

# Department of Philosophy

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## Mission Statement

The Department of Philosophy (<https://www.apu.edu/theology/philosophy/>) equips and mentors students to become intellectual leaders in important debates about compelling philosophical issues that shape contemporary culture.

## Education Goals

Our degree programs aim to achieve this mission by developing a community of scholars who are:

**Intellectually Skilled:** Excellent in critical reading, analytic reasoning, and persuasive argumentative writing.

**Historically Informed:** Cognizant of the classical philosophical theories and principles that have shaped contemporary debates about God, human nature, and the Good Life.

**Pragmatically Oriented:** Able to use this combination of intellectual skills and theoretical knowledge to influence contemporary cultural practices concerning religion, science, ethics, civil service, public policy, and the arts.

## Distinctive Features

These education goals embody four characteristics of APU's Wesleyan Christian heritage:

**Classical Christian Orientation:** We draw upon the greatest aspects of the classical Christian philosophical traditions—Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant.

**Sanctity of Mind:** We believe that all people are called to love God with their minds by cultivating intellectual virtues so they can better understand God, human nature, and all of God's Creation.

**Sanctity of Heart:** We believe that all people are called to love God with their hearts by cultivating moral virtues so they can be better lovers of God and of their neighbors and better stewards of God's Creation.

**Community-Oriented Service:** We believe that all people are called to manifest their love of God and neighbor by putting these intellectual and moral virtues into practice, serving their ecclesial and civil communities.

## Career Opportunities

By achieving these distinctive education goals, students set themselves up for success in graduate studies and/or careers in philosophy, theology, health care ethics, law, civil service, public policy, education, or ministry.

## Extracurricular Activities

The Department of Philosophy offers a number of excellent extracurricular activities that complement its core curriculum. These activities provide students with opportunities not simply to *learn about* but to *begin participating in* important debates about compelling issues that shape contemporary culture.

## Philosophy Club

The Philosophy Club meets every other week to discuss compelling philosophical issues in a diverse, friendly, and accessible environment. For more information about the club, contact the department.

## Sophia Forum

Made possible by the generosity of an anonymous donor, the Sophia Forum promotes Christian philosophy at APU with an annual two-day series of lectures and small-group discussions led by a renowned Christian philosopher.

Past Sophia Forums have featured speakers from Oxford, Yale, Notre Dame, Saint Louis University, Fordham, and the University of Oklahoma.

## Ethics Bowl

Sponsored by the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, the Ethics Bowl is a series of regional and national debates focusing on cases "covering a wide range of disciplines, including but not limited to, business, engineering, journalism, law, medicine, and social work." The purpose of the debates is to challenge students to "demonstrate their ability to (1) understand the facts of the case, (2) articulate the ethical principles involved in the case, (3) present an effective argument on how the case should be resolved, and (4) respond effectively to challenges put forth by the opposing team as well as the panel of expert judges."

APU began participating in the Ethics Bowl in 2010 and has been quite successful, consistently performing well at the California regional competition and, more recently, at the national competition.

## Academic Conferences

The Department of Philosophy draws groups of scholars to campus for academic conferences at which they present their latest research on developments within their fields of expertise.

Past conferences hosted by the department include The Society of Christian Philosophers Pacific Regional Conference and the C.S. Lewis Conference.

## Colloquia

The department also invites individual philosophers to campus to lecture and to meet with students to discuss contemporary research in the field.

## Programs

### Major

Philosophy (BA) (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-theology/religion-philosophy/philosophy/philosophy-ba/>)

### Minors

Philosophy (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-theology/religion-philosophy/philosophy/philosophy-minor/>)

Philosophical Apologetics (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-theology/religion-philosophy/philosophy/philosophical-apologetics-minor/>)

Practical and Professional Ethics (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-theology/religion-philosophy/philosophy/practical-and-professional-ethics-minor/>)

## Certificate

Certificate of Distinction in Philosophy (<http://catalog.apu.edu/academics/school-theology/religion-philosophy/philosophy/certificate-distinction-philosophy/>)

## Courses

### PHIL 100, Introduction to Philosophy, 3 Units

This course helps students understand the world better by studying significant interpretations of self, the world, and God-the major concerns of philosophy that have been offered by thinkers past and present. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Philosophy.*

### PHIL 100H, Introduction to Philosophy - Honors, 3 Units

This course helps students understand the world better by studying significant interpretations of self, the world, and God that have been offered by thinkers, past and present - the major concerns of philosophy. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Philosophy.*

**Prerequisite:** To enroll in the course, must be a student admitted to the Honors Program and be considered a member in "active" status.

### PHIL 210, Introduction to Critical Thinking, 3 Units

Students study principles of deductive and non-deductive logic. Principles are used to evaluate arguments in a variety of contexts, including the popular media and the professional practices of philosophy, theology, science or law. Students are also expected to assess and improve the logical rigor and clarity of their own reasoning.

### PHIL 252, Classical Chinese Ethics, 3 Units

This course provides an introduction to (1) key texts written by a variety of classical Chinese philosophers-e.g., Konzi (Confucius), Mozi, Mengzi (Mencius), Laozi (Lao Tzu), Zhuangzi, and Xunxi-and (2) to their fundamental ethical teachings-e.g., the nature of the dao, the nature of being human, the role of ritual in the moral life, whether virtue requires partiality to one's family and one's culture, and so forth. More importantly, it teaches students to analyze, to evaluate, and to apply the insights of these texts and teachings to their own lives. Through academic study and thoughtful cultural engagement, it offers a life-enriching, cross-cultural encounter with the classical systems of Chinese ethics that shaped eastern Asian cultures and continue to influence eastern Asian immigrant communities around the world. NOTE: This is a lower-division companion course to PHIL 452. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Intercultural Competence.*

### PHIL 301, Practical Ethics, 3 Units

In this course, students both (1) learn the fundamental theories and principles that influence contemporary ethical discourse, and (2) develop the ability to apply these theories and principles to contemporary moral problems. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Civic Knowledge and Engagement.*

## **PHIL 303, Reasons for Faith: Exploring the Rationality of the Existence of God and Christianity, 3 Units**

This course equips students to understand and communicate the rich intellectual foundations of a Judeo-Christian worldview. First, students learn various approaches to apologetics, the strengths and weaknesses of those approaches, and a survey of the epistemology of religious belief more broadly. Second, they apply these apologetic approaches with an aim to showcase the rich intellectual foundation for (a) the existence of a perfect Being and (b) the revelation of God through Christ. Third, students study common atheological arguments, ranging from the problem of evil to the problem of hell. Through the course, students learn how to (i) package ideas in clear, organized form, (ii) effectively relate their ideas to their audience, and (iii) think critically and analytically about big, enduring questions relevant to all human beings.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224 or PHIL 305

## **PHIL 305, Critical Thinking and Civil Discourse, 3 Units**

This course prepares students for effective civic engagement, politically and professionally, teaching them how to apply essential principles of critical thinking in a way that fosters intellectual virtues. These skills and virtues are applied in a variety of contexts including public policy, popular media, and professional practices such as philosophy, theology, science, business, and law. Consequently, the course helps prepare students to successfully complete graduate school placement exams (e.g., GRE, LSAT, MCAT, GMAT). PHIL 100 is not required as a prerequisite, but is strongly encouraged.

*Meets the General Education Requirement: Civic Knowledge and Engagement.*

## **PHIL 310, Formal Logic, 3 Units**

This course defines logic as the skill of assessing arguments. The course assists students to recognize arguments in both academic and nonacademic forms, increasing confidence in their ability to form a structure of techniques and values to be used as a basis for critiquing others' arguments and creating their own.

## **PHIL 315, History of Ancient Philosophy, 3 Units**

Students explore the development of philosophy from its early beginnings in Greece to the early thought of Augustine. Special attention is given to the Socratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian contributions to the field.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

## **PHIL 316, Medieval Philosophy, 3 Units**

This course helps students understand the importance of the medieval era and its contributions to the historical development of philosophy. Thinkers considered in this class include the late Augustine, Averroes, Avicenna, Maimonides, Anselm, Bonaventure, Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Ockham. Topics considered include the relationship of theology to philosophy, the divine attributes, ontology, and ethics.

## **PHIL 320, History of Early Modern Philosophy, 3 Units**

This course covers the development of philosophy from the Renaissance through the 18th century.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

## **PHIL 325, History of 19th and 20th Century Philosophy, 3 Units**

This course offers a study of the significant philosophical movements and figures from late modernity to the turn of the 21st century.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

## **PHIL 330, Ethics, 3 Units**

The basic principles of ethical conduct are examined as applied to personal and social problems. The chief theories of the "good life" are investigated, with special attention given to the principles underlying a consistent ethical outlook on life.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

## **PHIL 340, Writing 3: Concepts of Human Nature, 3 Units**

This course explores the significant questions concerning human nature. Special emphasis is placed on philosophical, theological, psychological, and sociological theories of the uniqueness of human activity. Extended attention and instruction will be given to various genres of philosophical writing.

*Meets the General Education Requirement: Writing 3: Writing in the Disciplines.*

**Prerequisite:** Writing 2; PHIL 100 or HUM 224

## **PHIL 360, Social and Political Debates, 3 Units**

The aim of this course is to prepare students to use ethical principles to argue for justice in the formation of public policies. With this end in mind, students both (1) examine the fundamental principles of social and political philosophy and (2) deliberate about how to employ these principles in contemporary social and political debates. Finally, they put their deliberations into practice by competing in the California Regional Ethics Bowl

## **PHIL 362, Business, Virtue, and the Good Life, 3 Units**

This course provides students with a moral framework for being wise and just business professionals. Students begin by learning the most prominent ethical theories and principles. They then develop the ability to analyze, to evaluate, and to apply these theories and principles in a way that helps them to lead good and virtuous lives—lives that properly balance often competing moral obligations to one's business associates, to one's fellow citizens, and to one's friends and family members.

**Prerequisite:** Recommended: PHIL 301 or PHIL 330

### **PHIL 364, Bioethics, 3 Units**

In this course, students both (1) learn the most prominent theories and principles used in contemporary bioethics, and (2) develop the ability to analyze, to evaluate, and to apply these theories and principles in the context of contemporary medical practice.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224; Recommended: PHIL 300 or PHIL 330

### **PHIL 366, Environmental Ethics, 3 Units**

In this course, students will investigate, craft a proposal for, and practice living according to an environmental philosophy as a way of life based on a virtue approach. Additionally, students will research the arguments for and against various environmentally ethical dilemmas in the modern world, aiming to analyze and respond to these arguments and drawing reasonable and actionable conclusions.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224; Recommended: PHIL 300 or PHIL 330

### **PHIL 410, Philosophy of Religion, 3 Units**

Religious experience is studied from the standpoint of philosophy. An examination is made of the contributions of philosophy to religion and religion to philosophy.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

### **PHIL 415, Philosophical Theology, 3 Units**

The purpose of this course is to analyze rational arguments concerning the divine nature. In it, students apply the laws of logic and principles of sound reasoning to empirical evidence (including claims about the direct experience of God) and introspective intuition concerning the concept of God, enabling us to understand the logical limits of that concept.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

### **PHIL 430, Philosophy of Science, 3 Units**

The course explores the nature of scientific method and knowledge and the character of scientific explanations. Ways in which ethics and religion interrelate with the sciences are also covered.

**Prerequisite:** One Lab Science and PHIL 100

### **PHIL 440, Epistemology, 3 Units**

This course exposes advancing philosophy students to the major problems in the theory of knowledge. While some historical background is covered, the principle focus is on the contours of the contemporary debates about such issues as skepticism, epistemic justification, foundationalism, coherentism, internalism, and externalism. Some application is made specifically to the epistemology of religious belief.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

### **PHIL 445, Metaphysics, 3 Units**

This course is an introduction to metaphysics that gives the student a broad perspective into contemporary issues of interest concerning what exists and its nature. This involves classroom discussion of readings from the introductory text and primary source material.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

### **PHIL 450, Special Topics in Ethics, 3 Units**

In this course, students utilize their foundational knowledge of ethical theories and principles to analyze contemporary debates concerning recent work in meta-ethics, normative ethics, moral epistemology, or moral psychology.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 and PHIL 330 or instructor consent

### **PHIL 451, Race, Sex and Science, 3 Units**

This course examines concepts of race and sex in relation to the history of modern western science. Students analyze readings in feminist philosophy, critical race theory and postcolonial studies, which argue that the sciences often presume and perpetuate Eurocentric, androcentric bias. Through this analysis, students cultivate the virtues of epistemic justice and intellectual humility required for intercultural competence and a Christlike character.

*Meets the General Education Requirement: Intercultural Competence.*

**Prerequisite:** 3xx PHIL or 3xx BIOL course or instructor consent

### **PHIL 452, Classical Chinese Ethics, 3 Units**

This course provides an introduction both (1) to key texts written by a variety of classical Chinese philosophers - e.g., Konzi (Confucius), Mozi, Mengzi (Mencius), Laozi (Lao Tzu), Zhuangzi, and Xunzi - and (2) to their fundamental ethical teachings - e.g., the nature of the dao, the nature of being human, the role of ritual in the moral life, whether virtue requires partiality to one's family and one's culture, and so forth. More importantly, it teaches students to analyze, to evaluate, and to apply the insights of these texts and teachings to their own lives. Through both academic study and thoughtful cultural engagement, it offers a life-enriching, cross-cultural encounter with the classical systems of Chinese ethics that shaped eastern Asian cultures and continue to influence eastern Asian immigrant communities around the world. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Intercultural Competence.*

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 301 or PHIL 330

### **PHIL 495, Seminar in Philosophy, 3 Units**

Students are assisted in relating philosophical insights to current moral, political, religious, and social issues. Each seminar offers an area of emphasis for study, such as values or the future. It may be taken more than once as topics change.

**Prerequisite:** PHIL 100 or HUM 224

## PHIL 496, Senior Seminar, 3 Units

In this course, students apply their knowledge of the Bible, Christian tradition, and philosophy to contemporary social challenges that confront a Christian worldview. They use this knowledge to analyze, evaluate, and respond to such challenges wisely and insightfully. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Integrative and Applied Learning.*

**Prerequisite:** Senior standing, completion of the majority of the units required for Biblical, Theological and Philosophical Formation, and Writing 3.

## PHIL 496H, Senior Seminar - Honors, 3 Units

## PHIL 497, Readings, 1-4 Units

This is a program of study concentrating on assigned readings, discussions, and writing arranged between and designed by a student of upper-division standing and a full-time professor. May be repeated for credit. An independent study fee is assessed for each enrollment in this class.

## PHIL 497H, Readings - Honors, 1-4 Units

This is a program of study concentrating on assigned readings, discussions, and writing arranged between, and designed by, a student of upper-division standing and a full-time professor. May be repeated for credit. An independent study fee is assessed for each enrollment in this class.

**Prerequisite:** To enroll in the course, must be a student admitted to the Honors Program and be considered a member in "active" status.

## PHIL 498, Directed Research, 1-4 Units

This course provides instruction in research design and technique, and gives students experience in the research process. The 1-unit expectation encompasses no less than 30 hours of work with accompanying reading, log, writing, and seminar presentation within the department or in a university research symposium. No more than 1 unit may be used to fulfill preparatory readings requirement. An independent study fee is assessed for each enrollment in this class.

**Prerequisite:** Junior or Senior Standing

## PRPH 100, Introduction to Philosophy, 3 Units

This course helps students understand the world better by studying significant interpretations of self, the world, and God- the major concerns of philosophy that have been offered by thinkers, past and present. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Philosophy.*

## WRIT 201, Writing 2: Philosophy of Math, Logic, and Language, 3 Units

Why is mathematics so effective in describing the physical universe? What happens when ordinary reasoning and languages are translated into more abstract mathematical and logical symbolism? Is anything lost in translation? This course introduces students to these and other questions on the nature of mathematics, logic, and language. Students evaluate the arguments, writing styles, rhetorical strategies, and types of evidence employed by the mathematicians, scientists, and philosophers addressing these questions. By critically thinking about formal logical and mathematical discourse, students become better writers in and about that discourse. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Writing 2: Genre, Evidence, and Persuasion.*

**Prerequisite:** GE 100, HON 101, or C- or better in WRIT 110; PHIL 310 or MATH 280 or instructor's consent.

## WRIT 202, Writing 2: Philosophical Writing in C. S. Lewis, 3 Units

C. S. Lewis was one of the most influential public Christian intellectuals of the 20th century. One of the reasons for this is that he wrote clearly and persuasively about the perennial questions of philosophy but for the common person. In this course, we will study and practice the art of writing well on philosophical matters for a broad audience. Students will critically assess the writing styles, questions, and arguments of philosophical writing for a general audience and will contrast what it takes to do such writing well with related forms of writing such as philosophical writing for a specialist audience and philosophical writing in fictional form. We will do so by analyzing, emulating, and critiquing the work of C. S. Lewis from the standpoint of philosophy. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Writing 2: Genre, Evidence, and Persuasion.*

**Prerequisite:** GE 100, HON 101 or C- or Better in WRIT 110

## Faculty

### Chair

David Woodruff (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/dwoodruff/>), PhD

### Professors

Rico Vitz (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/rvitz/>), PhD

Steven Wilkens (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/swilkens/>), PhD

David Williams (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/dcwilliams/>), PhD

David Woodruff (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/dwoodruff/>), PhD

### Associate Professor

Joshua Rasmussen (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/jrasmussen/>), PhD

## **Adjunct Faculty**

Fidel Arneccillo (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/farneccillo/>), PhD

Benjamin Easton (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/beaston/>), MA

Kirsten Gerdes (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/kgerdes/>), MA

Mihretu Guta (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/mguta/>), PhD

George Haraksin (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/gharaksin/>), MA

Benedict Nwachukwu-Udaku (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/budaku/>), PhD

Stephen Parise (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/sparise/>), PhD

Erik Sorem (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/esorem/>), PhD

## **Professor Emeritus**

John Culp (<http://www.apu.edu/faculty/jculp/>), PhD