

# Undergraduate Philosophy Classes – Spring 2020

\*Note: All PHIL classes listed here satisfy the A&S GenEd Arts & Humanities Requirement. Those that may also be used to fulfill other A&S GenEd requirements are indicated following the course descriptions.

## PHIL 1000: Introduction to Philosophy

Introduces students to the most fundamental questions of human existence, either topically or through various major figures in philosophy. Topics may include free will, the mind-body problem, the nature of the self, the existence of God, knowledge of the external world, the nature of morality, the meaning of life.

*MWF 9:00-9:50, 11:00-11:50, 12:00-12:50, 2:00-2:50; MW 1:00-1:50 (+ recitation), 3:00-4:15, 4:30-5:45; TR 3:30-4:45, 5:00-6:15*

## PHIL 1010: Introduction to Western Philosophy: Ancient

Introduces major philosophical ideas originating in ancient Greece, including the concepts of *eudaimonia* (happiness), *sophia* (knowledge), *philosophia*, *psychê* (soul), *aretê* (virtue), *erôs* (love), and democracy, placing these in historical context and relating them to subsequent philosophical developments. Topics may include the nature of happiness; why philosophy and democracy flourished in ancient Greece; the ancient Greek origins of science; whether being a virtuous person makes you happier; and ancient Greek thinking about life, love, and death.

*MW 3:00-4:15, 4:30-5:45*

## PHIL 1020: Introduction to Western Philosophy: Modern

Introduces several philosophical texts and doctrines of 17th and 18th century Europe. Gives special attention to the connection between philosophical ideas and the wider historical milieu: social, political and literary.

*MWF 10:00-10:50, 1:00-1:50, 2:00-2:50*

## PHIL 1100: Ethics

Introductory study of major philosophies on the nature of the good for humanity, principles of evaluation, and moral choice as they apply to contemporary moral problems.

*MWF 10:00-10:50, 1:00-1:50, 2:00-2:50; MW 12:00-12:50 (+ recitation), 3:00-4:15, 4:30-5:45*

## PHIL 1160: Introduction to Medical Ethics

Introduces students to moral dilemmas in medical practice, biomedical research, and health policy, placing them in the context of comprehensive ethical theories and core principles of bioethics. Topics may include: euthanasia; abortion; organ procurement; moral status; research on nonhuman animals; navigating cultural differences between patients and health professionals; and the fair distribution of healthcare resources; as well as the bioethical issues arising from technological advances in medicine, including genetic modification and assistive reproductive technologies.

*MW 3:00-4:15, 4:30-5:45*

## PHIL 1200: Contemporary Social Problems

Examines competing positions in debates over a wide variety of controversial moral, social and political issues. Topics may include: abortion, world poverty, animal rights, immigration, physician-assisted suicide, freedom of religion, hate speech, cloning, income inequality, pornography, gun rights, racial profiling, capital punishment, overpopulation, prostitution, drug legalization, torture.

*MWF 9:00-9:50, 10:00-10:50, 11:00-11:50, 1:00-1:50, 2:00-2:50; MW 3:00-4:15, 4:30-5:45; TR 11:00-11:50 (+ recitation), 3:30-4:45, 5:00-6:15*

## PHIL 1250: Poverty, Power, & Patriotism: Issues of Global Justice

Explores justice (and injustice) in global and local contexts, introducing students to major traditions in political philosophy and core concepts like equality, liberty, reciprocity, and distributive justice. Specific topics may include: racism; sexism; reparations; colonialism; famine; immigration; patriotism; exploitation; labor justice; climate change; terrorism; and war. Relates political topics in U.S. society to their global context, challenging students to consider marginalization along axes of race, gender, and class across cultural boundaries. **A&S GenEd: Global Diversity**

*MWF 10:00-10:50, 1:00-1:50, 2:00-2:50*

## PHIL 1400: Philosophy & the Sciences

Considers philosophical topics and concepts related to the natural sciences, such as the following: science and pseudo-science; scientific method; the nature of explanation, theory, confirmation, and falsification; the effect of science on basic concepts like mind, freedom, time, and causality; ethics of experimentation; and the relation of science to society. **A&S GenEd: Natural Science**

*MW 12:00-12:50 (+ recitation), 4:30-5:45*

## PHIL 1440: Critical Thinking

Develops students' skills in evaluating arguments and other aspects of critical thinking, focusing on the ways people reason and attempt to justify their beliefs. Activities may include modelling arguments, detecting common fallacies, examining the use (and misuse) of scientific evidence, and learning the basics of symbolic logic.

*MWF 12:00-12:50, 1:00-1:50, 2:00-2:50; MW 3:00-3:50 (+ recitation)*

## PHIL 1500: Reading, Writing, & Reasoning

Teaches students how to write argumentative papers. Each seminar will focus narrowly on some controversial topic. For example, one seminar might focus on the existence of God, whereas another might question whether we have free will. In all cases, a significant portion of the course will be devoted to learning how to write cogent argumentative papers about controversial topics. **A&S GenEd: Written Communication**

*TR 8:00-9:15, 9:30-10:45, 11:00-12:15, 12:30-1:45*

## PHIL 1600: Philosophy & Religion

Philosophical introduction to some of the central concepts and beliefs of religious traditions, focusing particularly on the question of the existence of God and on the relation between religious beliefs and moral beliefs.

*MW 3:00-4:15*

## PHIL 2140: Environmental Justice

Studies the intersection of environmental health and social justice, examining how political and economic institutions affect our planet and considering environmental problems in light of social problems that produce them. Topics may include sustainable development, climate justice, responsibility to future generations, global poverty, environmental racism, and the relation between economic systems (e.g., capitalism) and environmental concerns. Part philosophy, part policy, this class weaves together moral and factual issues, addressing fairness, rights, equality, and responsibility.

*TR 3:30-4:45*

## PHIL 2150: Ethics & Sex

Explores a variety of moral questions relating to sex and procreation. Topics may include arguments for and against the wrongness of masturbation, incest, pedophilia, bestiality, necrophilia, voyeurism, pornography, sadomasochism, prostitution, abortion, commercial surrogacy and cloning, as well as arguments addressing such additional subjects as what constitutes rape and whether procreation is morally obligatory, optional, or forbidden.

*MWF 2:00-2:50*

## PHIL 2160: Ethics & Information Technology

Examines contemporary ethical debates about the use, misuse, and development of information technology. Topics include ethical issues surrounding privacy, security, identity, hacking and cyber crime, automation technologies such as drones and self-driving cars, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality. **A&S GenEd: Social Science**

*MW 3:00-4:15, 4:30-5:45*

## PHIL 2200: Major Social Theories

Explores fundamental questions concerning the nature and legitimacy of major social and political institutions. Topics may include the nature of freedom; the meaning and value of democracy; competing conceptions of justice; the basis of political authority; civil disobedience; human dignity and individual rights; social conflict, tyranny, and war; just and unjust distributions of wealth; the relation between ethics and politics; the nature of political belief; and arguments for and against socialism, communism, libertarianism, and anarchism.

*MW 3:00-4:15*

**PHIL 2220: Philosophy & Law**

Considers philosophical issues related to law in general and the U.S. system in particular. Topics to be covered may address such questions as the following: What is the nature of law? What kinds of acts should the law prohibit (e.g., abortion, drug use, pornography, cloning)? Is there a moral obligation to obey the law? Can civil disobedience be justified? Is there a justification for punishing people for breaking the law? Is capital punishment, in particular, morally justified?

MWF 2:00-2:50, 3:00-3:50

**PHIL 2240: Philosophy & Sports**

Introduces students to philosophical issues surrounding sport. Topics may include: paying college athletes, sex testing in sports, the use of performance enhancing drugs, sports and gambling, the nature and value of sports and sportsmanship, gender equity and sports, the ethics of strategic fouling, sports fandom, the coach-athlete relationship, athletes as role models, and the risk of extreme bodily harm.

**A&S GenEd: Social Science**

MWF 10:00-10:50, 12:00-12:50, 2:00-2:50

**PHIL 2270: Philosophy & Race**

Explores the historical relationship between western philosophy and race and investigates the ways in which philosophy can be used to address contemporary racial issues.

**A&S GenEd: U.S. Diversity, Global Diversity**

MWF 12:00-12:50, 2:00-2:50; MW 11:00-11:50 (+ recitation)

**PHIL 2290: Philosophy & Gender**

Analyzes critically the concepts of sex, gender, and their intersection with other aspects of identity, exploring how these impact the extent to which people face injustice because of their gender.

**A&S GenEd: U.S. Diversity, Global Diversity**

MWF 11:00-11:50, 12:00-12:50; MW 1:00-1:50 (+ recitation)

**PHIL 2440: Symbolic Logic**

Introduces students to sentential logic, the logic of quantification and some of the basic concepts and results of metalogic (interpretations, validity and soundness).

MW 3:00-4:15; TR 3:30-4:45

**PHIL 3000: History of Ancient Philosophy**

Survey of selected figures in ancient Greek and Roman philosophy and in medieval philosophy. Philosophers studied may include the pre-Socratics, Plato, Aristotle, the Hellenistic philosophers and such figures as Aquinas and Occam. Explores the larger cultural context that influenced these philosophers and were, in turn, influenced by them.

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 9:30-10:45, 3:30-4:45

**PHIL 3010: History of Modern Philosophy**

Introduces modern philosophy, focusing on the period from Descartes through Kant. In addition to careful analysis of philosophical arguments, attention is paid to the ways in which philosophers responded to and participated in major developments in the 17th and 18th century, such as the scientific revolution.

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll*

MWF 10:00-10:50; TR 2:00-3:15

**PHIL 3100: Ethical Theory**

Examines important doctrines and arguments in various areas of theoretical ethics, such as the normative ethics of behavior, axiology, virtue theory and metaethics.

*Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

MWF 12:00-12:50, 1:00-1:50

**PHIL 3110: Feminist Practical Ethics**

Examines issues of public policy and personal ethics in light of the basic feminist commitment to gender justice. Feminists often disagree about how to interpret gender justice, and the readings for this course present competing feminist points of view on a range of topics such as: the environment, sex trafficking, immigration, abortion rights, fashion and beauty industries, cosmetic surgery, veiling, food, and militarism.

*Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

MWF 12:00-12:50

**PHIL 3140: Environmental Ethics**

Examines major traditions in moral philosophy to see what light they shed on value issues in environmental policy and the value presuppositions of the economic, ecological, and juridical approaches to the environment.

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll*

MWF 9:00-9:50; TR 11:00-12:15, 12:30-1:45

**PHIL 3160: Bioethics**

Analysis of ethical problems involved in such issues as abortion, euthanasia, organ transplants, eugenics, treatment of the patient as a person and the institutional nature of the health care delivery system.

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll*

MW 3:00-4:15, 4:30-5:45

**PHIL 3190: War and Morality**

Focuses on moral issues raised by war. When, if ever, can war be morally justified? Are rules of war globally applicable, or are they affected by local religious and cultural frameworks? Are colonized nations bound by the same rules of war as their colonizer states? Are states ever obligated to intervene to stop massacres or genocides in other states?

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll*

MWF 11:00-11:50, 1:00-1:50

**PHIL 3200: Social and Political Philosophy**

This course will address issues surrounding state authority, including the state's justification (if any) for coercively imposing laws on the rest of society and the obligation (if any) for citizens to obey the state. We will consider social contract theories (explicit, implicit, and hypothetical), fairness-based theories, democratic theories, and utilitarian theories of authority. We will also discuss the practical implications of rejecting the idea of authority, and whether and how a society might function without a state.

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 3:30-4:45

**PHIL 3260: Philosophy and the International Order**

Considers philosophical topics concerning the international economic, political and legal systems. Topics that may be considered include the nature of international law, war and peace, humanitarian intervention, international justice, world hunger and human rights.

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll; A&S GenEd: Global Diversity*

MWF 1:00-1:50

**PHIL 3410: History of Science: Ancients to Newton**

Surveys the history of science up to Newton, including the emergence of scientific modes of thinking from religious and philosophical roots in the Near East and Greece to the development of these modes in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Culminates with Isaac Newton and the 17th century scientific revolution.

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll; A&S GenEd: Natural Science*

TR 3:30-4:45

**PHIL 3430: History of Science: Newton to Einstein**

History of physical and biological science, from the epoch-making achievements of Charles Darwin in biology to the dawn of the 20th century revolutions in physics, chemistry and genetics. Deals with the success of the mechanical philosophy of nature and its problems. Department enforced prerequisite: 6 hours of philosophy course work.

*Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll; A&S GenEd: Natural Science*

MWF 2:00-2:50

**PHIL 3480: Critical Thinking/Writing in Philosophy**

Focuses upon the fundamental skills, methods, concepts and distinctions that are essential for the study of philosophy. Basic skills covered include the writing of philosophy papers, the reading of articles and the extraction and evaluation of arguments.

*Only PHIL majors; Sophomore Standing or higher to enroll; A&S GenEd: Written Communication*

MWF 12:00-12:50, 1:00-1:50

**PHIL 3600: Philosophy of Religion**

Explores fundamental questions concerning major world religions, especially the Abrahamic religions. Possible topics include: the divine attributes (Is perfect goodness compatible with the existence of hell? Can God be truly omnipotent?), the problem of evil, divine hiddenness and evidence of the existence of God, religious experience, the legitimacy of faith, the dilemma of freedom and divine foreknowledge, God and morality, tensions between religion and science, conceptions of the self in Abrahamic religions and in Buddhism.

*Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

MW 3:00-4:15

**PHIL 4010: Single Philosopher \*Aristotle\***

This course is an upper-division seminar on Aristotle intended for advanced philosophy undergraduates. We will begin with Aristotle's ethics and politics, and then turn to the methodological and metaphysical underpinnings of his ethical theory, including his method of argument and epistemology, his metaphysics, theology, philosophy of science, and psychology. Prerequisites: 12 hours of philosophy (4 courses), or instructor's consent. One of those courses should have been Phil 3000 History of Ancient Greek Philosophy or the equivalent. This is not intended as an introduction to philosophy, or as an introduction to ancient philosophy. *Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 12:30-1:45

**PHIL 4020: Topics in the History of Philosophy  
\*Hellenistic Philosophy\***

The aim of this course is to provide both a broad overview of the three schools of Hellenistic Philosophy – the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the Academic Sceptics – but with a decided focus on issues in modality, including: free will; determinism; the Master argument of Diodorus Cronus and Chrysippus's response; the necessity of the past versus whatever openness can be expected of the future; the possibility of eternal recurrence. The course will draw from, but not require those enrolled to read, the collection of A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (Cambridge 1987). *Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 2:00-3:15

**PHIL 4020: Topics in the History of Philosophy  
\*Pragmatism\***

In the recent past there have been various attacks on ideas central to the Western Tradition – like the concept of objective truth. In order to make sense of these attacks Pragmatism is a good place to begin. The concept of objective truth seems to assume that we can get outside the world and see it as an object, and then describe it in universal terms, like  $F=ma$ . Pragmatism includes a wide range of voices that share the view that we are actors within the world rather than observers outside it. This starting point results in a different conception of truth, a different conception of the scientific enterprise, of the philosophic enterprise, of politics, of art, and so on. Pragmatism began in the late 1800's with Peirce and James and Dewey, but it is still very much a living tradition – it currently plays a role at the cutting edge of feminism and critical race theory, for example. Our goal will be to understand what it is and to get a sense of the breadth of application of pragmatist thinking: in epistemology and philosophy of science, in aesthetics, in political philosophy, in philosophy of law, in feminism, in critical race theory. *Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 9:30-10:45

**PHIL 4150: Topics in Applied Ethics \*Sex & Procreation\***

This seminar will focus on ethical issues involving sex and procreation. The unit on sex will primarily deal with questions about sexual consent. Examples include: Can the threat of emotional harm suffice to render consent to sex invalid? (e.g. “if you don’t agree to have sex with me, I’ll reveal an embarrassing secret of yours”). Does the threat of physical harm suffice to render consent given to a third party invalid? (e.g. if a pimp says to a prostitute “if you don’t agree to have sex with this customer, I’ll beat you up,” is the prostitute’s consent to have sex with the customer valid?). Can deception about relatively minor matters suffice to render sexual consent invalid? (e.g., lying about one’s job to get someone to agree to sex). Under what conditions, if any, is it permissible to have sex with someone whose consent is given while they are moderately intoxicated? Does a young child’s inability to give valid consent to sex suffice to justify prohibitions on pedophilia? Is it permissible to continue having sex with a long-term partner if they develop severe dementia and are no longer able to provide valid consent? Do certain kinds of power asymmetries (e.g., between therapist and patient) undermine the validity of sexual consent? Can some offers be so irresistible that they render consent to sex invalid? (e.g., “I’ll give you ten million dollars if you have sex with me”). Time permitting, we will also consider a few other topics in sexual ethics, including issues involving monogamy, promiscuity, sadomasochism, and computer-generated child pornography. The unit on procreation will be shorter and will focus primarily on David Benatar’s anti-natalism and Derek Parfit’s mere addition paradox and non-identity problem. Time permitting, we will also look at parts of Samuel Scheffler’s recent book, *Why Worry About Future Generations?* *Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 3:30-4:45

**PHIL 4260: Philosophy of Law**

Considers philosophical topics concerning law and the U.S. legal system. Topics that may be considered include the nature of law, relations between law and morality, justifications of punishment, the moral duty to obey the law, and law and liberty. *Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

MW 3:00-4:15

**PHIL 4340: Epistemology**

This course will be an advanced survey of contemporary epistemology. It will cover the following topics: the traditional analysis of knowledge, the Gettier problem, perceptual justification, dogmatic vs. non-dogmatic theories, foundationalism vs. coherentism, internalism vs. externalism, pragmatic and moral encroachment, and skepticism. Required readings: Richard Feldman, *Epistemology*; and a selection of recent journal articles. *Only PHIL majors; Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

MW 3:00-4:15

**PHIL 4400: Philosophy of Science**

This course will consider philosophical questions surrounding modern science, including such issues as the problem of induction, the epistemic value of simplicity, what the theory of relativity tells us about space and time, what quantum mechanics tells us about the nature of chance and reality, and what modern cosmology tells us about our place in the universe. *Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 2:00-3:15

**PHIL 4490: Philosophy of Language**

Examines the nature of language through topics such as truth, reference, meaning, and use, as well as the general relationships between language and action, cognition, logic, and reality. *Requires PHIL 2440; Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 3:30-4:45

**PHIL 4800: Open Topics in Philosophy \*The Logic & Metaphysics of Value\***

There is an astonishing variety of value phenomena. We attribute evaluative traits (properties, relations and magnitudes) to objects of just about every ontological type. In addition to the thin evaluative attributes (e.g., good, bad and better-than) there are thick evaluative traits (e.g., courageous, compassionate, callous, kind, boring, delightful) which we apply to persons, character traits, dispositions, actions, states of affairs, institutions, artifacts, performances, paintings, poems, proofs and practices. The value phenomena suggest that just about any type of entity is bearer of value features. In addition to this plethora of different kinds of value bearers, we entertain radically different kinds of value attributes. Some bearers of value (such as pleasure, happiness, knowledge, and a good will) are claimed to be good simpliciter. Others are said to be good for some beings but not others. Others are said to be good of a kind. Cutting across these categories we often distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic goodness. Pleasure is claimed by hedonists to be intrinsically good while things which conduce to pleasure—such as health or wealth—are claimed to be of extrinsic value. Traditionally intrinsic value has been identified with what has final value—i.e. what is to be valued for its own sake. Recently some philosophers have argued that final and intrinsic value come apart. Kant made a (possibly related) distinction between conditional and unconditional value. Coolness, courage and even happiness may all be good in some manner, but they are good only conditional upon the presence of a good will, and a good will, Kant claimed, is the only thing of unconditional value. This connects to a long debate about the additivity of value. Do values add up or does value exhibit organic unity? The aggregation of value lies at the heart of many problems, such as various population paradoxes, the validity of bare-difference reasoning, and value particularism. It is the aim of the course to try to examine this range of issues and their bearing both on the ontology and logical structure of value—and to determine whether, underlying the bewildering complexity of value phenomena there might be lurking a plausible unified theory. *Junior Standing or higher to enroll*

TR 12:30-1:45