Upper Level BIC Course Offerings—Spring 2022

BIC 3358 Biblical Heritage (Specialty emphasis; see description)
Dr. Mike Whitenton
This course is a special interest section of BIC 3358, which explores the potential contributions of biblical heritage (broadly conceived) for navigating our religiously diverse global society. This course starts with the assumption that religious difference is a rich (yet frequently untapped) resource for the common good—that we are better human beings and better citizens of a better society if we have authentic encounters across religious differences. Sometimes called “interfaith engagement,” these encounters focus on story-sharing and cultivating relationships, rather than winning a debate or sorting out who is “right.” According to social scientific research, such interactions spark authentic relationships, leading to positive attitudes towards, and appreciative knowledge of, religious traditions other than your own. The result is what Diana Eck calls “pluralism,” by which she means “[a]n ethic for living together in a diverse society: not mere tolerance or relativism, but the real encounter of commitments.”

Drawing upon the lives of Moses (and Pharaoh’s daughter), Abraham, Joseph, Ruth, Jesus, Paul and others, this section of BIC 3358 will focus on exploring scriptural texts and paradigms that can inform a Christian approach to interfaith cooperation. In addition, students will develop their religious literacy as a means of bridge-building, work through real-life case studies of (a lack of) interfaith cooperation, develop tools for engaging in story-sharing on the basis of shared values, and articulate their own theology/ethic of interfaith cooperation.

Priority will be given to students who are pursuing the minor in Civic Interfaith Studies. If you are in the minor, you may request a permit for this section, but this MUST be done before Nov. 1. Contact Dr. Nogalski.

BIC 4374 World Cultures V: Russia, Eastern Europe, and Africa
Dr. Ivo Novakovic
This section of WC V will study and compare the sociocultural transformations in two different regions of the world, post-socialist Eastern Europe and postcolonial Africa. In the first part, you will focus on Eastern Europe, Russia, and the former Soviet Republics and analyze their developments after the collapse of socialism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In the second part, you will study social and cultural history of Africa and examine the impact of colonialism on African developments in the postcolonial conditions. In the third part, you will compare these two geopolitical regions, in terms of both their post-socialist/postcolonial experiences and their prospects in the contemporary world.

BIC 4374 or 4389 may be required for graduation requirements, depending on the student’s degree. Please check your degree audit to see if you are required to take one of these courses. Even if you have had one of the courses for graduation requirements, you are welcome another section of BIC 4374 or 4389 for an upper level course (free elective). We also welcome students not required to take BIC 4374 or 4389, if you have room in your schedule.
BIC Capstone Opportunities for 2022

**Spring 2022 (Check schedule for time/day listings; may be subject to change)**

**BIC 4389 Death, Dying and Grief**
Dr. Candi Cann
We talk about death all the time—in books and movies, our favorite characters die; in games, when a person loses the game, we often say they died; and we describe the world around us using death terminology—“my car died,” “I laughed so hard, I died.” Yet, we rarely encounter or know how to manage death and the complex feelings surrounding death, dying and grief.

This course is an interdisciplinary analysis of death, dying, & bereavement. It includes such topics as facing death; coping with dying; hospice care; bereavement, grief, & mourning; funeral practices; lifespan perspectives on death; legal issues; suicide; and assisted suicide & euthanasia. This course will emphasize definitions, theories and models of grief and loss. Students will explore their own perspectives of loss and gain understanding of how their perspective impacts their response to others. In addition, this course will focus on how faith, culture and religion impact one’s understanding and acceptance of death and dying. We will deal with difficult topics, go on fieldtrips, listen to guest speakers, and grapple with many aspects of the intersection of death, culture and technology.

** This course is not suitable for students who have death or suicide ideation.**

**BIC 4389 Friendship and the Good Life**
Dr. Tom Hibbs and Dr. Stacey Hibbs
Aristotle claims that friendship is the greatest of the external goods and that no one would choose to live without friends. The importance of friendship (and the negative ramifications felt from a lack thereof) is not disputed, but the ability to make and preserve friendships is not always easy. In a time when feelings of loneliness have reached an all-time high, exacerbated by periods of isolation during a global pandemic, friendship is more important than ever. How do we live our lives together? How can friendship transcend barriers? What is required of us if we hope to be good friends?

**BIC 4389 Life at the Intersections: Navigating the World After BIC**
Dr. Sarah Walden and Dr. Mike Whitenton
We live our lives at intersections—intersections of gender, race, and class, but also of religion, education, politics, and popular culture. Yet we often participate in these spheres as though they are fragmented and separate. Throughout your experience in the BIC, we have worked to integrate diverse disciplinary and theoretical approaches to a variety of discourses, histories, and cultures. Now, as you turn your attention to life after BIC, you will be bombarded with advice about work-life balance, family, religion & secularity, friendship, mental health, grief, and many more topics that, at first glance, may seem self-evident, but are in fact woven from a tapestry of intersecting discourses, identities, and experiences.

In this course, we will explore real-life topics that require an intersectional, interdisciplinary approach. We want to prepare you for life beyond the BIC by inviting you to be part of the construction of the course: We will begin with several required texts, and then, as a class, we will choose the topics that we will explore in more depth together. Course material will include recent scholarship and literature, as well as news media, podcasts, art, and music. Each week, you will choose from a selection of texts that employ multiple perspectives and approaches to the topic under consideration in order to tailor the course readings to your individual interests. The course will culminate in individual research projects developed over the course of the semester as you engage your research question in consultation with your peers and professors.
Examining our lives intersectionally changes the way we see. By seeing a world that is larger than ourselves, we can better understand where we fit into that world and what we can do to change it. As a result, we are better able to live authentically, engage critically, and collaborate productively for the improvement of our local and global communities.

**Courses Offered for BIC Capstone Credit: Limited availability/cross listed with PHI courses**

**BIC 4389  Contemporary Ethical Theory (cross-listed with PHI 4360)**  
Dr. Paul Carron  
This class explores the positive and negative effects of technology on our lives. For example, we will examine how technological changes lead to cultural and ideological changes. As Marx famously said, “The hand-mill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam-mill, society with the industrial capitalist.” The agrarian revolution and the industrial revolutions transformed society, changing not only how goods were produced but the structure of our most intimate relationships. The industrial revolution helped create modern cities and the nuclear family, but also led to isolation and loneliness for many. We will ask, how has and will the technological revolution of the late 20th century transform our world? Will we be more connected? Better people? More isolated? Will the family structure change? And perhaps most importantly, what can we do to live more authentic lives in this modern world? Along the way, our guides will be philosophers and social scientists who asked these questions during the dawn of industrialization – e.g. Karl Marx, Søren Kierkegaard, and Émile Durkheim, as well as the contemporary philosopher Charles Taylor, and contemporary writings in psychology and cultural anthropology. We will also view several contemporary films and identify connections between course readings and the themes of the films.

*NB: This course is cross listed with PHIL4360: Contemporary Ethical Issues: The Moral Threat of Technology. Readings will be appropriate for an upper division philosophy course, but BIC students will have several alternative (i.e., less demanding) assignments since this is a Capstone.*

**BIC 4389  Philosophical Issues in Feminism (cross-listed with PHI 3320)**  
Dr. Lenore Wright  
Feminist theorists have challenged the negative assessment of the body within philosophical discourse. This course will survey recent developments in feminist philosophy, paying particular attention to the contested nature of embodiment in feminist thought. Topics will include theories and definitions of gender, assessments of gender oppression, relationships between the body and gender identity, cultural inscriptions and evaluations of the body, theories of power and politics of the body, evaluations of the body in science and biomedicine, embodied dimensions of human identity, and the implications of embodiment for women and men. No philosophy background is necessary, but readings will approach feminism from a philosophical point of view.

*These courses have limited enrollment for BIC students since most participants will be taking the course for Philosophy credit. Please register for BIC 4389 if you desire Capstone credit.*
Summer 2022—STUDY ABROAD
BIC 4389  Pilgrimage and Martyrdom
Dr. Jason Whitlark

This course explores the concepts of pilgrimage and martyrdom. Medieval pilgrimages by Christians were a significant spiritual discipline. “Pilgrimage is a journey to sacred places. Every place has a story, and sacred places are those places whose story is associated with God’s self-revelation and with the lives of the holy” (*New Westminster Dictionary of Spirituality*). These pilgrimages had as their goal to visit the places of martyrdom and martyr relics. Thus, we will examine how the stories of martyrs shape our own understanding of the life that is worth living. We will also examine how the metaphor of pilgrimage helps us examine the lives we have lived and the ones we hope to live. Another title of the course could have been “living courageously.”

*Note: Specific reading is subject to change for all courses described.*

Summer 2022—Baylor Campus (online status not yet known)
Summer Term (June):  BIC 4374 World Cultures V (Tatum)

Dr. Lynn Tatum's small group concentrates on Middle Eastern culture with a particular view towards religion and the role it has played, and is playing, in the region’s history and development. The course will look particularly at the Israeli-Arab dispute and America’s role in that struggle. It will also look at the ISIS phenomenon and the roots of this violent jihadist movement.

Dr. Tatum will also offer a section of BIC 3358 Biblical Heritage in June term on campus