

# PHILOSOPHY

## Overview and Contact Information

We take many things for granted—that things exist besides ourselves; that some art is good, some art is bad, and some “art” is not really art at all; that other people feel pain, have emotions, dreams, and desires; that there are right ways to behave, and wrong ways too. However, even casual reflection reveals that these assumptions are just that—things we take for granted without much thought. In order to illuminate our lives and appreciate our existence, we ought to investigate these assumptions; as Socrates says, the unexamined life is not worth living.

Philosophy is a discipline that encourages the examination of life in its myriad dimensions. Our fundamental assumptions about right and wrong, beauty, truth, the mind, language, and meaning are exposed to careful scrutiny in philosophy classes. We encourage you, as a student of philosophy, not only to strive to understand what philosophers have written, but also to be a philosopher yourself—thinking with depth and clarity about issues that are fundamental to our condition as human beings. Whether you take a course on philosophy of film, ethics, feminist philosophy, logic, or philosophy of science, philosophy will leave you seeing the world anew.

A major in philosophy will provide you with a broad understanding of the background of both historical and contemporary philosophical thought, with the tools for critical reasoning necessary for philosophical inquiry, with a good understanding of some important philosophical themes, and with the enthusiasm for inquiry necessary for the productive pursuit of your own philosophical speculations. The critical approach you will learn will be valuable for whatever you choose to do after graduation.

## See Also

- Logic (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/logic>)

## Contact Information

James Harold, Chair

Natalina Tulik, Academic Department Coordinator

205 Skinner Hall

413-538-2249

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/philosophy>

## Faculty

**This area of study is administered by the Department of Philosophy:**

James Harold, Professor of Philosophy

Samuel Mitchell, Associate Professor of Philosophy

Nina Emery, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Teaching Fall Only

Katia Vavova, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Teaching Fall Only

Thomas White, Teaching Spring Only

Mark Wells, Visiting Lecturer in Philosophy

## Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 36 credits:

Two courses in the History of Philosophy, such as:

PHIL-201	Philosophical Foundations of Western Thought: The Greek Period	
PHIL-202	Philosophical Foundations of Western Thought: The Modern Period	
PHIL-212	Philosophical Foundations of Chinese Thought: The Ancient Period	
PHIL-255	Existentialism	
One course in Ethics and Value Theory, such as:		4
PHIL-205	Ethics	
PHIL-242	Social and Political Philosophy	
PHIL-248	Philosophical Issues in Race and Racism	
PHIL-249	Women and Philosophy	
PHIL-260ME	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Medical Ethics'	
PHIL-273	Philosophy of the Arts	
One course in Theoretical Philosophy, such as:		4
PHIL-209	Theories of Probability and Causation	
PHIL-270	Epistemology	
PHIL-272	Metaphysics	
One course in Logic, such as:		4
PHIL-210	Logical Thought	
PHIL-225	Symbolic Logic	
At least 12 credits in philosophy at the 300 level		12
4 additional credits in philosophy		4
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>36</b>

## Other Requirements

- Program plan. Majors will be asked to fill out a form that specifies which courses they will use to satisfy these requirements.

Like the major, the minor is intended to provide an understanding of some of the structure and content of current philosophical thinking, with upper-level work in some area of special interest and with enough philosophical breadth to imbue a generous mixture of knowledge and enthusiasm.

## Requirements for the Minor

A minimum of 20 credits:

16 credits in philosophy at the 200 or 300 level	16
4 additional credits in philosophy at the 300 level	4
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>20</b>

## Course Advice

### Beginning the Study of Philosophy

Students who are completely new to philosophy can take PHIL-101 or PHIL-103, which offer a broad introduction to the subject.

If you've done some philosophy and enjoyed it or if you want to challenge yourself, we encourage you to take a 200-level course with a number lower than 220, such as PHIL-201 (The Greek Period), PHIL-202 (The Modern Period), PHIL-205 (Ethics), or PHIL-210 (Logical Thought). Courses at this level require no previous knowledge, but offer more useful background for other philosophy courses, and can be used to satisfy major and minor requirements.

We also offer courses without prerequisites that are designed to supplement other topics and serve broader interests. These courses include Medical Ethics, Social and Political Philosophy, Women and

Philosophy, and Philosophical Issues in Race and Racism. Symbolic Logic is of interest to mathematicians and computer scientists, as well as being very useful to philosophy majors.

More advanced courses draw upon the writing skills and content of these courses. We offer, on a regular basis, topics in the systematic study of one philosopher, advanced logic, meta and normative ethics, and the philosophy of art.

## Course Offerings

### PHIL-101 Introduction to Philosophy

*Fall. Credits: 4*

This course will explore topics that philosophers have grappled with for thousands of years, and that still undergird (or sometimes threaten to undermine) our understanding of the world, our knowledge, ourselves, and each other. In historical and modern texts of the Western intellectual tradition, we will discuss questions such as: Are we all selfish? What makes right actions right, if anything? Do you know anything at all about the future? Are you really free if your actions are caused? This class is for first and second year students who know nothing about philosophy, and want to know whether they will be interested in it. Students with some exposure to, and interest in, the field should take other classes.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*S. Mitchell*

### PHIL-103 Comparative Introduction to Philosophy

*Spring. Credits: 4*

What kind of life should a person live? What can we know about the world? Do we have souls that are separate from our bodies? The aim of the course is to learn how to do philosophy by engaging with philosophical thinkers throughout the globe. We read some philosophers from the Western tradition (such as Plato and Sartre) alongside philosophers from other historical traditions, such as the Daoist thinker Zhuangzi and the Sufi mystic al-Ghazali, and we also read some contemporary thinkers from a variety of cultural traditions (such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Jorge Gracia). This course is equivalent to Philosophy 101.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Multicultural Perspectives*

*J. Harold*

### PHIL-104 Science and Human Values

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Modern science has taught us surprising new things and modern technology has given us extraordinary new abilities. We can now prolong life in extraordinary ways, artificially enhance our physical and cognitive abilities, and radically reshape the natural environment on local and global scales. This course is devoted to the critical study of moral problems that have been raised or affected by this newfound information and these newfound abilities. Topics will include euthanasia, pharmaceutical enhancement and genetic engineering, the allocation of scarce medical resources, the moral status of animals, climate changes, and what contemporary cosmology tells us about our place in the world.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*N. Emery*

### PHIL-201 Philosophical Foundations of Western Thought: The Greek Period

*Fall. Credits: 4*

An introduction to ancient Greek philosophy, focusing mainly but not exclusively on the works and ideas of three Athenian philosophers who worked and taught in the period between the Persian Wars and the rule of Alexander the Great, more than 2,300 years ago: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Topics to be discussed include: What is the nature of the self? What is truth, and how can it be known? What kind of life should we live? We will work to understand each philosopher's responses to these questions, but we will also learn to develop our own answers. We will take care to place these figures and their works in their historical and cultural context.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*J. Harold*

### PHIL-202 Philosophical Foundations of Western Thought: The Modern Period

*Spring. Credits: 4*

Philosophy was transformed during the 17th and 18th centuries, in a period known as the Modern period, or the Enlightenment. This period is important for the background of our current views both in Philosophy and in intellectual endeavor generally. In this course, we'll look at the major figures involved in this transformation, and the positions about knowledge and reality that they defended. We'll have selections from the work of Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. We might not cover all of these, but will get to most.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*S. Mitchell*

*Notes: Evaluation is by three essays.*

### PHIL-205 Ethics

*Spring. Credits: 4*

What is the right thing to do? What makes a life good? The purpose of this course is to critically examine some of the key theoretical approaches to answering these questions. We will focus on three main ethical theories: (1) virtue ethics, exemplified by the Chinese philosopher Mengzi; (2) utilitarianism, as defended by the English philosopher John Stuart Mill; and (3) Kantianism, named for the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. We will also discuss contemporary alternatives to and criticisms of these traditions. Finally, we will evaluate some arguments for and against the objectivity and universality of ethics. Is there such a thing as moral truth?

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*J. Harold*

### PHIL-209 Theories of Probability and Causation

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

In this course we will look at theories of causation, probability, and their interaction. We will look first at Hume on causation, and then move on to some very basic probability theory. We will briefly explore the standard statistical approaches and go on to Bayesian reasoning and confirmation theory. Finally, we'll examine recent developments in the Bayesian Net theory of causation. As a whole, the class is an investigation of recent mathematical and philosophical theories about how science works, what justifies the hypotheses we ought to believe, and how observations could justify hypotheses about unobserved entities and regions.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*S. Mitchell*

*Prereq: One course in Philosophy or Mathematics.*

**PHIL-210 Logical Thought***Fall. Credits: 4*

This course cultivates sound reasoning. Students will learn to see the structure of claims and arguments and to use those structures in developing strong arguments and exposing shoddy ones. We will learn to evaluate arguments on the strength of the reasoning rather than on the force of their associations and buzzwords.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**N. Emery***PHIL-212 Philosophical Foundations of Chinese Thought: The Ancient Period***Spring. Credits: 4*

An introduction to Chinese thought in the classical period roughly between 500 and 221 BCE, a time of social and political furor. We will survey different philosophical responses to this upheaval, with an eye to the contemporary relevance of ancient Chinese wisdom. We will conclude the course by looking at how classical Chinese thought changes and adapts with the arrival of Buddhism. The course format consists of lecture and discussion preceded by extensive reading of primary texts (in translation).

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Multicultural Perspectives**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**M. Wells**Advisory: No familiarity with Chinese history, philosophy, or language is assumed.***PHIL-225 Symbolic Logic***Spring. Credits: 4*

This course develops a symbolic system that can be used as the basis for inference in all fields. It will provide syntax and semantics for the language of this system and investigate its adequacy. It provides the basis for all further work in logic or in the philosophical foundations of mathematics. Much of the course has a mathematical flavor, but no knowledge of mathematics is necessary.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**S. Mitchell***PHIL-238 Ethics of Career Choice***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Mary Lyon said 'When you choose your fields of labor, go where no one else will go.' For most students attending a college like Mount Holyoke, one of the most important questions is: what career should I prepare to pursue after graduation? When most of us think about this question, we tend to think about self-centered considerations: what will make us happy, or express our talents, or provide financial independence. This class examines the ethical aspects of choosing a career. Do we have moral responsibilities to others, to ourselves, or to future generations, in choosing our careers? For example, are we obligated to work against social injustice? How should such moral considerations affect this most important of choices?

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**J. Harold***PHIL-242 Social and Political Philosophy***Spring. Credits: 4*

We will examine the place of liberty and equality in a just society by looking at classic and contemporary topics in social and political philosophy. We will consider big questions such as the following: what is liberty and why is it important? What about equality? Do these values conflict? Or can a society ensure both? We will also consider more narrow, practical questions on topics such as immigration, voting, commodification, reparations, freedom of expression, and a universal basic income.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**M. Wells***PHIL-248 Philosophical Issues in Race and Racism***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course examines the nature of race and racism primarily (but not exclusively) from a philosophical perspective. What kind of entity or category is 'race'? Is it something real at all? If so, how is it real exactly? If not, what consequences (should) follow from its lack of reality? Do we have to be a member of a 'race' in order to (have the right to) know and speak for it? How is race and race-thinking relevant for our personal and group identities? What is the nature of racism? How do race, ethnicity, gender, and class intersect? How legitimate are race-based social policies that aim to bring about social justice or diversity? Readings will come from philosophy and a variety of interdisciplinary texts (e.g., film and other media).

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Multicultural Perspectives**The department***PHIL-249 Women and Philosophy***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

The goal of this course is to see how careful philosophical thought can help us with pressing issues that women face. We approach this topic through a distinctly feminist lens, as opposed to a traditional philosophical, queer theoretic, or gender studies lens. We will draw on a variety of philosophical resources, ranging from liberal and feminist political theory, to speech act theory. Possible questions we will consider include: What is objectification? What is consent? Is pornography degrading? How does sexism and bias lead to bad science?

*Crosslisted as: GNDST-210PH**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**The department***PHIL-250 Topics in Philosophy****PHIL-250AE Topics in Philosophy: 'Philosophical Issues Concerning Animals'***Spring. Credits: 4*

Who are non-human animals? In this course, we will think about this question and others – specifically about the ethical relationship "human animals" have to these beings. We will ask such questions like: What are the philosophical – especially the ethical – implications of the scientific research on non-human animals? What determines the quality of life of any animal – human or nonhuman? What obligations do we have to non-human animals? Our answers to these questions will have implications for human businesses, our diet, our pets, our legal system, and, ultimately, how we think about ourselves as 'human animals.' The course format consists of lecture, discussion, regular writing and the possibility of a class presentation.

*Crosslisted as: ENVST-233AE**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**T. White*

**PHIL-250AP Topics in Philosophy: 'History of Analytic Philosophy'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This class is about how philosophy tried to be a science, and rejected most of its history as metaphysical nonsense. It's about how and why this failed, and returned to metaphysics. There were three phases: Logical Positivism, which argued that most of the history of philosophy was meaningless babble, and should be replaced by a much more scientific approach to the issues. Quine, who replaced the positivists with a pragmatic view of the subject. And Kripke/Lewis who returned Metaphysics to the center of concern using possible worlds. This last approach brings us to the present day. We'll read the most influential figures: Frege, Russell, Schlick, Carnap, Quine, Lewis Kripke. These developments provide the background for nearly all Contemporary Philosophy.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**S. Mitchell**Prereq: 8 credits in the department including logic (PHIL-210 or PHIL-225).***PHIL-255 Existentialism***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Does human life have meaning (purpose)? Can religion or spirituality provide it? If not, is human life 'absurd'? How can we attain or create meaning in the face of the 'absurdity' of human life? What is genuine human freedom? Are other people in the world obstacles to, or also sources for, our attempt to attain or create meaning in our lives? What is existential commitment and 'authenticity'? Is existentialist ethics possible at all? We will examine the central themes of existentialism in readings from Kierkegaard, Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus, de Beauvoir, and Fanon (among others). We will also end the course by considering some significant criticisms of existentialism.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**The department***PHIL-260 Topics in Applied Philosophy**

These courses ask questions about the ethical and/or conceptual problems pertaining to a practice, such as law, medicine, or caring for the natural environment. Such courses are suitable for philosophy majors as well as for students who are new to philosophy but who are interested in the relevant practice.

**PHIL-260EB Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Business'***Spring. Credits: 4*

What are the special challenges of obligation and responsibility that individuals, businesses and other organizations face in a complex global environment? We explore these questions using applied philosophical ethics from the traditional approaches to moral philosophy (studying the ethical character of both actions themselves and the results of those actions) and the more recent ethics of care. We apply these ethical considerations in different cases and contexts of individual decision-making and the choices and dilemmas that businesses and other organizations face.

*Crosslisted as: EOS-249**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**T. White***PHIL-260ET Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Environmental Ethics'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

A fundamental problem we face as humans is how we should relate to the natural world. Why not turn Yosemite into a parking lot? Should we control nature by applying scientific and technological expertise? Or should we strive for noninterference and preservation of the wild? How do we balance the pressing needs of people for food, energy, and other resources with the needs of other species or whole ecosystems?

*Crosslisted as: ENVST-233ET**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**The department***PHIL-260GE Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Problems in Global Ethics: Climate Change, War, and Poverty'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Living in today's world presents distinctive and pressing moral problems. What are the responsibilities of individuals, particularly individuals living in relatively affluent societies, to prevent climate change, or to alleviate the harms caused by it? How should we act to prevent war, and should we ever initiate wars in order to prevent greater evils (such as terrorism)? What responsibilities do citizens of relatively affluent nations have to prevent and ameliorate poverty and global inequality? In order to reason clearly about these questions, we will need to think deeply about the notion of global citizenship (or "cosmopolitanism") and the nature of individual moral responsibility.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**J. Harold***PHIL-260LW Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Philosophy of Law'***Fall. Credits: 4*

This course is an inquiry into questions concerning the nature of 'justice,' 'law,' and the relationship between the two from the point of view of various schools of legal thought like natural law theory, positivism, utilitarianism, legal realism, critical race studies, and feminist theory. We will examine questions like 'Is there a duty to obey, or sometimes disobey, the law?' and 'What do we mean by 'equality' or 'rights'?' within the context of contemporary legal issues like affirmative action, abortion, and same-sex marriage. Readings drawn from Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Kant, Mill, Holmes, Llewellyn, Hart, Rawls, and others.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**M. Wells***PHIL-260ME Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Medical Ethics'***Fall. Credits: 4*

Over the last century, advancements in medical practice have introduced new ethical questions and made old problems more pressing. Given the possibility of painless death, is it wrong for physicians to assist terminally-ill patients who wish to end their life? Should parents exercise control over the genetic makeup of their children? How should we distribute scarce medical resources? This course gives students the tools needed to think critically about these questions and arrive at better and more thoughtful answers to them.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**M. Wells*



**PHIL-270 Epistemology**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

As the study of knowledge and related concepts like justification, rationality, and evidence, epistemology is of central importance, and not just to philosophy. This course provides an introduction to epistemology through a number of epistemological problems or puzzles about skepticism, dogmatism, and humility.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*K. Vavova*

*Prereq: 4 credits in Philosophy.*

**PHIL-272 Metaphysics**

*Fall. Credits: 4*

Metaphysics is the study of what world is like. This course will survey of some major topics in metaphysics, with a particular focus on radical metaphysical arguments – arguments that call into question our most basic beliefs about the world. Examples of questions that we will consider include: Do ordinary objects exist? Is there anything that makes persons distinct from other sorts of objects? Could things have been different than the way they in fact are? In answering these questions we will investigate the nature of composite objects, the criteria for personal identity, and the metaphysics of causation, laws of nature, and modality.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*N. Emery*

**PHIL-273 Philosophy of the Arts**

*Fall. Credits: 4*

The purpose of this course is to explore philosophical problems concerning the arts and aesthetic experience. Some questions to be explored include: What is the difference between beauty and moral goodness? Can artistic taste be objective? What does it mean for a work of music to be 'sad'? Are the intentions of artists relevant to appreciation? What is the purpose of art criticism? How do pictures represent their objects? Readings will be drawn from both historical and contemporary philosophical writings.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*J. Harold*

**PHIL-295 Independent Study**

*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 4*

*The department*

*Instructor permission required.*

**PHIL-321 Seminar in Philosophy of Language**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

How do words come to mean things? Frege introduced two aspects of meaning: reference, that is, whatever expressions pick out in the world, and sense, a publicly accessible means by which expressions pick out their references, which must be grasped by all speakers. This course is an extended examination of the concept of sense, the uses to which it has been put, and the criticisms that have been lodged against it. We'll look at Frege's work, the complaints made by Quine and Kripke, Davidson's theory of meaning, and Dummett's defense of sense.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*S. Mitchell*

*Prereq: 8 credits from the philosophy department.*

**PHIL-327 Advanced Logic**

*Fall. Credits: 4*

This course uses the predicate calculus to present a careful development of formal elementary number theory, and elementary recursion theory, culminating in a proof of Gödel's incompleteness results. It includes some discussion of the philosophical significance of these results for the foundations of mathematics.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*S. Mitchell*

*Prereq: PHIL-225.*

**PHIL-328 Non-Classical Logic**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course looks at the recent flowering of non-classical logics. The most prominent are modal logics concerning necessity and possibility, which have come to dominate work in metaphysics and epistemology. Conditional logics, intuitionist logics, and relevance logics have also become important. These logics are particularly useful in graduate-level classes in philosophy but also are interesting in their own right.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*S. Mitchell*

*Prereq: 4 credits from Philosophy, Mathematics, or Computer Science department.*

*Advisory: One course in Logic, Mathematics, Computer Science or Philosophy 209*

**PHIL-334 Topics in Ethics****PHIL-334HC Topics in Ethics: 'The Ethics of Having Children'**

*Spring. Credits: 4*

Few choices have as much of an impact on ourselves and others as those we make about having children. In this course, we will discuss the ethics of issues such as procreation, pregnancy, surrogacy, adoption, genetic modification, and our obligations to future generations. In the process, we will explore deep and challenging issues such as the nature of harm, value, and personal identity. The course format will consist in discussions of contemporary books and articles.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive*

*M. Wells*

*Prereq: 8 credits from the Philosophy department.*

**PHIL-350 Topics in Philosophy****PHIL-350BA Topics in Philosophy: 'Reasons for Belief and Action'**

*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Your friend wrote a tacky song. Should you believe it's a masterpiece? (She is your friend, after all). You're about to jump across an icy stream. You're more likely to make it if you believe you can. Should you believe that? Your resolutions to exercise regularly usually fail. Should you believe you will succeed this time? If we say 'yes', what is the relevant sense of 'should'? Are these beliefs rational, or merely beneficial? These cases suggest that there can be different sorts of considerations in favor of belief and action. This course is about how to understand these different sorts of reasons and how these might conflict or interact.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities*

*K. Vavova*

*Prereq: 8 credits from the Philosophy department.*

*Notes: Professor Vavova is co-teaching a version of this course at Amherst College in fall 2017. Mount Holyoke students can register for this course using the Five College registration system.*

**PHIL-350FR Topics in Philosophy: 'Freedom and Responsibility'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Is free will possible if all our actions are causally determined? Might we be justified in blaming, praising, rewarding, or punishing people even if their actions are not free? Abstract metaphysical questions about freedom intersect in important ways with everyday problems in our relationships with others and our attitudes about moral ignorance, addiction, and madness. This course will examine these issues side by side in the hope of improving our understanding of freedom and responsibility.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**K. Vavova**Prereq: 8 credits from the Philosophy department.***PHIL-350SE Topics in Philosophy: 'The Philosophy and Science of Emotion'***Spring. Credits: 4*

This course, rooted in an analytical philosophical approach, is an interdisciplinary investigation of emotions. The course goals are to understand emotions, how different academic disciplines approach the study of emotions, and how these perspectives can inform each other. Are emotions primarily bodily responses? Feelings? Thoughts? What role does culture play in shaping emotions? What functions do emotions serve? What can neuroscience tell us about emotions? We will read and critically analyze material from different disciplines including philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, anthropology and evolutionary theory.

*Crosslisted as: NEURO-309SE**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**L. Sizer**Prereq: 8 credits in Philosophy or Neuroscience and Behavior, or 4 credits in each.**Notes: Assignments include in class presentations and several short and longer papers.***PHIL-350SO Topics in Philosophy: 'Socrates Against the Sophists'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

In a number of Plato's dialogues we find the character Socrates debating various sophists— itinerant teachers-for-hire whose views were often diametrically opposed to Socrates' own. This seminar is structured around a close, careful reading of three such dialogues: the Euthydemus, the Protagoras, and the Gorgias. These dialogues will offer a general introduction to Socratic philosophy, but we will also focus on a few issues in much greater detail. Chief among those special topics will be questions about the nature and value of moral knowledge, the possibility of moral education, and the efficacy of the Socratic method of inquiry.

*Crosslisted as: CLASS-349**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**P. Debnar**Prereq: 8 credits in Philosophy or Classics (or in a combination of Philosophy and Classics).***PHIL-351 Systematic Study of One Philosopher****PHIL-351KA Systematic Study of One Philosopher: 'Kant'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is one of the few works in the Western philosophic tradition that fundamentally transformed our understanding of the place of human beings in the world. This seminar involves a careful, critical reading of the text in order to assess the nature and significance of the epistemological and metaphysical views it expounds. There will be frequent, short papers.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**The department**Prereq: PHIL-202 and one additional Philosophy course.***PHIL-353 Topics in Social Philosophy****PHIL-373 Philosophy of Art**

This class examines philosophical issues concerning the interpretation, creation, and experience of art. Topics vary from year to year.

**PHIL-375 Philosophy of Film**

An examination of different theoretical issues concerning the nature of film and film viewing. Topics vary yearly.

**PHIL-375PF Philosophy of Film: 'Dangerous Movies'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Many critics considered Kathryn Bigelow's *Zero Dark Thirty* to be the best film of 2012, but it was also widely criticized for seeming to promote torture. Movies can be morally dangerous, seemingly endorsing or even promoting immoral or discriminatory ideals, or romanticizing immoral characters and behavior, as in Hannibal Lecter from *Silence of the Lambs* (Thomas Harris, 1991). In this course, we evaluate the arguments given for treating certain movies as immoral, and we examine whether and how our moral evaluations of movies should affect us. When, if ever, are movies immoral? Should certain movies be censored? Should we withhold praise from morally objectionable movies?

*Crosslisted as: FLMST-320PF**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**J. Harold**Prereq: 8 credits from Philosophy or Film Studies.**Notes: There will be film screenings in addition to the regular class meeting times***PHIL-395 Independent Study***Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 8**The department**Instructor permission required.*

## Courses Meeting Philosophy Area Requirements for the Major

### History of Philosophy

#### Philosophy

PHIL-201	Philosophical Foundations of Western Thought: The Greek Period	4
PHIL-202	Philosophical Foundations of Western Thought: The Modern Period	4
PHIL-212	Philosophical Foundations of Chinese Thought: The Ancient Period	4
PHIL-250AP	Topics in Philosophy: 'History of Analytic Philosophy'	4
PHIL-255	Existentialism	4
PHIL-350SO	Topics in Philosophy: 'Socrates Against the Sophists'	4

PHIL-351KA	Systematic Study of One Philosopher: 'Kant'	4
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## Ethics and Value Theory

### Philosophy

PHIL-205	Ethics	4
PHIL-238	Ethics of Career Choice	4
PHIL-242	Social and Political Philosophy	4
PHIL-248	Philosophical Issues in Race and Racism	4
PHIL-249	Women and Philosophy	4
PHIL-250AE	Topics in Philosophy: 'Philosophical Issues Concerning Animals'	4
PHIL-260EB	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Business'	4
PHIL-260ET	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Environmental Ethics'	4
PHIL-260GE	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Problems in Global Ethics: Climate Change, War, and Poverty'	4
PHIL-260LW	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Philosophy of Law'	4
PHIL-260ME	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Medical Ethics'	4
PHIL-273	Philosophy of the Arts	4
PHIL-334HC	Topics in Ethics: 'The Ethics of Having Children'	4
PHIL-350BA	Topics in Philosophy: 'Reasons for Belief and Action'	4
PHIL-350FR	Topics in Philosophy: 'Freedom and Responsibility'	4
PHIL-375PF	Philosophy of Film: 'Dangerous Movies'	4

## Theoretical Philosophy

### Philosophy

PHIL-209	Theories of Probability and Causation	4
PHIL-270	Epistemology	4
PHIL-272	Metaphysics	4
PHIL-321	Seminar in Philosophy of Language	4
PHIL-350BA	Topics in Philosophy: 'Reasons for Belief and Action'	4
PHIL-350FR	Topics in Philosophy: 'Freedom and Responsibility'	4
PHIL-350SE	Topics in Philosophy: 'The Philosophy and Science of Emotion'	4

## Logic

### Philosophy

PHIL-210	Logical Thought	4
PHIL-225	Symbolic Logic	4
PHIL-327	Advanced Logic	4
PHIL-328	Non-Classical Logic	4