

# PHI: PHILOSOPHY

## Courses

### PHI 100. Creating Meaning. 3 Credits.

This course is an introduction to existentialism, one of the most influential intellectual currents of the 20th century. Through film, literature, and the primary philosophical texts of existential philosophers, such as Frederick Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and Simone de Beauvoir, we will explore basic existential themes such as the formation of values, "dread" and "alienation." Existentialism focuses less on what to think and more on how to live in the face of radical freedom and responsibility.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive  
Distance education offering may be available.

### PHI 101. World Philosophies. 3 Credits.

For more than 2,500 years, humans from across the globe have attempted to make sense of the universe and their place in it. They have asked questions about the nature of reality, of knowledge, of the self, and of justice, among other things, and they have offered a range of answers. In this course students will explore the wide variety of philosophies offered across time and place by investigating the views of a handful of representative thinkers and texts from some key historical eras. They will be exposed to ideas from Chinese philosophy, Indian philosophy, Islamic philosophy, African philosophy, Indigenous philosophy, and Anglo-European philosophy. The goal of the course is to provide students a broad understanding of philosophy generally and a better understanding of the philosophical assumptions that inform people's thinking around the world--both in the past and today.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive

### PHI 102. Introduction to Religious Studies. 3 Credits.

The role of religion in human life. Illustrations drawn from various traditions, rituals, and belief patterns, both ancient and modern.

Gen Ed Attribute: Interdisciplinary Requirement, Writing Emphasis (select both)  
Distance education offering may be available.

### PHI 125. Theology & Science: Enemies or Partners?. 3 Credits.

An inquiry into the relationship of theology to the natural sciences. Team taught by both a physicist and a philosopher, the course investigates how ideas of God have been affected by advances in physics and biology.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive  
Equivalent courses: PHY 125

### PHI 130. Religion in the United States. 3 Credits.

This course will explore the rich diversity of religions in the United States and the impact of religion on our culture.

Gen Ed Attribute: Diverse Community(select both)  
Distance education offering may be available.

### PHI 150. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving. 3 Credits.

Introduction of the principles needed for effective thinking and evaluation of arguments in practical situations. Topics include procedures and guidelines for identifying and evaluating arguments, recognizing fallacies, and writing/criticizing argumentative essays.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive

### PHI 174. Principles of the Arts. 3 Credits.

A critical examination of traditional and contemporary aesthetic theories from diverse cultural perspectives to extend students' thinking about the "concept" as well as the "experience" of art. Visual and literary arts are emphasized, as well as how to live a more artful life.

Gen Ed Attribute: Interdisciplinary Requirement

### PHI 180. Introduction to Ethics. 3 Credits.

Introduction to major theories and contemporary work in moral philosophy. Offers tools for ethical decision making in our daily lives with emphasis on the influence of culture, power, privilege.

Gen Ed Attribute: Diverse Community(select both), Ethics Requirement, Humanities Distributive

### PHI 190. Logic. 3 Credits.

Introduction to deductive and inductive logic, with emphasis on classical syllogistic and symbolic logic. Topics include arguments, categorical propositions and classes, immediate inferences, Venn diagrams, rules of syllogism propositional functions, truth tables and predicate logic.

Distance education offering may be available.

### PHI 199. Philosophy Transfer Credits. 1-10 Credits.

Transfer Credits  
Repeatable for credit.

### PHI 201. Contemporary Issues. 3 Credits.

Discussion and analysis of contemporary philosophical issues. The topic varies from semester to semester.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive  
Repeatable for credit.

### PHI 203. Introduction to Indigenous Philosophy. 3 Credits.

This course serves as an introduction to Indigenous thought with an emphasis on Lenape philosophy. West Chester University occupies the land of the Lenape. This land, known as Lēnapehōkink (Lenapehoking), is the source of Lenape beliefs, practices, and stories. As such, throughout the course students will be reading Lenape stories, while also focusing on Lenape history and culture to provide context for the ideas and morals found in those stories. They will begin with some articles on general themes that are common in Indigenous thought. Then, since they are on Lēnapehōkink, students will focus on the history and stories of the Lenape whose descendants are now members of the Delaware Nation, Delaware Tribe of Indians, and Stockbridge-Munsee Community in the U.S. and the Delaware Nation at Moraviantown, Munsee-Delaware Nation, and Six Nations of the Grand River in Canada.

Gen Ed Attribute: Speaking Emphasis

### PHI 204. Philosophies and Religions of India. 3 Credits.

The religious and philosophical heritage of India, from Vedic times to the present. Examination of major classics, such as Rig Veda, Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, and Yoga-sutras; recent writers such as Tagore, Gandhi, and Radhakrishnan.

### PHI 205. Yin-Yang, Dao, and Zen. 3 Credits.

This course offers an overview of classical East Asian philosophies and religions. This course will aim to contextualize the three major religious traditions of northeast Asia (Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism) within a philosophical-cultural common sense view that seeks religious meaning and values within constantly changing webs of relationality. This course offers students an alternative to Western perspectives. The discussion topics include, but are not limited to, Yijing, Dao De Jing, Yin-Yang, Zen Buddhism, Donghak, Korean Shamanism, Shinto, East-Asian Arts and Medicine, etc.

### PHI 206. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the three major monotheistic traditions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Exploring their earliest heritage including founders, scriptures, early institutions, and practices, it will then address how these traditions were preserved, re-invigorated, and sometimes transformed in response to social change and political upheaval.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive  
Distance education offering may be available.

### PHI 207. Philosophies of Nonviolence. 3 Credits.

An examination of the concepts of violence and nonviolence, especially as seen by recent thinkers. The course attempts to link theory with practice by considering the contributions of Tolstoy, Gandhi, Thoreau, and other philosophers, religious thinkers, and activists.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive

### PHI 220. Introduction to Islam. 3 Credits.

This course is an introduction to Islam as a prophetic religious tradition. Students will begin the course with an overview of Islam and how the Western discourses see it. They will then learn about the beliefs, tenants, and the teachings of Islam, as well as about the life of the Prophet Muhammad, hadith, and the Qur'an. Subsequently, students will delve into some of the most significant topics related to the classical and post-classical Islamic tradition: theology, Sufism, law, and gender. They will conclude the course by examining Islamophobia in the post-911 era.

Gen Ed Attribute: Arabic CC (select both), Diverse Community(select both), Humanities Distributive

### PHI 270. History of Ancient Philosophy. 3 Credits.

A survey of the major figures of ancient philosophy, from the pre-Socratic period through Plato, Aristotle, the Epicureans, and Stoics, to the Skeptics and Neo-Platonists.

### PHI 271. History of Medieval Philosophy. 3 Credits.

The history of philosophy from the early Church fathers to the late Middle Ages. St. Augustine, St. Thomas, mysticism, Jewish and Islamic influences, humanism, and the rise of science.

### PHI 272. History of Modern Philosophy. 3 Credits.

From Descartes to Hegel. The social, political, and scientific impact of the philosophers.  
Gen Ed Attribute: Germany CC (select both)

**PHI 273. 19th Century Philosophy. 3 Credits.**

Hegel and German Idealism; decisive influences on European and American literature and thought. Survey of the chief themes of Schopenhauer, Comte, Mill, Spencer, Marx, Kierkegaard, Darwin, and Nietzsche.

Gen Ed Attribute: Germany CC (select both)

**PHI 280. Philosophy and Film. 3 Credits.**

This course helps students understand and discuss philosophy, film, and how the two disciplines intersect. Students' critical thinking skills will improve as they use film theory and terminology to decipher key philosophical texts, and vice versa.

Gen Ed Attribute: Diverse Community(select both), Humanities Distributive

**PHI 282. Animal Ethics. 3 Credits.**

An exploration of the religious, philosophical, and scientific perspectives on animals, animal treatment, and animal use, including arguments for vegetarian/veganism and of activist groups.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive

**PHI 301. Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. 3 Credits.**

This class surveys some major ethical theories and applies them to 15 cases published by the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl, in preparation for competing in the Northeastern Regional in November. Ethics Bowl cases are drawn from recent news stories and typically involve a wide spectrum of ethical concerns including environmental and sustainability issues, animal rights, economic justice, civil rights, and reproductive rights.

Repeatable for credit.

**PHI 330. Introduction to Meaning. 3 Credits.**

Discussion of the analysis of meaning given by various disciplines, including philosophy, psychology, linguistics, communication studies, and the arts.

Gen Ed Attribute: Interdisciplinary Requirement, Writing Emphasis (select both)

**PHI 340. Contemporary Moral Issues. 3 Credits.**

Philosophical examination of major social debates (e.g. abortion, human cloning, war, and violence) and their relation to race, class, gender, etc.

Gen Ed Attribute: Writing Emphasis (select both)

**PHI 349. Ideas of the Bible. 3 Credits.**

This course will explore major themes in the Bible and their impact on Western Culture, including on constructions of gender. Particular attention will be paid to their influence on Western literature, religion and philosophy.

**PHI 350. Philosophical Topics: 20th Century and Beyond. 3 Credits.**

A course in recent and current philosophies and philosophers from various traditions.

Gen Ed Attribute: Humanities Distributive

Repeatable for credit.

**PHI 355. Political Philosophy. 3 Credits.**

What is the legitimate role of the state? How do we preserve liberty, equality, and produce a distribution of burdens and benefits in society? To begin to answer these sorts of questions, this course examines philosophical texts on politics from thinkers such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Jefferson, Thoreau, Mill and Marx.

**PHI 371. Medical Ethics. 3 Credits.**

A case-based approach to the study of philosophical concepts and ethical criteria as applied to health care practice, clinical research, and the pressing medical issues of the day.

PHI 371 Prerequisite: Junior or Senior status, or department consent.

Gen Ed Attribute: Ethics Requirement, Health Humanities Pathway, Interdisciplinary Requirement

**PHI 373. Business Ethics. 3 Credits.**

The study of philosophical concepts and ethical criteria as applied to business practices. Through case studies and scholarly contributions, the course will cover issues such as the ethical nature of the free market system, foreign outsourcing, issues around environmental impact of business, consumer rights, worker rights and job discrimination, and more.

Gen Ed Attribute: Diverse Community(select both)

**PHI 376. Entrepreneurial Ethics. 3 Credits.**

The study of philosophical concepts and ethical criteria applied to business practices especially from the perspective of the entrepreneur. Through case studies and scholarly contributions, the course will cover issues such as the ethical nature of the free market system, marketing and advertising, product development, etc. The course will ask key questions: "what makes a business a good business?"; "can a product or service be inherently unethical?"; "how can new products alter our community in important ways that contest our values?"; etc. Most importantly, the course will invite students to reflect on their own system of moral evaluation and creatively engage in ways that they could solve problems with attentiveness to the ethical dimensions of any business activity.

**PHI 390. Women and Religion. 3 Credits.**

An exploration of how the beliefs and practices of major world religions have both hampered and enhanced women's lives. Particular attention will be paid to often marginalized voices of women from within these traditions.

Gen Ed Attribute: Diverse Community(select both)

**PHI 401. Internship in Philosophy. 3 Credits.**

This course provides a structured and supervised work experience in philosophy for upper-level students. Students must apply to the department Internship Director and receive approval to be admitted.

**PHI 405. Feminist Theory. 3 Credits.**

This course focuses on the development of contemporary feminist theoretical constructs, beginning in the 1970s. Students will study classic feminist theories and ideas from this period. They will use a feminist pedagogy which emphasizes learning that is collaborative and student-centered. We value participatory, experiential, diverse, and student-centered knowledge production. Because we believe that students serve as sources of knowledge for themselves and each other, we encourage students to take initiative in and responsibility for the learning process.

PHI 405 Prerequisite: Successful completion of two WOS courses, with minimum grades of D-. Equivalent courses: WOS 405

**PHI 407. Queer Theory. 3 Credits.**

This course is an introduction to the study of Queer Theory, as both a discipline and a form of political resistance. Queer theory is, in a very basic nutshell, the study of identities that exist outside of rigid binary categories. For this reason, we must understand queer theory as separate from, even if closely aligned with, GLBT or sexuality studies. Queerness, in this context, does not refer to sexuality and gender, but to any identity rejected by or resistant to normative, binary categories. Thus, this course utilizes a "queer" approach (drawing on feminist, race, sexuality, psychoanalytic, literary, etc.) to ask fundamental questions about our identities (whether sexuality, gender, race, class, nationality, etc.) and how our identities are determined by and resistant to social regulation.

PHI 407 Prerequisite: Successful completion of one WOS course, with a minimum grade of D-.

Gen Ed Attribute: Diverse Community(select both)

Equivalent courses: WOS 407

**PHI 410. Independent Study. 1-3 Credits.**

Topic to be approved by supervising faculty member. Requires approval of Department Chair. Repeatable for credit.

**PHI 411. The Problem of War. 3 Credits.**

An examination of war and the "war systems" including terrorism. Alternatives to war are considered.

**PHI 412. Ethical Theories. 3 Credits.**

An inquiry into the meaning, interpretations and function of ethical theory in our lives. The course will explore some combination of classic, modern and contemporary ethical theories.

PHI 412 Prerequisite: Successful completion of PHI 101 or PHI 180, with a minimum grade of D-; and a minimum 2.00 cumulative GPA.

**PHI 414. Philosophy of Religion. 3 Credits.**

Religion and religious experience as viewed by major western thinkers. Concepts of God, immorality, religious knowledge, evil, miracles, and science and religion.

**PHI 415. Existentialism. 3 Credits.**

An exploration of important texts in 19th century and 20th century existentialism and their influence on contemporary currents in philosophy and social sciences.

PHI 415 Prerequisite: Successful completion of 2 PHI courses, with minimum grades of D-.

Gen Ed Attribute: FRA/Franco Area CC (SLCT both)

**PHI 421. Philosophy of Law. 3 Credits.**

Consideration of the philosophical foundations of law. Topics may include the nature of law and its' relation to rights, liberties, duties, liability, and responsibility, and privacy; the nature of judicial reasoning; concepts of responsibility and liability; theories of punishment; causation in the law; discrimination and equality; the relation of law and morality; civil disobedience. PHI 421 Prerequisite: Successful completion of 3 credits of PHI, with a minimum grade of D-, or permission of instructor.

**PHI 422. Philosophy of Science. 3 Credits.**

The nature of scientific method and scientific theory, with reference to presuppositions, inference, explanation, prediction, applications, and verification. PHI 422 Prerequisite: Successful completion of a 200-level PHI course and one other PHI course, with minimum grades of D-.

**PHI 430. African American Philosophy. 3 Credits.**

This course guides students through an in-depth study of African-American Philosophy with a focus on three critical areas: (1) philosophical anthropology, (2) liberation/insurrection, and (3) Black existentialism. In the first unit, students consider race and the color-blind principle against the backdrop of liberalism and how this has impacted public policy. They also cover social, political and economic dimensions of African-American philosophy. In the second unit, students will study key works in critical race theory, and this may include some of the judicial opinions and speeches of the late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. The final unit explores Black existentialism and the work of such philosophers as George Yancy. Some knowledge of moral and political philosophy (utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics, the social contract, etc.) is helpful for this course.

PHI 430 Prerequisite: Successful completion of 3 credits of philosophy coursework, with minimum grade of D-, or permission of the instructor.

**PHI 434. Contemporary Indigenous Thought. 3 Credits.**

The aim of this course is to help students better understand how Native American ideas and values have been adapted to address the ongoing process of colonization. Despite forced removals (e.g., people from land, children from parents, practices from people, etc.) and forced attempts at assimilation (e.g., U.S. board schools for Native children, "Kill the Indian, Save the Man" policies, etc.), Native American philosophical frameworks weren't eradicated. Rather, these frameworks still exist and have been adapted to address the new forms of colonization. In this course, students will look at the philosophical underpinnings of contemporary issues faced by Native Americans. Gen Ed Attribute: Speaking Emphasis

**PHI 436. Symbolic Logic. 3 Credits.**

Principles and methods of symbolic logic. Practice in determining validity of sentential and quantificational arguments. The algebra of classes. PHI 436 Prerequisite: Successful completion of PHI 190, with a minimum grade of D-.

**PHI 451. Religion and Ecology. 3 Credits.**

This course explores contemporary environmental issues from the perspectives of different religious traditions through a postcolonial interreligious lens. We will compare spiritual and religious views of the ecosystem, its meaning, and its relation to human beings. Students will be asked to critically examine these efforts and also explore issues of environmental injustice. Furthermore, this course introduces postcolonial ecocriticism that promises to make new contributions to the analysis of how imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism create basic conditions of inequality between the colonizer and the colonized. This high level online course is offered for both graduate and undergraduate students.

PHI 451 Prerequisite: Successful completion of one PHI course, with a minimum grade of D-. Distance education offering may be available.

**PHI 480. Environmental Ethics. 3 Credits.**

Study of arguments and principles surrounding moral questions about the environment. Who and what dissolves moral consideration? What if our obligations to the environment and human beings conflict? Do animals have rights?

PHI 480 Prerequisite: Successful completion of 3 credits of PHI, with a minimum grade of D-, or permission of instructor.

**PHI 481. Philosophy of Human Rights. 3 Credits.**

An examination of theories of human rights and the bearing of these theories on public policy issues such as legitimacy of war and terrorism, economic justice, and whether future generations have rights. Topics include whether there are basic human rights, and if so, what they are, what is their nature or basis, and what arguments can be brought to bear upon these questions.

PHI 481 Prerequisite: Successful completion of 6 credits of PHI, with minimum grades of D-.

**PHI 499. Philosophical Concepts and Systems. 3 Credits.**

An intensive study of the major works of one philosophical system, emphasizing comparison with other views. Required of all philosophy majors.

PHI 499 Prerequisite: Successful completion of 6 credits of PHI, with minimum grades of D-; senior standing; and a minimum 2.00 cumulative GPA.