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The mission of McKendree University is to provide a high-quality educational experience to outstanding students.

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PHI 201 Introduction to Philosophy (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand what it means to adopt a "philosophical attitude" as an elevated form of human curiosity and resistance to dogmatism;
2. Explain and analyze philosophical concepts that are central to debates within philosophy;
3. Identify and critically evaluate philosophical arguments made by others;
4. Construct one's own philosophical arguments and defend them from criticism, both orally and in writing; and,
5. Improve your critical thinking skills and your ability to express your reasoning and insights in writing and conversation.

Course Topics

1. The nature, value, and methods of philosophy
2. Faith and Reason
3. Epistemology
4. Metaphysics and Freedom: the mind-body problem, personal identity, and free will
5. The meaning of life



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PHI 204 Logic (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Identify and summarize the basic problems, principles, and methods of deductive reasoning;
2. Employ the methods of deductive logic to detect and avoid fallacious reasoning;
3. Formulate and evaluate deductive arguments;
4. Apply the principles and methods of logical reasoning to the analysis of texts, to the conduct of scientific inquiry, and to the problems of everyday life;
5. Use clear, logical, and concise language, both in speaking and writing; and,
6. Participate actively in discussion of arguments and of the principles of good reasoning.

Course Topics

1. The structure and purpose of arguments
2. Heuristics and Biases
3. Informal Logic and Fallacies
4. Propositional Logic: Syntax and Semantics
5. Propositional Logic: Syllogistic Logic
6. Propositional Logic: Natural Deduction
7. Predicate Logic



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PHI 206 Introduction to Ethics (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Identify and analyze the central concepts of ethics;
2. Summarize in detail, both orally and in writing, the theoretical perspectives of thinkers central to the Western ethical tradition;
3. Use the logical and critical thinking methods of philosophy to analyze and evaluate the ways in which ethical theorists have attempted to address and resolve ethical dilemmas and debates; and,
4. Identify the assumptions and arguments central to contemporary debates regarding animal rights, abortion, social justice, and conflicts between individual rights and collective welfare.

Course Topics

1. Ethical reasoning and argument
2. Why be Good? Skepticism, Relativism, and Rationality
3. Ethical theories: virtue, utilitarian, deontological, contractarian, and feminist perspectives
4. The animal rights debate
5. The abortion debate
6. Social justice and ethics
7. Ethics and the meaning of life



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PHI 208 Environmental Ethics (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Define the concepts central to environmental ethics;
2. Explain and defend one's own ethical standpoint according to these ethical concepts;
3. Explain the difference between anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric ethic theories;
4. Discriminate and assess claims regarding moral stand and considerability;
5. Articulate and evaluate alternative ethical stances from traditionally underrepresented groups;and,
6. Understand and evaluate one's own concrete interaction to their surrounding world, especially in reference to the concept of sustainability.

Course Topics

1. Ethical reasoning and argument
2. Philosophical and cultural roots of anthropocentrism
3. Non-Anthropocentric theories: sentience-based, biocentric, ecocentric, and feminist perspectives
4. Non-anthropocentric ethical perspectives
5. The Human and the Natural: debates regarding nature, wilderness, and humanity
6. Concept of sustainability
7. Population and Food
8. Species and Biodiversity
9. Climate Change
10. Urban ecology and modern life



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PHI 225/325 Philosophy of Religion (W, 325 only) (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Explain major themes, concepts, and theories in the philosophy of religion;
2. Evaluate various arguments for and against theism, miracles, and mystical experiences;
3. Explain the difference between pragmatic and epistemic justifications for religious beliefs; and,
4. Evaluate the arguments for and against the possibility of life after death.

Course Topics

1. The nature and methods of philosophy of religion
2. Religious Language and Belief
3. Concept of God
4. Faith and Reason: the existence of God
5. The Problem of Evil
6. Religious experience and mysticism
7. Death and Immortality



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PHI 231/331 Social and Political Philosophy (W, 331 only) (3)

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. Same as PSI 331.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Identify and analyze the central concepts of social and political philosophy;
2. Summarize in detail, both orally and in writing, the theoretical perspectives of thinkers concerning the relation of the individual to society;
3. Use the logical and critical thinking methods of philosophy to analyze and evaluate the ways in which theorists have attempted to clarify the concept of justice, to defend the legitimacy of state power, and to analyze civil disobedience; and,
4. Identify the assumptions and arguments central to contemporary debates identity, social norms, intersectionality, and conceptions of justice

Course Topics

1. Philosophical reasoning and argument
2. Conceptions of justice: Aristotelian, Utilitarian, Liberalism, Libertarian, Socialist, and Constructivist
3. Markets and Morals
4. Distributive Justice
5. Ability, Disability, and Discrimination
6. Justice, Community, and Membership
7. Meritocracy and Democracy



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PHI 233/333 Metaphysics and Human Nature (W, 333 only) (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Identify, analyze and, assess metaphysical theories regarding the relation of the human to the natural world;
2. Evaluate the arguments regarding the nature vs. nurture debate;
3. Evaluate central arguments in contemporary debates regarding consciousness, freedom, personal identity, and human enhancement; and,
4. Synthesize and apply information, concepts, and arguments from the cognitive sciences regarding what it means to be human, human identity, and the construction of values and meaning.

Course Topics

1. Philosophical reasoning and argument
2. Materiality and consciousness
3. Determinism, freedom, and Meaning
4. Conceptions of meaning in life
5. Human Enhancement
6. Artificial Intelligence
7. Race, Gender, and Identity



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PHI 234/334 Philosophy of Art (W, 334 only) (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Apply concepts and/or methodologies in the analysis of literary, performing, visual, or other art forms;
2. Analyze how literature, performance, the visual arts, or other creative endeavors respond to and influence society and culture;
3. Analyze creative endeavors in a contextual framework, such as critical theory, aesthetics, philosophy of art, or rhetoric; and,
4. Demonstrate concepts that characterize a polycentric view of the world in contrast to an ethnocentric perspective.

Course Topics

1. Philosophical reasoning and argument
2. The nature and purpose of art
3. Aesthetic meaning, value, and significance
4. Traditional aesthetic theory: taste, beauty, and disinterestedness
5. Modern ethical theory: formalism, cognitivism, pragmatism, and evolutionary perspectives
6. Emotion, Fiction, and Film
7. Ethical and political debates regarding art



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PHI 236/336 Existentialism (W, 336 only) (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand and discuss the importance and influence of existentialism as a philosophical, literary, artistic, and cultural form of expression and theoretical perspective;
2. Display the skills of describing, interpreting, explaining, and evaluating the philosophical ideas expressed in existential literature, film, art, and philosophy for one's quality of life, including social connectedness, education, environment, civic engagement, health, life satisfaction, safety, aesthetic experiences, spirituality, and/or work-life balance;
3. Articulate philosophical ideas verbally and in writing, as pertains to central existentialist texts, themes, and debates; and
4. Articulate philosophical ideas verbally and in writing, as pertains to central existentialist texts, themes, and debates.

Course Topics

1. Philosophical reasoning and argument
2. Kierkegaard on being an individual
3. Dostoevsky on the plight of the modern person
4. Nietzsche's transvaluation of values
5. Heidegger's existential phenomenology
6. Marcel's Christian existentialism
7. Sartre on existentialism as a humanism
8. De Beauvoir on gender, identity, and existentialism
9. Black existentialism



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PHI 263/363 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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand and discuss the philosophical thought of the Ancient Greek and Medieval traditions, as well as a survey, analysis and evaluation of many of the key teachings of that tradition;
2. Analyze and assess arguments and debates in Ancient Greek and Medieval philosophy with critical philosophical depth;
3. Identify and analyze the philosophical richness of ancient and medieval thought which continues to play a central role in philosophical and scientific studies today;
4. Situate and assess the teachings of Ancient Greek and Medieval philosophy in their own historical and cultural context while at the same time making occasional reference to their importance in later thought and periods.

Course Topics

1. Philosophical reasoning and argument
2. Pre-Socratics
3. Plato and Academic Philosophy
4. The Aristotelian Turn
5. Hellenistic Alternatives
6. Roman Stoicism
7. Early Medieval thought
8. Middle and Later medieval thought



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PHI 264/364 History of Philosophy: Renaissance and Modern (W, 364 only) (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand and discuss the philosophical thought of the Renaissance and Modern traditions, as well as a survey, analysis and evaluation of many of the key teachings of that tradition;
2. Analyze and assess arguments and debates in Renaissance and Modern philosophy with critical philosophical depth
3. Identify and analyze the philosophical richness of Renaissance and Modern thought which continues to play a central role in philosophical and scientific studies today; and,
4. Situate and assess the teachings of Renaissance and Modern philosophy in their own historical and cultural context while at the same time making occasional reference to their importance in later thought and periods.

Course Topics

1. Philosophical reasoning and argument
2. The New Science and Renaissance thought
3. Skepticism and Humanism
4. The Cartesian Project
5. Idealist and Empiricist Responses to Descartes
6. Empiricism
7. Kantian Transcendental Idealism
8. Hegel, Heidegger, and Foucault



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PHI 290/390 Ethics and Public Policy (W, 390 only) (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Identify and analyze the central concepts of social and political philosophy;
2. Summarize in detail, both orally and in writing, the theoretical perspectives of thinkers concerning the relation of the individual to society;
3. Use the logical and critical thinking methods of philosophy to analyze and evaluate the ways in which theorists have attempted to clarify the concept of justice, to defend the legitimacy of state power, and to analyze civil disobedience; and,
4. Identify the assumptions and arguments central to contemporary debates identity, social norms, intersectionality, and conceptions of justice

Course Topics

1. Philosophical reasoning and argument
2. Conceptions of justice: Aristotelian, Utilitarian, Liberalism, Libertarian, Socialist, and Constructivist
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PHI 291/391 Biomedical Ethics (W, 391 only) (3)

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Explain and analyze bioethical discussions in text and oral forms;
2. Describe, employ, examine, and critique bioethical principles and the dilemmas that arise in contemporary medical practices because of them;
3. Analyze and assess bioethical arguments offered by others and the student themselves; and,
4. Develop resolutions to ethical problems and dilemmas using recognizable ethical principles and established patterns of argumentation'

Course Topics

1. Ethical values, reasoning and argument
2. The scope and nature of biomedical ethics
3. The Physician-Patient Relationship: models, metaphors, and dilemmas
4. Death and End-of-Life
5. Abortion, Genetics, and Reproduction
6. Contested Therapies and Life-Sustaining Treatment
7. Social Justice and Health Care