

PHILOSOPHY

College of Arts and Humanities
Philosophy Department

Program Description

The Philosophy Department offers a major and a minor in Philosophy and a minor in Religious Studies. The program provides a strong foundation in the history of Western thought and deals with a variety of ongoing philosophical and religious issues, tracing them from their origins in early Greek and other historical sources to current theories and disputes. The department offers a variety of courses in contemporary philosophy, including phenomenology and applied ethics. The department recognizes the importance of cultural diversity and through its course offerings addresses multicultural concerns.

Features

The faculty members of the Philosophy Department bring with them a deep interest in their subjects and together provide a wide spectrum of interests and expertise in the areas of both philosophy and religious studies. All of the faculty members hold their doctoral degrees from highly respected universities and are active in research and writing.

In scheduling classes, the department endeavors to provide sufficient course offerings to permit working students the opportunity to complete the major in a timely manner. For full-time students, courses necessary to fulfill the major are offered within a four-semester period.

Academic Advisement

Students should consult an advisor as early as possible to plan the most suitable combination of courses in advance.

Assessment

Students in the Philosophy program are involved in ongoing assessment. As part of the requirements of core courses, journals are required in addition to other written assignments such as research papers. The PHI 490 Seminar functions as a capstone experience in which work generated from previous courses in philosophy is reviewed to assist in determining the overall progress of the student in the Philosophy program.

Preparation

High school students are encouraged to take four years of English and courses in the humanities and sciences.

Transfer students should contact their Advising Center or the CSU Dominguez Hills Philosophy Department to identify appropriate lower-division major/minor preparatory courses.

Graduation With Honors

An undergraduate student may be a candidate for graduation with Honors in Philosophy provided that he or she meets the following criteria:

1. A minimum of 36 units in residence at CSU Dominguez Hills;
2. A minimum grade point average of 3.5 in all courses used to satisfy the upper-division requirements in the major;
3. Four upper-division courses, including PHI 490 Seminar, taken in the Philosophy Department.

Career Possibilities

The study of Philosophy provides students with the mental tools and skills necessary for clear thinking and analysis. This training provides students with the skills to understand the intricacies of virtually any area chosen as a basis for livelihood. For those students interested in doing graduate work in the field or in closely related fields, the major offers a well-rounded preparation for more advanced studies. Furthermore, the bachelor's degree in Philosophy provides quality preparation for advanced studies in fields such as law, medicine, and theology, among others. Our majors have found careers in business consulting, law, teaching, higher education, counseling, financial advising, public service, seminary, humanitarian organizations, and environmental organizations. Students might also consider Philosophy as a "second major," providing a balance for their primary major, be it in the humanities or the sciences.

Undergraduate Programs

Bachelor

- Philosophy, Bachelor of Arts (<https://catalog.csudh.edu/academics/philosophy/philosophy-ba/>)

Minor

- Philosophy, Minor (<https://catalog.csudh.edu/academics/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)
- Religious Studies, Minor (<https://catalog.csudh.edu/academics/philosophy/religious-studies-minor/>)

Faculty

Brian Gregor, Department Chair
Dana S. Belu, Sheela Pawar, Robert Jones

Department Office: LCH C-312, (310) 243-3636

Emeriti Faculty

Charles Fay, William Hagan, John LaCorte, Donald Lewis, Eiichi Shimomisse, Rudy Vanterpool

Courses

PHI 101. Moral Problems. (3 Units)

The role of morals as motivations and goals in our lives. General knowledge of what values are and how they influence us on individual and societal levels. Students will construct solutions to moral problems, for example, problems of justice.
Offered Fall, Spring, All terms

PHI 102. Humanity, Nature & God. (3 Units)

Critical examination of perennial philosophical issues such as the nature of philosophy, the existence of God, free will, truth. Both Western and non-Western perspectives are discussed. Gives student general understanding of his/her societal context. Essays as well as exams.
Offered Fall, Spring

PHI 120. Critical Reasoning. (3 Units)

Introduction to methods of critical thinking including the nature of arguments, formal and informal fallacies, deductive and inductive arguments. Provides student with critical skills in both academic and non-academic context. A-C-/NC grading.
Offered Fall, Spring, Summer, All terms

PHI 201. The Good Life. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: ENG 110 is recommended. Explores philosophical approaches to the art of living. Readings will focus on ancient Greek and Roman philosophy as a way of life, along with a selection of religious and non-Western philosophies of the good life.
Offered Spring

PHI 202. The Devil You Don't Know. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: ENG 110 is recommended. The development of the idea of the Devil and related ideas such as sin, evil, temptation, and the nature of the human. Investigates the Devil in scripture, philosophy, literature, and film. Includes Jewish, Christian and Muslim sources.
Offered Fall, Spring

PHI 220. Symbolic Logic. (3 Units)

Introduction to symbolic logic and its relation to everyday language. Students study deductive and inductive reasoning, the logical content and consistency of statements, truth-functional operations, analysis of arguments for validity and invalidity, logical fallacies, and elementary quantification theory.
Offered Spring

PHI 300. Proseminar. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: 6 units in LD Philosophy or department consent. An introduction to philosophical methods, research and dialogue in order to improve students' skills at writing and analysis. Topics to be covered will address some central area or areas of philosophy and will vary from year to year.
Offered Fall, Spring

PHI 301. Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy. (3 Units)

A critical study of the foundations of Western civilization as found in ancient Greek and Roman thought.
Offered Fall

PHI 302. Medieval Philosophies: Jewish, Christian and Muslim. (3 Units)

Offered Spring even

PHI 303. Modern Philosophy: Descartes To Kant. (3 Units)

Western thought as manifest through the evolution of the philosophical systems of Rationalism, Empiricism and Critical Philosophy.
Offered Spring

PHI 304. 19th Century Philosophy: Hegel To Nietzsche. (3 Units)

A study of nineteenth century European philosophy focusing on thinkers such as Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx and Nietzsche.
Offered Fall

PHI 305. Contemporary Philosophy. (3 Units)

Study of contemporary American and European philosophical concepts, movements, or key figures. Specific topic indicated in class schedule. Repeatable for credit.
Offered Spring odd

PHI 308. Existentialism. (3 Units)

Prerequisite(s): PHI 101 or PHI 102 is recommended. Examines key existential philosophers, such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Marcel, Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Camus. Also explored are existentialist themes in the history of philosophy, literature, poetry, and film such as Dostoyevsky, Rilke, Bergman, Kurosawa, and Woody Allen.
Offered Fall odd

PHI 316. Ethical Theories. (3 Units)

A critical inquiry into the groundwork of ethics by exploring such basic questions in ethics as the nature of good, the criteria for right action, the language of moral discourse, ontology and morality, and religion and ethics.
Offered Fall

PHI 321. The Nature of Beauty: Aesthetics. (3 Units)

A critical examination of our beliefs about the nature of beauty in the context of art, music, literature and film. Topics include artistic creativity, aesthetic experience, criticism and evaluation. Specific topic indicated in class schedule. Repeatable course.
Offered Spring even

PHI 331. Social & Political Philosophy. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is highly recommended. Historical and contemporary theories on the scope and legitimacy of political authority: discussion of various contract theories of the state and of the relationships between rights of individuals and rights of states. Repeatable course.
Offered Fall odd

PHI 340. Environmental Ethics. (3 Units)

Inquiry into philosophical theories and methods that assess how humanity should relate to Earth, how we view ourselves ecologically, whether consumption practices are logical and moral. Topics include deep ecology, Eco-feminism, anthropocentric v. non-anthropocentric Ethics, animal rights and sustainability.
Offered Spring

PHI 350. Theories of Cognition. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 120 or equivalent. PHI 300 is highly recommended. This course will approach the question of mind from disciplines in humanities, sciences, and social sciences. Several standpoints such as: classical philosophy, cognitive science, neurology, computer science and artificial intelligence, cognitive ethology, and evolutionary linguistics will be discussed.
Offered Infrequent

PHI 351. Death and Dying. (3 Units)

Introduction to psychological, medical, cultural, and ethical aspects of death and dying. A cross-cultural approach to perceptions of death and dying, how and why they have changed over time, how various authors, poets, and artists represent death and dying.
Offered Fall, Spring

PHI 352. Myth as Reality. (3 Units)

Explores the nature of myth, its relationship to ritual, dream, and folktale, and its manifestations in literature and the individual. Although the course will have a primary literary focus, it will draw on the disciplines of philosophy, religious studies, anthropology, and psychology.
Offered Fall, Spring

PHI 353. Age of Revolt. (3 Units)

Investigation of the spirit of revolt in the historical period of the Spanish Conquest; the American, French, Haitian, Russian and Algerian revolutions; Black Power and Zapatista: through history, philosophy and the arts.
Offered Fall, Spring

PHI 365. Mind, World and Language. (3 Units)

A critical examination of the relation between knowledge and reality, with a particular interest in the role of language. Readings include a variety of historical and contemporary perspectives, such as analytic philosophy, pragmatism, and phenomenology.
Offered Spring even

PHI 370. Philos of Africa & Diaspora. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is highly recommended. A critical study of African and afrocentric philosophies, including Bantu, Akan, and Yoruba traditions. African American philosophers such as Alain Locke and other third world African peoples are also covered in depth. Topics include personhood, time, causality, value theory, black aesthetics, and black feminist epistemologies.

Offered Spring

PHI 371. African World Religions. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is recommended A critical study of traditional religious experience and expression among peoples of the African continent including the Akan, Yoruba and Ibo as well as manifestations of Christianity and Islam as expressed both in Africa and in the Americas .

Offered Fall

PHI 378. Philosophy of Religion. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300. A critical, comprehensive study of the nature and value of religion. Includes such issues as the relationship between Religion, Philosophy, Theology, and Science; the existence of a deity, revelation(s), faith, the problem of evil, scriptural myths, and religious experience and language.

Offered Spring

PHI 379. Contemporary Moral Issues. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is highly recommended. Philosophical inquiry into basic moral problems relevant today such as morality versus non-morality, human responsibility, individual versus societal values, morality versus legality, ethnic identity versus social conformity, abortion versus right to life, and the euthanasia decision. Repeatable for Credit.

Offered Fall

PHI 383. Comparative Religions. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is highly recommended. A study of the relationship of the various religious perspectives of the world, their rituals, their influence on society and their philosophical implications.

Offered Fall

PHI 384. Philosophies of India, China and Japan. (3 Units)

The evolution and meaning of various non- Western traditions will be discussed. Selected topics will include Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, Shintoism, Confucianism. Emphasis on significance in India, China and Japan . Repeatable course.

Offered Spring

PHI 386. Analytical Methods of Biblical Study. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is highly recommended. The Bible in light of modern scholarship; principles and methods of its interpretation. Emphasis is given to the Pentateuch, the Gospels, and other key portions for their philosophical and theological views.

Offered Fall odd

PHI 480. Religion and Violence. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 383 is recommended. A critical examination of fundamentalist movements in various religious traditions. Explores the intrinsic relationship among four key variables: religion, secularization, fundamentalism, and the consequences of religious fundamentalization. Finally, we will ask whether fundamentalist principles legitimate new forms of religious violence.

Offered Fall odd

PHI 490. Seminar. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300. A critical analysis and interpretation of a major philosophical or religious system or issue in respect to its presuppositions, task, method, problems and solutions. Repeatable course. Course is writing intensive. Three hours of seminar per week.

Offered Spring

PHI 494. Independent Study. (1-3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is highly recommended. Study of a particular philosophical or religious problem, individually or as a team or group, under the direction of a faculty member. Only three units may be used for Philosophy major and minor requirements.

Offered Fall, Spring

PHI 495. Special Topics:. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is highly recommended. An intensive study of a concept, movement or individual in Philosophy. Intended for students with senior standing and having fulfilled major requirements. Specific topic listed in class schedule. Repeatable course. Three hours of seminar per week.

Offered Infrequent

PHI 580. Religion and Violence. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 383 is recommended. A critical examination of fundamentalist movements in various religious traditions. Explores the intrinsic relationship among four key variables: religion, secularization, fundamentalism, and the consequences of religious fundamentalization. Finally, we will ask whether fundamentalist principles legitimate new forms of religious violence.

Offered Fall odd

PHI 595. Special Topics:. (3 Units)

Prerequisite: PHI 300 is highly recommended. An intensive study of a concept, movement or individual in Philosophy. Intended for students with senior or graduate standing. Specific topic listed in class schedule. Repeatable course. Three hours of seminar per week.

Offered Infrequent