

PHILOSOPHY

Faculty

Kaarina Beam, Ph.D (Chair, Fall 2024).

Kenneth Knowlton (Ph.D. Candidate)

Jesús Ilundáin-Agurruza, Ph.D. (Chair, Spring 2025)

A mind trained to view an issue with critical analysis, logical consistency, and creative problem-solving is indispensable in dealing with the complexities and ambiguities of contemporary society. A liberal arts education provides various avenues for achieving these proficiencies, but there is no more direct way to achieve them than through philosophical study. The student of philosophy acquires an appreciation of the history of ideas and the penetrating and perennial questions raised in philosophical works.

The Department of Philosophy provides opportunities to study works from the major schools of philosophical thought that have informed that way that we understand and engage the world around us. At the same time, a breadth of exposure to diverse and applied philosophical perspectives is emphasized in the curriculum.

The Department of Philosophy offers an engaging educational experience in which the emphasis is not on information retrieval but upon the dialectical processes through which students learn to critically read, listen, think, and question, as well as to identify and develop deliberately informed courses of action.

Course offerings in the department emphasize: the development of the capacity to think and write clearly, coherently, and creatively; the opportunity to explore both the diverse and shared philosophical ideas which constitute the intellectual heritage of the world; the development of a synoptic view of life through the integration of insight derived from studies in the sciences and humanities; and opportunities for students to formulate and develop their own deliberately informed positions in relation to the perennial questions and pressing concerns of contemporary life.

Honors

Qualified students are invited to membership in Phi Sigma Tau, the national honorary society in philosophy. Known as Oregon Alpha, Linfield's chapter was the first in the Northwest. The Francis G. Nelson Award for Best Senior Thesis in Philosophy is also conferred yearly.

Programs

- Philosophy Major (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/programs-az/arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-major/>)
- Philosophy Minor (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/programs-az/arts-sciences/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)

Courses

A list of the department's infrequently taught courses can be found on the Registrar's webpages.

COURSES

A list of the department's infrequently taught courses can be found on the Registrar's webpages.

Course Descriptions (Per Subject)

PHIL 150 FUNDAMENTALS OF PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)

Philosophic ideas and problems at the root of human culture. Major Western views of self, conduct, and meaning.

Typically offered: Annually

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 160 PHILOSOPHY EAST & WEST (4 credits)

Comparative introductory study of major philosophical traditions of east and west: ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of religion. (Listed as PHIL 160 (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/about://search/?P=PHIL%20160>) and RELS 160 (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/about://search/?P=RELS%20160>))

Typically offered: Annually

(GLOBAL PLURALISM, ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 170 CRITICAL REASONING (4 credits)

Introduction to logical and inductive reasoning emphasizing arguments in everyday contexts. Common informal fallacies and their relation to debates about current events and prominent philosophical arguments. Topics including emotive and ambiguous language, causation, common statistical mistakes, and how to read polls.

PHIL 180 MORAL PROBLEMS (4 credits)

General introduction to Western ethical philosophy with a focus on the application of ethical theory to contemporary moral issues. Examination of classic and contemporary readings to gain working familiarity with central theories, issues, and moral dilemmas in ethics. Some comparative work in Non-western and/or divergent U.S. ethical traditions. Examination of issues in both normative and metaethics, including: the problems of relativism and skepticism; the nature and limits of moral obligations to others; religion and ethics; and ethical analysis applied to social and political issues relevant to the 21st century in U.S. life.

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS, U.S. PLURALISM)

PHIL 185 PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE (4 credits)

Introduction to philosophy of science, including such topics as verification and falsification of theories, laws in nature, objectivity, impartiality, theory versus description, and value commitments of scientists outside the framework of scientific explanation.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 190 LOGIC (4 credits)

Introduction to categorical logic, truth-functional logic, quantificational logic, induction, and the classification of logical fallacies. Includes translation of arguments in ordinary language into their logical equivalents as well as some study of the properties of logical systems.

(QUANTITATIVE REASONING)

PHIL 198 SPECIAL TOPICS: JAN TERM TRAVEL (4 credits)

Topics vary according to faculty availability and interest. Recent courses include Environmental Ethics in the Galapagos and Comparative Philosophy: Asian Thought in China. Offered only as student interest and university resources permit. May be repeated for credit with different topics.

Prerequisites: IDST 098 (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/about://search/?P=IDST%20098>) previous fall and at least one philosophy course or consent of instructor.

Typically offered: January Term

PHIL 210 SPORT, PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIETY (4 credits)

Role of sport in contemporary political, economic, and social issues; sport as cultural representation; sport and deviance; sport and socialization; sport and the reproduction of social inequality (race, class, gender, and sexual orientation); sport and imperialism. (Listed as PHIL 210 (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/about://search/?P=PHIL%20210>) and SOAN 210 (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/about://search/?P=SOAN%20210>))

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 215 BIOETHICS (4 credits)

Case studies and primary source readings highlighting central theories, issues, and problems in bioethics, generally, and biomedical ethics, specifically. Bioethical concerns including the right to live and die, paternalism versus autonomy and the patient's bill of rights, biomedical experimentation and research, reproductive technologies, social and institutional justice, and healthcare duties, responsibilities, and relationships. Both normative ethics and metaethics considered.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 230 ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)

Historical survey of ancient Western philosophy from Presocratics to the Neoplatonism of Plotinus (6th Century BCE to 6th Century CE). Study of selected primary source readings to examine foundational Western questions and conceptions about the nature of being, the nature and limits of knowledge, and the nature and origin of politics and morality.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 245 AESTHETICS (4 credits)

Survey of aesthetic theories that engages issues such as definition of art, relationship between art and truth, role of expression, nature of aesthetic experience, artistic creation, relevance of beauty, autonomy of art, women and art, and non-Western conceptions of art. Selections from classical and contemporary aestheticians may include figures such as Plato, Kant, Hume, Nietzsche, Danto, Dewey, Margolis, Weitz, besides others.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(CREATIVE STUDIES, ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 270 PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION (4 credits)

Examination of educational philosophies operative in and/or relevant to the U.S. educational tradition. Designed to bring into focus the often

unexamined ways in which educational goals, policies, procedures, methods, etc. are founded upon particular conceptions of the nature, purpose, and interrelations of human beings. Primary source readings are utilized to critically interrogate selected educational theories, practices, and outcomes through an examination of the philosophical and cultural assumptions and practices of their respective theorists and practitioners.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS, U.S. PLURALISM)

PHIL 280 PHILOSOPHY & LITERATURE (4 credits)

Examination of imaginative literature as a vehicle for philosophy, examining those philosophical problems best suited to literary expression. Variable content where philosophical and critical pieces work in conjunction with works ranging from novels and short stories to plays or poems. Considers such issues as truth and literature, interpretation, authorship, ontology of fictional characters, and the definition of literature.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 298 SPECIAL TOPICS: JAN TERM TRAVEL (4 credits)

Topics vary according to faculty availability and interest. Recent courses include Environmental Ethics in the Galapagos and Comparative Philosophy: Asian Thought in China. Offered only as student interest and university resources permit. May be repeated for credit with different topics.

Prerequisites: IDST 098 (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/about://search/?P=IDST%20098>) previous fall and at least one philosophy course or consent of instructor.

Typically offered: January Term

PHIL 306 ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS (4 credits)

Moral and aesthetic readings applied to questions of value about land, air, water, and non-human species. Particular attention to issues surrounding human disruption of ecosystems.

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 350 MODERN PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)

Historical survey of modern philosophy, emphasizing but not limited to rationalism and empiricism. Primary readings including key representatives such as Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, and/or others.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 360 PHILOSOPHY OF LAW (4 credits)

Examination of moral dimension of legal reasoning (jurisprudence), with consideration of such topics as natural law, legal positivism, jurisprudence and the U.S. Constitution, international law, and moral justification of punishment. Offered at department's discretion.

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 365 SOCIAL & POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)

Examination of major topics in social/moral and political philosophy, such as: freedom and liberty, order and revolution, peace and justice, rights and representation, power and authority, individual and community. Concepts and issues will be studied via an examination of selected primary source texts, both classical and contemporary.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 370 20TH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)

Historical survey of twentieth-century philosophy, including pragmatism, positivism, ordinary language philosophy, process philosophy, and post-modern philosophy.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 375 COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY: ASIAN THOUGHT (4 credits)

Study of philosophical and cultural traditions of some area(s) of Asia, as compared with those traditions in the West, especially the U.S. Readings consist of primary and secondary sources in literature of East-West comparative philosophy, including texts of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and/or Hinduism.

(GLOBAL PLURALISM, ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 380 EXISTENTIALISM (4 credits)

Examination of interrelated movements of Existentialism and Phenomenology, beginning with Dostoyevsky or Nietzsche as introduction to existentialist themes. Primary source readings include texts from selection of movements' most influential thinkers: Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Husserl, Heidegger, Arendt, Sartre, DeBeauvoir, and/or Merleau-Ponty. Some analysis and/or reading of contemporary issues or texts.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 398 SPECIAL TOPICS: JAN TERM TRAVEL (4 credits)

Topics vary according to faculty availability and interest. Recent courses include Environmental Ethics in the Galapagos and Comparative Philosophy: Asian Thought in China. Offered only as student interest and university resources permit. May be repeated for credit with different topics.

Prerequisites: IDST 098 (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/about://search/?P=IDST%20098>) previous fall and at least one philosophy course or consent of instructor.

Typically offered: January Term

PHIL 430 TOPICS IN CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)

Senior-level seminar focusing on key issue(s), current topic(s), and/or exploring some school(s) of thought from the last forty years of philosophical scholarship. Topical content variable, according to discretion and expertise of instructor. May be repeated for credit with different content.

Prerequisites: At least one lower-level philosophy class or consent of instructor.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 439 PEER INSTRUCTION (1-4 credits)

Advanced study opportunity for outstanding students to assist faculty members in the class-room. Focus on course content and pedagogy.

Prerequisites: Application and consent of instructor.

(EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING)

PHIL 452 PROBLEMS IN HEALTH CARE ETHICS SEMINAR (1 credit)

Case study on-line discussion of major health care ethical issues. Discussions facilitated by experts with clinical ethics consultation experience. Interaction with students taking PHIL 451 (Problems in Health Care Ethics).

Typically offered: Fall Semester

PHIL 460 AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY (4 credits)

Examination of the historical emergence and nature of classical U.S. American Philosophies, including Puritanism, Transcendentalism, and Pragmatism, with concentration on American Pragmatism. Primary source readings include contemporary American perspectives, including one or more of the following: Neo-Pragmatist, Native American, African American, and/or Latin American perspectives.

Prerequisites: At least one lower-level philosophy course or consent of instructor.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS, U.S. PLURALISM)

PHIL 470 PHILOSOPHY OF MIND (4 credits)

Examination of issues arising when we think philosophically about the mind, with consideration of advances in neuroscience, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence. Questions include: what is mind?, what counts as a thinking being?, what is consciousness?, could a robot or computer ever be considered a person? Topics include dualism, materialism, consciousness, embodiment and intelligence, the nature of thought, and others.

Prerequisites: At least one lower-level philosophy course or consent of instructor.

Typically offered: Alternate Years

(ULTIMATE QUESTIONS)

PHIL 480 INDEPENDENT STUDY (1-5 credits)

Program of directed tutorial reading on some topic or problem of special interest to the student.

PHIL 487 INTERNSHIP (3-4 credits)

Individualized learning in applied philosophy through work in an approved business, government agency, or community organization.

Prerequisites: Junior standing or higher, and consent of instructor.

(EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING)

PHIL 490 RESEARCH/THESIS (4 credits)

Intensive research on a topic of special interest to the student, culminating in a senior thesis on an advanced topic in philosophy. Seminar includes course readings, discussions, and presentations, along with research guidance and collaborative writing support. Required of majors in their senior year. Minors may enroll with instructor consent.

Typically offered: Fall Semester, Annually

(MAJOR WRITING INTENSIVE)

PHIL 498 SPECIAL TOPICS: JAN TERM TRAVEL (4 credits)

Topics vary according to faculty availability and interest. Recent courses include Environmental Ethics in the Galapagos and Comparative Philosophy: Asian Thought in China. Offered only as student interest and university resources permit. May be repeated for credit with different topics.

Prerequisites: IDST 098 (<http://catalog.linfield.edu/about://search/?P=IDST%20098>) previous fall and at least one philosophy course or consent of instructor.

Typically offered: January Term