

Philosophy

Crystal R. Allen-Gunasekera, Associate Professor
Christopher B. Young, Assistant Professor

Philosophy is the study of deep, meaningful, timeless questions concerning the nature of knowledge, justice, reality, goodness, beauty, and truth. What is real? How can we know anything? What actions are morally just?

Understanding and grappling with these questions can help students in all other disciplines and in any career. Courses in philosophy are specifically designed to encourage broad-minded, critical, and compassionate thinking about the world and humanity's place therein. Students will read and study the ideas of philosophers, religious thinkers, and political leaders. Equally important, they will learn how to be philosophers themselves.

Four courses for the major must be taken at the 300 level or above. No course can fill more than one requirement and particular courses to fulfill each category are determined in advising.

Departmental Learning Outcomes

Purpose: To cultivate in students a critical awareness of the issues and needs of humanity and the world and respond with critical, compassionate, sensitive understanding.

1. *Critical thinking*

Students will demonstrate critical thinking through analysis of texts using original ideas, defense of arguments with independent reasoning, and dialogical competence.

2. *Ethical reasoning and living*

Students will evaluate ethical theory based on an awareness of classical positions and particular environments.

3. *Commitment to Community and Communication*

Students will evaluate multiple viewpoints with an awareness of personal bias based on an understanding and respect of disparate worldviews and traditions.

4. *Philosophic Scholarship*

Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of philosophical themes/texts, which will result in a level of comfort and clarity in a state of constant inquiry.

Major

- B.A. Major in Philosophy

Minor

- Minor in Philosophy

2 Philosophy

- PHIL 120 Critical Thinking** 3.0 SH []
This course is an introduction to logic and basic argument. Students identify, analyze, evaluate, and construct basic arguments.
Class Level Restriction: Freshman and Sophomore only.
- PHIL 150 Introduction to Philosophy** 3.0 SH [GEH]
An introductory inquiry into the nature of philosophy, examining various branches of the discipline, typically including epistemology, aesthetics, metaphysics, ethics, and philosophy of mind. Attention is given to both classic and contemporary philosophers. Primary source readings form the base of the course.
Class Level Restriction: Freshman and Sophomore only.
- PHIL 170 Film and Philosophy** 3.0 SH [GEH]
This course is a survey of philosophical ideas as they appear in films and written texts. The course is not a philosophical study of film so much as it is a study of philosophical ideas through film. Basic themes covered through film include but are not limited to ethics, free-will, metaphysics, and epistemology.
- PHIL 220 Introduction to Ethics** 3.0 SH [GEH]
An exploration of western moral philosophy, focusing on issues of moral duty, rights, and the nature of the good. The course offers a critical survey of traditional ethical theories and provides an introduction to contemporary responses.
- PHIL 221 Topics in Philosophy** 3.0 SH []
A seminar for lower division students on a topic of current philosophic interest. The title will be extended to describe the current topic. May be repeated up to a total of six semester hours provided the topics differ.
- PHIL 222 Feminist Philosophy** 3.0 SH []
This course explores the connections between traditional western philosophy and recent feminist discourse. Students consider ways in which feminists have criticized traditional philosophy and ask whether these criticisms are justifiable. Students examine ways in which feminist scholars have infused the discipline of philosophy with revisions or alternatives to philosophical thinking and evaluate the validity of these new insights.
- PHIL 223 The Problem of Evil** 3.0 SH []
This course traces a long-standing issue of human thought: the problem of evil. Students use several philosophers' work on the subject in conjunction with both historical and theoretical situations that have motivated the age-long human question: why do bad things happen to good people?.
- PHIL 230 Philosophic Classics** 3.0 SH []
An introduction to philosophy through the study of classic texts in philosophy.
- PHIL 240 Environmental Ethics** 3.0 SH []
This course offers an introduction to environmental ethics. It provides an opportunity for students to learn about, discuss, and evaluate different attitudes and policies towards the natural world using the rigor and clarity of a philosophical framework.
- PHIL 250 Contemporary Moral Problems** 3.0 SH []
Introductory study of various moral and social problems facing society today. Topics may include abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, animal rights, racial inequities, sexual orientation, pornography, and cloning. Readings in applied ethics and the critiquing of arguments form the basis for the course.
- PHIL 252 Philosophy of Religion** 3.0 SH []
A philosophical analysis of concepts, claims, and arguments that have traditionally been employed in support of and in challenge to religious belief. Topics typically include proofs for God's existence, the problem of evil, arguments against belief in God, and the possibility of life after death.

PHIL 255	Global Ethics	3.0 SH	[GEH]
Course focuses on ethics and moral problems both as they relate to the world community and from various standpoints within that community. Ethical traditions from Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America are considered. Intercultural moral conflicts are examined from a wide array of religious, cultural, and moral vantage points. More sensitivity, understanding, and assessment of needs are stressed.			
PHIL 260	Intro to Ancient Philosophy	3.0 SH	[GEH]
An introduction to the history of philosophy focusing on ancient Greek thought. Students will read a selection of Pre-Socratic thinkers, several Platonic dialogues, and selections from Aristotle.			
PHIL 265	Business Ethics	3.0 SH	[]
This course focuses on major philosophical and ethical questions surrounding modern western business practices. Students receive a brief introduction to moral philosophy, become familiar with important literature in the field of business ethics, and begin to understand the place of morality in business.			
PHIL 270	Eastern Thought	3.0 SH	[GEH]
This course looks at the value systems and metaphysical beliefs of the east and identifies philosophical themes that comprise Eastern Philosophy. We will cover metaphysical, cosmological, ethical, and epistemological topics from views found in cultural practices and religious belief systems. Students will analyze multiple viewpoints and critically evaluate arguments found in these traditions.			
PHIL 275	Aesthetics	3.0 SH	[]
Philosophical inquiry into the nature of art, the aesthetic experience, and aesthetic appreciation.			
PHIL 311	Ancient Philosophy	3.0 SH	[]
Philosophical ideas of the ancient and medieval worlds with emphasis on the Presocratics, Plato, and Aristotle.			
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.			
PHIL 312	Modern Philosophy	3.0 SH	[]
Philosophical ideas from the modern period. Emphasized: rationalist and empiricist movements from 17th century Europe.			
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.			
PHIL 313	Contemporary Philosophy	3.0 SH	[]
Philosophical ideas of the 19th and 20th centuries. Emphasized: idealist, existential, pragmatic, and analytical movements.			
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.			
PHIL 315	Ethics of Inequality	3.0 SH	[]
This is a course in social and political philosophy. It focuses on racial, gender, and economic inequalities and the moral duties we have in light of those inequalities. Other types of inequalities may be discussed as well. Various ethical standpoints will be considered and applied.			
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.			
PHIL 320	Ethical Theory	3.0 SH	[]
This course in moral philosophy examines historical and contemporary ethical theories and their problems. Students study three classical theories (i.e., Aristotle's virtue ethics, Kant's deontology, and Mill's Utilitarianism) as well as more recent approaches concerning rights and justice (e.g., care ethics and discourse ethics).			
Prerequisite: three semester hours in philosophy.			
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.			
PHIL 321	Epistemology	3.0 SH	[]
Exploration of classical and contemporary theories of knowledge and truth inclusive of theories of mind.			
Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.			

4 Philosophy

PHIL 350 Philosophical Writing 1.0 SH []

This course helps students to develop their Philosophical writing skills. It will be run in the format of a workshop, with in-class practice with skills such as: crafting theses and arguments, summarizing and paraphrasing difficult texts, and integrating sources successfully.

Prerequisite: PHIL 120.

Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

PHIL 402 Advanced Topics in Philosophy 1.0-3.0 SH []

This course is an advanced seminar for upper division students on a topic of current philosophical interest. The title will be extended to describe the current topic. May be offered for variable credit from one to three semester hours. May be repeated up to a total of six semester hours provided the topics differ.

Prerequisite: PHIL 120.

Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

PHIL 421 Seminar in Philosophy 3.0 SH []

A seminar in a selected problem or topic in philosophy. Course content varies from year to year.

Research and writing techniques are developed. The title will be extended to describe the current topic.

May be repeated up to a total of six semester hours provided the topics differ.

Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.

PHIL 440 Capstone in Philosophy 3.0 SH []

Independent reading, research, and writing on a topic of philosophical interest. The product is a high quality thesis paper demonstrating original thought, philosophical maturity, and depth. Required for the major.

Class Level Restriction: Junior and Senior only.