PHILOSOPHY ELECTIVE COURSES
AT A GLANCE - Fall 2020

ROSE HILL

Historical – Ancient
PHIL 3501: Ancient Philosophy – J. Koterski  
MR 10:00-11:15

Historical – Contemporary & 20th Century
PHIL 3622: Kierkegaard – A. Jampol-Petzinger  
TF 2:30-3:15

Topical – Metaphysics
PHIL 3348: Concepts and Reality – R. Winegar  
MR 2:30-3:45

Topical – Knowledge and Method
PHIL 3266: Philosophy of Science – L. Caruana  
TF 11:30-12:45

Topical – Meaning and Human Experience
PHIL 3975: Philosophy as a Way of Life – S. Grimm  
MR 4:00-5:15

Topical – Moral, Social, & Political Philosophy
PHIL 3145: Democracy & Constitutional Order in Classical American Philosophy – J. Davenport  
MR 2:30-3:45

Pluralism
PHIL 3720: African American Philosophy – J. Green  
TF 1:00-2:15

Interdisciplinary Capstone Course (ICC)
PHIL 4315: Jane Austen and Moral Philosophy – L. Kopajtic  
MR 11:30-12:45

Senior Values Seminars (EP4)
PHIL 4409: Environmental Ethics – E. Tokay  
TF 1:00-2:15

PHIL 4416: Art, Morality, Politics – S. Islekel  
TF 10:00-11:15

PHIL 4418: Issues of Life and Death – J. Proust  
MR 10:00-11:15

PHIL 4486: Evil, Vice and Sin – J. Jones  
MR 11:30-12:45

LINCOLN CENTER
Historical – Medieval
PHIL 3552: Medieval Philosophy – G. Pini
TF 11:30-12:45

Historical - Modern
PHIL 3620: Kant – B. Babich
T 6:00-8:45

Topical – Moral, Social, & Political Philosophy
PHIL 3130: Philosophy of Law – J. Flynn
TF 2:30-3:45

PHIL 3904: Feminist Philosophy – S. Whitney
MR 10:00-11:15

Senior Values Seminars
PHIL 4444: AI, Science Fiction, & Values –TBA
TF 1:00-2:15

PHIL-4484-L01: Freedom and Responsibility – V. Emery
MR 2:30-3:45

GRADUATE LEVEL COURSES (Open to senior Philosophy Majors with Department approval)*

PHIL 5010: Introduction to Aquinas – B. Davies
R 4:30-6:30

PHIL5009: Introduction to Aristotle – D. Tress
F 1:30-3:30

*All graduate courses meet at Rose Hill

Philosophy Electives – Course Descriptions
This general course offers a philosophical study of the scientific worldview. It has three parts, one on logical and methodological questions, one on the relevance of the social and historical dimensions of scientific knowledge, and one on specific philosophical areas like space, time, causation, life and the concept of nature itself.

Topical: Metaphysics

PHIL 3348: Concepts and Reality
R. Winegar

How do the concepts in our minds relate to reality outside our minds? For example, do our concepts match the way that reality is in itself, carving nature at the joints so to say? Or do we impose our own conceptual schemes on reality, conceptual schemes that might not match the way reality is in itself? Might our conceptual schemes change dramatically over time, for example during scientific revolutions? And if so, how should we understand such changes? What is the relationship between conceptual representation and visual perception? For example, is conceptual content part of visual experience? Or is it something only added later? Can we in principle grasp everything with our concepts? Might there be things that our concepts are not able to fully grasp? And might there be things that can only be described in non-conceptual ways, such as through art? This class will examine 20th and 21st century approaches to these and related questions. Authors discussed may include H.G. Gadamer, Sally Haslanger, Susanne Langer, C.I. Lewis, Thomas Kuhn, John McDowell, Thomas Nagel, W.V.O. Quine, Peter Strawson, Wilfrid Sellars, David Wiggins, and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Historical: Ancient

PHIL 3501: Ancient Philosophy
J. Koterski

This course aims to acquaint the student with the basic problems and directions of Western philosophy as developed in its early and decisive phase by the principal thinkers of ancient Greece. Pre-Socratics, Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus are among the figures that can be treated, as well as Stoicism and Epicureanism.

Historical: Contemporary & 20th Century

PHIL 3625: Kierkegaard
A. Jampol-Petzinger

Known occasionally as the “founder of existentialism,” Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-1855) had a profound and lasting impact on philosophical reflection on the nature of the self, faith, ethics, rationality, and the possibility and meaning of philosophical discourse more generally. This course will take a comprehensive approach to Kierkegaard’s thought, reading selections from both his pseudonymous works and religious discourses, as well as looking at those, like Heidegger, Sartre, and de Beauvoir among others, who were significantly influenced by Kierkegaard’s writings.

Pluralism

PHIL 3720: African American Philosophy
J. Green

Using texts by Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. DuBois, Alain Locke, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, James H. Cone, Angela
Davis, Cornel West, Patricia Hill Collins, Howard McGary, William E Lawson, Leonard Harris, Lucius Outlaw and others, this course will focus on pillars, prophets and prospects for African American philosophy, a ‘philosophy born of struggle’ created by profound critical and transformative voices from times of chattel slavery to the present that plays an influential role in American philosophy and American society today.

Topical: Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy

PHIL 3145: Democracy and Constitutional Order in Classical American Philosophy
J. Davenport

Democratic justice has two main poles: popular sovereignty and constitutional order. Founders of the American federal government in the Revolutionary period sought to balance these values, but the idea that people might vote for slavery brought them into crisis. This forced civic republicans, including Lincoln, to articulate the moral preconditions of legitimate democracy in a clearer way. With federalist arguments for more centralized power as a starting point, this course will consider alternative conceptions of democratic justification that emerged from the American debates with an eye to contemporary applications. In particular, we will clarify and debate proposed constitutional reforms that are being considered today.

Topical: Meaning and Human Existence

PHIL 3975: Philosophy as a Way of Life
S. Grimm

This class takes its jumping-off point from the idea that philosophy has something to contribute to a life well-lived. Over the course of the semester we will explore a variety of philosophical “Ways of Life”: The Examined Life (Socrates), the Awakened Life (Buddha), the Pleasurable Life (Epicurus), The “Authentic” Life (Sartre), and many more. In addition to learning about the details of these ways of life, we will explore the practices and habits of mind that structure and flow from them, in order to see how belief and action are intertwined in these traditions.

Interdisciplinary Capstone Course

PHIL 4315: Jane Austen and Moral Philosophy
L. Kopajtic

This course will examine the novels of Jane Austen as works of moral philosophy, asking both how these works of fiction can be considered as such, and also what moral questions and positions we can find in them. Moral topics to be considered include the role of emotions in morality, moral education and the cultivation of virtue, moral perception and judgment, and the relation of the individual to society. We will also read selections from works (philosophical and literary) by authors who were near contemporaries of Austen’s, including Samuel Johnson, David Hume, Jane Collier, Hannah More, Adam Smith, and Mary Wollstonecraft.

Senior Values Seminars

PHIL 4409: Environmental Ethics
E. Tokay

This senior values seminar surveys major theories in environmental ethics dealing with our moral duties regarding nature, including environmental stewardship, sustainable development, environmental justice, ecological virtue ethics, animal rights, biocentrism, Leopold’s land ethic, and ecological feminism. Environmental ethics has not only philosophical but also scientific, economic, political, and design dimensions, as it deals with such topics
as global warming, alternative energy, pollution control, suburban sprawl, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and the prospect of a sixth mass species extinction event threatening the future of human and nonhuman life as we know it.

**PHIL 4416: Art, Morality, and Politics**  
S. Islekel

This course explores the inter-relationship among artistic, moral, and political values. How do aesthetic ideas, such as the idea of beauty, play into moral values? What is the relationship between art and politics? What kind of political and social impacts can art have? Does art replicate the moral and political values from which it emerges, or can it open up new ways of seeing and understanding the world? In investigating these questions, we will not only discuss the philosophical material, but also will be talking about historical and cultural contexts of this material to examine the impacts of these contexts on thought.

**PHIL 4418: Issues of Life and Death**  
J. Proust

The objective of this course is to expand students’ knowledge of issues related to the ethical, legal, and social implications of advances in biotechnology and biomedicine. It aims at providing a strong foundation in historical, philosophical, and socio-scientific approaches and frameworks to address bioethical challenges.

**PHIL 4486: Evil, Vice, and Sin**  
J. Jones

This senior values seminar takes a negative strategy in approaching moral questions by focusing on actions labeled “evil,” “vicious,” and “sinful.” The aim is to create an opportunity for reflecting on the reality and experience of evil from which we might evolve some positive conception of "value" or "good," and to explore the kinds of damage to selfhood and agency among victims that might form part of our basis for describing things as "evil."

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**Lincoln Center**

**Topical: Moral, Political and Social Phil.**

**PHIL 3130: Philosophy of Law**  
J. Flynn

This course focuses on a number of fundamental questions and central debates within the philosophy of law. What is the nature of law? Is there a moral obligation to obey the law? When is civil disobedience justified? Should law be used to enforce the morals of a community? What goes into interpreting law?

**Historical: Medieval**

**PHIL 3552: Medieval Philosophy**  
G. Pini

This course introduces students to medieval philosophy by paying attention both to canonical thinkers such as Augustine, Boethius, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas and to some “out-of-the-canon” but extremely original figures, such as mystics and female authors. We will devote most attention to philosophers in the Western tradition, but we will also consider the fundamental contributions made by Arabic thinkers. Although we will consider medieval philosophy in its historical development, our focus will be on what medieval thought has to
teach us regarding issues that continue to be of great philosophical importance even today. These include free will and responsibility, the problem of evil, the existence and nature of God, the structure of the world and our place in it, the scope of our cognitive capacities, and happiness and virtue. Medieval thinkers developed some of the most daring (and influential) arguments ever devised to tackle those "perennial" topics. The goal of the course is to enable students to understand and evaluate those arguments in their original formulation.

**Historical: Classical Modern**

**PHIL 3620: Immanuel Kant**
B. Babich

Participants in this course will read Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in the context of his critical philosophy overall, especially his contributions to science and philosophy of science. The course will include reference to 20th and 21st century philosophical reception of Kant's thought, both continental and analytic.

**Topical: Meaning and Human Experience**

**PHIL 3904: Feminist Philosophy**
S. Whitney

A survey of feminist philosophy, focusing on its contributions to social and political philosophy. It balances historical and issue-based approaches, surveying feminist contributions to philosophical accounts of rights, equality, and personhood, as well as power and oppression, liberation and resistance, subjectivity and sociality. Figures studied may include Mary Wollstonecraft, Simone de Beauvoir, Shulamith Firestone, Gayle Rubin, bell hooks, Catharine MacKinnon, Marilyn Frye, Nancy Fraser, Sandra Bartky, Iris Marion Young, Audre Lorde, Patricia Hill Collins, Monique Wittig, Judith Butler, Sally Haslanger, and Martha Nussbaum.

**Senior Values Seminars**

**PHIL 4444: AI, Science Fiction, and Values**
TBA

This course is focused on the concept of human value. We will be asking what, if anything, makes a human being a bearer of moral value in a way that is distinct from other forms of life and, more specifically, technologically created models or imitations of life. We will survey a number of traditional and contemporary philosophical positions on the difference between humans and artificial life forms, and thus will engage with these thinkers' views on what is unique to human life. We will also use Heidegger's critique of technology to ask what value can possibly be taken away from human life in the process of technological advancement. Alongside our exploration of these theories, we will turn to several fictional portrayals of interactions between humans and artificial intelligence in order to get a better sense of what value-bearing qualities and capacities are missing on the part of technologically developed beings. Science fiction can serve as a gateway to philosophical questions about what makes humans distinct because it offers imaginative depictions of the impact technology can have on human experience. Science fiction authors and directors encourage us to stretch our conception of what makes humans unique and what is distinctive about our relationship with technology.

**PHIL 4484: Freedom and Responsibility**
V. Emery

The course will investigate several problems concerning freedom, responsibility and the morality of punishment. Is freedom possible in a world completely governed by physical laws? How can I be blamed (or praised) for my actions, given that upbringing, character, and environment are largely matters of luck? Is the practice of punishing criminals morally justifiable? How?
Spring 2021 Preview (Tentatively Planned)

Rose Hill

**Historical – Classical Modern**
PHIL 3606: Early Modern Philosophy: Self & World – L. Kopajtic

**Historical – Contemporary & 20th Century**
PHIL 3653: Latin American Philosophy – Samir Haddad

**Topical – Metaphysics**
PHIL 3330: Philosophy of Religion – B. Davies

**Topical – Knowledge and Method**
PHIL 3250: Problems in Epistemology – N. Ballantyne

**Topical – Meaning and Human Experience**
PHIL 3422: Harry Potter and Philosophy – J. Jones

**Topical – Moral, Social, & Political Philosophy**
PHIL 4001: Politics and Biopower – S. Islekel

**Globalism**
PHIL 3770: Daoist and Zen Philosophy – C. Gowans

**Pluralism**
PHIL 3722: Native American Philosophy – J. Green

**Interdisciplinary Capstone Course (ICC)**
PHIL 4301: Happiness and Well Being – C. Gowans

**Senior Values Seminars (EP4)**
PHIL 4473: War and Peace: Just War Theory – J. Davenport

PHIL 4484: Freedom and Responsibility – M. Baur

Lincoln Center

**Historical – Medieval**
PHIL 3557: Confessions of St. Augustine – G. Pini

**Historical – Modern**
PHIL 3716: Hegel and His Successors – M. Burke
Topical – Metaphysics
PHIL 3360: Contemporary Metaphysics – A. Seymour

Senior Values Seminar (EP4)
PHIL 4412: Classical Values: the Art of Living – B. Babich

For more information about Philosophy courses, and the Major or Minor, please contact:
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PHILOSOPHY MAJOR

10 Courses in total

1. PHIL 1000 Philosophy of Human Nature
2. PHIL 3000 Philosophical Ethics
3-7. 5 Required electives: Chosen from 3 different Historical Periods and 2 different Topical
   OR
   2 different Historical Periods and 3 different Topical Areas
8-10. 3 Free electives: Chosen from all the upper-level philosophy courses, including Senior
   Values, Globalism, Pluralism, Interdisciplinary Capstone Courses, and Senior
   Thesis

PHILOSOPHY MINOR

6 courses in total

1. PHIL 1000 Philosophy of Human Nature
2. PHIL 3000 Philosophical Ethics
3-6. 4 Free electives: Chosen from among all upper-level philosophy courses, including
   Values, Globalism, Pluralism, and Interdisciplinary Capstone Courses.

PHILOSOPHY MINOR (GABELLI)

6 courses in total

1. THE Philosophy of Human Nature
2. PHIL 3000 Philosophical Ethics
3. BLBU 3443 Ethics in Business
4-6. 3 Free electives