

Philosophy Course Offerings 200-level and above Winter 2024

PHIL 220: Ethics
Professor Jill Dieterle
T/Th 12:30 – 1:45

This course is an introduction to ethics.

We will start with basic questions in ethics: What is ethics about? Why are some acts morally permissible and others morally wrong?

We will also discuss several ethical issues. For example: Is the current distribution of income and wealth justified? What obligations do we have to non-human animals? What are the ethical implications of our consumerist society?

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
Instructors TBA
Sections offered:
MW 11:00 – 12:15
T/Th 12:30 – 1:45
Online Asynchronous

A consideration of ethical questions regarding business practices in a global environment. Students will be introduced to ethical theory and critical reasoning. They will use these tools to critically examine the market system

itself, as well as practices of multinational business. Students will explore the ethical responsibilities of corporations with regard to employees, consumers, and other stakeholders.

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 223: Medical Ethics
Professor Jill Dieterle
Online Asynchronous

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

The Supreme Court recently overturned Roe v. Wade. As a result, the legal status of abortion is now determined by individual states. We will examine the ethical arguments on both sides of the abortion debate and discuss some of the consequences of legal prohibitions on abortion.

We'll also talk about other topics in medical ethics: pandemic ethics, vaccine refusal, patient autonomy and informed consent, reproductive technology, and genetic screening.

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: Medical Ethics
Professor John Ouko
Available sections:
T/Th 11:00 - 12:15
Online Asynchronous

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, whether dying babies should be used in experimental medicine (even to help other babies), ethical issues in first-time organ surgeries, 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 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: Feminist Theory
Professor Laura McMahon
MW 3:30 – 4:45

This course engages in a philosophical study of the situation of women in the contemporary world—a situation that is in deep and pervasive respects a situation of inequality and oppression. Part One will inquire into the nature of oppression, not only along gendered lines but also along the lines of race, sexual orientation, and class, and how such oppression plays out in diverse areas of contemporary life. Part Two will examine feminist arguments concerning the social construction of gender and sex, inquiring into the manner in which femininity (and also masculinity) are less natural categories than learned patterns of behavior beginning in early childhood. In Part Three of the course, we will turn to a study of the problems facing women in multicultural contexts, inquiring into the interactions between sexism and cultural imperialism and into more just ways in which we might relate to one another in a global context.

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.

Additional sections of PHIL 226 offered T/Th 11:00 – 12:15 and
online asynchronous; instructors TBA

PHIL 228: Global Ethics
Prof. John Ouko
T/Th 12:30 – 1:45 (Honors Section)

This course introduces students to a variety of ethical systems from around the world and applies these systems to issues that are currently in dispute between nations or cultures. The course is divided into two parts. The first part covers Western ethical systems such as deontology, divine command theories, consequentialism, virtue ethics, and right theory as well as non-Western ethical systems such as Hindu ethics, Islamic ethics, Buddhist ethics, and

African ethics. Fundamental questions about ethics, such as whether there is one universal ethical system that underlies the apparently differing ethical ways of thinking in the world, or whether there are multiple equally valid ethical ways of thinking, are also considered. The second part applies the aforementioned ethical systems to particular moral issues like global poverty and international development, global conflict and the ethics of making peace, global bioethics, global environmental and climate ethics, and global gender justice.

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.

An additional section of PHIL 228 offered online asynchronous;
instructor TBA

PHIL 260: Existentialism
Professor Jeremy Proulx
MW 11:00 – 12:15

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
MW 12:30 – 1:45

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 Global Awareness.

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

PHIL 332W: 19th Century
Professor Kate Mehuron
Online Synchronous, T/Th 3:30 – 4:45

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. We will evaluate and 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 448: Environmental Values, Justice, and Policy
Professor Michael Scoville
T/Th 12:30 – 1:45

In this course, we'll explore philosophical perspectives on nature, value, and justice, and consider how those perspectives are relevant to environmental decision-making and policy. We'll start by working through some texts that aim to clarify concepts of nature that are important for environmental decision-making and policy. Then we'll turn to some foundational texts on social justice, giving special attention to the influential theories of John Rawls, Martha Nussbaum, and Elizabeth Anderson. Following that exploration, we'll study several chapters from a recent book by political philosopher Darrel Moellendorf in which the tools of normative philosophy are used to inform and critique global climate policy (specifically in the institutional context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). Over the course of the semester, we'll consider a number of specific issues and debates, including: concepts of nature relevant to public policy discussions; the relation of concepts of nature to value and normative reasons; what we owe each other as a matter of justice (with sensitivity specifically to environmental dimensions of what we owe each other); how to reconcile global poverty-alleviation and human development goals with environmental protection in the context of global climate policy; and the plurality of values and reasons relevant to supporting and motivating environmental action and policy.

PHIL 448 fulfills the Social Justice requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 472W: Philosophy and Narrative
Professor Laura McMahon
MW 2:00 – 3:15

This course explores two interrelated themes: 1) the centrality of narrative—personal and historical—in our self-understandings and in our capacities for personal and collective transformation; and 2) the power of literature and film to bring to life philosophical ideas of powerful significance in human existence.

We will study works of philosophy attending to the nature of lived experience by figures such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and John Dewey, as well as works by philosophical thinkers reflecting on the central role played by narrative in our self-understandings—personal and historical—such as Susan Brison, Donnel Stern, and Saidiya Hartmann. We will also engage with works of literature and film throughout the course.

PHIL 472W fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 472W counts as a Writing Intensive course.

PHIL 481W: Philosophy of the Life Sciences
Professor John Koolage
T/Th 2:00 – 3:15

Philosophy of the Life Sciences focuses our philosophical curiosity on questions internal to some of our most interesting sciences. In this iteration of the class, we will cover some helpful feminist and general philosophy of science, including a brief exploration of theories, social-procedural objectivity, and evidence. However, I hope to spend the bulk of our class time on Philosophy of Psychiatry, where we will focus on at least one oddity of the DSM, and on Philosophy of Biology, where we will focus on the idea of epigenetics. To this end, we will read, at least, Philosophy of Psychiatry by Jon Tsou and The Maternal Imprint by Sarah Richardson. I am certain we will also read some excerpts of work by Elliott Sober, Helen Longino, Nelson Goodman, Ian Hacking, and Kristin Andrews, who have projects directly related to those found in our two books. Students should come away with a set of philosophy of science ideas and tools that are widely applicable, as well as some experience with how these ideas and tools can benefit scientific research programs. No prior knowledge of the sciences is required.

PHIL 481W fulfills the Knowledge and Reality requirement in the Philosophy Program.

PHIL 481W counts as a Writing Intensive course.
