

Philosophy Fall 2026

Beginning Philosophy		Fulfills the Language, Philosophy, and Culture requirement	
<p>This class will examine how we ought to live in a community and how that impacts dialogue, love, and our responsibilities to each other. Authors we may read could include Plato, Boethius, Anselm, Jesus, Aquinas, and others. The class will systematically work through how to read philosophy texts, develop your own answers to important questions, and then express these views when speaking and writing.</p>			
PHIL 2300-001	TBD	Tue, Thur	9:30 - 10:50 am
PHIL 2300-003	Doug Westfall	Mon, Wed, Fri	1:00 - 1:50 pm
PHIL 2300-004	Doug Westfall	Mon, Wed, Fri	2:00 - 2:50 pm

Logic		Fulfills Core Curriculum Math requirement Counts towards Cognitive Science minor	
<p>This is an introduction to symbolic logic via the study of sentential and predicate logic. Topics to be discussed include analyzing arguments, translating ordinary English sentences into a formal language, the methods of truth tables, and natural deduction in sentential and predicate logic.</p>			
PHIL 2310 - 001/701	Joe Gottlieb	Tue, Thur	11:00 - 12:20 pm
PHIL 2310 - D01	John DePoe	ONLINE	ASYNCHRONOUS

Introduction to Ethics		Fulfills the Language, Philosophy, and Culture requirement	
<p>This class will examine questions like: Can personal choices be truly right or wrong? Are there things or acts that should appropriately be referred to as good or evil? Is there a right way to live, and why should I live that way? Do I have obligations towards other people and if so, what are they? How should I think about conflicts between my self-interest and my responsibility to others? We will consider skeptical positions before turning to examine competing answers regarding these questions.</p>			
PHIL 2320-H01	Jeremy Schwartz	Tue, Thur	9:30 - 10:50am
PHIL 2320-003	Doug Westfall	Mon, Wed, Fri	10:00 - 10:50 am
PHIL 2320-004	TBD	Tue, Thur	11:00 - 12:200 pm
PHIL 2320-D01	TBD	ONLINE	ASYNCHRONOUS

Meaning and Value in the Arts

Fulfills Creative Arts Requirement

Is beauty in the eye of the beholder, as some say, or in the object itself? Did art begin with cave paintings and bone flutes, or long before? How can we define art in general, or music, literature, painting, etc.? Are artists geniuses or craftspeople? Is there a difference between art and craft? Is an artwork the idea in the mind of the artist or the thing we see or hear? Since we do not invent musical notes, is a musical work created or discovered? Is a theatrical play a work of literature or a performance art? Is our experience of art works and beautiful objects something special and different from other experiences? What if we were indifferent to beautiful sunsets and all the other beauties of nature? What is the value of art — what would our lives be missing if we had no poetry, no novels, no music, no movies, no plays, no dance, no sculptures, no paintings? We will discuss these and other questions as we read philosophical works on these topics.

PHIL 2340-001

Anna Ribeiro

Tue, Thur

11:00 - 12:20 pm

PHIL 2340-D01

Francesca Di Poppa

ONLINE

ASYNCHRONOUS

World Religions And Philosophy

Fulfills the Language, Philosophy, Culture requirement

This course is a study of seven major world religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. We will study the doctrines and practices of each of these religions; then, for each religion, we will critically examine some element of doctrine or practice to see if it can be justified. Examples might include the doctrines of karma and reincarnation, the doctrine of monotheism, the problem of evil, and the doctrine of the incarnation.

PHIL 2350-D01

TBD

ONLINE

ASYNCHRONOUS

Classical Greek Philosophy

In this class, we will investigate ancient Greek philosophy by closely studying Plato's *Republic*, Plato's *Symposium*, and two chapters from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. These books, perhaps more than any others, invented philosophy as it is practiced in the West. By diving deep into these masterpieces, students will grapple with fundamental question about the nature of justice, love, and friendship.

PHIL 3301-001

Jeremy Schwartz

Tue, Thur

12:30 - 1:50 pm

Social Epistemology

In an age of rapidly advancing technological development (ChatGPT, TikTok algorithms, relentless targeted advertising, and the promise of AI) it is hard to know what to believe. As social beings, we rely on others to form our beliefs about the world. And this dependency makes us vulnerable to misinformation, fake news, and conspiracy. Social media makes it possible for fake news to trend internationally within minutes. How do we distinguish fake from fact? What effect does pervasive false information have on our information ecosphere? Is it ever rational to believe conspiracy theories? What responsibilities do we have as individuals to form beliefs in a responsible way? How can we know anything? This is a class in social epistemology. Our particular focus will be epistemic pathologies: misplaced trust and doubt, fake news, conspiracy theories, and misinformation. We will examine these phenomena through the lens of social media, the attention economy, and algorithmic bias.

PHIL 3311-001

Amy Flowerree

Mon, Wed, Fri

12:00 - 12:50 pm

Intro To Political Philosophy

Basic issues and concepts in political philosophy including discussion of such topics as justice, freedom, equality, authority, community, and the nature of politics and the state.

PHIL 3320-001

TBD

Tue, Thur

9:30 - 10:50 am

Biomedical Ethics

This course will survey a range of topics in biomedical ethics, while also serving as an introduction to philosophical thinking and methodology. Sample questions include: Should parents be allowed to choose the genetic characteristics of their children? Should consenting adults be allowed to sell their organs? How do the rights of fetuses weigh against those of pregnant persons? Is it permissible for doctors to help patients end their lives?

PHIL 3322-001

Michael Schon

Mon, Wed, Fri

11:00 - 11:50 am

PHIL 3322-002

Michael Schon

Mon, Wed, Fri

12:00 - 12:50 pm

PHIL 3322-004

Michael Schon

Mon, Wed, Fri

10:00 - 10:50 am

Philosophy of Religion

This is a course in philosophy of religion. Our orientation will generally be contemporary, but we will also look at historical sources as well. Our topics will include arguments for God's existence; arguments against God's existence; the nature of religious belief and faith; the relationship between God and meaning; and whether we should want God to exist, amongst other things.

PHIL 3324-001

Joe Gottlieb

Tue, Thur

2:00 - 3:20 pm

Environmental Ethics

Should I have kids? Can I eat a burger without feeling guilty? Is my sweet minivan destroying the planet? Should I trade it in for a Prius? Given that we can't live without harming the environment in some way, what is a morally defensible approach to navigating our relationship with the planet and our obligations to future generations. In this class we will explore and refine our positions on these, and other, questions.

PHIL 3325-D01

Doug Westfall

ONLINE

ASYNCHRONOUS

Philosophy of Cognitive Science

Cognitive science is the interdisciplinary study of the mind. In this class, we'll focus specifically on important *philosophical* issues that arise in the course of this study. These include questions about the nature of thought (*Should we think of the mind as a kind of computer? Can computers think?*), mental representation (*How do minds come to represent the external world? How are our mental representations structured?*), and consciousness (*What is consciousness? Can it be scientifically studied?*).

----Required for the Cognitive Science minor----

PHIL 3335-001

Cristina Ballarini

Tue, Thur

11:00 - 12:20 pm

Philosophy And Literature

Poems, stories, and plays are among our most ancient forms of artistic expression, and they exist in every culture. But what makes a string of words a poem or a novel as opposed to just plain conversation or a news article or work memo? Defining what counts as literature is not easy, even if we generally have no difficulty recognizing a literary work. Relatedly, what counts as fiction as opposed to nonfiction? Is a memoir fiction or nonfiction? Another question literary works raise is this: we all know that some things are material objects (a chair) while others are abstract entities (the number 2). A literary work is obviously not identical with the printed book that records it: when we break a chair, we no longer have that chair, but the concept of chair continues to exist. Likewise, when we burn a copy of a book, or delete its audio file, the work itself is not lost. So it seems that a literary work is something abstract, like the number 2. However, whereas Shakespeare created Sonnet 116 in England in the early 1600s, no one invented the number 2; it is what philosophers call a 'universal', eternal and unchanging and without location. So are literary works more like chairs? Other questions we may ask regarding literary works are: How do we interpret them? How do we evaluate them? Is it irrational to feel emotions for fictional characters? Do we acquire knowledge by reading poems or novels that we could not have acquired by other means? What is the value of poems and stories and plays? In this course we will discuss these and other questions about literature as they have been investigated by contemporary philosophers as well as Plato, Aristotle, David Hume and others, testing their theories against actual literary examples.

PHIL 3341-001

Anna Ribeiro

Mon, Wed

2:00 - 3:20 pm

Ethics

Philosophical ethics investigates how we ought to live. Students will examine closely some of the most powerful thinkers on the subject.

PHIL 4320-001

TBD

Tue, Thur

3:30 - 4:50 pm

Philosophy of Language

How does language relate to the world? How do we manage to use words to talk about things? What is the relationship between the words we use and the thoughts that they express? These are the central questions for this course. Along the way, we will explore the concepts of meaning, truth, and belief. We will begin by investigating the work of Frege and Russell on the meaning of proper names. According to them, the relationship between a name and the object it picks out is mediated by descriptive information. The differences between these two competing approaches will be brought out in our discussion of propositions and belief reports. We will go on to examine further implications of direct reference theories for meaning and thought. Other related topics in the course include: truth and meaning, the role of contemporary linguistics, pragmatics and context, metaphor, and pejorative words.

----Counts toward Cognitive Science minor----

PHIL 4331-001

Christopher Hom

Tue, Thur

2:00 - 3:20 pm

Graduate Courses Fall 2026

Basic Issues Contemporary Philosophy

The seminar will focus on basic issues in the history of analytic philosophy, with a focus on the rise and fall of Logical Positivism, and how this impacted such issues as meaning, reference, truth, logical form, analyticity, a priority, necessity, translation, and pragmatics. We will closely read work from the following authors: Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein (early and late), Carnap, Quine, Davidson, Grice, Searle, and Kripke. The course will conclude with a consideration of more contemporary issues such as contextualism, vagueness, non-cognitivism, and meaning skepticism. Requirements include a seminar presentation and a research paper.

PHIL 5308-001

Christopher Hom

Wed

6:00 - 8:50 pm

History of Aesthetics

This class will offer a far from exhaustive survey of major philosophical figures in the history of aesthetics and philosophy of art. We will start with Plato and end with Wittgenstein. Among the figures included are Aristotle, Augustine, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche, and others.

PHIL 5310-001

Francesca Di Poppa

Mon, Wed

2:00 - 3:20 pm

Philosophy of Science

This will be an introductory survey course looking at a number of central topics in the Philosophy of Science. Possible topics include scientific methodology, confirmation theory, induction, underdetermination and theory choice, scientific realism, causation, laws, explanation, and the role of values in science.

PHIL 5330-001

Joel Velasco

Tues, Thur

3:30-4:50 pm

Philosophy of Mind

Mental Representation

Mental representation is a perennial topic in philosophy of mind and remains at the center of many current debates. As such, it's a great subject for a graduate seminar: students without any background in the philosophy of mind will get a broad introduction to central issues in the field, while those with more experience will have the opportunity to engage with work at the cutting edge of current research.

Our seminar will focus on the following questions:

What is the representational theory of mind committed to? What role (if any) should mental representations play in our explanations of behavior?

In virtue of what do mental representations represent (i.e. how do they get their representational contents)?

What are concepts and how do we learn them?

What is the relationship between representational content and phenomenal character?

PHIL 5331-001

Cristina Ballarini

Tues, Thur

2:00-3:20 pm

Seminar In Teaching & Writing

This is a class for first year graduate students. It is designed to equip students with the professional skills necessary to succeed in various aspects of academic philosophy: teaching, reading, writing, and applying to PhD programs. These skills will be developed through rigorous and careful study of the core concepts, arguments, and texts in contemporary Epistemology.

PHIL 5350-001

Amy Flowerree

Mon, Wed

3:30-4:50 pm