

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 analyzed 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.

Nearly all courses are designed to be of interest and accessible to both majors and nonmajors. Look for the ♦ symbol, which designates those courses particularly appropriate for first-year or upperclass 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 115, Practical Issues in Ethics; PHIL 200, Ancient Philosophy; PHIL 210, Modern Philosophy; PHIL 225, Existentialism; 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, Contemporary Political Philosophy.

PHIL 335, Wittgenstein, and PHIL 315, Phenomenology, 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

1. Course Requirements
4 1/2 units of philosophy, including the following courses:

PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy
PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic or
PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic
PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy
PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy
One course from each of the three core areas (see "Core Area Courses" below)

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. PHIL 105 or PHIL 120, 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 should take PHIL 120.

Requirements for Honors Majors

Central to the Honors Program is a series of three related courses culminating in a thesis at the end of the senior year. The first of these courses, PHIL 398, is designed to acquaint the student with contemporary methods of philosophical thought as a preparation for writing a thesis, as well as to help in finding and developing a suitable thesis topic. The second, 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 100 Introduction to Philosophy
- PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic
- PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy
- PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy
- PHIL 215 Nineteenth-Century Philosophy
- PHIL 398 Junior Honors Seminar
- PHIL 497 and 498 Senior Honors

One course from each of the three core areas (see below), one of which must be a seminar

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

2. Senior Exercise

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

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 400 Seminar in Contemporary Ethics

Epistemology

- PHIL 220 Pragmatism
- PHIL 405 Theory of Knowledge

Metaphysics

- PHIL 205 Medieval Philosophy
- PHIL 215 Nineteenth-Century Philosophy
- PHIL 310 Heidegger's Ontology

Senior Exercise

The Senior Exercise consists of a comprehensive essay examination with questions drawn from Modern Philosophy, Ancient Philosophy, and core area courses.

Students with a grade point average of 3.5 and above in the major,

however, have the option of writing a paper in place of sitting for the examination. The paper option is designed as an opportunity for the student to display and refine his or her philosophical skills, as well as engage in close philosophical dialogue with a faculty member. It consists of the writing of a paper under the close supervision of a faculty member, who guides the paper from its earliest stages as a mere proposal, through several drafts, until the final, polished version. The exercise concludes with the student delivering the paper before an audience of majors and faculty members and then, typically, replying to questions raised by the audience. This discussion also gives the student the opportunity to expand upon his or her ideas. The written work and oral work are evaluated as a unit.

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 1/2 units of work 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 210, or PHIL 215)

Two additional 1/2-unit courses in philosophy of the student's choice

First-Semester Courses

Introduction to Philosophy

◆ PHIL 100 (1/2 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 Logic

◆ PHIL 105 (1/2 unit)
Staff

This course presents an introductory examination of the nature of reasoning. Topics will include the relation between formal and ordinary language, inductive and deductive arguments, and fallacious reasoning. The emphasis will be on providing students with the basic conceptual tools and methods of thinking that are necessary to identify and evaluate both formal and informal reasoning.

Introduction to Ethics

PHIL 110 (1/2 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: 1/2 unit in philosophy or permission of instructor.

Practical Issues in Ethics

◆ PHIL 115 (1/2 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 (1/2 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.

Nineteenth-Century Philosophy

PHIL 215 (1/2 unit)
Staff

This course follows the rise and fall of German idealism. The German idealists attempted to demonstrate the unity of all experience and knowledge by formulating all-encompassing philosophical systems.

We will study the most elaborate of these attempts—Hegel's encyclopedic system of philosophy—and then turn to a succession of critics: Marx, who argued that philosophical reflection could not unify experience; Schopenhauer, who argued that no such unity can be found in life; and Nietzsche, who argued that we must create our own unified experience. Throughout the course, we will focus on these philosophers' understanding of the idea that we are alienated and their prescriptions for how to overcome such alienation.

The readings in this course are extraordinarily difficult, and it is strongly recommended that students have some previous experience with the history of philosophy. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or above.

Existentialism

PHIL 225 (1/2 unit)
De Pascuale

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.

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.

Philosophy of Art

PHIL 230 (1/2 unit)
De Pascuale

This course is a seminar/workshop in which we will attempt to philosophically scrutinize the delightful, complicated, and varied world of art. The philosophy of art is not art history, art appreciation, or art criticism. It is, instead, that division of philosophy in which we critically examine the assumptions made by artists, historians, and critics of art. In Philosophy of Art, we try to define art, establish general criteria for distinguishing what is important or unique in art works, understand creativity, and ascertain the role of art in human life and society.

The aim of this course is to enable us to see and hear more clearly the kinds of objects that art presents for our contemplation and experience, so that we may come to know more and feel more. The first half of the course will be spent reading and discussing the theories of Bell, Tolstoy, Aristotle, Collingwood, Langer, Hanslick, and others. The second half of the course will largely be spent viewing, hearing, feeling, reading, and otherwise experiencing art works and philosophically questioning that experience. We shall discuss the nature of art, the ontology of objects of art, and the problems of the interpretation and criticism of art. No prerequisite. Enrollment limited.

Philosophy of Mind

PHIL 260 (1/2 unit)
Richeimer

Mentality is not like much else in the universe. Mentality (or mind) is quite peculiar. The human brain (unlike other physical things) has the power to think. We have thoughts. Yet what are thoughts? Thoughts don't seem to be physical. For instance, unlike physical objects, thoughts don't have any weight. One does not gain weight by having new thoughts or lose weight by forgetting them. Unlike physical objects, thoughts have no

shape. The thought of a circle is not circular. Yet thoughts have power. When we explain human behavior, we do so by saying that the person has certain thoughts; i.e., he has certain beliefs and certain desires. Those beliefs and desires (those thoughts) caused the person to act the way he did. The view that there are thoughts, that thoughts are in minds, that thoughts cause behavior, is the ordinary everyday view of the world. It is called "folk psychology" (i.e., the psychology of ordinary folk). Folk psychology seems obviously true. But is it true? And if it is true, can we describe it in a clear way? Does contemporary research in psychology support or undermine folk psychology? We will see that what seems so obvious is in fact quite controversial. Many psychologists and philosophers think something is wrong with folk psychology. We will examine some of those debates.

Sartre and Merleau-Ponty

PHIL 340 (1/2 unit)
Richeimer

The two most important philosophers in post-World War II France were Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. They initiated a debate that was and still is immensely influential both in and out of academia. Sartre worked out the implications of a consciousness-centered methodological individualism. The result was a new analysis of human freedom that equated freedom with "consciousness-raising". This had a tremendous influence on the political left, feminist thought, existentialism, postmodernism, and many forms of psychotherapy.

Merleau-Ponty challenged Sartre's mind's eye view with a brain-body's eye view of human behavior. Such a view replaced consciousness as guiding human behavior with an account of how any embodied functional system can self-adapt to its environment. Merleau-Ponty's account was not limited to human behavior, but was generalizable to a range of self-maintaining systems. Merleau-Ponty explored this primarily in terms of

the psychology of perception, in neuroscience, and in an analysis of film as a psychological phenomenon. Prerequisite: PHIL 100 or permission of instructor.

Individual Study

PHIL 493 (1/2 unit)
Staff

Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.

Senior Honors

PHIL 497 (1/4 unit)
Staff

Prerequisite: permission of department chair.

Second-Semester Courses

Introduction to Philosophy

◆ PHIL 100 (1/2 unit)
De Pascuale, Xiao, staff

See first-semester course description.

Symbolic Logic

◆ QR PHIL 120 (1/2 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 (1/2 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 knowl-

edge, 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.

Philosophy of Natural Science

PHIL 245 (1/2 unit)
Richeimer

One of the greatest human achievements is scientific knowledge. But what is scientific knowledge? Is it different from other kinds of knowledge? Should we take scientific claims as literally true or as useful fictions? What status should we accord scientific work? We will examine the answers to these questions offered by the Logical Positivists, the Popperians, Kuhn, Quine, Lakatos, and Boyd. On the way, we will consider the issues surrounding induction, explanation, theoretical entities, laws, observation, reductionism, and so on. No formal background in the natural sciences is assumed. Prerequisite: PHIL 100 or permission of instructor.

Philosophy of Language

PHIL 255 (1/2 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.

Moral Psychology

PHIL 275 (1/2 unit)
Xiao

This course examines concepts and questions at the intersection between 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.

Heidegger's Ontology

PHIL 310 (1/2 unit)
De Pascuale

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) is widely regarded as one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century. His influence has been extraordinarily wide and deep, affecting such diverse fields as psychoanalysis, literary theory, theology, and architecture. Although the body of work he produced is remarkably diverse, Heidegger claims that in all of his writings he is occupied with a single task, that of thinking through "the question of the meaning of being."

In this seminar we will submit to close reading selected works from Heidegger's early writings, from the period between 1922 and 1940. Among the works that may be read and discussed are *Being and Time*, *What is Metaphysics*, *The Concept of Time*, and *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Among the topics to

be discussed are: the cognitivism of emotions, the basic structure of human existence, and the relationship among the awareness of death, being, and time. Some time will also be spent studying the reception of Heidegger's thought by Anglo-Saxon analytic philosophy. Prerequisite: one unit of philosophy.

Individual Study

PHIL 494 (1/2 unit)
Staff

Prerequisites: permission of instructor and department chair.

Senior Honors

PHIL 498 (1/4 unit)
Staff

Prerequisite: permission of instructor and department chair.