DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

John Sarnecki, Department Chair

Philosophy AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO
Philosophy at the University of Toledo is historically oriented, pluralistic department with an outstanding faculty and vibrant graduate program. Our undergraduate program exposes students from all majors to the richness of philosophical thought and the importance of critical thinking, and it gives its majors a deep and broad education in diverse philosophical traditions.

Religious Studies at the University of Toledo
The Religious Studies Program at the University of Toledo offers undergraduates the opportunity to explore religion—one of the most powerful forces shaping human civilizations and individuals. Religion wrestles with the deepest questions humans can ask, such as: What is ultimate reality? What is the meaning of life and of death? Why is there both good and evil? What is the destiny of humanity and the universe as a whole? The world’s religions offer different answers to these questions. Our program explores these answers and the robust traditions of religious practice, ethics, social institutions, sacred texts, rituals, and lived experiences that accompany them.

Our program offers both an undergraduate major and minor. Students can opt to focus their studies in the major in focal area such as Jewish and Christian Studies, Islamic Studies, or other areas they design in conjunction with a faculty advisor. We work hard to see that all our majors and minors have a course of study that reflects their career goals and interests so they can flourish professionally and personally.

Our majors are also invited to intern with local, national and/or international organizations as part of their curriculum and to be involved with outreach work done by the Department’s Center for Religious Understanding.

Degrees Offered


PHIL 1010 Introduction To Logic
[0-3 credit hours]
(not for major credit) An introduction to the symbolic analysis of argument components and structures. Topics include definition, syllogistic reasoning, semantics, sentential logic and probability.
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall
Core Arts & Humanities, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

PHIL 1020 Critical Thinking
[0-3 credit hours]
(not for major credit) A study of principles and patterns of good reasoning and writing, including the evaluation and construction of arguments and the identification and avoidance of fallacies.
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall
Core Arts & Humanities, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

PHIL 2200 Introduction To Philosophy
[3 credit hours]
An introduction to philosophical reflection on such issues as the existence of God, free will, knowledge and objectivity, social justice and moral responsibility. Humanities core course.
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall
Core Arts & Humanities, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

PHIL 2400 Contemporary Moral Problems
[3 credit hours]
A study of topics such as abortion, euthanasia, environmental responsibility, famine relief, affirmative action and sexuality. Attention is paid to moral argument and the bases of moral decisions.
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall
Core Arts & Humanities, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

PHIL 3000 Symbolic Logic
[3 credit hours]
A study of propositional and predicate logic, techniques used to evaluate deductive arguments. Topics may include computability, set theory, Bayesianism and other formal systems with philosophical and mathematical relevance.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

PHIL 3060 Philosophy Of Language
[3 credit hours]
A historical and critical examination of topics in the philosophy of language such as truth, reference, representation, metaphor and interpretation.
Term Offered: Fall

PHIL 3120 Business Ethics
[3 credit hours]
An examination of the ethical dimensions of the relationships between a business and employees, consumers, other businesses, society, government, the law and the environment.
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall

PHIL 3140 Computers And Culture
[3 credit hours]
A study of the philosophical issues computers raise which affect and reflect human values. Topics include censorship and privacy on the internet, virtual reality and the possibility of artificial intelligence.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall
PHIL 3160 Data Science Ethics  
[3 credit hours]  
A course which covers ethical and social implications of big data science and management. Topics include big data research ethics, privacy, identity, healthcare, and social justice.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall

PHIL 3180 Environmental Ethics  
[3 credit hours]  
An examination of our relation and responsibility to the natural environment. Topics include risk assessment, the value of non-human living things, resource use, economics, technology, environmental racism and ecology.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Summer, Fall

PHIL 3210 Ancient And Medieval Philosophy  
[3 credit hours]  
A study of ancient and medieval philosophy from the pre-Socratics to Aquinas.  
**Term Offered:** Fall

PHIL 3230 Modern Philosophy  
[3 credit hours]  
A study of early modern philosophy from Descartes to Kant. Writing intensive course.  
**Term Offered:** Spring

PHIL 3240 Existentialism  
[3 credit hours]  
An examination of existentialist philosophy from the 19th Century to the present as represented in the works of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Camus, Sartre, de Beauvoir, Fanon and others. Topics may include anxiety, meaning and meaningless, freedom, and community.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall

PHIL 3310 Science And Society  
[3 credit hours]  
A study of twentieth-century science and its relationships with government, industry, religion and medicine, including the emergence of Big Science and the future of science education and research.  
**Term Offered:** Spring

PHIL 3370 Medical Ethics  
[3 credit hours]  
The application of ethics to the practice of medical professionals. Topics include authority, paternalism, truth-telling, informed consent, health care reform, genetic manipulation, abortion, infanticide and euthanasia.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Summer, Fall

PHIL 3400 Ethical Theory  
[3 credit hours]  
A examination of the assumptions, methods and content of major theories of ethics, with an emphasis on the nature of the good, moral obligations, rights and duties. Questions to be examined include: What is the best life for a human being? What is the foundation of the distinction between right and wrong? What motives do I have for acting morally?  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall

PHIL 3500 Eastern Thought  
[3 credit hours]  
An examination of major philosophies of Asia and the Far East, their specific concerns and their relevance to contemporary problems.  
**Term Offered:** Spring

PHIL 3540 Feminism And Philosophy  
[3 credit hours]  
An examination of feminist perspectives in philosophy, exploring the relevance of gender to central questions in ethics, political theory and epistemology.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Summer

PHIL 3560 Aesthetics  
[3 credit hours]  
An analysis and evaluation of aesthetic topics such as the definition of art, truth in the arts, the role of representation, the nature of aesthetic value and the character of aesthetic experience.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall

PHIL 3570 Philosophy Of Religion  
[3 credit hours]  
A critical, philosophical exploration of questions about the nature of religion, including the existence and nature of God, the problem of evil, and the relation between faith and knowledge. Other topics may include the relation of religion to science and morality, as well as the role of religious experience and miracles in religious belief.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall

PHIL 3630 Philosophy Of Psychology  
[3 credit hours]  
A philosophical examination of problems concerning the nature of mind such as the relation between mind and body, consciousness, free will and personal identity.  
**Term Offered:** Spring

PHIL 3750 Social And Political Philosophy  
[3 credit hours]  
A study of classic and contemporary treatments of justice, authority, the relations between individual and community, the meaning of freedom and equality, power and violence, and race and gender.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall

PHIL 3760 Crime And Punishment  
[3 credit hours]  
A philosophical study of topics such as crime, responsibility, justice and punishment. Special attention is paid to current practices in the criminal justice system.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall

PHIL 3900 Seminar  
[3 credit hours]  
Topics vary.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall

PHIL 4210 Ancient Philosophy Seminar  
[3 credit hours]  
An intensive study of the texts and arguments of Presocratic philosophers, Plato, Aristotle, or Hellenistic philosophers. Course may be repeated as topics vary.  
**Term Offered:** Spring, Fall
PHIL 4230 Modern Philosophy Seminar
[3 credit hours]
An intensive study of one or more Continental or British philosophers from the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. Course may be repeated as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

PHIL 4240 19th Century European Philosophy
[3 credit hours]
An intensive study of European philosophy after Kant, including Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.
Term Offered: Fall

PHIL 4250 Phenomenology
[3 credit hours]
An intensive study of major works from phenomenological philosophers, such as Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, or Merleau-Ponty. Course may be repeated as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

PHIL 4260 Recent European Philosophy
[3 credit hours]
An examination of texts and problems in the Frankfurt school, post-structuralism, deconstruction and post-modernism, or of such thinkers as Habermas, Foucault, Derrida and Lyotard. Course may be repeated as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

PHIL 4270 American Philosophy
[3 credit hours]
A study of the development of American Philosophy, or one or more of Pierce, James, Dewey, or Mead. Course may be repeated as topics vary.
Term Offered: Fall

PHIL 4280 20th Century Analytic Philosophy
[3 credit hours]
Selected readings from Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, the Vienna Circle, the Ordinary Language school, and American neo-pragmatists such as Quine, Rorty and Davidson. Course may be repeated as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

PHIL 4300 Philosophy Of Natural Science
[3 credit hours]
A study of scientific inquiry including the structure of scientific explanations, relations of evidence and confirmation, the metaphysics of theoretical entities, and the nature of scientific change and progress.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

PHIL 4400 Ethics Seminar
[3 credit hours]
Selected topics or philosophers in ethical theory. Course may be repeated as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring

PHIL 4650 Philosophy Of Mind
[3 credit hours]
Advanced study of issues in the philosophy of mind such as: intentionality and misrepresentation, rationality and interpretation, supervenience and reductionism, folk psychology and eliminative materialism. Course may be repeated as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring

PHIL 4750 Political Philosophy Seminar
[3 credit hours]
Selected topics or philosophers in political philosophy. Course may be repeated as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

PHIL 4900 Advanced Seminar
[2-4 credit hours]
Topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

PHIL 4920 Directed Readings
[1-4 credit hours]

PHIL 4990 Independent Study - Honors
[3 credit hours]

REL 1220 World Religions
[3 credit hours]
A study of the major religions of the world, with an emphasis on their histories, beliefs and practices
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall
Core Arts & Humanities, Multicultural Non-US Diversity, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

REL 2000 Introduction To Religion
[3 credit hours]
Critical and thematic study of the concepts, values and world-views intrinsic to the religious life.
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall
Core Arts & Humanities, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

REL 2070 Early Judaism
[3 credit hours]
Institutions, culture and religion from the earliest times through the Biblical period to the Medieval period.

REL 2300 Understanding The Monotheistic Religions
[3 credit hours]
A critical examination of the similarities and differences between the three major manifestations of monotheistic religion in the Western Tradition, Islam, Judaism and Christianity.
Core Arts & Humanities, Multicultural Non-US Diversity, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

REL 2310 Old Testament/Tanakh
[3 credit hours]
An examination of the history and ideas of the Jewish scriptures within the context of Judaism and their appropriation within Christian traditions.
Term Offered: Fall
Core Arts & Humanities, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

REL 2330 New Testament History And Ideas
[3 credit hours]
Examination of the history and ideas of the New Testament.
Term Offered: Spring
Core Arts & Humanities, Trans Mod Arts and Humanities

REL 2350 Bible And Church Authority
[3 credit hours]
This course will explore issues related to the sources and exercise of religious authority within Christianity, with an extended consideration given to a particular Christian tradition determined by the instructor.
REL 2380 Topics In Catholic Thought  
[3 credit hours]  
Critical examination of selected topics in contemporary Catholic thought and life.  
Term Offered: Spring, Fall  

REL 2410 Introduction To Christian Thought  
[3 credit hours]  
This course will introduce students to the fundamental creedal commitments of Christianity, with an extended consideration given to a particular Christian tradition determined by the instructor.  
Term Offered: Fall  

REL 2500 Introduction To Islam  
[3 credit hours]  
An introduction to the academic understanding of Islam. Topics may include; faith, rituals, law (Shari’ah), jurisprudence (Fiqh), theology (Kalam), and stories from the Islamic heritage. Non-Western multicultural course.  
Multicultural Non-US Diversity  

REL 2610 Religious Studies Topics In The Humanities  
[3 credit hours]  
Cross-listings with 2000-level courses offered in the humanities departments. Specific topics vary, and course may be repeated for credit as topics vary. Check course schedules for specific subject and prerequisites.  

REL 2980 Special Topics In Religious Studies  
[3 credit hours]  
Special topics courses. Course may be repeated for credit as topics vary.  
Term Offered: Spring, Fall  

REL 3000 Religious Studies Proseminar  
[1 credit hour]  
This course enhances students' professional development in fields related to religious studies.  

REL 3080 Jewish Biblical Studies  
[3 credit hours]  
An examination of the texts and methods of historical and contemporary Jewish scriptural studies.  
Term Offered: Spring, Fall  

REL 3100 Islam  
[3 credit hours]  
An overview of the central doctrines and the many cultural expressions of Islam, the role of the Qur’an and the Prophet Muhammad, Hadith as religious narrative, and tensions between law, modernity, and mysticism.  
Multicultural Non-US Diversity  

REL 3210 Ancient And Medieval Philosophy  
[3 credit hours]  
A study of ancient and medieval philosophy from the pre-Socratics to Aquinas.  
Term Offered: Fall  

REL 3350 The Qur'an And Hadith  
[3 credit hours]  
A study of the two main texts for Islamic belief and practice: Qur’an and the Hadith (the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad). Topics include their thematic structure, methods of interpretation, and their unique authority within Islam.  

REL 3420 Christian Ethical Perspectives  
[3 credit hours]  
This course will study fundamental ethical concerns in Christian thought, with an extended consideration given to a particular Christian tradition determined by the instructor.  
Term Offered: Spring  

REL 3500 Eastern Thought  
[3 credit hours]  
An examination of major philosophies of Asia and the Far East, their specific concerns and their relevance to contemporary problems.  
Term Offered: Spring, Fall  
Multicultural Non-US Diversity  

REL 3510 Comparative Religion: Living Non-Western Religions  
[3 credit hours]  
Study of the major attitudes toward life, human existence and the world embodied in such major religions of the world as Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam and Taoism. Non-U.S. Diversity  

REL 3570 Philosophy Of Religion  
[3 credit hours]  
A critical, philosophical exploration of questions about the nature of religion, including the existence and nature of God, the problem of evil, and the relation between faith and knowledge. Other topics may include the relation of religion to science and morality, as well as the role of religious experience and miracles in religious belief.  
Term Offered: Spring, Fall  

REL 3580 Contemporary Issues In Islam  
[3 credit hours]  
An examination of key contemporary issues facing Islamic thought and culture, such as the changing and contested understandings of religious authority, jihad, role of women, courting, and family norms and the effects on all these of globalization and social media. Course may be repeated for credit as topics vary. Non-Western multicultural course.  
Term Offered: Spring, Fall  
Multicultural Non-US Diversity  

REL 3610 Religious Studies Topics In The Humanities  
[3 credit hours]  
Cross listings with 3000-level courses offered in the humanities departments. Specific topics vary, and course may be repeated for credit as topics vary. Check course schedules for specific subject and prerequisites.  

REL 3710 Literature Of The Old Testament  
[3 credit hours]  
A study of the Old Testament from the literary point of view, including ancient poetry, history, romance, short story, hymn, prophecy and wisdom writing. Recommended: ENGL 2700 or 2800.  
Term Offered: Spring, Summer
REL 3720 Literature And Mythology
[3 credit hours]
Study of classical and biblical mythologies in modern Western literature, private mythologies and literary adaptations of patterns from legend and folklore. Recommended: ENGL 2700 or 2800.
Term Offered: Fall

REL 3900 Seminar-Contemporary Religious Thought
[3 credit hours]
A critical examination of selected topics in the area of religion.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

REL 3980 Special Topics In Religious Studies
[3 credit hours]
Special topics courses. Course may be repeated for credit as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

REL 4520 History Of The Middle East From 600 - 1500
[3 credit hours]
A survey of Middle East history from the emergence of Islam and the formation of Islamic states until the establishment of the Ottoman and Persian empires in the 15th-16th centuries.

REL 4600 Religious Studies Topics In The Arts
[3 credit hours]
Cross listings with 4000-level courses offered in the visual and performing arts departments. Specific topics vary, and course may be repeated for credit as topics vary. Check course schedules for specific subject and prerequisites.
Term Offered: Fall

REL 4610 Religious Studies Topics In The Humanities
[3 credit hours]
Cross listings with 4000-level courses offered in the humanities departments. Specific topics vary, and course may be repeated for credit as topics vary. Check course schedules for specific subject and prerequisites.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

REL 4630 Religion, Violence and Peace
[3 credit hours]
This seminar is a sustained exploration of whether religion is related to the occurrence of violence, peace or community-building, and if so, when and how.

REL 4820 Anthropology Of Religion
[3 credit hours]
Cross-cultural comparison of religious concepts, roles, and practices. The analysis of religious symbolism as well as their sociopolitical and economic basis.
Prerequisites: ANTH 2800 with a minimum grade of D-

REL 4900 Seminar In Religious Studies
[3 credit hours]
Topics vary. Course may be repeated for credit as topics vary. See adviser for Seminar Request Form.
Term Offered: Spring

REL 4920 Directed Readings In Religious Studies
[1-4 credit hours]
Critical inquiry of selected works under the guidance of an instructor on a topic not offered as a regular course.
Term Offered: Fall

REL 4940 Internship In Religious Studies
[1-6 credit hours]
Student is placed in a campus or community setting approved by the instructor of record to work on issues pertaining to religion, and analyzes verbally and in writing how religion functioned in this setting.
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall

REL 4960 Senior Thesis for Honors
[3 credit hours]
Prerequisite: Junior standing and consent of program director
Term Offered: Spring, Summer, Fall

REL 4980 Special Topics In Religious Studies
[3 credit hours]
Topics vary. Course may be repeated for credit as topics vary.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall

REL 4990 Independent Study In Religious Studies
[1-4 credit hours]
Directed study in religious studies under the supervision of a religious studies instructor.
Term Offered: Spring, Fall