

Philosophy

Division of Humanities

- **Major: 30 credit hours**
- **Minor: 15 credit hours**
- **Major/minor GPA required for graduation: 2.25**
- **All courses for the major/minor must be completed with a grade of a C- or better**

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

- **Capstone: Senior Thesis in Philosophy (PHI 410)**

Description of Major: Studying philosophy helps students confront in a methodical and constructive way fundamental questions and problems, both theoretical and practical, about themselves, their culture, and the natural world. Philosophy addresses the “big questions,” including What is the meaning of life? What duties do we have to others? What makes a society or law just? Is faith compatible with reason? What is the relation of mind to brain? As the oldest and most basic of the liberal arts disciplines, philosophy provides a foundation for addressing such questions, but also cultivates skills in reasoning and argumentation that are critical to graduate studies, law school, employment, and, indeed, to be an informed and engaged citizen.

Majoring in philosophy allows students to develop familiarity with a basic intellectual vocabulary through which discussion of central questions has occurred, as well as an ability to recognize relationships between past philosophies and basic presuppositions of Western culture today. Philosophy also seeks to develop students’ ability to recognize philosophical issues and to assess critically the response of various thinkers to those issues, while developing empathic skills in entering the “mindset” of given thinkers. Majors will emerge with the tools for diagnosing their own intellectual presuppositions and those of their culture, thus moving them to develop and express their own careful thinking about central philosophical questions.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Develop the interpretive, critical, and argumentative skills necessary for academic excellence, career success, and civil engagement.
- Know the major figures, issues, and debates in the history of Western philosophy, both ancient and modern.
- Explain, analyze, and evaluate the ethical and social issues that inform our personal and social lives.
- Create a perspective from which students can synthesize all their studies and develop a sense of how philosophy bears on other disciplines.

Preparation: The study of philosophy develops skills essential to success in future education and employment, including critical thinking, evaluation, and construction of sophisticated arguments, consideration of many different perspectives on a single subject, clear written communication on complex topics, and the ability to synthesize and organize complex information. Students majoring in philosophy often enter the fields of law, medicine, journalism, or business, in addition to pursuing graduate studies in philosophy itself. A major or minor in philosophy, in tandem with a major in a narrower professional field or another academic discipline, will serve the student well as career advancement comes to require the flexibility of mind, and insight into the essentials of a situation, as well as analytical skills.

It is suggested that the student consider a major or minor in a second field. The following courses, many of which also fulfill general education curriculum requirements, are suggested but not required for the major in philosophy: ART 210 and/or 211; ECO 211 and/or 212; HIS 161, 162; PSI 202; PSY 153; REL 250; SOC 149, 150, 407; COM 210.

PHILOSOPHY MAJOR REQUIREMENTS 30 crs.

PHI 201	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	3
PHI 204	LOGIC	3
PHI 363	HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL (W)	3
PHI 364	HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: RENAISSANCE AND MODERN (W)	3
PHI 410	SENIOR THESIS IN PHILOSOPHY (W)	3

**AT LEAST 15 CREDITS
FROM AMONG THE FOLLOWING**

PHI 206	INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS	3
PHI 325	PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION (W)	3
PHI 331	SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY (W)	3
PHI 333	FREE WILL AND HUMAN NATURE (W)	3
PHI 334	PHILOSOPHY OF ART (W)	3
PHI 336	EXISTENTIALISM (W)	3
PHI 390	ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY (W)	3
PHI 391	MEDICAL ETHICS (W)	3
PHI 480	INDEPENDENT STUDY IN PHILOSOPHY	1-4
PHI 490	SEMINAR IN PHILOSOPHY	1-4
ANY PHI TOPICS COURSE		1-4

PHILOSOPHY MINOR REQUIREMENTS 15 crs.

PHI 201	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	3
12 credits of electives in Philosophy (Only one course from PHI 390 and 391, and one course from PHI 206 and 332, will count toward the minor.)		12

Philosophy (PHI)

PHI 201 3

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

This is an introductory course dealing with the purposes, problems, and methods of philosophical thinking. It aims to lead students to organize their world-view and life-view in the light of a critical examination of their ideas and of typical philosophical positions.

PHI 204 3

LOGIC

The course aims to give the student a general knowledge of the fundamental laws of correct deductive and inductive reasoning. Emphasis is placed on practical exercise and the detection of formal and informal fallacies.

PHI 206 3

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

This course is an introduction to thinking about the ethical life from the perspective of philosophy. Ethical principles, virtues, and rights are linked to concrete situations of everyday moral decision-making.

PHI 208 3

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

This course examines diverse conceptions of nature and a range of competing ethical theories about the relationship of humans to nature. Readings are drawn from historically significant ethical theories as well as contemporary philosophical writings. Philosophical questions addressed include Is nature intrinsically valuable? Is nature a mere raw resource for meeting human needs? What are rights? Do non-humans (e.g. other animals, natural objects) have rights? What responsibilities do we have to future generations and their environment? What is the role of the environment in shaping a person's identity and conception of the "good life"? Contemporary environmental issues addressed include biodiversity, global warming, species preservation, population policy, animal experimentation, and sustainable development.

PHI 225/325 3

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION (W, 325 only)

This course explores traditional and recent, philosophical and theological thinking in areas such as arguments for the existence of God, the nature of religious knowledge, the problem of evil, the question of human destiny, and the nature of religious language, etc. Students taking this course as PHI 325 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both. Same as REL 325.

PHI 231/331 3

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY (W, 331 only)

This course examines a number of critical issues at the intersection of ethical theory, political thought, and social life. Among the subjects of special concern are the concepts of political freedom, the grounds of coercion, the acceptability of the "harm principle," the notion of legal rights, the concept of human rights, and theories of social justice. Students taking this course as PHI 331 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both.

PHI 233/333 3

FREE WILL AND HUMAN NATURE (W, 333 only)

This course focuses upon some recent answers to the question 'What is a human being?' noting questions about such concepts as 'person,' 'body,' 'freedom,' 'determinism,' 'causation' and matters such as the relation of mind and body, as these issues are raised in the thinking of prominent natural and social scientists.' Students taking this course as PHI 333 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both.

PHI 234/334 3

PHILOSOPHY OF ART (W, 334 only)

This course is an occasion for reflection on what it is one does when one 'does art.' It will focus on such issues as the nature of art, the relations of the various 'arts,' the relevance of such notions as 'expression,' 'creativity,' 'truth,' 'form,' to the doing of art and problems in interpreting and criticizing art. Students taking this course as PHI 334 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both.

PHI 236/336 3

EXISTENTIALISM (W, 336 only)

This course centers upon representative members of that group of modern philosophical thinkers called 'existentialists,' and upon the themes which these thinkers have made central to their work. Students taking this course as PHI 336 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both.

PHI 263/363 3

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY:

GREEK AND MEDIEVAL (W, 363 only)

This course is a historical survey of the great movements of philosophic thought from the Greek period to Scholasticism. The great philosophers of history are studied from the point of view of their particular philosophy and their influence on the thinking of their own and subsequent periods. Students taking this course as PHI 363 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both.

Philosophy (PHI)

PHI 264/364 3

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY:

RENAISSANCE AND MODERN (W, 364 only)

This course presents a survey of the period of thought from Scholasticism to modern critical philosophy. Special attention will be given to Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and major twentieth-century thinkers. Students taking this course as PHI 364 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both.

PHI 280-289 1-4

TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY

Studies in topical or specialized areas of Philosophy not included in the regular curriculum.

PHI 380-389 1-4

TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY (W)

Studies in topical or specialized areas of Philosophy not included in the regular curriculum.

PHI 290/390 3

ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY (W, 390 only)

This course examines recent philosophical thinking about such fundamental ethical and social issues as racial and sexual discrimination, criminal punishment and the death penalty, civil disobedience, the morality of war, the enforcement of morals, and abortion. Students taking this course as PHI 390 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both.

PHI 291/391 3

BIOMEDICAL ETHICS (W, 391 only)

This course explores the ethical implications of recent developments in biological research and medical practice, including experimentation with human subjects, biological engineering, death, transplantation and resource allocation, behavior control, and health care delivery. Students taking this course as PHI 391 will be required to complete a process-oriented major writing project in addition to other required writings. Students may elect to take this course at one level, but not both.

PHI 410 3

SENIOR THESIS IN PHILOSOPHY (W)

This course involves independent study under the supervision of a faculty member in philosophy. The objective is the preparation and writing of a senior thesis suitable for submission to an undergraduate philosophy journal.

PHI 480 1-4

INDEPENDENT STUDY IN PHILOSOPHY

PHI 490 1-4

SEMINAR IN PHILOSOPHY

Prerequisite: junior or senior standing as a philosophy major.