

**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

Summer Session

<http://www.buffalo.edu/cas/philosophy/undergrad-study/ug-courses.html>

PHI 101 Introduction to Philosophy

Josh Merlo

Online; June 1 to July 9, 2021 (Session J)

Class #: 10908

Examines general topics in various areas of philosophy showing different sides of issues; develops critical thought and philosophical method.

Is everything that exists matter? Do we have a soul? What does 'having a self' mean? What is free will? What does determinism mean? Can we prove the existence of God? Can something come out of nothing? How can I know that what I see is true? Are we one with nature? What is a virtuous life? Can we understand history?

All of the above, and many other, questions will be examined in this introductory course. The course will present fundamental topics in various areas of philosophy, undertaking a broad historical survey. Key figures, key philosophical concepts and key questions will be identified in each period examined. The link between these historical questions and contemporary debates in the field will be shown.

The course will first introduce the major Eastern philosophies of China and India, and then the Greek foundation of Western Philosophy. Subsequently, the emergence of Early Modern and Modern Western Philosophy will be traced up to the late 19th century. The course will conclude with the analytic-continental divide of the early 20th century. In each different tradition examined, the philosophical concepts and questions will also be categorized according to the subfield they relate to (Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics, Logic, etc.).

PHI 105 Contemporary Moral Problems

Josh Vonderhaar

Online; June 1 to July 9, 2021 (Session J)

Class #: 11602

Introduces value theory, good and bad, justification of obligations to others, relationship of free choice and determinism, and contemporary moral problems analyzed by ethical principles.

In this online course, we will introduce philosophical methods as we explore competing responses to contemporary moral problems. Such problems include, for instance, the moral status of abortion and capital punishment, how best to respond to economic inequality and poverty, issues in cyber ethics (including cyberbullying and online piracy), defining and responding to terrorism, the moral status of pre-emptive war, the responsibility for climate change, and the moral status of animals. No prior experience in philosophy is required and no textbook required. Coursework will consist of reading and preparing online readings, watching course lectures, creating posts to a course discussion board, six short written assignments, and two term exams.

PHI 107 Introduction to Ethics

Finn Wilson

Online; July 12 to August 20, 2021 (Session M)

Class #: 12979

Introduces value theory, good and bad, justification of obligations to others, relationship of free choice and determinism, and contemporary moral problems analyzed by ethical principles.

Does morality depend on the person, situation, or culture? Even if an action feels right, is there a systematic way to avoid personal biases in my assessment? What kind of person should I be? This course introduces the ongoing discussion of the nature of morality, what might be the best criteria for assessing right and wrong, and what factors are relevant in difficult ethical situations. The course is structured in two parts: first discusses what morality is and surveys the most influential ethical theories; the second applies these theories to practical circumstances and controversial policies, including abortion, euthanasia, treatment of animals, etc. The course does not require familiarity with philosophy or ethical theory.

PHI 115 Critical Thinking

Francesco Franda

Online; July 12 to August 20, 2021 (Session M)

Class #: 11357

Examines techniques of problem solving, decision making, and evaluating pros and cons of an issue; organizing data; forming strategies and giving reasons; perceptual, cultural, emotional, intellectual, and expressive blocks to thinking; and simple inductive reasoning and statistical fallacies. Students will also learn the basics of inductive, deductive, categorical, and propositional logic.

PHI 234 Environmental Ethics

Sean Kermath

Online; July 12 to August 20, 2021 (Session M)

Class #: 12980

Examination of how humans should interact with the environment, both as individuals and as members of groups or organizations.

PHI 237 Medical Ethics: Social & Ethical Values in Medicine

Jonathan Vajda

Online; June 1 to July 9, 2021 (Session J)

Class #: 10451

Examines techniques of problem solving, decision making, and evaluating pros and cons of an issue; organizing data; forming strategies and giving reasons; perceptual, cultural, emotional, intellectual and expressive blocks to thinking; and simple inductive reasoning and statistical fallacies.

In this course, we will consider a variety of ethical issues that arise in the biomedical field. You will be introduced to some of the major ethical frameworks within moral philosophy (e.g. utilitarianism, deontology) as well as the basic methods and tools of philosophical analysis. We will survey examples of applications of these frameworks to various bioethical issues. You will develop the skills needed to read, discuss, and write about philosophical issues within bioethics. You will practice applying the tools of philosophical analysis in order to (i) recognize the ethical frameworks being applied to various bioethical issues, (ii) identify arguments presented in the readings and assignments, (iii) discuss your own critical evaluations of the arguments, and (iv) construct and defend your own evaluations and arguments about these issues in writing. The main goal is to get you to become better, more careful thinkers, both in general and about bioethical questions in particular. Not only will you become familiar with a number of different views surrounding ethical issues in medicine, you will also have the opportunity to further develop your own view on these important issues.

Individual Tutorial Course Sections to be arranged with professor

Meeting days and times as arranged with professors. See listing on the HUB Registration Window for Individual Tutorial Course Sections with Philosophy Department Faculty (to be arranged with Permission of Instructor.)