

# PHILOSOPHY

## CURRICULUM

First Offered Fall 2010

### Master of Arts

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	Credits
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PH8001 Area Readings	1
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PH8003 Professional Seminar	1
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AND one of the following Options:

#### **THESIS Option**

Master's Thesis	(Milestone)
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And Five Elective credits with at least one from three of the four core areas below	5
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#### **MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER Option**

Major Research Paper	(Milestone)
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And Seven Elective credits with at least one from three of the four core areas below	7
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Electives	Credits
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#### **Core Area: CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY**

PH8119 Phenomenology and Existentialism	1
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PH8121 Recent Continental Philosophy	1
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PH8125 Critical Theory	1
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PH8128 Contemporary Political Thought	1
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#### **Core Area: HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY**

PH8115 Ancient Philosophy	1
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PH8116 Topics in Early Modern Philosophy	1
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PH8117 19th Century Philosophy	1
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PH8126 Kant	1
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PH8131 Topics in Ancient Philosophy	1
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PH8130 South Asian Philosophy	1
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#### **Core Area: METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY**

PH8101 Epistemology	1
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PH8102 Metaphysics	1
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PH8104 Philosophy of Religion	1
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PH8105 Philosophy of Language	1
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PH8106 Philosophy of Mind	1
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PH8108 Philosophy of Action	1
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#### **Core Area: VALUE THEORY**

PH8107 Human Rights and Justice	1
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PH8109 Moral Philosophy	1
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PH8110 Aesthetics	1
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PH8111 Social and Political Philosophy	1
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PH8112 Feminist Philosophy	1
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PH8129 Metaethics	1
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#### **Unclassified – to be assigned to a core area according to content at time of enrollment**

PH8122 Topics in Philosophy	1
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PH8123 Major Figures in Philosophy	1
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PH8124 Independent Readings	1
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## **COURSE LISTING**

### **Major Research Paper**

A Major Research Paper is a work of about 35-40-pages written under the supervision of a faculty member. The standard of evaluation is an article in a refereed academic journal. This is a Milestone. Pass/Fail

### **Thesis**

A Thesis is a work of about 100-120 pages written under the supervision of a thesis committee. The standard of evaluation is a short monograph published by an academic press. This is a Milestone. Pass/Fail

### **PH8001 Area Readings**

The Area Readings course consists of independent but guided research in a core area of philosophy chosen by the student in consultation with the program director. The Area Readings course is an opportunity for students to broaden their philosophical knowledge while sharpening their research skills. The course culminates in a written and/or oral exam. Students will typically conduct the Area Readings in the area of their eventual Thesis or MRP. Pass/Fail

### **PH8003 Professional Seminar**

The Professional Seminar is a required course for all first year students. While the topics may vary from year to year, the seminar aims to introduce students to the professional skills needed to succeed in the program and the profession. Students will meet the department's faculty, who will present their research and discuss the methods they employ and the distinctive traditions in which they work. Finally, the seminar will initiate the mentoring and planning processes needed to successfully complete the program, including grant and scholarship applications. Pass/Fail

### **PH8101 Epistemology**

This course is a study of what canonical and contemporary philosophers have said about several central problems in the theory of knowledge. Topics may include: theories of justification; skepticism; the limits of belief and knowledge; perception, intuition and other sources of evidence; the social construction of knowledge; science and pseudo-science; a priori and a posteriori knowledge; knowledge of mathematical truths. 1 Credit

### **PH 8102 Metaphysics**

This course is a study of what canonical and contemporary philosophers have said about several central metaphysical problems. Topics may include: being and existence; the existence and nature of abstract objects; modality and possible worlds; the nature of time; personal identity; and metaphysical realism and anti-realism. 1 Credit

### **PH8104 Philosophy of Religion**

This course is a study of what canonical and contemporary philosophers have said about religion. Topics may include: concepts of God and ultimate reality; arguments for and against the existence of God; the relationship between faith and reason; religious diversity; miracles; religion and science; religion and ethics. 1 Credit

### **PH8105 Philosophy of Language**

This course will examine philosophical issues regarding both the nature of language and the relation of language to other matters. The first group of issues includes topics such as: what distinguishes linguistic communication from other types of communication; how metaphors work; the ways in which language is rule-governed; the distinction between semantics and pragmatics. The second group of issues includes topics such as: the relation between language and thought, between language and truth, language and rationality, and language and gender. 1 Credit

### **PH8106 Philosophy of Mind**

This course will examine a selection of views and issues that have arisen out of philosophical attempts to make sense of "the mind". Some of these views may be historical, while others will be contemporary. Issues taken up may include: mind-body dualism and its critics; materialism and its critics; behaviourism and its critics; the nature of sensory experience and its relation to thought; mind/ brain identity theories; the relation(s) between thought and language; functionalism and its critics; the nature of consciousness; the possibility of "naturalizing" the mind; whether non-human animals have thoughts; whether computers do, or could in principle, think; emotions and their expression; innatist accounts of learning; cognition as information processing. 1 Credit

### **PH8107 Human Rights and Justice**

This course will explore a core theme in the general cluster of Philosophy of Human Rights, Law and Punishment. Examples include: transformations in philosophical theories of human rights, from Lockean Natural Rights theory to contemporary Egalitarianism (including Capability Theory and Feminist Theories); transformations in philosophical theories of punishment, revisioning deterrence, retributivism and restorative justice; transformations in philosophical theories of distributive justice (including Libertarianism, Rawls' Theory and other Egalitarian theories). 1 Credit

### **PH8108 Philosophy of Action**

This course is a study of what historical and contemporary philosophers have said about several central problems concerning the nature of action. The course may include such topics as: free will and moral responsibility; the nature of agency; practical knowledge; the nature of intention and motivation; rationality and irrationality in action. 1 Credit

### **PH8109 Moral Philosophy**

This course focuses on selected issues or figures in historical and/or contemporary moral philosophy. Typical topics to be dealt with might include: the sources of normativity; the metaphysical and epistemological underpinnings of moral experience; moral psychology and the nature of practical reason; the relation between morality and politics and/or religion; particular moral theories such as utilitarianism, Kantianism, virtue ethics, and contractarianism. 1 Credit

**PH8110 Aesthetics**

This course will involve a close study of some central issues in philosophical aesthetics. Topics may be drawn from one or more of the main fields within the discipline: the study of beauty (or the aesthetic), the philosophy of art, and the philosophy of criticism. Potential topics include: the nature of art; the relation between morality and art, the character of aesthetic experience, and the appropriate criteria for art criticism. 1 Credit

**PH8111 Social and Political Philosophy**

This course focuses on selected issues or figures in historical and/or contemporary social and political philosophy. Typical topics to be dealt with might include: the scope and justification of the state; the right vs. the good; multiculturalism and group rights; the relation between economics, ideology and politics; particular political theories such as libertarianism, liberalism, political realism, communitarianism, critical theory. 1 Credit

**PH8112 Feminist Philosophy**

This course involves a close study of one or more philosophical topics in historical and/or contemporary feminist thought. Examples include: the nature and origins of gendered identity; feminist approaches to ethics; feminist epistemology; feminist perspectives on motherhood, sexuality, the body, and reproductive technology; critical approaches to gender-based oppression. 1 Credit

**PH8115 Ancient Philosophy**

This course involves a critical study of selected themes and doctrines in ancient Greek philosophy, with a focus on such seminal thinkers as Socrates, Plato, and/or Aristotle. Typical issues include: the nature of reality; the relation between universals and particulars; the nature of the soul and its relation to the body; the difference between knowledge and true belief, and between the different kinds of knowledge (philosophical, practical, mathematical, knowledge of the natural world); the nature of the good life and of virtue; the roles that reason, emotions, and appetites play in the virtuous person; the kinds of social, economic, and political structures that characterize the best society. 1 Credit

**PH8116 Topics in Early Modern Philosophy**

This course involves the critical examination of selected works from one or more of such major 17th and 18th Century philosophers as Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Leibniz, Spinoza, Hume and Kant. Topics might include the structure, scope and limits of human knowledge; the primary secondary quality distinction; concepts of space, time and matter; nature of causation; nature of perception, consciousness and self-consciousness; personal identity; how mind and body are related; nature and existence of free will and the problem of evil and theodicy; the nature and foundations of moral and political rights. 1 Credit

**PH8117 19th Century Philosophy**

This course involves the critical examination of selected works from one or more of such major 19th Century philosophers as Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. Typical themes to be addressed include: the nature of subjectivity and self-consciousness; the role that socioeconomic institutions play in shaping human knowledge and self-identity; the nature of reason and its relation to history; social dimensions of freedom; arguments for and against the systematic character of human knowledge; the critique of modernity. 1 Credit

**PH8119 Phenomenology and Existentialism**

This course is an in-depth study of the influential philosophical movement known as phenomenology, and of the ways this movement was taken up and developed by the existentialists of the Twentieth Century. Some of the typical issues to be studied include: the distinction between reflective and lived experience; the character of perception and embodied experience; the intersubjective constitution of the world's meaning; the breakdown of the subject/object dualism; the temporal structure of human reality; the significance of our encounter with death and nothingness. The main authors to be studied may include Husserl, Bergson, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. 1 Credit

**PH8121 Recent Continental Philosophy**

This seminar examines a selection of the most important themes and developments in recent continental philosophy. Some of the topics to be examined may include: difference and alterity; the 'ethical turn'; desire and the unconscious; critiques of subjectivity and self-identity; communicative action theory; bio-politics; performativity. The course will typically focus on the work of such philosophers as Foucault, Deleuze, Habermas, Irigaray, Kristeva, Levinas, Lyotard, Nancy, Butler and Žižek. 1 Credit

**PH8122 Topics in Philosophy**

This course gives students the opportunity to engage in a rigorous and concentrated study of a specific canonical or contemporary philosophical topic. 1 Credit

**PH8123 Major Figures in Philosophy**

This course gives students the opportunity to engage in a rigorous and concentrated study of the work of a major historical or contemporary philosopher. 1 Credit

**PH8124 Independent Readings**

This course consists of focused study in an area of philosophy under the supervision of a faculty member. Students wishing to pursue an Independent Readings elective must submit a proposal of study, approved by the course supervisor, to the Program Director: the content of an Independent Readings course cannot overlap with a student's coursework, ARE, or final project studies. All Independent Readings are subject to Program Director's approval. 1 Credit

**PH8125 Critical Theory**

This seminar focuses on a branch of continental social and political thought known as Critical Theory. Though diverse, Critical Theorists share roots in Western Marxism and a commitment to the critique of ideologies and social practices that perpetuate alienation and oppression. Thinkers studied may include early forerunners, such as Marx, Nietzsche and Freud, members of the Frankfurt School, including Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and Fromm, and contemporary figures, such as Habermas and Honneth. 1 Credit

**PH8126 Kant**

This course studies the philosophical thought of Immanuel Kant as presented in works such as the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the *Groundwork to the Metaphysics of Morals*, the *Critique of Practical Reason*, and the *Critique of Judgment*. Topics to be discussed may include a priori knowledge, idealism, perception, and causation; free will, moral obligation, and practical reason; beauty, aesthetic judgment, and artistic genius; or teleological explanation, organisms, and the philosophy of biology. 1 Credit

**PH8128 Contemporary Political Thought**

This seminar explores 20th-21st C. political ideas by thinkers working within (or in relation to) the continental tradition who seek to understand the crises of their times. Themes might include colonialism, fascism, identity, migration, populism, racism, resistance, technocapitalism, totalitarianism, or violence. Texts will include European and non-European authors such as Appiah, Arendt, Balibar, Berardi, Chatterjee, Esposito, Fanon, Luxemburg, Mbembe, Samaddar and Weil. 1 Credit

**PH8129 Metaethics**

This course explores the metaphysics, semantics, and epistemology of morality. Possible questions may include: Are there moral facts and, if so, are they relative to individuals or society? Or, might morality somehow be objective? Can moral statements be true or false, or is moral discourse a matter of expressing our emotions? Is it possible for us to know anything about morality and, if so, how do we accomplish this? Through reason? Emotion? Intuition? 1 Credit

**PH8130 South Asian Philosophy**

This seminar is devoted to classical and medieval South Asian philosophy. Important figures studied may include Nāgārjuna, Īśvarakṛṣṇa, Pakṣilasvāmin Vātsyāyāna, Buddhaghosa, Candrakīrti, Kumāriḷa Bhaṭṭa, Śāntarakṣita, Ādi Śaṅkara, Uṭapaladeva, and Rāmānuja. Thematically speaking, we will explore South Asian philosophical debates concerning, for instance, personal identity, ontology, epistemology, philosophy of language, the nature of insight, and how these themes relate to the ethical quest for liberation from delusion and the sufferings that emerge in its wake. 1 Credit

**PH8131 Topics in Ancient Philosophy**

This course involves a focused study of a particular topic in ancient philosophy, and may include, for instance, ancient women thinkers, Pre-Socratics, Hellenistic thinkers, and Neo-Platonists. 1 Credit

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