First Course in Philosophy -- What should you take?

Any of the following courses is a great introduction, whether you just want to try out philosophy and develop your own reasoning skills, or you want to major or minor in it. All courses involve a combination of lecture, discussion, and writing. *No prior experience in philosophy needed.*

**PHI 10 (HP) Introduction to Philosophy (multiple sections)** -- survey of central topics in philosophy (e.g., freedom & determinism; nature of mind; God; difference between knowledge and belief)

**PHI 12 (HP) What does it all mean? Life, Meaning and Philosophy CRN 23337 (TR 11:10-12:35) --** examines various approaches to the question of the meaning of life, and how this question connects with other important philosophical questions.

**PHI 14 (HP) Introduction to Ethics (multiple sections)** -- more focused than PHI 10; study of values; what it means to lead a good life; the nature of right and wrong; what justice is; the role of happiness in making moral choices.

**PHI 16 (HP) Philosophic Themes in Film CRN 22747 (TR 2:20-3:45) --** another good introduction to central topics in philosophy through explicit use of films such as *The Matrix, Memento, A.I.*, and *Crimes & Misdemeanors*. (An *optional* 1-credit enhancement, PHI 9F, is available for this course; contact the instructor, Prof. Karofsky.)

**PHI 92 (HP) Global Ethics CRN 22895 (MW 2:55-4:20) --** provides students with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the phenomenon of globalization by inviting them to reflect on its philosophical and ethical implications.

1-Credit Courses: start after President's Day

**PHI 5F Friendship 1 s.h. CRN 22759 (meets TR 10-11, for 10 weeks, 2/20-4/10) --**

Friendship is a crucial part of a good human life. But many puzzles arise: can it be one-sided, or does it have to be mutual? can it be shallow? Do friends have to be similar or can they be very different from one another? What is the value of friendship in the larger context of things we value (e.g., ambition, morality)? *No prior experience in philosophy required.*
PHI 9W Philosophy Studio: Writing a Philosophy Paper 1 s.h. CRN 24910 (meets TR 1-2 p.m., 3/1-4/28) – workshop style class where students work collaboratively with one another and instructor on how to write a philosophy paper and develop good analytical writing skills.

Other Courses

Most "higher number" philosophy courses do not presuppose prior familiarity with philosophy. If something grabs your interest, sign up for it!

PHI 120 (HP) Philosophy of Law (MWF 10:10-11:05 & MWF 12:50-1:45) -- studies major areas in the philosophy of law; the nature of law and its relation to morality and custom, and the proper limits of criminal and tort law.

PHI 130 (HP) Bioethics: Medicine and Morality CRN 24446 (MW 2:55-4:20 p.m.) -- An investigation of morality in traditional and modern practices of medicine. Meaning and value of health and disease, life and death will be explored. The course is good for students interested in ethics and in becoming healthcare professionals.

PHI 138 (HP) Ethics and Sustainability: Personal, Social and Corporate Responsibility CRN 24447 (M 5-7:50 p.m.) -- examines the ethical bases for duties to future generations, and for responsibilities to live, consume, and produce sustainably. The course combines philosophical readings with practical and concrete case studies.

PHI 143 Classical Modern Philosophy CRN 20254 (MW 12:50-2:15) -- Beginnings of modern science and consequent reconstructions in philosophy from the 16th century forward. Particular emphasis on Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Kant. Course is designed to help students develop competency in the oral presentation of philosophical ideas and arguments.

PHI 152 Scientific Reasoning CRN 24452 (MW 2:55-4:20 p.m.) – nature of evidence and argument in science; nature of statistical reasoning and causal reasoning, and relation between the two; ways scientific reasoning can go awry; how statistical reasoning can support decision-making under uncertainty. Case studies from a variety of real life contexts.

PHI 163 (HP) Philosophy of Religion CRN 24454 (TR 12:45-2:10) – Course explores three broad topics: extent of rational justification for belief in God; what, if anything, the fact of evil tells us about God’s nature; the nature of religious discourse.
PHI 165 Philosophy of Language CRN 24456 (TR 4:30-5:55) – How does language relate to the world? Course discusses nature of language and linguistic concepts like meaning, syntax, reference, truth and fiction.

PHI 180b Metaphysics CRN 24457 (TR 9:35-11 a.m.) -- How does one event cause another? When we talk of possible ways things might have turned out, does this mean there are other, possible, worlds? Might you have existed if your parents had not conceived for another two months? These are metaphysical questions, and this course will look at some of the ways philosophers have attempted to answer these, and other such questions.

Other Cool News!

There are three degree tracks in Philosophy to choose from:
- BA in Philosophy
- BS in Philosophy
- BA in Pre-health Studies with a concentration in Philosophy

Philosophy Department
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