PHILOSOPHY

Departmental Office: 708 Philosophy; 212-854-3196
www.philosophy.columbia.edu (http://philosophy.columbia.edu/)

Director of Undergraduate Studies: David Albert, 706 Philosophy; 212-854-3519; da5@columbia.edu (da5@columbia.edu)

Economics-Philosophy Adviser: Jessica Collins, 714 Philosophy; 212-854-3970; jessica.collins@columbia.edu

Students interested in philosophy may pursue a major either in philosophy or in economics-philosophy. Because philosophy treats issues fundamental to both the sciences and the humanities, students are also welcome to combine their philosophy major with work in other fields. Before declaring a major in philosophy or economics-philosophy, and before deciding to combine philosophy with another discipline, students should meet with the director of undergraduate studies to formulate the program best for them.

Philosophy majors are given a foundation in logic and philosophical methodology, and are asked to confront fundamental questions in the main areas of philosophy: epistemology and metaphysics, ethics and political philosophy, philosophy of mind and language, and history of philosophy. The department requires that all majors take at least one seminar (PHIL UN3912), designed to allow students to focus on particular philosophical issues or texts in greater depth. Outstanding seniors may also pursue their own philosophical project in a senior thesis.

Over and above the courses required of all majors, there is room for considerable flexibility. Through an appropriate choice of electives from among the department's offerings (and from related courses in other departments), there are special opportunities for focusing more intensively on one or two subfields of philosophy, e.g., logic and the philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of science, ethics and political philosophy, or the history of philosophy. Students should consult with the director of undergraduate studies on how best to pursue such programs.

Study Abroad: Reid Hall, Paris

For information on the Columbia in Paris Program at Reid Hall, including summer courses, consult the Columbia University in Paris Bulletin (available in 606 Kent and online at the Office of Global Programs (http://ogp.columbia.edu/) website), call 212-854-2559, or send an email to reidhall@columbia.edu. For information on applicability of Reid Hall courses to the major or concentration, consult the director of undergraduate studies.

Grading

Courses in which a grade of D has been received do not count toward the major or concentration requirements.

Senior Thesis

Undergraduates majoring in Philosophy or Economics-Philosophy may propose to write a senior thesis. Students who wish to write a thesis should approach a faculty member at the end of their junior or beginning of their senior year, and begin working on the proposal early in the fall semester of their senior year. Proposals are due in early December, and will be reviewed by a committee which will include the Director of Undergraduate Studies; students will be notified of the committee's decision within two weeks. Students whose proposals are approved should register for their faculty advisor's section of Supervised Independent Research for the spring term of the senior year. Theses are due in early April.

Students who have a grade point average of 3.6 or above in the major and who complete a thesis will be placed into consideration for departmental honors, though any senior may complete a thesis regardless of their grade point average (upon approval of the proposal).

See the full policy and procedure concerning senior theses on the departmental webpage:

http://philosophy.columbia.edu/content/senior-thesis-philosophy (http://philosophy.columbia.edu/content/senior-thesis-philosophy/)

Departmental Honors

Departmental honors are highly competitive. Normally no more than 10% of the majors graduating in the department each year will receive departmental honors.

In order to qualify for departmental honors in philosophy, a student must have a grade point average of at least 3.6 in the major. For students with a GPA of 3.6 or above, there are two possible routes to consideration:

1. A student may complete a senior thesis; those students who complete senior theses will automatically be considered for honors without having to be nominated.
2. A student may be nominated by a faculty member early in the spring semester of the senior year; nominated students will be invited to submit a writing sample at least 15 pages in length. A nominated student who is also writing a thesis may submit their thesis as the writing sample, or may choose to submit a different work.

Both the senior theses and writing samples are due in early April. The departmental honors committee will then review the submitted material and the academic records of the writers, and will report to the full faculty.

The full faculty will then decide which students to recommend for departmental honors to the Columbia College and General Studies administrations.

Professors

David Albert
Akeel Bilgrami
Taylor Carman (Barnard)
Haim Gaifman
Lydia Goehr
Robert Gooding-Williams
Axel Honneth
Jenann Ismael
Patricia Kitcher
Philip Kitcher
Wolfgang Mann
Christia Mercer
Michele Moody-Adams
John Morrison (Barnard)
Fred Neuhausser (Barnard)
Christopher Peacocke
Carol Rovane
Achille Varzi
Katja Vogt
Associate Professors
Jessica Collins

Assistant Professors
Justin Clarke-Doane
Melissa Fusco
Dhananjay Jagannathan
Tamar Lando
Karen Lewis (Barnard)
Francey Russell (Barnard)

Affiliated Faculty
Souleymane Bachir Diagne (French and Romance Philology)
Jon Elster (Political Science)
Kent Greenawalt (University Professor)
Wayne Proudfoot (Religion)
Joseph Raz (Law School)
Gayatri Spivak (University Professor)

Major in Philosophy
Students considering a major in philosophy are strongly encouraged to
meet with the director of undergraduate studies early in their sophomore
year. All majors must consult with the director of undergraduate studies
each term before registering for classes in order to plan and update their
individual programs of study.

Students planning to major in philosophy are advised to begin with
PHIL UN1010 Methods and Problems of Philosophical Thought.
Beginning students are especially encouraged to take 2000-level courses,
both in the history of philosophy and in systematic philosophy. These
courses are typically less specialized and less narrowly focused than
higher-numbered ones. More advanced students are encouraged to take
3000-level courses. The department requires that all majors take at least
one seminar, PHIL UN3912.

No more than one course at the 1000-level can be counted toward the
major. In order to enroll in one of the 4000-level courses, students must
have taken at least four courses in Philosophy.

The major requires a minimum of 30 points in philosophy chosen from
courses prefixed with UN or GU:

PHIL UN2101 The History of Philosophy I: Presocratics
to Augustine
PHIL UN2201 History of Philosophy II: Aquinas to Kant
PHIL UN3411 Symbolic Logic
At least one course in either metaphysics or epistemology e.g.,
PHIL W3960, or a related course to be chosen in consultation with the
director of undergraduate studies.
Select at least one course in either ethics or social and political
philosophy from the following:

PHIL UN2702 Contemporary Moral Problems
PHIL UN3701 Ethics
PHIL UN3751 Political Philosophy
A related course to be chosen in consultation with the director of
undergraduate studies.

PHIL UN3912 Seminar

Concentration in Philosophy
Philosophy, as an academic discipline, has significant points of contact
with a wide range of other subjects—in the humanities, the social
sciences, and the natural sciences. A concentration in philosophy
thus can be an attractive option for many students. Those considering
becoming concentrators are strongly encouraged to meet with the
director of undergraduate studies early in their sophomore year, in order
to discuss their specific interests and to plan their programs of study. All
concentrators should consult with the director of undergraduate studies
each term before registering for courses.

The concentration requires a minimum of 24 points in philosophy, chosen
from courses prefixed with UN or GU. There are no specific courses
required for the concentration.

Students may choose courses prefixed with GR only with the instructor’s
permission.

PHIL UN3912 is open to junior and senior concentrators who have taken
at least four courses in philosophy.

Major in Economics-Philosophy
Economics-Philosophy is an interdisciplinary major that, while
introducing students to the basic methodologies of economics and
philosophy, stresses areas of particular concern to both. These include
subjects such as rationality and decision making, justice and efficiency,
freedom and collective choice, and the logic of empirical theories and
their testing. Many of the issues are dealt with historically, and classic
texts of Plato, Kant, Mill, Marx, and Smith are reviewed.

Two advisers are assigned for the interdepartmental major, one in the
Department of Economics and one in the Department of Philosophy.
Please note that the Economics adviser can only advise on the
Economics requirements and the Philosophy adviser can only advise on
the Philosophy requirements.

The Economics-Philosophy major requires a total minimum of 54 points:
25 points in Economics, 16 points in Philosophy, 6 points in Mathematics,
3 points in Statistics, and 4 points in the interdisciplinary seminar as
follows:

Economics Core Courses
ECON UN1105 Principles of Economics
ECON UN3211 Intermediate Microeconomics
ECON UN3213 Intermediate Macroeconomics
ECON UN3412 Introduction To Econometrics

Mathematics Sequence
Select a mathematics sequence

Statistics
Select a statistics course

Economics Electives
Three electives are required; refer to the Economics section of this
bulletin.

Philosophy Courses
PHIL UN1010 Methods and Problems of Philosophical
Thought
PHIL UN3411 Symbolic Logic
PHIL UN1401 Introduction to Logic. 3 points.
Explicit criteria for recognizing valid and fallacious arguments, together with various methods for schematizing discourse for the purpose of logical analysis. Illustrative material taken from science and everyday life.

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PHIL UN2101 The History of Philosophy I: Presocratics to Augustine. 4 points.
BC: Fulfillment of General Education Requirement: Reason and Value (REA), Recitation Section Required
Corequisites: PHIL V2111 Required Discussion Section (0 points).
Exposition and analysis of the positions of the major philosophers from the pre-Socratics through Augustine. This course has unrestricted enrollment.

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PHIL UN3264 19th Century Philosophy: Hegel. 3 points.
Prerequisites: PHIL UN2201 or PHIL UN3251
Examines major themes of Hegel's philosophy, with emphasis on social and political thought. Topics include Hegel's critique of Kant, the possibility of metaphysics, the master-slave dialectic, and the role of freedom in a rational society. Readings from Kant's Third Critique help explain how Hegel's project develops out of Kant's transcendental idealism. Some knowledge of Kant's moral theory and his Critique of Pure Reason is presupposed. Prerequisite: at least one of PHIL UN2201, PHIL UN2301, or PHIL UN3251.

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PHIL UN3353 European Social Philosophy. 3 points.
Prerequisites: one philosophy course.
A survey of European social philosophy from the 18th to the 20th century, with special attention to theories of capitalism and the normative concepts (freedom, alienation, human flourishing) that inform them. Also: the relationship between civil society and the state.

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PHIL UN3411 Symbolic Logic. 4 points.
CC/GS: Partial Fulfillment of Science Requirement, Recitation Section Required
Corequisites: PHILV3413 Required Discussion Section (0 points).
Advanced introduction to classical sentential and predicate logic. No previous acquaintance with logic is required; nonetheless a willingness to master technicalities and to work at a certain level of abstraction is desirable. This course has unrestricted enrollment.

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PHIL UN3551 Philosophy of Science. 3 points.
Enrollment limited to 40.
Prerequisites: one philosophy course or the instructor’s permission.
Philosophical problems within science and about the nature of scientific knowledge in the 17th-20th centuries. Sample problems: causation and scientific explanation; induction and real kinds; verification and falsification; models, analogies and simulations; the historical origins of the modern sciences; scientific revolutions; reductionism and supervenience; differences between physics, biology and the social sciences; the nature of life; cultural evolution; human nature; philosophical issues in cosmology.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3551
Course Number | Section/Call Number | Times/Location | Instructor | Points | Enrollment
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PHIL 3551 | 001/10372 | M W 11:40am - 12:55pm | Jenann Ismael | 3 | 49/49

PHIL UN3601 Metaphysics. 4 points.
Discussion Section Required
Corequisites: PHIL V3611 Required Discussion Section (0 points).
Systematic treatment of some major topics in metaphysics (e.g. modality, causation, identity through time, particulars and universals). Readings from contemporary authors.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3601
Course Number | Section/Call Number | Times/Location | Instructor | Points | Enrollment
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PHIL 3601 | 001/10373 | M W 6:10pm - 7:25pm | Justin Clarke-Doane | 4 | 56/80

PHIL UN3716 Topics in Ethics. 3 points.
Enrollment limited to 40.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3716
Course Number | Section/Call Number | Times/Location | Instructor | Points | Enrollment
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PHIL 3716 | 001/00137 | T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm | Francey Russell | 3 | 39/40

PHIL UN3752 Philosophy of Law. 3 points.
This course explores philosophical reflection on the relationship between law, society and morality. We discuss the nature of law, the nature of legal reasoning, the relationship between law and social policy, and central concepts in civil and criminal law. Readings are drawn from such sources as the natural law tradition, legal positivism, legal realism, and Critical Legal Theory. Readings will be supplemented by analysis of classic cases.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3752
Course Number | Section/Call Number | Times/Location | Instructor | Points | Enrollment
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PHIL 3752 | 001/10376 | M W 4:10pm - 5:25pm | Michele Moodo-Adams | 3 | 80/80

PHIL UN3858 CULTIVATING INDIVIDUALITY. 3 points.
Talk about ‘individuality’, about ‘being’ (or becoming) ‘yourself’ is all around us. But what exactly does this mean? What is genuine individuality, and how can we develop, it in ourselves (through self-development) and in others (by designing appropriate educational institutions)? What is the relationship between an individual and being a part of society? Is there a tension between non-conformism often associated with genuine individuality on the one hand, and the demands of community and good citizenship, on the other? Can educational institutions be designed to fulfill both those demands (to the extent they are distinct)? And how might oppressive social institutions hinder the development of ‘individuality’? In this course, we will explore these and related questions by drawing both on the classics of philosophy of education (Plato, Rousseau, Nietzsche, Dewey, BeDois), and on relevant literary material that is in conversation with the philosophical texts (Rilke, Tolstoy, Woolfe).

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3858
Course Number | Section/Call Number | Times/Location | Instructor | Points | Enrollment
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PHIL 3858 | 001/15298 | W 12:10pm - 2:00pm | Natalia Rogach | 3 | 15/15

PHIL UN3912 Seminar. 3 points.
Required of senior majors, but also open to junior majors, and junior and senior concentrators who have taken at least four philosophy courses. This exploration will typically involve writing a substantial research paper. Capped at 20 students with preference to philosophy majors.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3912
Course Number | Section/Call Number | Times/Location | Instructor | Points | Enrollment
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PHIL 3912 | 011/10490 | M W 4:10pm - 6:00pm | Jenann Ismael | 3 | 12/20

PHIL UN3996 Supervised Senior Research. 3 points.
Supervised research under the direction of individual members of the department.
PHIL UN3997 Supervised Senior Research. 3 points.
Supervised research under the direction of individual members of the department.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3997

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PHIL GU4055 Aesthetics: Modern Survey II. 3 points.
Open to senior undergraduates with previous work in the history of philosophy and to graduate students. Priority is given to students who have taken Aesthetics: Historical Survey I.
This course is a critical examination of the major texts in aesthetics including Dewey, Collingwood, Croce, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Adorno, Benjamin, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, Wollheim, Goodman, Cavell, and Danto. Aesthetics: Modern Survey I is not a pre-requisite, but preference is given to those students who have taken it.

Fall 2020: PHIL GU4055

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PHIL GU4424 Modal Logic. 3 points.
CC/GS: Partial Fulfillment of Science Requirement

Fall 2020: PHIL GU4424

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PHIL GU4561 Probability and Decision Theory. 3 points.
Examines interpretations and applications of the calculus of probability including applications as a measure of degree of belief, degree of confirmation, relative frequency, a theoretical property of systems, and other notions of objective probability or chance. Attention to epistemological questions such as Hume’s problem of induction, Goodman’s problem of projectibility, and the paradox of confirmation.

Fall 2020: PHIL GU4561

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PHIL GU4900 Topics in Early Modern Philosophy. 3 points.
Open to undergraduates with previous work in the history of philosophy and to graduate students. Focuses either on an important topic in the history of early modern philosophy (e.g., skepticism, causation, mind, body) or on the philosophy of a major figure in the period (e.g., Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Gassendi, Conway).

Fall 2020: PHIL GU4900

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Spring 2020

PHIL UN1010 Methods and Problems of Philosophical Thought. 3 points.
Critical introduction to philosophical problems, ideas and methods.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN1010

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PHIL UN1401 Introduction to Logic. 3 points.
Explicit criteria for recognizing valid and fallacious arguments, together with various methods for schematizing discourse for the purpose of logical analysis. Illustrative material taken from science and everyday life.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN1401

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PHIL UN2201 History of Philosophy II: Aquinas to Kant. 4 points.
Prerequisites: PHIL UN2211 Required Discussion Section (0 points). PHIL UN2101 is not a prerequisite for this course. Exposition and analysis of the metaphysics, epistemology, and natural philosophy of the major philosophers from Aquinas through Kant. Authors include Aquinas, Galileo, Gassendi, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. This course has unrestricted enrollment.

PHIL UN2301 History of Philosophy III: Kant to Nietzsche. 4 points.
Prerequisites: None.
Exposition and analysis of major texts and figures in European philosophy since Kant. Authors include Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche. Required discussion section (PHIL UN2311). Attendance in the first week of classes is mandatory.
PHIL UN3251 Kant. 3 points.
Explores the connections between theoretical and practical reason in Kant's thinking with special attention to the Critique of Pure Reason and the project of 'transcendental' philosophy.

PHIL UN3411 Symbolic Logic. 4 points.
CC/GS: Partial Fulfillment of Science Requirement, Recitation Section Required
Corequisites: PHILV3413 Required Discussion Section (0 points).
Advanced introduction to classical sentential and predicate logic. No previous acquaintance with logic is required; nonetheless a willingness to master technicalities and to work at a certain level of abstraction is desirable. This course has unrestricted enrollment.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3411
Course Number  | Section/Call Number | Times/Location | Instructor  | Points | Enrollment
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
PHIL 3411   | 001/10367  | T Th 10:10am - 11:25am | Tamar Lando | 4 | 100/100

PHIL UN3576 Physics and Philosophy. 3 points.
Philosophical problems at the foundations of quantum theory, especially those having to do with the uncertainty of relations and nature of quantum mechanical indeterminacy. Exploration of a variety of interpretation and hidden variable theory.

PHIL UN3654 Philosophy of Psychology. 3 points.
Considers psychology from the perspective of philosophy of science and the plausibility of various philosophical positions in light of the best current theories of psychology. Examines the assumptions and explanatory strategies of past and present ‘schools of psychology’ and the implications of recent work in psychology for such perennial philosophical problems as moral responsibility and personal identity.

PHIL UN3751 Political Philosophy. 3 points.
Six major concepts of political philosophy including authority, rights, equality, justice, liberty and democracy are examined in three different ways. First the conceptual issues are analyzed through contemporary essays on these topics by authors like Peters, Hart, Williams, Berlin, Rawls and Schumpeter. Second the classical sources on these topics are discussed through readings from Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Marx, Plato, Mill and Rousseau. Third some attention is paid to relevant contexts of application of these concepts in political society, including such political movements as anarchism, international human rights, conservative, liberal, and Marxist economic policies as well as competing models of democracy.

PHIL UN3800 PHILOSOPHY, JUSTICE AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM. 4 points.
In his Theses on Feuerbach, Karl Marx writes, “Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it.” The questions to ask in response to Marx’s exhortation include: how do we recognize the need for change and appropriately effect it? What are the relations between our goals and the means to them? How can we better understand our goals to make the means more suitable? When we organize to produce results, what are we doing? Do we know exactly who and what we want to change? What are the “ethics of process”? What exactly do we do when we organize? A tentative definition: to organize is to bring together individuals who have common interests in a way that will enhance their power. What kind of power is this? What other forms of power are there? What is the best form of coordinating among individuals? If we better understand the dynamics of organizing, should we reconceive our goals accordingly? How do we better tap into shared values and concerns? What temptations and distractions get in the way of our goals? What problems prevent us from achieving them? Do we have goals that can be achieved? If not, how can we revise them?

PHIL UN3912 Seminar. 3 points.
Required of senior majors, but also open to junior majors, and junior and senior concentrators who have taken at least four philosophy courses. This exploration will typically involve writing a substantial research paper. Capped at 20 students with preference to philosophy majors.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3912
Course Number  | Section/Call Number | Times/Location | Instructor  | Points | Enrollment
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
PHIL 3912   | 011/10490  | M W 4:10pm - 6:00pm | Jenann Ismael | 3 | 12/20
PHIL 3912   | 014/00138  | T Th 10:10am - 12:00pm | Frederick Neuhouser | 3 | 13/20
PHIL UN3997 Supervised Senior Research. 3 points.
Supervised research under the direction of individual members of the department.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3997

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PHIL UN3998 Supervised Individual Research. 3 points.

Fall 2020: PHIL UN3998

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PHIL GU4675 The Direction of Time. 3 points.
A survey of the various attempts to reconcile the macroscopic directionality of time with the time-reversibility of the fundamental laws of physics. The second law of thermodynamics and the concept of entropy, statistical mechanics, cosmological problems, the problems of memory, the possibility of multiple time direction.

PHIL GU4810 Lattices and Boolean Algebras. 3 points.
Prerequisites: PHIL UN3411 or 4801
This course is designed as an introduction to lattices and Boolean algebras. In the first part of the course, we study partial orders and view lattices both as partial orders and as algebraic structures. We study some basic constructions involving sublattices, products of lattices, and homomorphic images of lattices. In the second part of the course, we study Boolean algebras, with an aim to proving several representation theorems: first, a representation theorem for finite Boolean algebras, and toward the end of the course, the famous Stone Representation Theorem. We end the course with a look at the connection between classical mereology (or the theory of parthood) and complete Boolean algebras.

PHIL GU4900 Topics in Early Modern Philosophy. 3 points.
Open to undergraduates with previous work in the history of philosophy and to graduate students. Focuses either on an important topic in the history of early modern philosophy (e.g., skepticism, causation, mind, body) or on the philosophy of a major figure in the period (e.g., Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Gassendi, Conway).

Fall 2020: PHIL GU4900

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Room TBA
ECPH GU4950 Economics and Philosophy Seminar. 4 points.
Open only to economics-philosophy majors who are in their senior year.

Prerequisites: ECON W3211, ECON W3213, ECON W3412. Students will be contacted by the Economics department for pre-enrollment. Explores topics in the philosophy of economics such as welfare, social choice, and the history of political economy. Sometimes the emphasis is primarily historical and sometimes on analysis of contemporary economic concepts and theories.