

# PHILOSOPHY

## Summer & Fall 2021 Courses

### PHIL 1310: The Philosophical Life

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.

Prof. McAuliffe

**Summer:** Online, no virtual meetings

**Fall:** Mon/Wed 10am face-to-face meetings with additional content online

**Core Curriculum:** Humanities

### PHIL 2350: Introduction to Logic



What makes people so good at solving certain problems is that we are very adept at pattern recognition. This is why CAPTCHA images tend to block machines: we can see the words without being distracted by superfluous marks. Logic clarifies our patterns of reasoning without being distracted by superfluous arguments (logical fallacies). Just as learning the patterns of computation in mathematics allows us to do problems of addition and subtraction that go beyond the number of our fingers and toes, so too the rules of logic allow us to solve problems that are too complex for us to simply recognize the answer. In this course, we will look at both formal and informal logic. We will also cover the ways in which the study of logic can serve as preparation for the LSAT test.

Prof. Thomas

**Fall:** Online with virtual meetings Thur. 1:40

### PHIL 2320: Ethics & Society

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.

Multiple sections **Summer & Fall**

—consult Course Schedule for details

**Core Curriculum:** Humanities

### PHIL 3312: Science & Culture

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.

Prof. Thomas

**Summer:** Online, no virtual meetings

### PHIL 3386: Ethics Bowl

This course is an upper-level applied ethics course taught with a focus on specific case studies created for the regional Ethics Bowl competition. Students will have the opportunity to engage with ethical problems on a wide range of topics (past examples include student loan forgiveness, gun control, environmental policy, COVID-19 care, etc.). Work on the case studies will allow students to improve not only their research and writing abilities, but their oral communication and teamwork skills as well. Much of the course will involve structured, in-class debate. While the course will prepare students for the Ethics Bowl competition, participation on the Ethics Bowl Team is not required—but it is encouraged!

Prof. Norton

**Fall:** Tues/Thur 3:05 face-to-face meetings

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### **PHIL 3321: Kant & 19th Century Phil.**

*Immanuel Kant wrote of awaking from a “dogmatic slumber” and challenged his contemporaries to emerge from a self-imposed immaturity into the autonomy of reason. This course will examine some influential selections from Kant and later advocates of the Enlightenment philosophical project, as well as some of its most outspoken critics. Exploring work by Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx, and Nietzsche—as well as Mary Wollstonecraft, Margaret Fuller, Frederick Douglass, Anna J. Cooper, and others—we will ask questions about the foundations and limits of reason, the nature of human freedom, the material conditions of knowledge, the role of faith, and the struggle for liberation. We will also undertake critical questions about the ways that philosophers’ views about race and gender might complicate their otherwise emancipatory positions.*

Prof. Norton

**Fall:** Tues. 1:40 face-to-face meetings  
with additional content online

### **PHIL 3375: Environmental Philosophy**

*According to some scientists and philosophers we have now entered the ‘Anthropocene’, a period in which humans have not only negatively impacted the climate and species diversity but the very geology of the planet. Humans are now influencing every aspect of the Earth on scales that are unprecedented. This course will introduce students to environmental philosophy by giving them an opportunity to think critically and creatively about various philosophical accounts of ‘value’ in the context of the Anthropocene. In the first half of the course we will address questions like: What is valuable? Where does value come from? Do humans create value? Is value inherently anthropocentric? Are values ‘objectively’ present in the universe? Is value conferred by the presence of certain attributes or qualities (reason, sentience, being alive, diversity, balance, etc.)? In the second half of the course we will reflect on how these accounts of value bear on specific controversies and how we might live our lives accordingly. We will examine how these dimensions are linked and integrated in some of the most difficult moral issues that face us today including population, food, climate change, pollution, and the loss of species life.*

Prof. Robinson

**Fall:** Wed. 1:40 face-to-face meetings  
with additional content online

### **PHIL 3347: Philosophy of Law**

*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 offers students an opportunity to think critically about law as a powerful social force. We will begin by understanding the philosophical basis for what makes law legitimate or illegitimate by exploring the purpose of law and its relationship to justice as well as to social order. We will then look at the historical actuality of law by exploring how law has shaped the lived reality of people through its effect on the social experience of nationality, race, gender, class, and/or sexuality. Each student will develop an original critical analysis of a particular law that determines whether and how that law fulfills the promise of justice. This course thus uses the historical development of law as an opportunity to ask urgent contemporary questions about the meaning of freedom and justice in the 21st century.*

Prof. McAuliffe

**Fall:** Online, no virtual meetings