

# PHILOSOPHY (PHIL)

## PHIL 1100 - Introduction to Philosophy (3 Credits)

A general introduction to some of the main topics, texts, and methods of philosophy. Topics may include the existence of God, the nature of mind and its relation to the body, causation, free will, knowledge and skepticism, and justice and moral obligation. Readings may be drawn from the history of philosophy and contemporary philosophical literature.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Summer 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1110 - FWS: Philosophy in Practice (3 Credits)

This First-Year Writing Seminar is about using philosophy and everyday life and provides the opportunity to write extensively about these issues. Topics vary by section.

**Distribution Requirements:** (WRT-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1111 - FWS: Philosophical Problems (3 Credits)

This First-Year Writing Seminar discusses problems in philosophy and gives the opportunity to write about them. Topics vary by section.

**Distribution Requirements:** (WRT-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1112 - FWS: Philosophical Conversations (3 Credits)

This First-Year Writing Seminar offers the opportunity to discuss and write about philosophy. Topics vary by section.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1402 - Data Ethics in Social Media (3 Credits)

Data ethics has become an increasingly important topic with the rise of big data and artificial intelligence. We will focus on three major ethic concerns raised by our lives online: privacy, manipulation, and bias. Readings will be drawn from a variety of authors, and writing assignments will apply ethical theories to practical problems.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Summer 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1420 - Social and Political Philosophy (3 Credits)

This course will examine central issues in social and political philosophy. Topics include the legitimacy of the state, the nature of property, the nature of justice, the role of education, and the permissibility of violence. We will consider the role of identity, liberty, and autonomy in our social and political lives. Readings will be a mix of historical and contemporary sources.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1440 - Ethics of Eating (3 Credits)

We all face difficult moral decisions on occasion. This course introduces students to the idea that we face such a decision several times a day in deciding what to eat. How should facts about animal life and death inform this decision? Is the suffering involved in meat, egg, and dairy production really bad enough to make the practices immoral? How do our dietary choices affect local and non-local economies, the environment, and other people generally? Finally, given the deep connections between eating practices and various ethnic, religious and class identities, how can we implement a reasonable food policy for an expanding world population while also respecting these important differences? The goal of this course is not to teach some preferred set of answers to these questions. The goal is rather to give participants the basic tools required to reflect clearly and effectively on the questions themselves. These tools include a working knowledge of the major moral theories developed by philosophers, and an understanding of basic empirical issues related to food production, distribution, consumption, and disposal. In addition to readings, lectures, and required sections, the course will involve trips to some local food-production facilities, as well as supplemental lectures by experts from Cornell, Ithaca, and beyond.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-SBY)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1450 - Contemporary Moral Issues (3 Credits)

An introduction to some of the main contemporary moral issues. Topics may, for example, include animal rights, abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, sexual morality, genetic engineering, and questions of welfare and social justice.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG, KCM-AG), (ETM-AS, SCD-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Summer 2024, Summer 2023, Spring 2023, Summer 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1512 - Philosophy and Film (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with PMA 1512

In what ways do movies reflect our world? In what ways do movies limit our imagination? Can we learn about ourselves and the real world from fiction in films? And if so, what is it that we learn? What do movies communicate? Can you misinterpret a film? Does it matter what the filmmaker intended? How do we evaluate the truth of what films say? How can we answer the questions they ask us? This course will explore philosophical questions and themes taken up through film and ask these philosophical questions about the genre itself.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Summer 2025, Summer 2009, Summer 2008

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

## PHIL 1595 - A Philosopher's Guide to the Galaxy: Philosophy & Science Fiction (3 Credits)

Is time travel possible? Are we stuck inside a computer simulation? Should we try to live forever? In this course we will grapple with philosophical questions of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics alongside works of science fiction by authors such as N. K. Jemisin, Robert Heinlein, and Ursula Le Guin. Readings and assignments will tie abstract philosophical theories to the real world, creating opportunities for both abstract philosophical debate and practical questions about the ethics of technology.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Summer 2023, Summer 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 1620 - Introduction to Cognitive Science (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 1101, PSYCH 1102, LING 1170, CS 1710, HD 1102

This course provides an introduction to the science of the mind. Everyone knows what it's like to think and perceive, but this subjective experience provides little insight into how minds emerge from physical entities like brains. To address this issue, cognitive science integrates work from at least five disciplines: Psychology, Neuroscience, Computer Science, Linguistics, and Philosophy. This course introduces students to the insights these disciplines offer into the workings of the mind by exploring visual perception, attention, memory, learning, problem solving, language, and consciousness.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG), (SCT-IL)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Summer 2025, Fall 2024, Summer 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 1621 - WIM: Introduction to Cognitive Science (1 Credit)**

Crosslisted with COGST 1104, PSYCH 1104, LING 1104

This section is highly recommended for students who are interested in learning about the topics covered in the main course through writing and discussion.

**Corequisites:** COGST 1101.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 1651 - What is Race? (3 Credits)**

What is race? Race can determine a lot about people's lives. It can determine the targets of racial discrimination, violence, and injustice. It can determine who benefits from racial progress. It can be the basis of privileging some and subordinating others. It can impact a person's self-identity. But what does it mean to belong to a certain racial group? This course will explore different philosophical answers to the question of 'what is race?'. Is race solely biological? Are there "racial" genes? Or is race a social construction? Is race a political or cultural category? What are the consequences of each of these accounts? By engaging with these questions, students will cultivate their ability to clearly articulate their thoughts and develop their own opinions.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 1918 - Conversations in Moral Psychology (1 Credit)**

Crosslisted with PSYCH 1200

Who gets to decide what is right and wrong? Are there any universal moral rules? Do moral norms benefit some more than others? What are the implications when age, gender, race, ethnicity, education, income, social status, and other individual differences interact with morality? This course is designed for students who are ready to dive to the core of morality. This format of the course is a series of guest talks and active discussions.

**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-CEL)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 1920 - Introduction to Political Theory (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 1615

This course introduces students to political theory as a distinctive mode of political inquiry. By surveying the wide range of forms through which political theory has been practiced—such as treatises, dialogues, plays, aphorisms, novels, manifestos, letters, speeches, illustrations, and films—we explore the ways in which political theory reflects upon, criticizes, and reshapes the basic concepts, habits of perception, and modes of feeling through which people make sense of the political world, from big events like wars and revolutions to everyday experiences of felt injustice or alienation. Our approach will be both historical and conceptual, attending to the force of each theoretical intervention in its context, while also drawing out the broader philosophical and political questions it continues to pose to us now.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SBA-AG), (SSC-AS)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 1950 - Controversies About Inequality (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with SOC 2220, GOVT 2225, ILOB 2220, PUBPOL 2220, AMST 2225

In recent years, poverty and inequality have become increasingly common topics of public debate, as academics, journalists, and politicians attempt to come to terms with growing income inequality, with the increasing visibility of inter-country differences in wealth and income, and with the persistence of racial, ethnic, and gender stratification. This course introduces students to ongoing social scientific debates about the sources and consequences of inequality, as well as the types of public policy that might appropriately be pursued to reduce (or increase) inequality. These topics will be addressed in related units, some of which include guest lectures by faculty from other universities (funded by the Center for the Study of Inequality). Each unit culminates with a highly spirited class discussion and debate.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG, SBA-AG), (ICE-IL), (SCD-AS, SSC-AS)

**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-SBY); (AFAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 1960 - Law, Society, and Morality (3 Credits)**

An introduction to leading topics in legal theory and political philosophy such as: what the laws should be, how they shape and are shaped by society, how they are and should be interpreted, the proper role of ethical and religious outlooks in lawmaking, the obligation to obey the law, and the relationship between private life and public legislation.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2200 - Greek and Roman Philosophy (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with CLASS 2661

An introductory survey of ancient Greek philosophy from the so-called Presocratics (6th century BCE) through the Hellenistic period (1st century BCE) with special emphasis on the thought of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2220 - Modern Philosophy (4 Credits)**

A survey of Western philosophy in the 17th and 18th centuries: Descartes, Locke, Spinoza, Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. We focus largely on epistemology (ideas, skepticism, belief, knowledge, science) and metaphysics (bodies, minds, God, causation, natural laws, afterlife, and personal identity). Some of the ethical implications of these systems will also be mentioned in passing.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2240 - Nineteenth and Twentieth Century European Thought (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 3475

Survey of European social theory from Hegel to Foucault (via Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Weber, and the Frankfurt School).

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2017, Spring 2016  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2260 - Slavery in Philosophy (3 Credits)**

This course examines slavery as a topic of philosophical analysis. Surveying a range of ancient and modern discourses, we will think together about the following questions: What is slavery? What is a slave? Who can be a slave? Why does slavery exist? What is the relationship between slavery and race? Slavery and gender? Slavery and religion? We will encounter several views on these questions, paying close attention to the ways they emerged in their historical contexts. We will begin with a study of slavery in the ancient world, focusing on Greece and Rome. Ancient Greek and Roman accounts of slavery and freedom form much of the foundation for how slavery was understood in the medieval and early modern world. These beginnings will give us the conceptual tools necessary for us to analyze and understand the enslavement of Indigenous peoples and Africans by Europeans and the American anti-slavery movement. The course ends by considering slavery's enduring legacy in the modern university.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2300 - Puzzles and Paradoxes (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 2305

This course will survey a number of famous paradoxes about the nature of time, identity, logic, science, belief, decision, and value. Some of these paradoxes have widely accepted answers, but many do not. Paradoxes include (but are not limited to) Zeno's paradoxes, the sorites paradox, the liar paradox, paradoxes of probability, the doomsday and simulation arguments, Newcomb's puzzle, and the trolley problem. These paradoxes will be used as a stepping stone to deeper philosophical questions. Some of the questions we'll tackle include: Is time real? What is a person? Is infinity coherent? How is science possible? What is knowledge? What is it to be rational? What should we do? Does God exist? And finally, why is death bad?

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Summer 2022, Fall 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2310 - Introduction to Deductive Logic (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 2310

Covers sentential languages, the truth-functional connectives, and their logic; first-order languages, the quantifiers every and some, and their logic.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2410 - Ethics (4 Credits)**

This will be a lecture course on classic and contemporary work on central topics in ethics. The first third of the course will focus on metaethics: we will examine the meaning of moral claims and ask whether there is any sense in which moral principles are objectively valid. The second third of the course will focus on normative ethics: what makes our lives worth living, what makes our actions right or wrong, and what do we owe to others? The final third of the course will focus on moral character: what is moral praiseworthiness, and how important is it? Can we be held responsible for what we do? When and why?

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2415 - Introduction to Moral Psychology (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with PSYCH 2415, COGST 2415

This course is an introduction to the moral mind from philosophical and psychological perspectives. Many traditional philosophical problems about morality are being illuminated by current work in cognitive science. In this course, we will look at several of these problems. In each case, we will begin with a presentation of the philosophical problems, and we will proceed to examine recent empirical work on the topic. A wide range of topics will be covered, including moral judgment, agency, the self, and punishment.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2420 - Social and Political Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 2605

This course will examine key issues in social and political philosophy. Topics may include the legitimacy of the state, political obligation, the nature and demands of justice, equality, liberty, and autonomy. Selected readings may be drawn from historical as well as contemporary sources.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2019  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2430 - Moral Dilemmas in the Law (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 2432

The course concerns the principles and philosophical arguments underlying conflicts and moral dilemmas of central and ongoing concern to society as they arise within legal contexts. We consider questions such as what justifies using state power to punish people for wrongdoing, what kinds of conduct are rightly criminalized, what justifies the Supreme Court's power to strike down Congressional legislation, what justifies the right to private property and its boundaries, what is the right to privacy and why it is important, what are human rights, and what is the morality and law of war. Throughout we will be reading legal cases and philosophical commentaries that engage with the deep issues that the cases pose.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG, KCM-AG), (ETM-AS, SCD-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2021  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2441 - Ethics and Society: Aid and Its Consequences (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASRC 3333

**Distribution Requirements:** (HST-AS, SSC-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2021, Spring 2019, Spring 2017  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2455 - Introduction to Bioethics (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with STS 2451, SHUM 2455

Bioethics is the study of ethical questions raised by advances in the medical field. Questions we'll discuss will include: Is it morally permissible to advance a patient's death, at his or her request, to reduce suffering? Is there a moral difference between killing someone and letting someone die? What ethical issues are raised by advance care planning? What is it to die? What forms of cognitive decline or physical change could you survive (and still be you)? On the flip side, were you ever a fetus? How should the rights of pregnant women be balanced against those of the fetus? Should parents be given control over the genetic make-up of their children? Are some forms of human enhancement morally troubling? Should we aim to be better than well? What is it to be disabled? How should scarce health care resources or costly therapies be allocated to those in need? Should organ sales be permitted? Should medical treatment (or health insurance!) ever be compulsory, or is mandating treatment unacceptably paternalistic? Should doctors or hospitals be permitted to refuse to provide certain medical services that violate their consciences?

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Summer 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2465 - Philosophy of Applied Jurisprudence (3 Credits)**

This course examines a series of epistemic and metaphysical issues raised in modern applied jurisprudence. For example: What constitutes an actionable 'harm' and how can successful plaintiffs be 'made whole'? What kinds of evidence should juries consider in their deliberations, and how should they be guided in so doing? How does more or less speculative evidence from modern neuroscience complicate questions of culpability and mens rea? How do we justify punishment generally, and incarceration specifically? Does it make sense for juries to apply the 'reasonable person' standard in sexual harassment cases if we cannot conceive of a genderless person? We will examine these and other questions, applying philosophical rigor to modern jurisprudence.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2021, Fall 2018, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2471 - Ethical Issues in Engineering Practice (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ENGRG 3600, STS 3601

This course surveys a range of ethical issues that arise in professional engineering, and provides discussion-based practice in analyzing and addressing them. Using normative frameworks from professional codes, philosophical ethics, value-sensitive design, feminist theory, and science & technology studies, the course engages with a series of historical, current, and fictional case studies, across a wide variety of engineering disciplines. Specific topics to be discussed may include: privacy, consumer rights, smart cities, geoengineering, artificial intelligence, and cloning. Instruction is through a mix of lectures and discussions.

**Prerequisites:** For engineering students, completion of one First-Year Writing Seminar (FWS).

**Enrollment Information:** For engineering students, enrollment limited to: sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

**Distribution Requirements:** (KCM-AG, SBA-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Be familiar with and able to identify a range of ethical and social issues in professional and academic engineering practice.
- Understand some of the major normative theories in philosophy, science and technology studies, feminist theory, and other approaches.
- Be able to apply normative theories to specific cases in engineering, from a variety of different stakeholder perspectives, including the perspectives of historically marginalized social groups.
- Be able to analyze, evaluate, and produce normative arguments using evidence and techniques of philosophical argument.
- Have improved their research skills and written communication skills, particularly in argumentative writing.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)



**PHIL 2473 - Ethics of Computing and Artificial Intelligence Technologies (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ENGRG 3605, STS 3605

Computing is ubiquitous in modern life, and essential to professional work in engineering and many other disciplines. However, computing technologies, especially artificial intelligence, raise distinctive normative issues. This course surveys a variety of social, ethical, and political issues that arise in connection with computing technologies, including artificial intelligence, from a philosophical perspective. Specific topics may include: hacking, privacy, intellectual property, forms of deception and manipulation enabled by computing technologies, social injustices that are reinforced by algorithmic systems, machine ethics, and science fiction issues such as robot rights or existential risks posed by superintelligent computer systems. Content delivery will be through a mix of lectures, readings, and in-class discussion.

**Enrollment Information:** Enrollment limited to: sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Students will be able to identify and describe a variety of social, ethical, and political issues that arise distinctively from the use and development of computing technologies.
- Students will be able to use normative theories from the humanities and social sciences to make sense of ethical issues in computing.
- Students will be able to reason about, critique, defend, and develop specific opinions on social, ethical, and political issues that arise in connection to computing technologies.
- Students will have improved their written and oral communication skills and academic research skills.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2510 - Philosophy of the Arts (3 Credits)**

This course is an introduction to philosophy of the arts, with emphasis on contemporary visual art, and on recent theorizing about art. We will investigate questions such as: What is art? What is good art, and who decides? What is art about, and who decides? What is the relationship between art and politics? Between art and thought? Art and nature? Art and ordinary experience? What is the nature of aesthetic experience?

**Distribution Requirements:** (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2020, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2525 - Introduction to African Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASRC 2020

**Distribution Requirements:** (GLC-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022, Fall 2020, Fall 2018, Fall 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2530 - Religion and Reason (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with RELST 2630

What must (or could) God be like, and what reasons do we have for thinking that a being of that sort actually exists? What difference would (or could) the existence of God make to our lives? Religion & Reason examines the idea, shared by several major world religions, that God must be an absolutely perfect being. What attributes must a perfect being have: must it have a mind, be a person, care for human beings? Is the concept of a perfect being coherent? Is the existence of a perfect being compatible with the presence of evil in the world, the existence of human freedom, the nature of the world as modern science understands it? Does what is morally right and wrong depend in any important way on the nature or will of a perfect being? Is a perfect being among the things that actually inhabit our universe? The course approaches these questions with the tools and methods of philosophical reason and through readings drawn from both classic texts and contemporary philosophical discussion.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2540 - Introduction to Indian Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASIAN 3344, RELST 3344, CLASS 3674

This course will survey the rich and sophisticated tradition of Indian philosophical thought from its beginnings in the speculations of Upanishads, surveying debates between Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and materialistic philosophers about the existence and nature of God and of the human soul, the nature of knowledge, and the theory of language.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (SAAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2019, Spring 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2560 - The Meaning of Life (3 Credits)**

Is there a meaning to life? What does that question even mean? How, if at all, is the meaning of life related to the questions: What makes a life good? What makes a life worth living? What are we here for? What gives life a point? And how does our present condition – moderns living in a wealthy, secularizing, industrialized country – shape the answers we can give to the above questions? What about your present condition – students at an elite university? Can thinking about these questions guide how we actually live? In this course, we will examine these questions through conversation with some great philosophers. The course will proceed in three parts: Finding Meaning, where we consider views that meaning is something to be discovered; Losing Meaning, where we look at arguments that life has no meaning (or no good meaning); Making Meaning, where we encounter thinkers who have thought that meaning can be constructed, including under tragic circumstances.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2570 - Introduction to Ancient Chinese Philosophy and Literature (3 Credits)**

This course is a survey of ancient Chinese philosophy (prior to the Qin Dynasty of the late third century BCE) and its influence on Chinese literature and aesthetics of the subsequent dynasties. We will focus on the primary texts by key philosophers of the Confucian, Daoist, Mohist, and Legalist schools. We will examine how the secular moral ideal and the transcendent ideal of Chinese aesthetics arise from the Confucian and Daoist schools of thoughts. We will also study their subsequent interplay in folk poetry, Xuanyan (metaphysical or philosophical) poetry, and Shanshui (landscape) poetry from the Han Dynasty to the Tang Dynasty.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2610 - Knowledge and Reality (4 Credits)**

An introduction to some central philosophical questions about knowledge and reality. Questions to be addressed may include: What, if anything, do we know? What is it for a belief to be reasonable? What is it for one event to cause another event? What makes the person reading the beginning of this sentence the same as the person reading the end of this sentence? Readings are typically drawn from recent sources.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023, Fall 2014, Fall 2011, Spring 2011

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2611 - Knowledge and Belief (3 Credits)**

This course will introduce students to some central questions in epistemology (often defined as the philosophical study of knowledge), using both contemporary and historical readings. For example, we will examine our reliance on experts and testimony for our knowledge, the status of reports concerning miraculous or 'scientifically impossible' events, and the epistemology of conspiracy theories. We will also consider questions of disagreement and pluralism when it comes to controversial matters such as politics and religion.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2621 - Minds and Machines (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 2621

Throughout history, metaphors drawn from technology of the time have been proposed to understand how the mind works. While Locke likened the newborn's mind to a blank slate, Freud compared the mind to hydraulic and electro-magnetic systems. More recently, many have endorsed Turing's proposal that the mind is a computer. Why is this idea attractive and what exactly is a computer? Is it at all plausible that the cells of your brain are computing? Could a computer ever really have a mind, beliefs, emotions and conscious experiences? What are these mysterious things anyway? Could a machine ever count as a person and make choices based on its own free will? Is it really so clear that we have this kind of free will?

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Summer 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2640 - Introduction to Metaphysics (3 Credits)**

This course is an introduction to some of the central questions in metaphysics—the study of what there is and how it works. Possible topics include persistence through change, freedom of the will, the nature of time (and the possibility of time travel), causation, properties, and necessity.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2019, Fall 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2650 - Philosophy of Race (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASRC 2650

This course offers an introduction to the philosophy of race. It canvasses key debates in the field concerning the metaphysical status of race, the relationship between the concept of race and racism (and the nature of the latter), the first-person reality of race, and the connections and disconnections between racial, ethnic, and national identities.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG, KCM-AG), (ETM-AS, SCD-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2810 - Introduction to the Philosophy of Science (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with STS 2831

We will look at some central questions about the nature of scientific theory and practice. What makes a discipline a science? Does science discover the objective truth about the world? How, and why, do scientific theories change over time? To what extent do observation and experiment determine which theories we accept? What is a good scientific explanation? What are laws of nature? Does physics have a special status compared to other sciences?

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG), (SCT-IL)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2020, Fall 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2830 - Introduction to Decision Theory (4 Credits)**

This course is an introduction to decision theory. Decision theory aims to answer a fundamental normative question: what ought one to do, given what one believes and values. Modern decision theory is a work in progress, with many outstanding issues, so our focus will be on what are sometimes called the philosophical 'foundations' of decision theory. Our discussion will be driven by some concrete problems (Newcomb, Death in Damascus, Sleeping Beauty), and by some general questions (what does practical irrationality consist in? how can one argue in favor of one decision theory or another?).

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2835 - Game Theory: For Finance, Diplomacy and Everyday Life (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ECON 2801, COGST 2801, GOVT 2803

The course is an introduction to game theory for students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds and interests. Game theory is a discipline barely one hundred years old. Its rise to prominence, with implications for various subjects, from economics, politics, and philosophy, to finance, diplomacy and computer science, in such a short time, has few parallels. The course is meant to be a primer on the subject for students who have no background in it. It can serve as groundwork for students pursuing different disciplines and also for those who intend to later take more advanced courses in game theory.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SSC-AS)

**Exploratory Studies:** (SAAREA)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2945 - Civil Disobedience (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 3785, AMST 3785

This course examines controversies in the theory and history of civil disobedience. Do citizens have obligations to obey unjust laws? Can law breaking ever be civil rather than criminal? Do disruptive protests endanger democracy or strengthen the rule of law? How do acts of protest influence public opinion and policy? How is the distinction between violence and nonviolence politically constructed and contested? We will study classical writings and contemporary scholarship in pursuit of answers to these questions and related debates concerning the rule of law, conscientious objection, the uses of civility and incivility, punishment and responsibility, as well as whistleblowing, direct action, strikes, sabotage, hacktivism, and rioting.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, SSC-AS), (KCM-AG, SBA-AG), (OCE-IL)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Spring 2020  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2960 - Ethics and the Environment (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with BSOC 2061, STS 2061

Politicians, scientists, and citizens worldwide face many environmental issues today, but they are neither simple nor straightforward. Moreover, there are many ways to understand how we have, do, and could value the environment from animal rights and wise use to deep ecology and ecofeminism. This class acquaints students with some of the challenging moral issues that arise in the context of environmental management and policy-making, both in the past and the present. Environmental concerns also highlight important economic, epistemological, legal, political, and social issues in assessing our moral obligations to nature as well as other humans. This course examines various perspectives expressed in both contemporary and historical debates over environmental ethics by exploring four central questions: What is nature? Who counts in environmental ethics? How do we know nature? Whose nature?

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETH-AG, KCM-AG, SBA-AG), (ETM-AS, SSC-AS)

**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-SBY)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2965 - Ecological Justice: Feminist, Queer, and Trans Perspectives (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with FGSS 2024

This course is an in-depth study of ecological justice from feminist, queer, and trans perspectives. Historically, people marginalized by race, gender, sexuality, disability, and poverty have borne the brunt of environmental degradation. But they have also led environmental movements and ecological theorizing around the globe. Drawing on the traditions of ecofeminism, racial justice, queer and trans ecology, and disability theory, students will learn how feminist, queer, and trans thinking has reshaped binaries at the heart of environmental ethics, including nature/artifice, human/animal, stranger/kin, science/poetics, and activism/daily life. As such, students will deepen their knowledge of intersectional justice within a more-than-human world.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG), (SCD-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 2990 - Foundations of Law and Society (3 Credits)**

This course explores the meaning of Law and Society, which is an interdisciplinary study of the interactive nature of legal and social forces. A law and society perspective places law in its historical, social, and cultural context, studying the dynamic way in which law shapes social norms, policy, and institutions, and conversely, the way that social forces shape the law. This Foundations of Law and Society course is structured as a series of four modules, each taught by a faculty member from a different discipline. The modules will introduce students to a range of disciplinary methods and content related to the study of the interaction of law with social, political, and economic institutions and relationships.

**Distribution Requirements:** (OCE-IL), (SBA-AG), (SSC-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3180 - Origins of 20th Century Philosophy (3 Credits)**

In this course, we will consider some philosophical writings from the last third of the 19th century through the early 20th century that are both of interest in themselves and helped shape philosophical work up to today. We will also read some more recent writings that address issues raised by material from that target period.

**Prerequisites:** at least one previous course in philosophy.

**Enrollment Information:** Primarily for: undergraduate Philosophy majors/minors.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3202 - Plato (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with CLASS 3669

We will study several of Plato's major dialogues, including the Apology, the Meno, Phaedo, and Republic. Topics include knowledge and reality, morality and happiness, and the nature of the soul.

**Prerequisites:** at least one course in philosophy at 2000 level or above, or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3203 - Aristotle (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with CLASS 3664

We will study several of Aristotle's major works, including the Categories, Physics, Posterior Analytics, Metaphysics, and Nicomachean Ethics. Topics include nature and change, form and matter, the nature of happiness, the nature of the soul, and knowledge and first principles.

**Prerequisites:** at least one previous course in philosophy at the 2000 level or above, or permission of the instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2019, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3204 - Hellenistic Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with CLASS 3661

An examination of the doctrines of the Greek philosophers working in the three centuries after the death of Aristotle. Emphasis on Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Skepticism.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022, Spring 2020, Fall 2014, Spring 2010

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3210 - Medieval Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with RELST 3150, MEDVL 3210

A selective survey of Western philosophical thought from the fourth to the 14th century. Topics include the problem of universals, the theory of knowledge and truth, the nature of free choice and practical reasoning, and philosophical theology. Readings (in translation) include Augustine, Boethius, Anselm, Abelard, Aquinas, Scotus, and Ockham. Some attention will be given to the development of ideas across the period and the influence of non-Western traditions on the West.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2022, Spring 2019, Fall 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3212 - Philosophy in the Islamic World (800-1400) (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with NES 3212, MEDVL 3212

An introduction to some of the major thinkers and philosophical developments in the Islamic world from the 9th to the 14th centuries CE. Figures include Muslim thinkers such as Al-Kindi, Al-Razi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) as well as important representatives of the Jewish tradition such as Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides). Themes include philosophical theology (the existence and nature of God, God's relation to the created world, prophecy, the place of reason in religion), metaphysics (the nature of existence, fundamental ontology, causality), mind and knowledge (the nature and mechanisms of cognition, our knowledge of ourselves and the world), and ethics and political philosophy (how best to live and organize the state).

**Prerequisites:** at least one course in philosophy.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3222 - Early Modern Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with JWST 3222

This course is a survey of European philosophy of the early modern period (17th – 18th Century). This period witnessed a burgeoning of diverse philosophical views on the major issues in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and political philosophy. These views shaped contemporary philosophy and continue to profoundly influence modern society and culture. This course surveys the influential philosophers of this period including Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Hume, and Kant, whose selected works cover the following six major topics: (a) knowledge, justification, and skepticism, (b) the metaphysics of the physical world, (c) the nature of mind and consciousness, (d) free will and moral responsibility, (e) the ground for political obligation and the structure of government, and (f) the rational basis of morality.

**Prerequisites:** at least one prior course in philosophy, or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3230 - Kant (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GERST 3590

An intensive study of the metaphysical and epistemological doctrines of the Critique of Pure Reason. Some editions of the course may also consider Kant's ethical views as laid out in the Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals and related works.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Fall 2019, Fall 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3231 - Kant's Ethics (4 Credits)**

This course introduces students to Kant's moral philosophy, focusing on his normative ethics. We will pay special attention to how Kant's emphasis on virtue in his later ethical writings enables a response to many of the historical and contemporary criticisms leveled against him. We will also discuss some remaining worries about his theory; for example, those stemming from his rigorism or his views on race and gender.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3250 - Nineteenth Century Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GERST 3580

Survey of nineteenth century philosophy.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2022, Spring 2018, Spring 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3300 - Introduction to Set Theory (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with MATH 3840

This will be a course on standard set theory (first developed by Ernst Zermelo early in the 20th century): the basic concepts of sethood and membership, operations on sets, functions as sets, the set-theoretic construction of the Natural Numbers, the Integers, the Rational and Real numbers; time permitting, some discussion of cardinality. Course was formerly titled Foundations of Mathematics.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2020, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)



**PHIL 3305 - Math for Philosophy (3 Credits)**

This course introduces the mathematical methods used in many areas of contemporary philosophy without any assumed mathematical background. It will also cover some of the basic applications of these methods in a range of subfields within philosophy. The course consists of six units: 1. Basic Set theory; 2. Relations (applications in metaphysics); 3. Semantics (applications in metaphysics and epistemology); 4. Probabilities (applications in epistemology and philosophy of science); 5. Decision Theory (applications in ethics); 5. Game Theory (applications in philosophy of language and social philosophy). Other units and applications may be included depending on time and interest.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3310 - Deductive Logic (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 3310, MATH 3810

A mathematical study of the formal languages of standard first-order propositional and predicate logic, including their syntax, semantics, and deductive systems. The basic apparatus of model theory will be presented. Various formal results will be established, most importantly soundness and completeness.

**Prerequisites:** PHIL 2310 or MATH 2210 or MATH 2230 or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3340 - Modal Logic (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with MATH 3850

Modal logic is a general logical framework for systematizing reasoning about qualified and relativized truth. It has been used to study the logic of possibility, time, knowledge, obligation, provability, and much more. This course will explore both the theoretical foundations and the various philosophical applications of modal logic. On the theoretical side, we will cover basic metatheory, including Kripke semantics, soundness and completeness, correspondence theory, and expressive power. On the applied side, we will examine temporal logic, epistemic logic, deontic logic, counterfactuals, two-dimensional logics, and quantified modal logic.

**Prerequisites:** PHIL 2310 or equivalent.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Spring 2023, Fall 2020, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3460 - Modern Political Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 3625

This course will primarily focus on studying and scrutinizing general conceptions of justice. Topics explored typically include liberty, economic equality, democracy, community, the general welfare, and toleration. We will also look at implications for particular political controversies such as abortion, welfare programs and pornography.

**Distribution Requirements:** (CA-AG, KCM-AG), (ETM-AS, GLC-AS)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2021, Fall 2016, Fall 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3475 - Philosophy of Punishment (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with SHUM 3475

This course addresses central debates in the philosophy of legal punishment. We will analyze the leading theories of punishment, including the familiar retributivist and deterrent alternatives, as well as lesser-known hybrid, self-defense, and rehabilitative accounts. We will ask whether each theory offers a general justification for establishing institutions of punishment, and whether each theory justifies specific acts of punishment. Other topics may include criminal responsibility, the legitimacy of collateral consequences (e.g., the denial of felons' voting rights), alternatives to punishment, etc.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3480 - Philosophy of Law (3 Credits)**

This will be a class on various topics in the philosophy of law. Some questions we'll be considering: What is law? Do laws have moral content? What is the proper role of judges in interpreting the law? What do alternatives to our legal system look like? Is there an obligation to obey the law? Might there sometimes be an obligation to disobey the law? What, if anything, justifies punishment by the state? What counts as having an excuse for wrongdoing? What counts as good evidence of guilt? What are the justifications for and limits of the right to free speech? When, if ever, is paternalistic interference by the state into the lives of its citizens justified? And what special ethical problems do practicing lawyers face?

**Prerequisites:** one previous course in philosophy.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3525 - Africana Philosophy: Existentialism in Black (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASRC 3402

The dominant strains in Euro-American philosophy tend either to erase or underplay the participation in and contributions to the constitution of Western philosophy of philosophers from the global African world. Additionally, dominant philosophical narratives are notorious for excluding African-inflected discourses from explorations of the perennial problems of philosophy. In this class, we seek to fill this absence by spending time studying the contributions to a distinct philosophical tradition-Existentialism-by thinkers from the global African world.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3535 - Moses to Modernity (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with JWST 3535, RELST 3535

This course is an introduction to Jewish philosophy - from Biblical texts to 20th century work. Our inquiries will span metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of religion, and political philosophy. We will reflect on questions such as the relation between philosophy or reason on the one hand, and religion and ethics on the other, on the possibility of knowledge of God, the ethics of human relations, the nature of suffering, and finally the nature of a tolerant and just society. We will read works by Maimonides, Spinoza, Mendelssohn, Marx, Buber, Rosenzweig, Cohen, Arendt, Levinas, and Butler, among others.

**Prerequisites:** at least one prior course in Philosophy or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG, KCM-AG), (ETM-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2021, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3610 - Epistemology (3 Credits)**

This course will be an advanced introduction to some contemporary debates in epistemology. We will start by considering skeptical arguments that we cannot really know whether the world is the way it appears to us. We will look at different strategies to respond to such skeptical arguments, in particular contextualism, and explore questions concerning the nature of knowledge and the relation between knowledge and other epistemologically significant concepts, such as certainty, justification, and evidence. We will also look at Bayesian epistemology and its theoretical underpinnings, at knowledge-first approaches to epistemology, at the relation between knowledge and action, and at the compatibility of traditional epistemology with formal epistemology. Also will explore the notion of common knowledge, and issues in social epistemology.

**Prerequisites:** one previous course in philosophy, or permission of the instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2020, Fall 2019  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3700 - Problems in Semantics (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 3333, COGST 3330

Concepts are properties of individuals that approximately correspond to word meanings. They play a role in Linguistics, Cognitive Science, Philosophy, and Artificial Intelligence. The course looks at phenomena and accounts of concepts from these different perspectives. Looks at problems in the semantic analysis of natural languages, critically examining work in linguistics and philosophy on particular topics of current interest. Topics vary. Not taught every year.

**Prerequisites:** logic or semantics course such as LING 3303, LING 4421, PHIL 2310, or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2021, Fall 2019, Fall 2009  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3710 - Philosophy of Language (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 3332

An introduction to some of the main issues in the philosophy of language. Topics may include names, definite descriptions, belief ascriptions, truth-conditional theories of meaning, pragmatics, and metaphor. Both historical and contemporary readings are considered.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Fall 2019  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3830 - Decision Theory (4 Credits)**

This course delves into decision theory. We shall be concerned with a fundamental normative question: what ought one to do, given what one believes and values. Our focus, throughout, will be on philosophical questions and not on applications.

**Prerequisites:** at least one prior course in Philosophy.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3870 - Philosophy of Mathematics (3 Credits)**

After some stage-setting on logic, and an overview of philosophical questions raised by mathematics, we will focus on Logicism: the thesis that arithmetic (understood as the part of mathematics concerned with the numbers in various number-systems) is or is a fragment of higher-order logic. We will approach Logicism historically, through writing by Frege and B. Russell. We will then look two other views of mathematics: Hilbertian formalism and Intuitionism. This will involve discussion of three restrictive projects: predicativism (imposing predicativity restrictions on definitions, comprehension principles and induction), constructivism (restricting logic to intuitionistic logic), and finitistic arithmetic. Since philosophical work in mathematics is enmeshed with mathematical work on the foundations of mathematics, it will be necessary to devote time to fully mathematical material (sets, proofs and models).

**Prerequisites:** one course in logic and at least one other philosophy course, or permission of the instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3900 - Independent Study (1-3 Credits)**

To be taken only in exceptional circumstances. Must be arranged by the student with his or her advisor and the faculty member who has agreed to direct the study.

**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-UG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 3915 - Moral Psychology in Action (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with PSYCH 4940, HD 4940, COGST 4940

Moral Psychology in Action is an applied psychology course for students who want to make a difference in the world through ethical leadership and positive contributions in organizations, and who are drawn to scholarly work on psychology, ethics, and morality. The course is experiential and takes place mostly outside the classroom through students' individualized partnerships in community organizations, businesses, and institutions. Learning outcomes include enhanced critical reflection, intercultural competence, ethical practice, and the practice of applied moral psychology research methods.

**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-CEL)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4002 - Latin Philosophical Texts (1-2 Credits)**

Crosslisted with RELST 4100, MEDVL 4002

Reading and translation of Latin philosophical texts.

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4003 - German Philosophical Texts (1-2 Credits)**

Reading, translation, and English-language discussion of important texts in the German philosophical tradition. Readings for a given term are chosen in consultation with students.

**Prerequisites:** basic reading (not necessarily speaking) knowledge of German and permission of instructor.

**Enrollment Information:** Open to: upper-level undergraduates.

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4110 - Greek Philosophical Texts (1-4 Credits)**

Reading and translation of Greek philosophical texts.

**Prerequisites:** knowledge of Greek is essential.

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4200 - Topics in Ancient Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with CLASS 4662

Advanced discussion of topics in ancient philosophy. Topics vary by instructors.

**Prerequisites:** at least one prior course in philosophy.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4210 - Augustine (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with CLASS 4665, RELST 4665

Topics for this course vary.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2018, Fall 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4220 - Topics in Modern Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Advanced discussion of topics or authors in modern Western philosophy (circa the 17th and 18th centuries).

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2022, Spring 2020, Fall 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4261 - Topics in 20th C. Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with FGSS 4261, ROMS 4261

Advanced seminar covering a topic in 20th century philosophy.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG, KCM-AG), (ETM-AS, SCD-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Fall 2019, Spring 2017, Spring 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4300 - Set Theory (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with MATH 4870

This course is a sequel to PHIL 3300/MATH 3840 but is also open to students who have not had the latter. After a brief review of the central ideas from the latter course, it will cover the construction of the real numbers, cardinality, the ordinal numbers, the cardinal numbers, the axiom of choice, and time permitting, another topic or two.

**Prerequisites:** at least one prior course in Philosophy or logic, or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4310 - Mathematical Logic (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with MATH 4810

First course in mathematical logic providing precise definitions of the language of mathematics and the notion of proof (propositional and predicate logic). The completeness theorem says that we have all the rules of proof we could ever have. The Gödel incompleteness theorem says that they are not enough to decide all statements even about arithmetic. The compactness theorem exploits the finiteness of proofs to show that theories have unintended (nonstandard) models. Possible additional topics: the mathematical definition of an algorithm and the existence of noncomputable functions; the basics of set theory to cardinality and the uncountability of the real numbers. Students will be expected to be comfortable writing proofs. More experience with proofs may be gained by first taking CS 2800 or a 3000-level MATH course.

**Prerequisites:** MATH 2210, MATH 2230, MATH 2310, MATH 2940, or equivalent.

**Forbidden Overlaps:** CS 4860, MATH 4810, MATH 4860, PHIL 4310

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2022, Fall 2020, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4311 - Topics in Logic and the Foundations of Mathematics (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with MATH 4820

Advanced discussion of a topic in logic or foundational mathematics.

**Prerequisites:** PHIL 2310, PHIL 3310, PHIL 3300, MATH 3840, or permission of instructor. A background in logic is required.

**Distribution Requirements:** (SMR-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Fall 2019, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4410 - Topics in Ethics and Value Theory (3 Credits)**

Advanced seminar covering a topic in ethics and value theory.

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4430 - Topics in Social and Political Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Advanced discussion of a topic in social and political philosophy.

**Prerequisites:** one philosophy course in ethics or value theory or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4490 - Feminism and Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with FGSS 4491

Feminist approaches to questions in metaphysics, epistemology, language, and value theory.

**Prerequisites:** one philosophy course or one course in feminist theory (FGSS).

**Enrollment Information:** Not open to: first-year students.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG, KCM-AG), (ETM-AS, SCD-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4495 - Trans Theory and the Question of Gender (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with FGSS 4124

The question What is gender? is an increasingly thorny and political one. This course provides students with an advanced introduction to debates about the nature and function of gender in contemporary trans theory and trans philosophy. Throughout the seminar, we will analyze various definitions of gender offered by trans thinkers: gender as genus, as genre, as performance, as self-identity, and as colonial category. We will critically assess the value and limitations of key gender terms such as cisgender, genderqueer, nonbinary, and transgender. Finally, we will grapple with the current debate about whether to abolish gender or to richly celebrate gender diversity.

**Distribution Requirements:** (D-AG), (SCD-AS)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4510 - Topics in the Philosophy of Aesthetics (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 4510

An investigation of central topics in the philosophy of art, with an emphasis on issues about the mind. Readings will be drawn from philosophy and psychology.

**Prerequisites:** at least one prior course in Philosophy.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4570 - Chinese Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASIAN 4457

This course surveys major schools of classical Chinese philosophy: Confucianism, Mohism, and Daoism. We focus on the Confucian vision of an ideal life, moral development, and self-cultivation, whereby one refines and reshapes one's emotions to achieve ethical excellence and contribute to one's community. We explore the Mohist advocacy of an ethics in which everyone is to be treated impartially, and the differences between Mohism and Confucianism in relation to key ethical issues. We emphasize the Daoist rejection of Confucian moral preaching and the idea that the truth can be captured through theorizing and argument, as well as the espousal in this tradition of non-action and intuitive action. We shall see how advocates of these different philosophies debated and borrowed ideas from each other.

**Prerequisites:** at least one prior course in philosophy.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4610 - Topics in Epistemology (4 Credits)**

An intensive seminar on a special topic in epistemology to be determined by the instructor. Potential topics include: What are the limits of knowledge? What is the extent and nature of our knowledge of our own minds? How do we gain knowledge through particular sources such as perception, testimony, memory, or reasoning? Readings may be drawn from historical or contemporary sources.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2022, Spring 2016, Spring 2015, Spring 2011

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4611 - Topics in Action Theory (3 Credits)**

Advanced discussion of a topic in philosophical action theory.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4620 - Topics in Philosophy of Mind (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 4625

Advanced discussion of a topic in Philosophy of Mind.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2021, Spring 2021, Spring 2020, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4640 - Topics in Metaphysics (3 Credits)**

Advanced discussion of a topic in metaphysics.

**Prerequisites:** at least one course in philosophy at the 3000-level or higher, or permission of instructor.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Fall 2018, Spring 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4710 - Topics in the Philosophy of Language (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 4712, COGST 4730

An investigation of varying topics in the philosophy of language including reference, meaning, the relationship between language and thought, communication, modality, logic and pragmatics.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2020, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4720 - Pragmatics (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 4425, COGST 4425

What is the relationship between what words mean and how they are used? What is part of the grammar and what is a result of general reasoning? Pragmatics is often thought of as the study of how meaning depends on the context of utterance. However, it can be difficult to draw a line between pragmatics and semantics. In this course, we will investigate various topics that walk this line, including varieties of linguistic inference (including entailment and implicature), the pragmatics and compositional semantics of presupposition, anaphora and dynamic semantics, the semantics and pragmatics of focus, indexicals, and speech acts.

**Prerequisites:** LING 3303 or PHIL 2310, or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)



**PHIL 4730 - Semantics I (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 4421

Introduces methods for theorizing about meaning within generative grammar. These techniques allow the creation of grammars that pair syntactic structures with meanings. Students look at several empirical areas in detail, among them complementation (combining heads with their arguments), modification, conjunction, definite descriptions, relative clauses, traces, bound pronouns, and quantification. An introduction to logical and mathematical concepts used in linguistic semantics (e.g., set theory, functions and their types, and the lambda notation for naming linguistic meanings) is included in the course.

**Prerequisites:** LING 3303 or permission of instructor.

**Distribution Requirements:** (ETM-AS, SMR-AS), (KCM-AG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4900 - Informal Study for Honors I (3 Credits)**

Majors in philosophy may choose to pursue writing of an honors thesis in their senior year. Students undertake research leading to the writing of an honors essay by the end of the final semester. Prospective candidates should apply at the Department of Philosophy office, 218 Goldwin Smith Hall.

**Enrollment Information:** Enrollment limited to: senior honors students.

**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-UG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4901 - Informal Study for Honors II (3 Credits)**

Majors in philosophy may choose to pursue writing of an honors thesis in their senior year. Students undertake research leading to the writing of an honors essay by the end of the final semester. Prospective candidates should apply at the Department of Philosophy office, 218 Goldwin Smith Hall.

**Prerequisites:** PHIL 4900.

**Enrollment Information:** Enrollment limited to: senior honors students.

**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-UG)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 4941 - Locke and the Philosophies of Dispossession: Indigenous America's Interruptions and Resistances (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with AIIS 4200, AMST 4220

This course looks at the philosopher John Locke as a philosopher of dispossession. There is a uniquely Lockean mode of missionization, conception of mind and re-formulations of the 'soul' applied to dispossess Indigenous peoples of the social institutions, intellectual traditions and the material bases and practices which sustain(ed) them. While colonization is typically used as a kind of shorthand for this process, we will be attempting to stay focused on the specific dimensions of Lockean dispossession and its mutually informing relationship with English colonialism.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022, Spring 2019, Spring 2018, Spring 2017

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Demonstrate a fluency in the philosophical formulations for settler colonialism and the historical and ongoing dispossessing of Native Americans—specifically, a fluency in Locke's philosophies of 1) the workmanship theory of property, 2) of consciousness and the modern "self," 3) theories of mind, 4) metaphysics and theology.
- Develop enhanced interpretive abilities through formal presentations and writing assignments.
- Apply pedagogical skills in teaching course content where they lead seminar topics.
- Employ sharpened interpretation and critical analysis skills through course writing assignments and structured editorial assistance to 1) concisely convey central argument(s) of texts, 2) make warrantable claims using relevant historical, philosophical, legal and material/empirical evidence, 3) clearly indicate one's positionality in developing arguments.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6010 - Greek Philosophical Texts (1-3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GREEK 7161

Reading and translation of Greek Philosophical texts.

**Prerequisites:** knowledge of Greek is essential.

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6020 - Latin Philosophical Texts (1-2 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LATIN 7262, RELST 6020, MEDVL 6020

Reading and translation of Latin philosophical texts.

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6030 - German Philosophical Texts (1-2 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GERST 6131

Reading, translation, and English-language discussion of important texts in the German philosophical tradition. Readings for a given term are chosen in consultation with students.

**Prerequisites:** basic reading (not necessarily speaking) knowledge of German.

**Enrollment Information:** Open to: upper-level undergraduates.

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6040 - French Philosophical Texts (2 Credits)**

Reading, translation, and English-language discussion of important French philosophical texts. Readings are chosen in consultation with students.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6100 - Pro Seminar in Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Seminar for first year Philosophy graduate students. Other philosophy PhD students may enroll with prior permission of instructor.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6110 - Writing Philosophy (3 Credits)**

This course is devoted to writing philosophy papers well. During the first half of each seminar, we will consider exemplars of philosophical writing in the analytic tradition, and will discuss the way their authors use a variety of writing techniques to communicate their ideas clearly, vividly, elegantly, economically, or stylishly. During the second part of the course, students will gather and bring in their own exemplars to share with the class. Approximately half of each seminar will be devoted to discussion of and peer feedback on students' own short papers, following by revision, with my detailed guidance. Students will also submit and revise a final paper. The choice of papers topics is free, and the aim will be to produce effectively written papers on whatever topics you choose.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6180 - Origins of 20th Century Philosophy (3 Credits)**

In this course, we will consider some philosophical writings from the last third of the 19th century through the early 20th century that are both of interest in themselves and helped shape philosophical work up to today. We will also read some more recent writings that address issues raised by material from that target period.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6200 - Topics in Ancient Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with CLASS 7173

Advanced discussion of topics in ancient philosophy. Topics vary by instructors.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6202 - Plato (3 Credits)**

We will study several of Plato's major dialogues, including the Apology, the Meno, Phaedo, and Republic. Topics include knowledge and reality, morality and happiness, and the nature of the soul.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6203 - Aristotle (3 Credits)**

We will study several of Aristotle's major works, including the Categories, Physics, Posterior Analytics, Metaphysics, and Nicomachean Ethics.

Topics include nature and change, form and matter, the nature of happiness, the nature of the soul, and knowledge and first principles.

**Enrollment Information:** Enrollment limited to: graduate students.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6204 - Hellenistic Philosophy (3 Credits)**

An examination of the doctrines of the Greek philosophers working in the three centuries after the death of Aristotle. Emphasis on Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Skepticism.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6210 - Topics in Medieval Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with MEDVL 6210, RELST 6210

Graduate seminar covering a topic in medieval philosophy. Spring 2025 Topics include: Augustine; Philosophy in the Islamic World (800-1400).

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6220 - Topics in Modern Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Advanced discussion of topics or authors in modern Western philosophy (circa the 17th and 18th centuries).

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6222 - Early Modern Philosophy (4 Credits)**

This course is a survey of European philosophy of the early modern period (17th – 18th Century). This period witnessed a burgeoning of diverse philosophical views on the major issues in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and political philosophy. These views shaped contemporary philosophy and continue to profoundly influence modern society and culture. This course surveys the influential philosophers of this period including Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Hume, and Kant, whose selected works cover the following six major topics: (a) knowledge, justification, and skepticism, (b) the metaphysics of the physical world, (c) the nature of mind and consciousness, (d) free will and moral responsibility, (e) the ground for political obligation and the structure of government, and (f) the rational basis of morality.

**Enrollment Information:** Enrollment limited to: graduate students.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6260 - Topics in 20th C. Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ROMS 6261

Advanced seminar covering a topic in 20th century philosophy.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Fall 2019, Spring 2017, Spring 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6290 - Proseminar in the History of Philosophy (3 Credits)**

An introduction to current research in the history of philosophy primarily through engagement with a variety of presentations of such research by Cornell faculty, visiting scholars, and advanced graduate students doing dissertation-level work. Each seminar meeting will involve a viva voce presentation of a current paper or research project. Students in the course will be expected to engage in both critical discussion of the work presented and reflection on the practices and methodologies exemplified in that work. Advanced graduate students in the course will be expected to present work of their own. Exposure to a variety of scholars and their work and the opportunity for explicit reflection on scholarly practices will enable students to develop and refine their own research in the history of philosophy.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6305 - Math for Philosophy (3 Credits)**

This course introduces the mathematical methods used in many areas of contemporary philosophy without any assumed mathematical background. It will also cover some of the basic applications of these methods in a range of subfields within philosophy. The course consists of six units: 1. Basic Set theory; 2. Relations (applications in metaphysics); 3. Semantics (applications in metaphysics and epistemology); 4. Probabilities (applications in epistemology and philosophy of science); 5. Decision Theory (applications in ethics); 5. Game Theory (applications in philosophy of language and social philosophy). Other units and applications may be included depending on time and interest.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6310 - Deductive Logic (4 Credits)**

A mathematical study of the formal languages of standard first-order propositional and predicate logic, including their syntax, semantics, and deductive systems. The basic apparatus of model theory will be presented. Various formal results will be established, most importantly soundness and completeness.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2021, Spring 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6311 - Topics in Logic and the Foundations of Mathematics (3 Credits)**

Advanced discussion of a topic in logic or foundational mathematics. Topics vary by instructor. For descriptions of each topic, please visit the university class roster.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023, Fall 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6410 - Seminar in Ethics and Value Theory (3 Credits)**

Graduate seminar covering a topic in ethics and value theory.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2023, Spring 2023, Fall 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6417 - Moral Foundations of Anti-Discrimination (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LAW 7178

What makes discrimination wrongful, when it is? Does its wrongness depend on social context and historical background? Does it depend on harmful consequences? What makes a certain ground of discrimination an improper ground? Is indirect discrimination (disparate impact) really a form of discrimination or perhaps a mild form of affirmative action? What should be the reach and scope of anti-discrimination law? Should it allow for exemptions on religious or free speech grounds? We will address these and similar questions at a fairly abstract level, trying to understand the philosophical principles that might explain the various aspects of anti-discrimination law. Most of the legal examples will be focused on discrimination cases in the context of employment and service provision (Title VII), but we will also consider racial profiling, disability cases, and some others.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Fall 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6425 - Topics in Meta-Ethics (3 Credits)**

Advanced discussion of a topic in meta-ethics.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6430 - Topics in Social and Political Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LAW 7782

Advanced discussion of a topic in social and political philosophy.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6450 - Humor and Morality (4 Credits)**

This course will be about the surprising and complicated ways that morality and humor bear on one another. The focus will be on interpersonal humor (banter, teasing, mockery, leg-pulling, etc.) that raises serious moral questions, as it may well involve deception, cruelty, or stereotyping. Humor can hurt, exclude, and divide. Considering its occasional immorality, should we continue to engage in it? This is, surprisingly, a new area of exploration. We will explore literature that can help us to start thinking about the topic on our own, literature that is at least in the general vicinity (what literature on humor there is is just about jokes). It comes from a variety of disciplines, including aesthetics, psychology, metaethics, linguistics, emotion theory, and normative ethics.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6461 - Modern African Political Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASRC 6220

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2018, Spring 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6475 - Philosophy of Punishment (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LAW 6030

This course addresses central debates in the philosophy of legal punishment. We will analyze the leading theories of punishment, including the familiar retributivist and deterrent alternatives, as well as lesser-known hybrid, self-defense, and rehabilitative accounts. We will ask whether each theory offers a general justification for establishing institutions of punishment, and whether each theory justifies specific acts of punishment. Other topics may include criminal responsibility, the legitimacy of collateral consequences (e.g., the denial of felons' voting rights), alternatives to punishment, etc.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6490 - Feminism and Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Feminist approaches to questions in metaphysics, epistemology, language, and value theory.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6494 - Marxism, Anarchism, Feminism (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GERST 6365, COML 6364, FGSS 6365, GOVT 6465

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6510 - Topics in the Philosophy of Aesthetics (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 6510

An investigation of central topics in the philosophy of art, with an emphasis on issues about the mind. Readings will be drawn from philosophy and psychology.

**Prerequisites:** at least one prior course in Philosophy.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6570 - Chinese Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ASIAN 6657

This course surveys major schools of classical Chinese philosophy: Confucianism, Mohism, and Daoism. We focus on the Confucian vision of an ideal life, moral development, and self-cultivation, whereby one refines and reshapes one's emotions to achieve ethical excellence and contribute to one's community. We explore the Mohist advocacy of an ethics in which everyone is to be treated impartially, and the differences between Mohism and Confucianism in relation to key ethical issues. We emphasize the Daoist rejection of Confucian moral preaching and the idea that the truth can be captured through theorizing and argument, as well as the espousal in this tradition of non-action and intuitive action. We shall see how advocates of these different philosophies debated and borrowed ideas from each other.

**Prerequisites:** At least one prior course in philosophy.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6610 - Topics in Epistemology (3 Credits)**

An intensive seminar on a special topic in epistemology to be determined by the instructor. Potential topics include: What are the limits of knowledge? What is the extent and nature of our knowledge of our own minds? How do we gain knowledge through particular sources such as perception, testimony, memory, or reasoning? Readings may be drawn from historical or contemporary sources.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6611 - Topics in Action Theory (3 Credits)**

Advanced discussion of a topic in philosophical action theory.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6620 - Topics in Philosophy of Mind (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with COGST 6620

Advanced discussion of a topic in Philosophy of Mind.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Spring 2021, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6640 - Topics in Metaphysics (3 Credits)**

Graduate seminar covering a topic in Metaphysics.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Spring 2023, Spring 2021, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6700 - Problems in Semantics (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 6333, COGST 6333

Concepts are properties of individuals that approximately correspond to word meanings. They play a role in Linguistics, Cognitive Science, Philosophy, and Artificial Intelligence. The course looks at phenomena and accounts of concepts from these different perspectives. Looks at problems in the semantic analysis of natural languages, critically examining work in linguistics and philosophy on particular topics of current interest. Topics vary. Not taught every year.

**Prerequisites:** logic or semantics course or permission of instructor.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2021, Fall 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6710 - Topics in the Philosophy of Language (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 6634, COGST 6710

An investigation of varying topics in the philosophy of language including reference, meaning, the relationship between language and thought, communication, modality, logic and pragmatics.

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Fall 2020, Spring 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6713 - Philosophy of Language (3 Credits)**

An introduction to some of the main issues in the philosophy of language. Topics may include names, definite descriptions, belief ascriptions, truth-conditional theories of meaning, pragmatics, and metaphor. Both historical and contemporary readings are considered.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6720 - Pragmatics (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 6425, COGST 6425

What is the relationship between what words mean and how they are used? What is part of the grammar and what is a result of general reasoning? Pragmatics is often thought of as the study of how meaning depends on the context of utterance. However, it can be difficult to draw a line between pragmatics and semantics. In this course, we will investigate various topics that walk this line, including varieties of linguistic inference including entailment, presupposition, and implicature), anaphora, indexicals, and speech acts.

**Prerequisites:** LING 3303 or PHIL 2310, or permission of instructor.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6730 - Semantics I (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 6421

Introduces methods for theorizing about meaning within generative grammar. These techniques allow the creation of grammars that pair syntactic structures with meanings. Students look at several empirical areas in detail, among them complementation (combining heads with their arguments), modification, conjunction, definite descriptions, relative clauses, traces, bound pronouns, and quantification. An introduction to logical and mathematical concepts used in linguistic semantics (e.g., set theory, functions and their types, and the lambda notation for naming linguistic meanings) is included in the course.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6731 - Semantics II (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 6422

Uses the techniques introduced in Semantics I to analyze linguistic phenomena, including quantifier scope, ellipsis, and referential pronouns. Temporal and possible worlds semantics are introduced and used in the analysis of modality, tense, and belief sentences. The phenomena of presupposition, indefinite descriptions, and anaphora are analyzed in a dynamic compositional framework that formalizes the idea that sentence meaning effects a change in an information state.

**Prerequisites:** LING 6421 or permission of instructor.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)



**PHIL 6740 - Semantics Seminar (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LING 7711

Addresses current theoretical and empirical issues in semantics.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023  
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6870 - Philosophy of Mathematics (3 Credits)**

After some stage-setting on logic, and an overview of philosophical questions raised by mathematics, we will focus on Logicism: the thesis that arithmetic (understood as the part of mathematics concerned with the numbers in various number-systems) is or is a fragment of higher-order logic. We will approach Logicism historically, through writing by Frege and B. Russell. We will then look two other views of mathematics: Hilbertian formalism and Intuitionism. This will involve discussion of three restrictive projects: predicativism (imposing predicativity restrictions on definitions, comprehension principles and induction), constructivism (restricting logic to intuitionistic logic), and finitistic arithmetic. Since philosophical work in mathematics is enmeshed with mathematical work on the foundations of mathematics, it will be necessary to devote time to fully mathematical material (sets, proofs and models).

**Prerequisites:** one course in logic and at least one other philosophy course, or permission of the instructor.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6909 - Equality (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 6846, SHUM 6657, CLASS 6857

This seminar inquires into the interrelations among three meanings of equality that initially appeared in the ancient world: equality before the law, isonomia; equality of voice or participation, isegoria; and equality of power, isokratia. Tacking back and forth between ancient texts and contemporary materials in law and analytic and continental political philosophy, this course will explore how these different practices of equality circulate and interact in popular and institutional (judicial and legislative) settings marked by historical injustice, scarce resources, and asymmetries of wealth and power. This seminar will include texts by Herodotus, Plato, Aristotle, Ta-Nehisi Coates, John Rawls, Bernard Williams, Amartya Sen, Danielle Allen, Etienne Balibar, among others, probing the meaning of equality.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2021, Spring 2020, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6922 - Foundations of the Social Sciences (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GOVT 6122, ECON 6910

Social science research almost always combines empirical observation (data), the construction of concepts (language), and the logical analysis of the relations between observations and concepts (statistics). This course examines the relations between these three dimensions as the analyst moves from one to the other both as practice and in the crafting of a formal summary of findings and argument. We will be particularly interested in the foundational assumptions that underpin the connections between empirical reality, language, and statistical analysis. While these foundational assumptions are often taken for granted by social scientists, they vary dramatically between social science disciplines. The implicit contradiction between that variance and their doxic acceptance within disciplines will be a primary focus of the course.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2021, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6941 - Locke and the Philosophies of Dispossession: Indigenous America's Interruptions and Resistances (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with AIIS 6200, AMST 6220

This course looks at the philosopher John Locke as a philosopher of dispossession. There is a uniquely Lockean mode of missionization, conception of mind and re-formulations of the 'soul' applied to dispossess Indigenous peoples of the social institutions, intellectual traditions and the material bases and practices which sustain(ed) them. While colonization is typically used as a kind of shorthand for this process, we will be attempting to stay focused on the specific dimensions of Lockean dispossession and its mutually informing relationship with English colonialism.

**Enrollment Information:** Enrollment limited to: graduate students.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2022, Spring 2019, Spring 2018, Spring 2017

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Demonstrate a fluency in the philosophical formulations for settler colonialism and the historical and ongoing dispossessing of Native Americans—specifically, a fluency in Locke's philosophies of 1) the workmanship theory of property, 2) of consciousness and the modern "self," 3) theories of mind, 4) metaphysics and theology.
- Develop enhanced interpretive abilities through formal presentations and writing assignments.
- Apply pedagogical skills in teaching course content where they lead seminar topics.
- Employ sharpened interpretation and critical analysis skills through course writing assignments and structured editorial assistance to 1) concisely convey central argument(s) of texts, 2) make warrantable claims using relevant historical, philosophical, legal and material/empirical evidence, 3) clearly indicate one's positionality in developing arguments.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 6951 - Aesthetic Theory: The End of Art (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GERST 6560, ARTH 6560

**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2023, Spring 2016, Fall 2012, Spring 2009

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 7000 - Informal Study (1-4 Credits)**

Independent study for graduate students only.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 7900 - Placement Seminar (3 Credits)**

This course is designed to help prepare Philosophy graduate students for the academic job market. Though students will study sample materials from successful job applicants, much of the seminar will function as a workshop, providing them with in-depth feedback on multiple drafts of their job materials. Interview skills will be practiced in every seminar meeting. The seminar meetings will be supplemented with individual conferences with the placement mentor, and students should also share copies of their job materials with their dissertation committees.

**Enrollment Information:** Enrollment limited to: philosophy department graduate students pursuing post-graduation job placement.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 7910 - Work in Process Colloquium (1 Credit)**

Talks by philosophy graduate students sharing their current work and seeking feedback from fellow graduate students.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

**PHIL 7950 - Philosophy Discussion Club Colloquium (1 Credit)**

Invited talks in philosophy given by both outside speakers and members of the Cornell community. Enrollment for credit is required for first- and second-year philosophy graduate students.

**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)