Philosophy

Philosophy: The Big Questions

PHL 2050-01  Donovan Miyasaki  1:25-2:20  MWF
PHL 2050-02  Jacob Bauer     12:30-1:50  T&Th
PHL 2050-03  Donovan Miyasaki 10:10-11:05  MWF

Like philosophers through the ages, students in this class will pursue the “big questions” of life. We will discuss such perennially fascinating topics as: Can you survive the death of your body, and if not, can it be bad for you to die? Is there a God? Is it rational to be moral? Are there “right answers” to ethical questions, or is ethics just subjective? What is the meaning of life? We will examine these questions by reading selections from classic philosophical texts, and put our own beliefs about them under critical scrutiny. Our goal in these discussions will be to appreciate the complexities and difficulties such questions raise for our most fundamental and deeply held beliefs.

- Fulfills Arts & Humanities requirement in the WSU Core Curriculum (Area 4)
- Fulfills the Core Curriculum Area requirement for Philosophy majors & minors
- Integrated Writing in Core

Critical Thinking

PHL 3000-01  Erik Banks     10:10-11:05  MWF
PHL 3000-02  William Irvine  1:25-2:20  MWF
PHL 3000-03  Linda Farmer    9:30-10:50  T&Th
PHL 3000-04  Linda Farmer    11:00-12:20  T&Th
PHL 3000-05  Jacob Bauer     2:00-3:20  T&Th
PHL 3000-90  Scott Wilson    on-line course

This course will develop your reasoning skills: your ability to recognize the differences between facts and opinions, to distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, to identify unstated assumptions, to detect bias, to recognize fallacious reasoning, and to evaluate claims, definitions and arguments. It will help you cultivate clear, disciplined, and independent thinking that is readily applicable to your academic, social and personal pursuits.

- All CoLA Majors are required to take PHL 3000, Critical Thinking

Modern Philosophy

PHL 3030/5030-01  Linda Farmer  2:00-3:20  T&Th

Introduction to modern philosophy before Kant. We will be reading, discussing and reflecting upon the ideas and arguments of Descartes, Berkeley and Hume. We will be paying particular attention to the epistemological issues that dominated much of the philosophical discourse of the modern period. In this way, we will become acquainted with philosophical perspectives such as metaphysical dualism, materialism and idealism; rationalism, empiricism and skepticism; and with theories of truth.

- Fulfills the History of Philosophy area requirement for Philosophy majors & minors
- Integrated Writing
**HISTORY OF ETHICS**  
*Scott Wilson*

**PHL 3120/5120-01**  
12:30-1:50  T&Th

This course is designed to introduce students to some of the most important ethical works in the history of philosophy. Philosophers study the history of ethics not just to understand what different ethical philosophers wrote and meant, but also to gain a deeper understanding of the ethical landscape facing us today. Many of our beliefs about what is right and wrong, good and bad, worth choosing or unworthy of choice, are heavily influenced by the history of ethical thought, while other beliefs of ours are idiosyncratic and the product of a particularly contemporary mode of thought. By studying the history of ethical philosophy, students will be able to gain a deeper understanding of their own views, of what the possible alternatives to their views are, and to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of both.

- Fulfills the Value Theory area requirement for Philosophy majors & minors
- Fulfills the History of Philosophy area requirement for Philosophy majors & minors
- Integrated Writing

**SYMBOLIC LOGIC**  
*William Irvine*

**PHL 3200-01**  
2:30-3:25  MWF

Students will learn how to translate English sentences into symbolic sentences, and how to use derivations and truth tables to check the validity of English arguments. In this class, we will explore both propositional logic, which deals with the logical connectives if, and, and or, as well as predicate logic, which deals with the logic of sentences that make claims of existence (“Some men are married”) or of universality (“All men are married.”). This course has no prerequisite. Students who have zero logical ability will be transformed, in small steps, into students capable of doing complex derivations.

- This course is required for all Philosophy majors
- Prerequisite is PHL 3000, Critical Thinking

**MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**  
*Donovan Miyasaki*

**PHL 3310/5310-01**  
11:00-12:20  T&Th

An introduction to political philosophy focusing on the modern era, from the 17th century to the present. Topics will include the social contract theory of justice found in the works of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau; John Stuart Mill's classic statement of liberalism, in which justice is defined as the protection and promotion of the fundamental right of individual liberty; and the critique of traditional liberalism from the perspective of equality and distributive justice in the works of Karl Marx and John Rawls.

- Fulfills the History of Philosophy area requirement for Philosophy majors & minors
- Fulfills the Value Theory area requirement for Philosophy majors & minors

**HISTORY & PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE**  
*Erik Banks*

**PHL 3990/5990-01**  
12:20-1:15  MWF

History and Philosophy of Science: Modern Physics, is a tour through the great discoveries of physics in the years 1900-1930 and their subsequent impact on philosophy. The course is a collaboration between the physics and philosophy departments. The course does not assume any mathematics or physics training, and features assignments for those with either a liberal arts or science background. Bring your curiosity about relativity and the quantum world and prepare to be amazed.

- Fulfills the History of Philosophy area requirement for Philosophy majors & minors
- History and Philosophy of Science minor elective
- Medical Humanities and Health Studies minor elective