

# Philosophy

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## What is Philosophy?

Philosophy is a historically evolving, self-reflective inquiry into the fundamental questions that humans confront in making sense of their lives. It examines essential features of the human condition—e.g., morality, knowledge, nature, society, happiness, justice, beauty, selfhood, and friendship – all in the search for knowledge that both preserves and transforms enduring dimensions of human self-understanding. Philosophy emerges in the Western tradition as a rational, systematic, and self-critical inquiry committed to grounding its own claim to knowledge. Contemporary philosophy continues to examine the fundamental principles that guide our thought and action, our pursuit of knowledge, and our desire to live well. Because philosophy adopts a radically self-critical orientation to its own historical formation, philosophers often disagree profoundly about what philosophy is and how it differs from other disciplines. Such disagreements – openly, critically, and vigorously deliberated – are vital to the type of radical questioning that characterizes philosophy.

Philosophy challenges students to (1) reflect upon naively lived patterns of thought, action, speech, and perception; (2) identify how practices, institutions, and perceptions are shaped by philosophical traditions; (3) critically examine and assess the fundamental assumptions that inform such human enterprises; and (4) conduct this inquiry in the spirit of open critical communication committed to mutual understanding and respect for difference. Students learn the basic skills of identifying and analyzing arguments, and the department actively fosters an environment committed to the vigorous, respectful exchange of ideas to protect both commonalities and differences. Philosophy also cultivates ethical responsibility by balancing (1) the articulation, justification, and application of normative principles with (2) the deepening of moral imagination and sensibility.

## Curriculum

The department offers eight "History and Traditions" courses that represent important periods and traditions of Western philosophy:

- History and Traditions Courses
  - Ancient Philosophy
  - Early Modern Philosophy
  - 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Philosophy
  - 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Philosophy
  - Existentialism and Film
  - Analytic Philosophy and Science
  - Critical Social Theory: The Dialectic of Enlightenment
  - Postmodern Critical Theory: The Critique of Modernity.

These historical courses reconstruct the debates, issues, concerns, questions, and concepts that define a historical period from within. They also offer linkages among historical periods, allowing students to appreciate the larger, "paradigmatic" shifts in Western philosophy. Students gain an awareness of how canonical philosophers characteristically address their own historical precedents and shape their views in critical dialogue with predecessors. Students are required to engage in close textual interpretation and careful critical evaluation of original texts. Instructors identify contemporary advocates for, or illustrations of, traditional schools of thought and, in this way, underscore the real historical effects of philosophical creativity. Students write detailed, textually supported expository and argumentative essays that are graded for their balance between interpretive charity and critical acuity. Emphasis is placed upon cultivating a student's ability to first reconstruct the historical debates among canonical philosophers and to then critically evaluate their bearing upon contemporary concerns. Many of the Philosophy Department's history courses have interdisciplinary units of instruction that link historical debates to contemporary research programs within the natural and social sciences and to interpretive approaches in the Humanities.

The department also offers courses in the classic subfields of philosophy: logic, ethics, metaphysics, and aesthetics. These courses explicate the fundamental conceptual tools we need to systematically address particular types of contemporary issues:

How do we know? (*Theories of Knowledge*)

What ought we to do? (*Ethics*)

What is beauty? (*Philosophy of Art*)

What is good reasoning? (*Logic and Reasoning*)

What is being and what is it to be human? (*Metaphysics and Mind*)

In these courses, students are asked to identify, reflect upon, and exercise the key concepts, theories, and viewpoints that allow us to competently address ethical, epistemological, logical, metaphysical, and aesthetic issues. Subfield courses cultivate a student's ability to systematically, self-consciously, and flexibly manage a repertoire of conceptual tools to discern, analyze, and deliberate about contemporary problems. By gaining a sensitivity for different ways of perceiving and thinking about a single issue, students develop an appreciation for the complexity of actual problem solving.

The department also offers specialized subfield courses under the following three categories:

- Applied Ethics (*Ecological Philosophy, Biomedical Ethics, Philosophy of Law*)
- Applied Epistemology (*Philosophy of Science and Philosophy of the Social Sciences*)
- Linguistics (*Philosophy of Language*)
- Political Theory (*Classical and Contemporary Social Contract Theory, Human Rights and International Law, Theorizing Citizenship and Immigration*)

In these courses, emphasis is placed upon genuine problem solving in contemporary circumstances. The applied ethics courses introduce students to the systematic analysis of contemporary problems encountered in jurisprudence, political legitimation, healthcare practices, and environmental stewardship. Students learn to unravel the factual, conceptual, and normative threads interwoven in current crises. They also develop the ability to reflectively manage different theoretical perspectives upon a single, multifaceted problem. The applied epistemology courses examine fundamental questions concerning the logic and practices of the natural and social sciences. The philosophical linguistics courses analyze language competencies (semantics and pragmatics) and literary discourse (narratology).

## Outcomes

The philosophy program is committed to five overarching outcomes for students in our classes and in our major:

1. Knowledge: Gain appropriate breadth and depth of knowledge of the major traditions, figures, issues, and theories studied.
2. Skills:
  1. Write in a style appropriate to scholarly philosophy;
  2. Think clearly, rigorously, and logically about conflicting philosophical points of view;
  3. Engage in open, critical, cooperative discussion and interrogation;
  4. Cultivate philosophical impulses and insights and reflectively employ philosophical techniques;
  5. Comprehend, accurately represent, and originally construct arguments in the philosophical style;
  6. Conduct independent philosophical research;
  7. Present independent research in a professional setting.
3. Integration:
  1. Connect philosophical learning to other learning abilities, career goals, daily life, and roles in the world;
  2. Deepen a shared commitment to critical self-reflection as a fundamental dimension of living well.
4. Preparation:
  1. Thrive in selected post-graduate studies;
  2. Address vocational challenges by mobilizing critical thinking, writing, and verbal skills;
  3. Confront personal challenges with an awareness of philosophical resources.
5. Attitude: Gain a "philosophical sense" of curiosity, a willingness to engage in "meta-level" thinking, a determination to understand complex issues, and a cooperative and constructive spirit in critical deliberation with others.

## Preparation

Philosophy is a sound choice for those seeking a broad liberal arts undergraduate education and for those who value the skills and outlook imparted by studying the discipline. The major program prepares students for graduate studies in philosophy, law, social policy, and political theory, to name just a few areas of formal specialization. Students preparing for graduate studies in philosophy are strongly advised to follow a more structured majors program with additional course recommendations.

## Transfer and Study Abroad Credit

The Philosophy Department's transfer policies are as follows. All transfer courses in Philosophy must be approved by the Philosophy faculty upon consideration of a course catalog description and a syllabus for the course (to be provided by the student). If the course is taken during a student's enrollment at Kalamazoo College (for instance, on study abroad or during the summer), the approval must be obtained before the course is taken. In addition, the Department will consider only courses taught by instructors with a Ph.D. in Philosophy, or who are "ABD" (all but dissertation) in Philosophy.

## Requirements for the Major in Philosophy

### Number of Units

Minimum of 8 total units are required, which may include the SIP.

- **Required Individual Courses**

- PHIL 107 Logic and Reasoning
- PHIL 208 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Philosophy
- PHIL 490 Philosophy Seminar

- **2 Required History and Traditions Courses from the following list:**

- PHIL 109 Existentialism and Film
- PHIL 205 Ancient Philosophy
- PHIL 206 Early Modern Philosophy
- PHIL 207 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Philosophy
- PHIL 218 Analytic Philosophy & Science
- PHIL 310 Critical Social Theory: The Dialectic of Enlightenment
- PHIL 311 Postmodern Critical Theory

## Majors Preparing for Graduate Studies in Philosophy are Strongly Recommended to pursue the following programs

### Number of Units

Minimum of 10 total units are recommended, which may include the SIP.

- **Required Courses**

- PHIL 107 Logic and Reasoning
- PHIL 208 19<sup>th</sup> Century Philosophy
- PHIL 490 Philosophy Seminar

- **4 History & Traditions Courses chosen in close consultation with the department:**

- PHIL 109 Existentialism and Film
- PHIL 205 Ancient Philosophy
- PHIL 206 Early Modern Philosophy
- PHIL 207 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Philosophy
- PHIL 218 Analytic Philosophy & Science
- PHIL 310 Critical Social Theory: The Dialectic of Enlightenment
- PHIL 311 Postmodern Critical Theory: The Critique of Modernity

# Requirements for the Minor in Philosophy

## Number of Units

Six units are required.

## Required Courses

- PHIL 208 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Philosophy
- Two History & Traditions courses (See list under Required Courses for the Major in Philosophy)
- Three electives chosen in consultation with the department. We also recommend either supervisory or advisory involvement with the SIP.

*A SIP in Philosophy does not count toward minor requirements.*

## Philosophy courses

### PHIL 105 Ethics

Ethics is a sub-field of philosophy with rather lofty goals. Among its objects of study, it investigates what is valuable, what people have practical reason to do, and what is right and wrong. This course is only an introduction to part of this rich subfield: normative ethics. At the end we may have time for a small taste of applied ethics. We start by engaging with standard attempts to question ethics (amoral-ism, relativism, egoism, etc). We then survey the main ethical frameworks: virtue ethics, utilitarianism and deontology. We will read a variety of classical texts in these traditions as well as some more contemporary authors. The course is designed to demonstrate why ethics matters, to expose students to a variety of ethical frameworks and to equip them with the conceptual resources to think critically about each framework.

### PHIL 107 Logic and Reasoning

An introduction to methods for evaluating the validity and strength of reasoning. The course will investigate (1) the theory and practice of constructing and analyzing arguments as they occur in ordinary, informal contexts (reasoning), and (2) the concepts and techniques of elementary formal logic: the art of symbolizing English-language statements and arguments in terms of formalized languages and applying logical principles to them. Topics explored include informal fallacies, critical thinking, evaluating evidence, deciding between hypotheses, propositional logic, natural deduction, and predicate logic. Recommended for computer science, psychology, and pre-law students.

### PHIL 108 Ecological Philosophy

This course investigates the question of our understanding of, and ethical responsibility to, animals, plants, microorganisms, non-living beings, ecosystems, and "nature" as a whole. The first part of the course critically assesses whether traditional ethical theories adequately capture our ethical responsibilities to the environment. The second part surveys traditional Western conceptualizations of nature, reason, body, and space, which ecologists severely criticize as detrimental to developing an ecological ethic. Special emphasis will be placed upon developing a philosophical conception of life (bios) that is appropriate for both evolutionary biology and the development of a normative theory of environmental care. Contemporary positions such as anthropocentrism, deep ecology, radical ecology, ecofeminism, and social environmentalism will be studied. Recommended for environmental studies and biology students.

### PHIL 109 Existentialism and Film

Survey of key existentialist thinkers, such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, De Beauvoir, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre, with a special emphasis upon their radical ideals of freedom and self-responsibility. Films are shown as depictions of existentialist themes, such as alienation, authenticity, bad faith, despair, passion, anonymity, and anguish. Existentialists oppose traditional, "essentialist," "teleological," and "cognitivist" conceptions of human life, and they reject the hierarchical dualities of reason/will, knowledge/choice, mind/body, thought/being. Special emphasis will be placed upon the existentialist analysis of interpersonal relations in contemporary circumstances. Students are required to see seven films in addition to regularly scheduled classes. Discussion-based course with two writing assignments. Recommended for psychology, media studies, and literature students.

### PHIL 195 Philosophical Explorations of Happiness

What is happiness? What would it mean to live happily? Are there some conditions in which happiness can be realized and others in which it would be restricted? The question of what happiness entails, and what are the ways and conditions in which human beings can experience happiness has been a persistent concern of philosophers since antiquity to the present day. In this class, we will look to a variety of ways that Western thinkers have responded to both the question of what

happiness is and what it would mean to live happily. We will also examine the way in which our happiness could be tied to both the nature of our desires and the freedom that we may have to realize happiness.

#### **PHIL 195 Knowledge & Reality: An Introduction**

How much do you really know? Do you know that you are not dreaming right now? Do you know that an intelligent evil spirit is not deceiving you right now? Do you know that your senses are not deceiving you right now as they have so many times in the past? Do you know that a world separate from you even exists? How about God; do you know that God exists? Come to think of it, do you even know that you exist? And even if you do exist, can you make free choices? Can you freely decide to take this class, or it already predetermined? Readings will include classics from such philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, Rene Descartes, John Locke, David Hume, and Immanuel Kant, as well as more contemporary works from such philosophers as Bertrand Russell, W. V. O. Quine, Susan Wolf, John Searle, and Jennifer Lackey.

#### **PHIL/CLAS 205 Ancient Philosophy**

A study of ancient views on nature, knowledge, soul, the self, morality, and the good life. This is a history of philosophy course rather than a history course; we will be studying the ideas, arguments, and theories put forth by ancient philosophers, rather than biographical, cultural, anthropological, or historical issues about them or their time period. We will largely be trying to understand what these thinkers were trying to say, and why they thought what they did. In addition, we will be discussing the merits of the various positions and reasons offered. Readings will focus on selections from Plato and Aristotle, but will also include readings from the pre-Socratic and Hellenistic philosophers, all major sources of the Western philosophical tradition. Recommended for classics students. . (This is a designated Greek literature or culture course in Classics.)

#### **PHIL 206 Early Modern Philosophy**

Historical study of the "Early Modern" period in Western philosophy (17th and 18th century). The course will explore the profoundly influential development of rationalist and empiricist approaches to philosophical thinking; topics may include the connection between mind and body, skepticism and the possibility of knowledge, the existence of God, knowledge of the external world, the nature of minds and their ideas, and the proper method of philosophical method. Readings from Descartes, Leibniz, Berkeley, Locke, Hume, and others. Recommended for computer science and psychology students. Sophomore standing recommended.

#### **PHIL 207 18th-Century Philosophy**

Study of the Enlightenment period through a critical comparison of two of its most famous 18th-century philosophers -- David Hume and Immanuel Kant -- who set the stage for contemporary debates in psychology, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence. Hume proposed to study humans just as Sir Isaac Newton had proposed to study nature: namely, through observation and experimentation. We will study Hume's A Treatise of Human Nature as a manifesto for the modern, naturalistic study of human experience and judgment. We will then study Kant's powerful arguments against Hume, examining in close detail Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, his demonstration that humans actively synthesize sensory data according to rules that they "spontaneously" impose to make experience possible. The film Memento, literary narratives, and studies of Alzheimer patients are used to illustrate the logical and temporal construction of human experience. A reading-intensive course with three essay assignments. Recommended for psychology, computer science, and English students.

#### **PHIL 208 19th-Century Philosophy**

This course examines how 19th-century European philosophers inherit and develop Kant's radical claims that (1) human agents are radically free, (2) knowledge is constructed, and (3) hope in moral progress is rational. We will examine how Fichte, Schiller, Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche work out how humans could really be "free," "autonomous," or "self-determining" while remaining natural animals and socially-situated subjects. Films such as Memento, American Beauty, Waterland, Babette's Feast, The Hairdresser's Husband, and Sex, Lies, and Videotape are shown. Lecture and discussion course with three paper assignments. First-year students with strong writing skills welcome. Recommended for psychology, English, and political science students.

#### **PHIL 209 Philosophy of Science**

A philosophical examination of scientific methods and reasoning. Topics may include the analysis of explanation, the nature of scientific truth, instrumentalist and realist interpretations of science, confirmation and falsification, observational and theoretical terms, inter-theoretic reduction, the relation among various sciences, scientific revolutions, and the possibility of scientific progress. Recommended for science majors. Sophomore standing recommended.

#### **PHIL 210 Classical & Contemporary Social Contract Theory**

The social contract tradition is a foundational pillar of modern political philosophy. Authors in this tradition hold that life without any government (the hypothetical "state of nature") would be so problematic that it motivates people to set up a "contract" of sorts with one another that institutes a system of government. This account of the move from the state of nature to government supposedly explains why we have an obligation to obey existing governments. According to this tradition government and laws of some kind are prerequisites to any minimally just society. This is how the tradition differs from philosophical anarchism (another class). Although the social contract tradition is an overarching framework authors within it

have very different views on topics such as just and unjust systems of government, consent to governance, the sources and limits of political obligation, property rights and the supposed "right to revolt". We will study this tradition by reading excerpts from Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Kant. We end the course by reading a few contemporary authors who critique the social contract tradition based on what it neglected to account for in terms of gender and race, and how this impacts the notion of consent to governance.

#### **PHIL 211 Philosophy of Law**

Historical examination of the two opposing paradigms in the study of legal systems: namely, factual ("positivist") and normative ("natural law") models of law. Selected topics may include (1) the relation between law and morality, (2) the nature of legitimation and authority; (3) the nature of juridical interpretation and legal reasoning; (4) the role of the legal system within ethical traditions, market forces, and political institutions; and (5) the Critical Legal Studies challenge to liberal jurisprudence. Readings from Aquinas, Austin, Holmes, Hart, Fuller, Dworkin, Scalia, Unger, Raz, MacKinnon, and Habermas. Seminar format with an emphasis upon discussion and structured debate. Suggested for pre-law and political science students.

#### **PHIL 214 Philosophy of Art**

This course introduces students to a variety of traditional and contemporary philosophical theories of art: namely, Platonic, Aristotelian, rationalist, empiricist, idealist, Marxist, phenomenological, hermeneutic, existentialist, feminist, psychoanalytic, semiotic, deconstructivist, and more contemporary "postmodernist" aesthetics theories. Such theoretical positions inform, but are also tested by, critical and interpretive articles about particular artworks: for example, painting, sculpture, film, architecture, and handcraft. We will focus our attention upon the visual arts -- as opposed to literary, musical, theatrical and the dance media. Students will gain an appreciation of the difficulties philosophers have encountered in framing a theory of "aesthetic perception" and, more importantly, of the remarkable variety of visual art forms.

#### **PHIL/SEMN 215 Human Rights & International Law**

People often invoke human rights and international law in the course of debate. However, these are highly contested concepts. This course introduces some theoretical clarity with respect to their conceptual grounding, history and contemporary practice. Our primary focus will be on different philosophical theories of human rights, with secondary attention to international human rights law. We start with an orientation on human rights practice and try to move past some of the so-called "challenges" to human rights. This is followed by a look at the main contemporary approaches for conceptualizing human rights: the basic human-interest approach, the capabilities approach and the newer "political" approach (among others). We will spend a few weeks on various debates within the human rights literature as well: Whether there is such a thing as "group rights", whether and how there is a distinction between civil and political human rights on the one hand versus social and economic human rights on the other, when human rights violations might trigger external, international intervention, etc.

*Prerequisite: Sophomores Only*

#### **PHIL 218 Analytic Philosophy & Science**

Historical introduction to analytic philosophers who studied the foundations of logic, mathematics, science, and linguistics as a critique of traditional philosophy. Recommended for students of the natural sciences, mathematics, cognitive science, and neuroscience interested in the analysis of scientific change and revolution. We examine (1) Frege and Russell's development of formal logic and the foundations of mathematics, (2) Wittgenstein, the Vienna Circle, and logical positivism, (3) ordinary language philosophy, (4) Quine's and Putnam's destruction of logical positivism and the "analytic" conception of language, and (5) formal developments such as Goedel's incompleteness theorem, Tarski's truth schema, Chomsky's generative grammar, modal logic, and direct-reference theories of meaning.

#### **PHIL 291 Theorizing Citizenship & Immigration**

This course examines normative questions raised by citizenship and immigration. The first part of the course surveys different models for political community and how they affect the way we view formal membership status in such communities. We will cover the main philosophical theories for how the ideal of citizenship ought to be conceived. The second part of the course covers refugees: How are they different from immigrants? What special claims do they have? How might recognizing these claims affect the resources and attention nations should give to immigrants? The third part of the course covers more standard cases of immigration. We will cover key philosophical arguments that advocate either more or less restrictive immigration policies: arguments about the acceptable criteria that may be used in deciding who to admit, regarding how much weight the preservation of "national culture" should hold (and who decides what that is, anyhow?), about the moral (un)desirability and (im)practicability of open borders, on whether and to what extent receiving nations should seek to mitigate the "brain-drain" from sending nations, and finally arguments about the priority immigration reform should take vis-à-vis other reforms of issues that might "cause" mass migration (global poverty, weak international institutions, repressive, incompetent or exploited/exploitative governments abroad, etc).

#### **PHIL 295 Special Topics**

Special Topics offerings focus upon topics not addressed in the department's regular offerings. The course can be repeated with a different topic. Check the course schedule to see when Special Topics courses are being offered.

### **PHIL 295 History and Freedom**

Critical examination of ancient, modern, and contemporary conceptualizations of human history in connection with the theme of human freedom. Special emphasis is given to the contrast between dualistic conceptions of history, both theological and philosophical, and materialist conceptions of history that link the unfolding of time with the advent of human freedom. Readings from St. Augustine, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Adorno, and Benjamin. We conclude with reflections upon contemporary emancipatory movements and their varying conceptualizations of how freedom might redeem, not only the future generations, but past ones as well.

### **PHIL 305 Biomedical Ethics**

This course focuses on a variety of ethical issues brought about by modern medical technology and practice. We start by surveying the normative frameworks used by contemporary medical ethicists, paying particular emphasis to the main principles of medical ethics and the special nature of the relationship between doctors and patients. We then apply the principles of medical ethics and our insights about the doctor-patient relationship to controversial contemporary issues such as abortion, physician assisted death/suicide, euthanasia, the limits of doctor-patient confidentiality, the determination of organ transplant recipients, the determination of patient competence, and surrogacy contracts (among other issues). The class will often use short narrative case studies and longer court cases in order to highlight the complex nature of these issues. The course aims to emphasize that these issues are controversial precisely because very good arguments can often be made on either side, and to give students the analytical and evaluative frameworks to make judgments on their own. Readings will include contemporary philosophical articles, court decisions, statements by medical and governmental organizations, and textbook material on ethical theories and tools. Suggested for health sciences students and recommended for science students. No prerequisites, but junior- or senior-level reading and writing skills are recommended.

### **PHIL 306 Philosophy of Language**

Study of 20th-century philosophy of language. Introduction to traditional semantics (e.g. reference, truth, and meaning) will be followed by a detailed examination of speech-act theory or pragmatics. The course will focus on the complexity of speech acts and the various dimensions of understanding involved in successful communication. Using speech act theory, students are asked to analyze cinematographic artworks such as *Twelfth Night*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *American Buffalo*, *Oleanna*, etc. to examine how language and social power work together. Topics include theories of speaker meaning and reference, indexicals, direct and indirect speech acts, conversational implicature, presupposition, anaphora, non-literal language use, translation, rule-following, and the relation between language and thought. Readings from Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Quine, Austin, Dummett, Putnam, Searle, Davidson, Habermas, and Recanati. Lecture and discussion format with three essay assignments. Recommended for foreign language, theatre arts, and English students.

### **PHIL 308 Metaphysics and Mind**

Examination of topics in the Western philosophical areas of metaphysics and philosophy of mind, and their intersection. Metaphysics is concerned with the structure of reality; philosophy of mind is the branch of metaphysics concerned with the nature of minds. The topics studied could include the "mind/body problem," consciousness, personal identity, and free will and determinism. Is the mind a nonphysical soul-like entity, or is the mind the brain, or is it the software that runs on the brain's hardware, or is it something else? Can the qualitative part of our experience -- the part involving what it feels like to be in various states -- be captured in purely physical terms, or is it inescapably nonphysical? What makes you the same person over time? Does modern scientific knowledge entail that none of our actions is really free? What is it for an action to be free, anyway? The readings for this course will consist mostly of primary scholarly articles by contemporary philosophers. Suggested for psychology students. Some background in philosophy recommended.

### **PHIL 310 Critical Social Theory: the Dialectic of Enlightenment**

Introduction to the Frankfurt School of Social Criticism and its legacy as "Critical Social Theory." We begin by examining the "first generation" of the Frankfurt School, from its founding in the 1920s and '30s by Horkheimer, Adorno, Benjamin, Fromm, and Marcuse to Habermas's early writings in the '60s & '70s. We then examine "second-generation" research, Juergen Habermas's "Theory of Communicative Action," with its distinctive ideal of "undistorted communication" as the measure of social rationality. Finally, we explore Axel Honneth's alternative, "third generation," Neo-Hegelian model of social development, with its distinctive ideal of "undamaged identities" and the "struggle for mutual recognition" as the critical measures of social pathologies. Throughout the course, examples of U.S. social movements -- green, feminist, queer, race-based, & post-colonial movements -- will be used to assess the relative strengths of these competing diagnostic models of social crisis. Suggested for political science, anthropology/sociology, economics, and environmental studies students. Recommended for students with some background in philosophy, in particular students who have taken 19th-Century Philosophy. We recommend 19th-Century Philosophy as a prerequisite, but it's not required.

### **PHIL 311 Postmodern Critical Theory: The Critique of Modernity**

Introduction to contemporary French philosophy, with special emphasis on the themes of language, desire, embodiment, and sexual difference. We examine the early debate between Merleau-Ponty and Lacan on the acquisition of language, formation of desire, and development of body images. We then turn to two key post-structuralists: Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. We focus upon Foucault's transition from his "archaeology of knowledge" to his mature "genealogy of desire,"

contrasting his account of embodiment and social power to Pierre Bourdieu's. After reviewing Derrida's deconstructionist analysis of language, we turn to one of the following figures: Kristeva, Deleuze, Irigary, Butler, or Zizek. Films are shown throughout the course on Wednesday evenings. Media Studies concentrators are encouraged to write final essays linking philosophy and cinematography. Suggested for media studies, psychology, English, French, and political science students. Some background in philosophy recommended

**PHIL 490 Philosophy Seminar**

Intensive study of contemporary research on a major philosophical issue. The seminar is devoted to the critical reading of significant contemporary publications and a subsequent examination of the philosophical debates they have spawned. Advanced seminar-style discussion-centered course, with participants writing and presenting scholarly papers for the group. The seminar may meet over the course of either one or two quarters.

*Prerequisite: Senior standing*

**PHIL 593 Senior Individualized Project**

Each program or department sets its own requirements for Senior Individualized Projects done in that department, including the range of acceptable projects, the required background of students doing projects, the format of the SIP, and the expected scope and depth of projects. See the Kalamazoo Curriculum -&gt; Curriculum Details and Policies section of the Academic Catalog for more details.

*Prerequisite: Permission of department and SIP supervisor required.*

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