

PHILOSOPHY

Overview and Contact Information

We take many things for granted — that things exist besides ourselves; that time moves from the past towards the future, 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.

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 students of philosophy not only to strive to understand what philosophers have written, but also to be a philosopher — to think with depth and clarity about issues that are fundamental to our condition as human beings. Whether taking a course on epistemology, ethics, feminist philosophy, logic, or philosophy of time, students of philosophy will leave the course seeing the world anew.

A major in philosophy will provide 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 one's own philosophical speculations. The critical approach learned will be valuable for whatever students choose to do after graduation.

See Also

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

Contact Information

James Harold, Chair

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<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/academics/find-your-program/philosophy>

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Learning Goals

Mount Holyoke College's undergraduate learning goals (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/bachelor-arts-degree-requirements/#learninggoalstext>) emphasize skills that promote good citizenship and lifelong learning. At its heart, philosophy is the practice of critical thinking about foundational questions, including moral and political questions about what is a good life and how to be a good citizen. Philosophy is, thus, crucial to realizing Mount Holyoke's educational mission. This is especially clear with respect to Mount Holyoke's first learning goal, which says that students should learn to “think analytically and critically by questioning assumptions, evaluating evidence, and articulating well-reasoned arguments.” This is precisely what we learn to do when we learn to do philosophy. The ability to carefully and fairly evaluate arguments is a skill that has value in any situation. As global citizens, over a lifetime of different careers and paths, philosophy equips students with the ability to see the difference between arguments that work and ones that mislead, between sense and nonsense.

All of the courses in our department, whatever the ostensible topic — Kant's transcendental deduction, modal logics, the ethics of euthanasia, or the hard problem of consciousness — use a distinctly philosophical way of analyzing arguments. This is most explicit in logic, where the structure of arguments is itself the object of study, but it is equally important in other areas of philosophy. In the history of philosophy, for example, the study of texts focuses closely on understanding and evaluating the reasons offered by the author. The department puts a high priority in teaching the analysis of arguments in clear prose writing. By engaging in this sort of close study of arguments, students become better thinkers, better writers, and better able to handle whatever personal and professional challenges may come their way.

The department faculty provide the students with a focus on argument, both as it ought to be done, and as it is in fact done, using formal and informal methods. The learning goals, therefore, are fourfold. Students are expected to:

- Analyze arguments using the tools of formal logic.
- Write clear prose that explicitly sets out and evaluates arguments in English.
- Set out and analyze the arguments they discover in texts.
- Develop their own arguments in clear, concise, and convincing prose.

One way to sum up the department's learning goals is this: everything we do in philosophy is centered around the analysis of arguments. In some cases this is done formally (in our logic courses); in others, argument analysis is done in clear prose and careful discussion.

These learning goals are embodied in the major's requirements, the graded work in philosophy courses, and in the department's seminars, theses, and independent work.

To sum up: clearheaded critical thinking is an invaluable skill in any context. The philosophy department has a precise understanding of what such critical thinking amounts to, and the value it has for students, as scholars as well as citizens.

Faculty

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

James Harold, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Philosophy

Samuel Mitchell, Professor of Philosophy

Nina Emery, Associate Professor of Philosophy

Katia Vavova, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Teaching Spring Only

Laura Sizer, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy

David Turon, Visiting Instructor in Philosophy; UMass Teaching Associate

Brian Wermcrantz, Visiting Instructor in Philosophy; UMass Teaching Associate

Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 32 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
One course in the History of Philosophy, such as: ¹		4
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: ¹		4
PHIL-205	Ethics	
PHIL-242	Social and Political Philosophy	
PHIL-273	Philosophy of the Arts	
One course in Theoretical Philosophy, such as: ¹		4
PHIL-222	Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics	
PHIL-272	Metaphysics	
One course in Logic, such as: ¹		4
PHIL-170	Logical Thought	
PHIL-225	Symbolic Logic	
PHIL-328	Non-Classical Logic	
At least 12 credits in philosophy at the 300 level		12
4 additional credits in philosophy		4
Total Credits		32

¹ A full list of the approved courses (p. 2) for each required area within the major appears at the end of the Philosophy Courses section.

Additional Specifications

- Students who plan to do graduate work in philosophy will need to complete far more than the above minimum requirements for the major. Such students should complete at least 40 credits, including PHIL-201: The Greek Period; PHIL-202: The Modern Period; PHIL-225: Symbolic Logic; and at least one graduate course (500-level or above) at the University of Massachusetts through the Five College interchange. Students interested in graduate work should consult with their advisor early in their major planning

Requirements for the Minor

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.

A minimum of 20 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
16 credits in philosophy at the 200 or 300 level		16
4 additional credits in philosophy at the 300 level		4
Total Credits		20

Course Advice

Beginning the Study of Philosophy

Students who are completely new to philosophy can take any 100-level philosophy course, which offer introductions to the subject and the methods of argument analysis.

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 280, such as PHIL-201 (The Greek Period), PHIL-202 (The Modern Period), PHIL-205 (Ethics), and many others. 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 advanced intermediate classes in ethics, epistemology, and metaphysics. These courses are numbered 280-299 and they require previous coursework in philosophy. These courses offer good training for the work required in 300-level seminars.

Logic is of use to mathematicians and computer scientists, as well as an essential tool for philosophy majors.

Our seminar (300-level) courses offer instruction on challenging and exciting problems in philosophy. We go into considerable depth and encourage students to develop their own arguments. We offer a variety of seminars each year on topics such as metaphysics, epistemology, advanced logic, 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: 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.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities

S. Mitchell

Restrictions: This course is limited to first-years and sophomores.

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 from around 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 the work of more recent philosophers of color (such as Anthony Appiah and Maria Lugones).

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Multicultural Perspectives

J. Harold

Restrictions: This course is limited to first-years and sophomores.

Advisory: Students who have taken PHIL-101 should not take PHIL-103.

Notes: Course will open to juniors and seniors in second week of pre-registration.

PHIL-112 Introduction to Philosophy Through Science Fiction

Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4

This course introduces students to philosophical writing, analysis, and argument. We will pair classical and contemporary readings in philosophy with science fiction films and short stories in order to explore philosophical issues such as the nature of reality, free will, personal identity, artificial intelligence and the nature of mind. While science fiction will be used to animate and explore these issues, the emphasis of the class is on philosophical analysis and argument.

Applies to requirement(s): Humanities

L. Sizer

PHIL-161 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, dramatically enhance our physical and cognitive abilities, collect and process remarkable amounts of data, 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. Potential topics include euthanasia, pharmaceutical enhancement, genetic engineering, the moral status of animals, climate change, and artificial intelligence.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**N. Emery**Restrictions: This course is limited to first-years and sophomores.***PHIL-170 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**Restrictions: This course is offered to philosophy majors only.***PHIL-180 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-180DE Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Data Ethics'*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course is an introduction to ethical issues related to computing technology and the collection and use of data in society. Case studies illustrate beneficial and novel uses of computing technology and data, while highlighting the serious problems that may arise as a result of automation, misinformation, the loss of privacy, the concentration of power, and biases of race, gender, and class. We study principles that guide uses of computing technology and data collection, storage, analysis, and application. We will identify and explore a range of issues implicated by these practices and how ethical theory might inform thinking about our obligations – professional, social, and individual.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**L. Slzer**Restrictions: This course is limited to first-years, sophomores, and juniors***PHIL-181 Medical Ethics***Fall. Credits: 4*

Contemporary medicine gives rise to a variety of moral and philosophical questions. What are the responsibilities of medical researchers towards their subjects? How can we best understand the nature of disability? What moral duties do we have to those at the beginning of life? Do we have reason to be worried about the growth of technology in medicine? How should limited health care resources be distributed? The goals of this course are to improve our understanding of the best arguments on different sides of these questions and to acquire the tools to evaluate those arguments. The course will begin with a theory section, where we survey three influential theories – utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, and Rossian ethics – each of which will be helpful towards finding reasonable answers to questions within medical ethics.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**B. Wermcrantz***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**Restrictions: This course is limited to philosophy majors and minors.**Notes: Course will open to non-Philosophy majors/minors in the second week of pre-registration.***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*Fall. Credits: 4*

What do we owe to ourselves and to others? Which actions are right, which are wrong, and how can we tell the difference? Can we give principled answers to questions like these, or is it just a matter of opinion? We will think critically about such questions and some key theoretical approaches to answering them. We will focus on central traditions of Western moral philosophy, typified by Mill, Kant, and Aristotle. We will also consider vexing contemporary moral issues with an eye to whether these theories can guide our actions. Along the way, we will ask whether the moral theorizing we engage in can really uncover objective moral truths.

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

An introduction to Chinese thought during the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (roughly 770-256 BCE), a time of remarkable philosophical growth and controversy. We read the works of this era's most influential philosophers, including: Kongzi (Confucius), Mozi, Laozi, Mengzi (Mencius), Zhuangzi, Xunzi, and Han Feizi. Topics discussed include: What makes for a just ruler? What kind of life should we live? What is our relationship to nature? We work to understand each philosopher's responses to these questions, but we also learn to develop our own answers. We take care to place these figures and their works in their historical and cultural context.

*Crosslisted as: ASIAN-214**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities; Multicultural Perspectives**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**D. Turon***PHIL-222 Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Although quantum mechanics is a remarkably successful scientific theory, it also leads scientists to make extraordinary claims like that cats can be both dead and alive and that the state of a fundamental particle depends on whether someone one is observing it. In this class we will consider the various interpretations of quantum mechanics and the way in which those interpretations influence and are influenced by philosophical issues in science more generally.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**N. Emery*

Advisory: No previous work in physics is necessary, but students should be prepared to learn some mathematical formalism involving basic algebra and trigonometry.

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-226 Philosophy of Religion***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Is there a God? If there is, what is God like? Could all religions be true, or are they contradictory? Is religion in conflict with science? Can we have morality without religion? What happens when we die? In this class, we will consider arguments for and against different positions that people have on these questions. This course will give students a sense of the issues that philosophers of religion are currently thinking and writing about. As we think through topics such as these, we will be working to develop and hone philosophical skills such as analyzing concepts, constructing and critiquing arguments, and evaluating philosophical theories.

*Crosslisted as: RELIG-226**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**J. Mooney***PHIL-242 Social and Political Philosophy***Not Scheduled for This Year. 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**The department***PHIL-243 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, dramatically enhance our physical and cognitive abilities, collect and process remarkable amounts of data, 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. Potential topics include euthanasia, pharmaceutical enhancement, genetic engineering, the moral status of animals, climate change, and artificial intelligence.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**N. Emery***PHIL-250 Topics in Philosophy****PHIL-250CN Topics in Philosophy: 'Consciousness'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Nagel states, "Without consciousness the mind-body problem would be much less interesting. With consciousness it seems hopeless." Chalmers calls consciousness "the hard problem." Explaining consciousness raises significant challenges for philosophers and cognitive scientists alike, and understanding the nature of the problem is half the battle. This class will explore contemporary philosophical approaches to consciousness, and draw in psychology and neuroscience perspectives. Topics may also include split-brain problems, the nature of dreaming, and altered states.

*Crosslisted as: PSYCH-249CN**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**L. Sizer*

Prereq: One course in philosophy and either a second course in philosophy or a course in neuroscience.

PHIL-250HG Topics in Philosophy: 'Happiness and The Good Life'*Fall. Credits: 4*

Philosophers through the ages have asked about the nature of happiness and its contribution to the 'good life.' Happiness is something we all want, but what is it? And why do we all want it so much? What makes us happy and why? Is a 'good life' also a happy one? This course will examine happiness from several different perspectives. We will look at what both ancient and contemporary philosophers have said about the nature and importance of happiness in our lives. We will also look at some recent work in positive psychology and think about how that empirical work augments, challenges or contrasts with the philosophical accounts. This is a writing-intensive course that focuses on developing skills in philosophical reading, analysis, and writing.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**L. Sizer***PHIL-255 Existentialism***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Modernity has brought with it scientific and technological wonders, but it has also uprooted millennia-old convictions about God, morality, and humanity's place in the universe. In a secular society, how should we choose which values to adopt, or what path in life we should follow? How can we be authentic or true to ourselves in a culture that rewards conformity? What, moreover, is the meaning of life? Existentialism, a philosophical movement that flourished in the 19th and 20th centuries, is unique in trying to provide answers to these questions. Readings are drawn both from philosophical works and from existentialist authors like Kafka, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**J. Koon, M. O'Rourke-Friel***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-260AR Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Ethics and Artificial Intelligence'*Spring. Credits: 4*

Artificially intelligent technologies are prominent features of modern life – as are ethical concerns about their programming and use. In this class we will use the tools of philosophy to explore and critically evaluate ethical issues raised by current and future AI technologies. Topics may include issues of privacy and transparency in online data collection, concerns about social justice in the use of algorithms in areas like hiring and criminal justice, and the goals of developing general versus special purpose AI. We will also look at ethics for AI: the nature of AI 'minds,' the possibility of creating more ethical AI systems, and when and if AIs themselves might deserve moral rights.

*Crosslisted as: DATA-225AR, EOS-299AR**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**L. Sizer***PHIL-260EB Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Business'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course uses the traditional approaches of moral philosophy to explore ethical challenges and obligations faced by individuals, businesses, and organizations in an increasingly complex global environment. Through consideration of philosophical theories and particular cases we explore issues such as the social roles and ethical obligations of businesses or organizations; rights and responsibilities of workers, managers, and owners; ethics in sales and marketing; and ethics in a global business environment.

*Crosslisted as: EOS-249**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**L. Sizer**Notes: This course is strongly recommended for students interested in participating in the International Business Ethics Case Competition.***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***Spring. 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-281 Advanced Studies in 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.**Advisory: The required credits should be from a course with a substantial writing component. If in doubt ask instructor.*

PHIL-289 Advanced Studies in Philosophy**PHIL-289PM Advanced Studies in Philosophy: 'Advanced Studies in Philosophy of Mind'***Fall. Credits: 4*

This course focuses on the relationship between minds and bodies (the 'mind-body problem'), and the nature of mental phenomena. We will discuss the nature of mental features such as thoughts, sensations, emotions and consciousness, and consider their relationship to the seemingly unthinking, unfeeling, grey matter of the brain. We will read some historical responses to these issues but will focus on insights provided by contemporary philosophy and sciences of the mind, including neuroscience.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**L. Sizer**Prereq: 4 credits in Philosophy.*

Advisory: Students who do not meet the prerequisite but are working towards the Five College Cognitive Neuroscience certificate are encouraged to contact the instructor.

PHIL-295 Independent Study*Fall and Spring. Credits: 1 - 4**The department**Instructor permission required.***PHIL-328 Non-Classical Logic***Fall. 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: PHIL-225, MATH-232, or 8 credits in Philosophy.**Advisory: One course in Logic, Mathematics, Computer Science or PHIL-225.***PHIL-334 Topics in Ethics****PHIL-334KR Topics in Ethics: 'Knowing Right from Wrong'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

We know it's wrong to kick puppies for fun – *morally* wrong. But how do we know this? Wait -- *do* we know it? This class is about moral knowledge: what it is, if we have it, and how we get it (when we do have it). We'll consider questions in moral epistemology such as: Can we gain moral knowledge from testimony? What are the implications of the prevalence of moral disagreement? Do our evolutionary origins pose a challenge to our moral beliefs? And, more generally, should we be moral skeptics?

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**K. Vavova**Prereq: 8 credits from the Philosophy department in writing intensive courses.***PHIL-334MA Topics in Ethics: 'Immoral Art'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

From Plato's attacks on Homer's poems to the protests against D.W. Griffith's racist film *The Birth of a Nation* to the recent spotlight cast by the #metoo movement, it is clear that the relationship between art and morality is a difficult one. Are some works of art inherently immoral? If so, why? What should we say about works of art that are created by immoral artists? Or works that have morally troubling social effects? What is the relationship between an artwork's moral status and its value as a work of art? Are moral and aesthetic judgments objective? How are they related? We will survey the current state of the philosophical debate over the conflict between moral and aesthetic value.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**J. Harold**Prereq: 8 credits from the Philosophy department.*

Advisory: One previous course in ethics or philosophy of art; at least one course in philosophy that is writing-intensive.

PHIL-334MR Topics in Ethics: 'Moral Relativism'*Fall. Credits: 4*

Moral relativism describes a family of views that deny the universality of moral claims. So, for example, some philosophers have claimed that statements like 'Torture is morally wrong' can only be assessed as 'true' or 'false' relative to some social agreement about moral norms. In this course, we will survey some contemporary attempts to develop and defend moral relativism, as well as some criticisms of these relativist approaches. Our goal will be to assess arguments for and against moral relativism. Prior coursework in ethics and logic is recommended.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**J. Harold**Prereq: 8 credits from the Philosophy department.***PHIL-334NE Topics in Ethics: 'Neuroethics'***Spring. Credits: 4*

Neuroethics draws on the tools of philosophical analysis to investigate the role of neuroscience in our personal, social, and ethical lives. This class will look at the ethics of neuroscientific interventions such as cognitive enhancement, mind reading, and lie detection. We will examine how the neurosciences might inform philosophical discussions about human nature, personality, and ethics. In addition, we will look at the evidential role of neuroscientific evidence and how neuroscience technologies such as fMRI have influenced our thinking about the mind/brain and person.

*Crosslisted as: NEURO-309NE, PSYCH-350NE**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**L. Sizer*

Prereq: 8 credits from the Philosophy department or 4 credits from Philosophy and 4 credits from Neuroscience and Behavior.

PHIL-350 Topics in Philosophy**PHIL-350FR Topics in Philosophy: 'Freedom and Responsibility'***Spring. 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.**Advisory: The required credits should be from a course with a substantial writing component. If in doubt ask instructor.***PHIL-350MD Topics in Philosophy: 'Meaning and Reality: Michael Dummett'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course is a study of 20th Century analytic philosophy using one philosopher to focus the course, Michael Dummett. Dummett was one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century. He gave a theory of meaning using work by Frege and Wittgenstein. He then used this to argue that if our knowledge of the Universe is to be objective, then we cannot conceive of that Universe as real. That is, it is not in existence independently of our ability to find out about it. He was the first to introduce non-classical logic as a means to address the nature of truth. This introduction to his work will fill in the background to this argument, and thereby give an overview of 20th century philosophy.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**S. Mitchell**Prereq: One logic course (which may be at the 100 level) and 8 credits in the department at the 200 level or above.***PHIL-350PB Topics in Philosophy: 'Public Philosophy'***Spring. Credits: 4*

In this course we will take up the question of what it means to investigate a philosophical question in a way that is accessible to a broad audience. Students will develop their own philosophical project in an academically rigorous way and then find a way to present that project outside the classroom. Along the way we investigate the question of what counts as philosophy and why. Students should have extensive experience writing philosophy papers and be ready and willing to work independently on a philosophical topic of their choosing.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**N. Emery**Prereq: 8 credits in Philosophy.***PHIL-350SE Topics in Philosophy: 'Philosophy and Science of Emotion'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

This course is an interdisciplinary investigation of the nature of emotions and their influences on our thoughts and actions. While we will draw from a variety of disciplines, the nature and motivations of the inquiry are philosophical. We will consider: what are emotions? Are they bodily responses? Thoughts? Feelings? What roles do cultures play in shaping our emotions? What functions do emotions serve? We will examine evidence and arguments offered by philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, anthropology and evolutionary theory, and consider how these perspectives do or don't inform each other, as well as how they can help us understand the nature of emotions.

*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.***PHIL-350TM Topics in Philosophy: 'Philosophy of Time'***Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Does time flow? What is the difference between the future and the past? Is time travel possible? This course will survey the major topics in the philosophy of time from Augustine's *Confessions* and the Leibniz-Clarke correspondence to relativity theory. Along the way we will take up philosophical issues regarding the relevance of intuition, the nature of causation, determinism, and freedom, and the relationship between science and philosophy.

*Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**Other Attribute(s): Writing-Intensive**N. Emery**Prereq: 8 credits from the Philosophy department.***PHIL-375 Philosophy of Film**

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

PHIL-375AV Philosophy of Film: 'Artists vs. Audiences'*Not Scheduled for This Year. Credits: 4*

Usually, an artist produces a work, and then an audience experiences that work. However, sometimes audiences influence what a work means and even how an ongoing story unfolds. This course focuses on works of popular, serialized art in which the possibilities for artist/audience interaction are great, and so is the potential for conflict. We look at serial novels, film series, television shows, and new media (such as TikTok), among others. What are the rights of artists to control their works? What rights do audiences have to alter or create new works based on an existing work? What should we do when these rights conflict? What makes a "bad fan" bad? When do audiences become artists?

*Crosslisted as: FMT-330AV**Applies to requirement(s): Humanities**J. Harold**Prereq: 8 credits in Philosophy or 4 credits in Philosophy and 4 credits in Film, Media, Theater.***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

Code	Title	Credits
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-255	Existentialism	4

Ethics and Value Theory

Code	Title	Credits
Philosophy		
PHIL-180DE	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Data Ethics'	4
PHIL-205	Ethics	4
PHIL-242	Social and Political Philosophy	4
PHIL-243	Science and Human Values	4
PHIL-250HG	Topics in Philosophy: 'Happiness and The Good Life'	4
PHIL-260AR	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Ethics and Artificial Intelligence'	4
PHIL-260EB	Topics in Applied Philosophy: 'Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Business'	4
PHIL-273	Philosophy of the Arts	4
PHIL-334KR	Topics in Ethics: 'Knowing Right from Wrong'	4
PHIL-334MA	Topics in Ethics: 'Immoral Art'	4
PHIL-334NE	Topics in Ethics: 'Neuroethics'	4
PHIL-350FR	Topics in Philosophy: 'Freedom and Responsibility'	4

Theoretical Philosophy

Code	Title	Credits
Philosophy		
PHIL-222	Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics	4
PHIL-226	Philosophy of Religion	4
PHIL-272	Metaphysics	4
PHIL-281	Advanced Studies in Epistemology	4
PHIL-350FR	Topics in Philosophy: 'Freedom and Responsibility'	4
PHIL-350SE	Topics in Philosophy: 'Philosophy and Science of Emotion'	4
PHIL-350TM	Topics in Philosophy: 'Philosophy of Time'	4

Logic

Code	Title	Credits
Philosophy		
PHIL-225	Symbolic Logic	4
PHIL-328	Non-Classical Logic	4
PHIL-350MD	Topics in Philosophy: 'Meaning and Reality: Michael Dummett'	4