

Philosophy Overview

Philosophy, literally, is the love of wisdom. It is the search for truth and the asking of fundamental questions about our existence and relationship with the world and interaction with others. Philosophy includes the study of arguments, and the providing of evidence and reasons for making particular claims. The practice of philosophy teaches critical thinking and careful reflection; all courses encourage students to formulate pertinent questions and examine and create arguments. It is hoped that students will continue to use careful reasoning skills honed in philosophy classes as they continue in their education and in life. Areas of concentration within philosophy include logic, ethics, religion and the theory of knowledge. Philosophy is helpful for careers in law, teaching, business, medicine and many other fields. Philosophy courses fulfill a number of requirements for the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum and graduation requirements.

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PHIL 1700 Introduction to Philosophy

The purpose of this course is to engage the student in a number of central topics in philosophy through the examination and analysis of the writings of contemporary and major Western philosophers, as well as through the close study of several fundamental issues which have arisen in the course of the development of the Western philosophical tradition. Topics of study will include areas such as the nature of human knowledge, perception and illusion, the nature of consciousness, personal identity, minds, brains and machines, freedom and determinism, philosophy of religion, and the meaning of life. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0722 with a grade of "C" or better or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC: Goal 6) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1710 Logic

Logic is the study of arguments. This course uses the tools of symbolic logic to explore logical concepts such as logical truth, consistency, equivalence, and validity. It introduces an artificial, symbolic language that can be used to test the logical properties of statements and arguments. These analytical skills support work in a range of activities that require clear, careful, step-by-step thinking. Although this core falls within the goal of mathematics, it may not apply to certain technical programs or meet certain transfer requirements for mathematics. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0722 with a grade of "C" or better or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC: Goal 4) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1715 Philosophy of Scientific Reasoning

This course explores philosophical questions about the nature of science and scientific reasoning and helps students build skill at using and evaluating scientific reasoning. For instance, the course will address questions such as: What is the nature of science? Is science compatible with religion? How does science work? Are there limits to the knowledge science can give us? What is the difference between science and pseudoscience? How can we do a good job of understanding and evaluating scientific reasoning, especially when it is reported in the popular media? The course will explore these questions using historical and contemporary case studies about a variety of subjects, including evolution, astronomy and astrology, and theories and ideas in the social sciences, physics, and biology. The goal of the course will be to use these case studies to explore philosophical questions about the nature of scientific reasoning and to develop their own ability to understand and evaluate scientific reasoning in their lives and career fields. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0721 with a grade of "C" or better or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC: Goal 6) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1720 Ethics

This course equips students with philosophical skills and theoretical frameworks useful for fostering productive reflection about ethical controversies. Topics could include the nature and ground of moral judgments, views about what constitutes a good life, theories of right or wrong conduct, and particular moral issues such as animal welfare, civil disobedience, the morality of truth-telling and promising extreme poverty, racism and sexism, gun control, and genetic manipulation. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0722 with a grade of "C" or better or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC: Goals 6 & 9) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1722 Health Care Ethics

This course introduces basic ethical theories, principles, and decision-making guidelines used in health care ethics. It examines moral issues confronting health care practitioners, patients, and others involved in medicine. The course includes philosophical analysis of cultural differences regarding medical practices, contemporary moral decision-making on topics such as disclosure, confidentiality, human cloning, medical research, abortion, transplantation and organ markets, allocation of limited resources, conscientious objection, research on human subjects, and euthanasia. The course is open to all students interested in health care ethics. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0722 with a grade of "C" or better or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC Goals: 6 & 9) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1724 Environmental Ethics

This course will focus on helping students develop the ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate moral arguments about the value of nature and our obligations to the natural world and the human and non-human creatures that inhabit it. Topics will include global warming, pollution, animal welfare, anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric views of the value and role of nature, ecofeminism, the moral status of cultural and religious practices that affect the environment, energy and resource policy, conservation and the land ethic, and global and intergenerational justice. The course will include an introduction to basic skills and concepts in ethical theory and applied ethics. (Placement into this course will be according to the College assessment score.) (MnTC: Goals 6 and 10) 3C/3/0/0

*Information is subject to change.
This course information is not a contract.*

PHIL 1742 Greek and Roman Mythology

This survey course introduces students to Greek and Roman myths: stories about gods, heroes and heroines, monsters, the workings of the universe, and how human beings fit in. Myths address various important questions people have, such as “why are human beings on the earth?” “what is the best way to live a life?” and “why is there death?” We will look at how people have attempted to answer and make sense of these questions, as well as consider how these stories are a product of a particular culture and why they were so important to the people that produced them. We will also look at how they have continued to influence culture into the present time. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0722 with a grade of “C” or better or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC: Goals 6 & 8) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1750 Eastern Philosophy

The purpose of this course is to acquaint the student with the major Asian philosophies. Students will engage in study of the history and ideas of the following schools of thought: Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism. This will include examination and analysis of selections from works such as the Upanishads, the Tao Te Ching, the Analects of Confucius and the Dhammapada. Topics of study will include the nature of reality and being, social philosophy and ways of attaining knowledge. We will compare the ideas of Eastern philosophers on certain fundamental issues with the conclusions of various Western philosophies. The course will be conducted in a discussion format supplemented by instructor lectures. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0722 with a grade of “C” or better or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC: Goals 6 & 8) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1760 World Religions

This course is an introduction to the world religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Attention may also be given to indigenous religions and new religious movements. The course will focus on the main practices and beliefs, scriptures, formative periods and historical development of these religions. It will also include ways fundamental religious questions are answered and a critique of religion from a secular perspective. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0721 with a grade of “C” or better or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC: Goals 6 & 8) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1770 Feminist Philosophy

Feminist philosophers seek to understand and critique practices and institutions that oppress and subordinate women. They explore questions like: what is the nature of gender oppression, and how is it related to other types of oppression, such as racial oppression? What makes someone a woman or man? Is there a difference between a person's sex and their gender? Are women “naturally” different from men, and would it matter if they were? Is there a male bias in science and ethics? Can a pluralistic society like ours fight women's oppression while also recognizing the rights of cultures to maintain their distinctive practices? In this class, students will work to understand and evaluate prominent feminist answers to these questions, with an emphasis on helping students develop their own well-reasoned views on feminist issues and apply those views to their own lives. (MnTC: Goal 6 & 7) 3C/3/0/0

PHIL 1790 Special Topics in Philosophy

This course is designed to present additional or unique material and learning experiences within a specified discipline. The course will be based on student need, flexibility, and may be designed to meet various transfer and pre-major course requirements. Please see a current Course Schedule for complete course details. (Prerequisite(s): READ 0722 with a grade of “C” or better, or appropriate assessment score) (MnTC: Goal 6) Variable credits 1-6