UIC PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

SPRING 2022 COURSE BROCHURE

UIC LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

Philosophy

All classes are in-person unless otherwise specified.

PHIL 100: Introduction to Philosophy
The course is intended to introduce students to some basic problems in Philosophy: for example, whether we have free choice, whether there is a moral standard that everyone should adhere to, whether God exists, and whether we can know anything about anything. Along the way, students will develop their ability to read critically and think critically. *(Gen. Ed.: This course satisfies the Individual and Society requirement.)*
Professor Georgette Sinkler | MW 1-1:50 PM
Discussion sections: F 12-12:50 PM or 1-1:50 PM

PHIL 101: Critical Thinking (Async Section Available)
Critical thinking will enable you to better understand, evaluate, and defend the beliefs that make up your worldview, as well as the competing beliefs offered by others. We will learn how to analyze, evaluate and criticize arguments. We will then apply these skills to various forms of reasoning offered in academic and non-academic contexts. These are the skills you need to do well in college and to ace tests like the MCAT and the GRE. *(Gen. Ed.: This course satisfies the Individual and Society requirement.)*
-In-person section: Professor John Whipple | MW 11-11:50 AM
Discussion sections: F 9-9:50 AM or 10-10:50 AM
-Online Asynchronous section: Professor TBD; please note, there will be synchronous discussion sections (set around student preferences)

PHIL 102: Introductory Logic (Async Section Available)
Information is all around you. It is stored in books, on computers, in the rings of a tree, in your brain. Logic is the study of the most basic property of information: that you can put pieces of information together to make a new piece of information. This process is called inference and it is at the heart of what it means to be a thinker. In logic, we study inference by establishing precise rules for what makes a good inference. In this course you will learn principles of inference that will be useful to you in any activity that requires thought. You will improve your ability to make and evaluate arguments, and you will gain a greater appreciation for precision in language. *(Gen. Ed.: Natural World – No Lab course; also fulfills LAS Quantitative Reasoning requirement.)*
-**In-person section: Professor Justin Vlasits | MW 10-10:50 AM**
Discussion sections: F 10-10:50 AM, 11-11:50 AM, 12-12:50PM, or 1-1:50PM
-Online Asynchronous section: Professor TBD; please note, there will be synchronous discussion sections (set around student preferences)

PHIL 103: Introduction to Ethics
Doing the right thing is often a matter of figuring out what the right thing to do is. This class develops the skills to make and reflect on hard ethical decisions. Students will explore and discuss a set of cases describing moral dilemmas that teachers and school administrators can face in the course of their work. We will also read about and practice various strategies and methods of moral reasoning. Although the focus makes the class particularly suited to those considering a career in education, the skills developed will help facing all sorts of moral dilemmas. *(Gen. Ed: Counts towards Individual and Society General Education credit)*
Professor Tony Laden | MW 12-12:50 PM
Discussion Sections: F 9-9:50AM, 10-10:50 AM

PHIL 106: What is Religion? (Same as RELS 106)
Why are people religious? Should they be religious? Just what is religion anyway? And what is its function in society, or in our individual lives? We'll explore these questions from many different angles; students will be encouraged to develop their own views and argue for those views. *(Gen. Ed.: This course satisfies the Individual and Society requirement.)*
Professor Sam Fleischacker | MW 11-11:50 AM
Discussion Sections: F 10-10:50AM, 11-11:50 AM

PHIL 113: Philosophy in the Information Age
Study philosophy through an exploration of ethical, epistemological, and metaphysical implications of and questions arising from the use of digital technology. Examples may be taken from Big Data, social media and autonomous technology.*(Gen. Ed: This course satisfies Understanding the Individual and Society requirement.)*
Professor Rachel Goodman | MW 11-11:50 AM
Discussion sections: F 12-12:50 PM, 1-1:50 PM

PHIL 115: Death (Async Section Available)
There are few certainties in life, but one of them is that it ends. You, and everyone you have ever met, will one day die. What does this mean for us? In this course, we take a philosophical approach to death. We ask questions like: Is immortality possible? Would immortality be desirable? How should I feel about my own death? How should I feel about the death of other people? How should the knowledge that I will die affect how I live? *(Gen Ed: This course satisfies the Understanding the Individual and Society requirement.)*
-I**n-person section: Professor Aidan Gray | TR 11-11:50 AM**
Discussion sections: F 10, 11, 12 or 1
-Online Asynchronous section: Professor TBD; please note, there will be synchronous discussion sections (set around student preferences)

PHIL 116: Biomedical Ethics
Moral issues as they arise in medical contexts, including such topics as abortion, euthanasia, paternalism, allocation of medical resources, and psychiatric issues.
Professor TBD | TR 8-9:15 AM

PHIL 201: Theory of Knowledge
Basic issues concerning knowledge, such as knowledge of the external world, other minds, scientific laws, and necessary truths. Course Information: Prerequisite(s): One non-logic course in philosophy; or consent of the instructor.
Professor TBD | TR 2-3:15 PM

PHIL 202: Philosophy of Psychology
Almost everyone agrees that we have minds and we have bodies. What's less clear is exactly how our minds and bodies are related. Is there really just one thing with two ways of describing it? Or are there two very different things that may or may not interact with each other? We'll look at a range of answer to questions concerning the relation between mind and body. We will also focus on questions concerning individual senses from both a scientific and a philosophical perspective. Prerequisite(s): One course in philosophy; or junior or senior standing in the physical, biological, or social sciences.
Professor Rachel Goodman | MW 9-9:50 AM
Discussion sections: F 8-8:50 AM, 9-9:50 AM

PHIL 203: Metaphysics
Metaphysics is the study of the most fundamental questions about the way things are. We will investigate issues of possibility, necessity, essence, and possible worlds. We ask questions like: Is it possible for a mathematical truth to be false? Could I have been a Penguin? What are the essential properties of ordinary individuals such as people, cats, trees, and tables? Prerequisite: One non-logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.
Professor TBD | TR 3:30-4:45

PHIL 204: Introduction to the Philosophy of Science
Science is our best source of knowledge of the world and how it works, but what is the nature of that knowledge and its reliability? We will address questions like: What is science? What is the scientific method? How reliable is the knowledge granted by science? How do fallible, sometimes irrational scientists generate reliable knowledge? Prerequisite: One non-logic course in philosophy; or junior/senior standing in the physical/biological/social sciences, or consent of the instructor.
Professor Nicholas Huggett | TR 2-2:50 PM
Discussion Sections: F 10-10:50 AM, 11-11:50 AM

PHIL 221: Ancient Philosophy II: Aristotle and His Successors
This course will introduce Aristotle's philosophy by examining his conceptions of what it is to be a human being and of what it is to live a good human life. We will consider questions such as: What is happiness, and how do we achieve it? What is the relationship between being happy and being good? How do we become good? What is the relationship between thought and action? What role do non-rational sources of motivation play in the life of a rational animal? Our focus will be Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, but we will read excerpts from his Metaphysics, Physics, and De Anima ('On the Soul') along the way and consider some Stoic views on these issues as time allows. Prerequisite(s): One non-logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.
Professor Will Small | TR 11-12:15 PM

PHIL 227: Continental Philosophy 1: Phenomenology and Existentialism
Existentialism is both highly theoretical and deeply and directly aimed at questions about the human condition that arise for all of us. Philosophers working in the Existentialist tradition confront topics like freedom, anxiety, death, and the absurdity of life, seeking both to understand the source of these features of human existence and what they imply about how to live fully and well given our limitations. In this course we will look at a range of Existentialist philosophers, including Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Camus. Among other works, we will read Camus' novel The Plague, which depicts and reflects upon just the kind of disruption we have all lived through during the COVID pandemic. The course will also offer an introduction to Phenomenology, a philosophical movement that lays much of the methodological and theoretical groundwork for later Existential thought. The readings in the course can be difficult, but the issues addressed are familiar to everyone. Some of the thought is provocative, or depressing, but even if you do not accept it in the end, it raises important questions which are worth asking. Together we will work through the difficult, theoretical parts of the reading, and critically evaluate the claims about the nature of human life and how it should be lived.
Professor Marya Schechtman | TR 12:30-1:45 PM

PHIL 230: Ethics
Survey of major topics in ethical theory and political philosophy. Emphasis varies. Course Information: 3 hours. May be repeated if topics vary. Approval to repeat course granted by the department. Prerequisite(s): One non-logic course in philosophy; or consent of the instructor. Recommended background: PHIL 103 or PHIL 109 or PHIL 112 or PHIL 116. Class Schedule Information: To be properly registered, students must enroll in one Discussion/Recitation and one Lecture.
Professor TBD | MWF 9-9:50 AM

PHIL 232: Sex Roles: Moral and Political Issues (Same as GWS 232)
Why do we have female birth control, but no male birth control? What does it mean to say that gender is "socially constructed"? Can words really be oppressive? In this course we will touch on these and other questions as we review key debates in feminist philosophy, with the aim of developing a deeper philosophical understanding of both gender and gendered forms of injustice.
Professor Annette Martin | TR 2-3:15 PM

PHIL 299: Indian Thought
A topic-based course introducing students to themes discussed over thousands of years of philosophy done in the Indian subcontinent. Topics to be discussed are likely to include saṃsāra, dukkha, anekāntavāda, karma, dharma, anuvrata, advaita, bodhi, mokṣa/nirvāna. No prior knowledge of Indian philosophy or any Indian languages will be assumed. Prerequisite: One course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.
Professor Niranjana Warrier | MW 4:30-5:45 PM

PHIL 300: Fundamentals of Philosophical Discourse
Writing is fun! It is enjoyable to express interesting ideas clearly. The problem for most of us is that we can't express ourselves as effectively as we'd like, so that writing becomes a source of frustration. This course will help you to become a clear, precise, and more confident writer. Prereq(s): Major in philosophy; junior+ standing; departmental approval.
Professor Georgette Sinkler | MW 9:30-10:45 AM

Questions? Need advice about courses?
Contact:
-Your favorite instructor
-Director of Undergraduate Studies
Professor Will Small
wsmall@uic.edu
-Departmental Advisor Albert Hernandez
ahern093@uic.edu

PHIL 410: Introduction to Formal Logic
This course will teach formal methods and concepts for use in philosophy: including set theory, probability theory, computability, and issues of soundness and completeness in logic and arithmetic.
Professor Nicholas Huggett | TR 3:30-4:45 PM

PHIL 423: Studies in Early Modern Philosophy
The problem of evil is one of the most formidable challenges facing traditional theism. How could a God that is all-knowing, all-powerful, and completely good allow something like a pandemic to occur that kills hundreds of thousands of people? In this course we will study different historical treatments of the problem of evil, with a focus on three figures from the modern period: Nicolas Malebranche, Pierre Bayle, and G. W. Leibniz. However, we will begin the course by looking at medieval figure Moses Maimonides' fascinating approach to the problem of evil, and near the end of the seminar we will consider Voltaire's famous criticisms of traditional rationalist responses to the problem. We will conclude the course by looking selections from a recent monograph by Jill Graper Hernandez: Early Modern Women and the Problem of Evil: Atrocity and Theodicy. As we consider these figures' remarks on the problem of evil, we will try to discern the extent to which particular figures' approaches to the problem of evil are grounded in their broader epistemological and metaphysical commitments. We will also be paying careful attention to some of the interpretive challenges we face when trying to make sense of difficult texts like Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed, Bayle's Historical and Critical Dictionary, and Leibniz's Theodicy.
Professor John Whipple | MW 9:30-10:45 AM

PHIL 432: God & Morality
What's the relationship between belief in God and morality? Does morality depend on a belief in God? (Is it true, as Dostoevsky said, that if there's no God, everything is permitted?). If not, is there anything that a belief in God might add to morality? We'll consider these questions, first, in the work of Immanuel Kant, who kept morality and religion largely apart from one another, and afterwords in the writing of some contemporary Christian philosopher, especially Robert Adams, who presents a theistic ethics in his book FINITE AND INFINITE GOODS.
Professor Sam Fleischacker | M 1:00 - 3:30PM

PHIL 433: Topics in Social/Political Philosophy
John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*, published in 1971, is arguably the most important work of political philosophy published in the last century. It still drives much of the debate in political philosophy. It is also an elegant piece of philosophy, unfolding a single argument over 500 pages. This class will spend all semester working through Rawls's work, providing students a chance to understand both its details and its sweep. (Prerequisite: A Philosophy class at the 200 level or approval of the instructor.)
Professor Anthony Laden | MW 9:30-10:45 AM