

Philosophy Courses

Fall 2009

All philosophy courses except 215 and 216 satisfy the Humanities requirement. Two logic courses, 215 and 216, can be used to satisfy the Math/Logic requirement. Many philosophy courses (e.g., Business Ethics, Philosophy of Law) complement other major programs. For those with a sustained interest in philosophy there are both a *major* and a *minor* in philosophy.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY: 33 semester hours in philosophy which must include 215 or 216; 201; 202; and 450. Of the remaining 21 hours of electives in philosophy, at least 12 hours must be taken in courses at or above the 200 level, with at least nine of these at or above the 300 level. *Note: A maximum of six hours of PHIL 398, 399, or 499 may be taken to satisfy the requirement of nine elective hours at or above the 300-level*

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR IN PHILOSOPHY: 18 semester hours in philosophy which must include: Philosophy 101; Philosophy 215 or 216; a course in the history of philosophy (201, 202, 304, 305, 306, 307, or 310); and three additional courses in Philosophy, two of which must be at or above the 200-level.

Philosophy Course Offerings

PHIL101.001	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Boyle	MWF	11:00 - 11:50
PHIL101.002	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Boyle	MWF	12:00 - 12:50
PHIL101.003	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Hettinger	TR	9:25 - 10:40
PHIL101.004	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Hettinger	TR	10:50 - 12:05
PHIL101.005	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Schonbein	TR	12:15 - 1:30
PHIL101.006	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Williams	MW	2:00 - 3:15
PHIL101.007	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Williams	MW	3:20 - 4:35
PHIL115.001	CRITICAL THINKING	Wilder	MWF	1:00 - 1:50
PHIL150.001	NATURE, TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY	Grantham	MWF	9:00 - 9:50
PHIL201.001	HISTORY OF ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY	Lesses	MWF	10:00 - 10:50
PHIL207.001	ETHICS	Williams	TR	9:25 - 10:40
PHIL215.001	SYMBOLIC LOGIC I	Krasnoff	MWF	9:00 - 9:50
PHIL215.002	SYMBOLIC LOGIC I	Krasnoff	MWF	10:00 - 10:50
PHIL216.001	SYMBOLIC LOGIC II	Lesses	MWF	1:00 - 1:50
PHIL255.001	PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION	Boyle	TR	10:50 - 12:05
PHIL265.001	PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE	Grantham	MWF	11:00 - 11:50
PHIL280.001	AESTHETICS	Hettinger	TR	1:40 - 2:55
PHIL290.001	PHILOSOPHY & COGNITIVE SCIENCES	Schonbein	MW	2:00 - 3:15
PHIL310.001	AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY	Baker	MWF	12:00 - 12:50
PHIL320.001	METAPHYSICS	Coseru	MW	3:20 - 4:35
PHIL450.001	SENIOR SEMINAR: PUNISHING & FORGIVING	Perlmutter	TR	12:15 - 1:30

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Boyle

Section 001 (MWF 11:00 – 9:50)

Section 002 (MWF 12:00 – 10:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

We will examine several traditional, fundamental philosophical questions that still have contemporary significance. Is knowledge possible? What are the sources of knowledge -- does all knowledge come to us ultimately through the senses, or is there anything that we know innately? What is it to be a person? Do we have free will, or are all of our actions determined by causal laws? What about God – is it possible to prove that God exists? If God does exist, how can we explain the existence of evil in the world? What kinds of actions are morally right, which are morally wrong, and how can we justify our claims to know this?

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Hettinger

Section 003 (TR 9:25 – 10:40)

Section 004 (TR 10:50 – 12:05)

NO PREREQUISITE

Why should I care about others? Is knowledge of God necessary for religious faith to be rational? Is beauty in the eye of the beholder? Can society legitimately tell me what to do? Is everything (including the mind) purely physical? This course explores these fundamental philosophical questions and will introduce you to the main branches of philosophy: ethics, philosophy of religion, epistemology, aesthetics, political philosophy, and metaphysics.

Requirements: Major paper and paper proposal, midterm and final exams, reading quizzes, oral presentation to the class, and attendance.

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Schonbein

Section 005 (TR 12:15 – 1:30)

NO PREREQUISITE

In this course we investigate issues involving the ultimate nature of the universe, the possibility of certain knowledge, and the sources of morality. For example, are human beings genuinely free, or are our actions determined by the laws of physics or genetics? If we are not free, can a person truly be morally responsible for his or her actions? We will look at traditional arguments surrounding the existence of a Judeo-Christian God, and consider what implications they have for the nature of morality: What alternative ethical systems, not grounded in religion, are available? What are their strengths and weaknesses? In addition to these questions, additional topics may include: skepticism about the existence of the world, the identity of persons through time, and/or the advantages and disadvantages of various political systems.

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Williams

Section 006 (MW 2:00 – 3:15)

Section 007 (MW 3:20 – 4:35)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course is primarily concerned to explore the limits and possibilities of human knowledge in the areas of religion, science, and ethics. In the first section of this course, we will examine classical arguments regarding the existence of G-d and the problem of evil. We will learn how to recognize and evaluate different types of arguments. In the second section, we will look at science, which most of us assume has provided the paradigmatic model for human knowledge. In the third section of my class, we will focus on moral philosophy, investigating both classical and contemporary sources. Once we have considered two systematic ethical theories, we will consider whether we have reason to think that there is a fundamental difference between the methods of coming to know in science and ethics.

PHIL 115: Critical Thinking

Prof. Wilder

Section 001 (MWF 1:00 – 1:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

If our thinking guides our action (as it surely should), then to do well we must think well. This means we must think critically about our own beliefs, about the sources and quality of information available to us, and about the countless attempts that confront us every day to persuade us to change our beliefs, to buy new things, and to follow new leaders. This course provides tools for effective critical thinking, insights into where and why critical thinking is important, and help in overcoming obstacles to critical thinking. This is a practical, skills-oriented course. Requirements include homework, quizzes, exams and two papers.

PHIL 150.001: Nature, Technology and Society

Prof. Grantham

Section 001 (MWF 9:00-9:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course examines the nature of technology and how technological developments affect society and the environment. We will explore several questions: What is technology? How are technology and science related? To what extent can we (as individuals and as a society) control the development and/or implementation of new technologies? How have technological developments affected our conception of nature - and ourselves? We will study one or two topics (such as genetic engineering, the internet, or alternative fuels) in greater detail.

PHIL 201: History of Ancient Philosophy

Prof. Lesses

Section 001 (MWF 10:00 – 10:50)

PREREQUISITE: 3 semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor.

All of Western thought owes an incalculable debt to ancient Greek philosophy. What fascinated Greek philosophical thinkers accordingly constitutes a major part of the Western intellectual inheritance. This course examines the development of the philosophical views of (i) several early Greek thinkers, (ii) Socrates, (iii) Plato, and (iv) Aristotle. As much as possible, these philosophers will be read in the original sources in translation.

PHIL 207: Ethics

Prof. Williams

Section 001 (TR 1:40 – 2:55)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course will investigate issues related to the foundations of ethics through an exploration of classical texts from Plato and Mencius to Darwin and Nietzsche. We will consider themes such as kinship, reciprocity, and sexual morality. The course will cover systematic approaches to ethical theory, such as consequentialism, deontological theory, and social contract theory. Various challenges to systematic ethics, such as relativism, egoism, skepticism, and nihilism will be considered.

PHIL 215: Symbolic Logic I

Prof. Krasnoff

Section 001 (MWF 9:00-10:50)

Section 002 (MWF 10:00-11:50)

NO PREREQUISITES

Analysis of arguments using the tools of propositional logic. Since Socrates, Western philosophy has asked that we argue for our beliefs on the basis of reasons. Logic is the branch of philosophy that asks: what makes an argument rationally convincing? We will develop a formal language that will allow us to translate an important set of arguments from ordinary English, and some formal proof techniques that will allow us to determine with precision whether those arguments are valid, and thus should be accepted if their premises are true.

Note: *This course does not count toward the humanities minimum degree requirement. Together with PHIL 216, it satisfies the minimum degree requirement in mathematics or logic.*

PHIL 216: Symbolic Logic II

Prof. Lesses

Section 001 (MWF 1:00 – 1:50)

PREREQUISITE: PHIL 215 or permission of instructor.

This course is a sequel to PHIL 215 and covers what is called "predicate logic." The subject of PHIL 215 is propositional logic in which a simple statement is the smallest unit of analysis for the translation of English into symbolic language and for the construction of symbolic arguments. In PHIL 216, we will also examine the internal structure of simple statements in order to develop the symbolic language necessary to symbolize statements in terms of their subjects and predicates. We will then introduce procedures that will enable us to construct proofs using this new formal language. If time permits, we will consider some topics in metatheory, which is the branch of logic concerned with the features of logical systems themselves, and philosophical logic, which utilizes the formal tools and methods of symbolic logic in order to shed light upon questions of philosophical inquiry.

Note: *This course does not count toward the humanities minimum degree requirement. Together with PHIL 215, it satisfies the minimum degree requirement in mathematics or logic.*

PHIL 255: Philosophy of Religion

Prof. Boyle

Section 001 (TR 10:50 – 12:05)

NO PREREQUISITE

The philosophy of religion raises questions about the nature of religion and religious beliefs. In this course, we will examine some philosophical issues associated mainly with the Western religion tradition. These issues include the nature of religious experience, the relationship between reason and faith, arguments for the existence of God, and the problem of evil. Readings will be drawn from classic philosophical texts by Plato, Thomas Aquinas, Hume, William James, and others, as well as from some contemporary writings. We will also examine some contemporary issues in the philosophy of religion, such as feminist critiques of religion.

PHIL 265: Philosophy of Science

Prof. Grantham

Section 001 (MWF 11:00 – 11:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

Science shapes contemporary life in many ways. But what is science? What (if anything) makes scientific knowledge special? Is scientific knowledge different from other forms of understanding? We will examine several different twentieth century perspectives on science, including authors who defend the traditional view (i.e., that science is a body of objective knowledge and the scientific method will lead us to a more accurate understanding of the world). We will also explore the recent criticisms of this view based on historical and sociological investigations of science. Familiarity with one science or another (e.g., physics or biology) is helpful, but not required. No philosophical background is presupposed.

PHIL 280: Aesthetics

Prof. Hettinger

Section 001 (TR 1:40 – 2:55)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course explores philosophical issues in the aesthetic appreciation of art and nature. Questions include: What is art? For example, can food be art? Does all art express emotion? Is it silly to be moved by fictional events? If an artist intends her work to mean something and critics disagree, who is right? Can we distinguish between good and bad art? Are the Beatles as good as Beethoven? Should art ever be censored? Can aesthetic values trump moral values? Should art be publicly funded? Are aesthetic responses to nature more subjective than are responses to art? Should the aesthetic appreciation of nature be scientifically-informed? Is there ugly nature ("the great bag hanging from the bill of a pelican") as there are ugly works of art? Can nature's beauty be used to protect it or is this like saving pretty people first? Is environmental art "an aesthetic affront to nature"?

Course requirements: term paper, a presentation of paper topic to the class, midterm, final, reading quizzes, and attendance.

PHIL 290.001: Philosophy & Cognitive Sciences

Prof. Schonbein

Section 001 (MW 2:00 – 3:15)

NO PREREQUISITE:

In this course we sample contemporary issues at the intersection of philosophy of mind and the cognitive sciences, focusing on the actual or potential impact the cognitive sciences have on longstanding philosophical debates, and vice versa. Possible topics include but are not limited to: Consciousness, mental representation, artificial intelligence, the nature of concepts, experimental philosophy, neural aesthetics, moral theory, emotion, and innate knowledge.

PHIL 310: American Philosophy

Prof. Baker

Section 001 (MWF 12:00 – 12:50)

PREREQUISITE: Course prerequisite is 6 hours in philosophy (excluding PHIL 215 and PHIL 216), but others may enroll with the permission of the instructor.

In this course we are going to engage with the philosophies of well-known figures in American thought. Most commonly, courses in American Philosophy focus on the development of "Pragmatism" as a school of thought. (Pragmatists each had their own approaches, but the hallmark of Pragmatism is the idea that neither truth nor reality can be measured by purely intellectual means. Truth or reality ought to be measured by their practical use or the experience of these.) Other trends in philosophical thought got their start elsewhere, but Pragmatism's provenance is American, and is typically considered *the* uniquely American school of thought. For this reason courses in American Philosophy often look to pragmatism exclusively, looking even to decided non-Pragmatists for how they can be related to Pragmatism. We will not be taking this approach for two reasons. For one, we want to acknowledge the independent worth of other ideas developed by Americans (whether these ideas are unique to the US or not.) This allows us to study the Calvinism of Jonathon Edwards, early American political thought, thinkers like Emerson and Thoreau, and work being done by contemporary philosophers. For two, Pragmatism is no longer the dominant trend among contemporary American philosophers.

PHIL 320: Metaphysics

Prof. Coseru

Section 001 (MW 2:00 – 3:15)

PREREQUISITE: Course prerequisite is 6 hours in philosophy (excluding PHIL 215 and PHIL 216), but others may enroll with the permission of the instructor.

What is the nature of the world? What are the different categories of existing things and what kinds of relations exist among those things? Who exactly am I? What makes me endure from one moment to another? Is there a unitary self at the core of my existence? Am I responsible for my actions? What is the nature of causation? These questions belong in the domain of metaphysics - a branch of philosophy that attempts to understand the ultimate nature of reality. Metaphysics considers such basic concepts as existence, identity, possibility, quantity, quality, relation, substance, form, cause, etc. In this course we will focus primarily on the metaphysics of persons. We will also consider how these kinds of metaphysical questions relate to questions in other areas of philosophy, such as epistemology (what are the means of valid cognition?) and ethics (how should one live?).

PHIL 450: Senior Seminar: Punishing and Forgiving

Prof. Perlmutter

Section 001 (TR 12:15 – 1:30)

PREREQUISITE: Junior or senior philosophy major with at least nine previous semester hours in philosophy (other than 215 or 216), one of which must be a 300-level course, or permission of the instructor.

This seminar will look at recent philosophical literature on punishment and forgiveness, thinking of the alternative responses to wrongdoing. It will pay special attention to resentment (and anger), repentance (and apology), and forgiveness of debts and of wrongs. Psychological and political literature on forgiveness will also be considered. Students will be expected to take an active role in the class with class participation and presentations. Reading may include: Charles Griswold, *Forgiveness: A philosophical Exploration*, Jeffrie Murphy, *Getting Even: Forgiveness and Its Limits*.