

Fall 2010 Philosophy Department Offerings

Course Offered	Professor	Description
Intro Philosophy (190.001) MWF 1	Loht	An introduction to reading, writing, and thinking about philosophy. The western tradition of philosophical thought will define the subject matter of the course. Emphasis will be placed on the cultivation of a philosophical attitude and the development of the art of conceptual analysis and synthesis. Not open to seniors.
Intro Philosophy (190.002) MWF 2	Loht	An introduction to reading, writing, and thinking about philosophy. The western tradition of philosophical thought will define the subject matter of the course. Emphasis will be placed on the cultivation of a philosophical attitude and the development of the art of conceptual analysis and synthesis. Not open to seniors.
Intro to Ethics (195.001) MWF 11	Jolley	A study of the principal ethical traditions of Western culture and their application to contemporary moral issues and social problems. Not open to seniors.
Intro to Ethics (195.002) MWF 12	Jolley	A study of the principal ethical traditions of Western culture and their application to contemporary moral issues and social problems. Not open to seniors.
Political Philosophy (230.001) TR 1:40	Loht	<i>Prerequisite: FYS 101</i> This course will provide an introductory examination of fundamental political issues such as the meaning and requirements of justice and the legitimate source of political authority. The course may be taught with an historical emphasis, by looking at prominent political philosophers, or with an emphasis on key topics in political philosophy
Junior Seminar (301.001) TR 10:50	Thomas	<i>1 credit-hour. Prerequisite: one course in philosophy, Junior status, declared major in philosophy</i> This course is a workshop in philosophical skill development, including, but not limited to: essay writing, thesis and argument development, critical thinking, and presentation. Students will work together, with faculty, and with seniors from the Senior Seminar (see PHI 401) to complete at least one advanced philosophical project by the end of the semester. Junior seminar also will involve attending talks by guest lecturers and/or attending off-campus philosophy-related events.
Ancient Greek Philosophy (311.001) MWF 12	Thomas	<i>Prerequisite: one course in philosophy.</i> A survey of ancient Greek philosophy, including the pre-Socratics, Plato, and Aristotle.
Scholastic & Humanistic (313.001) W 4:30-7:30	Rosental	<i>Prerequisite: PHI 311.</i> This course meets once a week and will be seminar format, meaning student-led presentations of the material. The material will survey of late Medieval philosophy, which will include Islamic, Jewish, and Christian philosophers (e.g., Averroes, Maimonides, Aquinas, Ockham), and the rise of humanism, possibly including new approaches to ethics and politics (Machiavelli, Montaigne) and new approaches to nature (Bacon, Galileo, Bruno).

Notice: all Junior and Senior philosophy majors *must* take either PHI 301: Junior Seminar or PHI 401: Senior Seminar this fall. It is not offered in the spring semester.

Course Offered	Professor	Descriptions
Existentialism & Phenomenology (325.001) MWF 1	Thomas	<i>Prerequisite: One course in philosophy</i> A study of the major themes of existentialism and phenomenology with some attention to their historical roots in the nineteenth century. Readings to include: Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, and Camus.
Science & Religion & Humanism (390.001) TR 3:05	Rosental	<i>Prerequisite: Philosophy Major/Minor, or PHI 290: Science vs. Religion vs. Humanism, or by permission of instructor</i> There's been a long-standing and rather entrenched tension between three important platforms of contemporary culture: science, (secular) humanism, and religion. The tension is mutual in all directions, forming a sort of "tension triangle": science vs. humanities, science vs. religion, religion vs. secular humanism. Last fall students explored these tensions in PHI 290: Science vs. Religion vs. Humanism. This course follows up on this subject, examining possible resolutions to the tensions between science, religion and humanism. The solutions we will look at will be those from contemporary academic and popular writers, but also historical solutions and solutions proposed by students. Our goal is to make significant progress in resolving these tensions, doing advanced work in these areas. The course is open to any student who has taken the Science vs. Religion vs. Humanism course last year, to philosophy majors or minors, or those with some other significant background with these tensions (by permission of instructor).
Senior Seminar (401.001) TR 10:50	Thomas	<i>2 credit-hours. Prerequisite: PHI 3XX, Senior status, declared major in philosophy</i> This course is a workshop in philosophical skill development, including, but not limited to: essay writing, thesis and argument development, critical thinking, and presentation. Students will work together, with faculty, and with juniors from the Junior Seminar (see PHI 301) to complete and present their comprehensive exam in philosophy. Senior seminar also will involve attending talks by guest lecturers and/or attending off-campus philosophy-related events.

The philosophy faculty:

<p>Dr. Shawn Loht Dr. Shawn Loht received the Ph.D. in philosophy in 2009. A native of Pennsylvania, he completed his undergraduate studies at St. John's College in Annapolis and did his graduate work at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. In addition to teaching at Catholic University he has taught philosophy at Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Loht's research and teaching interests include ancient Greek philosophy, German philosophy, ethics, political philosophy, and phenomenology. He comes from an interdisciplinary, "great books" background, so he also has interests in subjects including literature, mathematics, and science. Some other subjects he studies in his free time and hopes to continue to explore while at Mercer University include the philosophy of film and the intersection of philosophy and community.</p>	<p>Dr. Charlie Thomas Professor Charlie Thomas received her BA in Philosophy from Mercer University in 1989 and her PhD in Philosophy from Emory University in 1996. Her research interests include Ancient Political Philosophy, Philosophy and Literature, and Philosophy and Art. Lately, she's been thinking a lot about Homer, Xenophon, Medieval Cathedrals, and Flannery O'Connor. One of her favorite things to do is run a Philosophy and Art Study Abroad program in the summer that rotates between Athens, Greece, Florence, Italy, and Paris, France. She is married to Eddie Thomas, who practices Accounting with the firm of Butler, Williams, and Wyche. They have two kids (Francis 16 and Isaiah 7), two dogs, a cat, and an old house about a block from campus.</p>
<p>Dr. Creighton Rosental Dr. Rosental originally studied contemporary analytic philosophy of mind, science and language at the University of Massachusetts Amherst but was drawn to histories of epistemology and logic. His dissertation on Thomas Aquinas was on faith and reason, and he continues to do research in late Medieval, Renaissance and Early Modern philosophy, particularly epistemology and philosophy of science. He is also interested in topical issues of contemporary philosophy, particularly philosophy of mind, religion, science, and art.</p>	<p>Dr. Marc Jolley Marc Jolley (PhD 1993) is a senior lecturer at Mercer. He has taught in higher education since 1986. At Mercer, he has taught Old Testament, New Testament, FYS 101 and 102, and, now, Ethics. His grown-up job is being the director of Mercer University Press, where he has worked since 1995. He is married and has two sons. His interests include reading, walking, art, music, literature, and film. His favorite authors are Thoreau and Kierkegaard.</p>