

PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy is concerned with fundamental questions about the nature of reality; the foundations of science, ethics and art; and the nature and scope of human knowledge. Philosophy is actually the meeting place for all disciplines, for any discipline becomes philosophical once it begins seriously to examine its own methodology and fundamental presuppositions. Ultimately, philosophy is much more than the acquisition of a certain kind of knowledge. It is the ability to think reflectively and to raise questions about problems that lie at the root of what might appear self-evident. The study of philosophy is therefore recommended to all students, regardless of their major.

Philosophy involves both systematic forms of inquiry and a prolonged reflection upon its own history. For its majors, minors and all students interested in deepening their liberal arts education, the department offers courses in the history of philosophy that span the entire tradition from the pre-Socratics to the philosophers of our own century. These historical courses are best pursued in conjunction with courses that cover the principal areas of philosophical inquiry (Metaphysics, Ethics, Epistemology, and Logic). Philosophical Inquiries (PHIL 110 Philosophical Inquiries) is reserved exclusively for first-year students; Montserrat Seminars that carry a P (for Philosophy) Common Area Designation count as Introductory. Students are permitted to take only one course at this level.

The department offers both a major and a minor program that combines necessary structure with the freedom to follow an individually oriented course of study.

In addition to a wide range of regular courses and seminars, the department offers tutorials and other opportunities for independent study. The departmental Honors program is designed to provide outstanding majors with an enhanced opportunity for independent research and sustained philosophical reflection during their senior year. Under the supervision of an advisor, students admitted into the program will engage in a yearlong thesis project resulting in a polished piece of philosophical writing which is formally presented at the end of the year. Eligible students are invited to apply to the Honors program in the second semester of their junior year. Further information about the program (eligibility requirements, details about the application process, and the structure of the program itself) is posted on the departmental website. Majors who think they might be interested in the departmental Honors program should consult with the department chair.

Faculty and students together benefit from regular departmental colloquia and the lively exchanges initiated by the Philosophy Club, which is open to all interested students. In addition, membership in the Holy Cross Chapter of the National Honor Society in Philosophy, Phi Sigma Tau, is available to those who have a strong academic record, participate in the life of the department, and demonstrate a desire and ability to philosophize. Students are encouraged to compete for two essay competitions, the Strain Gold Medal and the Markham Memorial Scholarship. The Department also awards the Flatley Gold Medal for the highest Philosophy G.P.A.

Advanced Placement Credit

Holy Cross awards credit for Advanced Placement exams taken through the College Board Advanced Placement Program and the International Baccalaureate Program and will accept some Advanced Level General Certificate of Education (A-Level) exams. One unit of credit is awarded

for an Advanced Placement score of 4 or 5 in any discipline recognized by the College. One unit of credit is awarded for a score of 6 or 7 on a Higher Level International Baccalaureate Examination in a liberal arts subject. One unit of credit is awarded for a score of A/A* or B on an A Level exam in a liberal arts subject. The College does not award credit for the IB Standard Exam or the A-Level Exam. AP, IB, and A-Level credit may be used to satisfy deficiencies and common area requirements. Each academic department has its own policy regarding the use of AP or IB credit for placement in courses and progress in the major. The Department Chair must also review the A-Level score to determine placement in courses and progress in the major. See departmental descriptions for further information.

Jeffrey A. Bernstein, Ph.D., *Professor*

May Sim, Ph.D., *Professor*

William E. Stempsey, S.J. Ph.D., *Professor*

Karsten R. Stueber, Ph.D., *Professor, Chair*

Kendy M. Hess, Ph.D., *Associate Professor, Brake-Smith Associate Professor in Social Philosophy and Ethics*

John P. Manoussakis, Ph.D., *Associate Professor*

Devin Yagel Gouvêa, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*

Justin Mooney, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*

Omar Quiñonez, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor*

John M. Bunke, Ph.D., *Visiting Assistant Professor*

Andrew Jussaume, Ph.D., *Visiting Assistant Professor*

Lawrence Cahoon, Ph.D., *Distinguished Visiting Lecturer*

Academic Plans within Philosophy

- Philosophy Major (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/philosophy/philosophy-major/>)
- Philosophy Minor (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)

Other Academic Plans Accepting/Requiring Philosophy Coursework

- Asian Studies Major (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/asian-studies/asian-studies-major/>)
- Asian Studies Minor (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/asian-studies/asian-studies-minor/>)
- Environmental Studies Major (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/environmental-studies/environmental-studies-major/>)
- Environmental Studies Minor (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/environmental-studies/environmental-studies-minor/>)
- International Studies Major (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/international-studies/international-studies-major/>)
- Peace and Conflict Studies Concentration (<https://catalog.holycross.edu/academic-plans/center-interdisciplinary-studies/peace-conflict-studies-concentration/#text>)

PHIL 110 — Philosophical Inquiries Course count: 1

In a certain way, philosophy needs no introduction. Each of us has had moments of wonder: "Why do we exist?" "Why is there so much suffering in the world?" "Why does the world itself exist?" This one-semester course for first-year students helps strengthen that sense of wonder by giving the student insight into what some of the greatest thinkers have had to say about these questions. Readings from Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes and Kant.

Enrollment limited to 1st year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

PHIL 111 — Intro to Africana Philosophy Course count: 1

Africana theorists (whether they have degrees in philosophy) have views on existence, ethics, society, politics, feminism, and race. However, one may wonder why Africana ideology should be regarded as philosophical discourse. The goal of this course is to help students understand the value and contribution of Africana voices in the discipline of philosophy. Some of the theories that will be discussed in this course are Black Feminism and Womanism, Black Theology, Pan-Africanism, and race philosophy.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Philosophical Studies

PHIL 112 — Chinese Political Philosophy Course count: 1

Whether your interest is Chinese culture, history, economics, international relations, politics, human rights, or environmental thought, this introductory course on Chinese Political Philosophy will help you understand China today. The U.S. and China must deal with one another regardless of whether the dealings are friendly or hostile. How can we better understand China and what underlies its economic and political aspirations? In President Xi Jinping's own words, Studying Confucius and Confucianism is key to understanding the national characteristics of the Chinese. Xi points to the rival schools of thought during the Warring States period that include the Confucians, Mohists, Daoists and Legalists, saying that the development of Chinese ideology and culture has been plural and multi-dimensional. In his recent speech to the World Economic Forum Conference in Davos, Xi alludes to China's Legalism saying, we should stay committed to international law and international rules instead of seeking one's own supremacy. Ancient Chinese believed that the law is the very foundation of governance. This introductory course considers Chinese Political Philosophies from Confucianism, Mohism and Daoism to Legalism. We will examine how these political ideas are related to their respective accounts of ethics, social, economic and cultural concerns, as well as justifications for political norms. We'll question what resources these political philosophies can offer to contemporary concerns regarding international law, justice, freedom, human rights, and flourishing in the face of conflicting values and environmental challenges.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 201 — Metaphysics Course count: 1

Aristotle described metaphysics as the "science which takes up the theory of being as being and of what 'to be' means taken by itself." Before and since Aristotle, the meaning and significance of metaphysics has been in dispute. While some thinkers have dismissed metaphysics as meaningless speculation, others have held it to be the center of Western philosophy. Using primary texts of classical and contemporary writers, this course studies the origins of metaphysics in ancient Greece, major developments of metaphysical thinking, and contemporary challenges to metaphysics.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Annually

PHIL 204 — Ethics Course count: 1

A study of moral philosophy with a twofold aim: (1) to give students an appreciation of the important historical and theoretical developments in moral philosophy; (2) to help students to think, write and speak clearly about important moral issues of our time. Examines both the thought of important Western philosophers such as Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, and John Stuart Mill, and topics of contemporary concern in personal and social ethics.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 207 — Foundations Of Ethics Course count: 1

Considers various challenges to the claims of morality, and whether and how moral philosophy can meet these challenges. Special topics include: the nature and justification of an ethical life, the limits of practical reasoning, various challenges to the claims of morality, and whether and how moral philosophy can meet reasoning, the subjectivity vs. the objectivity of value, relativism, conflicts of obligation, the idea of moral "truth," and the sources and ultimate value of morality itself. Examines how these issues come to life in classical texts, and how they are treated in recent philosophical literature. The goal is to understand the foundations of morality (if there are any), and to gain insight into what is perhaps the most striking thing about human life—the fact that we have values.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 209 — Theory Of Knowledge Course count: 1

Do you know that you are not a brain in a vat being force-fed experiences by an evil scientist? This course considers Descartes' skeptical arguments that we can't really know whether the world is the way it appears to us. These skeptical arguments lead us to consider what knowledge is, whether "knowledge" means the same thing in the philosophy classroom as it means outside it, and what justifies our beliefs. Writings of contemporary analytic philosophers are read and discussed.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 215 – Symbolic Logic Course count: 1

An introductory study of the formal structure of reasoning patterns such as deduction. Includes an introduction to formal languages, sentential calculus, predicate calculus, and an investigation into logic's value and limits.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 223 – Trauma & The Troubled Mind: The Ethics of Trauma Course count: 1

After trauma, we can find traces of the past in the way we see the world, in our behavior as we relate to others, and even in our genes. But what, exactly, is trauma? And what does it mean to be traumatized? This course examines the very nature of trauma from the perspectives of philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience. While looking critically at the history of the study of trauma, we will turn our focus on the ethical dimensions of understanding and treating trauma. What can we - and what ought we - to do about trauma and our troubled minds? Students pursuing all majors are encouraged to take this course.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Annually

PHIL 224 – Contemporary Continental Phil Course count: 1

Focuses on a theme or question of general scope within continental European philosophy since Nietzsche. Topics may include subjectivity, historical consciousness, technology, and plurality. Philosophical approaches may include phenomenology, hermeneutics, existentialism, psychoanalysis, the Frankfurt School, and post-structuralism.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 225 – Ancient Philosophy Course count: 1

We start by looking at the Presocratics (6th and 5th centuries B.C.) to witness the emergence of philosophical, scientific, ethical and religious thinking. We will follow the similarities and differences of these Presocratics to trace the kinds of questions they set and the kinds of answers they accept. Addressing many of the same questions bequeathed to them by the Presocratics, the Ancients offered new solutions. We will think with the great thinkers about alternative conceptions of the divine, first principles and causes, form and matter, atoms and the void. Wonder along with Plato, Aristotle, Lucretius and Epictetus about happiness in relation, reason and desire, and our place in society and in the universe.

One previous Philosophy course is required for first year students.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Fall

PHIL 227 – Philosophy of Race Course count: 1

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Philosophical Studies

PHIL 228 – The Ethics of Aristotle & Aquinas Course count: 1

This course examines Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics and Thomas Aquinas' ethical writings in the Summa Theologica and his Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. The goal is to gain an appreciation of the similarities and differences between these two masters of moral philosophy.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

PHIL 230 – Medieval Philosophy Course count: 1

A study of selected medieval thinkers such as Augustine, Boethius, Dionysius, Anselm, Bonaventure, and Aquinas. The birth of scholasticism, an analysis of this philosophical movement in the 13th century, and its decline are presented.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Spring

PHIL 235 – Early Modern Philosophy Course count: 1

A study of the origins of modern philosophy: Descartes' turning toward the subject; his attempt at a justified method guided by the ideal of mathematical certainty; his influence on the development of European rationalism, Spinoza, Leibniz. Equal attention will be given to empiricist philosophers such as Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume and their approaches to philosophy and science.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Fall

PHIL 241 – Modern Philosophy Course count: 1

A study of the later development of modern philosophy including Kant's new evaluation of metaphysics, epistemology, the nature of the sciences and morality and the idealist thought of Fichte and Hegel. Attention also to the thought of those opposing idealism, especially Marx and Kierkegaard.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Spring

PHIL 242 – Logic & Language Course count: 1

An introduction to the 20th-century analytic philosophy and philosophy of language, which to a large part is guided by the conviction that traditional philosophical problems are based on linguistic and logical confusions. Familiarizes students with the formal languages of modern sentential and predicate logic, whose development was so important for the philosophical thinking within this tradition. It will reflect on the importance of language for understanding the world.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Annually

PHIL 243 – American Philosophy Course count: 1

A survey of the beginnings and development of American philosophic thought from the colonial period to the present. Detailed discussion of the work of Emerson, Peirce, and James and of important movements such as transcendentalism, pragmatism and analytic thought. One unit.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

PHIL 244 – 20th Century Philosophy Course count: 1

This course examines and compares key writings of prominent traditions into which 20th-century Western philosophy split: analytic or Anglo-American philosophy, continental or European philosophy, and classical American philosophy or pragmatism. Readings will include works of Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and John Dewey, among others, on issues of knowledge, language, existence, and the nature of philosophy.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 245 – Phenomenology Course count: 1

Explores the motivation and the methods of phenomenological philosophy. Focus is on Husserl's development of phenomenology as a "rigorous science," and its critical revision. Topics include the relation of Husserl's "transcendental" project to the classical metaphysical tradition, the distinction between "pure" and "applied" phenomenology, the idea of a phenomenological psychology, and the influence of phenomenology in the philosophy of art. Readings include works by Husserl, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and others.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 246 – Philosophy & Literature Course count: 1

Explores the relationship between philosophy and literature. Reveals the enormous impact of philosophy on literary texts and tries to show how philosophy is present in all forms of intellectual life. Also tries to take seriously literature's claim to be doing something that philosophy itself cannot do. The authors chosen vary, but include such figures as Shakespeare, Goethe, Nietzsche, Thomas Mann and Proust.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Literature, Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 247 – Environmental Political Philosophy Course count: 1

The class begins with a survey of environmental philosophy, exploring anthropocentrism, sentiocentrism, biocentrism, and ecocentrism. With those in hand, we explore the question of what the government ought to do about it. We then study four contemporary political theories: liberalism, libertarianism, conservatism, and capabilities theory. Each of these theories is deeply anthropocentric (human-centered) in its original form, but some are easier to "green" than others and we will test them all to see which can incorporate the values driving the different environmental positions. Throughout we will debate whether we should green the theories (and if so, which way?) and we will repeatedly test our theories against real world issues: what do they tell us the government should do about factory farming, organic food, wilderness restoration, environmental racism, climate change, or anything else?

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 248 – Existentialism Course count: 1

Existentialism was a movement in recent (1850-1950) French and German philosophy that heavily influenced subsequent European thought and literature. It saw human beings as free and troubled, lacking guidance from tradition, God, and nature. This course explores existentialism through a reading of its philosophical exponents (Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, Tillich) and literary and philosophical authors (Dostoevsky, Camus). Both religious and atheistic existentialism are considered.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 249 – Environmental Ethics Course count: 1

What kind of person should I be? What do I owe to others, and to myself? What, if anything, do I owe to non-human others animals, nature, the environment and what kind of role can those things play in my own moral development? This class will study three different sets of answers to those questions, as represented in the traditions of Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics, and Virtue Ethics. Each of these theories begins as anthropocentric (human-centered), but we will introduce sentiocentric, biocentric, and ecocentric commitments and see which theories can accommodate those expanded concerns. We will repeatedly test our theories, in both original and modified forms, against real world issues: what do they tell us to do about factory farming, meat consumption, animal use in medical testing, wilderness restoration, climate change, or anything else?

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 250 – Medical Ethics Course count: 1

Examines topics of current interest in biomedical ethics, and the role moral philosophy plays in public debate about controversial issues. Aim is to help students think, speak, and write clearly about these issues. Discusses moral justification and an overview of several types of ethical theory. Considers such issues as the physician-patient relationship, truth-telling and confidentiality, informed consent, reproductive technologies, abortion, the right to die, euthanasia and assisted suicide, the AIDS epidemic, human genetics, and justice in the distribution of health care.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Annually

PHIL 252 – Process Philosophy Course count: 1

Process philosophy developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe and America in response to the theory of evolution. It is a metaphysics of nature holding that everything real is in the process of change or evolution, and that purposes, values, meanings, and minds must emerge from the natural processes described by modern science. Some drew religious implications as well. We will critically evaluate this tradition, examining among others Charles Peirce, William James, Henri Bergson, Alfred North Whitehead, and John Dewey.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 255 – Asian Philosophy Course count: 1

What is the ultimate goal of human existence, if any? Are there qualities of persons or actions that promote harmony with the community or with nature at large? Is there a soul that exists beyond this life? Is there really a 'self' at all? Is there a permanent reality beneath the visible world of change - or is the motley of change all there is to the world? We shall explore these fundamental philosophical questions through key Asian traditions of wisdom such as Confucianism, Daoism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Not only is an understanding of these wisdom traditions valuable in themselves, it'll also help us understand better the Asian nations which social, political, ethical and cultural practices are founded on Asian philosophy.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 260 – Philosophy Of Art Course count: 1

By reflecting on what philosophers have said about art, this course investigates the idea that art itself performs a philosophical, perhaps even a moral, function. Art is supposed by many to have the power to reveal something, and to be in some way "good" for us. In considering whether this is so, we have to confront two basic questions. The first is: Are there any "truths" about art (about what art is, about the purpose of art, about what makes art good or bad, etc.)? The second is: does art really reveal "truths" (What kind of truths? Truths about what? Can these truths be rationally articulated? If not, why should we take art seriously?) We shall concentrate on these, and related questions. Readings from Plato, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Kandinsky, and Iris Murdoch.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 261 – Philosophy Of Mind Course count: 1

Questions concerning the nature of the mind and its relation to the body or questions about the essential capacities of human beings distinguishing them from plants, animals, and machines are raised. Different traditional and contemporary themes about the nature of the mind are discussed critically. Emphasizes topics such as the mind-body problem, the nature, the explanation of action, and the problem of intentionality.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Annually

PHIL 263 – The Art of Living Course count: 1

Living is not just a biological process, but an art difficult to master and often even too complex to understand. Philosophers have always dealt with this issue, but not in a sufficiently systematic way. In the course of the semester we will exam a few philosophical recommendations as to how to live our lives (Plato, Montaigne, and Hartmann), as well as several recommendations as to how to develop one's humanity as fully as possible as presented by various religious traditions (Christianity, Hinduism, and Taoism).

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 264 – Philosophy Of History Course count: 1

Focuses on the growth of historical consciousness in the modern epoch, although it may also give attention to such Christian thinkers as Augustine. Emphasizes the contrast between the boldly progressive vision of Hegel, which celebrates scientific culture as the goal of history, and the more traditional vision of Vico (the Italian philosopher), which embodies a cyclical moment and defines historical culture more in terms of poetry than of science. Other authors typically read include Kant, Herder, Burckhardt, Nietzsche, Löwith, and Collingwood.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Historical Studies, Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 265 — Political Philosophy Course count: 1

Political philosophy addresses the questions of how and toward what end ought human beings live together, what a just and good society would be, and what makes power legitimate? These questions are pursued through a reading of the history of Western political thought, including the work of Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, and Locke. Recent liberal theory also examined, focusing on the justice of welfare spending and the proper limits on government, using for example the work of John Rawls and Robert Nozick.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies, Social Science

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 267 — Contemporary Political Philosophy Course count: 1

Examines the nature of liberal democratic politics in its relation to morality. The central question is: what are the rightful limits on and concerns of the government, law, and politics of a "liberal," that is, free and democratic, society? "Neutralist" liberals argue that maximum individual liberty requires government neutrality toward particular moral ends or notions of the good life. Others, especially "communitarians" and "civic republicans," fear that neutrality undermines both morality and community, and argue that government must promote both through endorsing some notion of the good life. What is the proper balance of liberty and morality? This question is pursued through the work of a number of important, most recent and American, political theorists.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies, Social Science

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 271 — Philosophy of Science Course count: 1

In many contemporary societies, science is taken to be different from and more secure than other ways of knowing. What accounts for this widespread perception? Do scientists follow a particular method? Do they have distinctive goals? Do their efforts accumulate overtime in a characteristic way? In short, what makes science special? Philosophers of science have consistently disagreed not only about the answers to their shared questions but even about how to develop such answers in the first place. This course will introduce you to that lively conversation and give you the means to join in the fun. Among other things, we will consider how scientists test claims, how scientific knowledge changes over time, and whether personal and social values have a place in the practice of science.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 272 — Philosophy Of Biology Course count: 1

What is life? How does evolution affect the way in which we think about ourselves and the natural world? How are living organisms classified and how does this affect our perception and measurement of biological diversity? Is 'race' a biological concept? In this course, we will explore fundamental philosophical questions prompted by what we know of the biological realm. Readings will include a selection of classical texts as well as recent articles. One unit.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

PHIL 273 — Philosophy Of Medicine Course count: 1

The philosophy of medicine includes the metaphysical, epistemological and methodological aspects of medical practice and medical research. This course explores some of the theoretical and conceptual issues that form the basis for medical knowledge and thus influence the practice of medicine. Topics include the nature of health and disease, normality and pathology, the assumptions and goals of medicine, changes in the theoretical structure of medicine over time, the nature of medical knowledge, and methods of reasoning in medical research and practice.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 274 — Philosophical Anthropology Course count: 1

We will explore the philosophy of culture through a reading of 20th-century philosophical and related writings, trying to discern what difference culture makes to our understanding of human beings. That is, what does the recognition that humans are fundamentally cultural being do to our ethics, politics, and account of human mind and knowing? We will confront problems of cultural relativism, the role of cultural identity in politics, and what some claim is our contemporary "clash of civilizations", reading, among others, Ernst Cassirer, Ernest Gellner, Johann Huizinga, and Samuel Huntington.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 275 — Social Philosophy of Modernity Course count: 1

In this course in social philosophy, we critically examine the nature and direction of the "modern" world, that is, the unique form of life which evolved in Europe and North America in the last three centuries and is arguably spreading throughout the world (via "globalization"). Readings include classical social theorists, like Karl Marx, Max Weber, Sigmund Freud, as well as more recent discussions of "advanced," "post-industrial" or "postmodern" society.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 277 — Feminism Course count: 1

Socrates considered himself a midwife, and his teacher, Diotima, a woman, turns the notion of autonomous creation to one of procreation. And yet philosophy is not often thought of in terms of the bodily, the domestic, or the kind of care relegated to the world of women. By taking up the writings of a variety of twentieth century feminist thinkers, we will explore what it is that feminism has to do with the pursuit of truth: with philosophy itself. Texts include *The Second Sex*; *Gender Trouble*; *The Power of Gentleness*.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 282 — Philosophy Of Religion Course count: 1

This course is divided into two parts, both of which confront concepts and names for God with experiences of evil. The first part studies the tradition of theodicy, with attention to Augustine, Boethius, Leibniz and contemporary liberation theology. The second part looks closely at the experience of extreme evil in genocide. Readings from P. Levi, E. Wiesel, E. Levinas, P. Celan and post-Holocaust "death of God" thinking.

Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 284 — Phil Foundations - Catholicism Course count: 1

This course will examine some of the philosophical foundations of Roman Catholicism and, more generally, of Christianity. We will consider the human capacity to know God, the nature of the Triune God, and our response to God in Church and Sacraments. Special emphasis will be placed on the philosophical ideas that helped to shape the expression of foundational Christian doctrine. Readings will include selections from Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, St. Augustine, St. Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas and other authors.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies, Studies in Religion

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 289 — Ethical Issues/Death & Dying Course count: 1

The ethical problems involved in caring for the terminally ill are among the most controversial issues of our day. This course examines ethical, philosophical, and public policy dimensions of death and dying. Topics include the definition of death, truth-telling with dying patients, suicide, euthanasia, deciding to forgo life-sustaining treatment, decisions on behalf of children and incompetent adults, the debate about futile care, and public policy issues.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 299-F01 — Bioethics Course count: 1

The philosophical sub-discipline of bioethics identifies and helps to answer ethical questions that arise in the context of medical practice and research, broadly understood. Some of these questions are very old, dating back to the emergence of medicine as an organized social institution. For example, what ethical obligations do physicians have towards their patients? A living discipline, bioethics also responds to the emergence of biomedical technologies. With the advent of gene editing, for example, bioethics asks whether there are decisive ethical objections to genetically altering our offspring. The current COVID-19 pandemic has focused the attention of bioethicists on several of the disciplines key questions, such as this one: In situations where medical needs outstrip medical resources, what constitutes a fair allocation of those resources? In this course, we will raise and explore many of the major traditional questions of bioethics and consider some of the ethical quandaries raised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

PHIL 299-F02 — Aesthetics Course count: 1

The philosopher G. W. F. Hegel rather controversially argued in the 1820s that art was a thing of the past since modern culture no longer venerates beauty. This class will explore the extent to which this claim is true. What does art do for us? What does it do to us? After discussing the nature of the beautiful and of the experience of beauty, known as aesthetics, the class will examine how philosophy responded to the explosion of art in the 1800s and 1900s, a productive period the likes of which had not been seen since the Renaissance. How does art help us understand ourselves, envision new possibilities, and build better worlds? Are we still inspired by the beautiful? We will treat these philosophical questions through different artistic disciplines, such as painting and sculpture, as well as different traditions, like expressionism, pop art, and modernism. We will draw from the following philosophers: Plato, Friedrich Schiller, Immanuel Kant, G. W. F. Hegel, Susan Sontag, Arthur Danto, Martin Heidegger, Alain Locke, Markus Gabriel, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Jacques Rancière. By the end of the term, students will have a good grasp of the major positions in the philosophy of art and aesthetics.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

PHIL 299-F03 — Technology Ethics Course count: 1

How do new technologies enhance (or impair) our agency as individuals and our relationships with one another? Do they merely serve our existing values or do they also shape those values? Do they change our understanding of what is natural or intelligent? And what is technology, anyway? We will explore these questions and others through recent writing from diverse philosophical and ethical perspectives.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

PHIL 300 — Emotion and Reason: East & West Course count: 1

Aristotle argues that the human function is to use reason to control our emotions and desires in order to become virtuous. In contrast, Mencius doesn't separate reason from emotions. He holds that human nature or the heart-mind consists of four feelings (compassion, shame/disdain, reverence for elders, and the feeling which approves of what is right and disapproves of what is wrong). These four feelings, when cultivated, make one virtuous for Mencius. Aristotle's emphasis on reason's control over emotions is complemented by the Stoic, Epictetus, who maintains that the emotions are already rational. Mencius's emphasis on human emotions or feelings is complemented by the Daoist, Zhuangzi, who downplays the role of the mind/reason in someone who is wise and virtuous. This seminar will examine these representatives of Eastern and Western philosophies to achieve a better understanding of how emotion and reason intersect, and how they motivate us to act according to our desires.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course or permission of instructor or permission of the instructor.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years, Spring

PHIL 301 — Moral Psychology Course count: 1

This course addresses the nature of moral agency and moral reasoning from an interdisciplinary perspective. It will try to develop a philosophically plausible and a psychologically realistic account of human beings who are capable of acting for moral reasons. At the center of the discussion is the following question: How is it possible to conceive of human beings to be motivated by something other than pure self-interest as moral philosophers constantly assume if we are also biological organisms, a product of evolution and a process of survival of the fittest? Particularly important for our purpose is the question of whether our ability to empathize or sympathize with other people leads to altruistic and moral motivations. Readings will include Aristotle, Hume, Smith, Kant, Schopenhauer, Batson, DeWaal and others.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 302 — Corporate Moral Agency Course count: 1

The course explores the question of whether highly organized collectives (corporations, governments, colleges, etc.) qualify as moral agents. If they do, then they have moral obligations and it is wrong when they lie, cheat, or steal. If they don't, then they don't have moral obligations and it isn't wrong when they lie, cheat, or steal. That's an unattractive result, but holists claiming that such collectives are moral agents face a difficult challenge. The holist has to demonstrate that (1) the collective entity exists, that it cannot be reduced to its members; (2) the entity qualifies as an agent, with beliefs, desires, and the ability to act on them; and (3) the entity has the additional capacities necessary for moral agency (including free will). That is the path we will trace in this course, drawing on contemporary analytic work in metaphysics, philosophy of mind, agency, and ethics to see whether collectives can meet the standards established there. Throughout, we will consider the implications for either the Enron scandal, NASA's failures with the Challenger and Columbia shuttles, the Penn State/Jerry Sandusky scandal, or the Countrywide mortgage scandal student choice. By the end, students should be able to (1) adopt a position on each of these core questions, supporting their position with reference to the contemporary literature and responding to criticisms, and (2) draw a conclusion about the situations involving the contemporary issue we choose to explore.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 307 — Metaphysics & Natural Science Course count: 1

This is a course naturalistic metaphysics which compares the speculative conceptions of philosophers to recent work in the natural sciences (this semester, physics). Readings of three 19th - and 20th-century "process" philosophers (Schelling, Peirce, Whitehead) who hoped to answer fundamental metaphysical questions from a naturalistic perspective. Each is coupled with a scientist's exposition of relevant parts of contemporary physical theory, particularly, the Big Bang origin of the universe (Weinberg), complex systems (Prigogine), and quantum mechanics (Polkinghorne). Goal is to use the science to educate the philosophy, and the philosophy to educate the science, hence to understand the natural world through a dialogue between the two.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 309 — Approaches to Medical Ethics Course count: 1

This course will examine the development and history of some of the most important approaches to medical ethics. It will examine three of the most important theoretical approaches: the principle-based common morality theory of Tom Beauchamp and James Childress; the libertarianism of H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr.; and the virtue ethics of Edmund Pellegrino and David Thomasma. Many issues of contemporary concern in medical practice and research will be addressed in conjunction with the study of these theories. We will critique the contemporary practice of bioethics.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 311 — The Nature of Morality Course count: 1

Prerequisite: One previous philosophy course

GPA units: 1

PHIL 316 — Problems In Aesthetics Course count: 1

Selected issues or texts in the philosophy of art explored in depth.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 320 — Self-Realization & Transcendence Course count: 1

What is the nature of the self? Is there really a 'self' or is what we call a "self" an illusion? If the self exists, how is it related to reality? Is there a permanent reality beneath the visible world of change - or is the motley of change all there is to the world? Is there a self/soul that exists beyond this life? What is the ultimate goal of human existence, if any? Is it to realize oneself or to transcend oneself? Are there qualities of selves or actions that promote harmony with the community or with nature at large? These are philosophical questions that Eastern and Western traditions have asked and answered in different ways. We will consider how Western thinkers (Plato, Aristotle, Heraclitus, and Epictetus) regard the self. These will be paired with Asian views of the self in Hinduism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Though the East and West pairings are designed to facilitate comparison, we shall be alert for differences as much as similarities in the ways our focal issues are asked and answered. Comparisons will expose strengths and weaknesses that may not have appeared without them. Quite different traditions may even offer solutions to each other's problems. Above all, this is a course that provides the resources as well as the occasion for cross-cultural understanding of the self at a fundamental, philosophical level.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Philosophical Studies

PHIL 332 — Problems in Phenomenology Course count: 1

Selected issues or texts in the Phenomenological good is explored in depth.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 335 — Philosophical Naturalism Course count: 1

Philosophical naturalism holds that all reality is in or is continuous with physical nature, hence nothing is supernatural, purely non-physical or "ideal." This also means the conclusions of natural science are directly relevant to the philosophical investigation of reality (that is, metaphysics). The historical problem for this view is to account for things that appear to be non-physical, like life, consciousness, knowledge, numbers, possibilities, God. This course encounters a variety of recent naturalisms to see whether they can handle these issues, reading John Dewey, W.V.O. Quine, Justus Buchler, Hans Jonas, and Hilary Putnam.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course. Enrollment limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 354 — Plato Course count: 1

Platonism" has fallen on hard times in the contemporary philosophical marketplace. As a way of thinking about ethical, epistemological, or metaphysical issues, it is seen as an enterprise which is more or less bankrupt. The goal of this seminar is to overcome the modern prejudice against Platonism by rereading Plato, and understanding what he really has to say. Do his works represent a coherent philosophical vision? If so, what does this vision offer us?

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 361 — Confucian Values & Human Rights Course count: 1

Discourse about Confucian values, frequently known as "Asian Values," provided strong resistance to Western rights. Arguing that human rights are not universal because of their origin in the West, Asian nations urge that consideration be given to their cultural and historical situations which justify their own brand of human rights. Confucian values are being invoked by the Chinese government in political discussions with the U.S. This seminar focuses on primary texts by Confucius, Mencius and two other early Confucian texts, in order to understand the philosophical concepts which constitute Confucian values. We will survey some contemporary literatures on human rights to come to an understanding of the highly contested concept of human rights. Ultimately, we examine what values are Confucian, whether they are compatible with human rights, (especially the first- and second-generation rights), and if one of these is prior to the other for Confucianism. We ask if there are resources within Confucian values which can contribute to a better understanding of human rights.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course. Enrollment is limited to 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies

PHIL 362 — Augustine Course count: 1

This seminar introduces the thought of Augustine through study of some main works in relation to key themes in Greek philosophy (chiefly Plotinus) and Christian theology. Augustine's Confessions are generally read, but depending on the topical focus in a given year, this may be followed by study of his City of God, De Trinitate, or passages from other works.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 375 — Hegel Course count: 1

An in-depth study of the philosophy of Hegel. This includes a probing and testing of his positions on the nature of reality and his theory of knowledge. Emphasis is on the philosophy of history, the history of philosophy, the state, and religion, and on their contemporary relevance.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 380 — Nietzsche Course count: 1

Friedrich Nietzsche is one of the archetypal modern masters. His notions of the "death of God," the "will to power," amor fati, the Dionysian and Apollinian, the overman and many others have entered the consciousness of the 20th century. His influence was (and still is) immense. The seminar is an in-depth study of Nietzsche's work. The discussion will be focused on the question of creation and negation, on nihilism and its overcoming, on the sense of morality and the criticism of Christianity. Nietzsche's books used in class are: The Gay Science, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Beyond Good and Evil, Genealogy of Morals, Twilights of Idols, The Anti-Christ, and Ecce Homo.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

PHIL 399-F01 — Philosophy of Time Course count: 1

In this course, students will contemplate the nature of time as a philosophical concept, reflecting on how philosophers attitudes on time have evolved over the years and how ones understanding of time shapes their metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical commitments.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Philosophical Studies

Typically Offered: Fall

PHIL 399-F03 — Meaning and Value Course count: 1

This course will examine the nature and kinds of values, as well as their impact on the meaning of life. We will analyze the values that have traditionally been considered as the highest and the most fundamental by philosophers (e.g., happiness, love, justice, truthfulness) to see whether they all have the same impact on the issue of lifes meaning, or whether some are more important than others. In the course of the semester, we will read the texts by Charles Taylor, Robert Nozick, Nicolai Hartmann, and Isaiah Berlin.

GPA units: 1

PHIL 399-F05 — African Philosophy Course count: 1

This course examines philosophy as it has existed on the continent of Africa from the ancient Egyptian dynasties until the present day. Figures will include, Ptahhotep, Ibn Khaldun, Zera Yaacob, Frantz Fanon, Kwasi Wiredu, and Achille Mbembe.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course or permission of instructor or permission of the instructor.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Fall

PHIL 399-F06 — Soren Kierkegaard Course count: 1

This class will read Kierkegaard's essential texts, from *Either/Or* to *Works of Love*. We'll study Kierkegaard's extraordinary exploration of self as that which is always already called by the other. Both deeply religious and radically political, Kierkegaard's work - above all, his work on love - changed the course of literature and philosophy in the twentieth century.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.
GPA units: 1

PHIL 399-F07 — Concepts and Kinds Course count: 1

Concepts are the glue that holds our mental world together," according to one prominent psychologist. But what are concepts, anyway? How do they grab onto the world beyond our minds? How do they shape that world? We will explore these questions by reading philosophical writing about scientific concepts and the things they designate. Our central examples will be chemical kinds, like water and gold, and psychiatric kinds, like depression and the self. The former seem to be natural and independent of human observation, while the latter are more obviously shaped by our interests. Students will also have the opportunity to explore their own concepts of interest through class presentations and final papers.

Prerequisite: One previous Philosophy course.
GPA units: 1

PHIL 399-S01 — Forms of Political Order Course count: 1

When international communism collapsed as a movement in 1989, it seemed to some that liberal democratic capitalism was destined to become the most common form of political order. In the past two decades that has been challenged by: a) Islamic fundamentalism; b) authoritarianism (e.g. Russia, China, Hungary); and c) a variety of countries where liberal states seem unable to develop. We will read two of the most important and comprehensive social and political philosophers of recent decades, Ernest Gellner and Francis Fukuyama, as they argue about the nature, requirements of, and prospects for liberal political order, comparing it with traditional aristocracy, nationalism, and authoritarianism.

Prerequisite: One previous PHIL course.
GPA units: 1

PHIL 400 — Tutorial Course count: 1

Independent study of various topics of special interest to individual students and faculty directors. Normally, tutorials will only be offered for topics that are not covered by regularly offered courses.

GPA units: 1
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

PHIL 494 — Honors Thesis Course count: 1

In their senior year, students admitted into the Philosophy Honors Program are required to enroll in two consecutive semesters of the honors tutorial in order to work on their honors thesis under the direction of their advisor. Two semester credits are granted at the end of the second semester. One unit each semester.

GPA units: 0
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

PHIL 495 — Honors Thesis Course count: 1

In their senior year, students admitted into the Philosophy Honors Program are required to enroll in two consecutive semesters of the honors tutorial in order to work on their honors thesis under the direction of their advisor. Two semester credits are granted at the end of the second semester.

GPA units: 2
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring