

Philosophy & Religious Studies

Course Listings Summer & Fall 2017



**UA
LR** | DEPARTMENT OF
PHILOSOPHY AND
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Summer 2017 Courses

1st Term: May 22 – June 26 • 2nd Term: July 5 – Aug 8

Ethics and Society – PHIL 2320

On Campus: Prof. Robinson – MTWRF 12:00-1:30
Multiple Sections Online (see Schedule of Classes)
1st & 2nd term

Introduction to Philosophy – PHIL 1310

Prof. McAuliffe – WEB (CRN: 31299 / UALR Online: 31603)
1st term

Intro to Logic – PHIL 2350

Prof. Spino – WEB (CRN: 30939 / UALR Online: 31899)
1st term

World Religions – RELS 2305

Prof. Hale – WEB (CRN: 30038 / UALR Online: 31614)
2nd term

Philosophy of Technology – PHIL 4380

Prof. Spino – WEB (CRN: 31900 / UALR Online: 31901)
2nd term

What would it mean to upload our consciousness to a computer? Would a robot with advanced artificial intelligence count as a person and have rights? If we could extend our natural life span by hundreds or even thousands of years, should we? Is the person that steps into a *Star Trek*-style transporter the same one that steps out? This course will examine some of the social, political, and ethical implications of our rapidly advancing technology. Topics once reserved for science fiction books and film are starting to become a reality, and governments, businesses, and individuals will soon be living in a very different world than that of just a generation ago. Specific topics include artificial intelligence, the moral status of robots, human cloning, the technological singularity, and cybernetics.

Summer course offerings may change subject to availability of instructors and expected enrollment; check the Schedule of Classes online or ask your advisor for the most up-to-date information.

Fall 2017 Courses

Introduction to Philosophy — PHIL 1310

Prof. McAuliffe — TR 9:25-10:40 (CRN: 60354)

Prof. McAuliffe — WEB (CRN: 60696 / UALR Online: 63086)

This course is a survey of basic themes in philosophy, addressing such fundamental concerns as the nature of morality and beauty, the relation of mind and body, and the existence of free will, through discussion and analysis of readings.

Introduction to Critical Thinking — PHIL 1330

Prof. Pardikes — MWF 11:00-11:50 (CRN: 60355)

An introduction to reasoning skills. This course focuses on the recognition of informal fallacies and the nature, use, and evaluation of arguments, as well as the basic characteristics of inductive and deductive arguments.

Ethics and Society — PHIL 2320

Multiple Sections On-Campus and Online,
see Schedule of Classes

This course features a study of selected texts reflecting a variety of ethical systems—with at least one major text from each of four historical periods. Ethical theories examined will include: deontology, utilitarianism, and virtue theory.

Fulfills Core Curriculum requirement: Humanities

Introduction to Logic — PHIL 2350

Prof. John — WEB (CRN: 60701 / UALR Online: 63087)

An introduction to deductive logic, including translation of sentences into formal systems, immediate inferences, syllogisms, formal fallacies, proofs of validity, and quantification.

World Religions — RELS 2305

Prof. Taylor — WEB (CRN 60702 / UALR Online: 63095)

This course examines the beliefs, practices, histories, and selected sacred texts of major Eastern and Western religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It emphasizes themes that reflect common values across different religious perspectives while acknowledging key differences.

Fulfills Core Curriculum requirement: Humanities

Science and Culture — PHIL 3312

Prof. Thomas — TR 10:50-12:05 (CRN: 65036)

In this course, we will take a close look at what science is, how it works, and what scientists do; we will explore the trend toward prediction rather than explanation (particularly in quantum mechanics); the influence of culture on science, and the influence of science on culture; the strength, limits and assumptions of the scientific method; the status of induction and causation; and the role of imagination.

Philosophy major: counts toward *Mind, Knowledge, and Culture*

Contemporary Philosophy — PHIL 3322

Prof. Robinson — MW 1:40-2:55 (CRN: 62740)

Some of the most exciting and original work in contemporary philosophy has been done in France in the period beginning roughly in 1890 and continuing up to the present. The contemporary French philosopher Alain Badiou has claimed that there is a unity to much of this work constituting what he calls both the 'programme' and the 'adventure' of French philosophy. Badiou suggests that the adventure of this philosophy lies in an exchange or dialectic between a philosophy of life on the one hand and a philosophy of the concept on the other. In this course I want to explore this claim by looking at how a range of French thinkers tackle some of the central topics of philosophy. With significant and creative contributions being made to our understanding of time, perception, free will, power, subjectivity, difference and language we will read texts by Bergson, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Foucault, Derrida and Deleuze.

Philosophy major: counts toward *History of Philosophy*

3000- and 4000-level PHIL courses generally have PHIL 1310, PHIL 2320, or instructor consent as their prerequisite. Students enrolling in 1000- or 2000-level PHIL or RELS courses are advised to have completed (or be concurrently enrolled in) RHET 1311.

****New Course****

Ethics Bowl — PHIL 3386

Prof. Spino — MW 3:05-4:20 (CRN: 65195)

This course is an advanced applied ethics course taught with a focus on specific case studies created by the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics for a regional debate competition each year. Students will have the opportunity to engage with ethical problems on wide ranging topics, such as social and political ethics (e.g., gun control or national health care), global issues (e.g., economic globalization or global warming), personal responsibility (e.g., local activism), and academic topics (e.g., plagiarism or academic freedom), to name only a few possibilities. Work on the case studies will allow students to improve not only their research and writing ability, but their oral communication skills as well. Much of the course will involve structured, in-class debate.

The course will also prepare students to participate in a regional Ethics Bowl (held in mid-November in Indianapolis) as part of the UA Little Rock Ethics Bowl Team. While participation on the Ethics Bowl Team will be encouraged, it will not be required.

For more information about the Ethics Bowl Team, visit:
<http://ualr.edu/philosophy/orgs/ethics-bowl/>

For more information about the structure, rules, and guidelines of Ethics Bowl competitions, as well as cases from past years, visit:
<http://appe.indiana.edu/ethics-bowl/ethics-bowl/>

Instructor consent is required to register for this course; contact Prof. Spino prior to registering

Feminist Theory — PHIL 4333

Prof. McAuliffe — TR 1:40-2:55 (CRN: 62742)

This course will engage with some of feminist theory's most fundamental and most recent texts to think critically and deeply about *how gender works*. Beginning from the perspective that gender is both social and political, we will explore the ways that normative power conditions how one comes to experience gender. We will pay close attention to the work of feminists of color, queer feminists, and trans feminists, as the history of feminist thought teaches us that it is crucial to centralize the experiences of those most marginalized by the power dynamics we explore. We will also think carefully about theory in general: what it is, how best to read it, what it is for, and what its relationship is or should be to political actions. The complex set of themes, methods, and ideas that constitute feminist theory can help each of us deepen our understanding of how history and power impact our society, our communities, and ourselves.

Graduate seats available (as PHIL 5333, CRN: 62743)

****New Course****

Theories of Religion — RELS 3300

Prof. Norton — WEB (CRN: 65044 / UALR Online: 65045)

What is religion? What counts as a religion? Is it even possible to define it with any precision? This course will examine a variety of theoretical approaches and methods used in the study of religions, both in the past and in the present. We will explore the difficulties of defining religion, the difference between "insider" and "outsider" perspectives on religions, and attempts to explain religion's origin. We will attempt to approach religion from a variety of viewpoints arising from different academic disciplines, paying special attention to the ways in which factors such as politics, gender, race, and ethnicity have shaped thinking about religion.

Religious Studies minor: required course

Reading Sacred Texts: The New Testament — RELS 3333

Prof. Hale — TR 12:15-1:30 (CRN: 60368)

This course will look at the books of the New Testament and the scholarly research that has been done on them. We will use a mostly historical approach. We will read each book and try to determine the circumstances of its composition: who composed it, when, where, and for what audience. We will also read about some of the other literature of that time period that did not become part of the New Testament. This will help us better understand the early development of the Christian religion.

Religion, Society, and Culture — RELS 4321

Prof. Hale — TR 10:50-12:05 (CRN: 63732)

This course deals with the anthropology of religion, so we will read and discuss material dealing with religion from an anthropological perspective. The articles we read will focus on religion as it is practiced, rather than abstract or idealized ideas about religion. Topics will include myth, ritual, shamanism, altered states of consciousness, healing, witchcraft, and sorcery. The class will be conducted mainly through discussions. Insights from various backgrounds and fields of study are encouraged.

Cross-listed as ANTH 4321 and SOCI 4321

Psychology of Religion — RELS 3363

Prof. Jones — WEB (CRN: 61835 | UALR Online: 64083)

Understanding religious behavior and experience has long been an interest in psychological research. Religion, however, has proven to be a difficult area for traditional scientific approaches and research given the seemingly unique place and scope that it has in our lives. This course will seek to examine various psychological perspectives on religion with particular focus on the varieties of religious experience, the nature of religious belief, psychological interpretations of religious experiences and practices, the findings of neuroscience with regards to religious phenomena, and the role of religion via its intersection and application in counseling.

Cross-listed as PSYC 3363

BA in Philosophy

- Intro to Philosophy
- Intro to Critical Thinking OR Intro to Logic
- HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: 2 courses (6 credits)
- MORAL AND POLITICAL: 1 course (3 credits)
- MIND, KNOWLEDGE, CULTURE: 1 course (3 credits)
- Electives: 4 courses (12 credits)

Philosophy minor

- Intro to Philosophy
- Intro to Critical Thinking OR Intro to Logic
- Electives: 4 courses (12 credits)

Religious Studies minor

- World Religions
- Theories of Religion
- MAJOR RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS: 1 course (3 credits)
- Electives: 3 courses (9 credits)