



Philosophy Courses Spring 2021

Compared to other majors, philosophy majors rank at the very top on graduate admissions tests for law school, business school, and others. Their median mid-career salary is above \$80,000 nationally. IU Philosophy graduates have flourishing careers in government, public policy, education, media, medicine, law, business, & more.



Philosophy raises questions about the most familiar things in our lives. A critical examination of our deepest beliefs, it emphasizes questioning assumptions, arguing logically, and thinking things through as completely as possible. Philosophers ask:

- **What should we do? How should we live?** (ethics, social and political philosophy)
- **What kind of world do we live in? What kinds of things are we?** (metaphysics, philosophy of mind)
- **How do we know these and other things? How can we reason better?** (epistemology, logic)

Philosophy teaches skills that are central in virtually any career. Philosophy students learn to: ask intelligent questions, define issues precisely, construct and criticize arguments, expose hidden assumptions, think creatively and independently, see problems from multiple perspectives, and write and speak with precision, coherence, and clarity.

Philosophical training provides the flexibility and perspective needed in a rapidly changing world.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS:

Gen Ed A & H: P103, P106, P105, P141, P150, P200, P201, P211, P242; Gen Ed World Cultures: P201
College Intensive Writing: P300

PHIL- P103 Gender, Sexuality, and Race – Katy Meadows

Race, gender, and sexuality are categories that are deeply embedded in our everyday lives but that are extremely hard to think clearly about. This course takes a philosophical perspective on these social categories, asking questions like: what are race, gender, and sexuality? If any of them are socially constructed, does that make them less real? What is it to oppress a person along one of these dimensions? How does membership in these social categories affect our access to knowledge, and to being treated as knowledgeable? And why is it sometimes so hard for us to communicate across these social categories? [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities](#), [COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry](#), [COLL \(CASE\) Diversity in the United States](#).

PHIL- P105 Critical Thinking – David McCarty

Logic is the study of persuasive reasoning and the principal goal of our P105 is to offer students a working knowledge of informal logic at the introductory level. This we separate into three component areas: recognition, analysis, and evaluation of reasoning. In the first, we learn to distinguish reasoning from other forms of communication, among them narratives and causal explanations. Next, in analyzing reasoning, we apply such techniques from logic as argument diagrams to understand the structures of reasoning. Finally, we learn to evaluate reasoning and to improve our own reasoning by employing the important notions of validity and fallacy. [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities](#), [COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry](#).

PHIL- P106 Introduction to Philosophy: Appearance & Reality - Adam Leite

An introduction to philosophy, focusing upon questions about the possibility and limits of human knowledge. Can we ever know the true nature of reality? If so, how? What is the relation between how things seem to us and how they really are? The class considers these and related questions by studying the writings of several important thinkers in the European philosophical tradition, including Plato, Descartes, Berkeley, and Kant. We will focus upon identifying, analyzing, and evaluating the reasons these philosophers offer for their views. We will also pay attention to how their views are embedded in historical contexts. We will strive to develop an understanding of the nature of philosophical questions and the tools philosophers have used to answer them. You will

learn to “think like a philosopher,” identifying and trying to answer philosophical questions yourself through careful rational argumentation. The course aims to develop students’ abilities to reason carefully, write clearly, work with deeply challenging texts, and think about difficult issues from a variety of viewpoints. [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL- P106 Introduction to Philosophy - Daniel Lindquist

What is justice? Can we really know anything with certainty? How ought we to live? In this course we will address these and related questions. The central goals of the course are to help you to understand and critically evaluate some influential responses to several of the main questions of philosophy, and to encourage you to ask and grapple with such questions for yourself. The readings are primarily from works by Plato, Descartes, and Kant, with other assigned readings to support these. [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL- P135 Introduction to Existentialism - Allen Wood

A survey of five nineteenth and twentieth century philosophers who question the meaning of existence, confront the absurdity of the human condition and challenge the authority of reason over our lives. Many readings will present philosophical ideas through literary forms (novels, aphorisms, prose-poetry, pseudonymous writings). The philosophers surveyed will be: Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard, Sartre, Beauvoir. [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL- P141 Introduction to Ethics: Moral Theory and its Critics - John Robison

Consider ordinary, moral disagreements: you and I disagree about whether it’s okay to eat meat, whether Jamie was disrespectful, whether Quincy is viciously self-centered, whether some outcome was just, or about whether the nurse is morally responsible. In such cases, we don’t merely disagree -- we exchange reasons and defend our positions. To that extent, we regularly (perhaps implicitly) invoke and evaluate moral theory. Yet, some are skeptical about this practice: they argue that there are no objective moral truths about which to theorize, that moral theorizing is somehow undermined by science, or that it’s too idealized. This course invites students 1) to critically examine such challenges to moral theorizing, 2) to carefully assess purported theories of rightness, value, respect, virtue, justice, and responsibility, 3) to build upon and challenge their own moral outlooks by borrowing and repurposing insights from these theories, and 4) to morally evaluate specific practices, including protest, punishment, and the eating of nonhuman animals. Emphasis is given to cultivating the widely applicable skills of constructing, presenting, developing, evaluating, and revising arguments. [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL- P141 Introduction to Ethics: The Moral Life- Autumn Averitt

What is moral? There are a number of ways to answer this question: we can focus on actions, on intentions, on outcomes, etc. It is the job of a moral theory to integrate these aspects of morality into a cohesive framework for how one should live one’s life. In this course, we will examine a broad range of historical and modern answers to the moral question. We will compare and evaluate theories by applying the theories to everyday situations, both the mundane and the global. Primarily the readings will be philosophical sources, but we will also discuss news, TV shows, and podcasts. This course aims to develop your writing and discussion skills. Above all, the goal of this course is to get you thinking rigorously about how you should live your life.

[Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL- P141 Introduction to Ethics - Kyle Stroh

In this course, we’ll learn about various theories in moral philosophy regarding what makes actions right or wrong, what kind of people we want to be, and how to identify the relevant factors for making decisions that further the values we should be promoting. An important part of how we evaluate these theories will be to examine current moral issues such as the exploitation of workers, freedom of speech, affirmative action, and the use of technologies to change ourselves. This course aims to improve your ability to think critically about ethical issues that are relevant to your lives in our current society and to help you express your own views in a clear, well-reasoned way.

[Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL-P150 Elementary Logic - Paul Shephard

Whether it be from a debate stage, a social media post, an academic article, or a discussion among friends, we are constantly faced with arguments that are meant to convince us of claims and conclusions we may not already agree with. But what is an argument, and what makes a good one? The purpose of this class is to learn the basics of argument forms and structures in a formal system, with the goal of gaining skills integral to evaluating arguments in everyday life. This class serves as an introduction to propositional and predicate logic, and no prior knowledge of logic is required. [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL-P200 Problems of Philosophy: Public Philosophy - Kate Abramson

“Public philosophy” is philosophical work, written by philosophers, aimed at non-philosophers. The general idea is to take a topic with which people outside of philosophy are already concerned—say, propaganda—and use the critical skills one learns in philosophy to explore that topic, with an eye to participating in the ongoing public discussion. In this

class, students will read public philosophy, work on developing their own skills as philosophers, develop an understanding of the various aims and methods of public philosophy, have conversations with philosophers who specialize in public philosophy about their work (they will Skype in to our class after we read some of their work), and by the end of the class, produce a piece of public philosophy themselves! [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL-P201 Ancient Greek Philosophy – Katy Meadows

This course will focus on philosophy in the classical Greek world. The majority of the course will be structured around two sets of questions, one concerned with virtue and the good life, and the other concerned with natural science and metaphysics. We'll begin with Socrates, who devoted his life to a search for ethical understanding – and who was willing to die to avoid doing something that he thought was unjust. Socrates's example raises questions about the nature of human virtue and about the role of virtue in a good human life. We'll then turn to the pre-Socratics, who aimed to understand the basic features of the universe like coming-to-be and change. The bulk of the course will examine the sophisticated and ambitious theories Plato and Aristotle developed in order to answer these questions about the good life and the basic nature of the universe. We'll close with some highlights of Hellenistic thought, including defenses of skepticism, hedonism, and the claim that death is not bad for the person who dies. [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, Gen Ed World Cultures, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry, COLL \(CASE\) Global Civilizations & Cultures.](#)

PHIL- P240 Business and Morality: Sustainable Business – Shannon Abelson

This course will examine fundamental problems of moral philosophy in a business context, with a special focus on sustainability. We will examine ethical business principles and practices as they relate to the local and global environment, climate change, sustainable energy, and socio-economic issues.

[Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL- P242 Applied Ethics: Environmental Ethics – Matthew Adams

How should human beings relate to the natural world? Do we have moral obligations toward non-human animals and other parts of nature? And what do we owe to other human beings with respect to the environment? In the first part of the course, we will examine such questions from the perspective of ethical, economic and political theory. Armed with this theoretical understanding, we will, in the second part, explore topics that arise in a policy context. Such topics will include: factory farming; in vitro meat; and an in-depth survey of climate change. A focal question of the course will be what our current ethical theories suggest regarding the extent and nature of our environmental obligations; and also what

reflection on such obligations suggests about the adequacy of our ethical theories. [Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL- P300 Philosophical Methods and Writing – Adam Leite

This course focuses on skills in philosophical writing, argumentation, and research. We consider how philosophers defend their views, and students practice incorporating various argumentative strategies into their writing. Students meet in pairs each week with an advanced graduate student to discuss their own philosophical work. The course topic is personal identity. What makes you the same person as the child you once were? Sameness of body? Continuity of memory or of other psychological traits? Do imaginary scenarios of "body-swapping" show sameness of body to be irrelevant? Do you become a different person if you lose your memory or undergo radical personality change? This topic quickly expands from metaphysics to questions in philosophy of mind and ethics. It connects with our most fundamental concern about what it is to be a person and raises important questions about the role of imagination and "thought experiments" in philosophical methodology. Strongly recommended: at least one course in philosophy. Primarily intended for majors and minors in philosophy.

[Gen Ed Arts and Humanities, COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry, COLL \(CASE\) Intensive Writing.](#)

PHIL- P310 Topic in Metaphysics: Spacetime and Our Place in It – Vera Flocke

This course is an introduction to metaphysics, focusing on spacetime and our place in it. Is spacetime its own substance, or merely a collection of relations? Can things move out of their own impulse, or only when pushed by something else? Is time passing, or do we merely move through time (as we move through space)? We will discuss these and other questions by studying the views of philosophers from different phases in history, from ancient to contemporary philosophy. The goal is to provide you with a broad knowledge base which will be useful for guiding your further studies. More importantly, you will practice how to do philosophy. We will study and practice the skills needed for clear philosophical thinking and writing in a structured and incremental approach. You will learn how to identify and articulate philosophical questions, how to evaluate arguments for and against a viewpoint, and how to carefully advance your own view through cogent writing.

[COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry.](#)

PHIL- P342 Problems of Ethics: Love, Sex, and Ethical Obligation – Matthew Adams

How should the potential tension between the ethical obligations that we owe all people and the personal attachments that we form with particular people be resolved? And, what would such a resolution say about the nature of obligation, practical reason, personal identity, attachment, and value? What is consent, and what are the conditions

under which it can ground treatment that would not be permissible without consent? In this course we will use the topics of love and sex to explore these questions—which are some of the most fundamental questions in ethical theory. Along the way we will also explore a number of theoretical questions that love and sex in particular raise. For example, whether the institution of marriage is compatible with equality and feminist perspectives on the permissibility of sex work. Readings will be drawn from a diverse array of contemporary philosophers including Dougherty, Nussbaum, Velleman, and Wolf.

[COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry](#)

PHIL- P346 Classics in Philosophy of Art - Rega Wood

This course introduces art analysis from a philosophical perspective. We study the art analysis of Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968), Ernst Gombrich (1909-2001), and Richard Wollheim (1923-2003), in light of the aesthetics of Aristotle (384-322 BCE), Augustine (354-430), Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), & Immanuel Kant (1724-1804).

[COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry](#)

PHIL- P371 Philosophy of Religion - Tim O'Connor

This course has two parts. In Part I, we will systematically explore classical theism, the comprehensive metaphysical view that all mundane reality is grounded in God, its generative source. We will note certain puzzles to which the idea of God gives rise and survey main responses to those puzzles. We will also compare classical theism to its two main rivals, metaphysical naturalism/atheism and pantheism, and discuss arguments for and against each of these positions.

In Part II, we will turn to epistemic issues raised by theistic belief and faith. We'll start by considering the relationship of certain modern sciences (cosmology, evolutionary biology, and cognitive and evolutionary psychology) to theistic belief: are they harmonious, in conflict, or something in between? We will then explore the nature of traditional theistic religious belief and faith and their relationship to purely philosophical acceptance of classical theism - is the former as an extension of the latter, or altogether different from and perhaps even incompatible with it? And are they (or can they be) rational, and if so, on what basis?

[COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry](#)

PHIL- P401 History of Philosophy: Special Topics: Martin Heidegger's "Being and Time" - David McCarty

Heidegger's dark and beguiling masterpiece "Being and Time." It's the single most influential philosophical monograph of the last century. You've never read it?! Shame on you! This course will be your once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make amends, clean up your philosophical act, and do better!

We will devote ourselves to a close study of as much of Heidegger's "Hauptwerk" as we can manage in sixteen weeks, alongside reading and discussing writings by other major

philosophers--from Aristotle through Arendt--that shed light on our main project.

Course grades will be based on a number of short writing assignments and two longer written examinations: a midterm and a final. Great emphasis will be laid upon the quality of student writing.

[COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry](#)

PHIL- P401 History of Philosophy: Special Topics: Kant's Ethics - Allen Wood

This course will survey the main topics in Kant's moral philosophy. Topics covered will include: Acting from duty and moral worth; derivation and function of Kant's formulas of the moral law; Kant's system of duties and virtues; the relation of right to ethics.

[COLL \(CASE\) Arts & Humanities Breadth of Inquiry](#)

LAMP- M302 Ethics & Responsible Management - John Robison

This course critically examines the ethical dimensions of management within the public and private sectors. Our main focus is on questions about *conflicts of values* and *accountability* as they arise in management contexts. Consider, first, conflicts of values. How—morally—ought concern for integrity, the environment, diversity, safety, privacy and the proper regulation of information and data, and religious freedom inform an organization's practices? Since these concerns can compete with other organizational goals, how should managers navigate such conflicts of values? Consider, now, accountability. What is it to be accountable for a bad outcome? Who specifically within an organization is accountable for which outcomes and why? Are *organizations*—rather than some individual(s) within them—ever accountable for bad outcomes? Throughout the course, we will engage with philosophical texts, case studies, and codes of conduct used by actual organizations. *Prerequisite: completion of the English composition requirement.*

PHIL- X473 Internship in Philosophy

Department approval required. Designed to provide academic credit for an internship within the Philosophy Department or in a professional work setting elsewhere. (The department has an undergraduate internship available.) Credit hours tied to the number of internship hours worked. S/F grading. Does not count toward the major in philosophy. Interested students should contact Professor Adam Leite, Director of Undergraduate Studies, aleite@indiana.edu.

PHIL- P498 Honors Thesis Directed Research

First half of the honors thesis sequence. Training in skills necessary for original philosophical research. Goals are to achieve appropriate mastery over a body of philosophical material relevant to the honors thesis project, and to develop core ideas for a successful honors thesis. Required:

Philosophy GPA of 3.5. Interested students should contact Professor Adam Leite, Director of Undergraduate Studies, aleite@indiana.edu.



Next Steps: Enjoyed an introductory-level Philosophy course? Consider P201 Ancient Greek Philosophy or P211 Early Modern Philosophy (core historical courses offered once per year), P242 or P246, P250 Symbolic Logic, or any 300-level course.

*For more information contact the Department of Philosophy at: phil@indiana.edu.
www.philosophy.indiana.edu 😊*

For more information, see our website: philosophy.indiana.edu

Join the Philosophy Circle email list to learn about all the discussions, events and other opportunities we offer. Send an email to phil-circle-l-subscribe@list.indiana.edu to be added, or click on "[Join the UG Events List](#)" on our webpage.