

L&S at UC Santa Barbara

The Role of Philosophy in Undergraduate Education

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Philosophy occupies a unique position among the academic disciplines. Aristotle called philosophy "the first and last science."

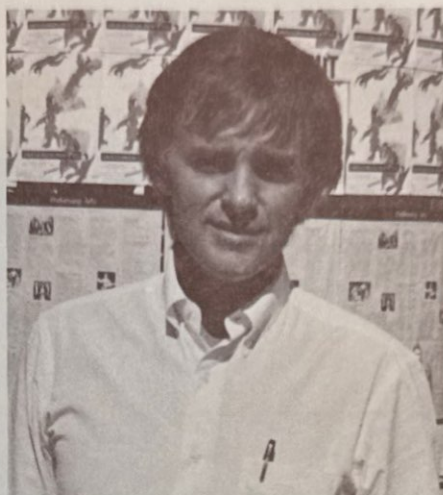
It is the province of philosophy to analyze and to examine critically the concepts and presuppositions that lie at the very foundation of any subject matter, whether it be physical science, social science, morality, mathematics, art, literature, religion, or even philosophy itself. In this sense, philosophy comes before all other subjects; it is "the first science."

Leading writers of contemporary philosophy take a clearheaded, no-nonsense approach to a variety of difficult but genuine issues and questions, such as the following: If there an obligation to obey the law, how does this obligation arise? How can scientific models help explain and predict phenomena if they are not put forward as accurate descriptions of reality? Are mathematical numbers real things in the universe? What makes something the same thing even after it has undergone extensive change? Can we know something without proof? What is a thought?

Some of these issues and questions go to the very heart of such diverse areas as psychology, law, mathematics, economics, and physics, but cannot be treated solely by the methods characteristic of those fields. Modern analytic philosophy has developed and sharpened a set of special methods for dealing with such otherwise intractable questions as these. In this sense, philosophy comes after all other subjects; it is "the last science."

Philosophy plays a similarly central role in a liberal undergraduate education, stimulating and challenging students to think critically and philosophically about the concepts and presuppositions of other subjects offered by the university. This is represented at UC Santa Barbara by such course offerings as Business Ethics, Philosophy of Religion, Philosophical Issues in Computer Science, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Mathematics, Philosophy of History, Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Law, and Philosophy of Language. Regardless of one's major field of study, exposure to philosophy

(See "Philosophy," back page)



Former Nebraska Governor Teaching Classes

Former Nebraska Governor Bob Kerrey is on campus this quarter to team-teach the popular undergraduate class, "Religion and the Impact of the Vietnam War." He will be sharing responsibility for the class with Religious Studies Professor Walter Capps.

A decorated Vietnam War hero who lost part of a leg in the conflict, Kerrey has spoken to Capps's classes about his war experiences twice before, once in 1985 and again in 1986. According to Capps, Kerrey enjoyed participating in the class and asked if he could come back in 1987 for a longer stay. That led to the invitation to come to UC Santa Barbara this term.

During his stay, Kerrey will also team-teach a graduate seminar in political science with Professor Alan Wyner, and will be giving public lectures.

Kerrey has been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, and the Vietnamese Campaign Ribbons for his military service.

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David A. Sprecher, Provost of the College of Letters and Science

Note from the Provost

by David A. Sprecher

This quarter the president of the university is expected to present to the Board of Regents his recommendation for the next chancellor for our campus. The arrival of a new chief executive officer is always an occasion for change and new challenges, and we are looking forward to the next phase in UC Santa Barbara's development.

While this search is going on, however, we have continued to be very active. Among the most important issues before us at this time are exciting initiatives from the college's faculty concerning new programs, undergraduate enrollment, space, and oil drilling in the Santa Barbara channel off the campus.

From the faculty initiatives I would like to single out three: proposals for a Center for the Humanities, for a Women's Studies Program, and for a Program in Economy and Society.

The Humanities Center is envisioned to provide an umbrella for interdisciplinary activities which will combine scholarly research with undergraduate and graduate teaching. The Women's Studies Program would allow faculty to do interdisciplinary research on gender-related issues and also to offer an undergraduate program. The Economy and Society Program would look at the influences and consequences of economic decisions on society from a modern perspective.

Finally, I would like to say a few words about this year's commencement ceremonies. They will be held Saturday and Sunday, June 13-14 on the Faculty Club Green by the campus lagoon. Accommodations for this weekend fill up quickly, so we encourage parents to make necessary reservations early. You can receive free assistance finding a hotel through Accommodations in Santa Barbara (805-963-9518).

At the commencement ceremonies this year we expect to award the first William Reardon Undergraduate Scholarships in the Arts and Humanities to graduating students who have demonstrated outstanding scholastic achievement. If you wish to contribute to this endowment, please send your check, payable to The UCSB Foundation, Reardon Scholarship Fund, to the UCSB Foundation, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106.

"Philosophy,"

(continued from front page)

provides a special and invaluable perspective on human intellectual activity in general, by encouraging students to examine some of the most fascinating questions to confront the human mind.

For those who choose to major in philosophy, UC Santa Barbara provides a uniquely flexible program. The diversity of student needs and interests is accommodated through four different concentrations within the major. Philosophy majors choose among a concentration in Ethics and Public Policy (particularly for students who plan careers in law, the public sector, or medicine), Theory and Practice of Analytical Reasoning (particularly for those planning careers in business management), Humanities (particularly for such arts and humanities careers as art criticism or reviewing), or Core Philosophy (for those who seek a thorough training in philosophy, perhaps as preparation for graduate study).

There is an adviser for each of the four concentrations, as well as a general undergraduate adviser. An information sheet for undergraduate philosophy majors can be obtained at the department office.

New Faculty Appointments

Sharon Farmer, assistant professor of history, comes to us from Rice University, where she held a Mellon postdoctoral fellowship following the completion of her Ph.D. at Harvard. A specialist in Western medieval social, cultural, and women's history, she is now at work on *Constructing Community and Identity in Medieval Tours*, a book on the role played by rituals, saints' cults, and legends in legitimizing and bringing about social and political change. She is also planning a course, *Women and the Family in the Middle Ages*, which will explore the history of the structure and ideology of the family, church attitudes toward women, women's religious culture, and women's social and economic roles in the Middle Ages.

James Fujii has joined the Department of Germanic, Oriental, and Slavic Languages and Literatures as an assistant professor. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. He will be teaching a survey of modern Japanese literature in translation and a course called "The Fractured Subject: Self in Modern Japanese Literature." His primary research interest is narrative form in the modern Japanese novel.

D. Darren Long is a new assistant professor in the Department of Mathematics. He has most recently been a lecturer at the University of Southampton, England. Long received his Ph.D. from Cambridge University in 1983, after graduate studies there and at the University of Texas. He is a highly respected authority on surface automorphisms, a central subject of topological research.

Catherine Nesci has been appointed assistant professor in the Department of French and Italian. She held a four-year fellowship at the *Ecole Normale Supérieure* (Paris) where she received the *agrégation des lettres modernes*. Before coming to UC Santa Barbara, Nesci was a lecturer at Bryn Mawr College. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Paris-7, and specializes in Balzac, nineteenth-century French literature, and feminist theory. She is currently studying the role of eroticism and irony in the making of the Balzacian novel and realistic fiction.

David Pugh joins the Department of Germanic, Oriental, and Slavic Languages and Literatures as an assistant professor. He comes to UC Santa Barbara from the University of Toronto, where he completed his Ph.D. on the aesthetic theories of Friedrich Schiller. At UC Santa Barbara, he will be teaching courses on German classicism, which is also his major research interest.

Norbert Reich has been appointed assistant professor of chemistry. He received his Ph.D. in medicinal chemistry from the University of California, San Francisco, where he also conducted postdoctoral research. He is studying the way proteins recognize DNA, and the ways this interaction is modulated by

other small molecules, such as drugs. Understanding this basic recognition process may suggest novel therapies for such fundamental life processes as carcinogenesis.

Alex Rosenberg joins the Department of Mathematics both as a full professor and as department chair. He comes from Cornell University, where he was department chair for three years. He spent nine years on the Committee on the Undergraduate Program in Mathematics, the major national professional advisory committee on undergraduate mathematics curriculum. He has also served ten years as trustee of the American Mathematical Society. Rosenberg's Ph.D. is from the University of Chicago. He is an internationally recognized algebraist and has published over forty articles. His most recent research is in quadratic forms and ordered fields.

Richard Turner has accepted a joint appointment in the Departments of Religious Studies and Black Studies. He received his Ph.D. in religion from Princeton University, and brings expertise in Afro-American religious history, African religions, the history of American religions, and Islam.

Charles Wolfe has been appointed assistant professor of film studies. He received his Ph.D. from Columbia University, and is a specialist in film history and film analysis. He is the author of a book on Frank Capra, and is currently doing research on voice and authority in American films of the thirties.

Birge Zimmermann-Huisgen joins the Department of Mathematics as a full professor. She comes to us from the University of Passau, West Germany, where she has been a full professor since 1984. Zimmermann-Huisgen received her Ph.D. from Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich, in 1974. She is a leading researcher in the theory of rings and modules, and abelian group theory. Her recent work focuses on exchange properties for modules, direct product and direct sum constructions for abelian groups, and the Nakayama conjecture for finite dimensional algebras.

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