

## CLA General Education Requirements, 2010-11

### 5. Philosophy

PHI 180, 185, 190, 195, 220, 230, 240,  
250, 260, 290  
GBK 202

One course required. One additional course may be taken from this group. See note by Group 7.

### 7. Miscellaneous

CHR 210, 335, 353, 356, 357  
ENG 237  
FRE, GER, or SPN 251, 252  
GBK 101  
GRK 251  
HIS 165  
LAT 251

One course, or an additional course from Groups 2-6, or 3 hours of credit for introductory United States History by transfer or AP exam.

## **PHILOSOPHY (PHI)**

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Philosophy at Mercer is dedicated to the Socratic motto that "the unexamined life is not worth living." Philosophy's ultimate purpose is disciplined reflection on life's "big" questions, universal questions about the meaning of Being that have occupied human beings since the

dawn of history. These questions, simply put, are "What are we?" and "Why are we?" That is, what is the ultimate nature of the universe we live in and what does it mean to be human in it? These animating questions immediately generate more detailed questions in metaphysics (what is ultimately real? Why should there be anything at all?), philosophy of religion (is there a mind at the foundation of things and is it accessible to us?), ethics (what belongs to living a good life and what values are worthy of our allegiance?) and aesthetics (what is the nature of beauty and the basis of artistic discrimination?). Answers to these questions are interconnected, and many answers are possible. And different answers have different implications for moral philosophy (how should we conduct ourselves in relation to other persons?) and social and political philosophy (how should we organize our lives together?). Moreover, the persistent pursuit of these questions reveals a constellation of other questions. For example, how are answers to such questions justified? This, in turn, leads to reflection on the scope, methods, and limits of human knowledge (what, if anything, can we know, and how can we know it?), which form the subject-matter of epistemology and philosophy of science, and also raises questions about the nature of thought and language that make up the disciplines of logic, semantics, and linguistic analysis. Philosophy, accordingly, may be thought of as the exploration of this web of questions.

A major may be earned by taking 30 semester hours in philosophy, and must include 301, 311, 314, 355, and 401; one course selected from 312, 313, 315, 316; and one course selected from 360, 361, 390.

Philosophy majors must complete and pass a comprehensive examination on broad philosophical topics. These questions will require significant reference to philosophers and philosophical positions central to the western philosophical tradition. The philosophy comprehensive examination will be administered once each semester. Students will be eligible to take this examination after completing 75 hours of course credit and at least two History of Philosophy courses (311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316). Students must complete the exam prior to the beginning of their last semester in residence or graduation.

A minor may be earned by taking 15 semester hours in Philosophy, including two courses selected from 311, 312, 313, 314, 315 and 316.

Majors may attain Departmental Honors in philosophy by meeting the following requirements: (1) maintain an overall 3.5 grade point average in philosophy; (2) complete satisfactorily one of the following courses: 360, 361, or 390; (3) present an honors thesis based on a closely supervised research project to be approved by all members of the Department.

No 100-level courses have prerequisites. All 200-level courses have the following prerequisite: FYS 101. Prerequisites for all other courses are as listed.

### **PHI 180. Logic and Language (3 hours)**

A study of the principles of logic used in distinguishing correct from incorrect reasoning. Special emphasis will be placed upon the application of these principles to everyday language and reasoning. Topics to be studied include: informal fallacies, definitions, categorical propositions and syllogisms, elementary truth functional logic, truth and validity, and induction. (Occasional)

### **PHI 185. The Quest For Meaning (3 hours)**

Questions of the meaning and purpose of human life are a dominant theme in our reflections on ourselves and our world. What are the sources of meaning in human life? What ideals and possibilities for human life have people in the past envisioned? How does the present age shape or meet our needs for meaning and purpose? The course is designed to explore these questions through readings in philosophy, theology, literature, and the social sciences. (Occasional)

### **PHI 190. Introduction to Philosophy (3 hours)**

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. (Every semester)

**PHI 195. Introduction to Ethics (3 hours)**

A study of the principal ethical traditions of Western culture and their application to contemporary moral issues and social problems. Not open to seniors. (Every year)

**PHI 220. Philosophy of Science (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: FYS 101.

A study of the nature and logic of the sciences and an analysis of the relation of science to other human concerns: emphasis will be placed on the nature of scientific evidence, explanation, and theory, the nature and history of scientific discovery; the place of science in understanding humans, values, and society. Recommended for junior and senior science majors. (Every three years)

**PHI 230. Political Philosophy (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: FYS 101.

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. (Every three years)

**PHI 240. Philosophy of Religion (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: FYS 101.

A study of some of the major problems that arise in the encounter between philosophy and religious belief. (Every three years)

**PHI 250. Philosophy of Mind (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: FYS 101.

This course is an introductory survey in topics in the philosophy of mind. Topics that will be covered in the course include theories of the nature of mind (dualism, behaviorism, functionalism, etc.), theories of personal identity, and puzzles and problems relating to role and nature of consciousness. Other topics may include philosophical treatments of: mental causation, perception, mental content and/or artificial or non-human intelligence. (Every three years)

**PHI 260. Philosophy of Art (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: FYS 101

This course is a survey of the philosophy of art. Subjects may include, but are not limited to the nature of beauty, art as representation, aesthetics and the aesthetic experience, art and ethics, art as evoking or expressing emotions, the formal qualities of art, the relation between form and content, the intention of the artist, the art world, art in context, and the nature of the art object. (Every three years)

**PHI 290. Special Topics in Philosophy (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: FYS 101.

A study of some significant topic in philosophy. Suitable for students with no background in philosophy. May be repeated with a different topic. (Occasional)

**PHI 301. Junior Seminar (1 hour)**

Prerequisite: one course in philosophy, Junior status, declared major in philosophy

This course is a workshop in philosophical skill development, including essay writing, thesis and argumentation 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 preparing for and attending talks by guest lecturers and/or attending off-campus philosophy-related events.

**PHI 311. History of Philosophy I:  
Ancient Greek Philosophy (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: one course in philosophy.

A survey of ancient Greek philosophy, including the pre-Socratics, Plato, and Aristotle. (Every fall semester)

**PHI 312. History of Philosophy II: Hellenistic and  
Early Medieval Philosophy (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: PHI 311.

A survey of Hellenistic and early Medieval philosophy, which can include the Epicurean, Stoic, Skeptical, and Neo-Platonist schools of the Hellenistic world, as well as early Christian thinkers such as Augustine, Boethius, and Anselm. (Every three years)

**PHI 313. History of Philosophy III: Scholastic and  
Humanistic Philosophy (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: PHI 311.

A survey of late Medieval philosophy, which can include Islamic, Jewish, and Christian philosophers (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). (Every three years)

**PHI 314. History of Philosophy IV:  
Early Modern Philosophy (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy.

A survey of early modern philosophy, including figures such as Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume, and Rousseau. (Every spring semester)

**PHI 315. History of Philosophy V: Kant and  
the Nineteenth Century (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: PHI 314

A survey of Kant and nineteenth century philosophy, including figures such as Hegel, Schopenhauer, Marx, Mill, and Nietzsche. (Every three years)

**PHI 316. History of Philosophy VI: Late Nineteenth and  
Early Twentieth Century (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: PHI 314

A survey of late nineteenth and early twentieth century philosophy, which can include the schools of existentialism, phenomenology, pragmatism, and analytic philosophy. Possible figures to be covered include Peirce, James, Husserl, Dewey, Russell, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and Sartre. (Every three years)

**PHI 325. Existentialism and Phenomenology (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy.

A study of the major themes of existentialism and phenomenology with some attention to their historical roots in the nineteenth century. (Every three years)

**PHI 337. Philosophy and Literature (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy.

An examination of the relationship between philosophy and literature, including reading classic and contemporary literary texts as philosophy, and reading representative philosophical texts as literature. Commonalities and distinctions between these two modes of dis-

course, as well as their historical influence on one another, will be considered. (Every three years)

**PHI 355. Formal Logic (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy or nine semester hours in mathematics or computer science.

This course is a formal study of inference. Subject matter may include the syllogism, modal logic, consequences, truth functions, and quantification theory. (Offered two years out of every three)

**PHI 360. A Great Ancient or Medieval Philosopher (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: PHI 311.

An intensive study of the works of an ancient or medieval philosopher of major importance in the Western tradition. The course is designed to acquaint the student with the principles of philosophical research, as well as to provide an extensive knowledge of the philosophy selected. Typical thinkers include but are not limited to: Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas. The philosopher selected will appear in the annual schedule of courses and be recorded on the student's transcript. The course may be taken twice with the consent of the instructor, for a maximum of 6 semester hours credit. (Every two years)

**PHI 361. A Great Modern Philosopher (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy.

An intensive study of the works of a modern philosopher of recognized stature. Typical thinkers include but are not limited to: Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, James, Dewey, Whitehead, Wittgenstein, Heidegger. The philosopher selected will appear in the annual schedule of courses and be recorded on the student's transcript. This course may be taken twice with the consent of the instructor, for a maximum of 6 semester hours credit. (Every two years)

**PHI 380. Human Nature and Art: (Location) (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy or permission of instructor.

This summer course is a study of the changing notions of the human condition in the western tradition as discerned in great works of visual art and architecture studied in situ. At least one week is spent on the Macon campus, orienting students to the aims and requirements of the course; at least two weeks of study abroad, examining appropriate art objects and artifacts, follow. May be repeated once for credit if offered in a different location. (Occasional)

**PHI 390. Special Topics in Philosophy (3 hours)**

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy, junior or senior status, and consent of the instructor.

An intensive study of some significant topic in philosophy, not otherwise covered in departmental course offerings. May be repeated once for credit. (By special arrangement)

**PHI 401. Senior Seminar (2 hours)**

Prerequisite: PHI 301, PHI 311, and two additional Philosophy courses, Senior status, declared major in philosophy

This course is a workshop in philosophical skill development, including essay writing, thesis and argumentation 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 and Honors Thesis (if applicable) in philosophy. Senior seminar also will involve preparing for and attending talks by guest lecturers and/or attending off-campus philosophy-related events.

**PHI 420. Directed Independent Research****(3 hours)**

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy, junior or senior status, and consent of the instructor.

This course is intended to provide the student with the opportunities to do guided reading in a field of interest. At least one substantial paper is required, and the student must have the project approved by the end of the third week of the semester. The course is available each semester. (By special arrangement)

**PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS**

The Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) concentration offers students an interdisciplinary approach to the study of topics, texts, and concerns that exist at the intersection of these three fields (e.g., theories of justice, rights, freedom, individual liberty, property, etc.) The program creates an intentional constellation of courses in these three disciplines that is designed to enrich the students' experience of each discipline and offer a breadth of study not available in any one disciplinary major.

Besides providing a framework within which students interested in these three disciplines can develop a sense of their interrelations, the program will facilitate the development of a better perspective of the boundaries and scope of these disciplinary approaches. For example, in economics coursework a student will learn the principles of markets and how they display the effects of various incentive structures. The same student, in her political science coursework may begin to understand the political context in which such markets operate. And, from philosophy, the PPE student would learn some of the long, rich tradition of theories that ground both political and economic approaches to understanding the human condition, as well as explore the ethical implications of political and economic action.

This 39 credit-hour concentration consists of a 9-course (27 credit-hour) PPE core, 3 elective courses (9-credit hours) to be taken in any one of the PPE disciplines (PHI, POL, or ECN), and a Senior Thesis (3 credit hours) on a topic approved by a committee of PPE faculty members. Students pursuing the PPE concentration must have at least 18 hours in one PPE discipline (including courses in the PPE core). Other courses relevant to PPE may be substituted for electives by approval of the student's PPE faculty committee.

Completion of the PPE concentration satisfies both the major and minor requirements for graduation in the College of Liberal Arts.

Students declaring a concentration in PPE must form a committee of three faculty members (one from each PPE discipline) to coordinate their curriculum. One of these faculty members will become the advisor to the student's senior thesis, and all three committee members will confer on all decisions relevant to that student's course of study (e.g. senior thesis topics, judgments regarding whether or not a particular course should be allowed to substitute for a PPE elective, etc.)

**PPE Core:** ECN 150, 151, 160, or 177  
ECN 477 (History of Economic Thought)  
ECN 437, 438, or 441  
PHI 190 or 195  
PHI 230  
PHI 311 or 314  
POL 101 or 253  
POL 200  
POL 373 or 378