

Philosophy Minor Course Descriptions

PHIL 1077/3177 Philosophy & Religions of Asia (3 units)

An exploration of Hindu and Buddhist traditions and, to a lesser extent, the Chinese traditions of Confucianism and Taoism, attempting to understand how each tradition conceives the nature of reality, the goals of human life, and the way to those goals. Field trips.

PHIL 1104/3104 Philosophy of Human Nature (3 units)

Inquiry into the enduring questions of human nature including the meaning and purpose of human life, the questions of its spiritual origin and destiny, its capacities for good and evil, the scope and limits of its freedom, the nature of knowing, and the question of immortality, drawing upon a range of Western thought. Particular attention is given to the tension between classical religious and philosophical views and those stemming from modern human sciences such as psychology, sociology, and sociobiology.

PHIL 1105/3105 Ancient Greek Philosophy (3 units)

Study of the seminal ideas of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle regarding the nature of reality and the nature and destiny of human beings. Pre-Socratic philosophical thought and the views of the Stoics and Epicureans are also considered.

PHIL 1106/3106 Medieval Philosophy (3 units)

Study of the philosophical issues of central concern to the leading thinkers of the Middle Ages: the nature of the human person, the relationship between persons and God, the good life, and the nature of reality in Augustine, Anselm, John of Salisbury, Thomas Aquinas, and Ockham.

PHIL 1107/3107 Argumentation and Logical Analysis (3 units)

Introduction to the liberal art of logic. Primary goal is to enable students to construct sound arguments and identify fallacious ones. Introduces the student to traditional formal logic with an emphasis on Aristotle's categories as a tool to critically analyze our world as essential to our role as responsible citizens in a democratic society.

PHIL 1108/3108 Ethics (3 units)

An introduction to ethical theory in Western philosophy followed by an investigation of a range of contemporary ethical problems drawn from private life, public policy, law, medicine, and business.

PHIL 1109/3109 Ethics in Healthcare (3 units)

An introduction to ethical theory in Western philosophy followed by an investigation of contemporary ethical problems drawn from the field of health care, e.g., scarce resource allotment, genetic intervention, control, and research, dilemmas in nursing, medical paternalism, AIDS issues, reproductive control, abortion, euthanasia.

PHIL 1110/3110 Environmental Ethics (3 units)

An investigation of philosophical perspectives on humanity's relation to nature, combined with an exploration of contemporary environmental issues and related political decision-making.

PHIL 1175/3175 Philosophy of Religion (3 units)

A rigorous inquiry into topics central to the philosophy of religion including the nature of God, grounds for belief and disbelief, freedom and necessity, space and time, human destiny East and West, problems of religious language, the problem of proof and the nature of religious faith, the problem of conflicting truth claims among different religions.

PHIL 2999 Independent Study (1-3 units)

The privilege of independent study is possible for students who are prepared to undertake it based on student need or interest with approval of the Chair of the department, the instructor concerned, and the Dean of the School. The study must be in an area not covered by a regularly scheduled course. Course may be taken for 1-3 units. The maximum number of units that can be earned in one semester by independent study is 3; a total of up to six units of independent study may be applied to the degree.

PHIL 3103 Ethics, Leadership and Meaning (3 units)

In the course the student will evaluate the ethical implications of various theories of leadership and decision-making within the context of personal meaning. Issues such as individual rights, collective responsibilities, formation of character, integrity, caring relationships and the common good will be addressed as the students explore their own leadership role in various organizational settings and as citizens in a democratic society. A service-learning component of the course will give student the opportunity to grow in their self-understanding as “leaders.”

PHIL 3150 Sexual Morality (3 units)

Examination of contemporary philosophical debate over sexual morality. Among the questions discussed in the course are: What does it mean to say that a sexual practice is unnatural? Does acceptance of feminism commit one to opposing prostitution? What distinguishes sexual harassment from other forms of sexual interaction?

PHIL 3200 Ancient, Medieval & Early Modern Political Philosophy (3 units)

Survey course focusing on the key writings of several important thinkers of Ancient, and Medieval Western civilization. Emphasis in the course is on the development of key values and concepts that have shaped our civilization (e.g. citizenship, legitimacy of political rule, the ideal political community, virtue). Major emphasis on the ideas of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and Machiavelli.

PHIL 3201 Modern & Contemporary Political Philosophy (3 units)

Survey course focusing on the key writings of several important thinkers of Modern and Contemporary Western civilization. Emphasis in the course is on the development of key values and concepts that have shaped our modern world (e.g. power, realpolitik, legitimacy of political rule, freedom, citizenship). Various thinkers of the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries will be considered.

PHIL 3202 Medieval Political Philosophy (3 units)

Survey course focusing on the key writings of several important thinkers of Ancient, Medieval, and early Modern Western civilization. Emphasis in the course is on the development of key values and concepts that have shaped our civilization (e.g. citizenship, legitimacy of political rule, the ideal political community, virtue). Major emphasis on the ideas of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and Machiavelli.

PHIL 3204 Virtuosity: Cultivating Moral & Political Character (3 units)

What does it mean to be morally or politically virtuous? What are the sources of moral value? What is the scope of morality? How does one cultivate a virtuous character? This course will explore a range of responses to these questions, paying particular attention to the notion that moral and political virtue ought to be understood as a kind of intellectual and practical expertise, or, in other words, as virtuosity.

PHIL 3220 Gender: Ethics & Politics (3 units)

A survey and critical analysis of contemporary feminist scholarship. Course will explore the distinctions between the various forms of feminism, such as liberal, socialist, radical, lesbian, and postmodern, and will address such concepts and topics as gender socialization, gender in relation to race and class, inequality, oppression, violence, work, families, mothering and fathering, intimacy and sexuality, health and medicine, and ethics. This course will be offered with an honors option for honors students.

PHIL 3510/3520 Self, Community & Service (3 units)

This course bridges ethical theory and ideas to action through service-learning with community partner organizations, emphasizing social justice issues, their root causes, systemic solutions and the dynamic relationship between these collective concerns and our individual values and choices. Students must also be aware that there is a 25 hour community-based component to the class. They will have the opportunity to choose from a variety of established community partner opportunities. The professor will also work with individual students to develop appropriate service activities in their own community if they reside outside of Marin County. Prerequisite: ENGL 3200.

PHIL 4994 Teaching Assistant (1-3 units)

The privilege of serving as a teaching assistant is available to students who are interested with the approval of the Department Chair, the instructor concerned, and the Dean of the School. A contract between the student and the instructor to determine goals, specifics on project contents/materials, and evaluation process will be required at time of request. Course may be taken for 1-3 units.

PHIL 4996 Internship: Philosophy (1-3 units)

Students gain practical, hands-on training in their particular area of career or volunteer interest by working with an organization of their choosing, in consultation with their academic advisor and the Career and Internship office. After meeting with the academic advisor, students meet with the Career and Internship office to fill out the necessary paperwork and, then, after securing all necessary signatures, submit an add/drop form along with the internship paperwork to the Registrar. This course cannot be accessed via the self-service registration cart. 1-3 units.

PHIL 4999 Independent Study (1-3 units)

The privilege of independent study is possible for students who are prepared to undertake it based on student need or interest with approval of the Chair of the department, the instructor concerned, and the Dean of the School. The study must be in an area not covered by a regularly scheduled course. Course may be taken for 1-3 units. The maximum number of units that can be earned in one semester by independent study is 3; a total of up to six units of independent study may be applied to the degree.