PHILOSOPHY (PHIL)

PHIL 1: The Big Questions

3 Credits

This course plunges students into the deepest philosophical questions: Why is there something rather than nothing? Can I be sure about anything? What is the purpose of life? Is morality real or conventional? Can the existence of God be proven or disproven? Can science explain everything? Students will meet a range of historical and contemporary formulations of philosophical questions such as these, study various types of response, and acquire the analytical and expository skills to develop and defend their own perspectives. The course proceeds through discussion, reading, writing, and other assignments.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 1H: The Big Questions -Honors

3 Credits

This course plunges students into the deepest philosophical questions: Why is there something rather than nothing? Can I be sure about anything? What is the purpose of life? Is morality real or conventional? Can the existence of God be proven or disproven? Can science explain everything? Students will meet a range of historical and contemporary formulations of philosophical questions such as these, study various types of response, and acquire the analytical and expository skills to develop and defend their own perspectives. The course proceeds through discussion, reading, writing, and other assignments.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
Honors
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 2: Individuals in Society

3 Credits

This course provides a philosophical introduction to pressing social and political issues. We will ask, for example, what justifies having a government; whether inequality is ever justified; what obligations citizens have toward each other and toward non-citizens; what exactly is wrong with racism, sexism, and other injustices and what we should do about them; the limits and benefits of privacy; and the role of families, schools, churches, clubs, and employers in public life. We study prominent philosophers and theorists on these questions, and address recent events or policies. Students will develop and defend their own perspectives. The course proceeds through discussion, reading, writing, and other assignments.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 3: Ethical Life

3 Credits

This course offers students an overview of ethical issues, moral reasoning, and questions concerning the good and flourishing life for individuals and groups. It engages the work and critical interpretation of major figures in moral thinking, and enters into the full complexity of contemporary moral problems. Students will study and evaluate competing accounts of the right way to live, including their overall plausibility, their background assumptions, and their practical implementation.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 4: The Human Condition

3 Credits

This course introduces central philosophical questions about the lives we humans live: Can our lives have meaning, and does their value depend on it? Does each of us have a true self to be discovered, or a shared human nature we cannot escape? What do we mean by 'authenticity,' is it worth striving for, and can it be achieved? What difference does recognizing your mortality make to anything? We explore these questions in conversation with influential historical perspectives and contemporary theories, while approaching them from everyday concerns. Doing so provides a path for introducing philosophical ideas and evaluations into ordinary life.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 5: Film and Philosophy

3 Credits

This course examines film as both an aesthetic medium and as a medium for the exploration of philosophical questions. In addition to watching films, class assignments will include the reading of interpretative texts about specific films, philosophical discussions of film as a form of art-work, and writings by major film makers and film critics. With its origins in the late 19th-century, film is an quintessentially modern form of art that reflects changes in modern society (consumer culture, political organization, and cultural modes of perception), advances in technologies (cameras, sound recording, computer graphics), and aesthetic forms of expression. This complex intersection of society, technology and art will be a focal point in understanding what is both novel and traditional about films: how do films change our perception of the world? How can films shape our collective consciousness? How are traditional structures of narrative transformed through the unique combination of visual and auditory experience in films? These and other questions are central to an understanding of film as a modern form of art. From the beginning of film-making, films have often been used by directors and screen-writers as a medium for the exploration of the human condition, social consciousness, and historical awareness. The genres of historical fiction and science fiction have traditionally
represented two important forms in which film raises and seeks to answer philosophical questions. Film is also a medium for the exploration of the social structures and values: family relations, love, friendship, and other social forms of existence are often the main theme of scrutiny and experimentation in films. How can we read what a film reveals about such social relations and individual psychologies? How can film explore basic questions of human existence? Can such philosophically minded films also aspire to art-works of poetical beauty? This richness in how films can provoke us to reflect upon the past, the present, and the future will be critically explored through different ways in which philosophers and film critics have reflected on film. These readings will be paired with specific films, with films and assigned readings drawn from international films, classical films from the 20th-century, and contemporary science fiction films.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 6: Literature and Philosophy
3 Credits
Explores fundamental issues of human existence through the traditions of western literature and philosophy. CMLIT 6 / PHIL 6 Philosophy and Literature in Western Culture (3) (GH;IL)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. This course is designed to introduce students to the various interpretive approaches to literature and philosophy. The class will explore key philosophic themes as these are exhibited in imaginative literature, and in doing so will practice both philosophical interpretation of literature and literary treatment of philosophy. The central themes of this course could include, for example, self-knowledge and self-deception; self-isolation, alienation and community; conflict of moral responsibilities; the use and abuse of language; the meaning of art; the ideal of a ‘simple life;’ normalcy and madness. The class will ask such questions as what counts as literature, what purpose it serves, what is the relationship between literature and ideology, and whether a text can be considered independently from what the author wanted to say in it. This course is a non-major General Education Humanities course. It may be used to fulfill minor requirements in philosophy. This course may be used to fulfill an additional-course requirement in either the minor or the major in Comparative Literature, although it is geared primarily towards non-majors.

Cross-listed with: CMLIT 6
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
International Cultures (IL)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 7: Asian Philosophy
3 Credits
This class is an introduction to the major intellectual philosophical traditions of Asia: Hinduism, Buddhism and Zen Buddhism, Jainism, Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism, and Taoism. It proceeds through careful study of major, representative texts and authors of each of these traditions, and may range from foundational works to modern and contemporary developments.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 8: Gender Matters
3 Credits
Feminism is one approach to addressing systematic oppressions of both women and men. This course examines various feminist philosophical approaches to issues such the construction of gender, sex, and sexuality, the nature of gender injustice, and the intersectionality of oppressions. It also addresses contemporary issues, including sexual harassment and assault, abortion, explicit and implicit bias, and discrimination and exclusion.

Cross-listed with: WMNST 8
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 9: Race, Racism, and Diversity
3 Credits
This course offers a critical examination of the ways we today often think about race and racism, the latter considered in its cultural, institutional, and systemic forms, as well as in its individual manifestations as slurs, beliefs, and attitudes. This course also takes up the philosophical issues raised by the concept of race in intersection with class, gender, and related concepts. It aims to promote diversity by fostering an appreciation and respect of differences especially in respect of race, ethnicity, gender, and religious affiliation.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
United States Cultures (US)
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 10: Critical Thinking
3 Credits
This course provides a critical awareness of the function, nature, strengths, and weaknesses of argumentation in its various real-world and academic forms and contexts. Students examine the construction of persuasive arguments, discover types of fallacy, and learn how to evaluate reasoning for validity and soundness (that is, logicality and truth).

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies
PHIL 10H: Critical Thinking
3 Credits
This course provides a critical awareness of the function, nature, strengths, and weaknesses of argumentation in its various real-world and academic forms and contexts. Students examine the construction of persuasive arguments, discover types of fallacy, and learn how to evaluate reasoning for validity and soundness (that is, logicality and truth). There will be specific application to moral and social-political issues, and to the nature of education. As an Honors section, this course will expect considerable engagement and creativity by members of the class.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
Honors
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 10Z: Critical Thinking
3 Credits
This course provides a critical awareness of the function, nature, strengths, and weaknesses of argumentation in its various real-world and academic forms and contexts. Students examine the construction of persuasive arguments, discover types of fallacy, and learn how to evaluate reasoning for validity and soundness (that is, logicality and truth).

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 11: Science and Truth
3 Credits
This course investigates the nature of science, scientific reasoning, and the 'scientific method.' The value of objectivity and explanation will be considered in relation to our knowledge of the world and ourselves. Students will compare scientific truth claims to others, such as those from common sense, religion, the humanities, and pseudo-science. Key concepts include hypothesis, falsification, evidence, models, and theory. We ask: How do facts relate to proofs? What is the role of subjectivity in interpreting data? Does science progress? Are there questions science cannot answer? The goal of the course is for students to understand better the meaning, value, and limitations of the scientific enterprise.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 12: Symbolic Logic
3 Credits
This course is an introduction to symbolic logic. Logic is the science of correct reasoning, and symbolic logic is a particular branch of logic that studies correct reasoning using a formal or artificial language. In this course, students will first learn basic vocabulary for argument analysis, standards for evaluating arguments that are expressed in English, and basic methods for testing these arguments along with the shortcomings of said methods. The deficiencies of the more natural approach to evaluating and testing arguments motivates a turn to learning symbolic logic as it purports to provide a more precise way of evaluating arguments. To this end, students will learn the symbols, syntax, and semantics of two different logical (formal, symbolic) languages (propositional and first-order predicate logic) and how to translate sentences from English into these formal languages. Once the languages are formulated, students will learn how to make use of mechanical tests (truth tables and/or truth trees) that allow for evaluating arguments for validity as well as testing propositions and sets of propositions for other logical properties (e.g. consistency, tautology, etc.). In addition to mechanical tests, students will learn how to solve proofs in two different languages. That is, they will learn a set of inference, derivation, or 'proof' rules and use these rules to show that a conclusion follows from a set of premises.

Bachelor of Arts: Quantification
General Education: Quantification (GQ)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 13: Nature and Environment
3 Credits
What is nature, and what is the appropriate human relationship with it? What are our obligations toward non-human animals, endangered species, or ecosystems? Is contemporary industrial society alienated from nature, and, if so, what should be done about this? What alternatives for living differently are genuinely available to us today? These questions are addressed through discussion of current environmental issues (e.g., consumerism, agriculture, wilderness protection, environmental justice, climate change, environmental activism) as well as influential historical and contemporary philosophical approaches, such as deep ecology, social ecology, ecofeminism, bioregionalism, and eco-phenomenology.

PHIL 13 Philosophy, Nature, and the Environment (3) (GH)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. This course familiarizes students with concepts regarding the central and very old philosophical problem of describing and understanding nature and the place of human beings in it. This philosophical discourse has evolved in the past 25 years into a firm sub-discipline of philosophy itself, usually under the title of 'Environmental Philosophy' or 'Philosophy of nature.' The discipline addresses a complex of crucial problems of contemporary society, politics, and ethics revolving around the relation of human beings and the environment. Students will learn the various and conflicting views on nature and the environment, and they will develop the ability to critically navigate these various positions as well as the assumptions underlying the contemporary environmental debate. Students will be graded on participation, case study analyses, a group presentation and response, and a final paper. PHIL 13 satisfies the GH requirement and is geared towards non-Philosophy majors. It may be used to fulfill minor requirements in philosophy. This course is offered once a year with an enrollment of 50-200 students.
PHIL 14: Love and Sex

3 Credits

This course examines the dominant philosophical and theological theories of love and sexuality in the Western world; historical and recent critiques of those theories; and the relevance of gender, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation to all such thinking about love and sex. Related ethical issues include monogamy, same-sex marriage, cultural differences, pornography, and consent, especially in contemporary US context.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
United States Cultures (US)
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

PHIL 14H: Love and Sex - Honors

3 Credits

This course examines the dominant philosophical and theological theories of love and sexuality in the Western world; historical and recent critiques of those theories; and the relevance of gender, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation to all such thinking about love and sex. Related ethical issues include monogamy, same-sex marriage, cultural differences, pornography, and consent, especially in contemporary US context.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
International Cultures (IL)
United States Cultures (US)
General Education: Humanities (GH)
Honors
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

PHIL 15: How to Live

3 Credits

Philosophy, uniquely, studies how best to live. But being better at questions than at answers, philosophy mainly provides hypotheses about the nature of good life and the various routes to it. Does it mean minimizing mental suffering, through elimination of superstition and fear? Or control of one’s bodily desires, through feats of endurance? Or modesty about what you know, through examination of one’s beliefs? Or reducing the amount of injustice you do, by thinking about the consequences of every action? Or changing the way people think, by revealing the power dynamics beneath everyday social institutions? Each week this course articulates one hypothesis from Western (e.g., Greek, Roman, European, American) or non-Western (e.g., Indian, Chinese) philosophy, historical or contemporary, then makes sense of the reasons for it, and then puts it into personal (or group) practice for five days. Students track, process, and evaluate their experiences through journaling, blogging, and other modes of writing, some of which will involve discussion with other students. Each week also features philosophical, literary, spiritual, or journalistic readings expressing the tenets of the particular way of life, defending it against other ways of life, or exploring the particular historical/cultural context that occasioned it. These readings may include, for example, Socratic dialogues, Stoic handbooks, meditation mantras, existential dramas, political manifestos, nature journals, or book reviews. At the semester’s end, students invent their own philosophical ‘best way of life,’ formulating and justifying rules, models, or virtues to live by, and engage in conversation with other students on this topic. Students should leave the class recognizing the diversity and challenge of a range of way-of-life ideals, their historical context and contemporary promise, how to decide on their appropriateness for themselves, and what it would mean to adopt, refine, and support their own ‘philosophy’ of life.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
International Cultures (IL)
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 60N: Philosophy and 1960s Counterculture

3 Credits

Explores some of the central philosophical ideas, values, and social scientific theories that motivated, attended, and/or were presupposed by signature events, projects, and persons typically associated with the 1960s Counterculture. PHIL 60N Philosophy and 1960s Counterculture. Students examine original texts and experience other forms of media to enhance their understanding of central philosophical and social scientific assumptions and theories underlying historically prominent projects and events that are typically associated with the 1960s Counterculture, including, for example, ones that address the relationship of individuals to society, the conditions and ideals of the good life, and the nature of dominance and social control. Students are guided in the design and completion of mini-research projects that address specific counter-cultural phenomena and that are intended to further foster the development of interdisciplinary research skills and inquiry. PHIL 60N satisfies 3 credits of the General Education Integrative Studies Requirement and may be used to fulfill 3 credits of the GH and GS requirements.

General Education: Humanities (GH)
General Education: Social and Behavioral Sci (GS)
General Education - Integrative: Interdomain
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 83: First-Year Seminar in Philosophy

3 Credits

First-year seminars in philosophy provide critical introductions to fundamental philosophical issues and problems. Each first-year seminar develops a broad overview of historical and contemporary thought through readings, discussions, and student writings. In this way, students will gain an understanding of important figures, ideas, problems, and theories that have shaped and continued to influence thought and practice around the world. Students will examine diverse viewpoints that will allow them to understand a wide range of views and challenge them to defend their own positions. First-year seminars involve active use of writing, speaking, and group projects. They provide opportunities for gathering information, analyzing problems, and synthesizing diverse
perspectives. Finally, each first year seminar in philosophy allows students to link theory to their own lives.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
First-Year Seminar
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 98: Special topics
1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Formal courses given infrequently to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject that may be topical or of special interest.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 102: Existentialism
3 Credits

This course introduces students to the evolution of Existentialism, with its kernel in mid-nineteenth century reflection on Christianity’s loosening grip on culture, its influence by the early-twentieth century experience of war’s utter and widespread destructiveness, and its development in mid-twentieth century industrial and capitalist modernity. It concerns especially what it means to define one’s own life in light of social pressures, interpersonal conflict, and economic forces, with or without the aid of traditional or religious guidance. This that the course focuses on metaphysical, moral, and social issues concerning reality, the nature of the self, the basis of values, and the relations between individuality and community, and studies philosophical treatises, imaginative literature, and other genres of writing. Representative authors include Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Marcel, Wright, Ellison, Jaspers, Fanon, Camus, Beauvoir, Sartre, and Lorraine Hansberry.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think

PHIL 103: Ethics
3 Credits

Through reading and discussion of classical and contemporary sources, this course provides an introduction to the basic questions of ethics, the major currents in traditional ethical theory (virtue ethics, deontology, consequentialism), and more recent developments (e.g., care ethics). These schools of thought offer distinct answers about how we should decide what to do and about what makes a character, a decision, an action good or bad, right or wrong. Students will gain a basic understanding of concepts such as agency, autonomy, and moral responsibility, while also reflecting on the foundations, scope, and limits of moral reasoning: Are ethical norms universal, particular, or culturally relative? How is the moral life of the individual related to political life? Are there moral solutions to social problems or vice versa?

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Critical and Analytical Thinking
Honors
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 103H: Honors Ethics
3 Credits

Through reading and discussion of classical and contemporary sources, this Honors course provides an introduction to the basic questions of ethics, the major currents in traditional ethical theory (virtue ethics, deontology, consequentialism), and more recent developments (e.g., care ethics). These schools of thought offer distinct answers about how we should decide what to do and about what makes a character, a decision, an action good or bad, right or wrong. Students will gain a basic understanding of concepts such as agency, autonomy, and moral responsibility, while also reflecting on the foundations, scope, and limits of moral reasoning: Are ethical norms universal, particular, or culturally relative? How is the moral life of the individual related to political life? Are there moral solutions to social problems or vice versa?

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Critical and Analytical Thinking
Honors
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 103W: Ethics
3 Credits/Maximum of 3

Through reading and discussion of classical and contemporary sources, this WAC course provides an introduction to the basic questions of ethics, the major currents in traditional ethical theory (virtue ethics, deontology, consequentialism), and more recent developments (e.g., care ethics). These schools of thought offer distinct answers about how we should decide what to do and about what makes a character, a decision, an action good or bad, right or wrong. Students will gain a basic understanding of concepts such as agency, autonomy, and moral responsibility, while also reflecting on the foundations, scope, and limits of moral reasoning: Are ethical norms universal, particular, or culturally relative? How is the moral life of the individual related to political life? Are there moral solutions to social problems or vice versa?

Prerequisite: ENGL 015 or ENGL 030
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason
Writing Across the Curriculum

PHIL 105: Philosophy of Law
3 Credits

This course surveys philosophical questions concerning any legal system. What counts as a law? Do judges interpret or create new law? How can laws be unfair? What kinds of punishment, if any, are appropriate? When is civil disobedience justified? Could there be international law, and how can rights be enforced? These questions will often be asked in the context of the American system of common law and statutes, and thus will overlap with questions of federalism, constitutionalism, democracy, the police and prison systems, and social and economic structures. They will also require investigating the views of human nature underlying various philosophical positions. In general, the course examines the relations between human values, ethics, and
law and the way these relations affect the organization of broader social, political, and religious institutions.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 105H: Honors Philosophy of Law
3 Credits

This course surveys philosophical questions concerning any legal system. What counts as a law? Do judges interpret or create new law? How can laws be unfair? What kinds of punishment, if any, are appropriate? When is civil disobedience justified? Could there be international law, and how can rights be enforced? These questions will often be asked in the context of the American system of common law and statutes, and thus will overlap with questions of federalism, constitutionalism, democracy, the police and prison systems, and social and economic structures. They will also require investigating the views of human nature underlying various philosophical positions. In general, the course examines the relations between human values, ethics, and law and the way these relations affect the organization of broader social, political, and religious institutions.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
Honors
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 106: Business Ethics
3 Credits

Business ethics is not just about CEOs behaving badly. Even if sweatshops treat humans poorly, do they deserve thanks for their labor market expansion? Must corporate trustees seek only profit for their shareholders, or also benefit their surrounding communities? Who picks up the cost of environmental degradation by airlines, factories, and farms? What exactly does 'truth in advertising' mean, and how limited should marketing be to children, or about alcohol and pharmaceuticals? How should the imperatives of the 'free market' or 'capitalism' be treated in democratic decision-making? The course will develop a student's critical skills in evaluating the philosophical foundations and justifications for business and economic systems, the relation between morality and contemporary business practices, and central positions and figures in the history of philosophical analysis of these questions.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 107: Philosophy of Technology
3 Credits

This course surveys different views about technology: what counts as technology, what role it plays in society and human development, what benefits it might promote, and what obvious or hidden effects deserve criticism. The course's readings and discussions prompt reflection on the purpose and consequences of technology for your own life, what possibilities it opens and forecloses, and how it modifies, sometimes irreversibly, your environment. Required readings may include current news articles and blog posts, science fiction, historical analyses of technological change, and philosophical investigations of the concept of technology.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 108: Social and Political Philosophy
3 Credits

This course studies philosophical views about large-scale human relations: in groups, communities, populations, nations, and countries. By studying prominent philosophers and positions it investigates the following kinds of questions: Why might anarchy give way to government? How do political arrangements differ from domestic, friendship, or business obligations? Ought people organize to pursue a common good or goal? What does fundamental opposition about religion, morality, financial interest, and human sentiment mean for integration into a public realm? Is the personal always political, and what deserves to be kept private? Such questions have animated philosophy since its origins, is of vibrant contemporary interest, requires development of a view of human nature, and relates to ethics, psychology, sociology, law and criminology, economics, and political science. By the course's end, students should have a greater critical understanding of the nature of social and political organization, influences on human values, and the traditional philosophical problem concerning the good society.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 108H: Honors Social and Political Philosophy
3 Credits

This course studies philosophical views about large-scale human relations: in groups, communities, populations, nations, and countries. By studying prominent philosophers and positions it investigates the following kinds of questions: Why might anarchy give way to government? How do political arrangements differ from domestic, friendship, or business obligations? Ought people organize to pursue a common good or goal? What does fundamental opposition about religion, morality, financial interest, and human sentiment mean for integration into a public realm? Is the personal always political, and what deserves to be kept private? Such questions have animated philosophy since its origins, is of vibrant contemporary interest, requires development of a view of human nature, and relates to ethics, psychology, sociology, law and criminology, economics, and political science. By the course's end, students should have a greater critical understanding of the nature of social and political organization, influences on human values, and the traditional philosophical problem concerning the good society.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
Honors
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 108W: Social and Political Philosophy

3 Credits

This WAC course studies philosophical views about large-scale human relations: in groups, communities, populations, nations, and countries. By studying prominent philosophers and positions it investigates the following kinds of questions: Why might anarchy give way to government? How do political arrangements differ from domestic, friendship, or business obligations? Ought people organize to pursue a common good or goal? What does fundamental opposition about religion, morality, financial interest, and human sentiment mean for integration into a public realm? Is the personal always political, and what deserves to be kept private? Such questions have animated philosophy since its origins, is of vibrant contemporary interest, requires development of a view of human nature, and relates to ethics, psychology, sociology, law and criminology, economics, and political science. By the course’s end, students should have a greater critical understanding of the nature of social and political organization, influences on human values, and the traditional philosophical problem concerning the good society.

Prerequisite: ENGL 015 or ENGL 030

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason
Writing Across the Curriculum

PHIL 109: Aesthetics

3 Credits

Aesthetics is the philosophical study of our experience of certain natural and artistic objects that incite pleasure or displeasure in us, and which we judge to be beautiful, ugly, or sublime. Aesthetics asks: What makes something beautiful? Are our judgments of beauty universal? What counts as art? What are the relations between beauty, morality, and truth? The objective of this course will be to provide students with a survey of historical and contemporary perspectives on these questions. The students should leave the course with a good grounding in aesthetic theory as well as an understanding of how the theoretical considerations apply in art criticism.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 110: Philosophy of Science

3 Credits

This course examines core philosophical questions about science, scientific reasoning and scientific practice. What is scientific method, and what role do deduction, induction and abduction play in it? How does scientific method differ from one science to another? What role do mathematics, mathematical models and computation play in the various sciences? How does reductionism (the claim that parts determine the whole according to specified laws) help science develop but also limits it? Why must philosophical reflection on science also encompass the history of science? If we pay close attention to the role of science in culture, we find that it has ethical as well as epistemological aspects, as it interacts with religion and politics.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

PHIL 113: Philosophy of Literature

3 Credits

This course investigates the expression of philosophical ideas in literary form and, likewise, literature’s contributions to a philosophical inquiry into fundamental questions of human existence. Its central themes may include the nature of love and desire, personal identity and relationships with others, and ethical concerns of good and evil. Readings are drawn from the history of world literature and philosophy, from Classical Greek texts to contemporary science fiction.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 114: Feminist Philosophy

3 Credits

This course familiarizes students with concepts and challenges in feminist philosophies. Students will investigate the intersections of gender, race, sexuality, class, and other dimensions of identity through feminist analysis of epistemological and metaphysical assumptions (e.g., What is a woman? Does one’s sex and/or gender provide special access to certain types of knowledge?), social structures, language, and the character of power.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 115: Philosophy and Education

3 Credits

This course surveys the core philosophical questions that arise when thinking about education and teaching: What ought people to learn? How are instruction and experience related? What counts as knowledge and truth? How do we discover the human nature that underlies our educational theories? What are the moral implications of leading young people out of innocence or ignorance? What is there to education beyond classrooms, schooling, and reading? How much education ought a society to require or expect of its population? How important is intellectual and moral maturity? The course also considers the historical contexts from which philosophical theories about education have arisen and their ideological, political, social, and economic implications.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason
PHIL 118: Environmental Philosophy

3 Credits

This course explores current environmental problems and human development in the context of historical and contemporary views of the relation of humans and nature. It examines differing conceptions of nature’s value, human values, and the human condition more generally. It also investigates how distinct social, economic, and political ideologies and systems affect the human relation to nature, and how the ethical problems that arise from such systems may be critically evaluated and potentially resolved.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 119: Ethical Leadership

3 Credits

Leaders, in whatever context, make difficult decisions, distribute scarce resources, direct and influence the conduct of others, and represent the goals of the enterprise they lead. Thus they ought to exemplify prudence, fairness, integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, and morally upright behavior. This course investigates these concepts and the moral dilemmas that arise in developing or applying them. It also explores, philosophically as well as practically, the ways leaders might identify ethical challenges, analyze them, imagine possible solutions, and be motivated to do the right thing. Students may read a variety of literature, from classic plays and novels, to prominent philosophical texts, to recent studies of ethics and leadership.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 120N: Knowing Right from Wrong

3 Credits

Knowing Right from Wrong provides a comprehensive understanding of the nature of moral ideas, beliefs, and behaviors in contemporary contexts. What roles do nature and nurture play in the development of moral sensibilities? How do moral emotions and moral reasoning interact to produce moral behavior? What defines moral character and how does it influence what we do? Is it possible to derive what ought to be done from what is known about the world? How do we respond when moral demands compete with another? How do our moral convictions color our perceptions of world events? Can individuals and groups with differing moral commitments communicate with one another and live together peacefully? The course integrates perspectives from philosophy, psychology, and sociology, and prepares students to think about (and act in) a world in which morality (and its linked concepts, such as judgment of others) plays an increasingly important social and political role. The course treats morality as both an aspirational concept and as an actual social practice, and focuses on three major themes: (1) the origins and development of moral reasoning and ethical systems, (2) the influence of moral emotions and moral intuitions on moral reasoning and behavior, and (3) the influence of social and contextual factors on moral behavior and expression. Integrating the philosopher’s interest in ethics, with the psychologist’s interest in the mind and body, and the sociologist’s interest in groups, the course provides a comprehensive introduction to morality in contemporary society, and the ways in which it shapes the lives of people in everyday situations.

Cross-listed with: PSYCH 120N, SOC 120N
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Social and Behavioral Sciences
General Education: Humanities (GH)
General Education: Social and Behavioral Scienc (GS)
General Education: Integrative: Interdomain
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 122: Philosophy of History

3 Credits

This course surveys the core questions that arise when thinking about history, the relevance of the past, and the writing of history: How can we know history? What does it explain and what does it teach? Are those who don’t know it doomed to repeat it? Is it objective? How is it related to human nature and progress? And what exactly is history? Is it simply everything that has happened, or specific sequence of events, or a narrative we apply to make sense of some aspect of the past or present? In addressing these questions, the course emphasizes the thought of influential figures, including Hume, Vico, Hegel, Marx, Mill, Rickert, Dilthey, Croce, Collingwood, and Hempel. In general this course helps students think philosophically about the fact that humans live essentially through time and across generations. It also contributes to understanding the practice of studying, research, writing, and talking about history.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 123: Media Ethics

3 Credits

This course surveys the core philosophical questions connected with mass media: What is newsworthy? What is the whole story, and what makes it true? How ought media’s form influence the power of its content? What authorizes journalists to interpret the facts? How much does individual self-understanding and social organization depend on media images and tropes? Does it make sense to speak of ‘the media’ as a unified phenomenon? As we work to formulate and answer these questions, students will acquire ethical understanding, media literacy, and an appreciation for the role media plays in the formation of cultural expectations about knowledge, values, and technology.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason
PHIL 124: Philosophy of Religion

3 Credits

This course surveys perennial philosophical questions connected with religion: What is God, deity, or divinity? What is the nature and significance of religious experience? Is it rational to hold religious beliefs? How persuasive are arguments about the existence of God? How compatible is religion with modern science? What are the meanings of miracles, immortality, and creation? In what ways might morality depend on religion? What role ought religion to play in society and the public sphere? What lesson should we draw from profound religious experiences? Ought religious tolerance to be limited at all? Through the reading and discussion of relevant historical and contemporary texts, students will be encouraged to reflect on such questions from a variety of perspectives.

Prerequisite: third-semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 125: Theories of Knowledge

3 Credits

This course surveys the core questions in epistemology. What do we mean when we claim to know something, as opposed to merely having an opinion about it? What sorts of things, if anything, are ultimately knowable? What role ought sensation, perception, observation, experience, authority, testimony, or reason play in forming, changing, justifying, or defending claims to knowledge? Are such claims to knowledge always conditioned by the social and historical situation, and limited by the knowers’ standpoint, or are there universal standards to establish them? Through analysis and discussion of classical historical and contemporary texts, the course introduces students to these and related problems of knowledge and acquaints them with the most influential strategies that philosophers have developed in response to them.

Prerequisite: ENGL 015 or ENGL 030
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies
Writing Across the Curriculum

PHIL 126: Metaphysics

3 Credits

This course considers key concepts, problems, and figures in metaphysics, the investigation into the nature of reality. We will ask the deepest questions about what exists and how things relate to one another on a fundamental level. For example: Does everything ultimately reduce to simple substances, or is reality organized into types? Does time exist objectively, or is it dependent on the mind? Does effect follow cause as a matter of universal law or only as a statistical probability? What factors determine whether a thing is the same over time or differs at every instance? We will also query the most basic assumptions about reality, that a pencil will not fall through a desktop, the sun will rise tomorrow, and the world was not created a minute ago. Students will develop skills in reading difficult texts, evaluating arguments, and formulating their own philosophical views through discussion and in writing.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 126W: Metaphysics

3 Credits

This WAC course considers key concepts, problems, and figures in metaphysics, the investigation into the nature of reality. We will ask the deepest questions about what exists and how things relate to one another on a fundamental level. For example: Does everything ultimately reduce to simple substances, or is reality organized into types? Does time exist objectively, or is it dependent on the mind? Does effect follow cause as a matter of universal law or only as a statistical probability? What factors determine whether a thing is the same over time or differs at every instance? We will also query the most basic assumptions about reality, that a pencil will not fall through a desktop, the sun will rise tomorrow, and the world was not created a minute ago. Students will develop skills in reading difficult texts, evaluating arguments, and formulating their own philosophical views through discussion and in writing.

Prerequisite: ENGL 015 or ENGL 030
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies
Writing Across the Curriculum
PHIL 127: Philosophy of Mind

3 Credits

The course wonders, 'What is a mind?' - especially in its relationship to the brain, the person, and the world. We study whether consciousness defines a mind, what limitations if any subjectivity places on the scientific investigation of the mind, and how to build a robot with a mind. Readings may include texts from the history of philosophy and contemporary philosophy, as well as neuroscience and psychology. Students will learn a broad range of skills needed to understand and synthesize the variety of information relevant to the mind.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

PHIL 129: Philosophy of Language

3 Credits

Philosophy of language asks the following sorts of questions: What makes a system of symbols a language? What is meaning? How does a term or a symbol refer to an object? In what way is speech also an action? How does language affect the way we see the world? This course offers a critical survey of key concepts, topics, and texts from Classical authors (e.g., Plato and Aristotle) and more recent thinkers, in the post-Fregean analytic tradition, the Peircean pragmatic tradition, and the post-Husserlian or Saussurean continental tradition. It shows how the debates about language and its relation to the world shed light on other major problems of philosophy. Due to the formal nature of its subject-matter, the course helps students develop skill in the logical analysis of sentences and descriptions.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think

PHIL 132: Bioethics

3 Credits

This course surveys core topics in recent bioethics - the study of ethical problems issuing from the use and treatment of human and non-human animals in the research and practice of medicine and biotechnology. It aims to help students think more critically and argue from specific moral theories when evaluating issues concerning human body and its enhancement, the value of life and death, abortion and euthanasia, the distinction between biological and moral conceptions of human, the nature of health, illness and disabilities, the allocation of resources for health-care, doctor-patient relationships, and our moral conduct toward animals in medical and industrial contexts.

Cross-listed with: BIOET 100
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 133N: Ethics of Climate Change

3 Credits

Climate change is not only a political, economic, and social crisis, it presents one of the great moral problems of our time. This course will cover the science, policy, and ethics of climate change. It fulfills general science requirements by giving an overview of the role played by such diverse scientific disciplines as chemistry, earth systems, ecology, and geology in understanding our changing climate while also exploring mitigation and adaptation strategies being developed in the fields of engineering, forestry, agriculture, and others. It fulfills humanities requirements by delving into the ethical dimensions of climate change, including religious and humanistic theories of human flourishing, deontological and teleological theories of ethics, and analysis of specific choices addressed by international negotiators. A hallmark of this course is using Penn State as a 'living laboratory' by taking advantage of both faculty expertise and the realworld activities of the Office of Physical Plant. Every week, students will interact with experts from various quarters of the University in order to see how climate change is being approached in a multi-disciplinary fashion. The first third of the course will feature guest lectures by EMS faculty working on paleoclimate, modeling, carbon sinks, ocean acidification and other aspects of climate science. The second portion will engage humanists, economists, historians, and artists at Penn State. The third will include tours of Penn State facilities, such as the East Campus Power Plant, and interviews with researchers developing new energy and sequestration technologies. In addition to exams and papers, students will prepare for a mock negotiation by learning about the energy profile and history of assigned countries. They will then have to set specific CO2 and temperature goals and come up with solutions to achieve these. The goal is to understand the role placed by ethical ideals in the pragmatic process of producing an equitable solution. In short, this course will give students the tools to understand the basic science of climate change and its ethical implications. Students will come away with a better sense of the moral dimensions of this phenomenon and the implications for human civilization and for the biosphere.

Cross-listed with: METEO 133N, RLST 133N
General Education: Humanities (GH)
General Education: Natural Sciences (GN)
General Education - Integrative: Interdomain
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 134: Food, Values, and Health

3 Credits

This course studies the ethical and social issues connected to food, personal and cultural eating habits, body image and ideas of health, and agricultural practices and industrialized food production. We will discuss the following sorts of questions: In what ways are cooking and eating central to our human identity? What do judgments about being anorexic, overweight, or eating unhealthily mean and do? How strong are the arguments for vegetarianism, veganism, or raw-food-ism? Ought we to eat as our Paleolithic ancestors did? If the future holds engineered meat, GMO fruit, and Soylent shakes, what are we to think? Should food-companies be allowed to advertise to children? Is alcohol more like food, like medicine, or like drugs? Students will pursue answers to such food-
ethical questions by learning relevant moral and social theory, discussing past and contemporary approaches to these issues, and analyzing case studies. We will pay particular attention to food as a symbol with psychological, social, and spiritual meanings and effects.

Cross-listed with: FDSC 134  
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities  
General Education: Humanities (GH)  
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think  
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 135: Ethics in Jewish Tradition and Thought  
3 Credits

This course takes as its starting point the idea that modern ethical frameworks are deeply rooted in the soil of older traditions. By examining the development of Jewish intellectual traditions and their roots in the Bible, it provides students with an opportunity to study ethics in a philosophically textured, culturally rich, and historically informed way. And by focusing on Jewish engagement with the Bible, the course illuminates other traditions that derive from biblical monothemism: for example, those associated with Christianity, Islam, and the Enlightenment. The first part of the course takes up the idea of tradition and includes a study of biblical texts that serve as the foundation for key moral concepts. Following the traditional division of the scriptures, it examines questions of human identity and responsibility in the Torah, social ethics in the Prophets, and the quest for wisdom in the Writings. The final topic in this unit is the development of ethical tradition among the great sages of Jewish antiquity. The second unit shifts focus to the appropriation of tradition in modern Jewish thought. After reviewing important developments in Jewish thought in the medieval and early modern periods, it turns attention to the ways that some recent figures have addressed perennial concerns in light of commitments and ways of being that are integral to Jewish identity. By reading closely the works of such seminal thinkers as James Kugel, Joseph Soloveitchik, and Abraham Heschel, we will gain a deep acquaintance not only with important vocabulary but also with the ways that traditional words and concepts may be used dynamically to produce fresh ways of looking at questions in moral philosophy.

Cross-listed with: JST 135, RLST 135  
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities  
International Cultures (IL)  
General Education: Humanities (GH)  
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication  
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think  
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 136N: Art and Philosophy in Ancient Greece  
3 Credits

Ancient Greece provided Western Civilization much in terms of art and philosophy. The influence of the Greeks can be seen in such areas as architecture, sculpture, concepts of beauty, literature, etc. These are independent domains, but there is often integration between the two disciplines. This course will uncover the ways in which philosophy informed Greek ideals and the role played by both visual art and literary art. To that end, sections will focus on each of those two disciplines. Study will also display how the disciplines come together in the following areas: 1) Beauty and 2) The interrelation of art, religion, philosophy and the state. Early in the course, students will thoroughly examine the concept of Beauty, with an emphasis on Ideal Beauty. Students will explore objective and subjective definitions by developing models of each and then synthesizing competing ideas in their own unconventional definitions of Beauty. Foundational work will include study of specific Greek artists/thinkers, and involve students in working toward identifying traces of early thinking in contemporary society. This will include both written and visual work. Analyses will target philosophical thought, sculpture and architecture primarily from Early Classical and High Classical/Golden Age works as students explore the Greek search for perfection. The periods and styles that will be covered include: Geometric which includes the Orientalizing period; Archaic; Classical (Early, High, and Late); and Hellenistic. Next students will examine and discuss different philosophical topics such as metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, etc. An emphasis will be placed on Plato and Aristotle but the Pre-Socratics may also be considered. Art and philosophy are also integrated in Ancient Greece. Plato considered beauty, art, the artist and tragedy in works such as The Republic, Philebus, Ion and Hippias Major. Aristotle’s major contribution to aesthetics is in the Poetics. The last section will consider the relationship between literary art (plays) and the Greek understanding of authority, particularly the gods, the state and the individual. Much of the art in the Greek culture (as it is in most cultures) is best understood in terms of the dominant religion. The themes developed gave rise to a great deal of philosophical reflection in terms of the place of religion, and how the individual saw themselves in relation to the gods and the state. Through an examination of plays and philosophical texts, students will explore this relation between the individual and an authority (gods or rulers).

General Education: Arts (GA)  
General Education: Humanities (GH)  
General Education - Integrative: Interdomain  
GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication  
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think  
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking  
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 197: Special topics  
1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Formal courses given infrequently to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject that may be topical or of special interest.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities  
PHIL 198: Special topics  
1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Formal courses given infrequently to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject that may be topical or of special interest.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities  
PHIL 199: Foreign Study--Philosophy  
1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Courses offered in foreign countries by individual or group instruction.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities  
International Cultures (IL)
PHIL 200: Ancient Philosophy

3 Credits

This course examines key themes, texts, and persons in ancient Greek philosophy, with the works of Plato and Aristotle at the core. We ask: What did Socrates mean when he said 'the unexamined life is not livable by humans'? Or when Thales said 'All begins in water'? Or when Epicurus said 'Only pleasure is valuable'? Or when Parmenides said 'You cannot speak of what is not'? To answer these questions, we examine the cultural background of philosophical thinking (Homer and Hesiod; Near Eastern traditions; trade and empire), and we survey views about, for example, the universe's structure and origin, the nature of reality and change, the status of knowledge and opinion, the best way of life for individuals and for societies, and the value of reason, persuasion, argument, and logic. We also give close attention to the formation, meaning, and purpose of philosophy, wisdom, and sophistry. This includes analysis of the 'myth reason' hypothesis, Mileian inquiry into basic principles (archai), physical vs. ethical inquiry, and the development of doctrine, discipline, and disagreement. In addition to the figures mentioned above, figures studied may come from the periods of the Presocratics (e.g., Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Xenophanes), Hellenism (Stoic, Epicurean, Cynic, and Skeptic), the Romans (e.g., Cicero, Seneca), and the Neoplatonists (e.g., Plotinus).

Cross-listed with: CAMS 200
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 201: Medieval Philosophy

3 Credits

This course examines key themes developed by the philosophers from the long millennium between the fall of Rome and the rise of the Renaissance, many of whom responded to ancient Greek philosophy in the context of their theological commitments (Christian, Jewish, Muslim). The works of Augustine and Aquinas are at the core; readings may also include works by Boethius, Anselm, Abelard, Occam, Scotus, Avicenna, Al-Kindi, Maimonides, and Averroes. We ask: What is the fundamental nature of reality, and where do humans fit in? How ought we to understand essence and existence? Do abstract concepts correspond to real 'universals' or are they mere names? What does a belief in free will and evil commit us to? What should we make of the arguments for God’s existence? What are laws of nature, and in what respect might natural law govern our lives? To answer these questions, we examine the cultural and Greek/Roman background of medieval philosophy, and give close study to the significant philosophical and related texts of the tradition.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 202: Modern Philosophy: 1600-1800

3 Credits

This course surveys major philosophical issues of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a vibrant era of scientific revolution, religious and political upheaval, and Europe's rise to global power. In its quest for a method of scientific discovery, philosophy breaks with the Aristotelian tradition that had dominated it for centuries; it ends up confronting remarkably new questions and modes of explanation. We focus on the works of the major thinkers of this era, such as Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. Although with different priorities and conclusions, each takes up the implications of the new, mechanistic conception of nature. We study their investigations into the following types of questions: What is 'substance' and what are the genuine qualities of things? What is the nature of the mind, and how is it related to the 'material body'? How do we acquire knowledge of reality, and can we ever be certain of this knowledge? Are natural phenomena determined by causal laws? Does God exist and, if so, what is his role in relation to a material world governed by causal laws? The lively debates over these questions gave birth to two rival schools of thought, one seeking answers in the innate principles of the mind (rationalism), the other in our experience of the world (empiricism).

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 203: Nineteenth Century Philosophy

3 Credits

The nineteenth century is a period of political upheaval and ongoing social, cultural, and scientific transformation, shaped in equal parts by the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. This transformative character is reflected by the epoch’s most influential philosophers. Kant’s ‘critical’ philosophy emphasizes the primacy of practice and the subject’s active role in constructing reality. Hegel focuses on the rationality implicit in the historical growth of religion and the political institutions of the state. As the century wears on, escalating social and political conflicts lend credibility to outspoken critics of such optimistic rationalism. Schopenhauer’s pessimism, Kierkegaard’s existentialist focus on the irrationality of faith, Marx’s historical materialism and emphasis on class struggle, Nietzsche’s ‘genealogical’ anti-realism and philosophy of power are prominent examples. The embrace of new paradigms in morality (Mill), natural science (Bergson), and psychology (Freud, James) round out the picture of a century in transition from ‘classical’ European modes of thought to the self-conscious secularism and dynamism of the 20th century. By reading a broad selection of representative texts, students will learn about the major figures and streams of thought that shaped the course of this eventful period in the history of Western philosophy.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 204: Twentieth Century Philosophy

3 Credits

The 20th century can be characterized as a crisis of foundations, doubt about the ultimate grounding or demonstrability of our beliefs concerning the world and ourselves. So-called continental philosophy sought a ground of knowledge in phenomenology, the view that human subjective experience (‘phenomena’) reveals essences, how things actually are.
By mid-century, deconstructionist critique shattered confidence about the underlying distinctions assumed here. So-called analytic philosophy began the century with a commitment to eliminating metaphysical speculation in favor of narrowly empirical truths, on the model of scientific investigation; but the eventual unconvincingness of this view led to theories of knowledge and metaphysics that allowed for the absence of foundations. Rooted in this and earlier rejections of foundations, so-called pragmatism began as way to assess competing ideas by the difference they make in human action. A crisis in political foundations generated the social and philosophical movements of Marxism, critical race theory, and feminism. The ramifications of these crises continue to be acutely felt in contemporary philosophy, making the 20th century a period of particularly diverse and relevant resources. This course satisfies BA and GH requirements.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 205: American Philosophy: 1840-Present

3 Credits

American philosophy comes into its own in the mid-nineteenth century, emancipating itself both from its origins in Protestant religion and from the tutelage of European role-models. The 1840s see the rise of the New England Transcendentalists (Emerson, Thoreau), who emphasized imagination, individualism, equality, and moral progress. During the decades of national reconsolidation following the Civil War, Pragmatism arises (Peirce, James, Dewey, Royce). Its practitioners innovations help set the tone for many twentieth-century intellectual developments: the emphasis on history, practice, and pluralism; the break with metaphysics and intellectualistic approaches to science, morality, and society; and the commitment to a ‘radical empiricism’ broad enough to embrace scientific observation, religious experience, and social experimentation. Fuller’s early feminism, Addams’s social progressivism, and Du Bois’s reflections on racial inequality constitute uniquely American moments in the history of philosophy. Certain more recent philosophers (Putnam, Rorty, Cavell, and Brandom) have renewed and extended the pragmatist legacy. The course evaluates the problems raised by these philosophers and traces their influences on American society, politics, and culture. One of the principal goals is to enable students to understand better this rich philosophical tradition and its importance—both critical and constructive—in the contemporary American landscape.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

PHIL 208: Contemporary Philosophy

3 Credits

Treating contemporary philosophy as history encourages us to ask what current ideas are likely to resonate in the future. The course focuses on philosophical work that crosses disciplinary boundaries, addresses new social and political problems, introduces experimental styles, and opens novel areas of investigation. By engaging with the ideas of philosophers who are writing and thinking right now, students gain the opportunity to consider how well philosophy addresses issues of concern to a world that they themselves belong to. Examples include climate change, racism, posthumanism, globalization, gender and sexual identity, and the science of the mind. Working with living philosophers also affords the opportunity to see the authors speak about their work on video or, when practical, in person.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp and Ethic Reason

PHIL 233: Ethics and the Design of Technology

3 Credits

Ethics and individual and group decision-making in the design of technology including design projects and specific attention to institutional ethics. PHIL (S T S) 233 Ethics and The Design of Technology (3) (GH)(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements. Technology has been around nearly as long as humans have been around. Humans have always created artifacts and artificial environments to aid us in our survival and to help fulfill our needs and desires. Moreover, today technology is all pervasive, transforming and conditioning our social and political relations, our cultural understanding of ourselves, and our relationship with other animals and the natural environment. Yet not much thought has been expended upon the meaning of technology, particularly in its moral dimensions. This course takes several steps to correct this deficiency. Because technologies can have far reaching effects well beyond the domain of their immediate application, the role of designers is crucial in deciding whether we take an intelligent or unintelligent approach to technology. All technologies exist to serve one human need or another. Designers make important choices concerning the creation, development, and deployment of many if not most technological innovations. Consequently, the task of the designer is an ethical one. Our goal is twofold: First, we will try to broaden our moral imaginations by taking into account the wider ranging effects that technologies have in order to reveal the moral significance of design choices. Second, we will examine the process of design itself, particularly in the way that the design process is similar to ethical reasoning in general. It is hoped that by accomplishing these two tasks, we will be empowered as designers, customers, citizens, and future employers to make choices that better fulfill the moral task of technological innovation. Two means will be used to achieve our course goals. Much of the time will be spent thinking about and discussing the various impacts that particular technologies have upon the social, cultural, and political lives of human beings and upon the natural environment. To facilitate thoughtful discussion, we will read a number of authors, writing short papers in preparation for critical discussion in class. In this way we will be better prepared to discuss and think about the issues at hand by having had the chance to organize our thoughts in advance. The second means is aimed at putting our ideas into practice by working in teams on several design projects. These design projects will require the integration of readings, discussion, and research and their synthesis to solve a design problem. Student teams will work cooperatively on these projects and make oral progress reports as well as final written and oral reports.

Cross-listed with: STS 233
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
General Education: Humanities (GH)
PHIL 242N: Happiness and Well-Being

3 Credits

PHIL 242N: Happiness and Well-Being, 3 credits. (Inter-Domain), (GH), (GS), (BA). This course provides a general introduction to the topics of human happiness and well-being as these topics are both approached from the humanities discipline of philosophy and the social and behavioral science discipline of psychology. The course will introduce the distinct methods of inquiry into the topic of well-being in philosophy and psychology and highlight the disciplinary commitments of the two fields more generally. Students will understand and evaluate the empirical research into well-being and positive psychology in psychology. Students will understand and evaluate the three major theories of well-being in philosophy: hedonism, the desire satisfaction theory, and the objective theory. We will appraise whether the empirical results affect the viability of the philosophical theories. We will appraise whether the philosophical theories affect the significance of the empirical results. We will consider such questions as: What are the strengths, weaknesses, and complementarities of the philosophical and psychological approaches to well-being? Are psychologists and philosophers talking past each other, or can the two disciplines learn from each other's research results and philosophical theories? What implications do the results and theories studied have for concrete choices I should make in order to increase my well-being? Are there implications for choices of social policies aiming to increase well-being?

Prerequisites: ENGL 15; or any PHIL course
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences
General Education: Humanities (GH)
General Education: Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS)
General Education: Integrative: Interdomain
GenEd Learning Objective: Crit and Analytical Think
GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

PHIL 296: Independent Studies
1-18 Credits/Maximum of 18

Creative projects, including research and design, which are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 297: Special Topics
1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Formal courses given infrequently to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject which may be topical or of special interest.
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 299: Foreign Studies
1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Courses offered in foreign countries by individual or group instruction.
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
International Cultures (IL)

PHIL 401: American Philosophy

3 Credits

Survey of key figures and movements in American thought, including the Transcendentalists, the Pragmatists, and contemporary developments.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200-level or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 402: European Philosophy

3 Credits/Maximum of 6

Survey of key figures and movements of Europe, including phenomenology, existentialism, structuralism and post-structuralism, and critical theory.

Prerequisite: PHIL 102 , 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 403: Environmental Ethics

3 Credits

Examines ethical theories, justice, rights, community, and human values revolving around such issues as preservation, conservation, pollution, sustainability, and population.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 103 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 405: Philosophy of Law

3 Credits

Examines philosophical views of the nature of law, legal ethics, law and society through questions regarding definition, interpretation, and institutions.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 105 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 406: Seminar in Business Ethics

3 Credits

This course examines ethical issues introduced and engaged by business. These may include the relation between morality and contemporary business practices, the nature of money, corporate social responsibility, self-regulation and government, advertising, social consequences of systems of production, environmental economics, economic inequality and justice, the relationship between business and politics, the philosophical foundations and justifications for business and economic systems, and central positions and figures in the history of these questions.

Prerequisite: fifth-semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
PHIL 407: Technology and Human Values
3 Credits
Interrelationships of twentieth-century technological change and human values. Emphasis on the social and ethical aspects of technological progress.
Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 107 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Cross-listed with: STS 407
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 408W: Social and Political Philosophy
3 Credits
Historical and philosophical foundations of political organization, authority, and justice, and contemporary issues of rights, community, and culture.
Prerequisite: 9 credits in philosophy including PHIL 108 or 6 credits at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
Writing Across the Curriculum

PHIL 409: Seminar in Aesthetics
3 Credits
Aesthetics examines questions related to the nature of art and beauty as well as the nature of aesthetic judgment and experience. Building on its precursor (PHIL 109), this course explores selected topics in traditional or contemporary aesthetics in greater depth. Typical issues include the distinction between beauty, sublimity, and ugliness; the nature of aesthetic experience and artistic value and their relation to knowledge; the basis and validity of aesthetic judgments; the relationship between art, morality, and society; and the influence of social identities (race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.) on the production and reception of art. In addition to familiarizing themselves with theoretical approaches, students will typically also engage in the discussion and critical interpretation of specific artworks (e.g. paintings, sculptures, photographs, films, musical compositions or performances, literary works), both as a way of exemplifying particular aesthetic issues and approaches, and with a view to enhancing students' aesthetic perception and experience.
Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 109 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level, or 3 credits of art or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
Writing Across the Curriculum

PHIL 410: Philosophy of Science
3 Credits
Historical and contemporary foundational and methodological issues such as causality, relativity and epistemological relativism, teleology, and the nature of reality.
Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 110 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 413: Philosophy of Literature
3 Credits
Discusses truth, belief, illusion, imagination and creativity through philosophical literature, as well as problems of philosophical writing.
Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 113 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 416: Philosophy of Social Science
3 Credits
Examines the philosophical nature and foundations of methodology, structures and objects, value-neutrality and objectivity in the social sciences.
Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 418: Ethics
3 Credits
Examines ethical theories, justice, rights, community, and human values revolving around such issues as preservation, conservation, pollution, sustainability, and population.
Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy including PHIL 103 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 424: Seminar in Philosophy of Religion
3 Credits
This course builds on lower level courses in ethics and value theory (e.g., PHIL 103). This class goes deeper into questions of the meaning, justification, and motivational grounding of ethical judgments. Topics may include 'normative ethical systems' such as utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, Aristotelian virtue theory, and feminist care ethics. Also included are more abstract issues in 'meta-ethics' such as whether ethical statements can be true or false, whether they stand in logical relation to each other as do other propositions, what connection do such judgments have to the psychological make-up of human beings, and the like. Also considered are questions such as the objectivity (or relativity) of ethical judgments and their relation to the meaning and evaluation of social practices and institutions.
Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 103 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
Writing Across the Curriculum

PHIL 434: Seminar in Philosophy of Religion
3 Credits
This course builds on its precursor (PHIL 124) to provide a deeper perspective on specific topics and issues, typically through discussion of classical or contemporary writings by recognized philosophers of religion. Though the course will typically focus on one or a few selected questions, these may range as broadly as the field itself, for example: how and to what extent is religious faith compatible with reason, scientific rationality,
and our knowledge of history? Are there universal types of religious experience and what is their human value and objective significance? Are religion and morality mutually independent or does one rest on or constrain the other? Arguments concerning the existence of God, the interaction between religion, society, and politics, and religious pluralism are further possible topics. Beyond gaining familiarity with canonical texts and honing their skills as critical readers and writers, students will find opportunities to reflect both on religion’s historical, social, and moral significance as a dimension of human life, and on the specific challenges it raises.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 124 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 425W: Epistemology
3 Credits

The nature of cognition and perception, the conditions of experience, and the justification and truth of belief.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 125 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level; in addition to ENGL 015 or ENGL 030
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities Writing Across the Curriculum

PHIL 426W: Metaphysics
3-6 Credits

Examines the nature of reality, the existence of freedom, and the nature of matter, mind, and values.

Prerequisite: 9 credits in philosophy, including PHIL 126 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities Writing Across the Curriculum

PHIL 427: Philosophy of Mind
3 Credits

Investigates problems of mind from the standpoint of traditional metaphysical views, modern scientific psychology, neuroscience, and artificial intelligence.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 127 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 432: Medical and Health Care Ethics
3 Credits

Examines ethical, political, and social issues in the research, implementation, and practice of medicine, medical technologies, and healthcare.

Prerequisite: fifth-semester standing
Cross-listed with: STS 432
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 433: Ethics in Science and Engineering
3 Credits

Ethical issues arising in the practice of science and engineering and their philosophical analysis.

Cross-listed with: STS 433
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Sciences

PHIL 435: The Interrelation of Science, Philosophy, and Religion
3 Credits

The historical and transformative interactions between science and Western philosophical and religious views of nature, humanity, and God.

Cross-listed with: STS 435
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 437: World Philosophies and Cultures
3 Credits

Philosophical traditions, problems, and authors in African, Asian, Middle-Eastern, Native American, or other non-Western cultures and intellectual traditions.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities International Cultures (IL)

PHIL 438: Feminist Philosophy
3 Credits

Examines the central currents of feminist philosophy, selected problems and concepts regarding difference, gender and sex, identity, and political culture.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including 6 credits of philosophy at the 200-level or 5th semester standing
Cross-listed with: WMNST 438
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 439: Asian Philosophies and Issues
3 Credits

Exploration of the traditions, problems, and authors of one or more of the philosophical systems of Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, and Confucianism.

Prerequisite: PHIL 007 9 credits in philosophy, including PHIL 007, or 5th semester standing
International Cultures (IL)

PHIL 441: Capstone Course in Philosophy
3 Credits

This course is intended as the Capstone Course for Philosophy majors and is to be taken during their senior year or during the last semester of their junior year.
Prerequisite: 6th semester standing and up

PHIL 453: Topics in Ancient Philosophy
3 Credits/Maximum of 6
Examines the philosophy of central figures in ancient philosophy from the pre-Socratics to the post-Aristotelians and Neoplatonists.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 200 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 455: Topics in Modern Philosophy
3 Credits/Maximum of 6
Descartes to Kant, including mind and reality, space and time, God and nature, morality and autonomy.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 202 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 456: Topics in Nineteenth Century Philosophy
3 Credits/Maximum of 6
Hegel to Nietzsche, including nature and spirit, history and human nature, ideology and morality.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 203 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 457: Topics in Twentieth Century Philosophy
3 Credits/Maximum of 6
Topics in the philosophy of figures such as Husserl, James, Russell, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Dewey.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 204 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level or 5th semester standing
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 458: Topics in Contemporary Philosophy
3 Credits/Maximum of 6
Topics in the philosophy of contemporary figures such as Foucault, Habermas, Rorty, Derrida, Rawls, Davidson, and MacIntyre.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 208 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 460: African American Philosophy
3 Credits
Major works by African American Philosophers, on topics of race, freedom, citizenship, nationhood, law and society.

Prerequisite: AF AM100 or PHIL 009 and 5th semester standing
Cross-listed with: AFAM 460
International Cultures (IL)
United States Cultures (US)

PHIL 461: Plato
3-6 Credits/Maximum of 6
Examines the metaphysics, epistemology, politics, aesthetics, and moral theory of this central figure in the history of philosophy.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 200 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 468: Jewish Philosophy
3 Credits
Explores major figures and trends in Jewish philosophy and their influences on other philosophical traditions.
Cross-Listed
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 473: German Idealism
3 Credits/Maximum of 6
Critically examines the philosophy of central German idealists, including Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, and its impact on later philosophy.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including either PHIL 202 or PHIL 203, or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 474: Kant
3-6 Credits/Maximum of 6
Critical examination of the metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, legal and moral philosophy, and influence of Immanuel Kant.

Prerequisite: 9 credits in philosophy, including PHIL 202 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 476: Hegel
3-6 Credits/Maximum of 6
Critical examination of the metaphysics, moral theory, epistemology, and philosophy of history of this central figure of 19th-century philosophy.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 203 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 478: Ethics After the Holocaust
3 Credits
This course analyzes the ethical and philosophical consequences of the Holocaust. Primary areas of examination will be (1) the nature of pre-Holocaust ethical theories and how those theories have failed to sufficiently account for the Holocaust, both philosophically and empirically, and (2) possibilities for a post-Holocaust ethics. Course topics will include the history of ethical theory, the nature and problem of evil, goodness and suffering, witnessing and testimony, and the promise of an ethics. In addition, recent approaches to trauma theory and rights discourse will also be introduced, with some emphasis on how post-Holocaust ethics have been utilized in contemporary human rights work.
This course provides students with philosophical approaches to the issues that emerge out of the events of the Holocaust. The course will help students expand their knowledge of the events of the Holocaust through a philosophical approach that does not merely expose them to what happened, but asks them to think about the implications of what happened: most specifically, how do we understand ethical life, if it cannot stop or confront evil? The course will encourage students to think critically, write effectively and express their thoughts logically. Student evaluation will be based on both regular writing assignments and in-class work, possibly including presentations and group-work. This course covers material in the history of philosophy, contemporary philosophy, and writings pertaining to the Holocaust in various forms (historical, literary documentary, and so forth). It provides links to other major areas in the history of philosophy, postmodernism, ethics, philosophy of religion, and Jewish history.

Prerequisite: One course in either JST or PHIL
Cross-listed with: JST 478, RLST 478
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 479: Critical Theory
3 Credits/Maximum of 6

In this course, the term Critical Theory refers to a distinctive approach to social, cultural, and political theory associated with the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, which was founded in 1923. Members of what came to be called the Frankfurt School were sharply critical of the political structures, social institutions, and culture of late capitalist societies such as Germany and the United States (where they lived and worked in exile during the Second World War). They were heavily influenced by the post-Kantian German philosophical tradition, especially the work of Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud. This course will focus on the historical development of Critical Theory, with an emphasis on the major figures of the early Frankfurt School: Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Walter Benjamin, and Herbert Marcuse. However, since Critical Theory is also an ongoing theoretical project, we will also study some contemporary representatives of this tradition, as well as some of its trenchant critics. After some introductory material, including discussion of the Marxist background of early Critical Theory, the course will focus on the following themes: Modernity, History, and Progress; Psychoanalysis and Critique; Culture and Art; and Race, Antisemitism, and Imperialism. In addition to the authors mentioned above, we will discuss work by such thinkers as Jürgen Habermas, Axel Honneth, Nancy Fraser, Seyla Benhabib, Enrique Dussel, and Angela Davis.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including either PHIL 203 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 485: Heidegger
3-6 Credits/Maximum of 6

Studies Heidegger’s metaphysical thought from his early to later works regarding being, history, subjectivity, aesthetics, language, and his influence.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 402 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 486: Wittgenstein
3-6 Credits/Maximum of 6

Examines Wittgenstein's early and late work, including logical atomism, meaning, language games, forms of life, and the private-language argument.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 204 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200 level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 490: Dewey
3 Credits/Maximum of 6

Critically examines the metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, logic, aesthetics, education theory, and social and political philosophy of this major American pragmatist.

Prerequisite: 9 credits of philosophy, including PHIL 401 or 6 credits of philosophy at the 200-level
Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 494: Research Project
1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Supervised student activities on research projects identified on an individual or small-group basis.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 494H: Research Project
1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Supervised student activities on research projects identified on an individual or small-group basis.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities Honors

PHIL 496: Independent Studies
1-18 Credits/Maximum of 18

Creative projects, including research and design, which are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 497: Special Topics
1-9 Credits/Maximum of 9

Formal courses given infrequently to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject which may be topical or of special interest.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities

PHIL 499: Foreign Study—Philosophy
1-12 Credits/Maximum of 12

Courses offered in foreign countries by individual or group instruction.

Bachelor of Arts: Humanities
International Cultures (IL)