Philosophy (PHI)

Major and Minor in Philosophy

Department of Philosophy, College of Arts and Sciences

CHAIRPERSON: Lorenzo Simpson  DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES: Patrick Grim

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Minors of particular interest to students majoring in Philosophy: Art History (ARH), Studio Art (ARS), Biology (BIO), Comparative Literature (CLT), Computer Science (CSE), English (EGL), Linguistics (LIN), Mathematics (MAT), Political Science (POL), Religious Studies (RLS), Women’s Studies (WST)

Faculty

David B. Allison, Professor, Ph.D., Pennsylvania State University: Contemporary European philosophy.

Edward S. Casey, Distinguished Professor, Ph.D., Northwestern University: Aesthetics; phenomenology; philosophy of psychology.

Harvey Cormier, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Harvard University: American philosophy; William James and Pragmatism; philosophy and culture.

Robert Crease, Professor, Ph.D., Columbia University: Philosophy of science; aesthetics; modern philosophy.

Allega De Laurentis, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., University of Frankfurt: Greek philosophy; Hegel.

David A. DiIorio, Professor, Ph.D., Fordham University: Ph.D., Columbia University: History of philosophy; East Asian languages and cultures.

Jeffrey Edwards, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Universitat Marburg: History of modern philosophy; Kant and German idealism; ethics and political philosophy.

Patrick Grim, Distinguished Teaching Professor, B.Phil., University of St. Andrews; Ph.D., Boston University: Logic; ethics; computer modeling; contemporary analytic philosophy. Recipient of the State University President’s and Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1988, Academy of Teacher-Scholars, 1996.

Dick Howard, Distinguished Professor, Ph.D., University of Texas: Political and social philosophy; Marxism.

Don Ihde, Distinguished Professor, Ph.D., Boston University: Phenomenology; philosophy of technology; hermeneutics.

Eva Feder Kittay, Professor, Ph.D., City University of New York: Philosophy of language; philosophy and literature; feminism; ethics; political and social philosophy.

Peter Manchester, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union: History of Greek philosophy; phenomenology; philosophical theology.

Gary Mar, Associate Professor, Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles: Logic; philosophy of mathematics; contemporary analytic philosophy; Asian American studies; philosophy of religion. Recipient of the State University President’s and Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1993, Alumni Association Outstanding Professor Award, 1995, Academy of Teacher-Scholars, 1996.

Eduardo Mendiesta, Associate Professor, Ph.D., New School for Social Research: Latin American philosophy; critical theory.


Rita D. Nolan, Professor, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania: Theory of knowledge; philosophy of language; foundations of cognitive science; Wittgenstein; feminism.

Kelly Oliver, Professor, Ph.D., Northwestern University: Joint appointment with women’s studies. 20th-century French philosophy; continental feminist theory; Nietzsche.

Mary C. Rawlinson, Associate Professor, Ph.D., Northwestern University: 19th-century philosophy; philosophy of medicine; aesthetics and literary theory; Hegel, philosophical psychology. Recipient of the State University President’s and Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1994.

Hugh J. Silverman, Professor, Ph.D., Stanford University: Continental philosophy; cultural and aesthetic theory; philosophy and literature. Recipient of the State University Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1977.

Michael A. Simon, Professor, Ph.D., Harvard University: J.D., Cardozo School of Law: Social and legal philosophy; philosophy of science; philosophy of mind; philosophy of law.

Lorenzo Simpson, Professor, Ph.D., Yale University: Contemporary continental philosophy; philosophy of the social sciences; philosophy of science and technology; neopragmatism and post analytic philosophy; philosophy and race. Recipient of Commonwealth of Virginia’s Outstanding Faculty Award, 1990, University of Richmond’s Distinguished Educator Award, 1984.

Marshall Spector, Professor, Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University: Philosophy of science; philosophy of technology; environmental issues.

Donn Welton, Professor, J.D., Ph.D., Harvard University: Philosophy of law; ethics. Recipient of the State University Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, 1978.

Affiliated Faculty

Donald Kuspit, Art

Robert Harvey, Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies

Adjunct Faculty

Estimated number: 2

Teaching Assistants

Estimated number: 17

Philosophy explores and critically examines the deeper meanings of human life and the world in which we live. It studies the foundations of all forms of knowledge and human activity and the interconnections among them. Its studies include the nature of existence, knowledge, and value; human reasoning and its limits; art, science, literature, and the human condition; and justice and the nature of the good. It unifies these diverse topics by concentrating on the fundamental nature of human experience and cognition as well as the conceptual foundations of the sciences.

A major in philosophy gives students access to the fruits of 2,500 years of thought on matters of ultimate concern. It encourages and provides the means of thinking effectively about timeless questions through a study of important writings on these topics. A successful student of philosophy is equipped to engage in intellectual conversation on a range of topics of both classical and contemporary concern. The study of philosophy encourages breadth and depth of understanding and promotes the ability to think cogently and rigorously.

Philosophy majors prepare themselves for a wide range of professional and business occupations that value highly developed skills of analysis, comprehensive thinking, and communication. Students majoring in Philosophy commonly pursue careers in law, medicine, business, technology, public service, teaching, and editing and publishing. In addition to its focus on the broader intellectual aspects of liberal studies, the Department of Philosophy stresses interdisciplinary studies in emerging fields such as feminism, computation and consciousness, environmentalism, philosophy of technology, and cross-cultural philosophies from a global perspective.

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Courses Offered in Philosophy
See the Course Descriptions listing in this Bulletin for complete information.

PHI 100-B Concepts of the Person (II)
PHI 101-G Historical Introduction to Western Philosophy
PHI 103-B Philopspic Problems (II)
PHI 104-B Moral Reasoning (II)
PHI 105-G Politics and Society (II)
PHI 108-B Logical and Critical Reasoning (II)
PHI 109-B Philosophy and Literature in Social Context (III)
PHI 110-B Arts and Ideas (III)
PHI 111-B Introduction to Eastern Philosophy (I)
PHI 200-G Introduction to Ancient Philosophy (I)
PHI 206-G Introduction to Modern Philosophy (17th and 18th century) (I)
PHI 208-G Introduction to 19th-Century Philosophy (I)
PHI 220-C Introduction to Symbolic Logic (II)
PHI 230-H The Nature and Practice of Science (III)
PHI 247-G Existentialism (I)
PHI 249-G Marxism (I)
PHI 264-D Philosophy and the Arts (III)
PHI 277-G Political Philosophy (II)
PHI 284-G Introduction to Feminist Theory
PHI 285-G The Uses of Philosophy (III)
PHI 300-I Ancient Philosophy (I)
PHI 304-I Medieval Philosophy (I)
PHI 306-I Modern Philosophy (I)
PHI 308-I 19th-Century Philosophy (I)
PHI 309-I 20th-Century Philosophy (I)
PHI 310-K American Philosophy (I)
PHI 312-I Topics in Contemporary European Thought (I)
PHI 315, 316 Majors' Introductory Seminars A, B
PHI 320-G Metaphysics (II)
PHI 323-G Philosophy of Perception (II)
PHI 325-G Contemporary Philosophies of Language (II)
PHI 330 Advanced Symbolic Logic (II)
PHI 332-G Theories of Knowledge (II)
PHI 335-G Philosophy of Time (II)
PHI 336-G Philosophy of Religion (II)
PHI 340-J Philosophical Traditions of East Asia (I)
PHI 342-J History of Chinese Philosophy (I)
PHI 344-J Japanese Thought and Philosophy (I)
PHI 347-G Hermeneutics and Deconstruction (II)
PHI 353-G Philosophy of Mind (II)
PHI 360-G Philosophy of Education (III)
PHI 363-G Philosophy of the Social Sciences (III)
PHI 364-H Philosophy of Technology (III)
PHI 365-H Philosophy and Computers (III)
PHI 366-G Philosophy and the Environment (III)
PHI 367-G Philosophy of War and Peace (III)
PHI 368-H Philosophy of Science (III)
PHI 369 Philosophy of Mathematics (III)
PHI 370-G Philosophical Psychology (III)
PHI 372-G Ethical Inquiry (II)
PHI 373-G Philosophy in Relation to Other Disciplines (III)
PHI 374-G Philosophy in Relation to Other Disciplines (III)
PHI 375-G Philosophy of Law (III)
PHI 376-G Philosophy and Medicine (III)
PHI 377 Contemporary Political Philosophy (II)
PHI 378-K Philosophical Topics in Asian American History (III)
PHI 379-K Philosophy of Race (III)
PHI 380-G Literature and Philosophy (III)
PHI 381-G Aesthetics (II)
PHI 383-G Philosophical Issues of Race and Gender (III)
PHI 384-G Advanced Topics in Feminist Philosophy (III)
PHI 390 Topics in Philosophy
PHI 391-G Topics in Philosophy
PHI 400-G, 401-G Individual Systems of the Great Philosophers (I)
PHI 402-G Analysis of Philosophic Texts (I)
PHI 420, 421 Advanced Topics in Philosophy (I, II, III)
PHI 435 Senior Seminar
Independent readings, research, and teaching practica courses

Requirements for the Major in Philosophy (PHI)
The major in Philosophy leads to the Bachelor of Arts degree. Philosophy courses are distributed among three categories indicated, in parentheses after the title of the course. Courses offered for the major must be passed with a letter grade of C or higher. No more than two 100-level philosophy courses may be used to satisfy major requirements.

Completion of the major requires 36 credits.

1. PHI 300 Ancient Philosophy and PHI 306 Modern Philosophy
2. PHI 400 Individual Systems of the Great Philosophers or PHI 401 Individual Systems of the Great Philosophers or PHI 402 Analysis of Philosophic Texts
3. Two courses in Category I, Styles and Systems of Philosophy in Historical Perspective, excluding those in Requirements 1 and 2 above.
4. Three courses in Category II, Basic Skills and Problem Areas of Philosophy
5. Three courses in Category III, Philosophy in Relation to Other Arts and Sciences. Two upper-division courses in another discipline, if appropriately related to a student’s program, may be substituted for one Category III course. Approval for such a substitution must be obtained from the undergraduate director prior to course election.
6. PHI 435 Senior Seminar
7. Upper-Division Writing Requirement

Philosophy majors must achieve an evaluation of S (Satisfactory) on the written work for either PHI 300 or PHI 306, which, for this purpose, must be taken before the end of the junior year. With advance permission from the Undergraduate Director, an evaluation of S (Satisfactory) on written work for another 300-level philosophy course which calls for intensive writing may be substituted. Students who wish to satisfy this requirement must inform the instructor of their intention to do so no later than the third week of the semester, so that the student’s essays for the course may be given special appraisal for advanced writing skills appropriate to Philosophy majors, in
addition to their appraisal for the course. A student must achieve an appraisal of S in advanced writing skills in order to register for PHI 435 Senior Seminar.

Notes:
1. PHI 200 and 206 may not be counted for the major if taken after 300 and 306, respectively.
2. Students who expect to pursue graduate study should include PHI 220 in their programs.
3. No more than 6 philosophy courses may be used to satisfy D.E.C. requirements.

Honors Program in Philosophy

To qualify for the honors program, a student must be a junior or a senior in the major with an overall g.p.a. of at least 3.00 and a g.p.a. in philosophy of 3.50. The student must maintain this average throughout participation in the honors program. To seek honors, a student must plan a program no later than the first semester of the senior year with a faculty advisor and the director of undergraduate studies. The program consists of three courses at the 300 level or higher, concentrated on related aspects of a central problem. At least one of the courses should be an independent study under the direction of the advisor and lead to a senior paper. This paper is reviewed by the advisor and one other member of the Philosophy faculty and by a faculty member from outside the Department. The senior paper is then the focus of an oral examination. Honors are awarded upon passage of the examination.

Requirements for the Minor in Philosophy (PHI)

The minor in Philosophy requires 18 credits, which must include at least nine credits in upper-division courses. The minor must be approved by the director of undergraduate studies. Students anticipating a minor may select one of the following emphases: history of philosophy; logic, science, and technology; moral, political, and legal issues; literature and the arts. Students pursuing the Political Theory/Philosophy track in the Political Science major may fulfill the Philosophy minor with 15 PHI credits, counting two of their upper-division POL electives in place of one PHI course. Alternatively, a student may design a minor in Philosophy tailored to his or her own interests, subject to approval by the director of undergraduate studies. Courses offered for the minor must be passed with a letter grade of C or higher. No more than one 100-level course can be counted toward satisfying the minor requirements.

Undergraduate Research Tracks in Philosophy

Occasionally, Undergraduate Research tracks are offered in Philosophy. These tracks afford students special opportunities to do sophisticated and concentrated research on a particular topic in philosophy while still undergraduates. Seven courses are required over a three-year period. The first five courses provide important skills and background. In the third year, the research team, which consists of a faculty member and a small group of students, spends two semesters doing work on a philosophical project of professional caliber, doing work that may even lead to publication. More specific information on available Undergraduate Research tracks, including particular topics and the courses designed for them, are available from the Undergraduate Office.

Study Abroad

Philosophy majors and other interested students who would like to spend a semester or a year studying in France, Germany, England, Spain, Italy, or other countries, should consult the Department’s director of undergraduate studies. With the permission of the Department, Philosophy majors may also use credits from other study abroad programs to satisfy major requirements. See also “Special Academic Opportunities.”