

# PHILOSOPHY (PL)

## PL 101. Introduction to Philosophy. 3 Credits.

This course introduces students to a number of central questions in philosophy through critical exploration of ideas from selected great philosophers. It engages students in the close study of several fundamental issues that have arisen in the course of the development of the philosophical tradition—such as free will, our knowledge of the "external" world, and the meaning and value of truth and justice—giving students the basic tools for further work in philosophy.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall and Spring

**UC:** Humanities

## PL 102. Introduction to Ethics. 3 Credits.

This course explores the meanings of such normative distinctions as good/bad, right/wrong and good/evil. Students critically examine theories of morality such as egoism, utilitarianism, deontological ethics, divine command theory, natural law theory, sentimentalism and virtue ethics, as well as a challenge to all ethical theorizing: the case for moral relativism. Students focus on the practical implications of theory: understandings are brought to bear on various real-life ethical issues such as war, poverty, racism, abortion and substance abuse.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, All

**UC:** Humanities

## PL 102H. Honors Introduction to Ethics. 3 Credits.

This course explores the meanings of such normative distinctions as good/bad, right/wrong and good/evil. Students critically examine theories of morality such as egoism, utilitarianism, deontological ethics, divine command theory, natural law theory, sentimentalism and virtue ethics, as well as a challenge to all ethical theorizing: the case for moral relativism. Students focus on the practical implications of theory: understandings are brought to bear on various real-life ethical issues such as war, poverty, racism, abortion and substance abuse.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every other year

**UC:** Humanities

## PL 103. Logical Reasoning. 3 Credits.

This course teaches students to recognize and evaluate logical patterns that recur in all language intended to persuade by reason. Students learn proof techniques for logical pattern evaluation, techniques to recognize and evaluate fallacies, and ways of understanding logical patterns in longer, extended passages. The goal of the course is to improve students' natural ability to think clearly and critically by learning to apply logic to arguments in public, academic and private life.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**UC:** Humanities

## PL 200. Special Topics in Philosophy. 3 Credits.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** As needed

## PL 214. Ancient Greek History. 3 Credits.

Ancient Greece" stretches chronologically from the third millennium BC until the 4th century BC and ranges geographically from modern day Turkey (what the Greeks called Ionia) to Sicily and the Italian peninsula (what the Romans called Magna Graeca). This course focuses on that part of Greek history that runs from the late Bronze Age period of Mycenaean Palace culture (approximately 1400 BC) to the end of the Peloponnesian Wars (in 404 BCE). The course emphasizes primary sources (such as literary sources and inscriptions) and challenges students to use primary sources as the basis for historical interpretations of the political, social, cultural, and intellectual institutions of ancient Greece, such as democracy, tyranny, slavery, tragedy, and philosophy. The course concludes with a role-playing Reacting to the Past historical simulation (that explores the options open to Athens in the aftermath of her defeat by Sparta).

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every other year, Fall

## PL 222. Bioethics. 3 Credits.

Students analyze complex ethical issues in contemporary bioethics using relevant technical vocabulary and methods from philosophy, in partnership with information from the contemporary biosciences and the health care professions. Ethical theories covered include deontology, utilitarianism, virtue-based approaches to ethics, ethics of care, feminist ethics, contractarianism, and African ethics. Bioethical issues may include: stem cell research, human subjects research, human enhancement, reproductive medicine, euthanasia, advance directives and end-of-life care, resource allocation, organ transplantation, the right to health care, global health, and addressing injustices and discrimination in health care and medicine.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course or FYS 101.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**UC:** Breadth Elective, Intercultural Understand

## PL 226. Environmental Ethics. 3 Credits.

In this course, students critically assess environmental ethical issues arising at the intersections of philosophy and the sciences, using relevant ethical theory and evidence. Issues examined include but are not limited to: climate change; climate change denialism and public engagement with scientists and the sciences; the ethics of innovations in the discrete sciences; habitat preservation and loss; resource depletion; rights of humans, non-human animals, and ecosystems; ecocentrism; pollution; health; energy; corporate responsibility; sustainability; climate justice; environmental migration; future generations. Students explore individual, societal, and global perspectives on environmental ethics, and critically assess responses to environmental injustices and inequalities, including those of race, gender, and class.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**UC:** Humanities

## PL 233. Business Ethics. 3 Credits.

This course helps students develop a framework for ethical decision-making, particularly in cases of business management. Students learn to identify ethical issues, apply various models of ethical decision-making, and analyze ethical cases in areas ranging from consumer rights to corporate responsibility. Topics include assessing and analyzing the ethics environment of business and identifying and managing ethics in a developing world including, human rights, environmental sustainability and technology. Students can receive credit for only one of the following courses: PL 233 and SB 410.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**PL 235. Philosophy of Science and Technology.****3 Credits.**

Students consider the history and nature of, and assumptions and values involved in, the scientific method; the logic of scientific explanation and theory construction; philosophical and ethical problems in selected natural, social and human sciences.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course or FYS 101.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**UC:** Breadth Elective

**PL 236. Philosophy of Language.****3 Credits.**

This course focuses on the attempt to understand the nature of language and its relationship with speakers, their thoughts and the world. Students explore such questions as: What is language? How do we understand one another? Can we think without language? What is the connection between words and the objects to which they refer? What is meaning? What determines the truth and falsehood of our statements? Do we have innate linguistic abilities or do we learn to speak by observing the behavior of other speakers? Various philosophical theories about language are attempts to answer such questions. These are discussed, along with their far-reaching consequences for other areas of philosophy.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course or FYS 101.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 237. Philosophy of Mind.****3 Credits.**

Are minds physical or non-physical? Is free will real or an illusion? Is consciousness computational? Can we build artificial minds? How can we explain phenomena such as emotions, delusions and pain? What are we, and where is the boundary between ourselves and our environment? In this course, students explore these and other issues in the contemporary philosophy of mind, focusing on questions that emerge at the intersection of philosophy, psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience and artificial intelligence.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course or FYS 101.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 240. Philosophy of Sport.****3 Credits.**

This course examines the notion that humans are "homo ludens" or beings who play from two perspectives. In the first part of the course, students look at such questions as: what is the nature or essence of sports? And how do we distinguish or define sports as distinct from other kinds of activities? In the second part of the course, students examine the relationship between sports and ethics, with a focus on topics such as what is fair play, whether athletic enhancement is cheating, what is gender equity within sports in society, and how do collegiate sports compare with professional sports.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course or FYS 101.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 242. Ancient Philosophy.****3 Credits.**

This course explores Greek and Roman philosophy through a focus on the concepts of *erôs* and *philia* or love and friendship. Students examine how Epic poetry, Greek tragedy, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Stoicism and Lucretius reflected on the place of love and friendship in a life well-lived.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 243. Modern Philosophy.****3 Credits.**

From the mid-16th through the 18th century, movements such as the Renaissance, the Reformation, the development of the modern sciences and increasing international trade and colonization introduced a new era of philosophy. Students explore human understanding, critically analyzing issues that potentially include the mind-body relationship, freedom and determinism, the nature of reality, the existence of God, perception, personhood and personal identity, the scope and limits of knowledge, and the value and limitations of our intellectual heritage from this period. Authors may include Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Kant.

**Prerequisites:** Take PL 101; or take 1 course from subject PL from level 200 or 300.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 250. Philosophy of Art.****3 Credits.**

What is beauty? What does it mean to experience something—perhaps art or nature—aesthetically? What is art? What is the nature of artistic inspiration? What is—or what should be—the purpose of art? How does one determine the value of art? Is some art worthless? What is the relationship between art and truth? Should artistic expression ever be censored? How have racism, sexism and consumerism impacted the art world? These are some of the questions to be discussed as we consider aesthetic experience and artistic expression—in the visual arts, but also in music, dance, film, drama and other forms.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course or FYS 101.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 255. Ethics and Artificial Intelligence.****3 Credits.**

In "Ethics and Artificial Intelligence" we shall pursue a number of interrelated themes. We will interpret the past, present, and future of AI, stressing the idea that AI presents us with a new form of agency - that is to say, moral responsibility - which is practically and professionally significant. This will lead to an investigation of AI's ethical (and unethical) possible employment, including the risks it presents (and their legal aspects); in other words, evil uses and good practices in the application of AI. These will be investigated through a number of key terms, such as accountability, reliability, explainability, and security. We will raise chief ethical concerns that are current headlines in discussions of AI: privacy (and surveillance), bias (or discrimination), and the role of human judgment. Finally, more broadly, we will address the design, development, and deployment of AI for social good, for the environment, for climate change, and for sustainable development.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** As needed

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 265. Philosophy of Race.****3 Credits.**

Because racial concepts pervade all of our experiences, they cannot help but structure our encounters with the concepts of practical philosophy. This course will look at the intersections of the philosophy of race with three of Western thought's traditional subfields: Metaphysics, Ethics, and Social Political Philosophy. We will learn through lecture, reading, and class symposia simultaneously to ask basic questions about both the world and the role of race and racialization within it. At the end of the course, we turn to political philosophy with an eye to the kinds of social invention necessary for the creation of a genuinely novel, antiracist, polity.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every other year, Fall

**UC:** Humanities, Intercultural Understand

**PL 266. Global Philosophies.****3 Credits.**

In this course, students explore global traditions in philosophy developed by people from diverse cultures, beyond Europe and the United States. Participants devote particular attention to insights and questions raised with regard to possible relationships or contrasts between diverse global philosophies and our existing assumptions, beliefs and values. Potential topics and course materials may include both classical and contemporary sources from Australia, Africa, the Caribbean, China, India, Japan, the Muslim world, the Pacific Islands and Latin America. Owing to the breadth of the field, the focus of the course shifts, reflecting the interests and work of the instructor in any particular semester.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course or FYS 101.

**Offered:** As needed

**UC:** Humanities, Intercultural Understand

**PL 267. Philosophy of Religion.****3 Credits.**

Religious language, religious experience and religious institutions make up a significant part of life in both traditional and modern cultures. This course analyzes the concepts and terms that are used in religious discourse, including God, holiness, redemption, idolatry, creation, eternal life and sacrifice, among others. Such analysis leads to questions regarding religious statements such as "God exists," "The cow is holy," and "If you fast, you will be redeemed" and their relationship with ordinary, everyday experience, as well as with science and with morality. Most important is the fundamental philosophical question "what is religion?"; answering it means moving beyond philosophy to anthropology, sociology, and of course psychology.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course or FYS 101.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 299. Independent Study in Philosophy.****1-3 Credits.**

Tutorial study or independent projects in selected areas of philosophy are completed under the direction of a faculty member. This course may not be used as a substitute for required courses in the major or minor. 1, 2 or 3 credits (must be agreed on in advance by the student and faculty member, and approved by the department chairperson).

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall and Spring

**PL 312. Philosophy of War and Peace.****3 Credits.**

This course draws on what philosophers, legal scholars and political scientists have written about the nature, limits and morality of warfare. Students study the general frameworks for evaluating warfare in the theories of realism, pacifism and just war, and then turn to the evaluation of historical case studies concerning when it is just to initiate war, how war is to be conducted justly once it is initiated, and the obligations of combatants following war. Readings include both historical authors, such as Thucydides and Thomas Aquinas, and contemporary theorists, such as Michael Walzer and Jeff McMahan.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course; or PO 211; or PO 215.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**PL 320. Thought and Work of Albert Schweitzer (SL: Service Learning).****3 Credits.**

Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) made significant, often controversial contributions in several areas: music, philosophy, religion, medical care, service to human need, animal rights and ecological awareness. In 1952 Schweitzer was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his many decades of humanitarian work at his "jungle hospital" in West Africa. In his 80s, he became one of the most active voices in the struggle against the testing of nuclear weapons. Because Schweitzer considered his philosophy to be primarily one of action and service ("My life is my argument") service learning is an important component of the course. Quinnipiac's Albert Schweitzer Institute offers students many kinds of projects and activities reflecting Schweitzer's many areas of involvement. In this course, students critically explore Schweitzer's life, thought and work and their application to some of the moral problems and cultural and political issues we face today.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course; or PO 211; or PO 215.

**Offered:** As needed, Spring

**PL 330. Philosophy and Gender.****3 Credits.**

Students investigate the notions of sex and gender and the debate over social versus biological underpinnings of expressions of masculinity and femininity. The relevance of historical views on sex, gender and relations between the sexes to current patterns and developments are considered. Issues facing men and women, as well as policies and reforms designed to address them are examined. Participants also consider the intersection between sex/gender and race, ethnicity, class and sexual orientation. Finally, the impact of gendered perspectives on contemporary philosophy, especially epistemology, ethics and social and political philosophy, is considered.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course; or one course from women's studies.

**Offered:** Every other year, Spring

**PL 331. Philosophy of Humor.****3 Credits.**

Historically, many thinkers have viewed humor with scorn while others have not considered it a topic worthy of philosophical investigation. This course explores the nature and value of humor in our daily lives and examines humor critically as a virtue that can help us take ourselves less seriously and live better lives. Students analyze the major accounts of humor such as the superiority, incongruity and relief theories highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each theory. Adopting a critical philosophical lens, students also explore some important connections between humor and aesthetics, ethics and education.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course.

**Offered:** As needed, Fall

**PL 334. Medieval Philosophy.****3 Credits.**

This course focuses on the history of medieval philosophy. Students discuss figures from the Christian, Islamic and Jewish traditions, including Augustine, Boethius, Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, Maimonides, Aquinas, Scotus and Ockham. Particular attention is given to examine the manner in which these philosophers confronted and assimilated Aristotelian philosophy and how they anticipate certain dimensions of modern philosophy.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course.

**Offered:** As needed, Spring

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 335. Contemporary Philosophy.****3 Credits.**

Students explore diverse responses to political, social, and ethical issues from dynamic movements in 19th, 20th, and 21st-century philosophy and political theory. Potential topics may include Marxism, existentialism, phenomenology, feminism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, and philosophy of race and gender. Potential material includes work by Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Du Bois, Sartre, de Beauvoir, Lorde, Merleau-Ponty, Arendt, Young, Foucault, Fanon, Biko, Derrida, and Butler.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course; or PO 215; or PO 219; or PO 315.

**Offered:** Every year, Fall

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 337. Human Rights: Theory and Practice.****3 Credits.**

This course provides a rigorous and critical introduction to the foundation, structure and operation of the international human rights movement. It begins with leading conceptual and theoretical discussions, moving on to the institutions and functioning of the international human rights mechanisms, including nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations. It covers cutting-edge human rights issues—gender and race discrimination, religion and state, national security and terrorism—placing them in the context of current political conflict and human rights discourse.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course; or PO 211; or PO 215.

**Offered:** Every other year, Fall

**PL 338. Paradoxes.****3 Credits.**

Paradoxes have been with us since a Cretan said "all Cretans are liars," and Zeno showed us how the tortoise could beat Achilles. Originally considered a problem for logical—and mathematical—thought, paradoxes run the gamut from logic to mathematics, to language, to science, to art and to ethics. This course presents the definition(s) of paradox, reviews some of the principal paradoxes known to us and asks about their essence: what is paradoxical about paradoxes? It then moves on to examine paradoxes in ethics, thereby asking about the real, paradoxical world of human—psychological and social—behavior.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course.

**Offered:** Every Third Year, Fall

**UC:** Humanities

**PL 368. Philosophy of Death and Dying.****3 Credits.**

What does it mean to live and what does it mean to die? How do we distinguish life and death, living and dying? Is there a way to "die well" in the same way that we assume there is a way to "live well"? How do we justify our beliefs about issues of life and death? Is suicide ethically defensible? Do we have a duty to prevent death? Should we consider death an evil, and could it ever be a good? Should we care about our posthumous reputations? Students in this course explore these and related questions, drawing important insights from a range of relevant philosophical literature and personal narratives on death and dying.

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100 or 200 or 300-level philosophy course.

**Offered:** As needed, Spring

**PL 395. Critical Game Studies.****3 Credits.**

In this course, students address current research in game studies, ludology or play theory, to develop critical, conceptual and cultural understandings of narrative, meaning and identity in digital games. The course also addresses the design and development of serious and meaningful games and the aesthetic, social and technological implications of new emerging forms such as digital storytelling, interactive theater, virtual worlds and locative media.

**Prerequisites:** Take GDD 101; or GDD 110; or one 100-level philosophy course.

**Offered:** As needed, Spring

**PL 399. Directed Research in Philosophy.****3 Credits.**

This is a more intensive directed research opportunity than that offered in PL 299. The course involves students in substantial independent research and writing projects in selected areas of philosophy, completed under the direction of a faculty member. This course may not be used as a substitute for required courses in the major or minor.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Offered:** Every year, Fall and Spring

**PL 400. Special Topics in Philosophy.****3 Credits.**

**Prerequisites:** Take one 100-level philosophy course; or FYS 101.

**Offered:** As needed

**PL 401. Senior Seminar.****3 Credits.**

This is a writing and research seminar for senior philosophy majors.

Students engage with philosophical primary and secondary readings in group discussion. They prepare and present a senior thesis on a topic of their choice, with guidance by faculty from the department.

**Prerequisites:** Must be a PL Major with Senior Status.

**Offered:** Every year, Spring