

Philosophy and Humanities

Department Overview

Philosophy focuses on the perennial problems raised by the encounter of human beings with the world and with their history and culture, especially problems concerning the nature of reality, the nature of knowledge, and the nature of value. The practice of philosophy requires the cultivation of analytical reasoning abilities, clarity of written and spoken argumentation, as well as the development of synthetic and higher-order critical thinking capacities. While concentrating on some of the most profound and fundamental problems of thought, philosophy students learn the history of the discipline and hone these broadly transferable and practically applicable skills.

Students who complete a major in philosophy are prepared to enter either graduate programs or the professional world. In addition to providing vocational skills and a solid foundation for graduate work in the discipline, a major in philosophy constitutes a strong preparation for graduate work in other academic disciplines and a variety of professional programs. The Department of Philosophy and Humanities is prepared to work with students who are interested in postgraduate professional education to assure that their preparation meets disciplinary or professional expectations in areas including law, business administration, medicine, and theology.

It is the mission of the Department of Philosophy and Humanities to provide our students with an excellent disciplinary training, to further research in philosophy and adjacent disciplines, and to render appropriate service to the university, the community, and the profession.

Undergraduate Programs (<https://catalog.uta.edu/archives/2025-2026/liberalarts/philosophy/undergraduate/>)

Contact Information

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COURSES

PHIL 1301. FUNDAMENTALS OF REASONING. 3 Hours.

This course is an introduction to critical thinking, which is a process of identifying, analyzing, evaluating, and constructing reasoning as found in texts, media, politics, and everyday personal interactions. Students will be introduced to what constitutes good reasoning through a range of topics including: formal logic; fallacious reasoning; cognitive biases; reasoning with probability, statistics, and numbers; and guarding against disinformation.

PHIL 1304. CONTEMPORARY MORAL PROBLEMS. 3 Hours. (TCCN = PHIL 2306)

Examination of ethical problems and theories which have a bearing on contemporary life. Texts may include both classical and contemporary ethical writings and deal with problems such as the conditions under which life may be taken (abortion, capital punishment, medical ethics), business ethics, social justice, and individual rights.

PHIL 2300. INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours. (TCCN = PHIL 1301)

An examination of one or more basic problems of lasting interest to philosophers. Typical problems may include human nature and limits of knowledge. Formerly listed as PHIL 1300. Credit cannot be received for both PHIL 1300 and PHIL 2300.

PHIL 2311. LOGIC. 3 Hours. (TCCN = PHIL 2303)

The development of formal and symbolic systems (categorical, propositional, and predicate) for the analysis of arguments.

PHIL 2313. PHILOSOPHY OF THE ARTS. 3 Hours.

Problems in the philosophy of art and art criticism; the history of aesthetic theory.

PHIL 2314. PERSPECTIVES ON SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS. 3 Hours.

Topics and episodes in the history of science and mathematics from a philosophical point of view. Students are brought to understand that science has a fascinating history, is underpinned by deep philosophical presuppositions, and depends upon special social and cultural factors for its continued growth and revision.

PHIL 2315. TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

In-depth treatment of philosophical topics or movements, such as Existentialism, Philosophy of Science Fiction, Brain and Mind, Asian Philosophy. May be repeated for credit as content changes.

PHIL 2316. COMPUTATION, MIND, AND PARADOX. 3 Hours.

A philosophical and historical introduction to the foundations of logic and mathematics, the psychology of reasoning, and the computational theory of mind. Topics may include: logic, set theory, axiom systems; number and infinity; fallacies of deductive and probabilistic reasoning; Bayesian epistemology; algorithms; artificial intelligence, computational theories of mind and brain.

PHIL 3301. HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

The beginning and the early developments of the western philosophic tradition. Ancient Greek philosophy, basically the Pre-Socratics, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.

PHIL 3302. HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

Post-Aristotelians (e.g., the later Stoics, the Epicureans, Neo-Platonists); philosophy of the early Church Fathers through Aquinas and later Scholastics.

PHIL 3303. HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: RENAISSANCE AND EARLY MODERN EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

The philosophical views of Galileo, Newton, Bacon, and Hobbes, the Continental Rationalists and British Empiricists, and a brief introduction to the philosophy of Immanuel Kant.

PHIL 3304. HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

Major philosophers from Kant to the early 20th century.

PHIL 3305. HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: CLASSICAL INDIAN & BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

Introduces the Classical Indian philosophical tradition and the Buddhist philosophical tradition as they developed inside and outside of India. Covers the origins and history of the six "orthodox" schools of Classical Indian philosophy and the three "heterodox" schools-Buddhism, Jainism, and Carvaka materialism-and their contributions to epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and philosophy of religion. There are no prerequisites but at least one prior course in Philosophy or Religious Studies is recommended.

PHIL 3307. SEMINAR IN RESEARCH METHODS AND PHILOSOPHICAL WRITING. 3 Hours.

Examination of philosophical methodology; philosophical analysis, philosophical writing, discipline-specific bibliographic tools, etc. Students write a series of short papers on topics of interest. Prerequisite: PHIL 2311 and one other PHIL course.

PHIL 3312. ETHICS. 3 Hours.

Studies the fundamental concepts and problems of moral life through an in-depth examination of classical and contemporary philosophical accounts, such as utilitarianism, contractarianism, theories of natural rights, Kantian ethics, and virtue ethics. Previously offered as PHIL 2312; cannot be repeated for credit.

PHIL 3315. EXISTENTIALISM. 3 Hours.

Readings in existentialist philosophy and literature with a special emphasis on such themes as alienation, anxiety, the self, absurdity, value, freedom, and responsibility. Texts may include writings from Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, de Beauvoir, Jaspers, and others.

PHIL 3316. PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION. 3 Hours.

Problems that engage philosophy of religion (e.g., the existence of God, theodicy, religious language) and the way these problems have been treated by some outstanding Western thinkers.

PHIL 3317. PHILOSOPHICAL LOGIC. 3 Hours.

Begins with predicate calculus and includes such topics as definite descriptions, identity, modal logic, second-order logic, set theory, philosophy of logic and mathematics, and philosophical applications of logic. Prerequisite: PHIL 2311 or consent of the instructor.

PHIL 3318. THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. 3 Hours.

The method and goals of scientific scholars and inquiry. The distinction between formal and empirical sciences, laws and theories, measurement, the role of observation and experiment, and probability. Formerly listed as PHIL 4315. Credit cannot be received for both PHIL 4315 and PHIL 3318.

PHIL 3319. BIOMEDICAL ETHICS. 3 Hours.

Major ethical problems which arise in modern medicine and in medical/biological research (euthanasia, abortion, patient-physician relations, allocations of medical resources, genetic research, etc.).

PHIL 3320. PHILOSOPHY OF LAW. 3 Hours.

Examination of the institution of law, legal concepts, legal reasoning, and the legal process. Topics may include the nature of law; the moral limits of the criminal law; legal rights; liberty, justice, and equality; punishment; responsibility; the private law (property, contract, and tort); constitutional law; and feminist jurisprudence.

PHIL 3321. PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE. 3 Hours.

Topics to be investigated include the nature of language and communication; the distinction between natural and artificial language; the traditional division of the field into syntax, semantics, and pragmatics; and such specialized subtopics as meaning, reference, truth, and speech acts. Completion of PHIL 2311 is recommended, but not required.

PHIL 3322. DISABILITY ETHICS. 3 Hours.

Explores the philosophical literature pertaining to disability and disabled experiences. Topics include defining disability, healthcare allocation, de-institutionalization, assisted dying and euthanasia, and the ethics of genetic and reproductive technologies. Offered as PHIL 3322 and DS 3322; credit will only be granted once.

PHIL 3324. BUSINESS ETHICS. 3 Hours.

Selected ethical issues in business, such as the nature and moral status of capitalism; corporate moral agency and responsibility; issues and challenges in the workplace (e.g., civil liberties, personnel policies, unionization, privacy, and safety); moral choices facing employees (e.g., loyalty, insider trading, and whistleblowing); job discrimination (e.g., affirmative action, comparable worth, and sexual harassment); consumer protection; environmental protection; and globalization.

PHIL 3330. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

Investigation of the basis (if any) of political obligation. Analysis of social and political concepts, such as equality, liberty, rights, and justice. Discussion of social and political theories, such as anarchism, contractarianism, Marxism, and conservatism.

PHIL 3340. TOPICS IN APPLIED ETHICS. 3 Hours.

Investigation of a single moral issue or a cluster of issues that arise in the context of a particular profession. Examples of the former are abortion, punishment, freedom of speech, the environment, and the moral status of animals. Examples of the latter are business ethics, legal ethics, engineering ethics, nursing ethics, and computer ethics. May be repeated for credit as content changes.

PHIL 3341. TOPICS IN BIOETHICS. 3 Hours.

Investigation of a single moral issue or a cluster of issues that arise in the context of the medical profession. Examples of possible topics are resource allocation, surrogate decision-making, the philosophy of mental illness, research ethics, reproductive ethics, and end of life care. May be repeated for credit as content changes. Prior completion of PHIL 3319 (Biomedical Ethics) is strongly recommended, but not required.

PHIL 3350. TOPICS IN ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

An in-depth examination of a particular figure or topic in the field of ancient Greek philosophy. Works studied may include those of the Pre-Socratics, Plato, Aristotle, Hellenistic, and Neoplatonic philosophers.

PHIL 3390. HONORS COLLOQUIUM. 3 Hours.

An interdisciplinary course designed to meet the needs of advanced undergraduates in the Honors College.

PHIL 4191. UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE COURSE. 1 Hour.

Topics assigned on an individual basis covering research of individual students or study in designated areas. May be repeated for credit.

PHIL 4192. CONFERENCE COURSE IN BIOETHICS. 1 Hour.

This course is an independent study offering students an opportunity for in-depth study of a specific topic in bioethics. Requires permission of the department chair and the instructor.

PHIL 4291. UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE COURSE. 2 Hours.

Topics assigned on an individual basis covering research of individual students or study in designated areas. May be repeated for credit.

PHIL 4292. CONFERENCE COURSE IN BIOETHICS. 2 Hours.

This course is an independent study offering students an opportunity for in-depth study of a specific topic in bioethics. Requires permission of the department chair and the instructor.

PHIL 4318. PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE. 3 Hours.

The role of ideas in literature and an analysis of the actual contacts between philosophy and the dominant world views of the great writers of literature.

PHIL 4380. PHENOMENOLOGY. 3 Hours.

Phenomenology is a major philosophical movement based on the methodically controlled description of conscious experience, as uncovered at first introspectively. This course focuses on (1) the origin of the movement in common epistemological problems arising in philosophy, psychology, mathematics, and the natural sciences, (2) the development of the movement's method, and (3) a close study of some influential phenomenologists, including Husserl, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty. Contemporary connections to the neuroscientific study of consciousness are also explored.

PHIL 4383. PHILOSOPHY OF MIND. 3 Hours.

Explores philosophical issues raised by the mind and its relation to the body. Topics may include consciousness, perception, artificial intelligence, animal minds, free will, the self, and the relationship between mind and matter.

PHIL 4385. THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE. 3 Hours.

Problems which arise from attempts to give an account of human knowledge. Skepticism, perception, induction, or the nature of truth. Note: Although there are no prerequisites for this course, students who have had no previous philosophy courses may find the material difficult.

PHIL 4386. METAPHYSICS. 3 Hours.

Problems which arise from attempts to give an account of reality and its manifestations. Possibility and necessity, causality, the nature of events, mind-body, and universals. Note: Although there are no prerequisites for this course, students who have had no previous philosophy courses may find the material difficult.

PHIL 4387. TOPICS IN VALUE THEORY. 3 Hours.

In-depth treatment of an issue or topic within value theory, which is broadly construed to include moral philosophy (and its subfields, such as moral epistemology and moral psychology), social philosophy, political philosophy, philosophy of law, aesthetics, philosophy of religion, and feminist philosophy. May be repeated for credit with permission of the department.

PHIL 4388. TOPICS IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

In-depth treatment of a single important philosophical writer, a related group of writers, or an extended tradition. May be repeated for credit with permission of the department.

PHIL 4389. TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES. 3 Hours.

In-depth treatment of one or more of the social sciences from a philosophical perspective: may include the philosophy of history, social philosophy, political philosophy, philosophy of the social sciences, or any specific subject therein. Credit may not be granted for PHIL 4311 or PHIL 4317 (no longer offered) and PHIL 4389. May be repeated for credit with permission of the department.

PHIL 4391. UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE COURSE. 3 Hours.

Topics assigned on an individual basis covering research of individual students or study in designated areas. May be repeated for credit.

PHIL 4392. CONFERENCE COURSE IN BIOETHICS. 3 Hours.

This course is an independent study offering students an opportunity for in-depth study of a specific topic in bioethics. Requires permission of the department chair and the instructor.

PHIL 4394. SENIOR THESIS. 3 Hours.

During the senior year, the student completes a thesis under the direction of a faculty member in the major department. Required of all pre-professional track philosophy majors and of all philosophy majors who are members of the University Honors College.

PHIL 5391. CONFERENCE COURSE IN PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

May be taken only with the permission of the instructor and Graduate Advisor.

PHIL 5392. TOPICS IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

Consideration in depth of the work of a single philosopher or a related philosophical school against the background of the development of philosophy. May be repeated for credit as the topic changes.

PHIL 5393. PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE HUMANITIES. 3 Hours.

A philosophical inquiry into problems and issues of relevance in humanistic disciplines. May be repeated for credit as the topic changes.

PHIL 6389. SEMINAR IN PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS. 3 Hours.

Seminar-style treatment of some major problem in contemporary philosophy. May be repeated for credit as the topic changes.

PHIL 6394. TOPICS IN SYSTEMATIC PHILOSOPHY. 3 Hours.

In-depth treatment of an issue or issues in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics or related subdisciplinary areas. May be repeated for credit as the topic changes.