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** -- survey of central topics in philosophy (e.g., freedom & determinism; nature of mind; God; difference between knowledge and belief). (midsemester course only; MW 4:30-6:30)

**PHI 14 (HP) Introduction to Ethics (multiple sections)** -- 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 15 (HP) Law, Philosophy and Public Life CRN 93582** (MF 11:15-12:40) This course is especially good if you are interested in pre-law, and satisfies a requirement for the Philosophy of Law minor.

**PHI 16 (HP) Philosphic Themes in Film** (multiple sections) -- a good introduction to central topics in philosophy through explicit use of films such as *The Matrix, Memento, A.I., Crimes & Misdemeanors* and others.

**PHI 25 (HP) Theories of Human Nature CRN 92261** (TR 4:30-5:55) -- a good introduction to central topics in philosophy: what is distinctive about human beings? that we are moral, seekers of knowledge, political animals? what's the connection between human nature and the natural world?

1-Credit Courses

**PHI 5F Insights: Friendship 1 s.h. CRN 93114** (meets TR 10-11, starting Oct. 6th) -- 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 5L Insights into Love 1 s.h. CRN 93144 (meets T 6-7:30) -- What does it mean to love? What does it mean to be loved? How might love be relevant to doing philosophy (“love of wisdom”)? This course seeks to understand these questions as well as provide some insights into the nature of love. **No credit for this course if you have already taken PHI 80. No prior experience in philosophy required.**

PHI 9Y, Philosophy and Yoga 1 s.h. CRN 92688 (M 2:55-4:20) – introduction to the philosophical underpinnings of Yoga and to key elements of its practice.

PHI 51D Dangerous Ideas 1 s.h. (W 4:30-6:30, starting October 5th) -- Ideas matter. Concepts such as cultural identity, the meaning of food, democracy, faith, race, freedom, gender have inspired social movements, shaped ways of life and political systems, and dramatically influenced the lives of individuals. Scientific ideas (such as evolution, species extinction, climate science) and skepticism about science also have power to shape our lives. Powerful ideas can be dangerous, generating turmoil and destabilizing the status quo, or supporting the status quo when change is needed, or creating unanticipated consequences. Each week a faculty member from a different department will explore a concept that has shaped human experience across time and space. The course is available only on a pass/D+/D/fail basis.

**Cross-Cultural Courses**

PHI 17 (CC) Introduction to Eastern Philosophy CRN 91044 (TR 12:45-2:10) -- surveys different types of non-Western philosophy, such as Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism.

PHI 103 (CC) Life, Death and Immortality CRN 91046 (TR 2:20-3:45) -- examines life, death and immortality across a range of western and nonwestern traditions.

**QR & WI Courses**

PHI 154 (QR) Introduction to Symbolic Logic CRN 92263 (MW 9:05-10:30)

PHI 141 (WI) Ancient and Medieval CRN 93665 (TR 2:20-3:45)

PHI 182K (WI) Selected Philosophers: Kant CRN 93666 (MW 12:50-2:15)

**Other Courses** -- see next page
Most "higher number" philosophy courses do not presuppose prior familiarity with philosophy. If something grabs your interest, sign up for it!

PHI 90 (HP) Contemporary Ethical Issues CRN 91045 (MW 2:55-4:20) -- examines contemporary topics, such as euthanasia, the ethics of marriage, abortion, corporate social responsibility, capital punishment, duties to future generations; topics vary.

PHI 92 (HP) Global Ethics CRN 93528 (MW 4:30–5:55) – 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.

PHI 130 (HP) Bioethics: Medicine and Morality CRN 93664 (MWF 10:10-11:05) – An investigation of moral theory and applied ethics in relation to the practice of medicine, and recent developments in biological science. Meaning and value of health and disease, life and death will be explored. The course will be especially helpful to philosophy majors or minors concentrating on ethics and to any students preparing to become healthcare professionals.

PHI 141 (WI) Ancient and Medieval CRN 93665 (TR 2:20-3:45) -- Historical survey of ancient and medieval philosophy, examining pre-Socratic philosophers, Plato, Aristotle, Hellenistic thinkers, and medieval writers. Course is designed to help students develop competency in the oral presentation of philosophical ideas and arguments.

PHI 154 (QR) Introduction to Symbolic Logic CRN 92263 (MW 9:05-10:30) – formal logic teaches skills for evaluating your own and others' reasoning. Also, great preparation for LSATs and other graduate entrance exams. (Required for PHI major.)

PHI 160 (HP) Philosophy and the Arts CRN 93529 (TR 9:35-11) – Are some works of art better than others? How does context shape how we understand and value artworks? Course explores how the various arts (music, dance, painting, sculpture, architecture, and more) relate to our experience of the world; and discusses philosophical theories of art in connection with examples of artwork in the various genres.

PHI 182K (WI) Selected Philosophers: Kant CRN 93666 (MW 12:50-2:15) – Was the Enlightenment a victory of reason over superstition, freedom over tyranny, science over religion? Critics claim the Enlightenment’s legacy is one of exploitation, dehumanization, and colonialism. In this course, we will examine the work of Immanuel Kant, one of the
Enlightenment’s chief spokesmen who argued that persons must be treated with dignity. This claim helped shape the Declaration of Independence, the Gettysburg Address, and the United Nations charter. We will see that Kant was ambivalent about the prospects for enlightenment, and anticipated many of its critics—even as he championed its values.

**Philosophy Programs**

**Major in Philosophy** -- there are three degree tracks in Philosophy to choose from:
- BA in Philosophy
- BS in Philosophy – allows you to combine Philosophy with a Professional, Technical or Scientific Program and to design an individualized program of study
- BA in Pre-health Studies with a concentration in Philosophy

**Minor in Philosophy** – there are several distinct programs; some are interdisciplinary:
- Philosophy Minor
- Philosophy of Law Minor
- Cognitive Science Minor
- Data Analysis & Scientific Reasoning Minor
- Philosophy, Society & Business Minor

Philosophy Department  
Heger Hall  
516-463-5612  
www.hofstra.edu/Academics/HCLAS/Philosophy