

Philosophy, Religion, and Classical Studies

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Philosophy

Philosophy is the systematic examination of some of the most fundamental questions that human beings ask. Philosophy explores such matters as the nature of reality, the nature and source of knowledge, the nature and basis of ethics, and the relationship between mind and body. The study of philosophy can make a valuable contribution to one's personal development and is the keystone of a liberal education.

The philosophy major combines a thorough study of philosophies that have shaped Western civilization with rigorous training in the analysis of argument. Philosophy majors learn how to analyze and critique arguments, argue effectively for philosophical opinions, make reasoned decisions about ethical issues, actively engage in the debates that have shaped the history of Western thought, and develop reasoned philosophical views of their own on a range of central philosophical issues.

The design of the philosophy major itself, as well as each course taught, strives to imbue students with ways of identifying, thinking about and analyzing problems and constructing and assessing theories and counterexamples that represent the best philosophy has to offer. Both lower and upper level courses in philosophy expressly ask students to demonstrate the ability to identify philosophical issues as problems or puzzles with respect to which there exist opposing solutions each of which requires investigation, understanding and assessment. They also emphasize the importance of the student's engaging deeply with the assigned and recommended materials for the course in addition to demonstrating mastery of those materials. Finally, they emphasize mastery of the process by which good philosophical research is produced and communicated.

Philosophy majors and minors may elect to pursue either the general course of study in philosophy or a major or minor specialization either in the area of Law and Philosophy or in the area of Ethics. The general course of study in philosophy is designed for students who have broad interests in philosophy or who wish to prepare for graduate school in philosophy. The specialization in Law and Philosophy is designed for students with an interest in law or in legal and political theory. The specialization in Ethics is designed for students with interests in theoretical or applied ethics, medicine, nursing, and other professions.

The study of philosophy provides a powerful perspective on other academic subjects ranging from literature and art to biology and mathematics as well as an exceptionally strong background for such diverse professions as law, teaching, journalism, medicine, ministry, and business. A major or minor in philosophy can thus be profitably combined with a variety of other majors. More information about the value of the study of philosophy can be found on the department website <http://philos.pages.tcnj.edu>.

Religion

Religion courses explore religious matters and their place in human life. They provide critical insight into the fundamental tenets and practices of the major religious traditions. The minor and self-designed major in religion offer a sustained and probing study of these matters and provide a valuable background for religious vocations and for a number of careers including social work, teaching, and counseling. Students at TCNJ interested in religion may pursue a five course minor in religion or a self-designed major in religious studies. Information on the minor in religion may be found below. Information concerning the self-designed major in religion may be found at <http://religion.pages.tcnj.edu>.

Classical Studies

The Classical Studies Program offers students an opportunity to explore the exciting worlds of classical Greece and Rome—the history, art, archaeology, literature, philosophy, science, religion, politics, and languages. Courses in all these aspects of Greek and Roman history and culture are offered by specialists from the relevant departments. Students may take individual courses or work towards a self-designed major, a minor, or an interdisciplinary concentration in classical studies. Information on the classical studies program may be found elsewhere in this bulletin and online at <http://classicalstudies.pages.tcnj.edu>.

Requirements for the Philosophy Major

Philosophy majors, whether pursuing the general course of study in philosophy or specializing in Philosophy and Law or in Ethics, are required to complete a total of 10 PHL courses for a total of 10 course units. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA for retention in the major.

Required Courses

Logic	1 course unit
PHL 120/Introduction to Logic	
<i>or</i>	
PHL 220/Metalogic	
History of Philosophy	2 course units
PHL 201/History of Ancient Philosophy	
<i>and</i>	
PHL 205/History of Modern Philosophy	
Ethics	1 course unit
PHL 350/Ethical Theory	
<i>or</i>	
PHL 375/Law and Ethics	
Epistemology or Metaphysics	1 course unit
PHL 410/Theory of Knowledge	
<i>or</i>	
PHL 420/Metaphysics	
Philosophy Electives	4 course units
Four additional philosophy courses including at least two at the 300 or 400 level.	
Senior Capstone*	
PHL 494/Senior Project	1 course unit
<i>or</i>	
PHL 495/Senior Thesis Research <i>and</i> PHL 496 Senior Thesis	2 course units

**The senior capstone is independent work guided by an advisor with whom the student will be working closely on a mutually agreed-on topic. The goal of the senior capstone is to give students the opportunity to unify the skills and knowledge they have previously gained in the major. Prior to registering for either PHL 494 or PHL 495, students must consult with the department faculty member they wish to work with on the capstone, and registration can take place only with the permission of that faculty member. For students completing the Senior Thesis, PHL 495 is normally completed during the fall term of the senior year and PHL 496 during the spring term. Significant work as determined by the advisor should be completed for each of the research and writing portions of the Senior Thesis.*

Philosophy Major Specializations: Law and Philosophy; Ethics

Like the traditional major, the specializations in Law and Philosophy and in Ethics require students to complete 10 course units in philosophy as described above. As part of their 10 course units, students who wish to pursue a specialization will be required to select specified courses as options and a senior project or thesis particularly related to the specialization, as follows:

Law and Philosophy

PHL 275/Philosophy of Law

PHL 375/Law and Ethics

Senior project or thesis on a topic in the area of law and philosophy.

Ethics

PHL 255/Biomedical Ethics

PHL 350/Ethical Theory

PHL 430/Advanced Ethics

Senior project or thesis on a topic in the area of ethics. Students interested in pursuing a specialization in Law and Philosophy should contact Professor Roberts. Students interested in pursuing a specialization in Ethics should contact Professor Roberts.

Requirements for the Philosophy Minor

Philosophy minors may elect to pursue either the general course of study in philosophy or, if they choose, a minor specialization either in the area of Law and Philosophy or in Ethics. All minors, whether pursuing the general course of study in philosophy or specializing in Law and Philosophy or in Ethics, are required to complete a total of five PHL courses:

PHL 120/Introduction to Logic

PHL 201/History of Ancient Philosophy

or

PHL 205/History of Modern Philosophy

One additional PHL courses at any level.

Two additional PHL course at 300 or 400 level.

Philosophy Minor Specializations: Law and Philosophy; Ethics

Philosophy minors specializing in Law and Philosophy or in Ethics must ensure that, in choosing courses that satisfy the requirements listed above, they also satisfy certain additional requirements of the specializations. In particular, minors specializing in Law and Philosophy must complete PHL 275 and PHL 375. Minors specializing in Ethics must complete either PHL 135 or PHL 255, PHL 350, and PHL 430. Because the philosophy minor may be tailored to any number of specific needs and interests, students who are considering a minor in philosophy may wish to consult with the chair of the department before selecting a particular sequence of courses.

Honors in Philosophy and Thesis Honors

The department awards honors in philosophy at graduation to students who have completed a distinguished undergraduate record in philosophy. Rising seniors are admitted to the honors program in philosophy provided they have a GPA of 3.6 or higher in their philosophy courses and have completed at least six courses in philosophy. Students who then complete the major with a 3.6 GPA or higher in their philosophy courses will be awarded *honors in philosophy* upon graduation. The department may also

designate still other students as having achieved honors in philosophy in exceptional cases.

The award of *honors in thesis* will be given to students who have completed PHL 496 (Senior Thesis) with distinction. Thesis students eligible for thesis honors will have, in addition to their advisor who will serve as first reader, a second reader. If both readers judge the thesis to meet the standard for thesis honors, the student will be invited to defend the thesis orally. The two faculty readers will then determine whether the thesis, in the light of the oral defense, merits thesis honors. The grading of the thesis itself, however, will remain the responsibility of the advisor.

Course Sequence

Many students who choose to major in philosophy do so in their sophomore year or even early in their junior year; and some courses are offered only in alternate years. The program that follows is thus an idealized sequence; the exact semester and particular order in which the courses are taken will probably vary. To ensure that students entering the major in their sophomore or junior year complete the program on a timely basis, specific requirements may be waived for students who have covered pertinent subject matter in other ways. The substitution of another course for a specific requirement does not reduce the total number of units required for the major.

To graduate, students must complete, in addition to the courses required for the major, a number of liberal learning requirements. Some of the requirements (in, for example, language, laboratory science and quantitative reasoning) are noted in the idealized sequence that follow. Others include courses, programs, or sustained experiences in (1) community engaged learning, (2) gender, (3) global perspectives and (4) race and ethnicity.

Freshman Year

FSP First Seminar	1 course unit
HSS 99/ Orientation to Humanities and Social Sciences	0 course units
WRI 102/Academic Writing—if required*	1 course unit
World Language **	2 course units
Quantitative Reasoning	1 course unit
Two electives in Philosophy (at any level)	2 course units
One elective	1 course unit

**It is recommended that students exempted from this course take another liberal learning course.*

***Students must determine whether or not they can be exempted from language course (by examination or other means); otherwise three courses are required. It is recommended that students exempted from these courses take other liberal learning courses.*

Sophomore Year

World Language	1 course unit
Laboratory Science	2 course units
Literature	1 course unit
PHL 120 Introduction to Logic	
<i>or</i>	
PHL 220/Metalogic	1 course unit
PHL 201/History of Ancient Philosophy	1 course unit
PHL 205/History of Modern Philosophy	1 course unit
One Elective	1 course unit

Junior Year

Social Science/History	3 course units
PHL 350/Ethical Theory	
<i>or</i>	
PHL 375/Law and Ethics	1 course unit
PHL 410/Theory of Knowledge	
<i>or</i>	
PHL 420/Metaphysics	1 course unit
One elective in philosophy (300-400 level)	1 course unit
Two electives	2 course units

Senior Year

Art	1 course unit
PHL 494/Senior Project	1 course unit
<i>or</i>	
PHL 495/Senior Thesis Research <i>and</i> 496/Senior Thesis	2 course units
One elective in philosophy (300-400 level)	1 course unit
Five electives	5 course units