LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

Philosophy

Spring 2025 Courses

PHIL 100: Introduction to Philosophy
The course will provide a general introduction to some of the central problems in philosophy. For example, what do we know, and how do we know it? Does a supremely perfect being exist? Do we have free will? What is the nature of morality? Readings will be from classic and contemporary sources. *Gen. Ed.: Individual & Society*
Prof. Georgette Sinkler | MW 11AM
Discussion Sections: F 11AM, 12PM

PHIL 100: Introduction to Philosophy— Philosophy and the Environment
Human beings are both a product of and a dominant influence on the physical and biological world we live in. What can we learn about ourselves by understanding our relation to the rest of our world? What implications does this relationship have for how human societies should be organized? Should human beings care about the earth itself and the non-human life on it? We will discuss topics like global warming, human-caused mass extinction, and the role of disease in human biological and cultural evolution.
Gen. Ed.: Individual & Society
Instructor TBD | Online ASYNCH
Online Discussion Sections: T 4PM, W 4PM, R 7PM

PHIL 101: Critical Thinking
Practical course designed to improve student reasoning skills useful for life, college coursework, and explicitly tested on standardized tests like MCAT, GRE, LSAT. Emphasis is on developing skill at evaluating, formulating and presenting arguments. *Gen. Ed.: Individual & Society*
Prof. John Whipple | MW 11AM
Discussion Sections: F 10AM, 11AM

Instructor TBD | Online ASYNCH
Online Discussion Sections | T 4PM, W 4PM, R 7PM

PHIL 102: Introductory Logic
What do designing an electrical circuit, solving a Sudoku puzzle, and writing a computer program have in common? They all use logic for information encoding and extraction. In this course, we will study the principles of propositional and first order logic to understand the concept of logical consequence and become better reasoners. Gen. Ed.: Natural World (No Lab). Satisfies LAS Quantitative Reasoning requirement
Zac Harmon | MW 10AM
Discussion Sections: F 8AM, 9AM, 10AM, 11AM

PHIL 110: Philosophy of Love and Sex
In this course, we will consider various kinds of love and the issues they raise for our lives. In the first half of the course, we will examine erotic or sexual love. We will also consider expressions of sexuality that occur outside the context of romantic love, like pornography and "casual sex." We will then move on to consider the unique forms of love involved in friendship, charity & the love of the divine.
Zac Harmon | MW 11AM
Discussion Sections: F 9AM, 10AM, 11AM, 12PM

PHIL 115: Death
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.: Individual & Society*
Instructor TBD | Online ASYNCH
Online Discussion Sections: T 4PM, W 4PM, R 7PM

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.
Instructor TBD | TR 8-9:15AM

PHIL 131/ED 131: Educational Ethics
A case-based class exploring strategies and approaches for thinking well about hard ethical questions that arise in the course of classroom teaching. 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.: Individual & Society OR Understanding US Society*
Prof. Anthony Laden | MW 11AM
Discussion Sections F 11AM, 12PM

PHIL 201: Theory of Knowledge
Basic issues concerning knowledge, such as knowledge of the external world, other minds, scientific laws, and necessary truths.
Prof. Georgette Sinkler | MW 1PM
Discussion Sections F 1PM, 2PM

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 different things that may or may not interact with each other? In this course, we will look at a range of answers to questions about the relation between mind and body. We will then ask whether and how the nature of conscious experience should impact our answers to questions about the relationship between our minds and our bodies.
Prof. Rachel Goodman | MW 9AM
Discussion Sections F 8AM, 9AM

PHIL 203: Metaphysics
Introduction to metaphysics via discussion of selected topics: existence, essence, identity over time, the self, agency, free will.
Prof. Will Small | TR 3:30-4:45PM

For any questions, please contact:
Director of Undergraduate Studies
Professor Will Small
wsmall@uic.edu

PHIL 204: Intro to the Philosophy of Science
The nature of scientific observation, explanation, and theories; confirmation of laws and theories; the relation between the physical and social sciences.
Instructor TBD | MW 3-4:15 PM

PHIL 220/CL 220: Plato and his Predecessors
What is a good life? What is the world like? How does the human world relate to the divine? These fundamental questions occupied the earliest Greek philosophers, from Thales to the Sophists, Socrates, and Plato as well as ancient historians, tragedians, and even doctors. In this course, we will do philosophy with them, focusing on the themes of law (*nomos*) and nature (*phusis*).
Prof. Justin Vlasits | TR 9:30-10:45AM

PHIL 224: Kant and his Predecessors
This course will serve as an introduction to two of the most important philosophers of the modern period, David Hume and Immanuel Kant, along with, at the beginning, a brief look at Leibniz. Topics will include skepticism, personal identity, causation, free will, the basis of morality, and the limits of reason.
Prof. Samuel Fleischacker | TR 11AM-12:15PM

PHIL 230: Ethics and Literature
Questions about how to live are central to the study of ethics. Similar questions are central to literature. Are works of literature, then, works of ethics? In this course, we'll investigate what makes a text in philosophical ethics "ethics," paying close attention to the ways arguments are designed to convince. We'll then consider if and how various works of literature try to convince. We'll conclude with a study of the philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch: can a writer working within and between ethics and literature help us clarify both what keeps the two disciplines apart, and what brings them together?
Alex Sarappo | MW 9:30-10:45AM

PHIL 403: Metaphysics: Identity and Change
Things (including people) can change a great deal over time. If things change too much, however, or in the wrong way, we don't say that they are different but that they no longer exist. What makes the difference between changing and ceasing to exist? Is the answer the same for objects, animals, and people? We will consider these topics by asking questions like: What does it mean to exist? What does it mean to be the same thing at two different times? Can a person change so much they become someone else?
Prof. Marya Schechtman | M 1-3:30PM

PHIL 410: Introduction to Formal Logic
In contemporary philosophy much use is made of technical machinery of various sorts. Many topics in metaphysics, epistemology, and the philosophy of science, for example, rely on a familiarity with tools from logic, mathematics, probability theory, etc. In this course we will focus on developing a good understanding of these tools.
Prof. Nick Huggett | TR 12:30-1:45PM

PHIL 429: Skepticism in China, Greece, and India.
The idea that we as human beings do not know as much about the world as we think we do has been expressed in many ways in cultures around the world. But the thinkers of ancient China, Greece, and India went further, developing an entire philosophy around this idea. In this seminar, we will engage in close reading of Zhuangzi, Sextus Empiricus, and Nagarjuna both on their own and in conversation with one another. Our goal is both to understand and to assess different expressions of skepticism, coming to a better appreciation of what can be known about the world.
Prof. Justin Vlasits | TR 12:30-145PM

PHIL 432: Kant's Moral Philosophy
Can morality be derived from reason alone? This class will examine Kant's moral philosophy in depth, considering its basic principles and view of human motivation, as well as its implications for everyday life, politics and religion. Readings from Kant's lectures on moral philosophy, his *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, and his writings on politics and religion.
Prof. Samuel Fleischacker | T 3:30-6PM

Prerequisites:
202 & 204: One non-logic course in philosophy; or junior or senior standing in the physical, biological, or social sciences; or consent of the instructor
All other 200-level courses: One non-logic course in philosophy, or consent of the instructor
410: PHIL 210, or consent of the instructor
All other 400-level courses: One 200-level course in philosophy, or consent of the instructor