PHILOSOPHY — (PHI)

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Philosophy studies the basic beliefs that support all of our thinking and living. These beliefs are about the nature and existence of the universe, God, persons, free will, space/time, and causality; about evidence, theory-testing, and rational judgment; and about justice, the good person, and moral education. The curriculum emphasizes the history of philosophy, as well as recent philosophical work concerning religion, science, business activity, environmental ethics, poverty, and social justice. Philosophy students will develop skills to evaluate critically what they read, to examine and to write clearly about what they believe, and to think in a cooperative way. These skills are useful in most careers and in graduate and advanced professional study. Majors often select an area of philosophy for independent study, and many students choose to double-major. The Department offers innovative tutorial courses to prepare students for study at Regent’s Park College, Oxford University.

Philosophy graduates will demonstrate:

- a basic understanding of major western traditions in ethics;
- a basic understanding of the history of western philosophy from the ancient world through the modern period;
- a basic understanding of formal symbolic logic and its application to arguments in ordinary language;
- a basic understanding of one or more areas of philosophy related to the student’s interests;
- successful application in a major independent project of fundamental research skills related to philosophy, including synthesis and critical evaluation of arguments, clarification and critical evaluation of one’s own beliefs and values, logical argumentation, organized written and oral presentation of ideas, and critical analysis of cultural trends.

**Major**
(B.A. degree) **Thirty semester hours required**, including PHI151, 152, 201, and 307; at least one upper-division history of philosophy course (PHI412 or 435); and either PHI440 or 450.

**Minor**
**Eighteen semester hours required**, including PHI151, 152, 201, and 307.

150. **Basic Philosophy.** (3 hours) Introduction to typical methods and
problems of philosophic thought, with emphasis on forming and evaluating a personal worldview. As needed

151. **Ethics.** (3 hours) Introduction to important texts and authors, including Aristotle, Kant, and Mill, who provide interesting answers to the question, “How should one live?” Fall and Spring

152. **Logic.** (3 hours) Introduction to principles of sound reasoning with emphasis on formal and informal techniques for evaluating arguments. Fall and Spring

195. **Discovering Vocation.** (3 hours) This course introduces the idea of vocation through reading, discussion, writing, and research. “Vocation” is a term of art referring to the integration of practice and intellect with moral and spiritual calling. The interdisciplinary readings in this course will acquaint the student with representative and historical models of reflection on vocation. This course will be offered only as a Foundations 112 course. Spring

201. **History of Philosophy I.** (3 hours) Survey of the development of Western philosophical thought within its cultural contexts from ancient Greece through the Middle Ages. Exploration of foundational approaches to questions of reality, virtue, knowledge, God, faith, and reason. Fall and Spring

307. **History of Philosophy II.** (3 hours) Survey of the development of Western philosophical thought within its cultural contexts from the Renaissance through the eighteenth century. Exploration of issues foundational to contemporary philosophy, theology, and the sciences. Prerequisite: Foundations 111 or one course in philosophy or permission of the instructor. Fall

325. **Business Ethics.** (3 hours) Introduction to both the moral issues involved in business management and the ethical concepts and analytical skills relevant to resolving those issues. Fall and Spring

335. **Theories of Economic Justice.** (3 hours) Introduction to the moral and political issues raised by the facts of absolute poverty and economic inequality in both international and domestic contexts. Contemporary theories of beneficence and distributive justice will be explored. Even Springs

345. **Environmental Philosophy and Ethics.** (3 hours) Philosophical exploration of the concept of the natural environment, including a survey of ethical positions that guide human habitation in nature. Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy. Even Falls
355. Philosophy of Religion. (3 hours) Philosophical exploration of the classical issues of theistic religious thought, such as the reality of God, the problem of evil, religious language, life after death, and the pluralism of religious traditions. Prerequisites: one course in Philosophy. Odd Falls

365. Social/Political Philosophy. (3 hours) An examination of the major political philosophies of our time, with same attention to the historical precedents. Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy. Odd Falls

370. Topics in Philosophy. (3 hours) The study of a special topic in philosophy, announced at advanced registration. Recent offerings include Postmodernism, Feminist Philosophies, and Friendship and Love. Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy. Fall and Spring

375. Tutorial Topics. (3 hours) The study of a special topic in philosophy using a one-on-one tutorial method of instruction adapted from humanities courses at Oxford University. Please check with department for a list of current offerings. Prerequisites: one course in Philosophy and permission of the instructor. Fall and Spring

385. Medical Ethics. (3 hours) Philosophical exploration of the moral issues involved in the practice and management of medicine, including a basic introduction to the moral concepts and analytical skills relevant to resolving these issues. Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy. Odd Springs

395. Seminar on Vocation. (3 hours) This course introduces the idea of vocation through readings and discussions. The readings include scripture, biography, theology, and philosophical texts. The purpose of the course is to develop the student’s understanding of vocation as a reflective theme and to have access to rich sources for exploring the idea of vocation. Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy. Spring

412. American Philosophy. (3 hours) Survey of the most influential American philosophies from the colonial period to the present: Puritanism, Deism, transcendentalism, pragmatism, and process philosophy. Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy. Odd Springs

435. 19th- & 20th-Century Philosophy. (3 hours) Survey of the development of Western philosophical thought within its cultural contexts from the beginning of the 19th century through the end of the 20th century. Exploration of issues pertinent to the development of contemporary theories of scientific discovery, personal identity, language, and mind-world relation. Major figures may include Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, Russell, Frege, Wittgenstein, and Lewis. Prerequisite: one
440. Independent Study. (3 hours) With the approval and permission of a member of the Philosophy faculty and the chair of the Philosophy Department, students may undertake independent reading and research on a philosophical topic of their own choosing. Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy. Fall and Spring

450. Seminar. (3 hours) Class presentation of research on a philosophical topic, announced at advanced registration, with the guidance of a member of the Philosophy faculty. Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy. As needed

460. Internship. (1-3 hours) Students may receive graduation credit for internships with appropriate disciplinary content that meet the faculty-approved criteria for academic internships. Such experiences include a significant reflective component and must be supervised by a full-time member of the Georgetown College faculty. Prerequisites: consent of the supervising instructor. As needed