

PHILOSOPHY (PHIL)

PHIL 6000 Metaphysics

6 credit hours

Metaphysics seeks to answer the most general questions about reality. What is it to exist? What is it to be an individual? What are the fundamental kinds of things and relations? Consideration is given to the principal metaphysical theories that form part of the Western philosophical tradition, e.g., materialism, idealism, dualism and monism. The course will also consider the major problems and concepts of metaphysics, e.g., time, space, substance, essence, free will, determinism, and causality.

PHIL 6415 Argumentation Theory

3 credit hours

Contemporary argumentation theory draws upon several disciplines: philosophy of language, cognitive psychology, feminist philosophy and communications theory. This course will examine the concept of argument through the lens provided by argumentation theorists. Alternative conceptions of argument will be critically examined and an overview of the development of argumentation theory will be provided.

PHIL 6446 Kant and Nineteenth-Century Philosophy

3 credit hours

Students examine the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and a selection of 19th Century philosophers. Topics include the "death of God", the relation of philosophy to other disciplines and practices (history, psychology, religion, and art), the nature of scientific knowledge, and the natures of objectivity and subjectivity.

PHIL 6447 Philosophy and the Scientific Revolution

3 credit hours

Students examine the philosophical repercussions of the scientific revolution in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Topics include the relation between science and religion, human freedom, and the foundations of science. Philosophers covered may include Bacon, Descartes, Elisabeth, Spinoza, Conway, Cavendish, Locke, Berkeley, Leibniz, Chatelet and Hume.

PHIL 6528 Topics in Moral, Political, and Legal Philosophy

3 credit hours

Students engage in an intensive study of one or more topics in moral, political, and/or legal philosophy.

PHIL 6585 Feminist Philosophy

3 credit hours

This course examines the contributions of feminist philosophers to historical and contemporary thought in diverse areas of inquiry, such as ethics, political theory, metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of science, and philosophy of mind.

PHIL 6590 Topics in Social Philosophy

3 credit hours

Students engage in an intensive study of one or more topics in social philosophy. Social Philosophy is broadly defined as the study of conceptual and normative issues concerning social relationships, practices, and institutions.

PHIL 6602 Philosophy of Language

3 credit hours

How is it that words and sentences mean what they do? One answer to this question is that linguistic meaning is determined by the speaker's intentions; another is that it is determined by social practices. Each answer raises issues regarding the relation of language to both thought and reality that this course will aim to address.

PHIL 6604 Theory of Knowledge: Foundations

3 credit hours

This course examines the various concepts of human knowledge and attempts to find the limits of that knowledge. Traditional approaches to problems in the theory of knowledge will be considered as well as current work.

PHIL 6605 Theory of Knowledge: Ethics of Belief

3 credit hours

We commonly evaluate beliefs as rational or irrational; justified or unjustified; responsible or irresponsible. But what do these terms mean and when are they correctly applied? Can beliefs be ethical? These and related questions are debated by contemporary epistemologists. This course seeks to interpret and assess the main competing views.

PHIL 6611 Political Thought: The Classic Texts

3 credit hours

A critical examination of some of the core works in the history of political philosophy, such as those of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Hobbes, Locke, Mill, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche.

PHIL 6612 Contemporary Political Philosophy

3 credit hours

This course introduces students to the major schools of contemporary political thought, such as utilitarianism, liberal egalitarianism, libertarianism, Marxism, communitarianism, and feminism. Among the issues addressed are the justification for state power, the role of human nature in determining political arrangements, democracy and the rights of minorities, the tension between liberty and equality, and the just distribution of resources.

PHIL 6617 Philosophy of Economics

3 credit hours

This course examines the basic assumptions on which economic theory rests, asks whether economics is a science and explores the extent to which economic analysis can be used in other areas (for example, in medicine and law). No knowledge of economics is presupposed or required.

PHIL 6625 International Justice

3 credit hours

This course will consider how major theories of justice such as Kantian constructivism, economic contractarianism, and utilitarianism deal with important issues in international justice such as the law of peoples, distributive justice, human rights, and democratization.

PHIL 6627 Classic Readings in Philosophy of Mind

3 credit hours

Students will study writings on the mind by important philosophers from antiquity to the twentieth century.

PHIL 6628 Philosophy of Mind: Contemporary Issues

3 credit hours

This course is a study of contemporary theories in the philosophy of mind. Topics include Behaviorism, Mind/Brain Identity theories, Functionalism, Cognitivism, and various theories of consciousness.

PHIL 6634 Greek Philosophy: The Presocratics and Plato

3 credit hours

A brief examination of Greek philosophy before the time of Socrates followed by careful readings of selected dialogues by Plato.

PHIL 6635 Greek Philosophy: Aristotle and the Hellenists

3 credit hours

A study of Aristotle's views (focusing on topics in metaphysics, psychology, knowledge and ethics), together with a brief examination of several Hellenistic philosophers.

PHIL 6642 Early Modern Philosophy: The Rationalists

3 credit hours

A critical examination of the works from this movement, focusing on the areas of metaphysics and epistemology. Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza and Leibniz are among the philosophers typically studied.

PHIL 6643 Early Modern Philosophy: The Empiricists

3 credit hours

A critical examination of the works from this movement, focusing on the areas of metaphysics and epistemology. Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley and Hume are among the philosophers typically studied.

PHIL 6644 Later Modern Philosophy: Kant

3 credit hours

A lecture and seminar course on Kant's theory of knowledge.

PHIL 6647 Philosophy and Film

3 credit hours

Students consider philosophical questions concerning, or arising in film. Questions include: general issues of perspective, evidence, knowledge, and objectivity, as well as more specific questions, such as: What is the nature of representation in film? Can film be construed as a language? What is the logic of film criticism? These and other questions will be addressed in an effort to clarify the nature of the relation between philosophy and film.

PHIL 6648 Aesthetics: The Classical Tradition

3 credit hours

This course addresses issues central to the history of philosophical aesthetics, including those of representation, expression, and the cognitive aspects of art and aesthetic experience. The course will involve a survey of some of the great works of the tradition, including those of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Collingwood, Dewey, and others.

PHIL 6649 Aesthetics: Contemporary Debates

3 credit hours

This course addresses issues that dominate contemporary philosophical reflection on the arts, including those of form and content, the logic of taste, aesthetic value, art and knowledge, art and emotion, and so on.

PHIL 6650 Environmental Aesthetics

3 credit hours

Students explore topics such as: the nature and value of natural beauty, the relationship between art appreciation and nature appreciation, the role of knowledge in the aesthetic appreciation of nature, and the importance of environmental participation to the appreciation of environments.

PHIL 6651 Pragmatism

3 credit hours

Students read the founding texts of pragmatism from the late 19th and early 20th centuries (e.g., by Pierce, James, and Dewey). Analysis will focus on the pragmatist critique of traditional western philosophical ideas about meaning, truth, reality, foundations of knowledge, and practice. Students examine the historical reception and impact of pragmatism and assess its continuing importance today.

PHIL 6652 Philosophy of Science

3 credit hours

An introduction to the main problems of the philosophy of science designed to familiarize students with some of the contemporary analyses of scientific concepts and methods.

PHIL 6653 Philosophy of Biology

3 credit hours

The course explores methodological, conceptual, metaphysical, and epistemological questions that arise in modern biology. Possible topics include scientific revolutions, experimentation, biological laws, theoretical modelling, objectivity, reductionism, species concepts, evolution vs. creationism, human nature, and biological theories of gender, race, and sexuality.

PHIL 6654 Philosophy of History

3 credit hours

A critical study of the philosophical views on the course of human history (its pattern, purpose and value) and an examination of the aim, nature and validity of historical knowledge.

PHIL 6655 Existentialism: The 19th Century

3 credit hours

A lecture and seminar course examining the 19th century origins of the existentialist movement in contemporary philosophy, with specific investigation of the writings of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.

PHIL 6656 Existentialism: The 20th Century

3 credit hours

A lecture and seminar course examining the 20th century expression of the existentialist movement in contemporary philosophy, through close study of the writings of Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, and others.

PHIL 6664 Analytic Philosophy

3 credit hours

A lecture and seminar course that examines the origins, expressions, and significance of the contemporary analytic movement in philosophy.

PHIL 6666 Philosophy of Law

3 credit hours

Students explore topics in the philosophy of law. Topics may include natural law theory, legal positivism, the separability thesis, relations between law and morality, legal interpretation, the economic analysis of the law, and legal skepticism.

PHIL 6669 Normative Ethics

3 credit hours

Students investigate normative ethical theories, such as theories about what makes right actions right, good states of affairs good, and virtuous people virtuous. The theories discussed may include: those that evaluate the morality of actions based on intrinsic features such as whether they respect autonomy, and those that evaluate the morality of actions based on the sorts of people who characteristically perform such actions.

PHIL 6671 Meta-ethics

3 credit hours

The course investigates the moral concepts that are used in the formulation and evaluation of ethical theories, including: 'morality', 'moral value', 'virtue', 'vice', 'moral right', 'moral obligation', 'justice', and 'good'.

PHIL 6672 Foundation of Ethics

3 credit hours

The course will involve the study of the nature of moral judgments and the logic of moral reasoning.

PHIL 6673 Moral Responsibility

3 credit hours

Students consider questions such as: Are we ever morally responsible for what we do? When are we exempt from moral responsibility? When do we share responsibility for a harm that has been brought about by a collective? Should we hold organizations morally responsible for wrongfully causing harm? Or can the moral responsibility of organizations always be reduced to the moral responsibility of individual members?

PHIL 6674 Moral Psychology

3 credit hours

Moral Psychology is an interdisciplinary study that draws on empirical research about human psychology and behavior and conceptual work in philosophical ethics. Some of the central questions include: what are the determinants of our moral judgements? What are the determinants of moral and immoral behavior? What is the connection between moral judgement and moral and immoral behavior? What are the varieties of immorality? Does empirical research support or refute extant normative ethical theories?

PHIL 6683 Graduate Seminar

3 credit hours

Participants will write and discuss research materials which are connected by a common theme. The aim will be to deepen students' knowledge of the topics studied, while developing effective research methods.

PHIL 6685 - 6689 Reading Courses in Philosophy

3 credit hours

The subject matter of these courses is determined by consultation between instructor and students.

PHIL 6690 - 6695 Reading Courses in Philosophy

6 credit hours

The subject matter of these courses is determined by consultation between instructor and students.

PHIL 6697 Master's Thesis PHIL

6 credit hours

This course accommodates the thesis research and writing required by the Department for any student proceeding to the Master of Arts degree in Philosophy.

PHIL 6800 – 6825 Special Topics in Philosophy

6 credit hours

These courses focus on a topic of research interest to the professor. The topics will vary from year to year.

PHIL 6826 – 6849 Special Topics in Philosophy

3 credit hours

These courses focus on a topic of research interest to the professor. The topics will vary from year to year.

PHIL 6850 – 6875 Directed Study in Philosophy

6 credit hours

Course content varies from year to year.

PHIL 6876 – 6899 Directed Study in Philosophy

3 credit hours

Course content varies from year to year.