Philosophy

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

Director of Undergraduate Studies: Christina Mercer, 707 Philosophy; 212-854-4884; cm50@columbia.edu (da5@columbia.edu)

Economics-Philosophy Adviser: Philip Kitcher, 717 Philosophy; 212-854-4884; psk16@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 Neuhouser (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

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**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 UN2011 Philosophy of Education. 3 points.
Drawing on classical and contemporary sources, this course will introduce students to a variety of texts that address the philosophical consideration of education, including its role in the development of the individual and the development of a democratic society. Readings from Plato, Rousseau, Dewey, and others.

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.

PHIL UN2110 Philosophy and Feminism. 3 points.
Is there an essential difference between women and men? How do questions about race conflict or overlap with those about gender? Is there a “normal” way of being “queer”? Introduction to philosophy and feminism through a critical discussion of these and other questions using historical and contemporary texts, art, and public lectures. Focus includes essentialism, difference, identity, knowledge, objectivity, and queerness.
PHIL UN3701 Ethics. 4 points.
Prerequisites: one course in philosophy.
Corequisites: PHIL V3711 Required Discussion Section (0 points).
This course is mainly an introduction to three influential approaches to normative ethics: utilitarianism, deontological views, and virtue ethics. We also consider the ethics of care, and selected topics in meta-ethics.

PHIL UN3756 Critical Philosophy of Race: What is Race?. 3 points.
This course is a philosophical examination of the meaning and significance of the concept of race. The course will chiefly aim to answer: What do we mean by the term "race"? And why is it often tied to the existence of racism? From where does the concept come? And what role did "race" play in the philosophical thought and the culture of Western modernity? Among the questions that can be asked are, How do concepts of race contribute to the formation and justification of various economic, political, and social institutions and practices, such as slavery, colonialism, and segregation? However, we will also inquire at the end of the course whether "race" is always a destructive concept, or whether it can be re-defined as part of a liberation project centered on racial identity: the appreciation and celebration of racial difference and solidarity.

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.

PHIL GU4424 Modal Logic. 3 points.
CC/GS: Partial Fulfillment of Science Requirement
Fall 2020: PHIL GU4424
Course Number Section/Call Number Times/Location Instructor Points Enrollment
PHIL 4424 001/15254 Th 12:10pm - 2:00pm 716 Philosophy Hall Tamar Lando 3 1/40

PHIL GU4451 History of Philosophy: From De Morgan to Frege. 3 points.
Prerequisites: one term of Symbolic Logic.
The roots of logic may be traced to Aristotle, who systematized and codified the subject in a way that was not significantly surpassed for over two millennia. As we know it today, however, logic stems largely from certain advancements that took place in the mid-nineteenth century, when the subject developed into a rigorous discipline whose exemplar was the exact method of proof used in mathematics. The aim of this course is to provide a critical reconstruction of such advancements along with an assessment of their philosophical significance.

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.

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

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.

PHIL GU4089 Aristotle. 3 points.
Not offered during 2019-20 academic year.
Prerequisites: undergraduate students must obtain the instructor’s permission.
The course offers a high-level survey of central themes in Aristotle's ethics: happiness, motivation, agency, excellence, deliberation, pleasure, responses to relativism, and the nature of ethics.
PHIL UN2201 History of Philosophy II: Aquinas to Kant. 4 points.
Prerequisites: PHIL UN2111 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.

Spring 2020: PHIL UN2201
Course Number: PHIL 2201
Section/Call Number: 001/00012
Times/Location: T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm
        405 Milbank Hall
Instructor: Kyle Driggers
Points: 4
Enrollment: 53/80

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.

Spring 2020: PHIL UN2301
Course Number: PHIL 2301
Section/Call Number: 001/00014
Times/Location: T Th 8:40am - 9:55am
        504 Diana Center
Instructor: Taylor Carman
Points: 4
Enrollment: 27/40

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.

Spring 2020: PHIL UN3251
Course Number: PHIL 3251
Section/Call Number: 001/11564
Times/Location: M W 1:10pm - 2:25pm
        413 Kent Hall
Instructor: Patricia Kitcher
Points: 3
Enrollment: 32/86

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.

Spring 2020: PHIL UN3411
Course Number: PHIL 3411
Section/Call Number: 001/11565
Times/Location: M W 11:40am - 12:55pm
        402 Chandler
Instructor: Tamar Lando
Points: 4
Enrollment: 77/86

Spring 2020: PHIL UN3411
Course Number: PHIL 3411
Section/Call Number: 001/10367
Times/Location: T Th 10:10am - 11:25am
        Room TBA
Instructor: Tamar Lando
Points: 4
Enrollment: 78/100

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.

Spring 2020: PHIL UN3751
Course Number: PHIL 3751
Section/Call Number: 001/11567
Times/Location: M W 8:40am - 9:55am
        310 Fayerweather
Instructor: Axel Honneth
Points: 3
Enrollment: 58/86

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.

Spring 2020: PHIL UN3576
Course Number: PHIL 3576
Section/Call Number: 001/11566
Times/Location: M W 4:10pm - 5:25pm
        601 Fairchild Life Sciences Bldg
Instructor: David Albert
Points: 3
Enrollment: 36/60

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.

Spring 2020: PHIL UN3654
Course Number: PHIL 3654
Section/Call Number: 001/00065
Times/Location: M W 2:40pm - 3:55pm
        405 Milbank Hall
Instructor: Raphael Gerraty
Points: 3
Enrollment: 23/80
PHIL 3800 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 3912 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.

PHIL 3997 Supervised Senior Research. 3 points.
Supervised research under the direction of individual members of the department.

PHIL 3998 Supervised Individual Research. 3 points.

PHIL 4675 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, the problems of memory, the possibility of multiple time direction.

PHIL 4810 Lattices and Boolean Algebras. 3 points.
Prerequisites: PHIL 3411 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).

Spring 2020: PHIL GU4900
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<td>Th 12:10pm - 2:00pm</td>
<td>Christia Mercer</td>
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Fall 2020: PHIL GU4900
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<td>T 4:10pm - 6:00pm</td>
<td>Aminah Hasan</td>
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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.

Spring 2020: ECPH GU4950
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<td>Jessica Collins</td>
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