

**Philosophy Course Offerings
200-level and above
Winter 2021**

Philosophy 215: Philosophy of Religion
Instructor TBA

Remote/synchronous MW 12:30 – 1:45

A philosophical study of the nature, goals and proper function of religion. Some possible topics are traditional arguments for the existence of God, grounds for disbelief in God, immortality, religious experience, the nature of religious language, the relation of science to religion, the role of faith and revelation, the connection between religion and ethics.

PHIL 215 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 212 fulfills the Knowledge and Reality requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 220: Ethics
Professor Brian Coffey
Online asynchronous

This course will introduce students to the philosophical study of Ethics by exploring the tools and techniques of philosophical inquiry, and utilizing those tools to evaluate several important moral theories. Topics for discussion might include: Is anything really right or wrong, or is it all 'subjective'? What is the relation of ethics to law? What is its relation to religion, or society? What, if anything, is truly valuable? Which features matter most when judging the ethics of a situation? Is there one best moral theory or do several theories reveal important insights into what we ought to do? etc. We will carefully and critically read both classical and contemporary writings in ethics with the goal of not only understanding what others have written before us, but also how we

can use their insights to help us deliberate about ethical choices in our own lives. We will not be passively learning about ethics—we will be *putting our ethical expertise into practice*.

PHIL 220 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 220 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program

Philosophy 221: Business Ethics
Professor Brian Coffey
Remote/synchronous MW 11:00 – 12:15

It is undeniable that businesses have incredible power to affect and shape the world we live in. With that power comes the responsibility to wield it ethically. In this course, students will learn about the philosophical study of ethics, and how to use the tools and methods of philosophy to think critically about contentious moral issues. We will discuss various moral issues raised within the context of the practice of business, and rigorously evaluate the reasoning that people have given for the stances they have taken on these issues. Topics for discussion might include: The nature and goals of business, corporate social responsibility, effects on the environment, whistleblowing, truth in advertising, honesty in sales, etc.

PHIL 221 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 221 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 221 also offered Remote/synchronous T/Th 12:30 – 1:45,
instructor TBA; and Online asynchronous, instructor TBA

PHIL 223: Medical Ethics
Professor Brian Coffey
Online asynchronous

We trust doctors, nurses, medical scientists, and other healthcare providers to give us the best care possible when we are sick; in many cases we literally put our lives in their hands. Those working in healthcare thus need to be particularly aware and careful of the various ways they may treat their patients unethically. In this course, students will learn about the philosophical study of ethics, and how to use the tools and methods of philosophy to think critically about contentious moral issues. We will discuss various moral issues raised within the context of the practice of medicine, and rigorously evaluate the reasoning that people have given for the stances they have taken on these issues. Topics for discussion might include: abortion, euthanasia, cloning, stem cell research, genetic selection / eugenics, healthcare allocation when resources are scarce, research involving animal and/or human testing.

PHIL 223 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 223 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 223 counts as an elective in the Critical Disability Studies minor.

PHIL 223: Medical Ethics
Professor Jill Dieterle
Online asynchronous

This course is an examination of ethical issues in medicine and health care.

The COVID-19 pandemic raises many ethical questions. How do we decide who gets a ventilator if there are not enough? Who should be first in line for a vaccine? These are instances of the problem of determining fair allocation of scarce of medical resources. In this class, we will talk about justice in health care. We will address health care access generally, and then we will spend two

weeks talking about issues of justice that have arisen during the COVID-19 pandemic. We'll also talk about other topics in medical ethics: patient autonomy and informed consent, reproductive technology, genetic screening, and other related issues.

PHIL 223 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 223 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 223 counts as an elective in the Critical Disability Studies minor.

PHIL 223: Medical Ethics
Professor John Ouko
Remote/synchronous
MW 11:00 – 12:15
T/Th 11:00 – 12:15

This course examines the relationships between contemporary values in the medical profession and traditional ethical values. Students will investigate various ethical theories and critically examine controversial issues in medicine such as whether physicians should participate in state-ordered executions, physician assisted suicide, prenatal testing and selective abortion, using preimplantation genetic diagnosis to save a sibling, et cetera.

PHIL 223 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 223 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 223 counts as an elective in the Critical Disability Studies minor.

PHIL 224: Ethics and Food
Professor Jill Dieterle
Online asynchronous

Issues related to food, its production and its distribution have garnered international attention in the last decade. This course is devoted to examining those issues from a philosophical/ethical perspective. We will discuss the industrialization of food production, the effect of agriculture on the environment, alternative food movements, food deserts, and the global problem of food insecurity. We will also examine and critique the idea of “responsible consumption” and whether ethical consumers have the power to transform the food system. Finally, we’ll discuss body image and food.

PHIL 224 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 224 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 224 counts as an elective in the Environmental Science and Society program.

PHIL 226: Feminist Theory
Professor Peter Higgins
Remote/synchronous MW 3:30 – 4:45

Feminist theory is an area of thought that seeks to expose, analyze and critically assess the justice of gender inequalities present in our society, in other societies, and globally. It is a foundational course for Philosophy majors and minors interested in social justice. This course focuses on six sets of questions:

- What is feminism?
- What is gender? Is gender “natural”? Are gender norms unjust?
- What is sexism? Why is sexism unjust?
- How is contemporary American society sexist, if at all? Are women oppressed? Are men oppressed?

- How should feminists reason about apparently sexist practices occurring outside of their own society?
- What are the ultimate goals of feminism? What would a gender-just society look like?

PHIL 226 fulfills the General Education requirement for either Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities or Global Awareness.

PHIL 226 fulfills the Eastern and Global requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 226: Feminist Theory
Professor Kate Mehuron
Online asynchronous

This course critically evaluates feminist critiques of society and feminist visions of the ideal egalitarian society. Questions examined in this course include: What is a just society? What constitutes equal treatment? What is oppression? How does oppression relate to social equality? How do ethnicity, race, and sexual identities intersect with gender to affect social equality? Are women and men essentially different, or are such differences the result of socialization? What are the major theories, and conceptual differences that inform feminist social change movements? The course will use a variety of feminist philosophical sources to explore these questions.

PHIL 226 fulfills the General Education requirement for either Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities or Global Awareness.

PHIL 226 fulfills the Eastern and Global requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 226 also offered Remote/synchronous T/Th 3:30 – 4:45;
instructor TBA

PHIL 228: Global Ethics
Professor John Ouko
Remote/synchronous MW 9:30 – 10:45

This course explores major ethical traditions from around the world in their application to particular moral issues like global poverty and international development, global conflict, international surrogacy, global organ trade, global gender justice and global environmental crisis, among others.

PHIL 228 fulfills the General Education requirement for either Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities or Global Awareness.

PHIL 228 fulfills the Eastern and Global requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 229: Environmental Ethics
Professor J. Michael Scoville
Remote/synchronous T/Th 11:00-12:15

Environmental ethics explores ethical aspects of the human relationship to nature or the environment. I assume any plausible environmental ethic needs to answer two basic questions: What nature or environments matter, and why? Answering these questions is challenging in part because the nature or environments that might matter are multiple and contested, and we need to be clear about what we mean when we use the terms “nature” or “environment.” Similarly, answers to the why question are multiple and contested. We can’t answer the why question without delving into philosophical debates about what is good and bad, right and wrong, and how these ideas relate to obligations we have. One of our basic tasks, then, is to study a range of views that attempt to answer these two questions. The larger project of the class is to articulate an environmental ethic that is responsive to the multitude of normative considerations at play, supported by good reasons, and capable of guiding action and policy.

PHIL 229 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 229 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 229 also fulfills a core course requirement in the Environmental Science and Society (ENVI) Program.

PHIL 260: Existentialism
Professor Jeremy Proulx
Remote/synchronous MW 11:00-12:15 p.m.

This course is an introduction to the wide-ranging school of thought referred to as Existentialism. Existentialist thinkers are a highly diverse group, with little to unify them. Thinkers who can be clearly classified as existentialists begin to appear in the middle of the 19th century, but existentialist themes have played a role in philosophy since the beginning. Existentialism is thus less a name for a philosophical school than it is a very broad and diverse way of understanding the world and the human place within it. Existentialist thinkers are generally interested in the role of human ideas and actions in the constitution of the world as meaningful. Students interested in just about any aspect of human life and activity will find something of interest in this course. The course is structured in such a way to provide students with the freedom to pursue their own interests in the context of the course material.

PHIL 260 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 260 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 291: Introduction to Asian Philosophy
Professor Brian Bruya
Online asynchronous

Philosophy 291 is an introduction to major aspects of South and East Asian philosophical traditions. The course is divided evenly into four units. The first unit explores the major texts of philosophical Daoism. The second unit is an introduction to Buddhism. In the third unit, we focus on two core texts of the Indian tradition, the *Yoga Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. The fourth unit grows out of the third by exploring the contemporary global issue of non-violent

revolution through the life, work, and philosophy of Mohandas Gandhi. Texts in this course include a broad range of genres, such as early religious tracts, dialogue, colorful anecdotes, analytic arguments, and cutting edge interpretation. Because of the vastness of the subject matter, course material will be considered a base from which students go on to explore more refined topics in projects of their own interest.

PHIL 291 fulfills the General Education requirement for either Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities or Global Awareness

PHIL 291 fulfills the Eastern and Global requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 291 counts as an elective in the Religious Studies minor and fulfills a requirement in the Asian Studies minor.

PHIL 332W: 19th Century Philosophy
Professor Kate Mehuron
Remote/synchronous MW 12:30 – 1:45

This course is a survey of the major thinkers of the nineteenth century: Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. We begin with a brief review of the Kantian legacy in order to situate the development of these thinkers. This legacy includes excerpts from Fichte and Hegel. Next, we will consider Kierkegaard's critique of the Hegelian system and investigate Kierkegaard's notion of truth as subjectivity. We will also read writings by Feuerbach, whose critique influenced Marx's overturning of Hegelian idealism by dialectical materialism. Following Marx, we will turn to Schopenhauer's reworking of Kantian themes. Finally, we will examine Nietzsche's rejection of post-Kantian idealism and his affirmative philosophy. We will evaluate these philosophies individually and also measure their relationship to Kantian idealism in order to understand what is meant by post-Kantian idealism.

PHIL 332W fulfills the History of Western Philosophy requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 332W counts as a Writing Intensive course.

PHIL 391W: Philosophy of Early China
Professor Brian Bruya
Online asynchronous

The Chinese philosophical tradition stands as one of the longest, most profound, and most influential philosophical traditions in the world. Beginning with a naturalistic cosmology, Chinese philosophers speculated widely on the nature of the human being, the utility of language, statecraft, warfare, morality, aesthetics, and education. Because the guiding assumptions of the tradition differ from those of other major philosophical traditions, students should expect both challenges and surprises. In this course we shall take a chronological approach, addressing texts as they arise and respond to their predecessors, reading both primary texts and cutting edge secondary research. The result will be not only a window into another tradition but a fresh perspective from which to view traditional and contemporary Western philosophical issues. Texts covered will include portions of the *Analects*, *Daodejing* (*Tao-te-ching*), *Yijing* (*I Ching*), *Zhuangzi* (*Chuang-tzu*), *Art of War*, and many others.

PHIL 391W fulfills the History of Philosophy requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 391W counts as a Writing Intensive course.

PHIL 391W fulfills a requirement in the Asian Studies minor.

PHIL 424W/524: Food Justice
Professor Jill Dieterle
Remote/synchronous T/Th 12:30 – 1:45

The phrase “food justice” is often invoked to highlight a range of ethical issues concerning food, including but not limited to: food production and the rights of agricultural laborers, inequities in food distribution within nations and between them, the corporatization of the food system, and the lack of democratic control over how food is grown, harvested, and distributed. As such, “food justice” has emerged as an important organizing concept for those interested in the complex forms of inequality and injustice that permeate and sustain food systems across the globe. Food injustices tend to track other injustices. Traditionally oppressed groups, such as communities of color and those living in poverty, are disproportionately affected by food insecurity.

Structural racial inequalities are prominent in every facet of contemporary food systems, from employment, to land ownership, to food access. Food insecurity is more common in households affected by disability, and it also tends to be more severe. In PHIL 424W/524 Food Justice, we will explore and analyze inequities such as those discussed above.

PHIL 424W fulfills the Social Justice requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 424W counts as a Writing Intensive course.

PHIL 424W counts as an elective in the Environmental Science and Society program.

Philosophy 429W/529: Topics in Environmental Philosophy
Professor Michael Scoville
Remote/synchronous T/Th 2:00 – 3:15

This iteration of PHIL 429W will focus on a variety of normative issues raised by climate change and our relationship to future generations. The course is divided into three parts. In part one, we'll work through some foundational philosophical texts on social justice. Then, we'll study a recent book aimed at informing global climate policy (specifically, in the institutional context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). In part three, we'll turn our attention to a different set of considerations that bear on our normative thinking, namely, reasons to care about future generations (and hence about the effects of climate change, among other things) that are based on agents' attachments to particular others, projects, places, and so on. The discussion of attachment-based reasons decenters, without abandoning entirely, justice-based and other moral reasons to care about climate change. One of the deeper disputes we'll explore in the course of our study is what sorts of reasons have, or can plausibly be claimed to have, normative authority and motivational force for situated agents.

PHIL 429W fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 429W counts as a Writing Intensive course.

PHIL 429W counts as an elective in the Environmental Science and Society program.

PHIL 429W is repeatable for credit, as long as the topic is different.

PHIL 442W/542: Philosophy of Mind
Professor John Koolage
Remote/synchronous T/Th 11:00 – 12:15

In this iteration of Philosophy of Mind, we consider and reflect on three areas of research. First, we will consider some classic ideas, primarily arguments for dualism and physicalism. We will focus on understanding these classic philosophical views in relation to (anti)reductivism and (epistemic) pluralism. Second, we will engage with Cognitive Science, studying the contrast between Classic Representationalism and Embodiment. Here we will read work by Larry Shapiro and Andy Clark, our goal will be to explore the limits of the classic view and the importance of the newer views in a good Cognitive Science. Third, we will explore Folk Psychology, reading either Shannon Spaulding's new book or Kristin Andrews' slightly older book about animal cognition and folk psychological pluralism.

PHIL 442W fulfills the Knowledge and Reality requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 442W counts as a Writing Intensive course.
