

Department of Philosophy

Professors: Christian Göbel, Daniel P. Maher (Director of the Core Texts and Enduring Questions Program), Molly Brigid McGrath (Director of D'Amour Center for Teaching Excellence); *Associate Professors:* J. Patrick Corrigan (Chairperson), Samuel A. Stoner (sabbatical 2025-26); *Assistant Professors:* Derek Duplessie, Margaret Matthews; *Visiting Assistant Professor:* Thomas Miles; *Lecturers:* Christopher Berger, Paul Douillard (Professor Emeritus), Charlotte Duffy, Peter Marton.

MISSION STATEMENT

Philosophy is a reasoned quest for truths fundamental to all areas of inquiry. Animated by a love of truth, philosophical inquiry attends to all that is of ultimate concern for human beings. Guided by the university's commitment to embody the complementarity of faith and reason and its broader mission, the Philosophy Department of Assumption University is founded on the ongoing engagement of its faculty and students with the Catholic intellectual tradition. We seek intellectual friendship among all who take seriously the life of the mind. Grappling with fundamental questions of human existence with an eye toward discerning the truth is an essential dimension of this tradition. Our mission is to engage students in the activity of philosophy strengthened by this tradition.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Reading texts closely and carefully in context
- Appreciating and evaluating positions to discern their fundamental principles
- Writing clearly, insightfully, and in a well-ordered manner
- Engaging respectfully and constructively in philosophical conversation
- Constructing and assessing arguments and evaluating their formal structures

MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY (11)

Philosophy comes before other studies in that it takes up the general questions whose answers underlie the more particular parts of human knowledge. The philosophy major prepares students for graduate work in philosophy, law, and theology. It also gives the student a more intensive training in the liberal arts and lays the foundations for special studies in the natural sciences, literature, languages, history, and the social sciences. The critical investigation of the major areas of human endeavor stresses the formation of the student's judgment.

REQUIRED COURSES (11)

- PHI 100 Socrates and the Search for Truth
- One intermediate course from the following list:
 - PHI 151 Ethics and the Good Life
 - PHI 152 The Human Difference
 - PHI 153 The Book of Nature
 - PHI 154 God and the Philosophers
- PHI 340 Metaphysics
- Three courses in the history of philosophy (from three eras):
 - Ancient Philosophy (PHI 350–354)
 - Medieval Philosophy (PHI 355–359)
 - Modern Philosophy (PHI 360–369)
 - Contemporary Philosophy (PHI 370–389)
- Three PHI courses (200 or higher)
- Two further PHI courses

Any student interested in graduate studies in philosophy should take PHI 301 Logic and should pursue a modern language (French or German).

RECOMMENDED FOUR-YEAR PLAN FOR THE MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY

The following plan describes one way to complete the Major in Philosophy. Students who double major or who have one or more minors may well follow a different path.

First Year

Fall	Spring
PHI 100 Socrates and the Search for Truth	Any intermediate PHI course (151–154) PHI 151 Ethics and the Good Life PHI 152 The Human Difference PHI 153 The Book of Nature PHI 154 God and the Philosophers

Sophomore Year

Fall	Spring
Philosophy Elective	History of Philosophy course (350-390)

Junior Year

Fall	Spring
History of Philosophy course (350-390)	Philosophy Elective (200 or higher)
Philosophy Elective (200 or higher)	PHI 340 Metaphysics

Senior Year

Fall	Spring
History of Philosophy course (350-390)	Philosophy Elective (200 or higher)
Philosophy Elective (200 or higher)	

ADVISING TIPS FOR THE MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY

- Although 11 courses are required for the major, students may take up to 14 philosophy courses.
- The heart of the major is found in the three “history” courses from four periods, Ancient, Medieval, Modern, and Contemporary. There are several courses offered in each historical period, and majors must take one course from three different periods. Typically, courses in ancient and modern philosophy are offered in the fall semesters, and medieval and contemporary courses are offered in the spring. Although desirable, it is not always possible to offer all four courses each year, and so students must plan carefully and take appropriate courses when they are available. Students who plan to study abroad at some point should take particular care. Consult with the chairperson of the department to learn the anticipated schedule.
- It is possible and often desirable to take more than one course from the same historical period as an elective within the major.
- Metaphysics may not be offered every year, and so students must plan carefully to take this course when it is available. Consult with the chairperson of the department to learn the anticipated schedule.
- A maximum of three intermediate courses (151–154) count within the major.
- Courses numbered in the 200’s are general interest PHI courses, presupposing no more than PHI 100 and one intermediate course (151–154). Courses numbered above 250 are like those below 250, except they involve a somewhat specialized or narrowed interest.
- Courses numbered above 300 usually do not have extensive prerequisites, which means they could be taken at any time after the first two philosophy courses. Nevertheless, those courses are proper only for majors, minors, and other students with a serious interest in the course.
- Any student interested in graduate studies in philosophy should take PHI 301 Logic and should pursue a modern language (French or German).
- PHI 301 Logic may be taken concurrently with the second Foundations Program cornerstone PHI course.

- Students may combine the Philosophy Major with another major or with any of several minors, such as Core Texts and Enduring Questions, LEX, or the Honors Program.
- Students are encouraged to join the student-run Philosophy Club. For more information, contact the chairperson.
- To maintain the academic integrity of the major, transfer courses are approved under strict conditions. Students should consult with the department chair before registering for courses outside the day school of Assumption University.

TO WHAT CAREERS DOES A MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY LEAD?

Philosophy leads to everything. In addition to obvious choices like law, medicine, publishing, teaching, and government, people who major in philosophy go on to careers in every imaginable field: <https://www.apaonline.org/page/whostudiesphilosophy>

See our department website for more information on the wide range of careers that have been and can be successfully pursued with a philosophy degree:

<https://www.assumption.edu/academics/programs/philosophy>

For a guide to careers outside of academia appropriate for people with degrees in philosophy, see:

<https://www.apaonline.org/page/beyondacademia?>

For an array of resources suitable for undergraduates, see:

https://www.apaonline.org/page/undergrad_resources

Learn about the American Philosophical Association:

www.apaonline.org

Learn about the American Catholic Philosophical Association:

www.acpaweb.org

PHILOSOPHY, ETHICS, AND BUSINESS: A 6-IN-5 BA/MBA PROGRAM

The Philosophy, Ethics, and Business 6-in-5 BA/MBA Program is designed to provide students with the best of a Catholic liberal arts education and advanced professional training in business. Grounded in a rigorous undergraduate liberal education, graduates of this program will receive highly relevant professional training and be poised to launch successful careers. This program consists of (a) the Major in Philosophy, Pre-Business Track and (b) the Accelerated MBA (Management Track). Students earn the BA and the MBA in five years instead of the six years these two degrees customarily require. During the first four years, students complete the 12-course Major in Philosophy, Pre-Business Track. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 in the undergraduate part of the program guarantees acceptance into the Accelerated MBA Program (Management Track), which begins in the summer following completion of the BA with the four Foundations courses and continues through a fifth year of courses. This one-year MBA includes a “professional practice” concentration in which students acquire experience working in local businesses while completing advanced courses that cover a range of key business disciplines.

MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY, PRE-BUSINESS TRACK (12)

Today’s businesses and today’s world need citizens who can think with insight, communicate clearly, and exercise good judgment both in and out of the workplace. This version of the Major in Philosophy includes emphasis on ethics, business, and economic life, and it can readily be combined with a second major, such as Political Science or Economics. The first four courses listed below help prepare students to understand business activities in their ethical and civic context. The other eight courses are included to broaden and deepen students’ understanding of philosophical reasoning as a formative influence in human life, one important part of which is economic activity. Students who complete this major with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 are guaranteed acceptance into Assumption University’s Accelerated MBA Program (Management Track) for liberal arts majors.

REQUIRED COURSES (12)

- PHI 100 Socrates and the Search for Truth
- PHI 151 Ethics and the Good Life
- PHI 305 Business Ethics
- PHI 290 Property and Civic Life
- Three courses in the history of philosophy (from three eras):
 - Ancient Philosophy (PHI 350–354)
 - Medieval Philosophy (PHI 355–359)
 - Modern Philosophy (PHI 360–369)

Contemporary Philosophy (PHI 370–389)

- Three PHI electives (at least one numbered above 200)
- MGT 100 Introduction to Management
- ACC 125 Financial Accounting

Students should take PHI 100 and PHI 151 by the end of their second year, thereby fulfilling the prerequisite for all other philosophy courses (which may be taken in any order). MGT 100 and ACC 125 may be taken at any time, but doing so earlier will allow students to take more business courses and reduce the number of Foundations in Business courses required for their MBA. In addition, with permission from the Dean of the Grenon School of Business, students may take up to two MBA courses as undergraduates. Students should consult with Prof. Michael Lewis, the MBA Program Director, as early as their junior year to make clear their intent to apply to the MBA program and to take the Foundations in Businesses courses at the end of their senior year. Students completing these major requirements but opting not to continue into the Accelerated MBA program will graduate with the BA major “Philosophy, Pre-Business Track,” unless they take additional courses to qualify for the standard Philosophy Major.

ACCELERATED M.B.A. PROGRAM

Following completion of the above BA, students will complete the 12–14 month Accelerated MBA. For specific information about the Accelerated MBA Program (Management Track), students should consult the MBA Program. During the summer prior to their MBA year, students take the Foundations courses, consisting of four courses designed to prepare liberal arts majors for graduate-level business courses. Undergraduate students interested in an MBA should seriously consider taking the following courses as undergraduates, since earning a B- or better in these courses waives MBA requirements otherwise fulfilled by the Foundations courses:

MKT 101 Principles of Marketing (equivalent: MBA 562)

ACC 126 Principles of Accounting II (equivalent: MBA 565)

MGT 230 Decision Analytics for Managers (equivalent: MBA 564)

ECO 325 Corporate Finance (equivalent: MBA 563)

PHI 305 Business Ethics fulfills the MBA requirement for MBA 600 Business Ethics, thus enabling students to substitute an elective in the MBA segment of the program.

Each of the following undergraduate courses is also strongly recommended:

CSC 113 Introduction to Computer Science or CSC 117 Introduction to Programming

ENG 304 Business and Technical Writing

or ENG 201 Writing Workshop: Argument and Persuasion

or ENG 308 Writing and Editing

MAT 117 Calculus I

POL 322 Political Economy

SPA 225 Business Spanish: Management, SPA 226 Business Spanish: Marketing

THE 343 The Social Teachings of the Church

MINOR IN PHILOSOPHY (6)

The minor in Philosophy is designed to strengthen any major, broaden the student’s background, and enable the student to see his/her subject in perspective.

REQUIRED COURSES

- PHI 100 Socrates and the Search for Truth
- One intermediate course (from the following list)
 - PHI 151 Ethics and the Good Life
 - PHI 152 The Human Difference
 - PHI 153 The Book of Nature
 - PHI 154 God and the Philosophers
- One course in the history of philosophy
 - Ancient Philosophy (PHI 350–354)

Medieval Philosophy (PHI 355–359)
Modern Philosophy (PHI 360–369)
Contemporary Philosophy (PHI 370–389)

- Three further PHI courses (at least one 200 or higher)

The minor program is planned in consultation with a member of the department, taking into consideration the student's major and interests, and subject to the approval of the Department Chairperson.

MINOR IN FORTIN AND GONTHIER CORE TEXTS AND ENDURING QUESTIONS (CTEQ)

Designed for select students who want to combine their pursuit of a specialized major with a fully integrated, interdisciplinary minor, the CTEQ minor brings four separate departments—Art History, Philosophy, Theology, and Political Science—together in one unified minor. Our students explore perennial human questions (about the nature of justice, beauty, human nature, and God) with the help of the Great Books. CTEQ students and faculty form a distinctive and close-knit learning community. For more information, see the entry under “Interdisciplinary Programs” or contact us at CoreTexts@Assumption.edu.

MINOR IN LAW, ETHICS, AND CONSTITUTIONAL STUDIES (LEX)

Jointly sponsored by the Departments of Philosophy and Political Science, the LEX minor engages law, ethics, and constitutionalism through those thinkers and texts whose political, philosophical, and legal reflections have shaped the Western intellectual tradition. This minor is designed for those who want to acquire the liberal arts skills essential to professional and personal excellence, as well as to all those who aspire to thoughtful citizenship. For more information, please consult the entry for LEX in “Interdisciplinary Programs” or contact its director, Prof. Jeremy Geddert at j.geddert@assumption.edu.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PHILOSOPHY (PHI)

PHI 100 SOCRATES AND THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

This course introduces students to the activity of philosophy, understood in the Socratic sense of living an examined life. Philosophy begins by questioning ordinary experience and the opinions one already holds, and it becomes a comprehensive, fundamental, and self-reflective search for the truth about the nature of human beings and the good life, the world, and God. Readings include Plato's *Apology of Socrates* and the Allegory of the Cave, as well as at least one medieval and one modern text. This course also introduces elementary principles of logical reasoning and basic distinctions of philosophic importance. It serves as the first Cornerstone philosophy in the Foundations Program, and each section includes some direct link with the content pursued in each of the intermediate Foundations courses in philosophy.

Staff/Three credits

PHI 151 ETHICS AND THE GOOD LIFE

Each person must confront the question, *how should I live?* In doing so, one may also wonder, *do the ends justify the means?* Are intentions all that count? Is God the source of right and wrong? How important are my desires? Many things seem good that later prove to be evil or merely incomplete goods for the human being. This course uses classic texts to investigate common opinions about the human good in light of our need to distinguish apparent goods from true goods. Ultimately, what is it to live well? Texts include Aristotle's *Ethics* and readings from the utilitarian and the Kantian traditions. Prerequisite: PHI 100.

Staff/Three credits

PHI 152 THE HUMAN DIFFERENCE

Being human involves wondering what it means to be human. The human being has been understood variously to be a political animal, a rights-bearing individual, a pleasure-seeking ego, a self-conscious mind, a purely material being, and the image and likeness of God. Are we souls, bodies, selves, minds, persons, or something else? Do we share a common nature, or are we self-made individually? This course investigates contemporary views of what it means to be human in dialogue with Aristotle's

interpretation of man as a rational animal at home in the cosmos and the Platonic/Augustinian view that human beings, loving and longing for something higher, are homeless and restless in the world. Prerequisite: PHI 100.

Staff/Three credits

PHI 153 THE BOOK OF NATURE

Is nature good, or is it indifferent to our well-being? Should we admire nature for its beauty and bounty, or should we master and transform it to serve our desires? Philosophy began with the discovery of nature, and modern natural science now enjoys unparalleled authority and power in the world. This course examines the modern understanding of nature as mathematical and lawful in relation to two older views it displaced: (1) Aristotle's natural kinds and their intrinsic causes; (2) nature as created by God. All living beings depend upon the order of nature, but only human beings try to understand it. Philosophical investigation of nature presupposes inquiry into human nature. Authors treated include Aristotle, Descartes, and Max Weber. Prerequisite: PHI 100.

Staff/Three credits

PHI 154 GOD AND THE PHILOSOPHERS

Is there a God? What could God be? What does God have to do with us? What is the role of reason in relation to faith? This course examines several ways that philosophers have thought about the divine: its existence and its relation to the world and to human beings. It considers classic arguments for the existence of God and various challenges to theism, such as those made in the name of science and the problem of evil. Included among the readings are the "Five Ways" of Thomas Aquinas, Anselm's "ontological argument," and Nietzsche's "Madman" parable. Prerequisite: PHI 100.

Staff/Three credits

PHI 220 LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

This course investigates the kinds of love, their causes and effects, as well as the necessity, nature, forms, and properties of friendship. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Corrigan, Duplessie, Maher /Three credits

PHI 230 PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE

Philosophical ideas are most often presented in the form of abstract, systematic, argumentative treatises. However, philosophical insight is not restricted to conventional philosophical discourse. Literature, with its keen discernment of the human condition and its probing of our moral situation, often presents significant philosophical insight. This course will either study a philosophical issue through a mixture of systematic, argumentative texts and literary texts or study the thought of a single author as presented in his or her argumentative and literary works. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Duplessie/Three credits

PHI 235 PHILOSOPHY AND FILM

This course examines the implications of cinematic representation for philosophy. How do moving images and sound change traditional conceptions of representation? How is knowledge transmitted through the medium of film? How is film related to culture, politics, and social life? Can film be a new mode of philosophical expression? Film theory will be read alongside works by such cinematic greats as Bergman, Truffaut, Lee, and others. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Göbel, McGrath/Three credits

PHI 239 TRIALS AND DEATHS OF SOCRATES AND JESUS

This course focuses on the very end of the lives of Socrates and Jesus as presented in the works of Xenophon, Plato, Matthew, Luke, and John. The differences in the details of the presentations of the deaths of Jesus and Socrates point to fundamentally different understandings of human beings: our situation, our deficiencies, and our salvation. Although this course attends to the differences between our authors, shared elements in the understanding of the human situation among the Evangelists can be discerned which ground the horror of Jesus' Passion and the beauty of the Socrates' death. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Corrigan/Three credits

PHI 240 EDUCATION AND LIBERATION

This is a seminar on the idea of liberal education—that is, an education that emancipates and that prepares a person for living freely. Why do people sometimes describe their educations as liberating? From what would education free us? And are some

forms of education not emancipating, but subjugating? What type of activities must the freed person learn in order to live well in freedom? The tradition of liberal education is the history of an argument about what oppresses human beings and what we are meant to do with our freedom, and thus about what type of learning we need in order to live a fuller human life. This course will require extensive reading, writing, and discussion. Readings will include classic texts from the tradition of liberal education as well as more contemporary adaptations of that tradition. Prerequisites: PHI100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154). McGrath/*Three credits*

PHI 245 REASON ANCIENT AND MODERN

Human intelligence takes many forms: common sense, mathematics, poetry, philosophy, science, engineering, and moral activity, to name a few. What, then, is our reason? What is the nature and proper use of this power at the origin of all our cultivated pursuits? The most universally acclaimed achievements of human reason have come through modern science, but this science itself gives no guidance for the use of its power. Does the contemporary critique of the modern form of reason (in the name of the environment, deconstruction, or religion) apply to reason simply? This course examines ancient and modern interpretations of human reason in core philosophical texts. Prerequisite: PHI100 and any intermediate PHI (151–154). Corrigan, Maher, Stoner/ *Three credits*

PHI 265 INTRODUCTION TO PEACE STUDIES

Regrettably, conflict and its violent resolution have marked human history. At the same time, however, human beings have consistently expressed their desire for peace and proposed strategies to eliminate or at least reduce violence. This interdisciplinary course is designed to acquaint students with a variety of reflections about the causes of and remedies for violent conflict. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154). Göbel/*Three credits*

PHI 270 PHILOSOPHY OF LAW

A discussion of the classical and contemporary writings on the source of, authority, the nature and kinds of law, the interpretation of law, and theories of punishment. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154). McGrath, Maher/*Three Credits*

PHI 290 PROPERTY AND CIVIC LIFE

What is wealth, and what is it for? Are human beings essentially greedy? We are all economic actors, but only because we are also human beings seeking the good life and citizens benefitting from and co-responsible for the shape of our communities. This course investigates what property, wealth, and business are and seeks a deeper understanding of ourselves as human beings involved in the production, exchange, distribution, and use of economic goods within our communities. Classical readings from Aristotle and Aquinas will be read in conjunction with texts from modern and contemporary thinkers (e.g., Locke, Smith, Marx, Hayek, Sen). Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154). McGrath/*Three credits*

PHI 301 LOGIC

This course examines the principles of formal and informal reasoning. Students examine validity, soundness, deduction, induction, and probabilistic reasoning, and the relation between logical form and truth. Topics may include classical syllogistic logic, propositional logic, predicate logic, modal logic, and fallacies. The course may also examine the relations between logic and ordinary language, science, mathematics, or metaphysics. This course is required for the LEX minor. Prerequisite: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154); may be taken concurrently with second Foundations Program PHI course. Staff/*Three credits*

PHI 305 BUSINESS ETHICS

This course is a review of the main theories of ethics and justice and the application of these theories to business. This will be done by examining case studies and legal decisions involving issues of the rights and responsibilities of business with regard to the employee, the consumer, and government. Business in modern society: social responsibility and environmental issues. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and PHI 151 or permission of instructor. Hasanoglu/*Three credits*

PHI 311 BIOMEDICAL ETHICS

This course studies moral reasoning in relation to health by surveying a series of topics appropriate to biomedical ethics. Historical medical and legal cases provide the context for close examination of practical decisions and philosophical arguments in defense of those decisions. The emphasis in the course falls on the arguments that attempt to justify and to criticize various actions. The topics treated vary, and may include assisted suicide, fertility therapies, biotechnical enhancement, abortion and perinatal care, treatment of animal and human research subjects, genetic screening, and allocation of scarce resources. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and PHI 151 or permission of instructor.

Maher/Three credits

PHI 302 PERSON, MIND, AND BRAIN

When I meet a human being, do I encounter a person who somehow transcends the body I can see, or do I encounter a neurochemical machine that can be understood completely through the operation of its physical parts? Is the person an immaterial mind or self? Is the mind rather an illusion, where the mental acts we experience as ours—memory, imagination, choice, and so on—are really nothing but operations of the brain? This course offers a philosophical examination of attempts to understand the human being in relation to neuroscience. We consider the phenomena of personal life and engage dialectically with diverse efforts to explain the phenomena by appeal to the neural conditions that make it possible.

Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154); PHI 152 or 153 recommended.

Maher/Three credits

PHI 340 METAPHYSICS

The course examines the aim and subject of that wisdom which is the goal of all philosophical activity. It examines the kind of experience necessary for pursuing this wisdom. Topics include: the search for first causes, the before and after of what is, how the human being is towards truth and the principle for finding the road to follow in science. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Maher, McGrath, Stoner/Three credits

PHI 345 SPECIAL TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES

This course offers a study at an advanced level of a philosophical issue not covered by other thematic courses. Topic changes according to the interest of the professor and needs of students. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Staff/Three credits

PHI 350 PLATO

This course undertakes a detailed reading and discussion of several major dialogues of Plato with numerous references to selected parts in other dialogues. Plato's positions on the nature and purpose of philosophy, as well as his tentative answers to the central questions of philosophy, will be contrasted with those of some other philosophers. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Staff/Three credits

PHI 351 PLATO'S REPUBLIC

What is justice? Treating others justly is good for them, but is it good for the just person? Would it be better to be unjust, provided one can get away with it? Plato's *Republic* begins with these vital questions and leads readers to examining, e.g., the nature of the soul, the city, the divine, knowledge, ethics, happiness, politics, poetry, and metaphysics in their interrelations. While some understand this book to depict an ideal city, others see it as a defense of despotism, and still others regard it as ironic or anti-political. This course helps students learn to read this inexhaustibly fertile text, to ponder the questions it raises, and to appreciate the power of a great book to enliven enduring questions. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI (151–154).

Duplessie/Three credits

PHI 354 SPECIAL TOPICS IN ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

This course studies a figure or school of philosophy not treated by other history of philosophy courses covering the Ancient period. It fulfills the Area 1 History of Philosophy Requirement for Philosophy Majors and Minors. "Focus in the History of Philosophy" courses are foundational to the Philosophy major. Texts, issues and positions of the past are studied for more than merely their antiquarian interest. Philosophizing well requires coming to grips with the ideas and continued significance of major

thinkers in the tradition. These courses are not “survey” courses; they focus upon key figures or philosophical issues characteristic of the period. With the help of the professor, students cultivate the art of independent philosophical research and writing, leading to the completion of a substantive essay characterized by a style appropriate to professional philosophical writing and argumentation. In keeping with the tradition of the Department, each year senior majors present a paper from one of their history of philosophy courses to their peers and the faculty in the Philosophy Department. Fall Semester. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Staff/Three credits

PHI 355 AUGUSTINE AND AQUINAS

The new intellectual environment of philosophy in medieval times will be investigated through a study of the writings of two of the greatest thinkers of the West. Of particular interest will be the union of and tension between the wisdom of the philosophers and the wisdom of the Scriptures present in each author’s work. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154). Göbel/*Three credits*

PHI 356 SEEK AND FIND: AUGUSTINE SEMINAR

The course offers an introduction to the life and thought of Augustine, whose philosophy resides at the heart of an Assumptionist education. Augustine was a constant seeker: his personal quest for truth and truthfulness did not end when he found God. The course offers a close reading of Augustine’s own account of this spiritual journey in the *Confessions*, one of the most influential books in Western intellectual history. We will further explore important topics addressed in the *Confessions*—Augustine’s analysis of the human condition (our “restless heart” and ‘metaphysical nature’), self, freedom, evil, happiness, truth, love, God, faith and reason, education, social engagement, a Christian existence, etc.—through the study of other works by Augustine and authors in the ‘Augustinian tradition’. We want to draw inspiration from these readings and find models of the philosophical quest for truth and a good life that we can relate to in our personal, professional, social, and spiritual development. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Göbel /Three credits

PHI 357 CROSSROADS: ISLAMIC, JEWISH, AND CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

This course involves an investigation of the contributions of Islamic, Jewish, and Christian thinkers to the roots of modern philosophical issues and problems. Students will be introduced to important classical figures in each tradition discussing a set of common problems. Consideration will be given to the contemporary implications of classical views. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Maher/Three credits

PHI 359 SPECIAL TOPICS IN MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY

This course studies a figure or school of philosophy not treated by other history of philosophy courses covering the Medieval period. It fulfills the Area 2 History of Philosophy Requirement for Philosophy Majors and Minors. Content and pedagogical objectives of the course are similar to those described in PHI 354 above. Spring Semester. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Staff/Three credits

PHI 360 EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY

This course undertakes a study of the European thinkers, from Descartes and Hobbes to David Hume, who contributed to and wrestled with modern science and its revolutionary impact on Western civilization. Examination will focus on the respective roles of reason and experience in our understanding of ourselves and the universe, which culminates in the intellectual movement known as the Enlightenment. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Corrigan, Maher, Stoner/Three credits

PHI 365 LATE MODERN PHILOSOPHY

The course undertakes an investigation of the philosophical movement known as German Idealism, in its beginnings with Immanuel Kant, its maturity in thinkers such as Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, and its self-overcoming in thinkers such as Feuerbach, Marx, and Schopenhauer. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Stoner/Three credits

PHI 369 SPECIAL TOPICS IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY

This course studies a figure or school of philosophy not treated by other history of philosophy courses covering the Modern period. It fulfills the Area 3 History of Philosophy Requirement for Philosophy Majors and Minors. Content and pedagogical objectives of the course are similar to those described in PHI 354 above. Fall Semester. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Staff/Three credits

PHI 370 EXISTENTIALIST THOUGHT

This course is an examination of that human experience and philosophy which is perhaps most clearly representative of the contemporary West. The roots of existentialist thought in the writings of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, and then a consideration of similarities and differences in the work of several existentialist writers. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Stoner/Three credits

PHI 380 20TH-CENTURY CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY

An examination of the French and German philosophical movements of the 20th century, topics in this course may include the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the ontological analyses of Martin Heidegger, the neo-Marxism of the Frankfurt School, the hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur, and the postmodernism of Jacques Derrida and Jean-Francois Lyotard. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

McGrath/Three credits

PHI 389 SPECIAL TOPICS IN CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY

This course studies a figure or school of philosophy not treated by other history of philosophy courses covering the Contemporary period. It fulfills the Area 4 History of Philosophy Requirement for Philosophy Majors and Minors. Content and pedagogical objectives of the course are similar to those described in PHI 354 above. Spring Semester. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Staff/Three credits

PHI 405 INDEPENDENT STUDY

Individually supervised study of a particular area of Philosophy. Offered only to highly qualified Juniors and Seniors. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154). Permission of the Chairperson is required in all cases.

Staff/Three credits

PHI 444 HONORS THESIS IN PHILOSOPHY

In this course the student will conduct the research project that was proposed and approved during the Honors Seminar (HON 300). The research project will be an original research thesis or creative work under the supervision of a faculty mentor. A summary of the capstone work will be presented at the Honors Colloquium at the end of the semester. This course will count as an elective in the Philosophy major. Prerequisites: PHI 100 and any intermediate PHI course (151–154).

Staff/Three credit