

PHILOSOPHY

Department Chair: Craig Condella, Ph.D.

Philosophy, or the love of wisdom, embraces a number of diverse traditions from the West and the East. The Department of Philosophy draws on this enriching diversity while being sensitive to and supportive of the Roman Catholic heritage of the University's tradition. Philosophy introduces students to representative philosophical issues in human life, and cultivates in them a capacity to apply philosophical methods to intellectual, moral, and social problems. Such issues are complex and controversial, and, while there are no easy answers, it matters greatly which answers are accepted or decided on. Engaging in philosophy develops a critical mind, a balance of analytic and interpretive abilities, a capacity for the imaginative development of abstract formulations and their concrete application in human society.

Students hoping to major or minor in Philosophy must have achieved a cumulative grade point average of 2.7 at the time of application to the department. Majors and minors are required to maintain a grade point average of 3.0 in Philosophy courses and a cumulative grade point average of 2.7 overall.

Philosophy Student Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate skill in critical thinking.
2. Explain major philosophies.
3. Apply ethical reasoning to issues.
4. Apply good writing and speaking skills to philosophical issues.

Bachelor's

- Philosophy (B.A.) (<https://catalog.salve.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs/philosophy/philosophy-ba/>)

Minors

- Philosophy Minor (<https://catalog.salve.edu/undergraduate/academic-programs/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)

PHL-120: Logic (3 Credits)

An introduction to methods and modes of inference, argumentation and persuasion. Basic forms of arguments and criteria for their evaluation are examined. Strategies for applying such knowledge and skills to current issues are suggested.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-125: Philosophy of the Human Person (3 Credits)

This course examines the philosophical literature on the question, what it means to be a human person. Topics such as the material and spiritual dimensions of the human person, the immortality of the soul, ethics and human dignity, and individuality and inter-subjectivity or community will be considered.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-126: The Pre-Socratics, the Sophists and Socrates (3 Credits)

This course will cover the first two periods of ancient Greek philosophy, the cosmological and humanistic periods. An exploration of the dawn of philosophy in Ionia will be followed by a tracing of its development beginning with Thales and covering the main Pre-Socratic thinkers. The shift from cosmology to ethics, politics and the soul will then be explored, including an analysis of the relationship between Socrates and the Sophists.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-130: Ancient Philosophy (3 Credits)

A survey of major themes, thinkers, and schools in the Greco-Roman period of Western philosophy.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-140: Medieval Political Philosophy (3 Credits)

A survey of major themes, thinkers, and schools of the medieval era of the Western Tradition.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-141: Medieval Political Philosophy (3 Credits)

Students will investigate the most important texts of political philosophers from the medieval era.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-201: Classical Political Philosophy (3 Credits)

In this course, you will read some of the most important texts of political philosophy, beginning with the greatest political thinkers of them all—Plato and Aristotle. Then, you will explore Christian political philosophy, diving into the texts of Augustine and Aquinas. By the end of the semester, you will have a deeper understanding of politics, human nature, and the great ideas that will underpin all political arguments.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

Cross-listed with: POL-201.

PHL-202: Modern Political Philosophy (3 Credits)

In this course, we begin with the radical break from earlier political thought and trace the development of modern political philosophy into the 20th century, reading authors such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Nietzsche. These ideas constitute a crucial background for understanding the American Founding, modern law, and contemporary culture—in short, for understanding ourselves.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

Cross-listed with: POL-202.

PHL-203: Modern Philosophy (3 Credits)

A survey of the major themes, thinkers and schools in the Rationalist, Empiricist and Idealist traditions.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-204: Contemporary Philosophy (3 Credits)

A survey of major themes, thinkers, and schools of the contemporary period spanning the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries in Western philosophy.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-225: Quest for the Good Life (3 Credits)

This course engages the philosophical and ethical literature seeking answers to the question: What makes a life good? We shall explore the roles of reason and faith in the search for the good life and probe subjects such as: happiness, wisdom, justice, and other virtues through study of the great works of philosophers, such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Kant, and Mill. In their company, we will have the opportunity to examine our lives and what makes for a life truly worth living.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Faith and Reason.

PHL-230: Plato (3 Credits)

This course introduces the student to Plato's philosophy through an in-depth study of one or more of his dialogues.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-231: Aristotle (3 Credits)

This course introduces the student to topics in Aristotle's metaphysical and ethical treatises.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-233: Islamic Philosophy (3 Credits)

A survey of the major themes, thinkers and schools in the Islamic tradition.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Building Global Awareness.

PHL-234: Chinese Philosophy (3 Credits)

A survey of the major themes, thinkers and schools in Chinese philosophy.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Building Global Awareness.

PHL-235: God and the Philosophers (3 Credits)

The religious faith of countless persons in a personal God has been of perennial interest to philosophers, whether or not they themselves have faith because metaphysical and epistemological questions have consistently been asked, and even answered, by many thinkers over many centuries. Does God exist or not? Does faith in God's existence, or faith in God's non-existence, qualify as knowledge? And what is evidence in this sphere? Delving into such metaphysical and epistemological questions, this course will place you in the middle of the debates.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-236: Philosophy of Justice (3 Credits)

This course surveys diverse positions on the subject of justice. Works studied may be selected from the Catholic, classical, liberal, utilitarian, socialist, libertarian and communitarian traditions.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-237: Science Fiction and Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course uses science fiction literature and film to explore philosophical topics ranging from the nature of reality to the difference between human and artificial intelligence to the ethical questions surrounding genetic enhancement and cloning.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-238: Japanese Philosophy (3 Credits)

We introduce novice students to the intriguing canvas of Japanese philosophy through its multiple sources in Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist, and Shinto beliefs. At the same time, we explore these ideas, Zen Buddhism in particular, embody themselves in Japanese painting, calligraphy, literature, martial arts, tea ceremony, theater, and film.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Building Global Awareness.

PHL-242: Thomas Aquinas (3 Credits)

This course introduces the student to the philosophical thought of Thomas Aquinas through an in-depth study of one or more of his major works.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-250: Continental Rationalism (3 Credits)

Students will investigate the important philosophical works of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-251: British Empiricism (3 Credits)

Students will investigate the important philosophical works of Berkeley, Locke, Hume and Reid.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-260: Applied Ethics (3 Credits)

Applies the major philosophical theories of moral goodness and rightness to contemporary moral problems and issues. Areas to be covered could include issues in medical ethics, business ethics, as well as social, political, economic, and legal ethics.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-261: Classic American Philosophy (3 Credits)

Beginning with the colonial period and extending to John Dewey, this is a survey of social, moral, and metaphysical ideas that have proved to be significant in the U.S.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Defining the American Experience.

Cross-listed with: AST-262.

PHL-271: Ancient and Medieval Philosophy (3 Credits)

A survey of major themes, thinkers, and schools in the Western tradition, from the Greco-Roman through the Medieval and Renaissance periods.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-299: Special Topics (3 Credits)

This course provides opportunities to explore special interest questions and topics in philosophy that are not included in the standard curriculum. Students should consult each semester's schedule of classes for descriptions of that semester's offerings.

PHL-325: Philosophy of Law (3 Credits)

An examination of the nature of law from the leading philosophical perspectives. Readings include representative writers from the traditions of natural law, legal positivism, historical jurisprudence, and integrative legal studies. The course centers on law's commitment to establishing justice and an order integrally directed to the flourishing of the human good.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

Cross-listed with: ADJ-325.

PHL-333: Reasoning about Race: The Ontology and Ethics of Racial Justice (3 Credits)

This course investigates and considers the major philosophical answers to the following questions: Do races exist? If so, what are they? How does racial identity relate to ethnic identity? What is the moral status of race, and how should it figure into our general notions of justice and equality? How should race as a distinguishing or identifying factor between people be used to assess specific policies and institutions? Is there such a thing as institutional racism? If so, how does one identify such an institution?

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Defining the American Experience.

PHL-334: Environmental Justice (3 Credits)

This course explores global environmental issues from a philosophical and social justice perspective. The foundation of environmental justice is built on the premise that all people, regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and economic capacity have a right to a clean and safe environment, and access to adequate natural resources. Global implications of environmental injustices are explored in the context of various ethical frameworks, and reasonable policy initiatives to correct the disparities are discussed and evaluated.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Building Global Awareness.

Cross-listed with: ENV-334.

PHL-335: Philosophy and Art (3 Credits)

In this course we will investigate and seek answers for the following questions: What is art? What distinguishes it from other forms of symbolic activity and meaning making? What makes for great art? Does it require a certain relationship to beauty or truth? Or can great art be ugly and express falsehoods?

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-336: Free Will (3 Credits)

Are we free to choose the way we act, or is everything we do a product of our biology, culture, and environment? This course examines the evidence for and against free will addressing the various ways this question has been answered by philosophers past and present.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-337: The Enlightenment and its Critics (3 Credits)

This course examines some of the fundamental contributions of the European Enlightenment in the area of political and moral philosophy. We shall focus on such thinkers as: Montesquieu, Rousseau, Kant, Hume, Voltaire, and Jefferson. We shall examine the critical reactions they inspire including some of the great encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII. Among the themes we shall explore: liberalism, human rights, rationalism, republicanism, neoclassicism, and commerce.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-338: Women in Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course examines the philosophical work of such women philosophers as Simone de Beauvoir, Julia Kristeva, Angela Davis, Sissela Bok, Hannah Arendt, Elizabeth Anscombe, and Judith Butler, employing a variety of books, articles, and filmed interviews. The Feminist Revolution occupies a special place in this course, but the contributions of these key figures to the scrutiny of large issues of the day constitute most of the semester's work, viz. racism, violence, war, and globalization. Some selections argue a unique view while others fit comfortably within the canon of classical philosophy.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-339: Great Thinkers in Ancient Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course will focus on the thought and work of a particular philosopher in ancient philosophy.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-349: Great Thinkers in Medieval Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course will focus on the thought and work of a particular philosopher in medieval philosophy.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-350: Idealism (3 Credits)

Students will explore the development of the idealist movement from the 17th through the 19th Century.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-359: Great Thinkers in Modern Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course will focus on the thought and work of a particular philosopher of modern philosophy.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-360: Phenomenology (3 Credits)

This course will introduce students to the philosophical movement of Phenomenology - an influential research program that flourished in the early 20th century, and aimed to draw fundamental philosophical conclusions from careful consideration of the structures of experience and thought. Students will study the works of such thinkers as Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty among others.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-361: Existentialism (3 Credits)

This course introduces students to the philosophical movement of Existentialism. This movement was primarily concerned with various threats to the possibility of human freedom. It emphasized the concrete fact of human existence over abstract rational principles as the fundamental starting point for doing philosophy and solving the problems of human existence. Students will study the works of such thinkers as Kierkegaard, Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, Sartre and Camus among others.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-362: Analytic Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course introduces the student to the philosophical method and movement of Analytic philosophy, which flourished and became predominant in Anglophone circles during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The movement emphasized the utilization of linguistic analysis and logical argumentation as the only proper starting point for the solution of the perennial problems of philosophy. Students will study the works of such thinkers as Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Ayer, Carnap, Quine and Kripke among others.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-369: Great Thinkers in Contemporary Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course will focus on the thought and work of a particular philosopher of contemporary philosophy.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-399: Special Topics (3 Credits)

This course provides opportunities to explore special interest questions and topics in philosophy that are not included in the standard curriculum. Students should consult each semester's schedule of classes for descriptions of that semester's offerings.

PHL-435: Topics in Philosophy of Science (3 Credits)

This course examines various topics at the intersection of philosophy and science such as: the Copernican revolution, creationism versus evolutionism, and realism and anti-realism.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-439: Topics in Ancient Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course provides opportunities to explore special interest questions and topics in ancient philosophy that are not included in the standard curriculum.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-449: Topics in Medieval Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course provides opportunities to explore special interest questions and topics in medieval philosophy that are not included in the standard curriculum.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-450: Metaphysics (3 Credits)

This course introduces students to fundamental questions about human existence and what it means to be human. Metaphysical questions are taken up, e.g., the mind-body problem, consciousness, freedom, identity, personhood, along with some ethical and socio-political applications.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-459: Topics in Modern Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course provides opportunities to explore special interest questions and topics in modern philosophy that are not included in the standard curriculum.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-460: Epistemology (3 Credits)

An inquiry into the human capacity to know. Sensation, perception, intuition, imagination, understanding, and reason are all examined as potential sources of human cognition. A wide range of philosophers are drawn upon in the individual inquiries into these cognitive faculties.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: Engaging Creative, Aesthetic and Spiritual Experience.

PHL-469: Topics in Contemporary Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course provides opportunities to explore special interest questions and topics in contemporary philosophy that are not included in the standard curriculum.

Fulfills Core Requirement in Philosophy.

Theme: What is Western Heritage?-Ancient and Modern.

PHL-490: Senior Seminar Capstone (3 Credits)

This course will vary in its particular subject from year to year and provide a summative experience for those in the major. Students will be required to write and defend a major paper. Themes and skills of both the major and the University Core will be addressed and links will be made to the Core philosophy course PHL-225: Quest for the Good Life. Open to majors in their senior year. Others admitted with permission of department chair.

PHL-499: Independent Study (3-6 Credits)

3-6 Credits Course work arranged for majors to pursue avenues of learning outside the existing offerings of the department.