

Philosophy Courses for Spring 2026

Courses marked with * satisfy general education requirements.

***PHIL 1000: Introduction to Philosophy**

Note that credit will not be given for both this course and PHIL 1001, which is the honors version of this course.

Section 1: TTh 9:00-10:20

Blakley

Major works on such themes as appearance and reality, human nature, nature of knowledge, relation of mind and body, right and good, existence of God, and freedom and determinism.

Section 2: TTh 10:30-11:50

Blakley

Major works on such themes as appearance and reality, human nature, nature of knowledge, relation of mind and body, right and good, existence of God, and freedom and determinism.

Section 3: MWF 10:30-11:20

Connor

Major works on such themes as appearance and reality, human nature, nature of knowledge, relation of mind and body, right and good, existence of God, and freedom and determinism.

Section 4: MWF 2:30-3:20

Wells

This course provides an introduction to philosophy through a survey of a number of figures and themes in Western philosophy. We will especially consider the relationships between belief, understanding, reason, and self. Along the way we will ask, for example: What do I believe, what should I believe, and on what grounds? Can the use of reason lead to social and historical progress? Are there boundaries and limits to what we can know? What is the self? If we are free, then are there justifiable limits that can be placed on one's choices and actions by others? Why is democracy something of value to us? Figures we will discuss include (but are not limited to): Plato, Descartes, Hume, Kant, Marx, Nietzsche, Mill.

Section 5: MWF 3:30-4:20

Wells

This course provides an introduction to philosophy through a survey of a number of figures and themes in Western philosophy. We will especially consider the relationships between belief, understanding, reason, and self. Along the way we will ask, for example: What do I believe, what should I believe, and on what grounds? Can the use of reason lead to social and historical progress? Are there boundaries and limits to what we can know? What is the self? If we are free, then are there justifiable limits that can be placed on one's choices and actions by others? Why is democracy something of value to us? Figures we will discuss include (but are not limited to): Plato, Descartes, Hume, Kant, Marx, Nietzsche, Mill.

Section 6: MWF 12:30-1:20**Connor**

Major works on such themes as appearance and reality, human nature, nature of knowledge, relation of mind and body, right and good, existence of God, and freedom and determinism.

PHIL 1021: Introduction to Logic*Section 1: MW 4:30-5:50****Heller**

Study of traditional logic emphasizing syllogistic theory, validation techniques, and fallacy detection. Includes introduction to elementary symbolic logic, such as truth-tables, sentential calculus, and quantification theory.

PHIL 2010: Symbolic Logic I

Also offered as LING 2010.

Section 1: TTh 10:30-11:50**Roland**

This course covers the basics of classical propositional and first-order logic. We will learn a formal language and use it to help us understand logical consequence and related concepts. In addition to philosophy students, this course will be particularly useful to students interested in mathematics, computer science, and linguistics. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Note. Be aware that for most students this course no longer helps to satisfy the Analytical Reasoning general education requirement. If you want to take logic to help satisfy that requirement, you should almost certainly take PHIL 1021.

***PHIL 2020: Ethics**

Note that credit will not be given for both this course and PHIL 2050, which is the honors version of this course.

Section 1: MWF 10:30-11:20**Wells**

In this course we examine major positions in the history of ethical theory, as well as their applications and challenges to them. In the most basic sense, this course asks: What is right? How ought we act? How ought we live? In considering these primary questions, we will ask further: How ought we treat, and what do we owe, each other? Where do these obligations and responsibilities come from, i.e., what are their foundations? Our aim will be not only to understand these questions in theory, but to grapple with how they challenge us to live our lives, give us meaning, and determine what we value. Our task is to consider who we are and who we want to (or, perhaps, who we *ought to*) become. In pursuing this task, we will consider virtue ethics, stoic ethics, Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, and care ethics. We will also consider critiques of morality and issues in applied ethics.

Section 2: Asynchronous Online Hackett

Classical and recent theories of obligation and value, including works of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hume and Nietzsche; topics including freedom, rights, justification of moral judgments.

Section 3: TTh 1:30-2:50 Blakley

Classical and recent theories of obligation and value, including works of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hume and Nietzsche; topics including freedom, rights, justification of moral judgments.

Section 4: TTh 3:00-4:20 Blakley

Classical and recent theories of obligation and value, including works of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hume and Nietzsche; topics including freedom, rights, justification of moral judgments.

Section 5: MWF 9:30-10:20 Wells

In this course we examine major positions in the history of ethical theory, as well as their applications and challenges to them. In the most basic sense, this course asks: What is right? How ought we act? How ought we live? In considering these primary questions, we will ask further: How ought we treat, and what do we owe, each other? Where do these obligations and responsibilities come from, i.e., what are their foundations? Our aim will be not only to understand these questions in theory, but to grapple with how they challenge us to live our lives, give us meaning, and determine what we value. Our task is to consider who we are and who we want to (or, perhaps, who we *ought to*) become. In pursuing this task, we will consider virtue ethics, stoic ethics, Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, and care ethics. We will also consider critiques of morality and issues in applied ethics.

Section 6: MWF 11:30-12:20 Wells

In this course we examine major positions in the history of ethical theory, as well as their applications and challenges to them. In the most basic sense, this course asks: What is right? How ought we act? How ought we live? In considering these primary questions, we will ask further: How ought we treat, and what do we owe, each other? Where do these obligations and responsibilities come from, i.e., what are their foundations? Our aim will be not only to understand these questions in theory, but to grapple with how they challenge us to live our lives, give us meaning, and determine what we value. Our task is to consider who we are and who we want to (or, perhaps, who we *ought to*) become. In pursuing this task, we will consider virtue ethics, stoic ethics, Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, and care ethics. We will also consider critiques of morality and issues in applied ethics.

PHIL 2025: Bioethics

Section 1: MWF 11:30-12:20 Heller

Defining health and disease; deciding on rights, duties and obligations in the patient-physician relationship; abortion and the concept of a person; defining and determining death; euthanasia and the dignity of death; allocation of medical resources, both large-scale and small-scale; experimentation with fetuses, children, prisoners and animals; genetic testing, screening and interference.

PHIL 2035: History of Modern Philosophy

Section 1: TTh 1:30-2:50 Stetter

Introduction to major themes and topics in modern philosophy (c. 1600-1800). With the seventeenth century comes the rise of mechanism and the corresponding scientific revolution in the study of the natural world. Longstanding anthropological, cosmological, and theological orthodoxies fall under scrutiny, along with ancient philosophical authorities, and the study of the self, the world, and God is renewed. At the end of the eighteenth-century, Kant will look to synthesize early modern “rationalism” and “empiricism” with his critical philosophy. These developments within philosophy also give rise to changes in the wider world as monarchic political and ecclesiastical religious establishments face crises of legitimacy. Authors include: René Descartes (1596-1650), Elisabeth of Bohemia (1618-1680), Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673), Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), Anne Conway (1631-1679), G. W. Leibniz (1646-1716), Lady Damaris Masham (1659-17908), John Locke (1632-1704), George Berkeley (1685-1753), Lady Mary Shepherd (1777-1847), David Hume (1711-1776), and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Topics include: philosophical methodology; human nature and non-human animal nature; metaphysics (causation; mind-body union; substance; action); the issue of freedom and determinism; the relation of the human person to the social; the nature of human knowing; and the passions and emotions.

PHIL 3020: Special Topics: Paranormal Philosophy of Religion

May be taken twice for credit when topics vary.

Section 1: MW 3:30-5:00 Felty

This course explores two central topics in the philosophy of religion that intersect with questions often labeled “paranormal”: the soul and miracles. In the first half of the course, we examine classic and contemporary arguments concerning the nature of the soul, the relationship between mind and body, and whether personal identity can persist beyond death. In the second half, we turn to the philosophy of miracles, analyzing how such events are defined, whether they are compatible with natural laws, and how claims of miraculous occurrences can be evaluated. Through careful reading and discussion, students will engage

with a range of philosophical perspectives and develop critical tools for assessing arguments about immaterial minds and extraordinary events.

PHIL 3950: Introduction to Epistemology

Section 1: MWF 2:30-3:20

E. Cogburn

Survey of central issues in the theory of knowledge; knowledge as justified true belief; the Gettier problem; induction as a source of justification; a priori knowledge; fallibilist vs. infallibilist and internalist vs externalist conceptions of justification; structure of justification.

PHIL 4003: Contemporary French Philosophy

Section 1: M 3:30-6:20 Synchronous Online

Goldgaber

In this course we will read Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* (*De la grammatologie*), before examining more recent responses to that work by Bernard Steigler and Catherine Malabou. Against the grain of its initial reception, which interpreted Derrida's claims about textuality (il n'y a pas de hors-texte) as a form of linguistic idealism, we will see the extent to which textuality and the idea of general writing can be understood in naturalistic terms. To do so we will focus on how Derrida's arguments inform and were informed by post-War cybernetics, informatics and transformations in the life and human sciences and how two of his most influential readers, Steigler and Malabou, developed these intuitions in their own philosophical work. Students are strongly encouraged to read the original French editions of assigned texts.

PHIL 4914: Philosophy of Language

Section 1: TTh 3:00-4:20

Roland

This course will focus on issues concerning linguistic reference. Reference generally is typically understood as a relation that holds between representations and entities. Linguistic reference is typically understood as a relation that holds between a singular term (e.g., a proper name such as 'Barack Obama'), a linguistic item, and the object picked out by that singular term (in the case of 'Barack Obama', the 44th president of the United States). The first two thirds of the course will introduce major traditional theories of reference. These traditional theories cluster into descriptivist and direct reference types. In the remainder of the course, we'll examine epistemic approaches to (linguistic) reference. Epistemic approaches are somewhat newer, and our main concern will be to ascertain in what sense these approaches are epistemic and how they differ from the traditional types of theories of (linguistic) reference.

There is a prerequisite of one logic course or permission of the instructor.

PHIL 4941: Philosophy of Mind

Prereq.: PHIL 2033 and PHIL 2035 or equivalent.

Section 1: MWF 1:30-2:20

J. Cogburn

This course examines how contemporary techno-utopian movements—Transhumanism, Extropianism, Singularitarianism, Cosmism, Rationalism, Effective Altruism, and Longtermism (collectively “TESCREAL”)—extend the assumptions of analytic philosophy of mind into cultural ideology. Using Adam Becker’s *More Everything Forever* alongside readings from Chalmers, Dennett, Nagel, and Parfit, we analyze claims about artificial consciousness, mind uploading, and cosmic intelligence as philosophical case studies. By tracing how functionalism and physicalism yield visions of disembodied and immortal minds, students confront the blurred boundary between scientific materialism and the paranormal imagination.

PHIL 4943: Problems in Ethical Theory: Feminist Disability and Care Ethics

Cross-listed as WGS 4500. Prereq.: two courses in philosophy or consent of the instructor. May be taken for a max. of 6 sem. hrs. of credit when topics vary.

Section 1: TTh 10:30-11:50

Bacon

This class will provide an overview of contemporary feminist, care, and disability ethics including critical and political analysis of these fields. In class we will also consider the normative philosophical discussion of embodiment, illness, dependence, and death. As this is a study of lived embodiment, discussions at the intersection of sexuality, race, gender, aging, mental illness, neurodivergence, and political exclusion/marginalization may likewise be included.

PHIL 4947: Topics in Philosophy of Law

Section 1: TTh 1:30-2:50

Bacon

This class will be a contemporary overview of the philosophical discussion of the law. Authors may include canonical texts by Kafka, Fuller, Hart, Hobbes, Benjamin, Derrida, and arguments concerning lawlessness by authors such as Kropotkin, Goldman, Parsons, Proudhon. The class will survey different arguments concerning justice, injustice, property, harm, anarchy, and incarceration to consider the philosophical, ethical, and theoretical underpinnings of the law and legally structured society. This class will center curiosity over desires to land on any one position. The aim of the course will be to give students the vocabulary and skills to participate in the discussion of the philosophy of law at an advanced level.

PHIL 7910: Seminar: Difference and Repetition

Cross-listed as LING 7910.

Section 1: W 3:30-6:20

Ardoline

Foucault famously declared “perhaps one day this century will be known as Deleuzian” in his review of *Difference and Repetition* and *Logic of Sense*. Judging by the recent rise in interest in Deleuze’s philosophy, Foucault may have been a century early. This course will focus on a close reading of Deleuze’s first magnum opus, *Difference and Repetition*. This dense and challenging work marks a fundamental break with the history of philosophy in at least two ways: first, difference is given metaphysical and explanatory priority over identity, commonality, or similarity, and second, in undertaking a devastating critique of representation as the structure of knowledge and cognition. We will approach *Difference and Repetition* with two major aims. First, we will focus on explicating the historical and contemporary resources of which Deleuze makes use. The context in which Deleuze is writing presumes a deep familiarity with the history of philosophy and mathematics as well as recent scientific advances, and so allusions and references frequently do the heavy lifting where we would prefer careful elaborations of the ideas Deleuze is drawing on from the tradition. Second, we will focus on reconstructing its central arguments.