

Philosophy Graduate Course Offerings Fall 2021

**Courses are offered face-to-face unless otherwise noted, but
note that course formats are subject to change due to the
uncertainty concerning the pandemic.**

PHIL 520: Ethical Theory
Professor Michael Scoville
T/Th 2:00 – 3:15

This course will explore the nature of values and valuing, the logic of evaluative attitudes, and the normative reasons agents can have. Specific topics to be discussed will likely include: valuing as a distinctive practical attitude; the role of the emotions in valuing; the objective, subjective, and social aspects of value and valuing; the temporal structure of evaluative attitudes or states (such as regret, resentment, guilt, hope, affirmation, contentment); the connection between valuing and living a meaningful life; different types of normative reasons (e.g., impersonal or agent-neutral reasons versus agent-relative reasons; moral versus nonmoral reasons) and their relative importance; the case for value pluralism. To better understand these topics, and the complexities they raise, we'll study recent (or relatively recent) scholarship in moral philosophy and value theory, likely focusing on works from Elizabeth Anderson, T. M. Scanlon, Samuel Scheffler, Susan Wolf, R. Jay Wallace, and Cheshire Calhoun.

PHIL 520 counts as a course in the Social Justice Division of the Philosophy M.A. Program.

PHIL 527: Social Epistemology
Professor Jill Dieterle
T/Th 12:30 – 1:45

Traditional theories of knowledge are individualistic in that the focus is how individual epistemic agents can properly use their cognitive devices to come to

know things. But knowledge production has social elements. Social epistemology explores how social-epistemic activities or practices impact the epistemic outcomes of particular agents or groups. One of our topics this semester will be the dynamics of testimony. When is testimony trustworthy? What happens when people's testimony is unjustifiably discounted? Other topics we'll explore this semester include trust and trustworthiness (both within and between diverse communities of knowers), peer disagreement (when is it reasonable to revise one's beliefs in the face of disagreement?), and the phenomenon of affected ignorance.

PHIL 527 counts as a course in the Social Justice Division of the Philosophy M.A. Program.

Philosophy 595: Phenomenology
Professor Laura McMahon
MW 3:30 – 4:45

“Phenomenology” names a movement in twentieth-century European Philosophy inaugurated by Edmund Husserl and carried on by Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Frantz Fanon, and a large number of contemporary thinkers. It also names a philosophical methodology: the rigorous description of experience as it is actually lived. In this course, we will approach the study of Phenomenology through a focus on the themes of *time*, *history*, and *identity*. Through readings by authors such as Henri Bergson (an important precursor to the phenomenological movement), Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Paul Ricoeur, Judith Butler, and Fanon, we will ask questions such as: What is the temporal nature of human experience, and how do common ways of understanding time obscure the experience of time as it is actually lived? How is personal identity not prior to temporal experience, but enacted in and through temporal experience? How is time lived in the body through structures such as habit? What is the inherently historical nature of experience? How do our ways of narrating our personal and collective pasts open up new possibilities for the future?

PHIL 595 counts as a course in the Methods Division of the Philosophy M.A. Program.

PHIL 601: First Year Seminar in Philosophy
Professor John Koolage
T/Th 11:00 – 12:15

The First Year Seminar is intended to situate incoming students in the MA program as well as provide a skill-based, deep dive, into at least one area of current research. In this year's seminar, students will engage with a research programme in either philosophy of psychology (focusing on cognition and evolutionary theory) or general philosophy of science (focusing on pluralism and epistemic optimism). If, before the start of semester, Professor Koolage can determine some intersection of these projects, we will do that. Regardless of content, students should expect to practice a number of philosophical skills, including reading philosophy, charitable analysis, writing for inquiry and for conference presentation, responding to referee feedback, and teaching in service of learning.
