

PHILOSOPHY

Program Website: Philosophy – Hiram College (<https://www.hiram.edu/academics/undergraduate-studies/undergraduate-programs/philosophy/>)

Introduction

Philosophy is one of most diverse areas of the humanities and is central to a liberal arts education. Philosophy examines the nature of reality, the character of knowledge, and the meaning of human values. Students of philosophy develop the ability to interpret philosophical texts, critically reflect on claims of knowledge, and formulate their own views on fundamental questions of life. Graduates in philosophy are able to pursue studies in philosophy, law, health-related areas, computer science, theology, business, and other fields.

Faculty

Colin Anderson, (2002) Professor of Philosophy; George and Arlene Foote Chair in Ethics and Values; Department Chair; Classical & Medieval Studies Advisory Committee

B.A., St. John's College;
M.A., Ph.D., Loyola University of Chicago
andersonca@hiram.edu

Course Descriptions

PHIL 10100: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY: 4 Hour(s)

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY ~ An introduction to some of the basic issues and areas of philosophy: metaphysics and theories of reality, epistemology and theories of knowledge, ethics, social & political philosophy, theories of human nature and existence. Historical and contemporary texts studied, such as Plato, Descartes, Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, Freud, Sartre.

PHIL 11800: INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS:ES: 4 Hour(s)

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS:ES ~ An inquiry and introduction to the texts and theories of traditional and contemporary ethics, including virtue ethics, utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and ethics of care. A three (3) credit hour version of this course is offered as PHIL 11810.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 11810: INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS:ES: 3 Hour(s)

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS:ES ~ An inquiry and introduction to the texts and theories of traditional and contemporary ethics, including virtue ethics, utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and ethics of care. A four (4) credit hour version of this course is offered as PHIL 11800.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 12100: ELEMENTARY LOGIC:MM: 3 Hour(s)

ELEMENTARY LOGIC:MM ~ In this course, we will learn how to identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments. In doing so, we will be concerned with distinguishing "good" arguments from "bad" arguments. The arguments with which we will be concerned will initially be stated in "informal" colloquial language (i.e., everyday English). We will learn how to restate arguments in order that their underlying logical structure becomes apparent. This will enable us to identify patterns of "fallacious" (logically incorrect) reasoning in arguments stated in English. Not all bad arguments can be easily identified. Thus, we will develop a series of increasingly technical and abstract representations of the underlying logic of arguments in order to hone our abilities to distinguish good and bad reasoning. This course fulfills the Modeling Methods requirement.

Core: Modeling Methods

PHIL 18000: WKSP: 1 Hour(s)

WORKSHOP. ~ Workshops may be taken Pass/No Credit only. Students may take no more than nine workshops for credit toward graduation. Workshops can be used as elective credit only.

PHIL 20600: INTRO TO WORLD PHIL:ES,EW: 3 Hour(s)

INTRODUCTION TO WORLD PHILOSOPHY:EW,ES ~ In this course, we will take up a number of traditional philosophical questions. What is the good life? What can we really know about the world? What kind of entity are we? What is the ultimate nature of reality? We will be looking at these questions from a multicultural perspective. We will examine Western answers alongside answers from other cultures and traditions, such as Islam, Zen Buddhism, Hinduism, and African religions. Not only will this broaden our understanding of the world, but such comparisons should give us a more nuanced sense of our own traditions.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Experiencing the World

PHIL 21000: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY:ES: 4 Hour(s)

ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY:ES,IM ~ In this course we will study some of the questions and problems that prompted ancient Greek, and therefore also, ultimately, all Western philosophizing. These questions fall generally under two fundamental problems: An epistemological problem—What can we know?—and an ethical problem—How should we live our lives? In the first half of the semester, we will examine several attempts to determine what can be known and what we must possess in order to claim that we know something in texts of Plato and Aristotle. In the second half of the semester, we will study the most important attempts to answer the ethical problem in antiquity, focusing on the Hellenistic era and its four major schools, Aristotelianism, Epicureanism, Stoicism and Skepticism. Throughout the semester, we will engage in close, careful reading and discussion of the philosophical texts in which these problems are confronted.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 21100: MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY:IM,ES: 3 Hour(s)

MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY:IM,ES ~ This course focuses on select problems from the history of medieval philosophy (understood broadly as 350-1400 C.E.) and an overview of the most significant philosophical developments in this period. The problems which will receive particular consideration include: the relationship between faith and reason; the existence and nature of God insofar as this is accessible to reason (natural theology); the relationship between God and evil; the nature of sin, the problem of universals and its metaphysical and epistemological consequences. We will explore these problems in the texts of Christian, Islamic, or Jewish philosophers, such as, Augustine, Anselm, Abelard, Thomas Aquinas, William of Ockham, Averroes, Al-ghazali, and Moses Maimonides.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Interpretive Methods

PHIL 21200: EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY:IM: 4 Hour(s)

EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY:IM~ An examination of European philosophy from 1600-1800, including the Rationalists (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz), the British Empiricists (Locke, Berkeley, Hume), and the critical philosophy of Kant.

Core: Interpretive Methods

PHIL 21300: 19th CENTURY PHILOSOPHY:IM,ES: 4 Hour(s)

19TH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY:IM,ES ~ An overview of the development of German idealism from Kant to Hegel, the collapse of idealism in the post-Hegelian philosophy of Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche. College-level reading and writing skills are necessary.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Interpretive Methods

PHIL 21800: CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS:ES: 4 Hour(s)
 CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS:ES ~ Examination of topics and issues in moral problems, drawn from one or more of the following: biomedical ethics, business ethics, environmental ethics, social ethics, sexual/gender ethics. This course is also offered for 3 credit hours as PHIL 21900.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 21900: CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS:ES: 3 Hour(s)
 CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS:ES ~ Examination of topics and issues in moral problems, drawn from one or more of the following: biomedical ethics, business ethics, environmental ethics, social ethics, sexual/gender ethics. This course is also offered for 4 credit hours as PHIL 21800.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 22000: UNDERSTANDING ARGUMENTS: 3 Hour(s)

PHIL 22100: SYMBOLIC LOGIC:MM: 3 Hour(s)
 SYMBOLIC LOGIC:MM ~ Development of general principles of inference, using symbolic notation to represent everyday discourse. This course will explore modern symbolic representations of logical relationships and examine their significance for our understanding of human reason and the world. Our primary focus will be modern symbolic logic including truth tables and natural deduction using propositional logic and basic quantification. We will also examine basic modal logic and some questions metalogic and the philosophy of logic.

Core: Modeling Methods

PHIL 22500: PHILOSOPHY AND FEMINISM:UD,ES: 3 Hour(s)
 PHILOSOPHY AND FEMINISM:UD,ES ~ This course is an exploration of the central concerns, issues, and theories of modern and contemporary feminism, including the sex/gender distinction, essentialism, feminist critiques of knowledge and disciplines, ecological feminism, women's spirituality, feminist ethics, and the connections of feminism to issues of class, race, and sexuality.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Understanding Diversity Home

PHIL 22800: THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE:ES: 3 Hour(s)
 THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE ~ A comparative-critical examination of contrasting and divergent views of human nature. Theories to be examined will include one or more of the following: Christianity, Buddhism, Evolutionary theory, Classical conceptions of humanity, Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Existentialism, Feminism, non-Western and native culture conceptions of humanity. This course is offered for four credit hours as PHIL 22900.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 22900: THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE:ES: 4 Hour(s)
 THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE:ES ~ A comparative-critical examination of contrasting and divergent views of human nature. Theories to be examined will include one or more of the following: Christianity, Buddhism, Evolutionary theory, Classical conceptions of humanity, Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Existentialism, Feminism, non-Western and native culture conceptions of humanity. This course is offered for three credit hours as PHIL 22800.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 23300: PHILOSOPHY THROUGH FILM:ES,IM: 3 Hour(s)
 PHILOSOPHY THROUGH FILM:ES,IM ~ This course examines the history of the philosophical question of the "good life." It is designed to provide an introduction to core philosophical problems, using film to gain access to these problems. In the light of what philosophers have to say about what makes life genuinely worthwhile and fulfilling, and through the medium of films, this course explores such questions as: the loss of faith in a secularized world, the possibility of commitment, the question of what we can know, the ultimate nature of reality, the limits of science, the place of the individual in society, the possibility of authentic existence, the nature of love, the human capacity for free will, and the role of morality in determining how we should act.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Interpretive Methods

PHIL 26400: HISTORY/PHIL OF SCIENCE:ES,IM: 3 Hour(s)
 HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE:ES,IM ~ In this class, we will be critically examining various historical scientific theories and philosophical interpretations of science, in particular the nature of observations and theories and the relationship between them. What happens when we observe? What does a theory do? How do we move from one to the other? This course will help you analyze how scientists work and the assumptions that limit and/or enable their discipline. This will allow you to become a more intelligent participant in contemporary public discussions where science plays such an important role. This course is offered for four credit hours as PHIL 26500.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Interpretive Methods

PHIL 26500: HISTORY/PHIL OF SCIENCE:ES,IM: 4 Hour(s)
 HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE:ES,IM ~ An examination of the rise of modern science and the intellectual revolution in the attitude and orientation towards the universe. The displacement of the older world view and the new hypothesis that nature is inherently mathematical in structure. Galileo's project of the mathematization of nature, and its significance for the experimental methods, and understanding of human nature and culture. This course is offered for three credit hours as PHIL 26400.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Interpretive Methods

PHIL 26600: DEU MUSIC,PHIL&NAT'L ID:PREQEL: 1 Hour(s)
 GERMAN MUSIC, PHILOSOPHY, AND NATIONAL IDENTITY ~ This course will serve as preparation for the 3-week Study Abroad course, Music, Philosophy, and German National Identity. Through readings, listening assignments, videos, and discussion, students will develop a foundational background through which they will be better equipped to interpret their experiences and observations in Germany. The course will introduce students to 19th and 20th century German philosophers and composers, providing a basis for discussion and understanding of the complex relationship between German philosophy, music, and national identity. We will analyze the close connections between German music and philosophy and the manner in which both were utilized to promote National Socialist Party ideology in the 20th century, examining how some German composers and philosophers distanced themselves from the Nazi party and the consequences they suffered for their aesthetic choices. We will discuss Germany's history as a center of both philosophy and art music and how the events of the 20th century have shaped their perceptions and interpretation of music and philosophy in the 21st century. We will also examine the influence that German music and philosophy have had on American art music development and music education. This course will also introduce current German societal norms and basic phrases that students can use in their interactions with Germans. Attendance at all class sessions is mandatory.

PHIL 27000: ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS:ES: 4 Hour(s)

ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS:ES ~ The questions that have developed over the last century concerning our use of resources and our effects on our environment require raising fundamental conceptual and theoretical questions about our moral obligations. The discipline of environmental ethics aims at developing the necessary conceptual frameworks for addressing these questions and at the application of these frameworks both to questions of environmental policy and to questions concerning individual behavior. In this course, we will examine various attempts to include nature and natural objects within the realm of our moral obligations and the attempts to apply these ethical theories to particular environmental problems such as pollution, global warming, wilderness preservation, biodiversity. Also listed as EVST 27000.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 27100: ANIMALS AND ETHICS:ES: 4 Hour(s)

ANIMALS AND ETHICS:ES ~ This course will consider the relationship between ethical theories and our treatment of other animals. We will examine relevant ethical theories probably including at least Utilitarianism, rights-based and contract-based ethical theories. These theories will be examined in their applications to problems surrounding our treatment of non-human animals including consuming animals as food, using animals for experimentation, and the recreational use of animals. In addition, this course will consider issues surrounding our ascription of various mental states or capacities to animals including the ability to feel pain, possessions of interests and desires, and the ascription of awareness, self-awareness, and language to animals.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 27200: ETHICAL THINKING:ES: 4 Hour(s)

ETHICAL THINKING:ES ~ Ethical life depends upon identifiable intellectual capacities as well as virtues of character. This course aims to develop the intellectual virtues that are a necessary condition of an ethical life. This requires two sorts of skills - those of critical thinking and of dialogue. The first set of skills enables the analysis of arguments, exposure of fundamental assumptions, and the rigorous statement of criticism of moral values and ethical frameworks, the ability to mediate ethical discussions, seek shared ground, formulate issues in non-prejudicial or unnecessarily judgmental terms, the ability to re-frame ethical problems and open new ground for discussion. This course will cultivate these skills while engaged in analysis and discussion of some of the most pressing moral difficulties we face. Also listed as ETH 27200.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 28000: SEM:: 1-4 Hour(s)

SEMINAR ~

PHIL 28100: INDEPENDENT STUDY: 1-4 Hour(s)

INDEPENDENT STUDY ~

PHIL 29800: FIELD EXPERIENCE: 1-4 Hour(s)

FIELD EXPERIENCE ~

PHIL 30100: PRECEPTORIAL: 2 Hour(s)

PRECEPTORIAL ~ A Preceptorial is a small focused discussion course in which we will closely read and examine important single works of philosophy which aren't included in other courses. This course is not designed so that the preceptors teach students these texts. Our goal is not mastery of these texts. Instead the goal is for us to think and learn about difficult philosophical texts and ideas. This is intended as a different model of learning to complement our lower-level courses or our upper-level courses where we expect content mastery, skill building, and introduce students to thinking about philosophical texts. The subject and texts of these seminars will vary each year. As an advanced undergraduate course, the preceptorial will be run like a graduate seminar with a strong emphasis on participation and preparation. Enrollment is by instructor permission.

PHIL 31400: 20TH CENTURY CONT PHIL:ES: 3 Hour(s)

20TH CENTURY CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY:ES ~ Now that it has drawn a close, we can begin to make sense of philosophy in the 20th Century. What makes it distinctive? Which topics and figures dominated it and why? How does it carry forth ideas from the 19th Century, and what might it be pointing towards in the future? In this course, we will focus on Continental thought which arises primarily in continental Europe, rather than Analytic philosophy which is more common in Anglo-American departments. We will read about the creation of phenomenology and structuralism and trace the way both movements developed to the point of undermining themselves. Particular attention will be paid to ethical ramifications of these views. This course is offered for four credit hours as PHIL 31500.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 31500: 20TH CEN CONTINENTAL PHIL:ES: 4 Hour(s)

20TH CENTURY CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY:ES ~ Now that it has drawn a close, we can begin to make sense of philosophy in the 20th Century. What makes it distinctive? Which topics and figures dominated it and why? How does it carry forth ideas from the 19th Century, and what might it be pointing towards in the future? In this course, we will focus on Continental thought which arises primarily in continental Europe, rather than Analytic philosophy which is more common in Anglo-American departments. We will read about the creation of phenomenology and structuralism and trace the way both movements developed to the point of undermining themselves. Particular attention will be paid to ethical ramifications of these views. This course is offered for three credit hours as PHIL 31400.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil

PHIL 37000: EXISTENTIALISM:IM,ES: 3 Hour(s)

EXISTENTIALISM:IM,ES ~ An examination of existential thought through the texts of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Camus, Satre, Beauvoir, and others a study of the extential concepts of dread, freedom, subjective truth, bad faith, and authenticity. This course is offered for four credit hours as PHIL 37010.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Interpretive Methods

PHIL 37010: EXISTENTIALISM:IM,ES: 4 Hour(s)

EXISTENTIALISM:IM,ES ~ An examination of existential thought through the texts of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Camus, Satre, Beauvoir, and others a study of the extential concepts of dread, freedom, subjective truth, bad faith, and authenticity. This course is offered for three credit hours as PHIL 37000.

Core: Meaning/Ethics/Soc Responsibil; Interpretive Methods

PHIL 37500: PHENOMENOLOGY: 3 Hour(s)

PHENOMENOLOGY~ An introduction to the movement of phenomenology, its methods and theories, through the writings of Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre. Topics include the phenomenological reductive, lived experience, embodiment, intersubjectivity and the other, and existential psychology.

PHIL 37700: PHILOSOPHY OF THE BODY:IM: 4 Hour(s)

PHILOSOPHY OF THE BODY:IM ~ What is the nature of our bodies? Is the mind essentially independent of the body or is it embodied by its very nature? What can recent neuro-scientific findings tell us about our bodies? This class will examine several analyses of the body, including those by philosophy, cognitive science, and neuro-science. Students' reading and writing skills should improve, as well as their critical awareness of those aspects of our experience that we generally ignore due to their ubiquity, what the ancient Greeks called wonder.

Core: Interpretive Methods

PHIL 37900: PHILOSOPHY OF SPACE:IM: 4 Hour(s)

PHILOSOPHY OF SPACE:IM ~ Space pervades our lives and yet is surprisingly difficult to describe. St. Augustine famously said that as long as no one asked him, he knew perfectly well what time was, but as soon as someone asked him to define it he was all in a muddle. We are going to plunge head first into this muddle by examining the theories of some historical, and artistic perspectives. The course will combine lectures and small group discussions. You will write and rewrite essays, short textual analyses, and present topics to the rest of the class. Your reading and writing skills will get an intensive work-out in this class. This class counts as a philosophy elective.

Core: Interpretive Methods

PHIL 38000: SEM:: 1-4 Hour(s)

SEMINAR ~

PHIL 38100: SPC TPC:: 1-4 Hour(s)

SPECIAL TOPICS ~

PHIL 40000: MJR PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS:: 4 Hour(s)

MAJOR PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS ~ This course is an investigation of a major problem, issue, concept in philosophy, or a study of a particular text. Prerequisite: permission of instructor.

PHIL 40100: FOUNDATIONS OF ETHICS: 4 Hour(s)

FOUNDATIONS OF ETHICS ~ The two most natural questions about ethics are also two of the most difficult: Can moral beliefs be true or false? Why should we be good? Answering these questions requires an investigation into the nature of moral judgments and their connection to motivation and action. What are we doing when we claim that something is morally wrong? Can this claim be true or false? If so, what would make it so? Are there moral facts? Or, are we, perhaps, merely expressing our disapproval of an action? If so, then why should anyone else care about our disapproval? More importantly, can we make sense of moral judgments as either expressions of our attitudes or as claims that could be true or false? And, assuming that we hold that some action is wrong, what sort of reason does this provide? Do moral beliefs need questions such as these focus on the assumptions that any moral judgment makes about epistemology, metaphysics, logic, and philosophical psychology. This course examines historically significant and recent attempts to answer these questions, seeking thereby a deeper insight into the foundations of ethics. A significant seminar paper and presentation are required in this course.

PHIL 47000: HEIDEGGER: BEING AND TIME: 4 Hour(s)

HEIDEGGER BEING AND TIME ~ This class will be a slow reading of one of philosophy's masterpieces: Martin Heidegger's "Being and Time." Considered by many to be the greatest work of twentieth-century philosophy, it has also influenced religious studies, psychology, literary criticism, cognitive science, and many other fields. Heidegger explores, in fascinating detail, what it is like to experience life as a human being, in such a way as to be at once both astonishing and profoundly familiar. Prerequisite: Students must have taken at least two (2) humanities courses, preferably philosophy.

PHIL 47500: FOUCAULT:POLITICS OF IDENTITY: 4 Hour(s)

FOUCAULT THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY ~ Michel Foucault is an important and intriguing figure in late 20th century philosophy. His claim that power affects all human relations has influenced gender studies, literary criticism, religious studies, and traditional views of the medical and psychological professions. Foucault shows how all features of reality and human nature are fundamentally historical, which undermines our traditional pursuits of truth and, at the same time, liberates us. We will examine books from each of the three phases of his work, focusing on his "genealogical" period, in which he describes the historical origin and transformations of punishment and sexuality. Prerequisite: Students must have taken at least two (2) humanities courses, preferably philosophy.

PHIL 48000: SENIOR SEMINAR: 1-4 Hour(s)

SENIOR SEMINAR ~

PHIL 48100: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH: 1-4 Hour(s)

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH ~

PHIL 49800: INTERNSHIP: 4 Hour(s)

INTERNSHIP ~

Academic Offerings

- Philosophy Minor (<https://catalog.hiram.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)