



# Philosophy Courses Spring 2023

Compared to other majors, philosophy majors rank at the very top on graduate admissions tests for law school, business school, and others. Their median mid-career salary is above **\$80,000** nationally. IU Philosophy graduates have flourishing careers in government, public policy, education, media, medicine, law, business, & more.



Philosophy raises questions about the most familiar things in our lives. A critical examination of our deepest beliefs, it emphasizes questioning assumptions, arguing logically, and thinking things through as completely as possible. Philosophers ask:

- **What should we do? How should we live?** (ethics, social and political philosophy)
- **What kind of world do we live in? What kinds of things are we?** (metaphysics, philosophy of mind)
- **How do we know these and other things? How can we reason better?** (epistemology, logic)

Philosophy teaches skills that are central in virtually any career. Philosophy students learn to: ask intelligent questions, define issues precisely, construct and criticize arguments, expose hidden assumptions, think creatively and independently, see problems from multiple perspectives, and write and speak with precision, coherence, and clarity.

Philosophical training provides the flexibility and perspective needed in a rapidly changing world.

## GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS:

Gen Ed A & H: P103, P105, P106, P141, P145, P150, P201, P211, P240, P242, P246  
 Gen Ed World Cultures: P201  
 Gen Ed Natural & Math Sciences: P251  
 COLL (CASE) Arts and Humanities: P103, P105, P106, P141, P145, P150, P201, P211, P240, P242, P246, P251, P300, P332, P470  
 COLL (CASE) Global Civilizations and Cultures: P201  
 COLL (CASE) Diversity in the United States: P103  
 College Intensive Writing: P300, P332

## PHIL- P103 Gender, Sexuality, and Race

Race, gender, and sexuality are categories that are deeply embedded in our everyday lives but that are extremely hard to think clearly about. This course takes a philosophical perspective on these social categories, asking questions like: what are race, gender, and sexuality? If any of them are socially constructed, does that make them less real? What is it to oppress a person along one of these dimensions? How does membership in these social categories affect our access to knowledge, and to being treated as knowledgeable? And why is it sometimes so hard for us to communicate across these social categories?

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,  
COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry,  
COLL (CASE) Diversity in the United States.

## PHIL- P105 Critical Thinking – Andrew Smith

The aim of this course is to explore common biases and mistakes in reasoning and to give you general tips and methods to help you reason better. We will address questions such as: what biases can prevent us from reasoning well and accurately assessing evidence? What is an argument, and how can we strengthen our arguments? What is evidence, and how should evidence increase or decrease our confidence in hypotheses? How can we improve the accuracy of our generalizations? What conditions allow us to infer that one event causes another? When the evidence we possess does not clearly favor one theory over another, how can we decide between them? To address these questions, I will help students master a variety of rules to improve reasoning. Mastering these rules also improves memory, concentration, and problem-solving skills.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,  
COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P106 Introduction to Problems of Philosophy: The World and Our Place in It – Andrew Smith**

This class is an introduction to key questions, tools, and concepts of philosophy: a discipline centered on fundamental questions about the world and our place in it and practiced by means of clear argument and dialogue. We will address questions about the existence of God, the nature of justice, morality, and happiness, and questions about civil disobedience and reparations for historical injustices. We will also address questions about the value of knowledge and truth, relativism and skepticism, the nature and existence of free will, and the place of trust in our politically polarized society. Students will vote on readings for the last few weeks of the semester that address additional philosophical topics, such as the nature of the mind and self. Special focus will be paid to improving your ability to recognize and formulate arguments and helping you to create your own philosophical theories and definitions.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P107 Philosophy and the Environment**

This course introduces students to philosophical questions about the natural environment and our relation to it. We begin with a survey of United States environmental laws with an eye towards identifying philosophically-significant concepts underpinning them. We ask, "What is nature?", "Where, if at all, is nature to be found today?", and "What, if anything, is valuable about nature?" On this last question, we analyze the concepts of biodiversity and ecosystem stability, investigating whether either is valuable. We then focus on whether there are specific actions and attitudes we should take towards nature, with a focus on issues of environmental racism, responsibilities to future generations, the intersection of animal rights and environmental ethics, bioengineering, the aesthetic appreciation of nature, and the viability of environmental restoration. In addition to the foregoing, this course aims to improve students' ability to engage critically with complex ideas, interpret others charitably, and express one's own thoughts clearly.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry,

### **PHIL- P141 Introduction to Ethics, Theories, and Problems: Moral Theory and its Critics – John Robison**

Consider ordinary, moral disagreements: you and I disagree about whether it's okay to eat meat, whether Jamie was disrespectful, whether Quincy is viciously self-centered, whether some outcome was just, or about whether the nurse is morally responsible. In such cases, we don't merely disagree -- we exchange reasons and defend our positions. To that extent, we regularly (perhaps implicitly) invoke and evaluate moral theory. Yet, some are skeptical about this practice: they argue that there are no objective moral truths about which to theorize, that moral theorizing is somehow

undermined by science, or that it's too idealized. This course invites students 1) to critically examine such challenges to moral theorizing, 2) to carefully assess purported theories of rightness, value, respect, virtue, justice, and responsibility, 3) to build upon and challenge their own moral outlooks by borrowing and repurposing insights from these theories, and 4) to morally evaluate specific practices, including protest, punishment, and the eating of nonhuman animals. Emphasis is given to cultivating the widely applicable skills of constructing, presenting, developing, evaluating, and revising arguments.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P145 Liberty and Justice – Matthew Adams**

This course will serve as an introduction to many of the most central questions of political philosophy. For instance, what is required for a state to be just and its citizens to be free? In exploring these questions, we will identify some theoretical tensions between justice, individual liberty, and equality. We will then bring this theoretical understanding into dialogue with some pressing political questions that arise in the contemporary US; for example, the legal regulation of pornography and the significance of racial discrimination in the criminal law. Texts will be drawn from a diverse array of philosophical traditions, including conservatism, feminism, liberalism, and Marxism.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P150 Elementary Logic**

When we formulate arguments to defend our beliefs or acquire new ones, we want the conclusions of our arguments to follow from the reasons we give for them, which logicians call premises. When this happens, the connection between our premises and our conclusion is strong. When an argument is what logicians call deductively valid, there is no case in which our premises are true and our conclusion is false. This means the connection between our premises and our conclusion is as strong as can be. In this course, we will learn symbolic, formal techniques that allow you to assess the deductive validity of a variety of arguments: the method of truth tables and the method of natural deduction, restricted to the region of logic known as propositional logic. These methods will help you assess the deductive validity of many arguments you encounter in your daily life, and thereby help you reason better. Mastering these symbolic, mechanical methods helps to improve memory, concentration, and problem-solving skills.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P201 Ancient Greek Philosophy – Katy Meadows**

This course focuses on philosophy in the classical Greek world. It is structured around two sets of questions: one concerned with virtue and the good life, and the other

concerned with natural science and metaphysics. We'll begin with Socrates, who devoted his life to a search for ethical understanding – and who was willing to die to avoid doing something that he thought was unjust. Socrates's example raises questions about the nature of virtue and its role in a good human life. We'll then turn to the pre-Socratics, who aimed to explain basic features of the universe like coming-to-be and change. The bulk of the course will examine the sophisticated and ambitious theories Plato and Aristotle developed in order to answer these two sets of questions. We'll close with some highlights of Hellenistic thought, including defenses of skepticism, hedonism, and the claim that death is not to be feared.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,  
Gen Ed World Cultures,  
COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry,  
COLL (CASE) Global Civilizations and Cultures,  
College Intensive Writing.

### **PHIL- P211 Early Modern Philosophy: Descartes through Kant – Kate Abramson**

If there's one phrase that could capture the early modern period in philosophy, it would be: "and then, everything changed." From conceptions of the mind, to moral and political philosophy, to theories of knowledge-- all that had been taken for granted was called into question. You might have heard of some of the philosophers involved in these debates: e.g. Rene Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, David Hume. Others you probably haven't heard of: e.g. Margaret Cavendish, Elizabeth of Bohemia, Mary Astell, Francis Bacon. Still others you may have heard of, but not realized that they wrote important philosophical works—e.g. Galileo. Equally various were the ways in which these philosophers argued for their views. They wrote brief arguments, systematic Treatises, meditations, utopias, miscellany, and even what may well be the very first work of science fiction. This is a survey class. We will read many philosophers, on many topics, with the goals of understanding not only the details of their arguments, but also the ways in which those arguments changed forever the framework for debates in philosophy.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,  
COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry,  
College Intensive Writing.

### **PHIL-P240 Business & Morality**

This introductory-level course will examine an array of ethical issues relevant to business. The topics likely to be covered include: deception, conflicts of interest, workplace issues (diversity in the workplace, sexual harassment, free speech, privacy, safety and other labor issues), exploitation (of workers, of patrons), corporate social responsibility (for example concerning the environment), and whistleblowing. Of particular interest are cases where two important values come into conflict, for example, workers' privacy vs. public safety (illustrated in the case of the suicidal Germanwings pilot). We will consider questions both abstractly and concretely. For instance, we will ask questions such as: What

is it to manipulate people? What is objectionable about doing so? What differentiates objectionable manipulation from permissible attempts to change people's minds or habits? And we will also ask questions such as: When, and what sort, of advertising is objectionably manipulative? What sorts of restrictions on advertising are appropriate? When are high-pressure sales tactics beyond the pale? Lecture/discussion format. No prerequisites.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,  
COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P242 Applied Ethics**

Through critically analyzing a variety of case studies, students will develop their ethical reasoning skills and learn to engage in respectful, productive ethical discourse about controversial topics that span a wide variety of disciplines. Students will be provided methodological tools for analysis that will help with identifying the morally relevant features of a case, asking good questions that get at the core moral issues that the case raises, brainstorming creative solutions to problems, applying theoretical moral considerations to a case, and formulating arguments to answer pressing ethical questions. Students will also practice participating in collective ethical inquiry and discussion and will learn how to productively engage in conversations about difficult ethical topics.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,  
COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P246 Introduction to Philosophy and Art**

Art is valuable to us. We seek out museums when we visit new cities, or beautifully landscaped parks and gardens, because our experiences of such places and the objects they contain bring us pleasure, enliven our senses, and offer us new kinds of experiences. A major question we ask in the philosophy of art is how our engagements with works of art help facilitate a deeper understanding of ourselves, our societies, and our world in general. Thus we assume that it is possible that through our engagement with works of art we come to *know* new things about ourselves and our world. But what kind of knowledge is it that we acquire through experiencing works of art? And how is it that these artworks convey this knowledge to us? How do social and cultural factors impact how and what we come to know through art? We will seek out answers to these and related questions in both classical and contemporary philosophical work on art.

Gen Ed Arts and Humanities,  
COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P251 Intermediate Symbolic Logic – Sharon Berry**

This course will build on the treatment of classical first-order logic in P250, by exploring how to formalize statements involving identity and definite descriptions. We will also study some properties of formal theories and some elementary set theory. Other topics such as modal logic (an extension of classical logic that captures reasoning about possibility and necessity) and paraconsistent logic (a variant

on classical logic that allows true contradictions!) may be covered depending on time and student interest. This course presupposes P250 or the equivalent. It will be relevant and beneficial to students who are interested in the scope and limits of formal systems in general, as well as in metaphysics, formal semantics, philosophical logic, set theory, and the foundations of programming languages.

Gen Ed Natural & Mathematical Sciences,  
COLL (CASE) Natural & Mathematical Sciences Breadth of Inquiry,  
COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P300 Philosophical Methods and Writing – Adam Leite**

This course focuses on skills in philosophical writing, argumentation, and research. We consider how philosophers defend their views, and students practice incorporating various argumentative strategies into their writing. Students meet in pairs each week with an advanced graduate student to discuss their own philosophical work. The course topic is personal identity. What makes you the same person as the child you once were? Sameness of body? Continuity of memory or of other psychological traits? Do imaginary scenarios of "body-swapping" show sameness of body to be irrelevant? Do you become a different person if you lose your memory or undergo radical personality change? This topic quickly expands from metaphysics to questions in philosophy of mind and ethics. It connects with our most fundamental concern about what it is to be a person and raises important questions about the role of imagination and "thought experiments" in philosophical methodology. Strongly recommended: at least one course in philosophy. Primarily intended for majors and minors in philosophy.

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry,  
College Intensive Writing.

### **PHIL- P332 Feminism and Value – Kate Abramson**

Feminism, the old saying goes, is the radical notion that women are people, and should be treated like people. But what exactly does that mean? We'll spend a semester philosophically exploring this question, and its necessary concomitant, namely—what is it to fail to treat women as people, or to treat women as less than full persons or second-class persons? This class will focus on philosophical analyses of feminist questions in the second and third waves of feminism. This period begins roughly with Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* and extends to the present day. The class will be organized by topic, rather than historically. Our topics will include: the content, meaning and relationship between gender and/or sex; psychoanalytic and psychological analyses of sexism; the complicated relationship among sexism, feminism, and sexuality (including, but not limited to, issues of sexual orientation); and the intersections and interactions amongst sexism, heterosexism, classism and racism.

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry,  
College Intensive Writing.

### **PHIL- P335 Phenomenology and Existentialism – David Sussman**

An overview of the main problems, themes, and foundational texts of Phenomenology and Existentialism, as well as intensive study of the writings of several of the most prominent thinkers in these movements. Selected readings from Buber, Camus, de Beauvoir, Heidegger, Husserl, Jaspers, Kierkegaard, Marcel, Merleau-Ponty, Nietzsche, Sartre, and others.

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **PHIL- P470 History of Philosophy: Special Topics: Consciousness – Tim O'Connor**

As you read these words, you are having *conscious* thoughts, accompanied by sensory experience in several modalities, and feelings of various kinds. Philosophers commonly say that a particular state (of feeling sad, say) is conscious if there is something it is like for one to be in that state. Our own consciousness is something we are (seemingly) intimately acquainted with, yet characterizing its general nature is deeply challenging. We will spend much of the term considering and assessing the ways that philosophers (and more recently, scientists) have sought to do so. We will also examine the relationship between consciousness and cognition and the role of consciousness in willed action.

COLL (CASE) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.

### **HON- H233 Philosophy and Literature– Sharon Berry**

This course will ask philosophical questions about literature and read some works of literature through a philosophical lens. We'll explore philosophical questions like the following. What is literature? What makes interpretive claims about fiction (like the claim that Sherlock Holmes had two nostrils) correct or incorrect? Are there objective facts about beauty and literary merit (and what functions do discussions of literary merit serve)? What is the relationship between aesthetic values and other values? For example, does engaging with great works of art provide some kind of special (and especially valuable) knowledge that's impossible to communicate in other terms? Can works of art be morally misguided in a way that counts as an aesthetic flaw?

We will also read and discuss literary works by authors such as Borges, Proust, Nabokov and Wilde from a philosophical point of view.

### **LAMP- M302 Ethics and Responsible Management- John Robison**

This course critically examines the ethical dimensions of management within the public and private sectors. Our main focus is on questions about *conflicts of values* and *accountability* as they arise in management contexts. Consider, first, conflicts of values. How—morally—ought concern for integrity, the environment, diversity, safety, privacy and the proper regulation of information and data, and religious freedom inform an organization's practices? Since these concerns can compete with other organizational goals, how should managers navigate such conflicts of values? Consider, now, accountability. What is it to be accountable for a bad outcome? Who specifically within an organization is accountable for which outcomes and why? Are *organizations*—rather than some individual(s) within them—ever accountable for bad outcomes? Throughout the course, we will engage with philosophical texts, case studies, and codes of conduct used by actual organizations. *Prerequisite: completion of the English composition requirement.*

### **PHIL- X473 Internship in Philosophy**

Department approval required. Designed to provide academic credit for an internship within the Philosophy Department or in a professional work setting elsewhere. (The department has an undergraduate internship available.) Credit hours tied to the number of internship hours worked. S/F grading. Does not count toward the major in philosophy. Interested students should contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies at [phildus@indiana.edu](mailto:phildus@indiana.edu).

### **PHIL- P498 Honors Thesis Directed Research**

First half of the honors thesis sequence. Training in skills necessary for original philosophical research. Goals are to achieve appropriate mastery over a body of philosophical material relevant to the honors thesis project, and to develop core ideas for a successful honors thesis. Required: Philosophy GPA of 3.5. Interested students should contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies at [phildus@indiana.edu](mailto:phildus@indiana.edu).

For more information, see our website: [philosophy.indiana.edu](http://philosophy.indiana.edu)

Join the Philosophy Circle email list to learn about all the discussions, events and other opportunities we offer.

Send an email to [phil-circle-l-subscribe@list.indiana.edu](mailto:phil-circle-l-subscribe@list.indiana.edu) to be added.



**Next Steps:** Enjoyed an introductory-level Philosophy course? Consider P201 Ancient Greek Philosophy or P211 Early Modern Philosophy (core historical courses offered once per year), P242 or P246, P250 Symbolic Logic, or any 300-level course.

For more information contact the Department of Philosophy at: [phil@indiana.edu](mailto:phil@indiana.edu)  
[www.philosophy.indiana.edu](http://www.philosophy.indiana.edu) ☺



**PHILOSOPHY**  
**THINK FOR YOURSELF.**