

## **Philosophy and Religion**

*Faculty:* Winston, Chair; Kamber, Le Morvan, Preti, Roberts, Sisko, Taylor

*Click the appropriate link for [Philosophy courses](#) and [Religion courses](#).*

Philosophy, as a discipline, is the systematic examination of the most fundamental questions that human beings ask. Philosophy explores such matters as the nature of reality, the nature and source of knowledge, the nature and basis of ethics, and the relationship between mind and body. The study of philosophy makes a valuable contribution to one's personal development and is a keystone of a liberal education. The philosophy major combines a thorough study of philosophies that have shaped Western civilization with rigorous training in the analysis of argument and in the development of a systematic set of reasoned philosophical views of one's own.

The design of the philosophy major itself, as well as each course taught, strives to imbue students with those ways of identifying, thinking about and analyzing problems and constructing and assessing theories and counterexamples that can be found within the best that philosophy has to offer. The courses expressly ask students to demonstrate the ability to identify philosophical issues as problems or puzzles with respect to which there exist opposing solutions each of which requires investigation, understanding and assessment. They also emphasize the importance of the student's making a genuine contribution to the discussion that is presented by the assigned and recommended materials for the course in addition to demonstrating mastery of those materials. These courses also place emphasis on the process by which a good piece of philosophy is finally produced.

Philosophy majors and minors may elect to pursue either the general course of study in philosophy or, if they choose, a major or minor specialization either in the area of Law and Philosophy or in the area of Ethics. The general course of study in philosophy is designed for students who have broad interests in philosophy or who wish to prepare for graduate school in philosophy. The specialization in Law and Philosophy is designed for students with an interest in law or in legal and political theory. The specialization in Ethics is designed for students with interests in theoretical or applied ethics, or medicine, nursing, and other professions in the fields of ethics, health care, and biomedical research.

The study of philosophy provides a powerful perspective on other academic subjects ranging from literature and art to biology and mathematics as well as an exceptionally strong background for such diverse professions as teaching, journalism, medicine, ministry, and business as well as law. A major or minor in philosophy can thus be profitably combined with a variety of other majors. More information about the value of the study of philosophy can be found on the department website

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~philos>

Religion courses explore religious matters and their place in human life. They provide critical insight into the fundamental tenets and practices of the major religious traditions. The minor and self-designed major in religion offer a sustained and probing study of these matters, and provide a valuable background for religious vocations and for a number of careers including social work, teaching, and counseling. Information concerning the self-designed major in religion may be found at <http://www.tcnj.edu/~philos/religion/sdmrs.html>.

### **Philosophy Major**

Philosophy majors, whether pursuing the general course of study in philosophy or concentrating in Philosophy and Law or in Ethics, are required to complete a total of 10

## Philosophy and Religion-2

PHL courses, for a total of 10 course units. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA for retention in the major.

### Required Courses

**Logic** 1 course unit

PHL 120/Introduction to Logic

*or*

PHL 220/Metalogic

**History of Philosophy** 2 course units

PHL 201/History of Ancient Philosophy

*and*

PHL 205/History of Modern Philosophy

**Ethics** 1 course unit

PHL 350/Ethical Theory

*or*

PHL 375/Law and Ethics

**Epistemology or Metaphysics** 1 course unit

PHL 410/Theory of Knowledge

*or*

PHL 420/Metaphysics

**Philosophy Electives** 4 course units

Four additional philosophy courses including at least two at the 300 or 400 level.

**Senior Capstone\*** 1-2 course units

PHL 493/Senior Project Research *and* PHL 494/Senior Project .5 course units each

*or*

PHL 495/Senior Thesis Research *and* PHL 496 Senior Thesis 1 course unit each

\*The senior capstone requirement permits the student to unify the skills and knowledge acquired through study in the major. The capstone will most likely take the form of a substantial piece of written work, with research and a significant written component completed in the fall semester of the student's senior year, and the final phases of the work completed in the spring semester of the student's senior year. Senior capstone is independent work is guided by an advisor with whom the student will be working closely in both the research and writing phases of the capstone, on a topic to which both agree. Prior to registering for their first semester of their senior year, students must seek permission of a department faculty member to serve as their advisor, and registration is by advisement only. By the end of the first semester of their capstone requirement (PHL 493/Senior Project Research or PHL 495/Senior Thesis Research), students must have submitted a significant portion of written work to the advisor. This work may take the form, for instance, of an outline with an annotated bibliography, or an initial partial draft of the project/thesis.

### Philosophy Major Specializations: Law and Philosophy; Ethics

Like the traditional majors, the specializations in Law and Philosophy and in Ethics require students to complete 10 course units in philosophy as described above. As part of their 10 course units, students who wish to pursue a specialization will be required to select specified courses as options and a senior project or thesis particularly related to the specialization, as follows:

#### Law and Philosophy

PHL 275/Philosophy of Law

PHL 375/Law and Ethics

Senior project or thesis on a topic in the area of law and philosophy.

### **Philosophy and Religion-3**

#### **Ethics**

PHL 255/Biomedical Ethics

PHL 350/Ethical Theory

PHL 430/Advanced Ethics

Senior project or thesis on a topic in the area of ethics.

Students interested in pursuing a specialization in Law and Philosophy should contact Professor Roberts or the chair of the department. Students interested in pursuing a specialization in Ethics should contact Professor Winston.

#### **Philosophy Minor**

Philosophy minors may elect to pursue either the general course of study in philosophy or, if they choose, a minor specialization either in the area of Law and Philosophy or in the area of Ethics. All minors, whether pursuing the general course of study in philosophy or specializing in Law and Philosophy or in Ethics, are required to complete a total of five PHL courses, for a total of five course units:

PHL 120/Introduction to Logic

PHL 201/History of Ancient Philosophy

*or*

PHL 205/History of Modern Philosophy

Two additional PHL courses at any level.

One additional PHL course at 300 or 400 level.

#### **Philosophy Minor Specializations : Law and Philosophy; Ethics**

Philosophy minors specializing in Law and Philosophy or in Ethics must ensure that, in choosing courses that satisfy the requirements listed above, they also satisfy certain additional requirements of the specializations. In particular, minors specializing in Law and Philosophy must complete PHL 275 and PHL 375. Minors specializing in Ethics must complete either PHL 135 or PHL 255, PHL 350, and PHL 430. Because the philosophy minor may be tailored to any number of specific needs and interests, students who are considering a minor in philosophy may wish to consult with the department before selecting a particular sequence of courses.

#### **Honors in Philosophy and Thesis Honors**

The department awards honors in philosophy at graduation to students who have completed a distinguished undergraduate record in philosophy. Rising seniors are admitted to the honors program in philosophy provided they have a GPA of 3.6 or better after having completed six courses in philosophy, in those courses. Students who then complete the major with a 3.6 GPA or better in their philosophy courses will be awarded honors in philosophy. The department may also designate still other students as having achieved honors in philosophy in exceptional cases (to be determined by vote of the whole department).

The award of thesis honors will be given to students who have completed PHL 496 (Senior Thesis) with distinction, as follows. All thesis students will have, in addition to their advisor who will serve as first reader, a second reader. If both readers judge the thesis to meet the standard for thesis honors, the student will be invited to defend the thesis orally. The two faculty readers will then determine whether the thesis, in the light of the oral defense, merits thesis honors. The grading of the thesis itself, however, will remain the responsibility of the original advisor.

## Philosophy and Religion-4

### Course Sequence

Many students who choose to major in philosophy do so late in, or after, their freshman year; and some courses are offered only in alternate years. The program that follows is thus an idealized sequence; the exact semester and particular order in which the courses are taken will probably vary. To ensure that students entering the major in their sophomore or junior year complete the program on a timely basis, specific requirements may be waived for students who have covered pertinent subject matter in other ways. Many courses in the College Honors Program will satisfy one or another philosophy requirement; and, where necessary, students can complete course requirements on an independent study or special arrangement basis. The substitution of another course for a specific requirement does not reduce the total number of credits required for the major.

### Freshman Year

FSP	First Seminar	1 course unit
WRI	102/Academic Writing—if required*	1 course unit
	Foreign Language**	2 course units
	Quantitative Reasoning	1 course unit
	One elective***	1 course unit
	Electives in Philosophy (at appropriate level)	2 course units

\*A student exempted from the requirement should take a Liberal Learning course.

\*\*Students must determine whether or not they can be exempted from language course (by examination or other means); otherwise three courses are required. It is recommended that students exempted from these courses take other liberal learning courses. Note: Arabic 151 and 152; Chinese 151 and 152; Japanese 151 and 152; Persian 151 and 152; and Russian 151 and 152 are intensive courses and carry two course units of credit each. Students should take this into account when planning a normal four-course semester.

\*\*\*Either through electives or otherwise, students must, in addition, complete courses, programs, or sustained experiences that cover (1) community engaged learning, (2) gender, (3) global perspectives and (4) race and ethnicity

### Sophomore Year

	Foreign Language	1 course unit
	Laboratory Science	2 course units
	Literature	1 course unit
PHL	120 Introduction to Logic	
	<i>or</i>	
PHL	220/Metalogic	1 course unit
PHL	201/History of Ancient Philosophy	1 course unit
PHL	205/History of Modern Philosophy	1 course unit
PHL	350/Ethical Theory	1 course unit
	<i>or</i>	
PHL	375/Law and Ethics	

### Junior Year

	Social Science/History	3 course units
PHL	410/Theory of Knowledge	1 course unit
	<i>or</i>	
PHL	420/Metaphysics	
	Two additional philosophy courses (300-400 level)	2 course units
	Two electives	2 course units

## Philosophy and Religion-5

### Senior Year

Art		1 course unit
PHL 493/ Senior Project Research <i>and</i> PHL 494/ Senior Project		.5 course units each
<i>or</i>		
PHL 495/ Senior Thesis Research <i>and</i> 496 Senior Thesis		1 course unit each
Two additional philosophy courses		2 course units
Four electives		4 course units