

PHILOSOPHY

College of Arts and Letters

Program Description

The subject of philosophy encompasses such fundamental issues as the scope and limits of human knowledge, the ultimate constituents of reality, the sources of value and obligation, and the nature of logic and correct reasoning. Philosophy utilizes the findings of many other academic disciplines and, in its method, stresses clear, rigorous, impartial and systematic thought. The application of philosophical ideas to practical problems is central to the subject.

Sacramento State offers the Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in philosophy as well as a philosophy minor. Philosophy is an excellent vehicle for refining one's skills in critical reasoning and rational decision-making, making it a useful major for a wide variety of career goals. For instance, philosophy is good preparation for the study and practice of law. Philosophy majors who plan a career in teaching at the college or university level must commit themselves to a program of graduate study upon completion of the BA.

Degree Programs

BA in Philosophy (General Concentration) (<http://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/arts-letters/philosophy/ba-in-philosophy-general-concentration>)

BA in Philosophy (Ethics, Politics, and Law) (<http://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/arts-letters/philosophy/ba-in-philosophy-ethics-politics-and-law>)

BA in Philosophy (Logic and Philosophy of Science) (<http://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/arts-letters/philosophy/ba-in-philosophy-logic-and-philosophy-of-science>)

BA in Philosophy (Honors) (<http://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/arts-letters/philosophy/ba-in-philosophy-honors>)

Minor in Philosophy (<http://catalog.csus.edu/colleges/arts-letters/philosophy/minor-in-philosophy>)

Special Features

- The Philosophy Department professors are active scholars who have presented many written papers and lectures at professional conferences. They are also active in the community, giving public lectures both on and off campus. Many participate in our Future Philosophers program by giving presentations to local high schools.
- The Philosophy Department houses The Center for Practical and Professional Ethics, which is dedicated to fostering better public understanding of contemporary ethical issues from a philosophical perspective.
- Flexible major and minor requirements allow students to choose concentrations and a range of electives to fit their specific interests and career objectives. The minor is an excellent complement to a variety of majors. It is also possible to complete the minor in such a way that almost all classes satisfy GE requirements.
- Students are encouraged to take part in the Philosophy Club. Its regular meetings are designed to promote group discussions about topics of philosophical interest. Club speakers have included students, philosophy faculty, professors from other departments on campus, and professors from other universities.
- The Philosophy Department offers a Philosophy Major Honors Program for qualified students. This program provides motivated students with an opportunity to expand their philosophy education, develop their writing, pursue philosophical research, prepare for graduate studies or law school, or enhance their career preparations. Students interested in pursuing graduate study in Philosophy are especially encouraged to participate in this program.

Career Possibilities

Law · Medicine · Public Health · Government · Politics · Ministry · Publishing · Social Work · Education · Journalism · Business

Contact Information

Russell DiSilvestro, Department Chair
 Amy Trimmer, Administrative Support Coordinator
 Mendocino Hall 3000
 (916) 278-6424
 Department of Philosophy Website (<http://www.csus.edu/phil>)

Faculty

AYALA-LOPEZ, SARAY

BELLON, CHRISTINA M.

CHOE-SMITH, CHONG

CORNER, DAVID R.

DENMAN, DAVID

DISILVESTRO, RUSSELL

DOWDEN, BRADLEY

MAYES, G. RANDOLPH

MCCORMICK, MATTHEW S.

MERLINO, SCOTT A.

MERRIAM, GARRET

SWAN, KYLE S.

PHIL 2. Ethics. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Examination of the concepts of morality, obligation, human rights and the good life. Competing theories about the foundations of morality will be investigated.

PHIL 4. Critical Thinking. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Critical Thinking (A3)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Study of the basic skills of good reasoning needed for the intelligent and responsible conduct of life. Topics include: argument structure and identification, validity and strength of arguments, common fallacies of reasoning, use and abuse of language in reasoning, principles of fair play in argumentation.

PHIL 6. Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge, World and Self. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Representative selection of philosophical problems will be explored in areas such as knowledge, reality, religion, science, politics, art and morals.

PHIL 21. First Year Seminar: Becoming an Educated Person. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Understanding Personal Development (E)
Term Typically Offered: Fall only

Introduction to the nature and possible meanings of higher education, and the functions and resources of the University. Designed to help students develop and exercise fundamental academic success strategies and to improve their basic learning skills. Students have the opportunity to interact with fellow classmates and the seminar leader to build a community of academic support and personal support.

PHIL 26. History of Philosophy. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Introduction to the history of philosophy, emphasizing such themes as the foundations of knowledge, the nature of reality, the basis of a good life and a just society, the existence of God, and the nature of self, and tracing the development of these themes from antiquity to the modern period.

PHIL 27. History of Early Modern Philosophy. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Examines the major developments in Western philosophy after the Middle Ages, with emphasis on the period from Descartes to Kant. Attention will be paid to the general historical and cultural setting within which the philosophical theories developed.

PHIL 56. Research Integrity. 1 Unit
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Basic regulatory and ethical requirements for doing research. Topics covered include protection of human subjects, data management, authorship, peer review, mentoring, animal experimentation, conflict of interest, and collaborative research.
 Credit/No Credit

PHIL 60. Deductive Logic I. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Further Studies in Area B (B5)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Introduction to deductive logic. Topics include: basic concepts of deductive logic; techniques of formal proof in propositional and predicate logic.

PHIL 61. Inductive Logic. 3 Units
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Introduction to inductive logic and the problem of decision under uncertainty. Topics include: the nature of inductive rationality, philosophical theories of induction and probability, cognitive biases and common errors in inductive reasoning, and philosophical problems in defining risk, rational agency, and the expected value of an action.

PHIL 100. Ethics and Personal Values. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Understanding Personal Development (E)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

Moral concerns of everyday life stressing such features of moral character as right and wrong conduct, virtue and vice, the emotions, attitudes, and personal relationships. Emphasis is on analytical and critical discussion of philosophical theories and competing viewpoints.

PHIL 101. Ethics and Social Issues. 3 Units
Prerequisite(s): GEAR certification before Fall 09; or WPJ score of 80+; or 3-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W; or 4-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X; or WPJ score 70 or 71 and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X.
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement (WI), GE AREA D
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Moral controversies that divide society today, such as abortion, the death penalty, affirmative action, sexism, war and peace. Emphasis is on identifying the relevant values and moral principles underlying competing views and subjecting them to rational assessment.

PHIL 102. Professional and Public Service Ethics. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Prepares students planning careers in professional practice or public service to identify, understand, and resolve ethical problems. Includes examinations of (i) ethical theory, rights and duties, virtue ethics, utilitarian ethics, social contract theory, and role morality; (ii) the philosophical underpinnings of professional codes of conduct, regulations, and norms of professional and public service practices; (iii) moral reasoning and argumentation; (iv) the relation between ethical judgement and action; (v) the relation between professional practice, public service, and democratic principles.

PHIL 103. Business and Computer Ethics. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: GE AREA D
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Analytical treatment of controversial moral issues which emerge in the business world, e.g., affirmative action, corporate responsibility, the global economy, industry and environmental damage, social effects of advertising, the computer threat to personal privacy, ownership of computer programs. Discussion will focus on basic moral principles and concepts relevant to these issues.

PHIL 104. Bioethics. 3 Units
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: GE AREA D
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

Ethical dilemmas faced by professionals and patients in the field of medicine, e.g., patient self-determination and informed consent, discrimination in health care, euthanasia, abortion, surrogate motherhood, genetic modification, and rights to health care. Emphasis is on the well-reasoned application of general moral principles to practical medical decisions.

- PHIL 105. Science and Human Values.** ✍ **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): GWAR certification before Fall 09; or WPJ score of 80+; or 3-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W; or 4-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X; or WPJ score 70 or 71 and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X.
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement (WI), GE AREA D
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Examination of the values implicit in a scientific culture and the problems that arise as a commitment to the development of scientific knowledge and technology. These problems include: distinguishing good scientific practice from bad; the intrinsic value of scientific knowledge independent of its benefits in application; the proper and improper applications of scientific knowledge.
- PHIL 112. History Of Ethics.** ✍ **3 Units**
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2), Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement (WI)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Investigation of the main approaches to ethics in Western moral philosophy. Emphasis on Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Kant and Mill.
Prerequisite: GWAR certification before Fall 09; or WPJ score of 80+; or 3-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W; or 4-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X; or WPJ score 70 or 71 and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X.
- PHIL 115. Philosophy In Literature.** ✍ **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): GWAR certification before Fall 09; or WPJ score of 80+; or 3-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W; or 4-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X; or WPJ score 70 or 71 and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X.
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement (WI), Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Spring only – even years
- Study of selected works of fiction which focus on philosophically controversial questions, e.g., basic moral dilemmas, the meaning of life, alienation, nihilism, the existence of God.
- PHIL 117. Existentialism.** ✍ **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): GWAR certification before Fall 09; or WPJ score of 80+; or 3-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W; or 4-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X; or WPJ score 70 or 71 and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X.
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2), Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement (WI)
Term Typically Offered: Fall only
- Study of the problem of the existing individual, or inner self – most especially the problem of choice in the context of radical freedom and finitude. Particular attention will be paid to the philosophical writings of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre, through some major literary works of these figures and others (Camus, Dostoevsky) will also be considered.
- PHIL 122. Political Philosophy.** ✍ **3 Units**
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- A philosophical examination of the individual, the community, and rights; the conflict between individual rights and the common good; various conceptions of justice, equality, liberty and the public good; and the relationship of politics to ethics, economics, law; war and peace.
- PHIL 123. Philosophy and Feminism.** ✍ **3 Units**
Term Typically Offered: Spring only – even years
- Study of feminist perspectives on important philosophical questions. Examples of the questions treated are: mind-body dualism; reason and emotion; the fact/value distinction; the nature of the public and private realms; equal rights; and whether knowledge is intrinsically "gendered." Different feminist perspectives will be considered and compared with traditional approaches to these questions.
- PHIL 125. Philosophy Of Science.** ✍ **3 Units**
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Further Studies in Area B (B5)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring, Summer
- Study of the philosophical problems that arise in the sciences: the nature of scientific reasoning, the limits and styles of explanation, identifying pseudoscience, values in science, unity and diversity of the sciences, and science's impact on our world view.
- PHIL 126. The Meanings Of Evolution.** ✍ **3 Units**
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Study of the philosophical basis of the biological sciences: the power and limits of evolution as a scientific explanation; Darwinism, its refinements, alternatives and critics; the origin and nature of life; the scope of evolution as an explanation, including critical investigations of evolutionary psychology and sociobiology.
- PHIL 127. History of Ancient Philosophy.** ✍ **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): 3 units in Philosophy.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Examination of the origins of Western philosophy, with emphasis on the works of the Pre-Socratics, Plato, and Aristotle.
- PHIL 128. History of Modern Philosophy.** ✍ **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): 3 units in Philosophy.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Examination of the major developments in Western philosophy after the Middle Ages with emphasis on the period from Descartes to Kant.
- PHIL 131. Philosophy Of Religion.** ✍ **3 Units**
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Summer only
- Introduction to philosophical theology, the philosophical study of religious assertions, arguments, and beliefs: the existence and nature of God; the rationality of religious belief; the relation of faith to reason; the problem of evil; immortality and resurrection; the possibility of miracles; the meaning of religious language. Includes both traditional and contemporary approaches.
- PHIL 136. Philosophy Of Art.** ✍ **3 Units**
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Arts (Area C1)
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Inquiry into the nature of art, beauty and criticism, with critical consideration of representative theories.

- PHIL 145A. Chinese Philosophy.** ✍ **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): GWAR certification before Fall 09; or WPJ score of 80+; or 3-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W; or 4-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X; or WPJ score 70 or 71 and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X.
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement (WI), Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Spring only
- Survey of the major philosophical traditions of China and Japan, focusing on concepts of nature, man, society, freedom and knowledge. Special attention will be given to Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and recent philosophical movements. Taught alternate semesters with PHIL 145B.
- PHIL 145B. Philosophies Of India.** ✍ **3 Units**
General Education Area/Graduation Requirement: Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement (WI), Humanities (Area C2)
Term Typically Offered: Fall only
- Survey of the major schools of Indian philosophical development. The emphasis will be on the Hindu and Buddhist traditions, with consideration given to competing notions of the self, consciousness, the origin of human suffering, and the possibility of transcendence.
Note: Taught alternate semesters with PHIL 145A. GWAR certification before Fall 09; or WPJ score of 80+; or 3-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W; or 4-unit placement in ENGL 109M or ENGL 109W and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X; or WPJ score 70 or 71 and co-enrollment in ENGL 109X.
- PHIL 152. Recent Ethical Theory.** **3 Units**
Term Typically Offered: Spring only
- Major topics in ethical theory with attention to their contemporary formulation, including such topics as utilitarianism vs. rights-based theories and the dispute over the objectivity of ethics.
- PHIL 153. Philosophy Of Mind.** **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): 3 units in philosophy or instructor permission.
Term Typically Offered: Spring only
- Rival theories of the nature of the mind and mental activity, including dualism, materialism, functionalism. Difficulties in achieving a theoretical understanding of familiar psychological concepts such as belief, sensation, emotion, intention.
- PHIL 154. Philosophy Of Language.** **3 Units**
Term Typically Offered: Fall only
- Study of philosophical issues concerning language: theories of the nature of linguistic meaning, in particular those involving the concepts of sense, reference, truth conditions, intention, convention, speech act, and force. Topics include the relation between meaning and reference to objects, and between meaning and mental processes. Emphasis on contemporary views, including views on the promise of a theory of language to shed light on fundamental philosophical problems in metaphysics and the philosophy of mind.
- PHIL 155. Philosophy Of Law.** **3 Units**
Term Typically Offered: Spring only
- Theories of the nature of law, e.g., natural law, legal positivism, legal realism. Selected controversies in contemporary law will also be studied, such as the justification of punishment, the legislation of morality, judicial activism vs. judicial restraint.
- PHIL 160. Deductive Logic II.** **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): CSC 28 or PHIL 60 or instructor permission.
Term Typically Offered: Spring only
- Further study of deductive logic. Topics include: principles of inference for quantified predicate logic; connectives; quantifiers; relations; sets; modality; properties of formal logical systems, e.g. consistency and completeness; and interpretations of deductive systems in mathematics, science, and ordinary language.
- PHIL 176. Twentieth Century Anglo-American Philosophy.** **3 Units**
Term Typically Offered: Spring only
- Rise of the analytic tradition in contemporary Anglo-American philosophy represents a turn toward common sense, science, language, logic and rigor. Readings will cover the philosophical movements of common sense, logical atomism, logical positivism, ordinary language philosophy and more recent analytical philosophy.
- PHIL 180. Knowledge and Understanding.** **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): 6 units in philosophy or instructor permission.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Examines the concept of knowledge. Representative topics include: the role of sense perception and memory, the importance of certainty, the justification of belief, philosophical skepticism, the concept of truth and the nature of philosophical inquiry. Emphasis is on contemporary formulations.
- PHIL 181. Metaphysics.** **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): 6 units in philosophy or instructor permission.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Examines arguments concerning the nature of reality. Representative topics include: substance, space, time, God, free will, determinism, identity, universals. Emphasis is on contemporary formulations.
- PHIL 189. Senior Seminar in Philosophy.** **1 Unit**
Prerequisite(s): Philosophy majors (any concentration), 21 upper-division units in Philosophy, and graduating semester; or instructor permission.
Corequisite(s): Philosophy major (any concentration) and graduating semester; or instructor permission.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- A required capstone experience in the philosophy major. The course involves: completion of a senior essay under direction of a faculty member; preparation for knowledge and skills examination; submission of written critiques for three public events in philosophy; completion of departmental assessment questionnaire.
- PHIL 192B. Topics in Bioethics.** **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): 6 units of Philosophy or instructor permission
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Advanced in-depth study of an ethical dilemma faced by professionals and patients in the field of medicine, such as patient self-determination and informed consent, discrimination in health care, euthanasia, abortion, surrogate motherhood, genetic modification, or rights of health care.
- PHIL 192D. Space and Time.** **3 Units**
Prerequisite(s): 6 units in philosophy or instructor permission.
Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring
- Introduction to significant philosophical issues involving space and time. An investigation into the current state of these issues.
Note: No background or work in mathematics or physics is required.
 Cross-listed: HRS 205; only one may be counted for credit.

<p>PHIL 192E. Environmental Philosophy. 3 Units Prerequisite(s): 6 units in Philosophy or instructor permission. Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p>	<p>PHIL 195. Philosophy Internship. 1 - 3 Units Prerequisite(s): Instructor permission. Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p>
<p>Will address the following topics: Does the natural world (ecosystems, species, etc.) have only instrumental value for humans, or intrinsic value? How should natural resources be valued, by the market? Cost/benefit analysis? The "takings" issues: What in nature should be private, what public? Institutional problems: Can a sustainable society/planet also be just?</p>	<p>Supervised work experience in an approved office or organization where significant philosophical issues are raised. The student must write regular reports on these issues. Supervision is provided by the faculty instructor and a managing official in the work situation. Open to majors only. Credit/No Credit</p>
<p>PHIL 192L. Topics in Philosophy Language. 3 Units Prerequisite(s): 6 units in philosophy or instructor permission. Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p>	<p>PHIL 196. Experimental Offerings in Philosophy. 3 Units Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p>
<p>Advanced topics in the philosophy of language. Topics may include: sense and reference, meaning and force, intentions vs. conventions, conditions for sameness of sense, conditions for successful reference, propositional content, indexical and demonstrative reference, and the semantics of propositional attitude and perceptual reports, linguistic pragmatics.</p>	<p>Experimental offerings will be scheduled as needed. PHIL 197. Honors Thesis. 1 Unit Prerequisite(s): Admission into Philosophy Department Honors Concentration. Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p>
<p>PHIL 192M. Topics in Philosophy of Mind. 3 Units Prerequisite(s): 6 units in philosophy or instructor permission. Topics in Philosophy of Mind. Topics may include: Artificial Intelligence; Qualia; functionalism; philosophy of neuroscience; property dualism; eliminative materialism; or specific theories of consciousness. Emphasis is on contemporary formulations.</p>	<p>Capstone seminar for Honors Program students in Philosophy major. Student will propose, research, write, and present an honors thesis; student will also provide comments and criticism of other honors theses.</p>
<p>PHIL 192O. Topics in Contemporary Metaphysics. 3 Units Prerequisite(s): 6 units in Philosophy or instructor permission Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p>	<p>PHIL 199. Special Problems. 1 - 3 Units Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p> <p>Special projects calling for independent philosophical investigation under the supervision of an individual faculty member. Note: Requires prior approval of the faculty member under whom work is to be conducted.</p>
<p>Contemporary topics in metaphysics. Topics may include: Ontology; realism and anti-realism; universals; individuals; substance; identity through time and change; kinds and degrees of necessity; physicalism; moral realism; realism regarding social entities. Emphasis is on contemporary formulations.</p>	<p>Credit/No Credit PHIL 299. Special Problems. 1 - 3 Units Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p>
<p>PHIL 192R. Topics in Philosophy of Religion. 3 Units Prerequisite(s): 6 units of Philosophy or instructor permission Topics may include: The problem of evil, atheism, modal arguments for God's existence, design arguments for God's existence, reformed epistemology, recent work in natural theology, divine hiddenness, skeptical theism, or Molinism. Emphasis is on contemporary formulations.</p>	<p>Special projects calling for independent philosophical investigation under the supervision of an individual faculty member. Note: Requires graduate status and prior approval of the faculty member under whom work is to be conducted. Credit/No Credit</p>
<p>PHIL 192T. Seminar on the Theory of Action. 3 Units Prerequisite(s): Six units in Philosophy or instructor permission Term Typically Offered: Fall, Spring</p>	
<p>An examination of philosophical topics surrounding the concept of action, such as the nature of intention, casual accounts of agency and their rivals, the role of belief and desire in action, moral responsibility, weakness of the will, doxastic voluntarism, and the debate between freedom and determinism. Discussion of the possibility of divine agency may be included.</p>	