

Spring 2020 Philosophy Courses

Honors sections are available for courses marked with an asterisk*

PHIL 2010 Introduction to Philosophy* **Multiple Instructors**

Is there free will? How can I tell right from wrong? What is the relationship of my mind to my body? Does all knowledge come from experience? Can God's existence (or non-existence) be proven? These are just a few of the questions that you may address in Introduction to Philosophy.

PHIL 2020 Logic and Critical Thinking **Multiple Instructors**

How can I construct good arguments and how can I evaluate the arguments of others? What are the principles of thinking and communicating clearly? This course addresses these questions and helps you develop your ability to communicate your ideas clearly. You will learn to distinguish between valid and invalid arguments and to analyze arguments and the logical structure of English sentences. Moreover, Logic and Critical Thinking will help you develop your critical and analytical skills—and do better in almost any type of academic test!

PHIL 2030 Introduction to Ethics **Multiple Instructors**

Is morality objective or subjective? Does the idea of morality without God make sense? Is it ever OK to illegally download songs? Does technological progress affect what we consider ethical? Can one kill one person to save hundreds? Is solitary confinement morally acceptable? What about the death penalty? This course will explore these sorts of questions and give you the background necessary to take more advanced ethics courses.

PHIL 2500 Symbolic Logic* **Multiple Instructors**

What are the methods and principles used to distinguish correct from incorrect deductive arguments? This course is guaranteed to sharpen your critical and analytical skills. It is also an excellent preparation for the GRE and the LSAT.

PHIL 3000 Classics of Ancient Western Philosophy **Multiple Instructors**

The history of philosophy has been characterized as 'a series of footnotes to Plato'. In this class you will go back to the source and study Plato as well as Aristotle and other important ancient philosophers. (Some of them thought everything was made of water!)

PHIL 3010 Classics of Modern Western Philosophy **Multiple Sections (Pineiro)**

Modern philosophy covers the period from the seventeenth century to today. Learn how philosophers such as Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Kant and Hegel shaped the way that we understand the world around us and how their ideas have influenced twentieth and twenty-first century thought.

PHIL 3030 Existentialism

MWF 11:15–12:05 (Brient)

Existentialism takes as its point of departure living, acting human individuals, confronted with the necessity of making concrete choices in the face of the abyss of human freedom. Truth and meaning for the existential philosopher are not, first of all, abstract matters of detached objectivity, rather truth and meaning must be grasped and lived by the individual subject. Existentialist philosophers reject the idea that we are determined in what we are by an abstract human nature. Rather, we determine what (or who) we are by taking up our existence in our lived choices. We will be reading Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky and Sartre.

PHIL 3210 Feminist Philosophy

MWF 10:10–11:00 (Cuomo)

Achieving gender equality is one of the fundamental challenges of our society. This course examines and evaluates liberal feminism, socialist feminism, ecofeminism, and other feminist approaches to philosophical thinking.

PHIL 3220 Biomedical Ethics*

Multiple Instructors

Biomedical ethics is a broad term given to the collection of ethical issues and problems that have emerged from professional practice in the fields of medicine, biomedical research and public health. In this course, we will consider how fairly recent advances in medicine and biotechnology invite new reflections on some very old human practices: reproduction, personal enhancement, and dying. Throughout the semester we will explore concepts like autonomy and beneficence and how these values inform medical practice and public policy.

PHIL 3550/ARTI 3550/PSYC 3550 Cognitive Science

Multiple Sections (Wright)

How does the mind work? What do we mean by 'intelligence'? This course explains how these and related problems are addressed in philosophy, psychology, linguistics, biology, anthropology, comparative science, and education. A truly interdisciplinary course!

PHIL 3610 Theory of Knowledge

MWF 12:20–1:10 (Grindeland)

Classic and contemporary theories of truth, justification, and knowledge applied to hot topics such as the science and ethics of global warming. We will investigate questions such as what we can know via the scientific method, whether we are in the Matrix, whether conceivability is a reliable guide to possibility, whether women are smarter than men, whether humans can be as knowledgeable as cyborgs or artificial intelligence, whether we can know ethical truths via reason, and whether ethical beliefs can serve as obstacles to learning.

PHIL 4020 Medieval Philosophy

MWF 12:20–1:10 (Halper)

Is religion compatible with philosophy? This question was central to medieval philosophers from all three western religious traditions, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. For them, 'philosophy' meant the thought of Plato and Aristotle, and they regarded it

much as we think of 'science' today. Many medieval philosophers argue that religious belief is a kind of shortcut to philosophical truths; others argue that religion falls short of truth but is a suitable substitute for the masses; still others, argue that revelation grants us access to truths that we could not discover on our own; a fourth group argue that philosophy is incoherent. We will read philosophers from all three religious traditions who argue all four answers.

PHIL 4045 Chinese Philosophy TR 2:00–3:15 (Sikri)

An in-depth study of the seminal texts of Chinese philosophy, presenting a selection from the classical traditions of Confucianism, Mohism, Daoism, Legalism, and other medieval and contemporary sources.

PHIL 4060 Hegel MWF 1:25–2:15 (Halper)

Is one idea connected with another? If so, how? In his *Science of Logic*, Hegel aims to derive all of our categories of thought, both logical categories and metaphysical categories, from the simple notion of Being. The keys to understanding the derivations are (1) to appreciate how dialectic works and (2) to grasp the structure of the work. The course will be a close study of this important and influential work.

PHIL 4210 Social and Political Philosophy TR 9:30–10:45 (Samaras)

In this course we will examine how contemporary political ideas and debates are shaped by the way that the major political thinkers of the past approached issues such as human nature, freedom and justice. Moreover, the historical development of Classical Liberalism and Socialism, as well as their theories about the nature of society will be discussed in detail. The course includes extensive readings from the works of Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Marx and Beauvoir.

PHIL 4510 Deductive Systems MW 2:00–3:15 (Bassler)

The *Deductive Systems* course will follow the approach to logic taken by Dirk van Dalen's *Logic and Structure* (Springer Verlag). This approach has the pedagogical advantage that it begins with a greater concentration on propositional logic than is usual, so that the way first-order predicate logic adds additional structure to propositional logic can be seen clearly. Also, natural deduction methods are emphasized throughout. The entire approach is well-suited to the underlying role logical formalism plays in contemporary artificial intelligence, computer science and philosophy.