

PHILOSOPHY (PHIL)

PHIL-101 Introduction to Philosophy

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Fall, Spring, and Summer, All Years

This course is the discovery and exploration of major intellectual problems of humankind through methods of questioning, analysis, synthesis, and critique. It emphasizes developing a world view and higher-order reasoning skills through consideration of such issues as the nature of time and physical reality, mind and consciousness, free will, evil, truth, ethics, and the nature and existence of God. This course is for students interested in the meaning of life and the implications of modern science for understanding our world.

Recommended Prerequisites: ENGL-101

PHIL-103 Ethics

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Fall, Spring, and Summer, All Years

This course is the investigation and discussion of personal, social, and professional moral issues and the principles and thinking skills used for their resolution. Emphasis is on the development and application of reasoning skills for decision making in the moral domain. This course provides awareness, sensitivity, insights, and skills essential to the success and moral integrity of the person in today's morally complex world.

Recommended Prerequisites: ENGL-101

PHIL-111 World Religions

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Fall and Spring Only, All Years

This course presents an overview of the historical and cultural settings, main beliefs, and practices of American Indian indigenous spirituality, of the great Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism) and of the Western religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). Attention is given to similarities and differences in concepts of humanity and in relationship to society, nature, and the divine. This course is for students interested in humankind's religious heritage and cultures of other parts of the world.

Recommended Prerequisites: ENGL-101

PHIL-201 Logic and Critical Thinking

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Fall, Spring, and Summer, All Years

This course is a general introduction to the reasoning skills and psychological approaches used for effective decision-making, problem-solving, and argument analysis and evaluation. This course provides instruction in skills essential to success in everyday life, citizenship, and as a professional in any career.

Recommended Prerequisites: ENGL-101 or COMM-101

PHIL-205 Political and Social Philosophy

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Fall Only, All Years

This course examines the most influential thinkers in the tradition of Western political philosophy. What we understand today as representative government, democracy, communism, socialism, and capitalism are the institutional manifestations of such noteworthy minds as Aristotle, Plato, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Locke, James Madison, Niccolo Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, Adam Smith Alexis de Tocqueville, Karl Marx, and Chantal Delsol. Students taking this course will come to appreciate the powerful influence philosophy has had on the shape and structure of the various competing modern political traditions and ideologies. The class will conduct a thorough examination of each thinker's perspective on such issues as the ideal structure of government, the role of human nature in political theory, the relationship between freedom and authority, the role that equality, inequality, economics, and power play in politics, and the competing definitions of political legitimacy. Students taking this course will be well-equipped to defend their own positions in the contemporary debates over issues of social and political justice.

Prerequisites: ENGL-101

Recommended Prerequisites: PHIL-101

PHIL-210 History of Ancient Philosophy

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Fall Only, All Years

This course will examine the teachings of the ancient Greek philosophers and their influence on the later development of Western philosophy and culture. The course is organized around the pre-Socratic philosophers (Pythagoras, Heraclitus, and others), the Sophists, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle and the fundamental questions they asked about human nature, reality, ethics, politics, economics, education, science, knowledge, religion and happiness. Students in this course will be introduced to what the ancient Greeks understood as the wisdom tradition in philosophy with an exploration into the most fundamental and perennial questions of human existence.

Prerequisites: ENGL-101

Recommended Prerequisites: PHIL-101

PHIL-215 History of Modern Philosophy

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Spring Only, Even Years

This course covers the major European thinkers of the Enlightenment period of the 17th and 18th centuries and examines the way in which their perspectives revolutionized European discourse concerning the nature and structure of reality and knowledge. Students will be introduced to the thought of Francis Bacon, Rene Descartes, Baruch Spinoza, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Thomas Hobbes, and other major thinkers of the period. In addition, students will examine how Enlightenment philosophy led to new attitudes concerning religion, politics, ethics, economics, and human nature.

Prerequisites: ENGL-101

Recommended Prerequisites: PHIL-101

PHIL-220    **Asian Philosophy**

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Spring Only, Odd Years

This course will examine for the most part the major Asian philosophical traditions of India and China, and to a lesser extent, Japan. These major traditions of India and China serve as the foundation for the "minor" philosophical traditions in Asia. For example, the Indian and Chinese traditions serve as a source for the philosophical traditions of Southeast Asia, Tibet, Korea, and Japan. We will focus on the main metaphysical, epistemological, political, and ethical issues that characterize each of these traditions, and to some extent we will compare these worldviews with western traditions where applicable. In addition, students will have the chance to read and reflect upon various modern and contemporary representatives of each of these traditions, such as Gandhi (India), Basho (Japan) and Anchee Min (China). This course is a timely introduction to the philosophical traditions of two of the major players on the world stage: India and China, and the course should help students to gain valuable sensitivity to the worldviews of two civilizations that will surely be gaining in extraordinary influence during the 21st century.

Prerequisites: ENGL-101 or an appropriate score on a placement test.

Recommended Prerequisites: PHIL-101

PHIL-222 Environmental Ethics

3 Credits

Lecture: 3 hours per week

Offering: Fall and Spring Only, All Years

This course investigates the historical development of the relationship between humans and the environment and then explores the ethical questions that pertain to human choices regarding animals and the environment. Students will address such questions as: What is the environment and do we have an obligation to protect it? Do non-human animals have rights? What is the proper ethical balance between economic and environmental concerns regarding natural resources? Does the present generation have an ethical obligation to preserve a healthy environment for future generations?.

Prerequisites: ENGL-101

Recommended Prerequisites: PHIL-101