

PHILOSOPHY

Faculty

Heather Waddell, chair
Richard A. Gilmore
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Faculty in philosophy join students in a mutual search for wisdom. Students participate fully in the ongoing conversations that define philosophy as a discipline. Successful graduates of the department will develop critical inquiry skills. Students of philosophy:

- become aware of significant philosophical schools and important issues of each period through the study of primary texts of the major periods of Western philosophy, including the style and substance of philosophical practice
- understand the ways in which history and societal norms condition thinking
- see how environment, economics, politics, nationality and gender have shaped, and continue to shape, philosophical thought
- gain some familiarity with non-Western philosophical traditions
- be skilled in philosophical analysis and discourse
- be familiar with problem-oriented methods of inquiry
- know the canons of deductive and inductive logic and be ready to appeal to them in recognizing, reconstructing and evaluating arguments
- be able to use symbolic logic, its notation and its analytical tools to understand debates in the philosophy of logic
- develop skills that nurture genuine dialogue, including a precise command of spoken and written language, effective listening and social discussion skills, and proficiency as researchers
- be attentive to religious dimensions and implications of the philosophy they study

Students should undertake a study of at least one area of value theory (ethics, aesthetics or political philosophy) to help them grow in their understanding of values-related implications of philosophical arguments, including the interactions between religion and philosophy.

The philosophy department sponsors an honors program for exceptional students. For details, consult the department chair.

Programs Offered

Major

- Philosophy Major (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-major/>)

Minor

- Philosophy Minor (<https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)

Courses

PHIL 102 - Life's Big Questions: Introduction to Philosophy, 4 credits.

This is an introduction to philosophy. We will read major texts from the history of philosophy. The goal is to address some of the biggest questions facing us as human beings: What is the purpose of life? How should we think about death? What is justice? What is love? We will explore these questions through reading texts, class discussions, and writing on the major ideas.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 110 - Thinking About Values, 4 credits.

A philosophical inquiry into topics such as virtue and vice, good and evil, rights and duties, self-esteem and meaningful existence. Writings of both historical and contemporary thinkers are considered.

Frequency: *Every Semester*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 115 - Seeking Justice in an Unjust World, 4 credits.

This course asks students to develop a view of their moral responsibilities to work for greater justice in the world. It examines key concepts in social philosophy, such as justice, equality, liberty, oppression, and responsibility. We examine these concepts by analyzing contemporary social issues, like educational inequality, criminal justice, interaction with nonhuman animals, climate change, or terrorism and war.

Frequency: *Every Year - Second Semester*

Core designations: U.S. Cultural Diversity U, Humanities H

PHIL 120 - Faith, Doubt and Mystery: Philosophy of Religion, 4 credits.

An investigation of philosophy's perennial engagement with religious beliefs, experiences and questions. This course surveys the main topics in philosophy of religion through both classic and contemporary texts. While we will look at attempts by philosophers to settle fundamental religious questions, we will also consider other thinkers who stress mystery: the persistent religious ambiguity of the cosmos.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 230 - Symbolic Logic, 4 credits.

An introduction to symbolic logic and the various types of reasoning found in the sciences, social sciences, and the humanities. Special attention will be paid to the construction and evaluation of arguments.

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 1st Semester*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 240 - Problems of Philosophy, 4 credits.

An introduction to selected epistemological and metaphysical problems, designed to show the fundamental nature of those problems and their interrelatedness. Such issues as free will/determinism, the extent of our knowledge of the external world, the mind-body identity thesis, and the problem of personal identity are typical topics for investigation.

Prerequisite: one course in philosophy or permission of instructor

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 250 - Pre-May Seminar, 4 credits.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

PHIL 300 - May Seminar, 4 credits.

An introduction to selected epistemological and metaphysical problems, designed to show the fundamental nature of those problems and their interrelatedness. Such issues as free will/determinism, the extent of our knowledge of the external world, the mind-body identity thesis, and the problem of personal identity are typical topics for investigation.

Frequency: *May Seminar*

PHIL 311 - Ancient Philosophy, 4 credits.

An investigation into the thought of the three dominant philosophers of the ancient Greek period - Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Plato's *Meno*, *Phaedo* and *Republic*, and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and *Nicomachean Ethics* will be the primary focal points of the course, although the pre-Socrates and the post-Aristotelian periods will also be discussed.

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 1st Semester*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 312 - Modern Philosophy, 4 credits.

An investigation into the thought of the dominant philosophers of the modern European period. The course will focus on the Continental Rationalists (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz), the British Empiricists (Locke, Berkeley, Hume), as well as Kant.

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 2nd Semester*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 313 - American Philosophy, 4 credits.

An investigation into the lines of thought known as American pragmatism. The course will begin with texts of Emerson and Thoreau; it will go on to the works of the classical pragmatists James, Pierce and Dewey; and it will finish with the contemporary pragmatists Richard Rorty and Cornell West.

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 1st Semester*

Core designations: U.S. Cultural Diversity U, Humanities H

PHIL 314 - Asian Philosophy, 4 credits.

An examination of the philosophical traditions of India, China, and Japan. The course focuses on classic Hindu philosophy, especially as expressed in the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Upanishads*, on Buddhist thought, and on the two main indigenous Chinese philosophical traditions, Confucianism and Taoism. The course will center on readings of primary texts, and will examine the visual arts of India, China and Japan as expressions of the beliefs and sensibilities of those cultures. This course can also count toward the global studies program.

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 2nd Semester*

Core designations: International-Global Prspct G, Humanities H

PHIL 315 - Existentialism, 4 credits.

A study of several existentialist thinkers such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre and Marcel. The materials of the course may include philosophical works, novels or short stories, and films.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 325 - Major Philosophers, 4 credits.

An intensive examination of the thought of two major philosophers, usually from different eras or representing different approaches. The course emphasizes the interpretation and evaluation of their contributions and has, in the past, studied such philosophers as Wittgenstein, Hume, Plato, Aristotle, Russell and Whitehead.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

Repeatable: Yes

PHIL 328 - Kierkegaard: Philosophy, Literature, Film, 0-4 credits.

A critical examination of key texts from Kierkegaard's authorship ("*Either/Or*," "*Fear and Trembling*," "*Philosophical Fragments*" and "*The Sickness Unto Death*") that emphasizes Kierkegaard's use of literary art to convey philosophical and theological ideas. In keeping with Kierkegaard's emphasis on artistic imagination as a resource for philosophical understanding, we will view one or more films in connection with each of Kierkegaard's texts. The course closes with a reading of Walker Percy's "*The Moviegoer*," a novel that transposes Kierkegaard's characters and ideas into a 20th century American context. This course can also count toward the film studies program.

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 1st Semester*

Core designations: Arts R

PHIL 331 - Philosophy of Law, 4 credits.

An examination of some of the key concepts employed in the law and an evaluation of their roles in legal decisions. Such concepts as legality, responsibility, liberty, rights, justice and punishment are analyzed, and such questions as "Who has the right to punish?" and "What is the source of legal authority?" are addressed. Both classical and contemporary sources are employed, as well as Supreme Court cases.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 332 - Philosophy of Science, 4 credits.

An examination of the historical development and philosophical presuppositions of modern science. Such issues as the nature of scientific explanation and description, the role of reductionism in scientific theory, the character of scientific revolution, the scope and limits of scientific speculation, and the effect of the "scientific establishment" on innovation and initiative are discussed. Theorists such as Popper, Nagel, Feyerabend, Kuhn, Hempel and Carnap will be studied.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 333 - Philosophy of Art, 4 credits.

A philosophical inquiry into the arts, with examinations of such questions as: "What is the importance of the arts?" "Do the arts reveal anything significant about the world and about ourselves?" "What does it mean to be a responsible worker in the arts?" and "What are the criteria of excellence in the arts?"

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 1st Semester*

Core designations: Arts R

PHIL 334 - Philosophy of Language, 4 credits.

An investigation of the workings of language and its philosophical presuppositions. Special attention will be paid to semantic relationships, ordinary language puzzles and the structure of metaphor. Such philosophers as Quine, Kripke, Russell and Frege will be studied.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 336 - Philosophy and Literature, 4 credits.

An examination of the nature, function, interpretation and assessment of literary art, especially fiction. Readings will be drawn from a variety of philosophical traditions, including Anglo-American, existential, hermeneutical, feminist and Marxist. Novels or short stories exploring themes of philosophical significance may also be included.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 337 - Philosophy of Feminism, 4 credits.

An inquiry into feminist philosophies, especially as they apply and critique traditional philosophical positions in ethics, epistemology and metaphysics. Some theorists argue that the nature of philosophy itself, its procedures, methods and line of questioning, are skewed because of the patriarchal construction of the discipline. The political and theoretical landscape is transected by others who accuse popular feminism of sharing biases along lines of class and race. Authors studied may include: Harriet Taylor, Simone de Beauvoir, Virginia Woolf, Marilyn Frye, Judith Butler, bell hooks, Patricia Hill Collins, María Lugones and Audre Lorde. Students will be asked to evaluate these positions and to articulate a position of their own. This course can also count toward the women's and gender studies program.

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 2nd Semester*

Core designations: U.S. Cultural Diversity U, Humanities H

PHIL 339 / ENVR 339 - Environmental Ethics, 4 credits.

This course draws on the world's philosophical traditions, both Eastern and Western, to understand our place within and responsibility for the natural world. The course will consider major theories of ethics (consequentialism, deontologism, virtue ethics) as well as major approaches to environmental philosophy (Social Ecology, Ecofeminism, Deep Ecology). In addition to broad theoretical approaches to the environment, students will use philosophical resources and methods to examine specific environmental issues and controversies.

Frequency: *Every Year - First Semester*

Core designations: Humanities H

PHIL 340 - Philosophy and Film, 4 credits.

A consideration of philosophical themes in both popular and art films. Some of the cultural issues that will be investigated are feminism, postmodernism, justice and individuality. The course will also consider such traditional philosophical issues as beauty, truth and goodness. This course can also count toward the film studies program.

Frequency: *Every Year - Second Semester*

Core designations: Arts R

PHIL 341 - Philosophy of Race, 4 credits.

This course explores questions about the existence of race, what racism is, and what we should do to combat it. The course engages histories of race and racism, contemporary social science, investigative journalism, popular media, and philosophical texts to work toward a better understanding of how race structures our world and the ways that we should work for greater racial justice.

Frequency: *Alternate Years - 1st Semester*

Core designations: U.S. Cultural Diversity U, Humanities H

PHIL 380 - Special Topics, 0-4 credits.

Courses covering various topics of interest in this particular discipline are offered regularly. Contact department or program chair for more information.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Repeatable: Yes

PHIL 390 - Academic Internship, 1-8 credits.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Repeatable: Yes

PHIL 407 - Seminar in Philosophy, 4 credits.

A research seminar designed to provide majors with a capstone experience.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Repeatable: Yes

PHIL 480 - Independent Study, 1-4 credits.

This course provides an opportunity for individual students to conduct in-depth study of a particular topic under the supervision of a faculty member. Contact the department or program chair for more information.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Repeatable: Yes

PHIL 487 - Directed Research, 1-4 credits.

This course provides an opportunity for individual students to conduct research in a specific area of study, completed under the direction of a faculty mentor. Specific expectations of the research experience to be determined by the faculty. Repeatable for credit. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

Frequency: *Not offered on a Regular Basis*

Repeatable: Yes