

PHILOSOPHY

Objectives

Socrates once said that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” Indeed, examining what’s taken for granted and developing critical thinking and rational judgment are primary goals of philosophy. Through analysis and interpretation of the works of past and contemporary philosophers, students examine basic questions concerning reasoning and the nature and sources of human knowledge and values. Through interactive dialogue with teachers and peers, students acquire speaking and writing skills that enable them to develop and effectively communicate their own views. Philosophy courses incorporate both multicultural and values-oriented thinking in order to help students develop a holistic perspective.

In addition to general education courses in Philosophy – Introduction to Philosophy, Introduction to Ethics, and more – the Department of Philosophy offers sequences of courses culminating in a major or a minor. Studying philosophy offers transferable skills in analytical problem-solving and critical thinking that support advancement in almost any career path. Completing a major or minor in Philosophy or Philosophy of Law prepares students for graduate and professional school, not only in philosophy, but also in such fields as law, psychology, social work, education, public administration, and healthcare. Philosophy courses develop reading comprehension and logical reasoning skills which are a significant part of graduate and professional school entrance exams, such as the Graduate Record Exam and the Law School Admission Test.

Programs

Bachelor

- Philosophy / Bachelor of Arts (<https://catalog.lewisu.edu/undergraduate/humanities-fine-arts-communication/philosophy/philosophy-bachelor-arts/>)
- Philosophy of Law / Bachelor of Arts (<https://catalog.lewisu.edu/undergraduate/humanities-fine-arts-communication/philosophy/philosophy-law-bachelor-arts/>)

Minor

- Philosophy / Minor (<https://catalog.lewisu.edu/undergraduate/humanities-fine-arts-communication/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)
- Philosophy of Law / Minor (<https://catalog.lewisu.edu/undergraduate/humanities-fine-arts-communication/philosophy/philosophy-law-minor/>)

Courses

PHIL 10600 - Topics in Philosophy (3)

This course provides students with the opportunity to study topics of interest to philosophers. Subject matter will vary.

PHIL 11000 - Introduction to Philosophy (3)

This course provides a study of the nature of philosophy, its methods, various branches and general historical development. Introductions to logic and to the fundamental issues and theories concerning reality, knowledge and value are also presented.

Attributes: Philosophy General Education
Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI): H4900.

PHIL 11200 - Philosophy for Self Care (3)

A study of philosophical views that lead readers to care for their selves, minds, and souls. The focus of this introduction to philosophical thinking will be texts and thinkers that promote fulfillment, care, balance, and agency in an uncertain world.

Attributes: Philosophy General Education

PHIL 21500 - Introduction to Ethics (3)

The nature of virtue and the good life is studied in conjunction with such issues as ethical absolutism versus ethical relativism, the relation between morality and legality and the relation between ethics and religion. This course fulfills the General Education Action and Values requirement.

Attributes: Intro to Ethics Gen Ed

Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI): H4 904 3 credit(s).

PHIL 22500 - Philosophical Issues in Race and Gender (3)

Students study the origin and development of the concepts of race and gender in a cultural context. One of the key questions concerns the extent to which these concepts are socially constructed. Other themes include sexuality, power, liberty and oppression.

Attributes: Latiné Studies, Peace Studies, Philosophy General Education, Women's Studies

PHIL 22600 - Philosophical Methods (3)

This course introduces students to the discipline of academic philosophy through (a) a survey of its historical genres and methodologies and (b) instruction in the skills of reading philosophical texts, writing in diverse philosophical genres, and conducting research in philosophy. Students will examine questions of canon and the state of the discipline today.

This course serves as a foundation for upper-level courses in the major, including the capstone.

PHIL 23000 - LGBTQ Rights and Issues I (3)

This course examines the historical, psychological, anthropological, sociological, philosophical, literary, political, religious, and legal aspects of LGBTQ issues. It addresses the myths and fallacies at the heart of the debate and explores contemporary and global trends and implications.

Attributes: Peace Studies

PHIL 23500 - Philosophy and Film (3)

This course explores the ways film can illustrate and challenge existing philosophical theories as well as present original philosophical ideas. There will be some discussion of the nature of film as an art form and the genres of philosophical discourse.

Attributes: Philosophy General Education

PHIL 24500 - Love, Hatred and Resentment (3)

This course offers an examination into the meaning and relationship among love, hatred and resentment from historical and contemporary perspectives. The issues are presented on an individual and a social level. Philosophers to be studied include Plato, Aristotle, Nietzsche, Scheler and Arendt.

Attributes: Philosophy General Education

PHIL 25000 - Philosophy of Art (3)

A philosophical inquiry into classical and contemporary aesthetic theories from a multicultural perspective, this course examines such theories as romanticism, realism and naturalism. Topics to be explored include the nature of beauty, the relation of art to truth, politics and society. Among the philosophers covered are Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche and Dante.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 25500 - Philosophy of Religion (3)

Analysis and evaluation of various concepts of God and arguments for and against God's existence are explored. Related topics studied include suffering, the relation between God and the universe, the possibility of miracles, agnosticism and atheism and the varieties of religious experience, especially mysticism.

PHIL 27500 - Existentialism (3)

This course explores the historical background and basic concepts of existential philosophy, including radical freedom, authenticity, commitment and transcendence. At least one literary work by an existential philosopher is studied, as well as selections from Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre and Marcel.

PHIL 29900 - Logic (3)

This course focuses on the main aspects of formal logic. It begins with a study of the basic functions of reasoning, language, and informal fallacies, followed by an investigation of symbolic logic, syllogisms, and induction.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 30100 - Ancient Philosophy (3)

Students explore the roots of Western civilization through a study of some of the great philosophers of the past. Among the philosophers studied are pre-Socratic philosophers, the Sophists, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 30700 - Reasoning and Standardized Test-Taking (3)

This course focuses on the purpose of standardized tests; the context and audience of standardized testing; and the kinds of questions administered, particularly questions that measure general aptitude. Students will spend most contact hours examining and answering typical test questions. Prepping for the Law School Aptitude Test (LSAT) is the primary classroom activity, but the course is open to any student in any discipline who desires in-depth practice in test-taking as a condition of entrance into graduate programs irrespective of discipline-specific content.

PHIL 31000 - Philosophy of Law (3)

Students examine theories regarding the foundation of law and the distinction and relation between law and ethical norms. Competing theories of liberty, justice, responsibility and punishment are analyzed and compared to pertinent Supreme Court decisions.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 32500 - Philosophies of Asia, Africa and Native America (3)

A study of the fundamental ideas concerning self, nature, God and society found in the Asian, African and Native American cultures is presented. These ideas are compared with those in Western philosophy. This course fulfills the non-western humanities requirement for Education majors.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 33300 - Topics in Applied Ethics (3)

Selected courses apply the concepts and theories of ethics to specific areas of human life, such as healthcare, business, society, the natural environment, and scientific research.

Prerequisite: PHIL 21500 (may be taken concurrently) or THEO 21400 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 34000 - Topics in Philosophy (3)

This course provides the opportunity for students to explore various topics and subfields of philosophy that are not centered in other regularly-scheduled courses. Topics will vary. May be repeated for a total of nine hours.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 34900 - Islamic and Jewish Philosophies (3)

This course provides an introduction to philosophy in Islamic and Jewish traditions, placing Jewish and Muslim philosophical texts and thinkers in conversation with one another. What is the nature of a human being? What are the limits of rationality? How are philosophical, spiritual, and mystical ways of knowing related? What role ought philosophy and religion play in society? Through in-depth study of treatises and allegorical texts, students will engage questions such as these from both Islamic and Jewish perspectives.

Prerequisite: THEO 10000 or THEO 10600 or PHIL 11000

PHIL 35000 - Social and Political Philosophy (3)

This course examines the spectrum of political theories, ranging from the conservative to the radical. Issues discussed may include: power, free speech, economic justice, and the rights of oppressed groups. The possible classical and contemporary theorists to be studied: Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Marx, Foucault, Rawls, Fanon, and hooks.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

Attributes: Peace Studies

PHIL 35500 - Philosophy of Rights (3)

Focusing on international issues, this course investigates the meaning of rights from a historical and contemporary perspective. The students will then examine the contemporary problems associated with human rights abuses as they pertain to refugees, penal matters, terrorism, organized crime and corruption, disarmament, and health. Possible philosophers to be studied include John Locke, Immanuel Kant, John Rawls, Robert Nozick, and Jurgen Habermas.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

Attributes: Peace Studies

PHIL 36500 - African American Philosophy (3)

Students examine the ideas of 19th and 20th century African-American philosophers, the issues raised and the problems they attempt to resolve. Examples include philosophical confrontations with slavery and racism (W.E.B. DuBois, Martin Luther King, Jr.), pragmatism and race (Alain Locke, Cornell West), gender and race (Angela Davis, Bell Hooks) and phenomenology and existential philosophy (Lewis Gordon).

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

Attributes: Peace Studies

PHIL 36600 - Latin American Thought (3)

This course introduces major currents in Latin American thought, examining philosophical, political, and cultural reflections produced in the region (from the sixteenth century to the present). It explores debates about the nature and identity of Latin American philosophy while engaging texts by thinkers working across philosophy, social theory, and the humanities. Topics may include colonialism, nation formation, modernity, social justice, feminism, and human agency, making the course relevant to students in philosophy, Latin American studies, history, and the social sciences.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently) or PHIL 11200 (may be taken concurrently) or PHIL 22500 (may be taken concurrently) or PHIL 23500 (may be taken concurrently) or PHIL 24500 (may be taken concurrently)

Attributes: Latiné Studies, Spanish Culture

PHIL 37000 - Early Modern Philosophy (3)

This course provides a study of the development of Western philosophy from the end of the Middle Ages to the 19th century. Among the philosophers studied are Hobbes, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Kant.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 38500 - Contemporary Philosophy (3)

Students investigate recent developments in European philosophy, in particular those philosophies that have developed in light of existential and phenomenological thought. Topics include postmodernism, deconstruction and critical theory.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 39500 - Philosophy of Science (3)

A philosophical examination of the presuppositions of science, the nature of the scientific method and scientific inference, the role of science and technology in human culture and the relationship between science and philosophy is provided.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 39600 - Metaphysics and Epistemology (3)

This course explores viewpoints concerning the fundamental nature of reality and the process and limitations of human knowledge. Among the positions covered are idealism, realism, empiricism, rationalism, phenomenology and relativism. Topics include appearance and reality, mind and matter, space and time, and objectivity and subjectivity.

Prerequisite: PHIL 11000 (may be taken concurrently)

PHIL 41000 - Senior Capstone (3)

Students will develop an article for publication in an undergraduate journal. They will research and articulate a problem in the philosophical literature; articulate their own interpretations, analysis, and evaluations of primary and secondary texts; compose a conference-length paper and present it to peers and faculty; and then develop that idea into an article-length paper revised and polished for publication. This course fulfills the advanced writing requirement.

Program Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: Philosophy or Philosophy of Law .

PHIL 41200 - Senior Portfolio (1)

Philosophy and Philosophy of Law majors in their final semester will compile a culminating portfolio of work completed across previous courses in the major for final reflection and departmental assessment.

Prerequisite: PHIL 41000

PHIL 42000 - ST: Single Author Seminar (3)

This course provides an in-depth study of a single significant author in philosophy. Students will read a substantial subset of works by a single philosophical author. They will articulate and critically analyze the trajectory of a single author's body of work (in whole or in part), in discussion and in writing. The chosen author will vary. Prerequisite: 9 Credits in Philosophy or Consent of the instructor

PHIL 43000 - ST: Single Text Seminar (3)

This course provides an in-depth study of a single significant text in philosophy. Students will read and develop an understanding of a complete book-length work. They will articulate, analyze, and critique its main argument(s) in discussion and in writing. The chosen text will vary.

Prerequisite: 9 Credits in Philosophy or Consent of the instructor

PHIL 49900 - Independent Study (1-3)

Students conduct individualized research on a selected philosophical topic.

Class Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Classes: Junior or Senior.