

PHILOSOPHY

Professors Falls-Corbitt, Schmidt,
and Churchill (on leave)
Associate Professor Ablondi (chair)
Assistant Professor Campolo

MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY

Ten courses distributed as follows:

- PHIL 285 *Plato and Aristotle*
- PHIL 295 *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Philosophy*
- PHIL 300 *Nineteenth Century Philosophy*
- PHIL 497 *Senior Thesis*
- Six other philosophy courses, at least three of which must be 300-level or above. Topics not covered in courses described below are available to majors through individually arranged independent studies.

MINOR IN PHILOSOPHY

- PHIL 285 *Plato and Aristotle*
- PHIL 295 *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Philosophy*
- PHIL 300 *Nineteenth Century Philosophy*
- three other philosophy courses, at least one of which must be 300-level or above.

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION MAJOR

A total of ten courses in philosophy and religion to include

- no fewer than four courses in philosophy
- two must be chosen from
 - PHIL 285 *Plato and Aristotle*
 - PHIL 295 *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Philosophy*
 - PHIL 300 *Nineteenth Century Philosophy*
- No fewer than four courses in religion
- PHIL 370/RELI 370 *Philosophy of Religion*
- PHIL 497 *Senior Thesis* or RELI 497 *Senior Seminar*
- at least four other courses 200-level or above.

Philosophy and Religion majors cannot major or minor in either philosophy or religion.

SENIOR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

While enrolled in Phil 49701 Senior Thesis, each philosophy major (or philosophy and religion major who chooses the philosophy capstone experience) will choose a philosophical topic or question to investigate

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under the guidance of one member of the department. This research will lead to a substantial thesis paper. A shorter presentation of this work will be delivered and discussed at the end of the spring semester.

COURSES

PHIL 110 *Introducing Philosophical Questioning* (VA)

Study centering on a particular theme or question. Reading and understanding philosophical texts will be introduced; in discussions and essays philosophical questioning will be practiced.

PHIL 120 *Critical Reasoning*

An investigation into the varieties of reasoning, with concentration on the comprehension, evaluation, and construction of arguments. By analyzing examples of reasoning drawn from everyday life, the media, and different academic disciplines, students will develop the skills and vocabulary required to articulate how reasoning works and to make reasoning an effective tool for gaining knowledge and participating in public discourse.

PHIL 150 *Introduction to Logic*

Emphasis upon the development of a symbolic system for sentential logic. Some aspects of traditional and informal logic receive brief treatment.

PHIL 215 *Ethics and Society* (CW, VA)

The philosophical analysis and evaluation of selected controversies related to the use of law and political systems to create and sustain just social conditions. The typical sort of issues studied would be poverty and world hunger, racism, the death penalty, civil disobedience, and conflicts over the protection of fundamental rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and privacy.

PHIL 225 *Ethics and Medicine* (CW, VA)

The philosophical analysis and evaluation of selected controversies related to the practice of medicine. The typical sort of issues to be studied would be abortion, termination of treatment, physician-assisted suicide, the use of reproductive and genetic technologies, and the just allocation of limited medical resources.

PHIL 240 *Existentialism* (VA)

An introductory study of existentialism through readings in literature and philosophy. Typically with selections from Kierkegaard and Nietzsche to Heidegger, Sartre, and Jaspers. The modern predicament of the human being will be examined and possible solutions sought.

PHIL 250 *Philosophies of India* (VA)

Presentation of the major philosophies of the Indian sub-continent in their historic and cultural contexts. In addition to readings from the Vedic and Epic periods, the systems of Jainism, Buddhism, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, and Vedanta will usually be discussed, sometimes with emphasis placed on one school or text.

PHIL 260 *Philosophies of China and Japan* (VA)

Presentation of the major philosophies of China in their historical and cultural contexts, including Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, as well as an examination of neo-Confucianism and the tradition of Zen Buddhism in Japan.

PHIL 270 *Environmental Philosophy* (CW, VA)

Study of particular themes related to an understanding of the relation of humans to the environment. Some years will focus on a particular area, such as environmental ethics, philosophies of technology, or philosophies of nature.

PHIL 285 *Plato and Aristotle* (VA)

Study of the two great systematic philosophers of ancient Greece, with attention to the development of their thought in subsequent periods and to the contemporary philosophical debates which they influence.

PHIL 295 *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Philosophy* (VA)

Study of philosophers and philosophical systems of the Enlightenment: Rationalism, Empiricism, and Kant.

PHIL 300 *Nineteenth Century Philosophy* (VA, W2)

Study of Hegel and the reactions to his system in Marx, Mill, the American Pragmatists, and Nietzsche. *Prerequisite: PHIL 285 or 295, or consent.*

PHIL 310 *Feminist Thought* (CW, VA)

Study of women's experience under patriarchy and of the philosophical, theological, and social criticisms arising there from.

PHIL 315 *Ethics and Relations to Friend, Kin, and Community* (CW, VA)

The philosophical analysis and evaluation of ethical issues pertinent to establishing and maintaining the goods of friendship, family, and community. This course will examine such questions as these: What virtues make flourishing relationships possible? What vices make them impossible? When, if ever, is respecting one another's rights not enough? Is "love" always enough? What are the ethical boundaries of different kinds of love? What moral obligations are entailed by our powers as sexual, procreative beings?

PHIL 330 *Ethical Theory* (VA)

Study and evaluation of the major ethical theories that are structuring the context of our contemporary moral debates, regardless of the concrete issue at stake. The course focuses upon understanding and comparing theories about what principles should guide human action, what kind of living constitutes the truly good life, and in what sense judgments regarding moral value have "objective" answers.

PHIL 340 *American Philosophy* (VA)

Study of particular philosophers or philosophical systems associated with the history of philosophy in the United States and their relations to European philosophies. *Recommended: PHIL 295 or 300.*

PHIL 360 *Social and Political Philosophy* (VA, W2)

Study and evaluation of the major philosophical theories and controversies shaping our contemporary political debates over such issues as the nature of social and economic justice, the meaning of equality, the limits of individual freedom, the sources of political obligation, and the characteristics of a well ordered society.

PHIL 370 *Philosophy of Religion* (VA)

Study and evaluation of classical and contemporary arguments regarding such issues as the nature and existence of God, the nature of religious faith and its relationship to reason, the meaning and epistemic value of religious experience, the "problem of evil," and the relationship between religion and morality. Cross-listed as RELI 370.

PHIL 380 *Metaphysics* (VA, W2)

Study of some of the perennial metaphysical topics in philosophy, including identity through time (what makes a table or a person the same table or person from one moment to the next?), universals and properties (is there 'redness itself', or are there just red things and if the latter, just what is the status of 'red?'), realism and anti-realism (does the world exist independent of us and our beliefs about it, and, if so, can we ever know the truth about it?), and existence itself (what exists in our world and what is mere fiction?). *Prerequisite: a previous course in philosophy or consent of instructor.*

PHIL 385 *Epistemology* (VA, W2)

Study and evaluation of various theories of knowledge and justification. Typically, the debates between internalism and externalism (does knowing something depend on what's going on in your head or on your environment?) and between foundationalism and coherentism (do we build up our knowledge structure from certain, basic beliefs, or do our beliefs form a self-supporting web?), as well as topics such as a priori knowledge (do we have knowledge of things independent of experience?) and naturalized epistemology (the view that the study of how we come to believe and know things belong to psychology and neuroscience, not philosophy) will be discussed. *Prerequisite: a previous course in philosophy or consent of instructor.*

PHIL 450 *Philosophy of Science* (VA)

Philosophical issues related to science and the scientific method with readings from Hempel, Popper, Kuhn, and others. *Recommended: major in philosophy or a science.*

PHIL 480 *Philosophy of Mind* (VA)

Study and evaluation of contemporary theories concerning the status of the mind and its contents. Typically, aspects of property dualism, reductive materialism, functionalism, and eliminative materialism will be discussed. *Prerequisite: a previous course in philosophy or consent of instructor.*

PHIL 490 *Special Topics* (W2)

Selected studies of major philosophers or philosophical concerns. At least one topic will be offered each academic year. *Prerequisite: a previous course in philosophy or consent of instructor.*

PHIL 497 *Senior Thesis* (W2) [UR]

Students in consultation with a professor will research, write, and defend a substantial paper on a topic of their choosing. Open only to philosophy and philosophy-and-religion majors in their senior year.