# Course Overview PIC Curriculum 2019/2020

The list below contains synthetic course descriptions. The list is not complete: there will be additional courses covered by visiting professors, but the title and content of these courses is as of today (July 2019) not yet known.

**Aesthetics**
**Federico Vercellone**

The course is an introduction to the debate of Modern Age Aesthetics and its evolution from Kant to the philosophy of art in the twentieth century. In particular the course will focus on the authors and the issues connected to the question of the "End of Art" from Hegel to Danto.

**Applied Philosophy**
**Il Kim (visiting professor)**
**Second semester, second block**

TBA

**Bioethics**
**Maurizio Balistreri**
**Second Semester**

The purpose of the course is to compare different perspectives of normative bioethics and critically analyse their theoretical assumptions, structure and applications in the field of bioethics, especially on main issues relating to the beginning of life (abortion, new reproductive technologies, genome editing), end of life and doctor-patient relationship.

Central questions include:
---Is it right to break off the development of a human embryo?
---Is the fertilised egg cell different from a somatic cell?
---Is there anything wrong with having a baby born by cloning or using in vitro gametes?
---Is it right to modify the human genome for the aim of enhancement?
---Is it our duty to promote the development of an artificial uterus?
---Should health operators always respect the patient's choice?
---Should people have the right to decide how and when to die?
---Who decides in medicine for those who are not competent?

**Continental Philosophy**
**Gaetano Chiurazzi**

TBA

**Epistemology**
**Peter Brössel (visiting professor)**
**Second Semester, Block 1**

TBA

**Epistemology of the Humanities and Posthumanism**
**Giovanni Leghissa**

The course aims at offering an introduction to the recent debate about posthumanism from an interdisciplinary perspective. The approach to this subject will be mainly philosophical, but the course means to frame the issue of posthumanism within those disciplines that contributed - or are contributing - to define the relationship both with materiality and animality in a new key. Both the anthropological and the ethical and political significance of the traditional dichotomy between nature and *techne* will be questioned. Attention will be drawn on the recent developments within evolutionary biology, which constitutes the main framework for any discussion about range and meaning of a theory of the posthuman.

**Formal Epistemology and Philosophy of Science**
**Jan Sprenger**
**First Semester, Block 1**

The course introduces the students to central debates in philosophy of science, such as causation, induction, scientific objectivity, and values in science. The focus is on recent debates with a strong connection to uncertain reasoning and probabilistic inference. Central questions include:

---What distinguishes genuine science from pseudo-science such as astrology?
---How do scientists handle uncertainty in reasoning, inference and decision-making?
---What are the most promising candidates for philosophical models of causation?
---Can science be free of political, religious and social values? Would this be desirable in the first place?
---Can scientific findings be trusted in general, or should we treat them with caution?
---Why is the epistemology of science so important for a philosophical study of human knowledge?

**History of Philosophy I and II**
**Guido Bonino and Paolo Tripodi**

The program of these courses varies on a year-by-year and typically includes a close study of prominent thinkers of the 19th and 20th century, including analytic philosophers.

**History of Science**

**Enrico Pasini**
**Second Semester, Block 1**

The course is devoted to the study of scientific thought through the history of scientific debates and the historical interplay of competing approaches. Students learn to approach classical texts and problems of the history of science. Basic (high-school level) background in mathematics and natural science is presupposed. Examples of topics recently dealt with are:

---How did probabilistic thought emerge in the Early-Modern time, in the interplay of mathematics, social planning and the sciences of nature?

---How did morphological, developmental and variational aspects interact in 19th- and 20th-century debates around evolution theory?

---Can we detect a specific paradigm of physical science and mechanics in the first century of the Copernican era?

**Human Rights Culture in the European Union**
**Angela Condello**

The course addresses basic questions of legal theory such as the relationship between case and norm or interpretation and legal decision making, from the perspective of European policies. It is open to students of philosophy, law and political science. The course specifically aims at enhancing the knowledge of European policies among students of humanities by means of the analysis of what can be defined a "European human rights culture". The students will work on specific paradigmatic cases decided by the ECJ and the ECHR concerning issues such as multi-level governance, legal pluralism and clashes of legal cultures. The course is a Jean Monnet module (more info here: [http://www.cultureofnormativity.unito.it/it/node/5](http://www.cultureofnormativity.unito.it/it/node/5)).

**Logic**
**Andrea Iacona**

The course is addressed to students who have already taken an introductory course in logic. Its aim is to provide a detailed exposition of predicate logic and to outline some important metatheoretical results concerning it. The course has three parts. In the first, some fundamental notions of the theory of predicate logic will be introduced, a predicate language will be presented, and an axiomatic system based on that language will be defined. In the second part, some syntactic properties of the system will be illustrated, the notion of first-order theory will be defined, and some results concerning first-order theories will be presented. The third part will provide the rudiments of modal logic.

**Mind and Language**
**Alberto Voltolini**
**First semester, Block 2**

The course addresses fundamental issues in philosophy of mind and philosophy of language that often require a shared thematic approach. Normally, this has to do with problems in philosophy of language whose thorough understanding prompts a parallel investigation in philosophy of mind. Basically, the notions in philosophy of mind that need to be elucidated are consciousness and intentionality, in all their ramifications. Examples of the above problems are the following:

---Do reports of intentional states satisfy criteria whose justification lies in understanding what the property of intentionality amounts to?

---What is the relationship between consciousness and intentionality and how can it be linguistically expressed?

---Can we understand the nature of perceptual experience on the basis of how perceptual reports work?

---What is the relation between perceptual experience, pictorial experience and imagination and how can that relation enable one to understand human creations depending on such mental states (depictions, fictions, humour…)?

**(Social) Ontology**
**Maurizio Ferraris**

The course aims to investigate the latest philosophical research in relation to theories describing the genesis of social reality and that of individual intentionality. We will examine two specific entities: "intentionality" and "documentality". According to intentionalism, society is the result of collective intentionality, and individual intentionality is a primitive. For the documentalistic approach, society is the result of documentality, which is also decisive to the genesis of individual intentionality. Finally, the way in which documentality comes into existence is not construction, but emergence: a long evolutionary chain rooted in our past (and present) animality - relationships of dominance and subordination, marking one's territory and so on. - that generates documentality and its inherently normative nature. Eventually, the course will focus on what I have called "The Documedial Revolution".

**Philosophy of Art**
**Tiziana Andina**

The course introduces the students to central debates in the philosophy of art, such as the definition of arts, ontology, relationship with aesthetics, function, and nature of the art-world and values in arts. The focus is on recent debates with a strong connection to the analytic and continental aesthetics. Central questions include:

◦ How is it possible to distinguish an ordinary object from a work of art?
◦ Is there any property which is typical of the works of art?
◦ Does an ordinary object become an artistic object in particular conditions?
◦ Is beauty a necessary property of the works of art?
◦ Is artifactuality a necessary condition of artistic production?
◦ Is still there any space for the originality in art?
◦ Who is the owner of public art?

◦ Who is the owner (if any) of an artwork placed from an artist on a private place (a wall, a surface, in a park...)?
◦ How is determined the value of an artwork?
◦ How many values may an artwork have?

**Philosophy of Language**
**Matteo Plebani**
**TBA**


"What sort of thing is the meaning of a linguistic expression?" and "what is the rule that connects the meaning of a complex expression to the meanings of its parts?" are two profound philosophical questions. David Lewis's *referential* framework provides precise answers to those questions.

You might find the idea of finding precise answers to philosophical questions either exciting ("precise answers, at last!") or outrageous ("philosophy is not about finding answers, it is about questioning received answers!"). Either way, I hope that at this point you wish to know more about the referential framework, if only to prove it mistaken.
In the first two weeks of the course, we will study in depth the referential framework, following Lewis' exposition in "General Semantics". In the following weeks, we will consider three potential challenges to the referential framework: Dummett's *manifestation challange*, Wittgenstein's *rule-following* considerations and Putnam's *model-theoretic* argument. The final week will be dedicated to contemporary philosophy of language and hyperintensionality: sometimes sentences which are true under exactly the same circumstances seem to differ in meaning.


**Philosophy of Literature**
**Carola Barbero**
**First Semester, Block 2**


The course introduces the students to central debates in philosophy of literature, such as literature as an art form, literary language, authors, truth, fiction and moral/cognitive values. The focus is on recent debates with a strong connection to literary practices. Central questions include:
---What is the difference between literary and ordinary language?
---What do we mean by "truth in fiction"?
---How do we know that a text is a work of literature?
---What do we learn from literature?
—What is the relationship between moral value and aesthetic value as far as literature is concerned?
—What kind of emotions do we feel when we respond emotionally to literature?


**Philosophy of Music**
**Alessandro Bertinetto**
**First Semester, Block 2**


The course introduces the students to central debates in philosophy of music, such as ontology of music, musical meaning, musical expressiveness, and music aesthetic value. Without neglecting references to the history of the philosophy of music, the focus is on recent debates such as those

concerning musical formalism, the relationship between music and emotions and the specific aesthetic dimensions of the different musical practices.

Central questions include:

---What is music?

---Does music have meaning?

---Can music express emotions and moods?

---What is a musical work, what is a musical performance, and how works and performance are related? What is musical improvisation?

---What are the salient aspects of listening?

---Can music have cognitive, ethical, political, or social values?

---Does the musical experience have a specific aesthetic dimension?

---Can music contribute to philosophical thinking?

**Philosophy of Nature**
**Elena Casetta**
**First Semester, Block 1**

The course is an introduction to the contemporary philosophy of nature including topics such as the philosophical implications of the theory of evolution, natural and cultural evolution, biological individuality, the species problem, the biotechnological revolution, the environmental crisis. The focus is on recent debates, in particular those driven by metaphysical and ontological questions, including:

—What is life?

—What are biological individuals and which are their identity and persistence conditions?

—Are species real and, if so, which is the nature of their reality?

—Does it make sense to speak of a human nature?

—Which is our place in nature?

**Philosophy of Technology**
**Jimmy Hernandez Marcelo (visiting professor)**
**Second Semester, Block 2**

TBA

**Theories of Rationality**
**Vincenzo Crupi**
**Second Semester, Block 2**

What does it mean to be rational? How does rationality relate to logic and similar formal theories? What is the role of philosophy and other disciplines (especially cognitive science) in the study of rationality? In which sense and to what extent are humans rational? The course aims at addressing these key questions. We will outline a classical view of rationality as characterized by the principles of logic, probability, and decision theory. Against this background, we will discuss a number of topics widely debated by philosophers and cognitive scientists:

(i) does this classical view of rationality have a compelling justification as a normative benchmark?

(ii) how does this kind of normative justification work?

(iii) do humans generally comply with the relevant normative principles of reasoning in actual practice?

(iv) if not, what are the consequences for philosophical analyses of rationality and for our individual and societal prospects?