

Chairperson: Marc A. Goldstein, Ph.D.  
(413) 662-5378, M.Goldstein@mcla.edu

# PHILOSOPHY

## PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

### **BACHELOR OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY CONCENTRATION IN LAW, ETHICS AND SOCIETY PHILOSOPHY MINOR TEACHER LICENSURE**

#### **PHILOSOPHY MAJOR PROGRAM**

The Department of Philosophy/Modern Language/Interdisciplinary Studies offers a four-year program leading to a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. Through reading, discussing, and writing about traditional and contemporary philosophical texts and issues, the program challenges students to bring a rigorous critical and constructive attitude to every aspect of their lives. These critical skills and habits complement any career. Students graduating with a degree in philosophy will be able and disposed to:

- C reflect on their own most basic assumptions;
- C consider a variety of perspectives on a topic;
- C become an active member of a community of learners;
- C write in a literate, clear, and interesting manner;
- C read actively and fruitfully various sorts of philosophical texts;
- C understand and apply the formal structures of sound reasoning and good argumentation;
- C engage in respectful and productive conversation and collaborative thinking.

#### **Philosophy Major Foundation Courses**

PHIL 100	A First Course in Philosophy	3 cr
or PHIL 101	History of Ideas	
PHIL 200	Logic and Critical Reasoning	3 cr
PHIL 240	Ancient Philosophy	3 cr
PHIL 242	Modern Philosophy	3 cr
PHIL 350	Contemporary Moral Issues	3 cr

#### **Elective Requirements**

Five philosophy electives above the 200 level, planned with the departmental advisor 15cr

**TOTAL PHILOSOPHY MAJOR REQUIREMENTS** **30**

Students majoring in Philosophy must publish at least two articles in the philosophical review, *Thesis XII*, and give at least one presentation at the annual philosophy student mini-conference.

#### **CONCENTRATION IN LAW, ETHICS AND SOCIETY**

Requires students to complete the philosophy major foundation courses, plus at least seven additional courses in philosophy. To graduate in the concentration, students must complete the following requirements:

#### **Law, Ethics and Society Concentration Requirements**

Philosophy Major Foundation Courses **15 cr**

PHIL 400 Contemporary Legal Philosophy **3 cr**

Two of the following applied ethics courses: **6 cr**

PHIL 250 Environmental Ethics

PHIL 322 Business Ethics

PHIL 485 Biomedical Ethics

PHIL 485 Information Ethics

One of the following social and political philosophy courses: **3 cr**

PHIL 301 Philosophy of Religion

PHIL 360 Social and Political Philosophy

or approved equivalent

Three electives in philosophy above the 200 level, in consultation with an advisor 9 cr

**TOTAL LAW, ETHICS AND SOCIETY CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS** **36**

Students pursuing the concentration must publish at least two articles in the departmental philosophical review, *Thesis XII*, and produce a senior capstone project as the basis for a presentation at the annual philosophy student mini-conference.

# PHILOSOPHY

Chairperson: Marc A. Goldstein, Ph.D.  
(413) 662-5378, M.Goldstein@mcla.edu

---

## PHILOSOPHY MINOR PROGRAM

The Philosophy minor will enable students to gain knowledge of main philosophical issues that may be fruitfully combined with subject areas in other departments, including their major program.

### Philosophy Minor Requirements

PHIL 100	A First Course in Philosophy	3 cr
or PHIL 101	History of Ideas	
PHIL 200	Logic and Critical Reasoning	3 cr
PHIL 350	Contemporary Moral Issues	3 cr

The remaining necessary nine credit hours 9 cr consist of electives taken from the Philosophy Department curriculum. The selection should depend on the major of the student and the student's main interests.

**TOTAL PHILOSOPHY MINOR REQUIREMENTS** **18**

## TEACHER LICENSURE PROGRAMS

Students majoring in philosophy may choose to pursue initial teacher licensure as an early childhood teacher or elementary teacher. These students will complete the philosophy major, education major, and a licensure program in education.

## COURSE LISTINGS

### PHIL 100 A First Course in Philosophy

3 cr

Engages students in the critical investigation and reflective analysis of such fundamental philosophical questions as freedom and moral responsibility, the nature of being and knowledge, the existence of God and the problem of evil, and individual rights and social justice. Emphasizes the relevance that philosophy has to contemporary problems and encourages students to think, read, write, and speak critically and thoughtfully.

**Prerequisite:** None

### PHIL 101 History of Ideas

3 cr

Provides a multidisciplinary approach to intellectual history, emphasizing the development of some of the major ideas whose consequences shape modern life, such as reason, nature, science, friendship, divinity, and freedom. Sufficient emphasis will be placed on the Massachusetts and federal constitutions to meet the State requirement.

**Prerequisite:** None

### PHIL 110 World Religions

3 cr

Examines basic texts, concepts, presuppositions, and ways of life of several major religious traditions. Drawing on both sacred texts and scholarly analyses, as well as fictional and journalistic accounts, the course aims to understand and assess the meanings of religion in human life.

**Prerequisite:** None

### PHIL 120 Art & Philosophy

3 cr

Adopts a philosophical approach to the experience, understanding, and critical assessment of the products and processes of the creative arts. Our inquiries will center on two traditional questions of aesthetic theory: What is art? And what is art's special value? This course will be more theoretical than hands-on, though direct, continued experience in the various creative arts will be encouraged and figure prominently in most discussions and assignments.

**Prerequisite:** None

### PHIL 200 Logic and Critical Reasoning

3 cr

Examines and applies the principles of cogent, sound, or critical reasoning and writing, leading to a deeper understanding of language and of the use of logical argumentation. Considers, in the context of real-life arguments and claims (in the rhetoric of philosophy, history, and other disciplines) formal and informal principles of clear and systematic thinking and writing.

**Prerequisite:** None

Chairperson: Marc A. Goldstein, Ph.D.  
(413) 662-5378, M.Goldstein@mcla.edu

---

# PHILOSOPHY

## **PHIL 240 Ancient Philosophy**

**3 cr**

Explores the ancient roots of western intellectual history, including contributions of non-European societies, in the context of the politics, economics, language, religion, and technology of their times. Students will apply philosophical and historical tools to investigate the development of important ideas and schools of thought in the ancient world and the consequences of those ideas in the present.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or PHIL 101, or department approval

## **PHIL 242 Modern Philosophy**

**3 cr**

Explores the roots of western intellectual history since the European Renaissance, including the politics, economics, language, religion, and technology in which they arose. Students will apply philosophical and historical tools to investigate the development of important ideas and schools of thought in the modern world and their consequences in the present.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or 101, or department approval

## **PHIL 250 Environmental Ethics**

**3 cr**

Addresses recent and historical perspective on the nature and scope of human moral obligations to the natural environment. Discusses the content and merits of competing ethical theories and their implications both for intra-human affairs and our place in nature as one of its creatures.

**Prerequisite:** None

## **PHIL 285 Special Topics in Philosophy**

**3 cr**

Challenges students at the sophomore level to understand, construct, and criticize both informal (natural language) and formal (categorical and propositional) arguments. The course considers in detail the very notion of argument, argument structure, and the criteria for construction cogent arguments, and distinguishes arguments supported by evidence and reason from mere opinion and belief. Students will learn to apply these logical concepts in their writing, conversing, and reading.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100, sophomore status, or department approval

## **PHIL 290 Philosophy of Education**

**3 cr**

Assists students to make progress toward identifying elements of the philosophy of education. Toward this end, basic philosophical questions and educational values are discussed within the context of examining different philosophical perspectives.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or 101 or department approval

## **PHIL 300 Epistemology and Metaphysics**

**3 cr**

Considers the origins, nature, and presuppositions of knowledge and its relation to such concepts as belief, fact, truth, justification, and reality. Examines various accounts of the most general features of reality using categories such as being/becoming, real/apparent, identity/difference, existence, change, time, space, and causality.

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level PHIL course, or permission of instructor

## **PHIL 301 Philosophy of Religion**

**3 cr**

Analyzes the nature of religion: religious knowledge (reason and justification), religious experience (the affective, inner impulse of sacred life), and religious tradition (the social construction of religion practices and beliefs).

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level philosophy course or department approval

## **PHIL 322 Business Ethics**

**3 cr**

Examines the values of a business society and the ethical dimensions of decision-making in business, with the aim of enabling the student to develop a meaningful set of values by which to live and contribute creatively in a business society.

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level PHIL course, or department approval

## **PHIL 330 Aesthetics**

**3 cr**

Explores systematically issues surrounding the critical appreciation of perceptual experience. Questions the nature and value of the objects of such appreciation, whether they are human creations (music, art, theatre, dance, literature) or natural objects.

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level PHIL course, or department approval

## **PHIL 350 Contemporary Moral Issues**

**3 cr**

Views such issues as war and peace, world poverty, sexual morality, and spirituality from the perspectives of traditional and contemporary ethical theories.

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level PHIL course or department approval

# PHILOSOPHY

Chairperson: Marc A. Goldstein, Ph.D.  
(413) 662-5378, M.Goldstein@mcla.edu

---

## **PHIL 360 Social and Political Philosophy**

**3 cr**

Investigates conceptual and moral questions posed by life in community with others. These include justifications of democracy, political freedom, natural rights, political obligation, social justice, and the challenge of anarchism.

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level PHIL course or department approval

## **PHIL 385 Special Topics in Philosophy**

**3 cr**

Challenges students at the junior level to understand, construct, and criticize both informal (natural language) and formal (categorical and propositional) arguments. The course considers in detail the very notion of argument, argument structure, and the criteria for construction cogent arguments, and distinguishes arguments supported by evidence and reason from mere opinion and belief. Students will learn to apply these logical concepts in their writing, conversing, and reading.

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level or 200-level PHIL course, junior status, or department approval

## **PHIL 400 Contemporary Legal Philosophy**

**3 cr**

Examines the nature of law, the logic and sociology of judicial processes, and the relationship of law to morality, including a comparison of major legal theories: natural law, legal positivism, legal realism, and Marxist legal analysis.

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level PHIL course or department approval

## **PHIL 485 Special Topics in Philosophy**

**3 cr**

Focuses on a period in the history of philosophy (e.g., Greek philosophy, medieval philosophy, 20<sup>th</sup> century American philosophy, etc.), the works of an individual philosopher (e.g., Plato, Hegel, Hume, Kant, Descartes, etc. ), or the critical examination of a philosophically challenging concept (e.g., freedom, value, meaning, truth, relativism, rights, justice, etc.).

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level PHIL course or department approval

## **PHIL 495 Teaching Assistantship in Philosophy**

**3 cr**

Provides assistance to philosophy majors who intend to pursue active teaching careers in the discipline. Students will be assigned to a department member to assist in the teaching of lower level courses.

**Prerequisite:** Minimum of 18 semester hours in philosophy and department approval

## **PHIL 500 Directed Independent Study**

**1-3 cr**

Open to juniors and seniors who wish to read in a given area or to study a topic in depth. Written reports and frequent conferences with the advisor are required.

**Prerequisite:** A 100-level and a 200-level PHIL course; junior or senior status; department approval

## **PHIL 540 Philosophy Internship**

**3-9 cr**

Philosophy is applicable to a wide range of professions and activities (e.g. law, business, education, public service). The Philosophy internship is designed to allow advanced students with a particular focus or career goal to design and pursue such applications with faculty supervision, including a significant component of writing about their experiences. Up to 9 credits per semester, three of which may apply to minimum major requirements.

**Prerequisite:** Senior status and departmental approval