

Philosophy & Religious Studies

Spring 2020 Courses



UALR | DEPARTMENT OF
PHILOSOPHY AND
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Introduction to Philosophy — PHIL 1310-991/9U1

WEB: Prof. McAuliffe (CRN: 11332 | UALR Online: 13587)

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 majors and minors

Introduction to Logic — PHIL 2350-991/9U1

Prof. Spino — WEB (CRN: 15610 | UALR Online: 15611)

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

Fulfills requirement for Philosophy majors and minors

Fulfills requirement for Legal Studies majors and minors

World Religions — RELS 2305

01: Prof. Hale — TR 10:50-12:05 (CRN: 11485)

991/9U1: Prof. Taylor — WEB

(CRN: 11338 | UALR Online: 13071)

This course examines the global patterns of contemporary world religions as symbol systems and expressions of discrete, coherent world views. It focuses on the particular histories, practices, and beliefs of the major world religions.

Fulfills Core Curriculum requirement: Humanities

Required for Religious Studies minors

Ethics and Society — PHIL 2320

01: Prof. Thomas — TR 9:25-10:40 (CRN: 11476)

02: Prof. Robinson — MW 12:15-1:30 (CRN: 11477)

03: Prof. Robinson — TR 12:15-1:30 (CRN: 11478)

991: Prof. Thomas — WEB (CRN: 11334)

992: Prof. Thomas — WEB (CRN: 11335)

993/9U3: Prof. Taylor — WEB

(CRN: 11336 | UALR Online: 13215)

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 (antiquity, medieval, early modern, and contemporary). Ethical theories examined will include: deontology, utilitarianism, and virtue theory.

Fulfills Core Curriculum requirement: Humanities

Ethics and Society: Prof. Applications — PHIL 2321-9H1

Prof. Spino — MW 11:00-11:50 + WEB (CRN: 15618)

HYBRID section: includes on campus class meetings & an online component

This course is similar to PHIL 2320, featuring a study of selected texts reflecting a variety of ethical systems such as deontology, utilitarianism, and virtue theory. These ethical theories will be brought to bear on specific ethical issues arising in the workplace and in the context of professional life.

Fulfills Core Curriculum requirement: Humanities

Ancient Greek Philosophy — PHIL 3345 (CRN: 12498)

Prof. Robinson — TR 1:40-2:55

What is known in the West as ‘philosophy’ began in Ancient Greece in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. But why bother studying thinkers who lived over 2,000 years ago? One fundamental reason is that the Greeks laid the foundation for Western culture and the traditions of Western philosophy and science. The Greeks are our intellectual ancestors, and so to understand something of their achievements is to open a window onto our own culture and ourselves. In this course we will read texts from Thales to Aristotle in order to dip into this legacy that has shaped Western culture. But there’s a second reason for studying these long dead philosophers. Many of their solutions to the great problems and questions of philosophy are still alive and remain vitally important and relevant today. Take Plato. The great British philosopher Alfred North Whitehead famously declared that the European tradition of philosophy is a series of ‘footnotes to Plato.’ In studying Plato we encounter questions that are relevant today. What is knowledge? Are values relative? Should we act in accordance with a law even if it is unjust? What is the best human life? In reading Plato we are also confronted by answers to these questions that challenge our contemporary modes of living and thinking. In this course we will read the Greeks because they still speak to us and can teach us about the meaning and value of human existence.

Fulfills Philosophy major area: History of Philosophy

Philosophy of Technology — PHIL 4380-991/9U1
Prof. Spino — WEB (CRN: 13615 | UALR Online: 15622)

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.

While beneficial, prior experience with philosophical and ethical theory is not required. Specific topics include artificial intelligence, the moral status of robots, human cloning, the technological singularity, and cybernetics.

3000- and 4000-level PHIL courses generally have PHIL 1310, PHIL 2320, or instructor consent as their prerequisite.

Course information/availability is subject to change. Make sure to remain in touch with your advisor, and watch your email for any announcements of course changes or cancellations.

Philosophy of Law — PHIL 3347
Prof. McAuliffe — MW 1:40-2:55 (CRN: 15620)

We live our lives in the context of laws; law may even have a hold on us before we are born and after we die. But why? This course allows students to think critically about law as a powerful social force. We will begin by engaging philosophical accounts of the purpose of law and its relationship to justice and social order. We will then look at the historical actuality of law, exploring how law has shaped the lived reality of people through its effect on nationality, race, gender, sexuality, and other identity categories. Each student will develop an original critical analysis of a particular law that determines how and whether that law fulfills the promise of justice. This course thus uses the philosophical engagements with law as an opportunity to ask urgent contemporary questions about the possibility of justice in the 21st century.

Fulfills Philosophy major area: Moral/Political

Eastern Thought — PHIL 3350 (CRN: 12123)
Prof. Norton — TR 12:15-1:30

This course will explore some of the most significant concepts and problems in the history of Indian, Chinese, and Japanese cultures. We'll look at themes such as the nature of reality, selfhood, and ethics, and along the way we'll also delve into the religious beliefs, histories, and philosophical schools of traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. In addition, we'll critically interrogate the definitions and boundaries of categories such as "spirituality," "religion," and "philosophy" – and particularly "Western" and "Eastern." The course will finish with a look at some examples of contemporary Asian thought.

Cross-listed as RELS 3350 (CRN: 12055)
Fulfills Philosophy requirement: Mind/Knowledge/Culture
Fulfills Religious Studies requirement: Major Traditions

Psychology of Religion — RELS 3363

Prof. Jones — WEB (CRN: 15628 | UALR Online: 15629)

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

Religion, Society, and Culture — RELS 4321

Prof. Hale — TR 9:25-10:40 (CRN: 11486)

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

The Department of Philosophy & Interdisciplinary Studies offers B.A. programs in Philosophy and in Interdisciplinary Studies, as well as Philosophy and Religious Studies minors.

In addition to the standard B.A. in Philosophy, we also offer the Early Admittance Law Program in conjunction with Bowen Law School – an accelerated Philosophy major that allows students to count their first year (or 30 credit hours) in law school as their final year (30 credit hours) at UA Little Rock.

For more information about any and all of our programs, visit ualr.edu/philosophy

To speak with one of our faculty members – or to set up an advising appointment – contact Brandy Cochran

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“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*)