

Philosophy

Department Faculty

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Department Goals

The study of philosophy at Covenant College is directed to helping students understand what philosophy is and how it has an inescapable relevance to their lives. The history of philosophy is an account of philosophers and thinkers making recommendations about how to conceive of or to interpret this or that element of human experience. One of the aims of philosophy is to examine these recommendations to see how they stand up under rigorous analysis. A further aim of philosophy is to bring together such interpretive ideas and concepts into a coherent framework or worldview. Distinctively Christian philosophy seeks to study the ideas and concepts that compose a given worldview from the standpoint of biblical presuppositions. The end of such activity is to assist students in developing a Christian worldview that enables them better to live in a way that pleases God and that consequently provides for a more meaningful life.

The study of philosophy provides an intellectual background in the history of human thought that equips students to have a better understanding of other academic disciplines. It also increases skill in the logical analysis of ideas.

Requirements for the Major in Philosophy

The core and distribution requirements for a major in philosophy are those listed for baccalaureate degrees on page 24, with the exception that a course in history or literature is required to fulfill the humanities distribution requirement. It is recommended that a philosophy major take PHI 102. Introduction to Logic/Critical Thinking as one of their earliest philosophy elective courses.

Core requirements	58
Electives	30

Major and Supporting Course Requirements

PHI 101. Introduction to Philosophy.....	3
History of Philosophy (three of the following)	

PHI 201. Classical to Renaissance, or	
PHI 202. Modern to 19th Century, or	
PHI 253. Contemporary Analytic Philosophy, or	
PHI 254. 20 th -Century Continental Philosophy	9
PHI 301. Philosophical and Biblical Ethics.....	3
PHI 302. Metaphysics	3
PHI 303. Epistemology ‘W’	3
PHI 492. Senior Integration Paper Seminar ‘S’.....	2
Philosophical electives * (see list below)	6
Philosophy electives: any philosophy courses.....	9
Total hours for the major	38
Total degree hours	126

Requirements for the Minor in Philosophy

PHI 101. Introduction to Philosophy	3
History of Philosophy:	
PHI 201. Classical to Renaissance, or	
PHI 202. Modern to 19th Century.....	3
PHI 253. Contemporary Analytic Philosophy, or	
PHI 254. 20 th -Century Continental Philosophy.....	3
Philosophical elective * (see list below).....	3
Philosophy electives: any philosophy courses.....	6
Total hours for the minor	18

Requirements for the Major in Philosophy and Religion

The core and distribution requirements for a major in Philosophy and Religion are those listed for baccalaureate degrees on page 24, with the exception that a course in history or literature is required to fulfill the core humanities requirement.

It may seem that more philosophy than religion is required, but the major assumes that students will be taking the required Bible and doctrine courses as part of their core requirements which amount to 12 hours. Further, we have a Biblical Studies Department and not a religion department, and the courses required below are in keeping with the religion courses the department does offer.

Core requirements	58
Electives	30 or 29

Major and Supporting Course Requirements

BIB 487. Modern Theology ‘W’	3
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MIS 302. World Religions	3
PHI 101. Introduction to Philosophy	3
History of Philosophy:	
PHI 201. Classical to Renaissance or	
PHI 202. Modern to 19th Century.....	3
PHI 253. Contemporary Analytic Philosophy or	
PHI 254. 20th Century Continental Philosophy	3
PHI 301. Philosophical and Biblical Ethics	3
PHI 304. Philosophy of Religion	3
PHI 492 or BIB 492. Senior Integration Paper ‘S’	2 or 3
Philosophical elective * (see list below)	3
Philosophy electives: any philosophy courses	6
Religion electives: philosophical electives that are	
BIB courses * (see list below)	6
Total hours for the major	<u>38 or 39</u>
Total degree hours.....	126

Requirements for the Minor in Philosophy and Religion

PHI 101. Introduction to Philosophy.....	3
History of Philosophy (two of the following):	
PHI 201. Classical to Renaissance, or	
PHI 202. Modern to 19th Century.....	3
PHI 253. Contemporary Analytic Philosophy, or	
PHI 254. 20 th -Century Continental Philosophy.....	3
Philosophical elective * (see list below)	3
Philosophy elective: any philosophy course.....	3
Religion elective: philosophical electives that are	
BIB course * (see list below).....	3
Total hours for the minor.....	18

*Philosophical electives:

Any PHI course and
 BIB 302, 303, 372, 373, 376, 383, 386, 387, 388, 487,
 495; BIO 315, COS 425, ECO 430, EDU 370, ENG
 380, HIS 399, 305; IDS 310, 335; MAT 290, 360, 410,
 470; MIS 302, MUS 372, PHY 351, PSY 306, 360;
 SOC 342, 402.

Requirements for Double Majors

Students double-majoring in Philosophy or Philosophy & Religion and another discipline MAY:

1. Count six (6) hours of philosophically rich upper-division electives in the other major *also* as Philosophy electives. ("Philosophically rich" courses devote significant attention to the metaphysical, epistemological and/or ethical foundations of another discipline. A complete list of such

courses is kept by the Chair of the Philosophy Department and is available on request.)

2. Satisfy the Philosophy SIP requirement by completing the SIP requirements of the other major AND including a member of the Philosophy Department faculty in the process of formulating the thesis, bibliography and outline of the SIP for the other major.

Philosophy Courses

101. Introduction to Philosophy

An introduction to philosophical thinking, what it is, and what it has to do with human life. The course will emphasize the role of a conceptual framework or world and life view in one's knowledge about the world and the problems involved in attempting to validate such frameworks or worldviews. There will be a consideration of the traditional areas of philosophical concern such as the nature of reality, knowledge, and moral and aesthetic values. A major focus of the course will be to consider all these issues from a distinctively Christian perspective. Three units. 'W' HUM

102. Introduction to Logic/Critical Thinking

A study of the evaluation of arguments and what it means to think critically. A major focus will be on informal fallacies in arguments although some formal logic will be considered. The course will also emphasize the role of language in argument and how what one considers to be logical presupposes a certain view of the nature of reality. Three hours. HUM

171. Bioethics

An application of moral theory to decision-making regarding health care. The course will focus on developing the ability to exercise discernment when dealing with complex choices and the capacity to communicate moral insights in a way likely to help others. Influential recent works on medical-ethical issues will be discussed, and students will regularly practice making decisions as part of an Ethics Committee. Open to Pre-med majors without prerequisite; prior completion of PHI 101. Introduction to Philosophy, is strongly recommended for all other students. Three hours. 'W'

201. History of Philosophy I: Classical to Renaissance

A survey of western philosophy from the pre-Socratics through Renaissance humanism. Major figures such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas will be emphasized. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours. 'W'

202. History of Philosophy II: Modern to 19th Century

A survey of western philosophy from Descartes to James. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours. 'W'

253. History of Philosophy III: Contemporary Analytic Philosophy

An examination of key figures in 20th century western philosophy. Russell, Wittgenstein, Moore, Austin, Whitehead, Quine and Sartre will be examined. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

254. 20th-Century Continental Philosophy

The study of Western European 20th-century philosophy (mainly Germany and France). The course will focus upon three sections: 1) Phenomenology to Philosophical Hermeneutics, 2) Marxism to Critical Theory and 3) Structuralism to Deconstruction. In each section, the student will read primary texts which will engage philosophical problems addressed by the philosopher's own interests, and yet, placing those problems in the history of philosophy. Three hours.

265. Existentialism

Perhaps Sartre's statement that "existence precedes essence" provides the most succinct summary of the project of existentialism. Themes such as "despair," "meaninglessness," "alienation," "the absurd" and "the authentic/inauthentic life" are "major players" in existential thought. In this course, we will do a close reading of some of the most significant texts in the existential tradition (mostly those of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre) and seek to develop an appropriate biblical response. Prerequisites: PHI 101 prerequisite and at least one course. PHI 200-249 recommended (but not required with permission of the instructor). Three hours.

272. Social Ethics

Assuming something of the background of Ethics 203, this course will examine the ethical implications of the Cultural Mandate of Genesis 1:28. The course will present a biblical-theological basis for culture and cultural expressions. The course will examine the moral consequences of this basis in such areas of Christian concerns as politics, economics, art, education, the environment, medical issues and other relevant current trends in terms of Christian moral responsibility. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

281. Philosophy of Art

The clarification of terms and a discussion of proposed criteria for aesthetic judgments. Major works will be read and discussed. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

283. Philosophy of Science

A study of the nature, scope and limitations of scientific method and explanation with some attention being given to scientific concepts such as causality, space, and time. Some inquiry will be made into the relationship between science and human values. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

301. Philosophical and Biblical Ethics

A study of philosophical and Christian ethics. The course will emphasize what it means to seek to justify a moral norm, and various approaches to such justification will be examined. The course will also focus on the distinctives of Christian ethics from a philosophical perspective. The Ten Commandments and their implications for personal and social ethics will be studied in detail. Issues such as abortion, economic justice, the role of the state, medical ethics, sexual morality and the arts will be examined in the light of the commandments and biblical principles. The purpose of this course will be not only to provide information about the field of ethics, but to assist the student in making responsible moral choices informed by biblical truth. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

302. Metaphysics

An examination of the classical metaphysical problems such as the nature of reality, minds and bodies, personal identity, free will and determinism, causality, time and the nature of God. Attention will be given to the question of whether or not there is metaphysical knowledge. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours. 'W'

303. Epistemology

An examination of major schools of epistemological theory. Current views of the justification of knowledge claims will be emphasized. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours. 'W'

304. Philosophy of Religion.

A survey of the traditional issues basic to a philosophical analysis of religion, for example, the concept of God, grounds for theistic belief, the matter of religious knowledge, the problem of evil and problems of religious language. A distinctively Christian approach to these issues will be a major emphasis of the course. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

316. Apologetics

A survey of various systems of Christian apologetics including the study of anti-theistic theories. Prerequisites: BIB 277 and 278. Three hours.

355. Christian Philosophers

This course will focus on at least one distinctively Christian thinker who is a philosopher or whose thought has significant philosophical implications. Representative works of the thinker will be read along with critical assessments. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

356. Philosophy of Language

A systematic and detailed study of the question: "How does a word 'mean'?" Various theories of meaning will be

examined. A major focus will be on the relationship of one's metaphysics or view of reality to one's theory of meaning. Hermeneutics, or what it means to interpret the Bible or a work of literature, will also be a significant emphasis of the course. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

357. Formal Logic

The propositional calculus and general quantification theory with some attention to practical application of these principles. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

358. Philosophy of Mind

An in-depth examination of the traditional mind-body problem. Current theories regarding the nature of mind will be studied. There will be a special focus of what it means to consider this topic from the standpoint of a Christian metaphysics. Also, some attention will be given to cognitive science and the matter of computers and human thought. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

380. Figure Seminar

A consideration of the principal works and contributions of a single influential figure from the history of philosophy. Particular attention will be given to reading primary texts by the figure and investigating the historical context in which the figure worked. Three semester credits. Prerequisites: PHI 101, and at least one of PHI 201, 202, 253 or 254. At least one of PHI 301, 302, or 303 is recommended. Three hours.

405. Seminar in Philosophy

Philosophy seminars take up special topics and issues in philosophy as well as in-depth studies of prominent and influential philosophers. Prerequisite: PHI 101 or permission from the instructor. Three hours.

411. Philosophy Internship

Off-campus work that utilizes skills developed by the academic study of Philosophy (conceptual clarification, assumption exposition, argument analysis, etc.) and is overseen by a business, ministry or endeavor maintaining a relationship with Covenant's Philosophy program. Prerequisites: PHI 101, at least one of PHI 201, 202, 253 or 254; and at least one of PHI 301, 302, or 303. One hour per 40 hours of work, up to three hours. 'W'

492. Senior Integration Paper Seminar

Twice-weekly meetings to discuss the integration of philosophical work and Christian faith, strategies for pursuing the Philosophy Senior Integration Project, and conversations about ongoing work on each student's SIP. Prerequisites: PHI 101, at least one of PHI 201, 202, 253 or 254, and at least one of PHI 301, 302, or 303. Senior standing. Two hours. 'S'