

# Φ The Department of Philosophy

336 ten Hoor Hall • 348-5942 • philosophy.ua.edu

## FALL 2016 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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### PHL 100.001, 002, & 005 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

INSTRUCTOR: DR. BENJAMIN KOZUCH

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).*

**Course Description:** The discipline of philosophy aims to answer the hard questions: Does God exist? Could there be an afterlife? Is there such a thing as objective right and wrong? Does a mechanistic physics allow for free will? These are questions that philosophers have toiled for hundreds of years trying to answer. This course surveys the fruits of their labor, looking at and evaluating the more notable answers offered to these questions. The goal of the course is to help the student form well-founded opinions as to how these questions should be answered.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Tentative Course Requirements:** TBA.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

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### PHL 100.003 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

INSTRUCTOR: DR. H SCOTT HESTEVOLD

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).*

**Course Description:** The course offers an introduction to philosophical methodology by way of studying several classic philosophical problems. The problems to be studied will likely include the following: (1) Are there objective facts about right and wrong, or is the moral status of homosexuality or abortion merely a matter of opinion? If there are objective moral facts, then what makes right actions *right* and wrong actions *wrong*? (2) Do you have free will, or are your actions all causally determined by your genetic predisposition, biochemistry, and various environmental stimuli? (3) What sort of thinking thing are *you*? Are you a non-physical soul that inhabits your body? Are you instead identical with your brain? (4) Is there compelling evidence that God exists? Or, does the existence of evil imply that a perfectly good God does *not* exist?

**Tentative Course Requirements:** Four multiple-choice/short-answer examinations.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *H* designation.

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**PHL 100.006 & 007                    INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**  
**INSTRUCTOR:                            DR. JUSTIN KLOCKSIEG**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).*

**Course Description:** This course provides an introduction to philosophy by way of a discussion of three central philosophical problems—the problem of free will and determinism; the problem of the existence and nature of God; and the “mind-body problem”. Along the way, other important topics in philosophy will be discussed.

In each case, the focus is on careful formulation of doctrines and arguments. The goals are (i) to understand the doctrines and arguments; (ii) to develop the ability to evaluate the doctrines and arguments; and (iii) to begin to develop the ability to extract well-formulated, interesting arguments from philosophical texts.

**Tentative Course Requirements:** TBA

**Prerequisites:** None

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

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**PHL 100.008 & 009                    INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**  
**INSTRUCTOR:                            DR. TIM BUTZER**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).*

**Course Description:** In this course, you will learn about what philosophy is and how philosophers apply the tools of logic and reason to philosophical problems. We will explore a variety of issues, including (but not limited to) the question of God’s existence, the relationship between mind and body, and skepticism about the external world.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Requirements (tentative):** Careful reading, attendance, participation, pop quizzes, and four exams (quizzes and exams are true/false, multiple choice).

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

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**PHL 100.900 & 990****INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY - ONLINE****INSTRUCTOR:****DR. TORIN ALTER**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).*

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to the basic concepts, methods, and problems of philosophy. Students will learn about philosophical approaches to issues such as the existence or nonexistence of God, the relationship between the mind and body, the freedom of the will, and the nature of right and wrong.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Requirements:** Seven module exams, comprehensive final. All work done on-line.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an **HU** designation.

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**PHL 104.002****CRITICAL THINKING****INSTRUCTOR:****DR. ADAM ARICO**

**Course Description:** Thinking critically does not come naturally to most of us; in fact, it is often contrary to our natural inclinations. In this course, we begin by looking at how human cognition typically operates, and why our psychology can often interfere with rational, critical thought. We will explore the basic features of human learning, memory, and reasoning, including common predispositions that often lead us to draw faulty conclusions, to arrive at mistaken judgments, and to make bad decisions.

Having identified some of the obstacles to and difficulties in behaving rationally and thinking critically, we will move on to the larger goal of the course: to better understand the structure of arguments and know how to critically assess them. This portion of the course will cover both inductive and deductive reasoning, as well as basic features of arguments, and will instruct you in identifying major fallacies, including ad hominem arguments, straw man arguments, appeal to irrelevant reasons, false dilemmas, etc. (see schedule for class meetings for more topics to be covered). Acquiring these skills will help you both better assess others' arguments and better construct your own.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Tentative Course Requirements:** (a) three in-class exams; (b) homework and writing assignments (d) a course participation grade.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Philosophy and Medicine** Specializations, and it fulfills requirements for the **Jurisprudence** Specialized Minor.*

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**PHL 106.001**  
**INSTRUCTOR:**

**HONORS INTRODUCTION TO DEDUCTIVE LOGIC**  
**DR. CHASE WRENN**

*Open to Honors students only. Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 195 (Introduction to Deductive Logic).*

**Course Description:** What is the difference between a good argument and a bad one? This course examines some of the formal techniques developed by philosophers and mathematicians to answer that question. Topics covered include the symbolic notation of modern sentential and predicate logic, truth tables, proofs, and counter-models. It is a self-paced course using both computer-aided learning techniques and one-on-one guidance from the instructor and the teaching assistants.

**Prerequisites:** Admission to UA Honors or 28 ACT, and a C or better in Math 100 or the equivalent.

**Course Requirements:** Attendance is mandatory, but students take tests when they feel they have mastered the material the tests cover. Final grades are determined by the number of tests passed and the number of test attempts made.

**Core Curriculum:** None

*This course is included in the **Mind - Brain** Concentration, and it fulfills requirements for the **Jurisprudence** Specialized Major and Minor.*

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**PHL 195.001**  
**INSTRUCTOR:**

**INTRODUCTION TO DEDUCTIVE LOGIC**  
**DR. CHASE WRENN**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 (Honors Introduction to Logic).*

**Course Description:** What is the difference between a good argument and a bad one? This course examines some of the formal techniques developed by philosophers and mathematicians to answer that question. Topics covered include the symbolic notation of modern sentential and predicate logic, truth tables, proofs, and counter-models. It is a self-paced course using both computer-aided learning techniques and one-on-one guidance from the instructor and the teaching assistants.

**Prerequisites:** A grade of C or above in Math 100 or equivalent.

**Course Requirements:** Attendance is mandatory, but students take tests when they feel they have mastered the material the tests cover. Final grades are determined by the number of tests passed and the number of test attempts made.

**Core Curriculum:** None

*This course is included in the **Mind - Brain** Concentration, and it fulfills requirements for the **Jurisprudence** Specialized Major and Minor.*

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**PHL 195.901**

**INTRODUCTION TO DEDUCTIVE LOGIC - ONLINE**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

**DR. CHASE WRENN**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 (Honors Introduction to Logic).*

**Course Description:** What is the difference between a good argument and a bad one? This course examines some of the formal techniques developed by philosophers and mathematicians to answer that question. Topics covered include the symbolic notation of modern sentential and predicate logic, truth tables, proofs, and counter-models. It is a self-paced course using both computer-aided learning techniques and one-on-one guidance from the instructor and the teaching assistants.

**Prerequisites:** A grade of C or above in Math 100 or equivalent.

**Course Requirements:** Students take tests when they feel they have mastered the material the tests cover. Final grades are determined by the number of tests passed and the number of test attempts made.

**Core Curriculum:** None

*This course is included in the **Mind - Brain** Concentration, and it fulfills requirements for the **Jurisprudence Specialized Major and Minor**.*

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**PHL 211.001**

**ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

**DR. SETH BORDNER**

**Course Description:** This course will focus on the major themes of ancient Greek philosophy, from the earliest pre-Socratic philosophers, through Plato and Aristotle, to the later Epicureans, Stoics, and Skeptics. We will proceed chronologically and pay special attention to the systematic connections between metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics in each school of thought, as well as the development of later views in light of criticisms of earlier ones. The aim of this course is to provide students a reasonably comprehensive introduction to the main areas of Western analytic philosophy through an examination of some of the earliest systematic philosophies.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Requirements:** There will be three exams throughout the course; two mid-term exams and one final exam. In addition, there will be periodic, unannounced quizzes given in class to test your comprehension of the readings. These quizzes will be graded on a High Pass/Low Pass/Fail scale.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.



**Course Requirements:** There will be five exams.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Philosophy and Medicine** Specialization.*

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**PHL 230.001                      POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

**INSTRUCTOR:                      DR. REKHA NATH**

**Course description:** What does justice require in our society today? With a focus on contemporary social and political issues, we seek to answer this question by looking at different dimensions of justice. We start out by examining the problem of political authority: What, if anything, can give the government legitimate authority over citizens? We then consider how the ideals of democracy, freedom, rights, and equality inform our understanding of a just society.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Tentative Course Requirements:** Exams and class participation

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence and Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

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**PHL 240.001                      PHILOSOPHY AND THE LAW**

**INSTRUCTOR:                      DR. KENNETH EHRENBERG**

**Course Description:** This course is a survey of major issues in the philosophy of law including the main theories of general jurisprudence, the relation of legal obligation to moral obligation, the nature and limits of legal responsibility, adjudication and legal reasoning, constitutions, and issues in legal interpretation.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Tentative Course Requirements:** reading quizzes, two exams, and online discussion

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** specialization.*

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**PHL 291.001                      AESTHETICS**

**INSTRUCTOR:                      DR. RICHARD RICHARDS**

**Course Description:** The arts are important to us. We listen to music, watch movies, see plays, attend dance concerts and go to art museums. But unless some controversy about art engages us, we rarely think about the nature of art. In this course, we will be introduced to some of the most fundamental concerns about art: What is distinctive, if anything, about the experience of artworks? Why do we identify anything as a work of art? How do we, or should we interpret an artwork? On what grounds can we criticize an artwork?

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Requirements:** Four exams. Attendance and participation in discussion will be expected.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *FA* (Fine Arts) designation.

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**PHL 292.001 & 004**                      **INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**  
**INSTRUCTOR:**                              **DR. ADAM ARICO**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).*

**Course Description:** What is the nature of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’, ‘good’ and ‘bad’? What are the principles or guidelines for behaving morally? What sort of life should live, and what sort of person should I be? How do I figure out what to do and which action is morally correct? Introduction to Ethics engages with all of these questions, and surveys the various ways that influential philosophers have attempted to answer those questions.

The course will introduce students to the fundamental concepts of ethics, as well as the major ethical theories. The course begins by discussing basic metaethical questions about moral realism, moral relativism, and moral skepticism, as well as the relationship (or lack thereof) between religion and morality. In the second portion of the course, students are introduced to the historically-significant ethical theories: Virtue Ethics, Deontology, and Consequentialism. The third portion of the course expounds on the implications of those ethical theories for various contemporary ethical issues—including abortion, animal rights, capital punishment, etc.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Requirements:** TBA

Attendance and participation are not required but are **strongly encouraged**. There will usually be a group work/discussion period during each class. There will be three in-class exams; one (optional) final exam; quizzes; and writing assignments.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** and **Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

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**PHL 292.002 & 009**                      **INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**  
**INSTRUCTOR:**                              **DR. HOLLY KANTIN**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).*

**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is to provide students with a general introduction to philosophical ethics. Students will become familiar with the main issues in ethical theory and learn how different theoretical approaches bear on specific ethical controversies. In the first few sections of the course we will discuss varying answers to the following theoretical questions: Are there moral facts and if so, what grounds these facts? How should we understand and respond to moral disagreements? What makes an action right or wrong? What does it mean to live well and have a good life? In the final section of the course we will discuss several specific ethical controversies including the debate over capital punishment and the ethics of euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide.

**Tentative Course Requirements:** TBA

**Prerequisites:** None

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** and **Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

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**PHL 292.005**                      **INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**  
**INSTRUCTOR:**                      **DR. TIM BUTZER**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).*

**Course Description:** We care not only about how the world actually is, but how it *ought to be*. We think it is wrong when someone kills, assaults or otherwise harms another without sufficient cause. We think highly of selfless acts that benefit others. In other words, we care about the *moral status* of our actions. Ethics, or moral philosophy, is the study of morality. Of primary importance in ethics is the question of what makes an act right or wrong. It is this question that will be the focus of this introductory course. We will survey some of the most influential theories of what makes an action morally right or wrong: utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and virtue ethics. In addition, we will also explore whether there are objective moral facts, whether actions are only moral/immoral relative to a culture, the role of religion in morality, and difficult moral issues surrounding world hunger and abortion.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Requirements:** TBA

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** and **Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

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**PHL 292.006**                      **INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**  
**INSTRUCTOR:**                      **DR. SETH BORDNER**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).*

**Course Description:** This course is designed to give the students a broad introduction to the field of philosophical ethics. The primary aim is to acquaint students with the basic subject matter of ethics as it is studied within philosophy, a few central authorities and positions, and a feel for how philosophers engage with contemporary ethical issues in light of some of the historical influences on the discipline. We will read a variety of texts ranging from historical works on ethics generally to contemporary works focusing on specific moral issues. The hope is that students will develop an understanding and appreciation of how different ethical theories apply to particular cases, and how they might begin to engage in genuine ethical debates.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Requirements:** There will be three exams throughout the course; two mid-term exams and one final exam. In addition, there will be periodic, unannounced quizzes given in class to test your comprehension of the readings. These quizzes will be graded on a High Pass/Low Pass/Fail scale.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence and Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

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**PHL 292.007 & 008                      INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**

**INSTRUCTOR:                              DR. JUSTIN KLOCKSIEM**

*Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).*

**Course Description:** This class provides an introduction to ethics by way of a discussion of doctrines and arguments in three central areas of moral philosophy--- (a) the normative ethics of behavior (the theory of right and wrong action); (b) value theory (the theory of good and evil); and (c) ethical controversies surrounding life-and-death situations involving human fetuses, the terminally ill, and non-human animals. Along the way, other important topics in moral philosophy will be discussed.

In each case, the focus is on careful formulation of doctrines and arguments. The goals are (i) to understand the doctrines and arguments; (ii) to develop the ability to evaluate the doctrines and arguments; and (iii) to begin to develop the ability to extract well-formulated, interesting arguments from philosophical texts.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Tentative Course Requirements:** TBA

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence and Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

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**PHL 381.001                              PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

**INSTRUCTOR:                              DR. H. SCOTT HESTEVOLD**

**Course Description:** The course offers the advanced philosophy student rigorous study of a range of problems involving philosophy of religion. Topics will likely include: (a) *Evidence that God exists:* the argument from design, the cosmological argument, and the ontological argument. (2) *The divine nature:* Are there limits to what an omnipotent being can do? Can God sin? Can God be omnipresent? (3) *Evidence that God does not exist:* Is it impossible that God exists in the same way that a married bachelor can't possibly exist? Does the existence of evil count against the existence of God? (4) *Theological concerns:* Can third-party atonement explain the Incarnation? If God exists, why does God remain hidden? Is belief in miracles inconsistent with adopting a scientific worldview? Given that we would condemn a physicist who believes in "dark matter" on faith; shouldn't we condemn the philosopher (or philosophy student) who believes in God on faith?

**Tentative Course Requirements:** (a) Two philosophical essays of at least five substantial, double-spaced pages will each determine 25% of the course grade; (b) three multiple-choice examinations will constitute 40%, and (c) course involvement (including attendance and occasional homework assignments) will constitute 10%.

**Prerequisites:** at least two UA philosophy courses or instructor's permission

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries a *W* designation.

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**PHL 390.001                    LOCAL JUSTICE – SPECIAL TOPICS**  
**INSTRUCTOR:                 DR. REKHA NATH**

**Course Description:** What does justice require in our society today? With a focus on social and political issues that face us locally, we seek to answer this question by drawing on different theories and viewpoints concerning citizenship, democracy, freedom, rights, and economic justice. In addition to learning about theories of justice in the classroom, students will develop a deeper understanding of social justice through the service-learning component of this course, which involves participation in a community project. The aim of this course is to enable students to bridge their academic experiences in the classroom with their experiences engaging firsthand with practical community issues.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Tentative Course Requirements:** Attendance and class participation; about 20 hours of work with a community organization outside of class time over the course of the semester; term paper.

**Core Curriculum:** None.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** Specialization.*

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**PHL 390.002                    ART & HUMAN NATURE – SPECIAL TOPICS**  
**INSTRUCTOR:                 DR. RICHARD RICHARDS**

**Course Description:** The arts are seemingly found in all human cultures. Why is this so? Is art deeply embedded in what we might call “human nature”? Philosophers have long thought about the arts in terms of human nature. More recently, there are proposals that we can think about the arts “naturalistically” in terms of what the biological and human sciences tell us about human nature, and the very human tendencies to make and appreciate art of all kinds. This naturalistic turn requires philosophical thinking first about how we should conceive art; second, how we can interpret and evaluate art, and third, how it functions in a variety of cultural and environmental contexts. We will be looking first at some classical theories of art and human nature, from Plato, Aristotle, Hume and Kant, then at three naturalistic, evolutionary theories of art. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Tentative Course Requirements:** Attendance, two essays and two exams

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries a *W* designation.

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**PHL 392.001                    NEUROETHICS – SPECIAL TOPICS**  
**INSTRUCTOR:                 DR. BENJAMIN KOZUCH**

**Course Description:** Due to advances in psychopharmacology and brain imaging, scenarios resembling those of science fiction may soon be upon us: Medications that enhance our memory, cognitive abilities, or happiness could be widely available in the near future, and advances in neuroimaging promise to allow the detection of lying, mental illness, or level of intelligence. Technologies like these bring a host of ethical questions in their wake, ones pertaining to privacy, justice, and authenticity. Issues like these are what compose the field of Neuroethics, and are what we will be looking at in this class

**Prerequisites:** Successful completion of at least one PHL course. PHL 392 may be repeated up to 12 hours. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

**Tentative Course Requirements:** TBA

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries a *W* designation.

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**PHL 440.001                    SEMINAR ON LAW – Law’s Functions**  
**INSTRUCTOR:                DR. KENNETH EHRENBERG**

**Course Description:** This class will begin with a close reading Professor Ehrenberg’s book outlining a metaphysical theory of law that helps to explain its functions and normativity and drafting an initial reaction paper. Then students will conduct their own research, crafting a critical paper that addresses some aspects of the issues that are raised in the book.

**Prerequisites:** B or better in a 200-level course from the jurisprudence list\* or instructor's approval, or an A- or better in any PHL class with a writing designation.

\* PHL 292, PHL 221, PHL 230, PHL 234, PHL 240, PHL 241, PHL 242, PHL 243 or PHL 256

**Tentative Course Requirements:** Two papers and two presentations.

**Core Curriculum:** This course carries a *W* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** Specialization.*