PHIL 460 A: PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

- Spring 2016

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**Meeting Time:** MW 1:30pm - 3:20pm

**Location:** SAV 136

**SLN:** 18282

**Instructor:** Andrea Woody

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**ADDITIONAL DETAILS:**

This course serves as an introduction to contemporary philosophy of science and will have a survey format (that is, we'll try to get a feel for the "landscape"). Philosophy of science is concerned generally with what makes science a distinctive enterprise and what makes the claims of science and the activities of scientists epistemically respectable. Attempts to address these issues have tended to focus attention on a few key concepts, which we will discuss and analyze throughout the term. Topics will include explanation, hypothesis confirmation and the nature of evidence, theory development, and issues concerning theory interpretation, e.g. realism/anti-realism debates. Where possible, these topics will be illustrated through contemporary and historical episodes of actual scientific practice. Classes will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. Students will be required to write several short papers aimed, first and foremost, at clear, concise explication of the philosophical issues. In effect, students will be introduced to both the "content" and the "methods" of contemporary philosophy of science.

Recommended: PHIL 120 or PHIL 160; prerequisite: one PHIL course.

**TEXT:** *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn.

**Catalog Description:**
Critical study of the nature of scientific knowledge. Topics include the relation of theory to observation, the use of mathematics, how theories change, the requirements for the meaningfulness of a theory, and nature of confirmation.. Prerequisite: one PHIL course.

**GE Requirements:**
- Individuals and Societies (I&S)
- Natural World (NW)
- Writing (W)

**Credits:** 5

**Status:** Active

**Last updated:** October 5, 2016 - 9:07pm