

Philosophy & Religious Studies

Summer 2019 Courses

Course Listings

Summer & Fall 2019



1st Term (May 28–July 1):

Ethics and Society — PHIL 2320

Prof. Robinson — MTWRF 12:00-1:30 (CRN: 31480)

Prof. Thomas — WEB (CRN: 30382 / UALR Online: 30819)

World Religions — RELS 2305

Prof. Hale — WEB (CRN: 31472 / UALR Online: 31473)

2nd Term (July 8–August 9):

Ethics and Society — PHIL 2320

Prof. McAuliffe — WEB (CRN: 30386 / UALR Online: 30820)

Intro to Logic — PHIL 2350

Prof. Spino — WEB (CRN: 30592 / UALR Online: 30905)

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 2019 Courses

Philosophy and Narrative — PHIL 3315

Prof. Thomas — TR 1:40-2:55 (CRN: 65472)

Is “Sherlock Holmes lived in London” a fact? Can fiction convey truths? Are there some dimensions of our lives that can only be expressed through literature? What do we learn from metaphor? What are the rules of effective storytelling? How do we know the difference between good and bad books? In this course, we will look at philosophy *in* literature as well as philosophy *of* literature. We will be reading a (short) novel every 2-3 weeks, and several assigned philosophical articles on aesthetics and literature.

Process from Nietzsche to Deleuze — PHIL 4385

Prof. Robinson — TR 12:15-1:30 (CRN: 65473)

This course seeks to introduce students to the problems, texts and concepts of modern process philosophy as a series of responses to the central traditions of 20th- and 21st-century Western philosophy—analytic philosophy and phenomenology. In doing so we will address some of the key questions in the history of Western philosophy. For example, questions about the nature, form and purpose of life, time and consciousness are typically addressed by process philosophers in relation to the concepts of becoming, change and fluidity. The fundamental ‘stuff’ of the world is here understood not as a fixed material substance or ‘thing’, as it is in much of the philosophical tradition, but as a process of becoming. A substance with fixed properties is replaced by a fluid series of complex and interrelated events. A river is not an object but a flowing, ever changing process such that “one cannot step twice into the same river”. However, the nature and conception of this processual reality varies throughout the tradition from the great ‘fire’ of the pre-Socratic thinker Heraclitus to the concept of ‘difference’ and ‘flux’ of the postmodern philosopher Gilles Deleuze. In this course we will concentrate on Nietzsche, Bergson, James, Whitehead and Deleuze and contrast them in order to examine the value and significance of process thought as a contemporary philosophy.

Philosophy Major: counts toward History of Philosophy area

Ethics Bowl — PHIL 3386

Prof. Spino — MW 3:05-4:20 (CRN: 64119)

This course is an upper-level 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, global warming), personal responsibility (e.g., local activism), and academic controversies (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. While the course will also prepare students for the regional ethical bowl competition, participation on the UA Little Rock Ethics Bowl Team is not required—though it is encouraged!

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 (jmspino@ualr.edu) prior to registering

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

Queer Theory — PHIL 4380

Prof. McAuliffe — MW 1:40-2:55 (CRN: 60352)

Queer people have perhaps never been so visible: appearing in the news, married in good legal standing, starring on reality TV, leading trends on social media. However, people determined to be gender and sexually transgressive continue to experience shaming, harassment, and violence. Because we are living through a time of intensifying queer representation, it is crucial to engage the ways that Queer Theorists have identified, understood, and critiqued social norms surrounding mainstream acceptance. We will engage this tension by reading our way through some of this interdisciplinary field's most fabulous texts. The course will consider what the term *queer* means, how it might differ from categories such as lesbian, gay, or homosexual, and how sexuality affects an understanding of race, gender, ability, nationality, and class. Each of the texts will help sharpen our understanding of how queer theorists critique heteronormativity, binary gender, and identity categories. We will also think carefully about theory in general: what it is, what it is for, and what its relationship is or should be to political action. The complex set of themes, methods, and ideas that constitute Queer Theory can deepen an appreciation for multiplicity, including the multiplicity in our communities, in our lives, and in ourselves.

Graduate section: PHIL 5380 (CRN: 61612)

Religion, Society, and Culture — RELS 4321

Prof. Hale — TR 10:50-12:05 (CRN: 63071)

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

Theories of Religion — RELS 3300

Prof. Taylor — WEB (CRN: 64015 | UALR Online: 64016)

This course will examine a variety of theoretical approaches and methods—from both the past and the present—used in the study of religions. How has “religion” been defined historically? How can we define its boundaries today? Is religion primarily about answering the ultimate questions in life, providing a guide for how to live a good life, providing an organizational structure for society, or something else?

We will cover different basic methodical perspectives used in the study of religion—“insider” vs. “outsider”, “substantive” vs. “functional”, “interpretive” vs. “explanatory”, etc.—and discuss their various advantages and disadvantages in scholarly contexts. We will also pay special attention throughout the course to the ways in which factors such as race, gender, politics, and socioeconomics have shaped thinking about religion and religious beliefs, traditions, practices, and communities.

Required for the Religious Studies Minor

Psychology of Religion — RELS 3363

Prof. Jones — WEB (CRN: 61716 | UALR Online: 63391)

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

Introductory Courses:

Introduction to Philosophy — PHIL 1310

Prof. McAuliffe — MWF 12:00-12:50 (CRN: 60340)

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.

Required for Philosophy Major and Minor

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. Spino — MWF 10:00-10:50 (CRN: 64752)

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. Hale — WEB (CRN 60671 / UALR Online: 62806)

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

Why Should I Study Philosophy?

“Philosophers are comfortable in the courtroom, control room, or boardroom. They are trained in public expression and mental discipline, both crucial skills for managers, executives, lawyers, and leaders. ... Philosophy teaches a person to engage not with the superficial symptoms of surrounding society, but, like a good MD, to consider the deeper history and structural causes.”
 (“A Case for Majoring in Philosophy,” *Forbes.com*)

“Philosophy classes taught me something applicable to any and every job: clarity of thought. Name me one aspect of your life that doesn’t benefit from being able to think something through clearly. Because it delivers real skills, philosophy doesn’t go out of fashion the way the trendy subjects do.”
 (“Be Employable, Study Philosophy,” *Salon.com*)

“In the US, where the number of philosophy graduates increased by 5% a year during the 1990s, only a very few go on to become philosophers. Their employability is impressive by any standard. ... Philosophy is the ultimate transferable work skill.”
 (“Philosophy: A Quintessential Modern Discipline,” *London Times*)

“Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves; because these questions enlarge our conception of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculation; but above all because, through the greatness of the universe which philosophy contemplates, the mind also is rendered great, and becomes capable of that union with the universe which constitutes its highest good.”
 (“The Problems of Philosophy,” Bertrand Russell)