

PHILOSOPHY

philosophy.northwestern.edu

The Department of Philosophy is committed to exposing students to a broad range of philosophical traditions and issues. With strengths in Anglo-American and continental philosophy, the department provides courses in all systematic areas of philosophy as well as a strong array of courses in ancient, medieval, and modern philosophy. The research interests of members of the department show a similar breadth, and many of them invite interdisciplinary pursuits with relevant scientific or other humanistic disciplines. This pluralism enables students to explore philosophy's application to all areas of life and to appreciate the diversity of approaches possible in philosophy.

Programs of Study

- Philosophy Major (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-major/>)
- Philosophy Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)

PHIL 101-7 College Seminar (1 Unit) Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and introducing skills necessary to thriving at Northwestern. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated.

PHIL 101-8 First-Year Writing Seminar (1 Unit) Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and focused on the fundamentals of effective, college-level written communication. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated.

PHIL 110-0 Introduction to Philosophy (1 Unit) Fundamental problems and methods of philosophy. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 150-0 Elementary Logic I (1 Unit) Introduction to the philosophical study of logical entailment and deduction. Systems of classical propositional and predicate logic; and their bearing on philosophical quandaries. First quarter of PHIL 150-0/PHIL 250-0/PHIL 350-0 sequence. *Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis Formal Studies Distro Area*

PHIL 151-0 Scientific Reasoning (1 Unit) Introduction to probabilistic calculus and its role in science. Topics may include Bayes's theorem, the Dutch Book theorem, hypothesis and confirmation, problems of induction, subjective and objective interpretations of probability, causal reasoning. *Formal Studies Distro Area*

PHIL 210-1 History of Philosophy - Ancient (1 Unit) Classical readings from authors of the Western tradition of ancient philosophy, like Plato, Aristotle, Stoics, Epicureans, Cicero, Seneca. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 210-2 History of Philosophy - Medieval (1 Unit) Classical readings from authors of the Western tradition of medieval philosophy. *Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 210-3 History of Philosophy - Early Modern (1 Unit) Classical readings from authors of the Western tradition of the early modern age of enlightenment, like Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Leibniz, Hume. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 216-0 Introduction to Pragmatism (1 Unit) Introduction to classical and contemporary literature in pragmatist philosophy: Peirce, James, Mead, Dewey, and 20th century neopragmatist authors (Quine, Rorty,

Putnam, et al.). *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 219-0 Introduction to Existentialism (1 Unit) Principal sources of existential philosophy: Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Marcel, Nietzsche, Sartre, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and others. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 220-0 Introduction to Critical Theory (1 Unit) Crisis, criticism, and critique in philosophical, political, and cultural contexts. Focus on the philosophical aspects of critical theory with reference to social conditions and art, literary, and/or political forms. COMP_LIT 207-0 and PHIL 220-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

PHIL 221-0 Gender, Politics, & Philosophy (1 Unit) Role of gender difference in the main political-philosophical traditions: social contract, liberalism, republicanism, socialism-Marxism, critical theory. The classics of feminist political philosophy (Wollstonecraft, Mill, Taylor, Engels), followed by contemporary debates. Taught with GNDR_ST 233-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

PHIL 222-0 Introduction to Africana Philosophy (1 Unit) Conceptual and historical approaches to philosophical questions, topics, and figures belonging to the African Diaspora including political thought, ethical thought, aesthetics, hermeneutics, philosophy of identity, and epistemologies. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

PHIL 224-0 Philosophy, Race, and Racism (1 Unit) Introduction to philosophical discussions of race, race identity, and racism. Readings may be drawn from classical as well as contemporary sources. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

PHIL 225-0 Minds and Machines (1 Unit) Introductory course addressing philosophical issues arising from the study of intelligence, including the possibility of machine intelligence and its relevance to the study of human intelligence. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Disci*

PHIL 240-0 Freedom and Responsibility (1 Unit) Introduction to philosophy through an examination of major theories of freedom and responsibility, with attention to how these may be affected by the scientific worldview. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 250-0 Elementary Logic II (1 Unit) Introduction to variations of classical logic, and their application to philosophical topics, among them necessity and possibility, obligation and permission, knowledge and truth. Second quarter of PHIL 150-0/PHIL 250-0/PHIL 350-0 sequence. Prerequisite: PHIL 150-0. *Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis Formal Studies Distro Area*

PHIL 253-0 Introduction to the Philosophy of Language (1 Unit) Contemporary themes and theories in the philosophy of language. Topics may include context and semantics, the semantics-pragmatics boundary, implicature, reference, presupposition, speech acts, and the role of language in shaping conceptions of social and natural reality. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Disci*

PHIL 254-0 Introduction to Philosophy of the Natural Sciences (1 Unit) Philosophical and methodological issues in the natural sciences, such as the discovery and testing of hypotheses, explanation, theory selection,

the nature of scientific laws, causality, space and time, determinism.

Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area

PHIL 255-0 Theory of Knowledge (1 Unit) Basic philosophical questions about human knowledge, focusing on skepticism and competing theories of knowledge. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 257-0 Philosophy of the Universe (1 Unit) Methods for and approaches to philosophical inquiry about the ultimate nature of the universe. Topics include: emergence of the macroscopic world, laws of nature, the directionality of time, cosmological arguments for the existence of God, life, consciousness. No Prerequisites. *Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 259-0 Introduction to Metaphysics (1 Unit) Introductory discussion of some debates in contemporary metaphysics. Possible topics include objectivity, time, universals, causations, possible worlds, and material constitution. *Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 260-0 Introduction to Moral Philosophy (1 Unit) Overview of some of the main ideas and most influential writings of moral philosophy. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 261-0 Introduction to Political Philosophy (1 Unit) Overview of some of the main ideas and most influential writings of political philosophy. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 262-0 Ethical Problems and Public Issues (1 Unit) Analysis of such controversial issues as the death penalty, abortion, euthanasia, sexual morality, economic justice and welfare, pornography and censorship, discrimination and preferential treatment, the environment, and world hunger. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

PHIL 266-0 Philosophy of Religion (1 Unit) Survey of the central issues in the philosophic analysis of religious experience and cultures: the existence of God or divine-like forces, creation, miracles, the claims of faith versus the claims of reason, sin, free will, immortality, revelation, harmony of the universe, community of humanity and universe. May be repeated for credit with change of topic. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 268-0 Ethics and the Environment (1 Unit) Topics include our relationship to the environment, the obligation to future generations, pollution and population control, food and energy production and distribution, species diversity, and the preservation of wilderness. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 269-0 Bioethics (1 Unit) Ethical analysis of a variety of issues such as the human genome project, genetic therapy, cloning and stem cell transplantation, human and animal research, reproductive technologies, and the allocation of resources. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 273-1 The Brady Scholars Program: The Moral Life (1 Unit) Course asking questions that allow determining how we are to treat and interact with others. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 273-2 The Brady Scholars Program: The Good Life (1 Unit) Course asking questions such as what it takes for a human life to go well, the nature of happiness, the role of pleasure, what makes lives meaningful, rich, flourishing, what human dignity consists in. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 273-3 The Brady Scholars Program: The Good Society (1 Unit) Course investigating domestic and international questions, such as

whether democracy is the most legitimate form of government, what obligations national states have to others, the role of peace, international inequality. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

PHIL 275-0 Climate Change and Sustainability: Ethical Dimensions (1 Unit) Interdisciplinary analysis of ethical issues concerning climate change; resource use, conservation practices, and sustainability. ISEN 230-0 is taught with PHIL 275-0; students may not earn credit for both courses. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

PHIL 280-0 Introduction to the Philosophy of Art (1 Unit) Introduction to major themes and theories in the philosophy of art, including questions concerning the nature of taste, beauty, art, and artistic creativity. May also be taught as an introduction to the philosophy and theory of one or several of the arts, e.g. philosophy of film, philosophy of figurative art, etc. *Literature Fine Arts Distro Area Literature and Arts Foundational Discipline*

PHIL 310-0 Studies in Ancient Philosophy (1 Unit) Works of one or more important philosophers or movements before 500 CE. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 311-0 Studies in Medieval Philosophy (1 Unit) Works of one or more important philosophers or philosophical movements between 500 and 1500 CE. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 312-0 Studies in Modern Philosophy (1 Unit) Works of one or more important philosophers or philosophical movements between 1500 and 1800. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 313-1 Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' I (1 Unit) Detailed analysis of Kant's claims to justify human knowledge in The Critique of Pure Reason (the 'Analytic of Pure Reason').

PHIL 313-2 Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' II (1 Unit) Detailed analysis of Kant's criticism of traditional metaphysics in The Critique of Pure Reason (the 'Dialectic of Pure Reason').

PHIL 314-0 Studies in German Philosophy (1 Unit) Study of one or more key themes, figures, or historical developments in German philosophy from the 18th century to the present. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 315-0 Studies in French Philosophy (1 Unit) One or more figures of 20th century or contemporary French philosophy, such as Michel Foucault, Simone de Beauvoir, Frantz Fanon. May include perspectives from feminist, anti-racist, decolonial and/or queer theory. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 317-0 Studies in 19th and 20th Century Philosophy (1 Unit) Study of one or more key philosophical themes, figures, or developments of the 19th century, 20th century, or both. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 318-0 Studies in Contemporary Philosophy (1 Unit) Selected philosophical works of the latter part of the 20th century or the 21st century. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 319-0 Existentialism and Its Sources (1 Unit) Intensive study of one or a small number of major contributions to the existentialist tradition. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 321-0 Philosophy & Gender (1 Unit) Survey of approaches to sex and gender throughout the history of philosophy. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 324-0 Studies in African American Philosophy (1 Unit)

Study of the work of one or more important African American philosophers or philosophical movements of the 19th or 20th centuries.

May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity

PHIL 325-0 Philosophy of Mind (1 Unit)

Selected topics in the philosophy of mind: mind-body problem, problem of other minds, self-knowledge, personal identity, philosophical psychology.

May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 326-0 Topics in Philosophy of Medicine (1 Unit)

Introduces premed students to reasoning through problems they are likely to encounter. For example: Is it ever ethical to withhold information from a patient? Should physicians help terminally ill patients commit suicide? Should health care for the elderly be more limited than for children? How does uncertainty and risk bear on medical decisions?

Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area

PHIL 327-0 Philosophy of Psychology (1 Unit)

Problems such as the nature of psychological explanation, experimentation and the testing of psychological claims, the standing of psychology as a science, reductionism, the unconscious, and conceptualizing the psyche and its processes. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 328-0 Classics of Analytic Philosophy (1 Unit)

Examination of classic texts that shaped the analytic movement of 20th century Anglo-American philosophy. Readings from Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Carnap, Quine, and others.

PHIL 330-0 Practical Reasoning and Choice (1 Unit)

Theory of decision making, what it is to decide, possible constraints on decisions, how to understand preference reversals, paradoxes of decision making, and actions taken against one's better judgment.

PHIL 350-0 Advanced Logic (1 Unit)

Alternating topics. Metalogic: Formal semantics, soundness, completeness, and compactness of predicate logic; Nonstandard models of arithmetic and the Lowenheim-Skolem theorems. Incompleteness: Recursive functions, the incompleteness of arithmetic and undecidability of predicate logic. Definability and undefinability of provability, consistency, and truth in arithmetic. Third quarter of PHIL 150-0/PHIL 250-0/PHIL 350-0 sequence.

Prerequisite: PHIL 150-0.

PHIL 351-0 Advanced Topics in Philosophical Logic (1 Unit)

Advanced application of methods of modern formal logic to a variety of questions in metaphysics, philosophy of logic, philosophy of language, and philosophy of mathematics.

Prerequisite: PHIL 250-0.

PHIL 352-0 Philosophy of Mathematics (1 Unit)

Nature of mathematical entities and mathematical truth. Platonism, intuitionism, fictionalism, nominalism, the synthetic a priori, self-referential paradoxes, incompleteness and undecidability, consistency, alternative axiomatizations and uniqueness, the relation between mathematics and logic, and mathematical revolutions.

PHIL 353-0 Philosophy of Language (1 Unit)

The nature and uses of language as presenting philosophical problems, e.g., theory of reference, the modes of meaning, definition, metaphor, problems of syntax, and semantics. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 355-0 Scientific Method in the Social Sciences (1 Unit)

Analysis of the philosophical foundations of social inquiry with reference to selected problems, thinkers, and schools, both classical and modern.

PHIL 357-0 Topics in Metaphysics and Epistemology (1 Unit)

Examination of current debates in metaphysics and epistemology, broadly understood. Possible topics include skepticism, mental representation, time, the epistemology of testimony, linguistic norms, personal identity, causation, and modality. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 358-0 Epistemology (1 Unit)

Central problems in the theory of knowledge, emphasizing contemporary developments. A priori knowledge, perception memory, induction, and theories of meaning and truth. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 359-0 Studies in Metaphysics (1 Unit)

The most general features of reality and their relation to thought and language. Topics may include existence, time, identity, properties, truth, causality, and freedom. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 360-0 Topics in Moral Philosophy (1 Unit)

Philosophical analysis of recent or contemporary issues, theories, or figures in moral philosophy. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 361-0 Topics in Social and Political Philosophy (1 Unit)

Philosophical analysis of a recent or contemporary issue, individual philosopher, or school of thought in social and political philosophy. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 362-0 Studies in the History of Ethical and Political Theory (1 Unit)

Examination of one or more major figures or movements in the history of moral or political philosophy. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 363-0 Kant's Moral Theory (1 Unit)

Exploration of the moral and ethical thought of Immanuel Kant through careful study of Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals along with readings from the Critique of Practical Reason, Metaphysics of Morals, and Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason.

Ethics Values Distro Area

PHIL 364-0 Business and Professional Ethics (1 Unit)

Application of ethical theories (Kantianism, utilitarianism, etc.) in a commercial setting. Topics include social responsibilities of corporations, public regulation, moral limits of marketing (e.g., marketing to children, noxious products), social justice versus fair compensation.

Advanced Expression Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area

PHIL 366-0 Advanced Studies in the Philosophy of Religion (1 Unit)

Central problems in the philosophy of religion. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 370-0 Philosophy & Literature (1 Unit)

Issues involving the relationship between philosophy and literature. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 373-1 The Brady Scholars Program: The Civically Engaged Life (0.5 Unit)

Students in the Brady Scholars Program meet at least once each week, among themselves and with civic leaders, to plan their community service project, and to bring it to completion.

PHIL 373-2 The Brady Scholars Program: The Civically Engaged Life (0.5 Unit)

PHIL 375-0 Issues in Environmental Philosophy (1 Unit) Interdisciplinary analysis of a contemporary issue, individual philosopher, or school of thought in environmental philosophy. PHIL 375-0 taught also as ISEN 375-0. *Advanced Expression Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

PHIL 380-0 Philosophy of Art (1 Unit)

Topics to be discussed might include the nature and purpose of art, art and perception, the nature of creativity, and the social responsibility of the artist. May also be taught as advanced topics in the philosophy and theory of one or several of the arts, e.g. in the philosophy of film, philosophy of figurative art, philosophy of music, etc. May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

Advanced Expression

PHIL 390-0 Special Topics In Philosophy (1 Unit)

May be repeated for credit with change of topic.

PHIL 397-0 HONKOL -- Advanced research methods in philosophy

Honors Colloquium (1 Unit) This course provides students as they design, research, and write their senior thesis with a group-research experience to refine their methods. Students will engage with each other's research and the Honors Convener to improve research methods to arrive at professional philosophical work. Each student presents their research project, and upon completion receives critical discussion of their presentation of research.

PHIL 398-1 Senior Tutorial (1 Unit) Senior thesis. Grade of K given in PHIL 398-1. Prerequisite: consent of instructor. *Advanced Expression*

PHIL 398-2 Senior Tutorial (1 Unit) Senior thesis. Grade of K given in PHIL 398-1. Prerequisite: consent of instructor. *Advanced Expression*

PHIL 399-0 Independent Study (1 Unit) Open to properly qualified students with consent of instructor. Can only be applied to Major or Minor after approval of DUS upon student's petition with dept form.