PHILOSOPHY (PHIL)

PHIL 100 Critical Questions in Philosophy (4 Credits)
An exploration of significant questions and concepts, beliefs and creative visions, theories and discoveries in Philosophy for first-year students. Although topics vary, the courses also seek to improve students' communication skills beyond the written word. Sample topics might include: freedom, mind, body, the human self, agency, knowledge, reality, and rationality.
College Curriculum: C100

PHIL 150 First-Year Seminar (4 Credits)
An exploration of a specific topic in Philosophy. A grade of C- or better fulfills the COLL 150 requirement. Although topics vary, the courses emphasize academic writing skills, reading and analysis of texts, and discussion.
College Curriculum: C150

PHIL 201 Introduction to Philosophy (3 Credits)
An introduction to the problems, methods and scope of philosophical inquiry through readings from historical and contemporary sources. Typically, the readings include at least one dialogue of Plato, the Meditations of Descartes, and usually selections from other philosophers.
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 205 Meaning in Life (3 Credits)
This course is divided into three units. In the first we'll look at arguments for and against the existence of God. In the second we'll study "God, death, and meaning". Questions to be considered include: Is life meaningful only if God exists? How does death impact life's meaning? Is meaning objective? (And what does 'meaning' even mean?) The third unit is called "Art, war, work, nation". Here we will examine some essentially human activities and organizations in which many have found—or lost—meaning. Throughout, the readings and assignments for this Coll 300 course aim to "connect you with people, places, and ideas that take you out of familiar surroundings and deepen the way you see yourself in the world". Accordingly, this course will include the examination of global differences regarding sources or bearers of meaning. Through personal reflection and philosophical argumentation, students will learn to "use your knowledge, your emerging expertise in framing questions, and your communication skills to engage the world in a self-reflective, cross-cultural way."
College Curriculum: C200, C30C
Domain: ALV

PHIL 210 Critical Thinking (3 Credits)
A survey of formal and informal logical techniques with emphasis on their practical applications and historical significance. Among the techniques studied are syllogistic logic, informal fallacies and induction.
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 215 Right and Wrong in the Contemporary World (3 Credits)
A course focused on particular moral issues facing contemporary society and the ethical arguments provoked by them. Topics discussed in the course may include, among others, abortion, euthanasia, hate speech, capital punishment, surrogacy, genetic engineering, war and nuclear arms.
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 220 Philosophy of Race: Identity, Racism, and Justice (3 Credits)
The purpose of this course is to explore issues of race and racism from a philosophical perspective. The course will begin with the question, what is race? We'll look at various answers about the nature of race, e.g., race as social/cultural, biological, or merely morphological. Next, we'll focus on questions surrounding racial identity and its intersections with our other identities, especially class and gender. Then, we'll turn to the question of the nature of racism. Individualistic conceptions of racism will be contrasted with institutional/structural conceptions. We'll focus on three case studies of structural racism: mass incarceration, immigration policy, and redlining in real estate. Our final topic is where we go from here in the pursuit of racial justice, with a focus on sources of hope and despair and our individual and collective responsibility.
College Curriculum: C200, C350
Domain: ALV

PHIL 225 Philosophy of Love and Friendship (3 Credits)
The aim of this course is to investigate two questions: (1) What is love and friendship among human beings? (2) How prevalent are genuine love relationships and friendships? Our strategy for addressing both questions is threefold: (i) a survey of prominent philosophical theories of love and friendship, (ii) a survey of current scientific theories of capacities essential to love and friendship, and (iii) developing an answer, based on (i) and (ii), to the following question: In what respects, if any, are our philosophical theories of love and friendship supported by scientific knowledge of our actual capacities?
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 230 Philosophy Across Cultures (3 Credits)
What is philosophy? What is it that makes a work philosophical rather than, say, religious or literary? In this course we will adopt a cross-cultural approach to answering these questions, analyzing and comparing a diverse range of philosophical texts from around the globe. By examining the different kinds of philosophical questions diverse thinkers ask, and the variety of methods they take to answer them, we will arrive at a better understanding of what philosophy is globally. As we engage with these diverse perspectives in philosophy we will also reflect on what constitutes good cross-cultural methodology. We will address the challenges that racism and colonialism present for engaging in philosophy across cultural boundaries. We will also reflect on our own identities as global citizen and what we can do to promote equal consideration and respect for diverse philosophical perspectives. As part of our practice of cross-cultural philosophical thinking we will have the opportunity to engage with several invited guests who will share their distinctive philosophical perspectives and methods.
College Curriculum: C200, C30C
Domain: ALV

PHIL 231 Greek Philosophy (3 Credits)
A critical examination of representative Greek philosophers with special emphasis on Plato and Aristotle.

PHIL 232 Medieval Philosophy (3 Credits)
Analysis of selected writings of major medieval philosophers such as Augustine, Erigena, Anselm, Maimonides, Aquinas, Duns Scotus and Occam.
Domain: ALV

PHIL 252 17th- and 18th-Century European Philosophy (3 Credits)
This course is a critical study of the ideas, culture, world-view, and values of the leading philosophers of early-modern Europe whose work shaped the history of Western thought: Descartes, Hobbes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. Our study is informed by the context of the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution. Possible topics include the nature and existence of God, the existence of a soul, personal identity, the mind-body connection, the reliability of sense perception, knowledge of the external world, the possibility of free will, the cause and justification of political systems, and the basis and content of morality.
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 253 Kant and his Successors (3 Credits)
An examination of Kant and some of the 19th-century philosophical responses to his philosophy (e.g., Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche).
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 201 or PHIL 215 or PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252
Domain: CSI

PHIL 301 Symbolic Logic (3 Credits)
An introduction to the principles of valid reasoning. Special emphasis will be given to modern symbolic techniques and some of their applications.
Domain: NQR

PHIL 303 Ethics (3 Credits)
An introduction to the problems of ethics and the nature of ethical reasoning. Included are historically important topics such as hedonism, egoism, utilitarianism and relativism, as well as contemporary moral issues such as abortion, euthanasia and civil disobedience.
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 304 Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art (3 Credits)
A philosophical examination of aesthetic perception and criteria of value. Special attention will be given to the elements of art and the function of form, symbol, expression and truth in art.

PHIL 305 Social and Political Philosophy (3 Credits)
A philosophical examination of major theories dealing with social and political issues such as governmental authority, individual rights, distributive justice, democracy and the importance of community.
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 306 Philosophical Problems (1-3 Credits)
A study of some major philosophical problems such as those concerning knowledge and reality, morality and conduct, and art and beauty. Special attention will be devoted to philosophical method.(See cross listed courses in, e.g., Music, Modern Languages, and Literature.)
Domain: ALV

PHIL 308 Issues in Environmental Ethics (3 Credits)
This course examines a number of ethical and political theories concerning the relation between human beings and the environment. It also discusses the obligations of human beings to other species and to future generations.
Domain: ALV

PHIL 309 Philosophy and Public Policy (3 Credits)
An introduction to theories of justice, democracy and citizenship, with special emphasis on their implications for law and public policy. Topics may include welfare, health care, education, and state funding of the arts.

PHIL 310 Philosophy of Law (3 Credits)
A critical examination of the concepts and arguments used in legal reasoning. Questions to be examined include: the nature of law, the grounds for obedience to law, the relationship of law to morality, and the grounds for legal punishment.
Domain: CSI

PHIL 311 Philosophy of Religion (3 Credits)
A philosophical investigation of the nature of religious experience, activity and belief. The course will also include an examination of such topics as those of God, freedom, immortality, arguments for existence of God and the problem of evil.
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 201 or PHIL 215 or PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252
Domain: ALV

PHIL 313 Philosophy of Science (3 Credits)
A philosophical examination of the nature, validity and significance of scientific inquiry. Special attention will be given to the descriptive, explanatory and predictive aspects of scientific theories.
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 201 or PHIL 215 or PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 315 Biomedical Ethics (3 Credits)
This course employs the resources of ethical theory to examine a variety of ethical issues that arise in the practice of medicine and biomedical research. Some of the topics that may be included are: the doctor-patient relationship, confidentiality and informed consent; the practice of research with human subjects and animals; the definition of death and the ethics of organ transplantation; the moral and legal status of abortion and reproductive technologies; euthanasia and its alternatives; the risks and promises of biotechnology; justice and access to health care and medicines; patents and advertisement of pharmaceutical products.
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 320 Philosophy and Feminism (3 Credits)
This course examines two ways philosophy and feminism intersect: philosophical arguments are used to support particular feminist theories and to criticize competing theories; and feminist theory is used to criticize traditional philosophical theories of ethics, knowledge, and science.

PHIL 321 Existentialism (3 Credits)
An examination of important aspects of existentialism with readings in such philosophers as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre. Some attention will also be given to the impact of these philosophical movements upon contemporary literature, religious thought and psychology.

PHIL 325 Neuroscience and Ethics (3 Credits)
An introduction to the interdisciplinary field of neuroethics, which explores both what the sciences of the mind can tell us about the nature of morality and how we should ethically respond to neuroscientific advances.
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV, NQR

PHIL 330 Ethics and Data Science (3 Credits)
This course is an introduction to some of the ethical and societal problems that are posed by recent developments in data science, artificial intelligence, and the pervasiveness of the Internet in everyday life. The course begins by introducing students to the nature of information and data, to two major normative ethical theories (consequentialism and deontology), and to some common biases and fallacies concerning probability and statistics. We will then explore moral issues concerning privacy and freedom in connection with big data and the Internet. What, if anything, justifies the right to privacy? How does privacy relate to autonomy and to property rights? Are traditional justifications of the right to privacy still adequate in the age of big data and social media? How does the right to freedom of speech interact with "echo chambers" and the spread of disinformation online? The course concludes by surveying a number of ethical problems posed by machine learning and artificial intelligence, such as: Should machine learning algorithms be transparent or interpretable by humans? How do biases arise in algorithms, and how can they be prevented or corrected? How do we make sense of questions of moral accountability in cases in which machines are autonomous? How will automation affect the nature of human labor, and how will it affect inequality? Should we be worried about the creation of a "superintelligence" that could destroy humanity?
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 333 Philosophy of AI: Capabilities, Risks and Governance (3 Credits)
Artificial intelligence is here. Today's AI systems handily defeat the best humans at games of strategy, score highly on standardized tests, help design novel drugs, create high-quality images and video, write complex code and hold compelling human-like conversations. These capabilities are likely to progress quickly in the coming years, as competition intensifies and hardware and algorithms improve. Some leading AI companies explicitly aim at creating general-purpose human-level AI; if they succeed, they'll face strategic and economic incentives to continue developing more powerful systems. We may soon find ourselves sharing the world with a new kind of highly capable thinking thing, trained but not necessarily understood or fully controlled by us. These technologies raise too many big questions to list. This course will explore a handful: Just how far and how fast is AI progress likely to go? How should we think about the moral status of current and future AI systems? What would it mean to align advanced AI with human values—and what sorts of harms might we face if we can't solve this alignment problem? Can we ensure safe AI products by regulatory means, or are we better off pausing further development altogether? How promising are interpretability methods for understanding and controlling complex AI systems?
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 335 Philosophy of Language (3 Credits)
A survey of recent philosophical questions about language and meaning. Topics such as the following will be considered: reference, analyticity, speech acts, and semantic and syntactic theories. Focus will be on such figures as Russell, Austin, Quine, Kripke and Wittgenstein.
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 210 or PHIL 301

PHIL 345 Philosophy of Mind (3 Credits)
Critical analysis of contemporary theories concerning the nature of consciousness, the concept of the person and personal identity, and some theories of the relation of the mind to the body.
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 201 or PHIL 215 or PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252
Domain: NQR

PHIL 350 Theory of Knowledge (3 Credits)
An examination of contemporary philosophical theories about such topics as the nature of knowledge, criteria for truth, perception, meaning, knowledge, validation of belief and skepticism.
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 201 or PHIL 215 or PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252
College Curriculum: C200
Domain: ALV

PHIL 360 Feminist Metaphysics (3 Credits)
The course "Feminist Metaphysics" focuses on the metaphysical issues arising in feminist philosophy. Specific topics include: the nature of social construction, the metaphysics of sex and gender, queer identities, gender essentialism, and the role of truth and objectivity in the pursuit of justice and equality for women. The course will be of interest to those studying contemporary metaphysics and its social/political applications, as well as to those in gender and women's studies wanting to have rigorous accounts of key concepts in feminist thinking.
College Curriculum: C200, C350
Domain: ALV

PHIL 375 Metaphysics (3 Credits)
A study of competing philosophical accounts of the nature of reality and the basic constituents of ontology. Topics may include persons, events, material objects, properties, propositions, and possible worlds.
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 201 or PHIL 215 or PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252

PHIL 403 Advanced Topics in Value Theory (3 Credits)
Pre-requisite: Three courses in Philosophy or consent of instructor. A study of selected normative and theoretical problems in value theory, such as the nature of beauty or the justification of ultimate moral principles, theories of social justice, or freedom and moral responsibility. This course may be repeated for credit if there is no duplication of topics.
Prerequisite(s): (PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 205 or PHIL 210 or PHIL 215) and (PHIL 231 or PHIL 232) and (PHIL 252 or PHIL 253)
College Curriculum: C400

PHIL 404 Adv Topics in Value Theory for Ethics & Law (3 Credits)
An advanced study of value theory that carries the attribute which satisfies the Ethics & Law Concentration's Additional Seminar Requirement. Topics include selected normative and theoretical problems in value theory that reinforce the study of ethics and/or law, such as the justification of ultimate moral principles, theories of social justice, or freedom and moral responsibility. This course may be repeated for credit if there is no duplication of topics.
Prerequisite(s): (PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252 or PHIL 253) and (PHIL 210 or PHIL 301 or PHIL 313 or PHIL 350) and (PHIL 215 or PHIL 303 or PHIL 305 or PHIL 310)
College Curriculum: C400

PHIL 415 Advanced Topics in Metaphysics & Epistemology (3 Credits)
Pre-requisite: Three courses in Philosophy or concent of instructor.
An advanced study of selected topics on the nature of reality and our knowledge of it. Students are expected to write research papers, present material, and discuss course topics in seminar fashion.
Prerequisite(s): (PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 150W or PHIL 205 or PHIL 210 or PHIL 215) and (PHIL 231 or PHIL 232) and (PHIL 252 or PHIL 253)
College Curriculum: C400

PHIL 416 Adv Topics in Epistemology for Ethics & Law (3 Credits)
An advanced study of epistemology that carries the attribute which satisfies the Ethics & Law Concentration's Additional Seminar Requirement. The content of such courses might concern, e.g., knowledge, evidence, reasonable doubt, or other epistemic concepts used in the law or legal reasoning. Students are expected to write research papers, present material, and discuss course topics in seminar fashion. This course may be repeated for credit if there is no duplication of topics.
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 205 or PHIL 210 or PHIL 215 or PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252 or PHIL 253
College Curriculum: C400

PHIL 422 Great Philosophers (3 Credits)
Pre-requisite: Three courses in Philosophy or concent of instructor.
A systematic study of the thought of a great philosopher such as Descartes, Spinoza, Hume or Wittgenstein. The particular philosopher to be studied is designated each time the course is offered.
Prerequisite(s): (PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 150W or PHIL 205 or PHIL 210 or PHIL 215) and (PHIL 231 or PHIL 232) and (PHIL 252 or PHIL 253)
College Curriculum: C400
Domain: ALV

PHIL 431 Advanced Seminar In Philosophy (3 Credits)
Special advanced topics of interest to faculty and students will be discussed in seminar fashion. Students in the course are expected to write and present papers for discussion.
Prerequisite(s): (PHIL 231 or PHIL 232 or PHIL 252 or PHIL 253) and (PHIL 210 or PHIL 301 or PHIL 313 or PHIL 350) and (PHIL 215 or PHIL 303 or PHIL 305 or PHIL 310)
College Curriculum: C400

PHIL 432 Advanced Seminar in Philosophy (3 Credits)
Special advanced topics of interest to faculty and students will be discussed in seminar fashion. Students in the course are expected to write and present papers for discussion.
Prerequisite(s): (PHIL 100 or PHIL 150 or PHIL 150W or PHIL 205 or PHIL 210 or PHIL 215) and (PHIL 231 or PHIL 232) and (PHIL 252 or PHIL 253)
College Curriculum: C400

PHIL 441 Independent Study in Philosophy (1-3 Credits)
Individually supervised study of special topics. (Description of requirements available on philosophy department website.)
Domain: ALV

PHIL 442 Independent Study in Philosophy (1-3 Credits)
Individually supervised study of special topics. (Description of requirements available on philosophy department website.)
Domain: ALV

PHIL 460 Advanced Logic (3 Credits)
Systematic investigation of topics in logic drawn from such areas as system construction, proof theory, modal and deontic logic, and abstract set theory.
Prerequisite(s): PHIL 301
Domain: NQR

PHIL 495 Honors (3 Credits)
Students wishing to do Honors work in philosophy should submit a written request to the chair by February 15 of their junior year. Students should see the department chair for a detailed statement of the requirements of the Honors program and the specification of the information that is to be included in the written request for Honors study.

PHIL 496 Honors (3 Credits)
Students wishing to do Honors work in philosophy should submit a written request to the chair by February 15 of their junior year. Students should see the department chair for a detailed statement of the requirements of the Honors program and the specification of the information that is to be included in the written request for Honors study.
Domain: ALV