

## Faculty

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The great philosophers seek to answer the most basic questions about the world and our place in it. Can we distinguish between what is real and what is unreal? What is knowledge? What are the roles of reason, perception, and feeling in shaping our relations with the world and with each other? What does it mean to be a person? What is the value of art? What are we to think about religion?

Many philosophical questions are inescapable. How is one to live one's life? What are good and bad, right and wrong? How do we acquire obligations? How are we to make moral decisions? In every life, such questions arise, and everyone assumes one answer or another. To attempt to articulate your answer and to search for better answers is to become a philosopher.

Original works of the great classical and contemporary philosophers are used in all courses. Texts are ana-

lyzed critically in order to understand what is being said and judge their merit. In class discussion and in written work, we raise questions, develop additional ideas, and construct new arguments. Classes in philosophy are generally small and usually emphasize discussion and dialogue. Students are encouraged to engage in critical thought and to come to their own conclusions.

## The Philosophy Curriculum

Nearly all courses are designed to be of interest and accessible to both majors and non-majors. Look for the u symbol, which designates those courses particularly appropriate for first-year or upper class students new to the philosophy department curriculum.

Regardless of background, students should normally take the introductory course, PHIL 100, before they take any other philosophy course at Kenyon. Each member of the philosophy faculty offers a section of the introductory course. This course serves as an introduction to the subject through the reading of original works by major philosophers. Although many of our texts derive from earlier centuries and from classical Greece, we are concerned with what is of timeless and present importance in them. We emphasize classroom discussion, focusing on interpretation of the texts and consideration of the philosophical issues raised by them. We assign several short papers and we give a final examination.

Other courses that may be taken without prerequisites are PHIL 105, Introduction to Logic; PHIL 110, Introduction to Ethics; PHIL 115, Practical Issues in Ethics; PHIL 200, Ancient Philosophy; PHIL 210, Modern Philosophy; PHIL 225,

Existentialism; PHIL 235 Philosophy of Law, and PHIL 240, Philosophy of Religion.

Intermediate-level courses include such courses as PHIL 120, Symbolic Logic; PHIL 245, Philosophy of Science; PHIL 215, Nineteenth-Century Philosophy; and PHIL 270, Political Philosophy.

PHIL 335, Wittgenstein, PHIL 315, Phenomenology, and PHIL 345, Kant, are among the more advanced courses. Although the seminars—PHIL 400, Contemporary Ethics; PHIL 405, Theory of Knowledge; and PHIL 410, Metaphysics—are primarily for majors, they may be of interest to other advanced students as well.

## Requirements for the Major

Listed below are the requirements for the major for students of the Class of 2009 and beyond. Students of prior classes have the option of satisfying these requirements or the requirements in effect when they enrolled at the College.

### 1. Course Requirements

4.5 units of philosophy (9 courses), including the following courses:

PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic or

PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic

PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy

PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy

Three electives of the student's choice

Three Core Area Courses (one

course from each of the three

core areas—Ethics, Epistemology,

Metaphysics—one of which must be chosen from the group of advanced seminars):

Phil 400 Seminar in Contemporary Ethics

Phil 405 Seminar in the Theory of Knowledge

Phil 410 Seminar on Metaphysics

## 2. Senior Exercise

All students must successfully complete the Senior Exercise (see description below).

## 3. Friendly Advice

Here are some tips on course planning. PHIL 100 is normally the first course majors take, but it is not mandatory. PHIL 105 or PHIL 120, PHIL 110, PHIL 200, and PHIL 210 should normally be taken as early as possible. PHIL 400, PHIL 405, and PHIL 410 should normally begin no earlier than the second semester of the junior year.

Students who expect to do graduate work in philosophy are strongly encouraged to take PHIL 120.

## Senior Exercise

The Senior Exercise consists of a comprehensive essay examination with questions drawn from Ancient Philosophy, Modern Philosophy, and from one of the Core Area advanced seminars of the student's choice.

## Honors

Central to the Honors Program is a series of two related courses culminating in a thesis at the end of the senior year. The first, PHIL 497, enables the student to pursue the search for and development of a suitable topic. By the second semester of the senior year, the student should have the background necessary for writing an honors thesis in PHIL 498. Students interested in the Honors Program should submit a written request to the chair of the department before the second semester of their junior year.

### 1. Course Requirements

5 units of philosophy, including the following courses:

PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic  
 PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy  
 PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy  
 PHIL 215 Nineteenth-Century Philosophy or PHIL 217 Nineteenth-Century Moral and Political Philosophy

Three electives of student's choice

All three Core Area Course seminars:

Phil 400 Seminar in Contemporary Ethics

Phil 405 Seminar in the Theory of Knowledge

Phil 410 Seminar on Metaphysics

PHIL 497 and 498 Senior Honors thesis independent studies.

For normal sequence of courses, see "Friendly Advice," above

### 2. Senior Exercise

All honors candidates must successfully complete the Senior Exercise (see description above).

### 3. Honors Thesis and Oral Examination

Upon completion of the thesis, an outside examiner and a department faculty member will read the honors thesis and participate in an oral examination on it.

### 4. Divisional Approval

The candidate must meet the requirements of the College and of the Humanities Division for admission to and retention in the Honors Program.

## Core Area Courses

There are three core areas: ethics, epistemology, and metaphysics. The courses that may be selected to satisfy the core area requirements are listed below under the core area they satisfy. Additional courses may be announced.

### Ethics

PHIL 110 Introduction to Ethics  
 PHIL 217 Nineteenth Century Moral and Political Philosophy  
 PHIL 275 Moral Psychology  
 PHIL 400 Seminar on Contemporary Ethics

### Epistemology

PHIL 220 Pragmatism  
 PHIL 245 Philosophy of Natural Science  
 PHIL 345 Kant  
 PHIL 405 Theory of Knowledge

### Metaphysics

PHIL 205 Medieval Philosophy  
 PHIL 260 Philosophy of Mind  
 PHIL 310 Heidegger's Ontology  
 PHIL 410 Seminar on Metaphysics

## Graduate School Considerations

Philosophy majors interested in attending graduate school are strongly encouraged to select PHIL 120 to satisfy the logic requirement, and to select PHIL 400, PHIL 405, and PHIL 410 to satisfy the core area course requirement. Such students should also consult with a faculty member as early as possible.

## Synoptic Majors

Philosophy courses are often suitable for inclusion in synoptic majors, and the department welcomes such majors.

## Off-Campus Studies

Philosophy majors who wish to do so are generally able to participate in off-campus study programs, particularly if they begin their major programs as sophomores.

## Requirements for the Minor

The minor in philosophy consists of 2.5 units of work (5 courses) in the department, including the following courses:

PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy  
 PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic or PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic  
 One course from the history sequence (PHIL 200, or PHIL 205, or PHIL 210, or PHIL 215, or PHIL 217)  
 Two additional .5-unit courses in philosophy of the student's choice.

## First-Semester Courses

### Introduction to Philosophy

PHIL 100 (.5 unit)  
 Staff

The primary aim of this course is to acquaint the student with the spirit, methods, and problems of philosophy. An attempt is made to show the

range of issues in which philosophical inquiry is possible and to which it is relevant. Major works of important philosophers, both ancient and modern, will be used to introduce topics in metaphysics, theory of knowledge, ethics, and other traditional areas of philosophical concern. Enrollment limited.

### **Introduction to Ethics**

PHIL 110 (.5 unit)  
Xiao

This course explores the central question in ethics “How should I live my life.” By examining major ethical theories such as utilitarianism, Kantianism, Aristotelian virtue ethics, honor ethics, and Confucian and Daoist ethics, along with meta-ethical issues such as relativism, subjectivism, and value pluralism. The emphasis is on classical texts. Prerequisite: .5 unit in philosophy or permission of instructor.

### **Practical Issues in Ethics**

PHIL 115 (.5 unit)  
Xiao

This course examines moral issues we face in private and public life from a philosophical point of view. We shall deal with topics such as abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, the moral status of nonhuman animals, the environment, war, same-sex marriage, inequality, and social justice. There is a strong emphasis on discussion. This course is suitable for first-year students.

### **Ancient Philosophy**

PHIL 200 (.5 unit)  
Richeimer

Ancient Greek philosophy is not only the basis of the Western and the Arabic philosophical traditions, but it is central for understanding Western culture in general, whether literature, science, religion, or values. In this course, we examine some of the seminal texts of Greek philosophy, focusing on the work of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. But we also examine the work of the pre-Socratics (such as Heraclitus, Zeno, and Democritus) and the Sophists (such as Protagoras and Gorgias). This is a lecture/discussion course. It is recommended that

students complete PHIL 100, but there are no formal prerequisites for this course.

### **Medieval Philosophy**

PHIL 205 (.5 unit)  
Staff

Philosophically speaking, the period between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries was a remarkably fertile one that both warrants and rewards close study. In this course we will examine some of the major thinkers and themes from the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian late medieval traditions, with an emphasis on understanding both how the medievals synthesized the wisdom of Aristotle with their dominant religious concerns and how they developed the world view against which early modern philosophy (seventeenth to eighteenth century) must be understood. Prerequisite: two philosophy courses, including either PHIL 200 or 210.

### **Contemporary Political Philosophy**

PHIL 208 (.5 unit)  
Yeomans

This course is a survey of different themes in political philosophy from the second half of the twentieth century to the present. We will consider the relation between state, market and society, conceptions of democracy, notions of justice, rights, liberty and equality, the nature of oppression, and the question of whether there are normative standards for international relations. We will approach these themes from a variety of different perspectives, including those of libertarianism, classical liberalism, Marxism, post-structuralism, and feminism.

### **Nineteenth-Century Philosophy**

PHIL 215 (.5 unit)  
Yeomans

This course is a seminar on Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Widely regarded as one of the most important texts of the last 250 years, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* has provided impetus to movements as diverse as existentialism, Marxism, post-structuralism, and theosophy. A

wide-ranging treatise on the nature of knowledge, the argument moves quickly from considering objects of knowledge to analyzing self-knowledge. In addition to perception and understanding, desire and action are also considered as forms of knowing. In the course of this development, Hegel articulates his idea of “mutual recognition”: self-consciousness requires that our awareness of ourselves be reflected back to us by another. Thus self-consciousness and knowledge are only possible on the basis of relations of mutual respect between persons. This provides an overarching philosophical vision in which claims to knowledge make sense only within a just society in which human beings feel at home. Prerequisite: PHIL 210 (Modern Philosophy), PHIL 217 (Nineteenth-Century Moral and Political Philosophy), or permission of instructor.

### **Existentialism**

PHIL 225 (.5 unit)  
DePascuale

Existentialism is one of the most influential philosophical movements in modern culture. Unlike other recent philosophies, its impact extends far beyond the cloistered walls of academia into literature (Beckett, Kafka, Ionesco), art (Giacometti, Bacon, Dadism), theology (Tillich, Rahner, Buber), and psychology (Laing, May).

Existentialism is at once an expression of humanity’s continual struggle with the perennial problems of philosophy (knowledge, truth, meaning, value) and a particularly modern response to the social and spiritual conditions of our times (alienation, anomie, meaninglessness).

In this course, we will study existentialism in its complete form as a cultural and philosophical movement. After uncovering the historical context from which this movement emerged, we will view the “existential” paintings of de Chirico and Munch; read the fiction of Kafka, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Beckett; and closely study the thought of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Sartre. Among the topics we shall

examine are alienation, authenticity, self-knowledge, belief in God, the nature of value, and the meaning of life. No prerequisite, but PHIL 100 or RELN 111 is desirable. Enrollment limited.

**Special Topic: Mind, Perception, and Film**

PHIL 391 (.5 unit)  
Richeimer

This is not a course on film history, film theory or aesthetics. Nor is this a course using film to illustrate philosophical ideas. Rather, this course treats film as a phenomenon in its own right. Film has its own properties. Those properties are in some ways similar and in some ways dissimilar from human experience. For instance, film has its own temporal and spatial structure of how we ordinarily experience the world. Yet, humans can easily understand film and be moved by film. Film is both of this world and other worldly. We will explore a broad range of questions on the nature of film and what the magic of film teaches us about whom we are.

**Seminar in Theory of Knowledge**

PHIL 405 (.5 unit)  
Richeimer

This is an advanced course on the central debates in epistemology: internalism versus externalism, foundationalism versus coherentism, naturalism versus antinaturalism. We examine these issues through the writings of Quine, Rorty, Putnam, Stroud, Dretske, Wittgenstein, and others. Prerequisites: PHIL 100, junior standing, and permission of instructor.

**Individual Study**

PHIL 493 (.5 unit)  
Staff

Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.

**Senior Honors**

PHIL 497 (.25 unit)  
Staff

Prerequisite: permission of department chair.

## Second-Semester Courses

**Introduction to Philosophy**

PHIL 100 (.5 unit)  
DePasquale, Xiao, Yeomans

See first-semester course description.

**Introduction to Logic**

QR PHIL 105 (.5 unit)  
Yeomans

This course is an examination of the informal reasoning used in everyday life as well as in academic contexts. We will aim to both describe and understand that reasoning, on the one hand, and improve our competence in reasoning, on the other. Central to these informal patterns of reasoning are practices of explanation involving causal relations. We will explore the nature of explanation and causation, and we will discuss ways of articulating our reasoning patterns that make their nature clear. Thus we aim both to improve critical thinking and reading skills, and to understand in a deeper way the role that those skills play in human life.

**Symbolic Logic**

PHIL 120 (.5 unit)  
Richeimer

This course presents an introduction to modern formal logic. The nature of deductive reasoning is examined through the study of formal systems, representing the principles of valid argument.

**Modern Philosophy**

PHIL 210 (.5 unit)  
Staff

This course examines seventeenth-through eighteenth-century philosophy. Major emphasis will be placed on Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant, but we will also stop in on figures such as Malebranche, Arnauld, and Reid. We will stress metaphysical and epistemological issues throughout. It wouldn't be unfair to say that Descartes sets the agenda by creating a certain conception of the mind and the nature of knowledge, while each of the subsequent figures works out various implications of that conception. As such, the

course content takes something of a narrative form, where we start with a certain optimism about knowledge, work our way into a deepening skepticism, only to be rescued at the end (by a rescuer whose price may not be worth paying). There are no official prerequisites, but PHIL 100 is recommended.

**Pragmatism**

PHIL 220 (.5 unit)  
Richeimer

Pragmatism is the only major philosophical tradition on the world stage originating in the United States. And it is the only tradition of philosophy since Kant that is respected and taken seriously in both the Anglo-American philosophical tradition and the continental philosophical tradition. Many movements claim their origins in the American pragmatism—these include verificationism, Husserlian phenomenology, Quinean naturalism, and some trends in postmodernism, cybernetics, vagueness logic, semiotics, the dominant trend in American educational philosophy, Italian fascism, American experimental psychology, and Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence. We will examine that tradition by reading the major works of Peirce, James, and Dewey, and their critics.

**Philosophy of Language**

PHIL 255 (.5 unit)  
Xiao

In this course, we will examine recent material in the philosophy of language. Questions about meaning will form the core of our study. What is meaning? What conditions must an expression meet in order to have meaning? Is meaning psychological and subjective, or objective? How is it possible to speak meaningfully of nonexistent things (including fictional entities)? Can claims be true solely by virtue of their meanings? What is the true logical form of certain sorts of propositions? Other questions to be explored include how expressions refer to the world (or how we use them to do so), how communication occurs, the nature of speech acts (utterances that accomplish some act,



such as a promise or a bet), metaphor, and the possibility of a purely private language. Some familiarity with logic would be useful but is not required. Prerequisite: PHIL 100 or equivalent.

### **Political Philosophy**

PHIL 270 (.5 unit)  
Yeomans

This course examines the political philosophy of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche. We will study the concepts, principles, and moral psychology that form the basis of their political theories. We will consider, in particular, how they relate certain philosophical concepts to a politics of freedom, civil disobedience, and dissent. We will address questions such as: Do individuals' interests ever conflict with the common good? In such cases, is it ever right to coerce individuals in accordance with universal principles of right and freedom? What right do individuals have to safeguard their rights in the face of abuses of power?

### **Moral Psychology**

PHIL 275 (1/2 unit)  
Xiao

This course examines concepts and questions at the intersection of philosophical psychology (philosophy of mind and action) and moral philosophy. We are interested in the constraints that a plausible psychology may have on moral theories, as well as the moral assumptions that may be concealed in theories of mind and action. The content of the course varies but includes topics such as the nature of action, free will, desire, reason, and moral emotions. We shall read classical figures such as Plato, Aristotle, and Augustine, as well as contemporary figures such as G.E.M. Anscombe, Christine Korsgaard, Martha Nussbaum, David Velleman, Donald Davidson, Bernard Williams, and Harry Frankfurt. We shall also take a look at moral psychology in non-Western traditions such as Confucianism and Buddhism. Prerequisites: junior and senior philosophy majors or minors; others may be admitted with permission of instructor.

### **Kierkegaard on Being Human**

PHIL 305 (.5 unit)  
De Pasquale

Often regarded as the originator of existential inquiry, Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) wrote a captivating poetic and philosophical literature concerning human existence. Taking the human hunger for meaning as his point of departure, Kierkegaard examined the rational and emotional depths of human life in its aesthetic, moral, and religious modes of expression.

In this course we will read a large part of what Kierkegaard called "my authorship" in order to understand his way of doing philosophy and to examine his portrayal of the spiritual landscape. Kierkegaard's probings into the value dimensions of life—for example, happiness, pleasure, boredom, despair, choice, duty, commitment, anxiety, guilt, remorse, hope, faith, and love—encourage his readers to think about their own lives and their relations with others. In examining Kierkegaard's ideas, therefore, the student should expect to be challenged personally as well as intellectually. Prerequisites: PHIL 100, PHIL 225, or permission of instructor. Enrollment limited.

### **Seminar on Metaphysics**

PHIL 410 (.5 unit)  
Staff

The content of this course varies but includes such topics as the nature and scope of reality, causality, space, time, existence, free will, necessity, and the relations of logic and language to the world. Traditional topics such as the problems of substance and of universals may be discussed. Much of the reading will be from contemporary sources. Prerequisites: This course is for junior or senior philosophy majors; others may be admitted with permission of the instructor.

### **Individual Study**

PHIL 494 (.5 unit)  
Staff

Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.

### **Senior Honors**

PHIL 498 (.25 unit)  
Staff

Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.