PHIL 401 D: ADVANCED TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHICAL AND HISTORICAL ANALYSES OF SCIENTIFIC MEASUREMENT

- Winter 2016

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

Location: EEB 031

SLN: 18766

Instructor: Andrea Woody

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ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

Capstone Seminar: Philosophical and Historical Analyses of Scientific Measurement (joint with HPS 400)

Measurement is taken to be a hallmark of scientific practice; histories of science are often studded with references to vital measurements, and simple epistemological models often portray accurate measurement as a crucial step in distinguishing among competing explanations. In both historical and philosophical accounts, measurement is often treated as a relatively unproblematic activity with little conceptual content. In this seminar, we will pursue more critical histories and philosophies of measurement and attempt to accomplish this task by drawing philosophy and history together. We will explore 3-4 case studies of measurement in science since the 19th century (physical sciences: the speed of light, temperature, the charge to mass ratio of the electron; cognitive sciences: intelligence; social and economic sciences: happiness/satisfaction), and discuss how historians and philosophers of science have treated these episodes. HPS majors will get the opportunity to practice both elements of the major as well as drawing upon their background in natural science. All students will be asked to write a substantial term paper based on an individual research project related to topics discussed in class.

TEXT: TBA

Catalog Description:
A study of philosophical topics at the advanced level. Topics vary.

GE Requirements:
Individuals and Societies (I&S)

Other Requirements Met:
Research Credit

Credits: 5

Status: Active

Last updated: October 5, 2016 -