

Philosophy

Philosophy Minor

Faculty and Fields of Interest

Requirements

Philosophy is the cornerstone of the humanities. A major in philosophy cultivates the development of analytical skills and clarity of thought that are invaluable, not only in pursuing a college degree, but later in developing a rewarding career and a meaningful life. Training in philosophy is highly regarded in professional fields such as law, medicine, artificial intelligence, and government.

The faculty in the department have a diversity of backgrounds and areas of specialization. This makes possible a solid grounding in the history of philosophy and in the various sub-areas of philosophy, areas such as ethics, logic, metaphysics, philosophy of religion, philosophy of science, and philosophy of language. The approach of the department is pluralistic.

Philip Cox (chairperson) ethics, medical ethics, philosophy of law, social theory

Maureen Eckert ancient philosophy, philosophy of mind, metaphysics, epistemology, history of philosophy

Catherine Villanueva Gardner ethics, history of moral philosophy, history of women philosophers, feminist philosophy

Timothy Nulty philosophy of language and mind, metaphysics, 20th century analytic and continental philosophy

Credits

One course in the history of philosophy 3

PHL 221 Hist. of Western Phil.: Ancient **or**
PHL 222 History of Western Phil.: Modern

PHL 409 Seminar 3

Four courses selected from any area of concentration or the electives, with the understanding that at least two of the courses must be at the 300 level. 12

Total 18

Selection of philosophy as a minor requires that the grade point average in one's major be at least 2.5.

General Education Departmental Requirements

Students majoring in Philosophy will meet their departmentally-determined General Education requirements as follows:

Area E: Satisfied by coursework required of all philosophy majors

Area I, Tier II: Satisfied by a 200 or 300 level course carrying a W designation. Students are required to submit a sample paper from this course, demonstrating advanced word-processing skills and web-based research, to the Chair of the Philosophy Department during the semester preceding graduation

Area W, Tier II: Satisfied by a 300 level philosophy course that carries a W designation

Area O: Satisfied by a course from the approved list of O designated courses

Philosophy Major
BA degree

Note: Presented here are the major and minor curricula that are in effect starting with the 2005-2006 academic year. Students entering the major in 2004-2005 should consult the previous catalogue version, that for 2003-2004.

Requirements

	Credits
PHL 110 Logical Thinking (PHL 235 Symbolic Logic may be substituted)	3
PHL 221 History of Western Philosophy: Ancient	3
PHL 222 History of Western Philosophy: Modern	3
PHL 371 History of Contemporary Analytic and Continental Philosophy	3
PHL 409 Seminar	3
One course from the following list of 300 level courses in the area of concentration in moral, social, or political philosophy:	3
PHL 300 Advanced Topic (if a topic in moral, social, or political philosophy)	
PHL 312 Metaethics	
PHL 315 Ethics II	
PHL 316 Political Philosophy	
PHL 317 Ethics and Health Care Professionals	
PHL 318 Bioethics and Law	
PHL 326 Philosophy of Law	
PHL 327 History of Moral Philosophy	
One course from the following list of 300 level courses in the area of concentration in the history of philosophy:	3
PHL 300 Advanced Topics (if a topic in history of philosophy)	
PHL 327 History of Moral Philosophy	
PHL 333 Plato	
PHL 334 Aristotle	
PHL 335 Hellenistic Philosophy	
PHL 336 Medieval Philosophy	
PHL 359 Heidegger and Contemporary Continental Philosophy	
PHL 360 Objectivity, Historicity, and Interpretation	
One course from the following list of 300 level courses in the area of concentration in metaphysics and epistemology:	3
PHL 300 Special Topics (if a topic in metaphysics and epistemology)	
PHL 301 Theory of Knowledge	
PHL 303 Metaphysics	
PHL 304 Philosophy of Mind	
PHL 305 Theories of Truth	
PHL 311 Philosophy of Language	
PHL 312 Metaethics	
PHL 320 Philosophy of Science	
One course either at the 200 level or the 300 level from the following list of courses in the area of concentration in Non-Traditional Philosophy:	3
PHL 200 Special Topics (if a topic in critical philosophy)	
PHL 237 Islamic Philosophy	
PHL 238 Existentialism	
PHL 242 Revolution and Liberation	
PHL 243 Asian Philosophy	
PHL 244 Selfhood and Personal Identity	
PHL 245 Marx, Nietzsche, Freud	
PHL 250 Philosophy and Feminism	
PHL 300 Advanced Topics (if a topic in critical philosophy)	
PHL 325 Philosophy of Religion	
PHL 361 Contemporary Continental Philosophy	
PHL 359 Heidegger and Contemporary Continental Philosophy	
PHL 360 Objectivity, Historicity, and Interpretation	
PHL 370 Latin American Philosophy	
Free Electives Two courses in any area at any level in philosophy	6
Total	33

Philosophy Courses

- PHL 101** three credits **C, E**
Introduction to Philosophy
An introduction to philosophy as the persistent and methodical attempt to think clearly about universal problems of human life, such as ways of knowing and studies in value.
- PHL 104** three credits **D**
Identities: Gender, Race, Sexuality
Examines the concepts and intersections of gender, race, and sexuality. The course examines whether these identities exist as natural "facts" or are socially constructed, while also questioning how we are to understand individuals who do not fit—or refuse to fit—into these categories. Cross listed as WMS 104.
- PHL 110** three credits **C**
Logical Thinking
Informal logical methods for evaluating reasoning in "real life" context. Arguments for analysis are drawn from newspaper articles, political speeches, advertisements, etc. Topics include: identifying arguments; techniques for representing arguments; evaluation and criticism of arguments; and informal fallacies. Elementary formal methods including sentential logic, predicate logic, and truth tables are also studied. The course requires no background in philosophy and is a good preparation for more advanced studies in logic.
- PHL 200** three credits **C**
Special Topics in Philosophy
Offered as needed to introduce current topics in one of the following fields: history of philosophy, metaphysics and epistemology, ethics/social/political philosophy, non-traditional philosophy. The specific topic is stated when the course is scheduled. May be repeated with change of content.
- PHL 215** three credits **C, E, W**
Ethics I
A critical examination of normative theories of obligation and value. A philosophical examination of some moral problems: abortion, euthanasia, death penalty, sexual equality, reverse discrimination, pornography and censorship, violence, and economic injustice.
- PHL 221** three credits **C, W**
History of Western Philosophy: Ancient
Study of Western philosophy from its origin with the Pre-Socratics through the Classical Period. The major portion of this course will be devoted to the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle.

Gen Ed Key

All Philosophy courses satisfy Cultural/Artistic Literacy; lower division courses are marked **C**, but advanced courses are eligible as well. Other courses satisfy other requirements as noted.

PHL 222 three credits **C**

History of Western Philosophy: Modern

A study of the major philosophical movements (rationalism, empiricism and critical philosophy) in the 17th and 18th centuries. Philosophers studied include Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant. In addition to these major philosophers, consideration will also be given to the work of Rousseau, Pascal, Malebranche, the French Enlightenment.

PHL 235 three credits **C**

Symbolic Logic

Prerequisite: PHL 110 or consent of instructor

A study of the formal techniques of sentential and predicate logic. The course aims at imparting skill in applying logic to natural language arguments and in recognizing and constructing correct deductions and refutations. Philosophical issues pertaining to the application of logic to natural language as well as elementary results of metalogic are discussed.

PHL 236 three credits

The Ideal State

In-depth study of Plato's *Republic* that will introduce students to basic philosophical issues in most all the areas of philosophical inquiry. As we follow the conversation depicted in the dialogue, we encounter many important questions about ethics, the nature of the state, and the nature of knowledge and reality. Questions for exploration in this course are: Why is justice better than injustice? Will being just make one happy? What characterizes a citizen, a leader? How does gender affect social and political roles? What is truly real—and how do we know it? Plato's views will be explored and critically examined.

PHL 237 three credits

Islamic Philosophy

Introduction to important figures, views and themes in Islamic Philosophy and Theology. Cultural and historical background may be provided. The works of particular thinkers such as Al-Kindi, Al-Ghazali, Al-Farabi, Avicenna, Averroes may be examined. Themes and topics such as proofs for the existence of god, the nature of the soul and its immortality, the distinction between essence and existence, as well as the quest for mystical union with god may also be explored.

PHL 238 three credits

Existentialism

Survey of two significant and related

movements within philosophy. Historical background may be provided, and the course will cover important existential themes, such as those regarding the self, authenticity, responsibility and choice, anxiety, perspectivism, the meaning of death and of god—to name a few. Phenomenology and its method of inquiry may be explored as well as famous artistic works that incorporate existentialist ideas.

PHL 239 three credits

Theories of Mind

Introduction to the major philosophical positions regarding the mind, including dualism, type and token identity theories and eliminative materialism. Some historical background may be provided, and the course may also present recent related research from cognitive psychology, neuroscience, artificial intelligence, and approaches to consciousness

PHL 240 three credits

Knowledge and Reality

Introduction to two areas of philosophical inquiry, the study of knowledge (epistemology) and the study of the nature of reality (metaphysics). Both historical and contemporary ideas on these subjects may be examined. Although these two specialized areas are often separated in contemporary philosophy, we will find that historically they are often linked in substantial ways.

PHL 242 three credits

Revolution, Resistance, and Liberation

Examination of a wide range of philosophical arguments for, and analyses of, liberation, as well as different strategies for resistance to oppression. Philosophical examination will be offered of everything from the liberation theology of Martin Luther King, to African anti-colonialist political philosophies, to anarchism in the US.

PHL 243 three credits

Introduction to Asian Philosophy

Major themes in Asian philosophy. Readings include works on: Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen, Taoism, and Confucius. The course focuses on common topics and problems in much of Asian philosophy – the nature of the self and the mind, the nature of reality, how understanding mind and nature promotes an ethical life in some sense. Supplemental readings on the topic of Chinese medical theory, chi gung, and martial arts may also be explored. The course might also examine Taoist inspired art. Comparisons are made to Western philosophers and their positions on these topics.

PHL 244 three credits

Selfhood and Personal Identity

Study of the nature of selfhood and personal identity; the unity of consciousness; and the origins of selves. Persons change their characteristics over time, yet they maintain their numerical identity. Theories that attempt to provide metaphysical criteria for existing as the same person over time are surveyed. Also examined are theories that deny the existence of the self in any substantive sense.

PHL 250 three credits

Philosophy and Feminism

Philosophical examination of the legal, economic, and ideological constraints on women (and other marginalized groups) in the context of the way these constraints play out in the real lives of women, as well as strategies to remove these constraints. The course will cover such issues as affirmative action, sex tourism, and the fashion/beauty complex.

PHL 298 one to six credits

Experiential Learning

Prerequisites: At least sophomore standing; permission of the instructor, department chairperson, and college dean
Work experience at an elective level supervised for academic credit by a faculty member in an appropriate academic field. Conditions and hours to be arranged. Graded CR/NC. For specific procedures and regulations, see section of catalogue on Other Learning Experiences.

PHL 300 three credits **D, W**

Advanced Topics in Philosophy

Offered as needed to introduce current topics in one of the following fields: history of philosophy; metaphysics and epistemology; ethics/social/political philosophy; non-traditional philosophy. The specific topic is stated when the course is scheduled. May be repeated with change of content.

PHL 301 three credits **W**

Theory of Knowledge

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy or consent of instructor
An analysis of the scope and structure of knowledge and its relation to other human activities.

PHL 303 three credits

Metaphysics

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor
Study of the nature of existence and of the kinds of things that exist; an investigation

Philosophy

into the ultimate constituents of reality. Topics may include: universals and particulars, the reality of everyday objects, causation, the nature of time, substances, and the debate between realism and anti-realism. Examines challenges to the possibility of metaphysics as a coherent enterprise, and what the appropriate methodology of metaphysics should be.

PHL 304 three credits

Philosophy of Mind

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor

Advanced study of the nature of the mind, and of the relationship between the mind and the brain. If the mind is something distinct from the brain, how is it able to cause bodily movement? Topics include various theories of the mental: dualism, materialism, functionalism, and behaviorism. Also examined are problems of mental causation, cognitive content, intentionality, and explanatory reduction.

PHL 305 three credits

Theories of Truth

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor

Study of attempts to provide an adequate philosophical analysis of our pre-theoretical intuitions about truth. Despite the centrality of truth throughout the history of philosophy, and its apparent role as a goal of inquiry in other disciplines, a debate continues regarding the nature of truth. The four major types of truth theories—correspondence, coherence, pragmatic, and minimalist—will be examined, as well as theories that are not subsumable under the previous headings. The contemporary debate is studied in relation to its historical predecessors. A central theme of the course is whether or not we need a robust account of truth instead of a minimalist account.

PHL 311 three credits

Philosophy of Language

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor

Examination of how language relates to the world and to thought. Topics will include the nature of meaning, truth, metaphor, and linguistic competence; speech act theory; and the relationship between syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Applications of formal logic to the understanding of language are also explored. Readings will include literature from both philosophy and psycholinguistics.

PHL 312 three credits

Metaethics

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor

Examination of moral philosophy in the twentieth century and its focus on the analysis of ethical language and concepts. Among the central questions examined are whether it is possible to define “good,” whether good is a property of things (independent of social conventions and subjective feelings), and whether the ascription of good to something is simply an expression of an attitude towards that thing. Philosophers studied will include G E Moore, A J Ayer, and R M Hare.

PHL 315 three credits

Ethics II

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor

Examination of advanced issues in ethics. Material covered will include a wide range of both theoretical and applied issues.

PHL 316 three credits

Political Philosophy

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy or consent of instructor

A study of some of the major themes and problems traditionally considered by political philosophers. A consideration of what constitutes a political problem and a discussion of the role of philosophy with regard to such problems. The course thus combines an analytical and an historical approach in the effort to relate traditional political thought to contemporary problems.

PHL 317 three credits

Ethics and Health Care Professionals

Prerequisite: Junior standing in Medical Laboratory Science, Nursing, Psychology, or Sociology

An examination of the ethical aspects of the health care professions, and the impact of the ethical issues on the professional's life. Topics include: responsibility, conscience, professional codes of ethics, privacy, informed consent, access to health care, loss, and death. Cross-listed as GRT 317.

PHL 318 three credits

Bioethics and the Law

After an initial survey of the foundations of ethical theory and the relation to applied ethics, the primary course content focuses on the ethical and philosophical dimensions of emerging issues in the life sciences and biotechnology, on one hand, and law and public policy on the other. These issues include: Definitions of human life, higher vs. full brain death, physician-assisted suicide,

medical futility, organ distribution/transplantation/sales, xenograft, stem cell research, therapeutic/reproductive cloning, global AIDS crisis and developed/developing world issues, generic licensing of pharmaceuticals, reproductive technologies, human subject research, informed consent, developing world human experimentation, and genetic testing.

PHL 320 three credits

Philosophy of Science

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy or consent of instructor, or third year in Mathematics or a science major.

A critical analysis of science and its methods, a study of the justification and the range of scientific knowledge.

PHL 325 three credits

Philosophy of Religion

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy or consent of instructor

Analytical and constructive study of central concepts and essential manifestations of religion. Both historical and contemporary readings are required.

PHL 326 three credits

Philosophy of Law

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy or consent of instructor

Approaches to the philosophy of law. The course addresses questions like, What gives meaning to law? How is the law interpreted, or how are judicial interpretations justified? What is the relationship between law and morality, or law and culture or custom? The course examines a number of state and Supreme Court opinions (on issues like free speech and expressive liberties, reproductive issues, obscenity, legal ethics, jury nullification, and hate crime legislation) with a critical eye toward their philosophical or juridical soundness. This course is valuable for those considering careers in law, public affairs or politics.

PHL 327 three credits

History of Moral Philosophy

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor

Examination of the origins and development of moral philosophy from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. Starting in the seventeenth century, the notion that morality was solely based on the will of the Christian God began to wane. Without an external moral authority, philosophers turned to other ways of distinguishing right from wrong. The Christian picture of human good as union with God also began to

disappear. Instead the dominant view of human nature became a picture of autonomous individuals pursuing their own interests and potentially in conflict with each other. Philosophers examined will include Hume and Kant. May be taken to fulfill either the history of philosophy or the ethics requirement.

PHL 333 three credits
Plato

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of the instructor
Examination of Plato's dialogues, exploring important ethical, epistemological, metaphysical and social views articulated within them, such as the unity of the virtues, weakness of the will, the theory of the Forms, the theory of recollection, the just individual and the just state, platonic love, to name a few. Important dialogues will be covered and critically examined. Questions concerning the dramatic and literary qualities of Plato's philosophical work may also be addressed.

PHL 334 three credits
Aristotle

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of the instructor
Examination of the writings of Aristotle, a student of Plato, examining his systematic approach to philosophy. Aristotle's contributions to the development of logic, his view of the soul, the divine, and literary criticism (poetics), may be addressed in addition to his important views regarding metaphysics, ethics and the study of the natural world. Questions regarding the coherence and consistency of Aristotle's system may be addressed as well as the relation between his thought and Plato's.

PHL 335 three credits
Hellenistic Philosophy

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of the instructor
In-depth survey of the philosophies of stoicism, epicureanism, and skepticism, as they developed following the end of the "classical age" (323 BC) through the first century AD. These philosophies tend to be concerned with the individual person and how s/he may live well; related ethical themes, in addition to views about free will and the criterion of truth, may be explored.

PHL 336 three credits
Medieval Philosophy

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor
Examination of a period of philosophy that

was both a continuation of the Ancient Greek tradition and a precursor of Modern philosophy. This course will cover philosophy from Christian, Islamic and Jewish traditions, examining both the questions that characterized medieval philosophical inquiry and also distinctive literary forms through which philosophers presented their arguments.

PHL 359 three credits
Heidegger and Contemporary Continental Philosophy

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor
Detailed study of Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, investigated as a response to an historical view of subjectivity initiated by Descartes and continued by Kant and Husserl. More broadly, the course examines Heidegger's view that his philosophy was a corrective to the tradition of Western metaphysics. Heidegger's influence on Derrida, Merleau-Ponty, and Gadamer, among others, is examined. The implications of Heidegger's thinking in relation to theories of human cognition and the possibility of artificial intelligence is also explored.

PHL 360 three credits
Objectivity, Historicity, and Interpretation

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor
Examination of the recurring themes of objectivity, realism, truth, relativism, and the interpretive nature of human inquiry. The course critically evaluates some implicit assumptions functioning in the philosophical endeavor from its inception. Attention is paid to philosophers who have, in some sense or other, attempted to overcome their respective traditions. Readings include work by Rorty, Davidson, Quine, Putnam, Gadamer, Derrida, Nietzsche, and Heidegger.

PHL 361 three credits
Contemporary Continental Philosophy

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy or consent of instructor
A study of the various currents of continental European thought in this century with special concentration on existentialism, structuralism, and post-structuralism. Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Saussure, Levi-Strauss, Lacan, Kristeva, Foucault, Derrida, and others are discussed.

PHL 370 three credits
Latin American Philosophy

Examination of the different strands of contemporary thought in Latin American philosophy and their historical roots.

Historical periods covered include Pre-Columbian thought, and nineteenth century positivist philosophy. Contemporary issues examined will include race/identity, feminism, and philosophy as literature.

PHL 371 three credits
History of Contemporary Analytic and Continental Philosophy

Prerequisite: Semester course in Philosophy, or permission of instructor
Examination of the historical development of major trends in contemporary Anglo-American or analytic philosophy and continental European philosophy. Topics include the formal approaches of Frege and Russell, logical positivism, ordinary language philosophy, hermeneutics, and phenomenology. Attention will be given to areas of dialogue between traditions, and to similarities of content often overlooked due to methodological and stylistic differences.

PHL 409 three credits
Seminar

Prerequisite: Major or Minor in Philosophy or consent of instructor
Intensive study of (1) major philosophers, such as Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Quine, and Wittgenstein, or (2) philosophers related by a common theme in development, such as Aquinas, Scotus, Ockham, or Locke, Berkeley, Hume, or Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, or (3) current philosophical work. May be repeated with change of content.

PHL 420 three credits
Directed Honors Thesis

Prerequisite: Major in Philosophy and 3.0 average in philosophy courses
Departmental guidance for a thesis developing out of the primary and continuing interest of the student.

PHL 495 three credits
Independent Study

Prerequisites: Philosophy major; Upper-division standing; permission of instructor, department chairperson, and college dean
Study under the supervision of a faculty member in an area not otherwise part of the discipline's course offerings. Conditions and hours to be arranged.

PHL 196, 296, 396, 496 three credits
Directed Study

Prerequisites: Permission of the instructor, department chairperson, and college dean
Study under the supervision of a faculty member in an area covered in a regular course not currently being offered. Conditions and hours to be arranged.