

PHILOSOPHY

Department of Philosophy

Chairperson: Jackson T. Buras

Graduate Program Director: Alexander Pruss

Associate Graduate Program Director: Francis Beckwith

Philosophy is the activity of thinking clearly about issues of fundamental importance. The study of philosophy helps to distinguish between good and bad reasoning, aids in clarifying, evaluating, and justifying beliefs, and assists in developing a worldview that brings order and meaning to one's experiences.

Because philosophy develops the abilities to think clearly, to solve problems, to communicate persuasively, and to respond to new situations in flexible and creative ways, it contributes both to living well and to making a living. The skills learned in philosophy not only contribute to personal satisfaction, but they are also valuable in any professional career.

Admission

The Department of Philosophy offers graduate work leading to the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees. For admission to its graduate program, the department requires

1. a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution;
2. at least fifteen hours of course work in philosophy;
3. a Graduate Record Examination General Test (GRE) score predictive of success in this program.
4. The Philosophy Department normally requires the GRE for all applicants. Exceptions may be made at the Department's discretion on a case-by-case basis. Please apply to the Director of Graduate Studies if you believe an exception in your case would be reasonable;
5. a brief writing sample; and
6. three letters of recommendation.

The faculty of the department may modify these requirements in exceptional circumstances. We currently do not admit students for terminal M.A. studies, but doctoral students often find it useful to receive the M.A. degree when they have completed enough of the program to qualify for it.

- Philosophy, M.A. (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/graduate-school/curriculum-departments-institutes-instruction/college-arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-ma/>)
- Philosophy, Ph.D. (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/graduate-school/curriculum-departments-institutes-instruction/college-arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-phd/>)
- Philosophy Graduate Minor (<https://catalog.baylor.edu/graduate-school/curriculum-departments-institutes-instruction/college-arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-graduate-minor/>)

Philosophy (PHI)

PHI 4310 Philosophy of Science (3)

An analysis of philosophical problems about science. Such central concepts as law, causation, induction, hypothesis, theory, verification, and models are studied. Presuppositions and methodologies of different sciences may be examined. The relation of scientific views to moral, social, and metaphysical problems is considered.

PHI 4311 Epistemology (3)

Pre-requisite(s): Two PHI courses or consent of instructor
A critical examination of classical and current problems in theories of knowledge. Attention is given to such problems as meaning, truth, the knowing situation, universals, knowledge of the external world and of other minds, and validation of knowledge claims. The contributions of recent movements such as logical empiricism, linguistic analysis, phenomenology may be studied.

PHI 4314 History of Philosophy: Patristic and Medieval (3)

The history and development of philosophy from 250 to 1400 A.D. Some of the major philosophers studied include Augustine, Boethius, John Scotus Erigena, Anselm, Abelard, Avicenna, Averroes, Maimonides, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, John Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham. Special emphasis will be placed on the significance of pre-Enlightenment thinkers to the development of the Enlightenment and Modernity.

PHI 4318 Philosophy of Law (3)

A critical study of historical and contemporary approaches to primary issues in jurisprudence and the philosophy of law, including tort law, criminal law, and Constitutional law.

PHI 4320 The Philosophy of Religion (3)

Pre-requisite(s): Two PHI courses or consent of instructor
A philosophical inquiry into such topics as the existence and nature of God, religious experience, immortality, the problem of evil, the relationship between reason and faith, the meaning of religious language and symbols, and the validity of religious knowledge claims. Methods of contemporary philosophical analysis are used in clarifying religious concepts.

PHI 4321 Metaphysics (3)

Pre-requisite(s): Two philosophy courses or consent of instructor
A critical analysis of classical and contemporary metaphysical systems and problems. These include the world views found in the philosophies of naturalism, idealism, personalism, positivism, pragmatism, organicism, and existentialism. Problem areas considered are mind-body relations, cosmology, ontology, philosophical anthropology, universals, determinism, and freedom. Basic categories such substance, cause, time, space, matter, and form are critically examined. Attention also is focused upon methods and criteria employed in metaphysical study.

PHI 4324 Philosophy in Literature (3)

A critical study of philosophical material in literature, that is, a study of the philosophy to be found in essays, novels, poems, and plays. Among the authors usually studied are Plato, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Lucretius, Voltaire, Goethe, Ibsen, Nietzsche, Kafka, Camus, Sartre, Malraux, Hesse and selected contemporary novelists.

PHI 4331 Latin American Philosophy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): Upper-level standing
Philosophical and intellectual movements in Latin America from the colonial times to the present. These movements include scholasticism, eclecticism, utilitarianism, romanticism, positivism, vitalism, phenomenology, and existentialism and philosophies of liberation. Works of major representatives of these movements (including such men as Bello, Mora, Sierra, Varona, Deustua, Caso, Korn, Vasconcelos, Farias Brito, Vaz Ferreira, and Romero) are studied.

PHI 4340 East Asian Philosophy (3)

Cross-listed as AST 4340

An historical and critical survey of the major movements in Chinese, Indian, or Japanese philosophy. Course may be repeated once with different area of concentration.

PHI 4341 Contemporary Continental Philosophy (3)

A critical study of philosophical movements in Europe during the past one hundred and fifty years. Some of the major philosophers studied include Nietzsche, Husserl, Adorno, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, de Beauvoir, Wittgenstein, Russell, Carnap, Gadamer, Habermas, Lyotard, Foucault, and Derrida. Movements studied include phenomenology, positivism, naturalism, critical theory, existentialism, structuralism, deconstructionism, and post modernism. Course may be repeated once with a different area of concentration.

PHI 4342 Contemporary American Philosophy (3)

A critical study of philosophical movements in the United States during the past one hundred years. Some of the philosophers whose works are studied include Pierce, James, Royce, Dewey, Mead, Lewis, Santayana, Whitehead, and Quine. Recent movements such as critical realism, naturalism, humanism, personalism, logical positivism, and linguistic analysis are also studied.

PHI 4345 Intermediate Logic (3)

Cross-listed as MTH 3345, PHI 3345

Pre-requisite(s): Upper-level standing

The language of first-order logic as a formal deductive system.

PHI 4353 Philosophy of Language (3)

Pre-requisite(s): Two PHI courses or consent of instructor

Critical examination of the basic problems in general semantics and philosophy of language, giving special attention to the major authors in these fields.

PHI 4360 Contemporary Ethical Theory (3)

Pre-requisite(s): Two philosophy courses or consent of instructor

Major issues in contemporary ethical writings. Course may be repeated once for credit if topic varies.

PHI 4361 Social Philosophy (3)

Cross-listed as PSC 4353

A critical survey of the fundamental concepts and theories used in justifying social institutions. Problems such as authority, law, freedom, rights, equality, responsibility, power, justice, the state, and justification of open societies are considered.

PHI 4365 Jewish Philosophy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): Upper-level standing or consent of instructor

Jewish philosophy in the twentieth century, with emphasis on the relation between mortality and morality, justice and totalitarianism, faith after the Holocaust, and individualism and revolution.

PHI 4379 Islam and Democracy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): Upper-level standing

Examines the evolution of political philosophy and institutions in Muslim culture.

PHI 4V99 Special Topics in Philosophy (1-3)

Pre-requisite(s): Senior or graduate standing and consent of instructor
Faculty-directed individual, group, or class research project. Course may be taken up to three times with a different topic for a maximum of 9 credit hours.

PHI 5199 Non-Thesis Degree Completion (1)

To fulfill requirements for non-thesis master's students who need to complete final degree requirements other than coursework during their last semester. This may include such things as a comprehensive examination, oral examination, or foreign language requirement. Students are required to be registered during the semester they graduate.

PHI 5301 Readings from Plato (3)

Topics include Plato's philosophical contributions in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, social and political philosophy, and aesthetics. Additional topics may include the philosophical uses of literary form, and the role of psychology and the emotions in an adequate philosophical understanding of human nature and the common good. Students learn a variety of interpretive approaches to Plato and also become familiar with the secondary literature on Plato. The course may be taken up to three times with different topics for a total of nine hours course credit.

PHI 5302 Readings from Aristotle (3)

We read from Aristotle's writings around a theme, e.g., metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics, politics, aesthetics, or psychology. Students become conversant with Aristotle's writings and important secondary literature. Course may be taken up to three times with different topics for a total of nine hours course credit.

PHI 5303 Ethics in the Western Tradition (3)

A survey of central philosophical texts and ideas shaping ethics in the Western tradition.

PHI 5306 Readings from Kierkegaard (3)

An intensive reading of selected philosophical works of Soren Kierkegaard, drawn from his pseudonymous and non-pseudonymous authorship. Focuses on significant philosophical issues discussed in Kierkegaard's works, putting him in conversation with important philosophers both from the past and from the contemporary world. Course may be taken up to two times with different topics for a total of 6 hours course credit.

PHI 5310 Value Theory (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A seminar on the major interpretations of the nature and meaning of value, with particular attention to the relation between value theory and ethics. Course may be repeated once with a different topic of study.

PHI 5311 Readings from the Philosophers (3)

Cross-listed as PSC 5311

Pre-requisite(s): For Political Science or Philosophy graduate students only; or consent of instructor

An intensive, critical reading of selected works of major philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Russell, and Rawls. Other philosophers may be added to this list. May be taken a maximum of six times if different topic, not to exceed eighteen semester hours.

PHI 5312 Topics in Classical Philosophy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A critical study of philosophers from the classical world; may include figures from the pre-socratic origins of philosophy to the times of epicurean and stoic philosophers, including especially Plato and Aristotle. Course may be taken up to three times with different topics for a total of nine hours course credit.

PHI 5313 Topics in Action Theory (3)

An in-depth study of relevant recent and/or more classical philosophical literature on one or more selected topics such as free will, responsibility, practical rationality, decision theory, and intention. Course may be taken up to three times with different topics for a total of nine hours course credit.

PHI 5314 Topics in Modern Philosophy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A critical study of philosophers from the Modern Period, including thinkers from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Course may be taken up to three times if topic is different for a total of nine hours credit.

PHI 5315 Topics in Philosophy of Mind (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A philosophical examination of the nature of the human mind and its relation to the body as well as theories that account for the nature of consciousness, intentionality, and other features of mentality. Course may be taken up to three times when topic is different for a total of nine credit hours for the course.

PHI 5316 Contemporary Philosophical Problems (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

Examination of historical, normative, and analytical problems which have arisen in the history of philosophy and an examination of the systems of philosophy which have emerged from the consideration of these problems. May be taken six times if different topic, not to exceed eighteen semester hours.

PHI 5318 Logic for Philosophers (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

In this course the student should gain formal tools that are useful in a wide-range of areas of philosophy, including: propositional logic, quantificational logic, basic set theory, basic probability theory, and basic modal logic.

PHI 5319 Philosophical Writing (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

This course contains a significant amount of epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. This course has as its goal mastering the art of writing a critical essay in philosophy, an essential skill for success in graduate school in philosophy and for publication success after securing a faculty position in philosophy.

PHI 5320 Special Topics in Philosophy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

Special research topics to be undertaken by students under direct supervision of the professor. Course may be taken a maximum of four times if different topic, not to exceed twelve hours.

PHI 5321 Topics in Epistemology (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

Covers a broad array of issues concerning the nature of successful cognition of the sort sought after in purely theoretical activities. May focus on issues such as the nature and possibility of knowledge, the threat of skepticism, and the nature of rationality and justification, as well as on current controversies in the literature, including controversies with the value of knowledge, debates between foundationalists and coherentists, the Gettier problem, and many others. Course may be taken up to three times when the topic is different for a total of nine credit hours for the course.

PHI 5322 Topics in Metaphysics (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

Covers a broad array of issues concerning the nature of being and reality, involving topics concerning God, the world, and the self. May focus on related topics such as ontology, category theory, substances and attributes, space and time, causation, and possible worlds. Course may be taken up to three times when topic is different for a total of nine credit hours for the course.

PHI 5330 Readings in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A critical readings course on primary sources and ancient and medieval philosophy. The course concludes with a comprehensive written examination over the sources.

PHI 5331 Readings in Modern and Contemporary Philosophy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A critical readings course on primary sources in modern and contemporary philosophy. The course concludes with a comprehensive written examination over the sources.

PHI 5333 Seminar in Political Philosophy (3)

Cross-listed as PSC 5333

See PSC 5333 for course information.

PHI 5342 Seminar on Religion, Law, and Politics (3)

Cross-listed as PSC 5342

An examination of the liberal and republican traditions of government and their relationship to church-state relations, with particular emphasis on how philosophers, legal theorists, and/or theologians assess the influence of both traditions on the American constitutional system. Among the topics that may be discussed are the debates about liberalism, religious liberty, religious establishment, the employment of religious reasons in a liberal regime, and the nature of public reason.

PHI 5343 Classical Political Thought (3)

Cross-listed as PSC 5343

See PSC 5343 for course information.

PHI 5350 Workshop in Teaching Philosophy (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

This course will address a broad range of pedagogical issues involved in becoming a successful philosophy teacher. Topics include: educational theory, organizational strategies, practical techniques for effective lecturing, practical techniques for stimulating discussion, the logistics of evaluation, the scholarship of teaching and the importance of ongoing self-assessment of classroom performance.

PHI 5353 Medieval Political Thought (3)

Cross-listed as PSC 5353

See PSC 5353 for course information.

PHI 5360 Contemporary Ethical Theory (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A critical study of issues in contemporary ethical theory; may be taken up to three times with different topics of study, not to exceed nine semester hours.

PHI 5361 Topics in Contemporary Philosophy of Religion (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

This course investigates issues in contemporary philosophy of religion. Course may be taken up to three times with different topics, not to exceed a total of nine hours of course credit.

PHI 5362 Issues in Contemporary Philosophy of Science (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A critical study of issues in contemporary philosophy of sciences; may be taken up to three times with different topics of study, not to exceed nine hours of course credit.

PHI 5363 Modern Political Thought (3)

Cross-listed as PSC 5363

See PSC 5363 for course information.

PHI 5365 Topics in Philosophy of Language (3)

Pre-requisite(s): For philosophy graduate students only or by departmental approval

A critical study of issues in philosophy of language. Meaning, reference, intentionality and extensionality are among possible topics to be considered using primary sources in contemporary philosophy. May be taken up to three times with different topics not to exceed nine total credit hours.

PHI 5393 Advanced Seminar in Political Philosophy (3)

Cross-listed as PSC 5393

See PSC 5393 for course information.

PHI 5V99 Thesis (1-6)

Research, writing, and oral defense of an approved master's thesis. A minimum of six semester credit hours of PHI 5V99 is required.

PHI 6V10 Prospectus Research (1-6)

Pre-requisite(s): PHI 5330 and 5331; and completion of regular course work

Supervised research for developing and writing a Dissertation Prospectus Proposal that will be the subject of a preliminary exam that will admit students to candidacy. A student may repeat this course for credit, with a maximum of eighteen total hours.

PHI 6V99 Dissertation (1-12)

Supervised research for the doctoral dissertation.