PHILOSOPHY

FACULTY:
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The Philosophy Department has as its fundamental mission the cultivation of skills, dispositions, and knowledge in its students that contribute to their development as autonomous persons and as responsible and engaged members of society. These skills and dispositions are acquired and honed through studying and doing philosophy. They facilitate a student's development by enabling the critical, systematic, and philosophically informed examination of beliefs, values, and conceptions of the world. Such an individual has an independent mind: one that is open, flexible, creative, critical, and capable of making well-reasoned decisions.

Philosophy is the critical search for understanding through argumentation and the analysis of concepts. Philosophical issues arise in all areas of human inquiry, and consequently the types of questions that philosophy examines are surprisingly diverse. Does the world consist only of matter? What does it mean to be rational? What is the relationship between law and morality? Do computers think? What obligations do we have to the environment? In answering such questions, one acquires skills in critical reading, writing, and discussion, conceptual analysis, argumentation, and identification of presuppositions. Thus, philosophy helps to enrich, expand, and develop one's liberal arts education.

Many students have found a minor in philosophy to be a valuable supplement to other majors in the natural and social sciences and other humanities departments.

Major in Philosophy

Consists of ten courses:

- PHIL 22000
- PHIL 25000
- PHIL 25100
- One of the following 300-level courses: PHIL 30100, 30200, 30300, or 30400
- PHIL 31100
- Two elective Philosophy courses
- Junior Independent Study: PHIL 40100
- Senior Independent Study: PHIL 45100
- Senior Independent Study: PHIL 45200

Minor in Philosophy

Consists of six courses:

- One of the following 200-level courses: PHIL 25000 or 25100
- One 300-level course: PHIL 30100, 30200, 30300, 30400, 31000, 31100, or 31200
- Four elective Philosophy courses

Special Notes

- Students are strongly encouraged to take PHIL 10000 as a first course in Philosophy.

- Majors and minors are not permitted to take any courses within the department for S/NC credit.
- Only grades of C- or better are accepted for the major or minor.

PHILOSOPHY COURSES

ETHICS, JUSTICE, AND SOCIETY

PHIL 10000. ETHICS, JUSTICE AND SOCIETY
Philosophy aims to understand and solve fundamental conceptual problems in all areas of human inquiry. Philosophical reasoning deals with such problems in a systematic and rigorous way. The aim of this course is to introduce the practice of doing philosophy. This course will focus upon questions relating to ethics and political philosophy, and will address methods of argumentation and critical reasoning. *Annually. Fall and Spring. [AH]*

PHIL 21000. JURISPRUDENCE: LAW AND SOCIETY
This course examines the nature of law, its relation to coercive power and to morality. How should one define law? In what way should precedent determine the decisions of judges? As well as investigating these classical questions of jurisprudence, it will also study contemporary criticism of legal theory, the relationship of the law to justice, and important legal cases. *Spring. [AH]*

PHIL 21200. RACE, GENDER AND JUSTICE (Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies)
This course examines various historical and contemporary attempts to theorize race and gender and answer the questions 'what is race?' and 'what is gender?' Further, we will look at the ways in which "race" and "gender" pose problems for traditional conceptions of justice and inquire into the degree to which these problems warrant substantive revision of our favored theories of justice. Authors discussed include W.E.B. DuBois, Alain Locke, Franz Fanon, Anthony Appiah, Iris Marion Young, and Nancy Fraser. *Alternate years. [C, AH]*

PHIL 21500. BIOMEDICAL ETHICS (Neuroscience)
This course examines the ethical problems that arise within medicine and health care. Ethical questions relating to the physician-patient relationship, reproductive rights, abortion, AIDS, physician-assisted suicide, patient autonomy, and the allocation of resources will be addressed. *Alternate years. [AH]*

PHIL 21600. ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS (Environmental Studies)
This course is an examination of the ethical obligations that humans have toward the environment. What is the nature and source of our obligations to animals, plants, and the environment as a whole? Can non-human entities have rights? We will evaluate various approaches to these questions including anthropocentrism, biocentrism, and eco-feminism. *Alternate years. [AH]*

PHILOSOPHY AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

PHIL 22000. LOGIC AND PHILOSOPHY
This course examines the development of formal logic from categorical logic to sentential and predicate logic. In addition, the course evaluates the nature of formal logical systems and the philosophical issues related to them. Such issues include puzzles about sets, conditional statements, induction, contradiction, and the nature of truth and meaning. *Annually. Fall and Spring. [AH]*

PHIL 22100. PHILOSOPHY AND THE RELIGIOUS LIFE (Religious Studies)
In one part of this course we will look at traditional issues in the philosophy of religion: the nature of religious experience, classical proofs for the existence of God, and the problem of evil. In the second part of the course we will focus on issues in religious language, "seeing God," the place of ceremony and liturgy in religious life, and religious pluralism. *Alternate years. [R, AH]*

PHIL 22200. SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTIONS AND METHODOLOGY
The traditional view of scientific method, with its emphasis on observation, prediction, falsification, and hypothesis forming, is often thought to be a model of rationality. Yet there have been several conceptual revolutions in science that seem to challenge this view. The course will critically evaluate the scientific method, including empiricist, post-modern, and feminist critiques. *Alternate years. [AH]*

PHIL 22300. PHILOSOPHY, CULTURE, AND EDUCATION (Education)
The philosophical study of education includes such issues as the formation of knowledge, curriculum rationale, conceptions of human nature, the requirements of citizenship, and the cultivation of intellectual and moral virtues. *Alternate years. [AH]*

PHIL 22400. ART, LOVE, AND BEAUTY
What is the relationship between the artist, the work of art, and the audience? In this course, we will learn to say something meaningful about different forms of art, such as dance, music, architecture, and visual arts. What is it to appreciate them? What do we see, hear, feel? What is art's relationship to culture, to perception, to judgment? How do classical theories of aesthetics interface with modern and post-modern views? *Alternate years. [AH]*

COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 23000. EAST/WEST COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY (East Asian Studies, South Asian Studies)
This course is an examination of fundamental issues in philosophy, focusing on the work of philosophers in the Indian, Chinese, and Western traditions. Special attention will also be given to critical reflection on the project of comparative philosophy. *Alternate years. [W†, C, AH]*

PHIL 23100. INDIAN PHILOSOPHY AND ITS ROOTS (South Asian Studies)
This course is an examination of the unique Indian tradition of philosophy, including careful study and analysis of the Vedic and Upanishadic inheritance, "Heterodox" developments, such as the Buddhist and Jaina systems, and the "Orthodox" schools of Hindu philosophy, as well as later developments in Indian thought. Each offering of this course will focus on a distinct philosophical theme. *Alternate years. Fall. [W†, C, AH]*

PHIL 23200. CHINESE PHILOSOPHY (Chinese Studies, East Asian Studies)
An examination of traditional Chinese thought, in translation, with emphasis on philosophical problems. The topics to be covered in lectures and discussions will include Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism, and Ch'ing empiricism. *Alternate years. [C, AH]*

PHIL 23400. AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY (Africana Studies)
An examination of the African tradition of philosophy, including the epistemology and metaphysics, ethics, and political philosophy. The primary focus will be the various concepts in ethics and political philosophy, particularly, as these issues arise within the political and social structures in post-colonial Africa. *[C, AH]*

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

PHIL 25000. ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY: PLATO AND ARISTOTLE (Classical Studies)
This course examines the major philosophical texts of Ancient Greece and the Presocratic writings out of which they grew. The writings of these philosophers have implications for contemporary politics, education, morality, and knowledge. *Annually. Fall and Spring. [AH]*

PHIL 25100. RATIONALISM AND EMPIRICISM
During the period from about 1600 to 1800, modern science emerged, and the Medieval worldview receded. These deep changes led to a re-evaluation of our understanding of knowledge, God, and the human mind. This course focuses on the Empiricist philosophies of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, and the Rationalism of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Kant. Their work will be used to introduce some crucial debates in philosophy today. *Annually. Fall. [AH]*

PHIL 26100. THEMES IN CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY
This course is meant to give an introduction to the major figures and schools of thought of phenomenology, hermeneutics, post-structuralism, and critical theory, paying particular interest to continental conceptions of subjectivity, rationality, and ethics. We will become well acquainted with the theoretical frameworks of four challenging and provocative philosophers, namely: Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Michel Foucault, and Jürgen Habermas. This will entail the careful reading, interpretation, and discussion of difficult texts as well as the exposition, critique, and construction of arguments. *Alternate years. [AH]*

PHIL 26400. EXISTENTIALISM
The philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre claimed that all existentialist philosophers, whether atheistic or theistic, share the belief that "Existence precedes essence." By this unifying principle, Sartre meant that we must begin philosophizing by acknowledging the fact of the enigma of existence. In Sartre's view, the history of philosophy has shown us that philosophical systems attempting to provide the meaning of existence necessarily fail. What philosophy, then will stand in place of failed essentialist philosophy? If life has no discoverable meaning, how should be live? In this course, we will examine primary texts of four existentialist philosophers, who wrestle with this post-modern understanding of philosophy: Martin Heidegger, Soren Kierkegaard, Albert Camus and Walker Percy. *Alternate years. Spring. [W†, AH]*

PHIL 26600. AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY
This course offers a detailed examination of the central doctrines of two or more of the following American philosophies: transcendentalism, American idealism, pragmatism, and neo-pragmatism. General topics include: (i) the effects of evolutionary theories to our conceptions of reality and truth, (ii) the motivations behind individualism and collectivism, and (iii) melioristic faith in moral and religious ideals. Readings will be drawn from such writers as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, Josiah Royce, George Herbert Mead, John Dewey, Jane Addams, Alain Locke, Cornel West, and Richard Rorty. *Alternate years. [AH]*

PHIL 29908. ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY (Religious Studies)
This course will provide an in-depth introduction to Islamic Philosophy and Theology. Our concentration will be on the classical period (9th-12th centuries), but we will also touch on post-classical and modern Islamic philosophers. We will explore the intellectual culture of medieval Islam, the relationship between philosophy and mysticism and between philosophy and theology, epistemology, ethics, and the influence of Greek and Jewish tradition. Our focus will be on getting through the philosophers themselves with our own intellects as guides, so we will read a number of primary sources in English translation, including the works of al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, al-Ghazzali, Ibn Rushd, and Ibn al-Arabi. Class structure will include brief background lectures but center on discussion of readings. Some knowledge of Greek philosophical tradition would be welcome but will not be necessary. *Alternate years. Fall. [AH]*

ADVANCED SEMINARS IN PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 30100. ONTOLOGICAL COMMITMENTS
Ontology, as part of metaphysics, investigates the general features of what there is, and takes up questions about topics as diverse and central as universals, particulars, space, time, causation, and persistence. This class undertakes a rigorous investigation of the ontological commitments we have – and works toward an understanding of which ones we should have. At the same time, it develops students' skills in critical interpretation, analysis, argumentation, and expression. *Prerequisite: A minimum of two Philosophy courses. Alternate years. [AH]*

PHIL 30200. EPISTEMOLOGY: RATIONALITY AND OBJECTIVITY
This course examines the nature and scope of human knowledge. What does it mean to be rational? What is objectivity? Can humans obtain knowledge and truth? We will critically examine answers presented by foundationalism, coherentism, reliabilism, and naturalized epistemology. *Prerequisite: A minimum of two Philosophy courses. Alternate years. Spring. [AH]*

PHIL 30300. UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE
What is meaning? How do we understand each other? To what do words refer? Formal theories of meaning and syntax offer one kind of answer to these questions. Other answers focus on communicative behavior and speech acts. Still others focus on the metaphorical use of language and context. We will critically evaluate these different approaches. *Prerequisite: A minimum of two Philosophy courses. Alternate years. Fall. [AH]*

PHIL 30400. PHILOSOPHY OF MIND AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE (Neuroscience)
What is the relation between the mind and the brain? Is consciousness a neurological function? What are the limits of artificial intelligence? During this century, there has been a dramatic revolution in our understanding of these and other issues. We will follow and critically evaluate some of these changes. *Prerequisite: A minimum of two Philosophy courses. Alternate years. [AH]*

PHIL 31000-31010. SEMINAR IN PHILOSOPHY
A topical seminar which focuses upon a special issue or the work of a particular philosopher. *Prerequisite: A minimum of two Philosophy courses. Alternate years. [W†, AH]*

PHIL 31100. ETHICAL THEORY
In this course, we will examine and compare the main theories of ethics: utilitarianism, Kant's Ethics, virtue theory, feminist ethics, and moral cognitivism. The focus of this course will be on the foundations of moral principles. *Prerequisite: A minimum of two Philosophy courses. Annually. Fall and Spring. [AH]*

PHIL 31200. POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
This course explores themes in political philosophy from the 19th century to the present. It addresses fundamental questions about the conditions for a political state's legitimacy, citizens' obligations, the nature of justice and rights, and the concept of fairness in respect to the distribution of resources. We will also examine questions about pluralism, the good life, and the relationship between conceptions of the good life and public/political institutions. Can and should our political institutions be neutral with respect to conceptions of the good life? *Prerequisite: A minimum of two Philosophy courses. Alternate years. Fall.[AH]*

PHIL 40000. TUTORIAL
A tutorial course on a special topic offered to an individual student under the supervision of a faculty member. *(.25 – 1 course credit) Prerequisite: The approval of both the supervising faculty member and the chairperson are required prior to registration.*

INDEPENDENT STUDY

PHIL 40100. JUNIOR INDEPENDENT STUDY
A seminar designed to help students further develop their ability to do independent research in philosophy and to write a philosophical thesis. In order to achieve this goal, the course will require students to examine questions about the nature and methodology of philosophy, engage in research using philosophical journals and electronic data bases, deliver oral presentations, participate in peer review of others' writing, and plan and write a philosophical paper.

PHIL 45100. SENIOR INDEPENDENT STUDY – SEMESTER ONE
The first semester of the Senior Independent Study project, in which each student engages in creative and independent research guided by a faculty mentor and which culminates in a thesis and an oral examination in the second semester. *Prerequisite: PHIL 40100.*

PHIL 45200. SENIOR INDEPENDENT STUDY – SEMESTER TWO
The second semester of the Senior Independent Study project, which culminates in the thesis and an oral examination. *Prerequisite: PHIL 45100.*