Program of Study

Philosophy covers a wide range of historical periods and fields. The BA program in philosophy is intended to acquaint students with some of the classic texts of the discipline and with the different areas of inquiry, as well as to train students in rigorous methods of argument. In addition to the standard major, the department offers two tracks. The intensive track option is for qualified students interested in small group discussions of major philosophical problems and texts. The option in philosophy and allied fields is designed for students who wish to pursue an interdisciplinary program involving philosophy and some other field. All three options are described in the next section.

The course offerings described include both 20000-level courses (normally restricted to College students) and 30000-level courses (open to graduate students and advanced College students). There is room for a good deal of flexibility in individual planning of programs. Most of the requirements allow some choice among options. Course prerequisites may be relaxed with the consent of the instructor, and College students may take 40000- and 50000-level courses (normally restricted to graduate students) under special circumstances. Students should work out their program under the guidance of the director of undergraduate studies.

Students in other fields of study may also complete a minor in Philosophy. Information follows the description of the major.

Program Requirements

The Standard Major. The following basic requirements for the standard major in philosophy are intended to constitute a core philosophy curriculum and to provide some structure within an extremely varied collection of course offerings that changes from year to year.

Introduction: The History of Philosophy. The Department of Philosophy offers a three-quarter sequence in the history of philosophy (PHIL 25000, 26000, and 27000), which begins in the first quarter with ancient Greek philosophy and ends in the third quarter with nineteenth-century philosophy. Students are required to take two courses from this sequence (any two are acceptable) and are encouraged to take all three. Students are also encouraged to take these courses
early in their program because they make an appropriate introduction to more advanced courses.

*Elementary Logic (PHIL 20100).* Students may bypass PHIL 20100 for a more advanced course if they can demonstrate to the instructor that they are qualified to begin at a higher level.

*Distribution.* At least two courses in one of the following two fields and at least one course in the other field: (A) practical philosophy and (B) theoretical philosophy.

Courses that may be counted toward these requirements are indicated in the course descriptions by boldface letters in parentheses. Other courses may not be used to meet field distribution requirements.

**Summary of Requirements: Standard Major**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 courses from PHIL 25000, 26000, and 27000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 PHIL 20100 or approved alternative course in logic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 one from field A and two from field B, or two from field A and one from field B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 additional courses in philosophy*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These courses must be drawn from departmental offerings. Students should consult with the director of undergraduate studies regarding courses taken at other colleges.*

**The Intensive Track.** Admission to the intensive track requires an application, which must be submitted by the middle of the Spring Quarter in the student's second year. Applications are available from the departmental office. (Students interested in the intensive track should consult with the director of undergraduate studies before submitting an application. The departmental website lists the office hours of the director of undergraduate studies.)

The intensive track is designed to acquaint students with the problems and methods of philosophy in more depth than is possible for students in the standard major. It differs from the standard program mainly by offering the opportunity to meet in the following very small discussion groups: the intensive track seminar in the Autumn Quarter of the third or fourth year (PHIL 29600), a junior tutorial (PHIL 29200), and a senior tutorial (PHIL 29300).

NOTE: Students in residence in Autumn Quarter of their third year typically are expected to take the intensive track seminar in their third year. Similarly, students typically take the junior tutorial in their third year and the senior tutorial in their fourth year. However, students may take the intensive track seminar and/or both tutorials in their fourth year if they are not in residence during their third year.

Intensive track students must also write a senior essay. Students must take PHIL 29901 and 29902 (Senior Seminar I, II) during their fourth year.

**Summary of Requirements: Intensive Track**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Count</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 courses from PHIL 25000, 26000, and 27000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 PHIL 20100 or approved alternative course in logic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 one from field A and two from field B, or two from field A and one from field B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 PHIL 29600 (intensive track seminar)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 PHIL 29200 (junior tutorial)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 PHIL 29300 (senior tutorial)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 PHIL 29901 and 29902 (preparation for senior essay)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 additional courses in philosophy*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These courses must be drawn from departmental offerings. Students should consult with the director of undergraduate studies regarding courses taken at other colleges.*

**Philosophy and Allied Fields.** This variant of the major is intended for students who wish to create a coherent interdisciplinary program involving philosophy and some other field of study. Examples of recent programs devised by students electing this track are philosophy and mathematics, philosophy and biology, and philosophy and economics. Students in this program must meet the first three of the basic requirements for the standard major (a total of six courses) and take six additional courses that together constitute a coherent program; at least one of these six additional courses must be in the Department of Philosophy. Students must receive approval for the specific courses they choose to be used as the allied fields courses. Admission to philosophy and allied fields requires an application to the director of undergraduate studies, which should be made by the middle of Spring Quarter of their second year. To apply, students must submit both a statement of purpose that explains why they want to major in philosophy and a sample program of courses, and they must have the agreement of a member of the Department of Philosophy to serve as their sponsor in the program. Interested students should consult with the director of undergraduate studies before applying; for office hours, visit the departmental website.
Minor Program in Philosophy

The minor program in philosophy provides a basic introduction to some central figures and themes in both the history of philosophy and in current philosophical controversies. The minor requires six courses: students must take: either two courses from the history of philosophy sequence and one course from field A or field B, along with three additional courses in philosophy; or one course from the history of philosophy sequence and one course from each of fields A and B, along with three additional courses in philosophy.

No courses in the minor can be double counted with the student's major(s) or with other minors; nor can they be counted toward general education requirements. They must be taken for quality grades and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses offered by the Department of Philosophy at the University. A maximum of two courses from another institution may be counted toward minor requirements with approval from the director of undergraduate studies.

Students who elect the minor program should meet with the director of undergraduate studies before the end of Spring Quarter of their third year to declare their intention to complete the program. The approval of the director of undergraduate studies for the minor should be submitted to the student's College adviser, on a form obtained from the College adviser, no later than the end of the student's third year.

Samples follow of two groups of courses that would comprise a minor:

2 from PHIL 25000, 26000, and 27000
1 PHIL 20100 or approved alternative course in logic
3 one from field A and two from field B,
   or two from field A and one from field B
6 additional courses, at least one of which must
   be in the Department of Philosophy

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Summary of Requirements: Philosophy and Allied Fields

2 from PHIL 25000, 26000, and 27000
1 PHIL 20100 or approved alternative course in logic
3 one from field A and two from field B,
   or two from field A and one from field B
6 additional courses, at least one of which must
   be in the Department of Philosophy

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The Senior Essay. Students who have been admitted to the intensive track are required to write a senior essay. By the middle of Spring Quarter of their third year, they must submit for approval a proposal for their senior essay on a form that is available in the departmental office. The proposal should be formulated in consultation with a faculty adviser who has expertise in the topic area. Potential advisers can be approached directly, but the director of undergraduate studies can help pair students with suitable advisers as needed.

Students who are not in the intensive track (i.e., are in the standard major or the allied fields major) but wish to write a senior essay should submit a proposal in consultation with a potential adviser by the middle of Spring Quarter of their third year. However, the availability of a suitable adviser is not guaranteed. Along with their completed proposals, non-intensive-track students must submit a record of their grades in the College; they must have a GPA of 3.25 in the major in order to write an essay.

In their fourth year, students should register for PHIL 29901 in Autumn (or Winter) Quarter and for PHIL 29902 in Winter (or Spring) Quarter. These two courses are among the requirements for the Intensive Track. For essay writers who are not in the intensive track, both courses must be taken; however, only one will be counted toward program requirements.

Grading. All courses for all tracks must be taken for a quality grade.

Honors. The main requirement for honors is a senior essay of distinction. A GPA in the major of 3.25 or higher typically also is required.

Transfer Students. Requirements for students transferring to the University of Chicago are the same as for other students. Up to (but typically no more than) three courses from another institution may be counted toward major requirements. All such courses must be approved by the director of undergraduate studies.

Advising. Students should contact the director of undergraduate studies with questions concerning program plans, honors, and so forth.

Faculty

Courses: Philosophy (PHIL)

Boldface letters in parentheses refer to the areas noted in the preceding Summary of Requirements section.

The following courses are intended for College students.

20100/30000. Elementary Logic. (=CHSS 33500, HIPS 20700) PQ: Basic knowledge of concepts and principles of symbolic logic. Course not for field credit. This course introduces the concepts and principles of symbolic logic. We learn the syntax and semantics of truth-functional and first-order quantificational logic, and apply the resultant conceptual framework to the analysis of valid and invalid arguments, the structure of formal languages, and logical relations among sentences of ordinary discourse. Occasionally we venture into topics in philosophy of language and philosophical logic, but our primary focus is on acquiring a facility with symbolic logic as such. K. Davey. Autumn.

20110. Plato's Theaetetus. (=FNDL 21713) Knowledge of Greek not required. Plato's Theaetetus is the first systematic treatment of the question: what is it to know anything at all? This class is a close reading of the dialogue; and an exploration of the nature of human knowledge. Examples of questions we think about are: What is it to define something? What is the relationship between knowledge and perception? What would it mean for a belief to be justified, over and above its being true? How is false belief possible—and why would anyone think there is a problem about it's being possible? A. Callard. Winter. (B)

20210/30210. Kant's Ethics. In this course, we read, write, and think about Kant's ethics. After giving careful attention to the arguments in the Second Critique, portions of the Third Critique, the Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, the Metaphysics of Morals, and several other primary texts, we conclude by working through some contemporary neo-Kantian moral philosophy, paying close attention to work by Christine Korsgaard, David Velleman, Stephen Engstrom, and others. C. Vogler. Autumn. (A)

20410/30410. Philosophy of Perception. This course concerns the nature and character of perceptual experience. We cover the most prominent contemporary accounts of perception (e.g., representationalism, relationalism, sense-datum accounts) and discuss how these views account for the distinctive phenomenal features of experience. We focus in particular on experience's presentational character. C. Frey. Autumn. (B)

20950. Ethics and Utopian Dreaming. Given the many ways disappointment permeates our relation to the political realm, difficult questions arise concerning the wisdom of compromise and the courage of intransigence in our efforts to live well and to act ethically. It is often difficult to distinguish instances when compromise is prudent and constitutes true progress, moving concrete, lived conditions towards one's ultimate goals and ideals, from instances when compromise is a kind of moral failure, revealing insufficient commitment to the ideals supposedly animating the agent. This course concerns the necessity of dreams and frustrated desire for producing a vision of who we want to become. The difficulty is to craft an ideal that manages to make the right sort of contact with the reality we live, where human interactions are often disappointing, unjust, and even cruel. Starting from Plato's Republic, the central example of utopian thinking in the construction of ethical theory, the class considers both the substance and method of utopian thinking. Examples of questions we consider: What is the nature of the activity identified as utopian thinking? What gets rejected as mere wishful thinking and what is accepted as psychologically realizable? How are these judgments as to what is possible or impossible justified? Is the philosopher's removal from more practical concerns an asset in utopian thinking, allowing for a more faithful exposition of the ideal? Or is this remove from the harsh realities others must confront damming to their project of articulating the social good? Is there a distinction to be made between political and moral concerns in working towards this vision of the ideal? E. Holberg. Winter.

21006. What Is Civic Knowledge? (=BPRO 21500, HUMA 24906, PUBL 21500) PQ: Third- or fourth-year standing. What is civic knowledge? Although civic rights and duties are supposedly universal to all citizens in a "democratic" nation, their implementation often depends on the strength of community connections and the circulation of knowledge across racial, class, and social boundaries. Focusing on the city of Chicago, we ask how citizens (in their roles as citizens) forge communities, make urban plans, and participate in civic affairs. How does the city construct the public spheres of its residents? Are the social practices of Chicagans truly "democratic"? Could they be? What does "Chicago" stand for, as a political and cultural symbol? For both Chicagans and their representatives, the circulation of knowledge depends not only on conventional media but also on how the city is constructed and managed through digital media. B. Schultz, M. Browning. Spring.

21210/31210. Philosophy and Literature. This course is a reading of works by a variety of contemporary authors that deal with the question of whether, and how, fiction and philosophy are related to one another. T. Cohen. Autumn. (A)

21505. Wonder, Magic, and Skepticism. Wittgenstein sometimes spoke as if being gripped by philosophical problems is a matter of succumbing to illusions—as if philosophers are magicians who are taken in by their own tricks. The aim of this course is to come to a deeper understanding of what both philosophy and magical performance are about. We are particularly concerned with Wittgenstein's picture of what philosophy is and does. The passion of wonder is another focus. In the Theaetetus, Plato has Socrates say, "The sense of wonder is the mark of the philosopher. Philosophy indeed has no other origin." Does magic end where philosophy begins? And what becomes of wonder after philosophy is done with it? D. Finkelstein. Spring. (B)

21510/31510. Forms of Skepticism in Antiquity. This lecture/discussion course is a broad introduction to the main forms of skepticism that were developed in antiquity. Specific cases covered include Xenophanes, Parmenides, the Sophists...
21600. Introduction to Political Philosophy. (=GNDR 21601, PLSC 22600) What would a just liberal democratic political order involve, and is that the best or only form of “legitimate” government? What are the best, reasoned justifications for such a political order, and how utopian or distant from present realities is the political philosophizing behind such justifications? Does a just liberal democratic society require that citizens be friends, or equals, or autonomous choosers, or free of particular identities or political passions? How would it reconstruct gender and sexuality? And what are the duties of citizens when the political order falls short of this ideal? How should this ideal guide current political practice and determine the role of countries such as the U.S. in world politics? In an age of terror and globalization, when many view the U.S. as a new empire, how optimistic can one be or should one be about the fate of the distinctly modern ideal of a just liberal democratic society? This course addresses these questions and others, taking as a point of departure the political theories of John Stuart Mill, John Rawls, and Martha Nussbaum. B. Schultz. Winter. (A)

21610/31610. Medical Ethics: Who Decides and on What Basis? (=BIOS 29313, BPRO 26210, HIPS 21911, HIST 25009/35009) PQ: Third- or fourth-year standing. This course does not meet requirements for the biological science major. Decisions about medical treatment take place in the context of changing health care systems, changing ideas about rights and obligations, and among doctors and patients who have diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. By means of historical, philosophical, and medical readings, this course examines such issues as paternalism, autonomy, the commodification of the body, and the enhancement of mental and/or physical characteristics. D. Brudney, A. Winter, J. Lantos. Spring. (A)

21700. Human Rights I: Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights. (=HIST 29301, HMRT 20100, LLSO 25100) The aim of this course is to help students think philosophically about human rights. We ask whether human rights has or needs philosophical foundations, what we need such foundations for, and where they might be found. We also ask some questions that tend to generate the search for philosophical foundations: Are human rights universal or merely the product of particular cultures? What kinds of rights (e.g., political, cultural, economic, negative, positive) are human rights? Can there be human rights without human duties? Without universal enforcement? Do the rights we enshrine as human right only some of us (e.g., men) as human? M. Lott. Autumn. (B)

21910/31910. Problems around Foucault. (=CMLT 21910/31910) This course meets the critical/intellectual methods course requirement for students who are majoring in Comparative Literature. This course is a reading of some of Foucault’s most important essays. We also discuss other philosophers whose work influenced or was influenced by Foucault (e.g., Deleuze, Hacking, Hadot). A. Davidson. Winter.
23015/33015. Darwin’s Origin of Species and Descent of Man. (=CHSS 38400, HIPS 24901, HIST 24905/34905) This lecture-discussion class focuses on a close reading of Darwin’s two classic texts. An initial class or two explores the state of biology prior to Darwin’s Beagle voyage and then considers the development of his theories before 1859. Then we turn to his two books. Among the topics of central concern are the logical, epistemological, and rhetorical status of Darwin’s several theories, especially his evolutionary ethics; the religious foundations of his ideas and the religious reaction to them; and the social-political consequences of his accomplishment. R. Richards. Spring. (B)

23560/33560. Husserl. This course concerns the philosophical work of Edmund Husserl. As the principal founder of phenomenology as a philosophical movement, Husserl is among the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century. The course focuses on four texts: (i) Ideas I, (ii) Cartesian Meditations, (iii) Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology, and (iv) On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time. C. Frey. Winter. (B)

23900/33900. J. L. Austin. This course is a reading of the works of J. L. Austin, mainly How to Do Things with Words and essays related to those lectures. T. Cohen. Spring. (B)

25000. History of Philosophy I: Ancient Philosophy. (=CLCV 22700) PQ: Completion of the general education requirement in humanities. This is a course in Ancient Greek Philosophy. We study major works by Plato and Aristotle, ones that introduced the philosophical questions we struggle with to this day: What are the goals of a life well-lived? Why should we have friends? How do we explain weakness of will? What makes living things different from nonliving things? What is the difference between knowledge and belief? What is definition and what is capable of being defined? A. Callard. Autumn.

25110/35110. Maimonides and Hume on Religion. (=JWSC 26100) This course studies in alternation chapters from Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed and David Hume’s Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, two major philosophical works whose literary forms are at least as important as their contents. Topics include human knowledge of the existence and nature of God, anthropomorphism and idolatry, religious language, and the problem of evil. Time permitting, we read other short works by these two authors on related themes. J. Stern. Winter.

26000. History of Philosophy II: Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy. (=HIPS 26000) PQ: Completion of the general education requirement in humanities required; PHIL 25000 recommended. This course is a survey of the thought of some of the most important figures of this period, including Anselm, Aquinas, Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. B. Callard. Winter.

26110/36110. Introduction to Scientific and Technological Change. We start with Kuhn’s Structure of Scientific Revolutions and test its claims against a number of scientific revolutions that differed in character: Darwin’s Origin, The Emergence of Classical Genetics, and Alvarez’s “asteroid hypothesis”. We also consider technological revolutions and the Nature of Technological Change. What are the relations between technology and science? Is the problem of progress the same in both cases? What are the causes, nature, and extent of incommensurability? Are there other ways of characterizing revolution? How do scientific and technological change resemble and differ from biological evolution? How important is material culture to each? Readings are a mix of scientific, historical, and philosophical readings. W. Wimsatt. Spring. (B)

27000. History of Philosophy III: Kant and the Nineteenth Century. PQ: Completion of the general education requirement in humanities. This course attempts to provide a broad survey of German philosophy from the time of Kant into the nineteenth century. Topics include Kant’s transcendental idealism, Herder’s philosophy of language, Romantic theories of interpretation and translation, Hegel’s project in the “Phenomenology of Spirit,” Marx’s theory of ideology and critique of religion, and Nietzsche’s critiques of religion and traditional morality. The course consists mainly of lectures, but discussion is also encouraged. M. Forster. Spring.

28010/38010. Introduction to the Philosophy of Language. PQ: PHIL 20100/30000 or equivalent. This course introduces key concepts and topics in the philosophy of language. The goal is to provide students with the necessary background for work on contemporary topics in philosophy of language and, more generally, analytic philosophy. We examine a variety of classical views on the nature of meaning, reference, and truth, with a special focus on the problem of understanding how linguistic communication works. Readings include Frege, Davidson, Grice, Kripke, Quine, Russell, and Strawson. M. Willer. Autumn. (B)

28990/38990. Introduction to History and Philosophy of Biology. In this course we (1) use the history of biological science to help us identify and solve philosophical problems in biology, and (2) use the tools of philosophical analysis to help us understand the importance of particular episodes in the history of biology. For example, we examine historical and philosophical issues associated with the theory of natural selection, macroevolution, and developmental biology. C. Haufe. Spring. (B)

29200/29300. Junior/Senior Tutorial. No more than two tutorials may be used to meet program requirements. Topics for this small, discussion-oriented seminar vary. Autumn, Winter, Spring.

29420/39420. Intermediate Logic: Non-classical Logic. PQ: PHIL 20100/30000 or equivalent. Topics in this course include various non-classical logics (e.g., [non]-normal and first-order modal logic, intuitionistic logic, multi-valued logic). Our goals are to understand the philosophical motivations behind non-classical logics and to gain insights into the analytic virtues (and vices) that
come with them. This course also offers a friendly introduction to soundness and completeness proofs, which is relevant for many advanced classes in logic. M. Willer. Spring. (B)

29600. Intensive Track Seminar. PQ: Open only to students in the Intensive Track. Topics for this small, discussion-oriented seminar vary. D. Brudney. Autumn.

29700. Reading Course: Philosophy. Staff. Autumn.

29901. Senior Seminar I. PQ: Consent of director of undergraduate studies. Required of fourth-year students who are writing a senior essay. Students writing senior essays register once for PHIL 29901, in either the Autumn or Winter Quarter, and once for PHIL 29902, in either the Winter or Spring Quarter. (Students may not register for both PHIL 29901 and 29902 in the same quarter.) The senior seminar meets all three quarters, and students writing essays are required to attend throughout. J. Bridges, B. Callard, Staff. Autumn, Winter.

29902. Senior Seminar II. PQ: Consent of director of undergraduate studies. Required of fourth-year students who are writing a senior essay. Students writing senior essays register once for PHIL 29901, in either the Autumn or Winter Quarter, and once for PHIL 29902, in either the Winter or Spring Quarter. (Students may not register for both PHIL 29901 and 29902 in the same quarter.) The senior seminar meets all three quarters, and students writing essays are required to attend throughout. J. Bridges, B. Callard, Staff. Winter, Spring.