

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

TEXAS  STATE  
PHILOSOPHY<sup>®</sup>

Texas State University  
Department of Philosophy

Master of Arts in Applied Philosophy and Ethics  
Professional Ethics Certification Program

Graduate Course Descriptions  
Spring 2020

Texas State University  
Department of Philosophy  
Comal 102  
601 University Drive  
San Marcos, Texas 78666  
Phone: 512-245-2285  
[philosophy@txstate.edu](mailto:philosophy@txstate.edu)

A limited number of Graduate Instructional Assistant positions are available each year, and students in the MAAPE program, the program in Sustainability Studies, and the program in International Studies, are eligible to apply. IAs typically assist the instructor of record in the large sections of Philosophy and Critical Reasoning and Ethics and Society. Applications for the position of IA are accepted in the spring semester. The IA position may be renewed for a second year given satisfactory performance. IAs are required to be enrolled in 9 hours of graduate coursework each semester of their employment and, during their first three semesters in the IA position, must enroll in Phil 5100 (Practicum in Teaching Philosophy). Phil 5100 does not earn graduate credit.

IAs are expected to undertake with diligence their responsibilities both as IAs and as students in the MAAPE program; failure to do so will result in a review by the department's Personnel Committee. The Graduate College requires that an IA maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA, and the Departmental expectation is that an IA achieves a 3.0 each semester.

We hold interviews each fall and spring semester.

Spring Application Priority Deadline: April 1st

Fall Application Priority Deadline: November 1<sup>st</sup>

**If you have questions about the Master of Arts in Applied Philosophy and Ethics program, please contact:**

**Dr. Bob Fischer**  
**Graduate Advisor, Philosophy**  
**Comal 207F**  
**512-245-2403**  
[MAAPEadmissions@txstate.edu](mailto:MAAPEadmissions@txstate.edu)

Applied Philosophy  
PHIL 5301 CRN #34634  
Online section

Instructor: Robert O'Connor, Ph.D.

Description: This course will focus on ethics, which is a branch of philosophy that addresses issues of right and wrong, good and bad, as well as virtues and vices. In this class we will address perplexing questions critical to today's world. What are the correct standards of right and wrong? Should everyone have the same moral standards? How do we know right from wrong? Why is there so much disagreement about the morality of abortion, euthanasia, same-sex marriage, capital punishment, the environment, animal rights, warfare, global responsibilities, and so forth? This class will begin with a critical exposition of classic ethical theories in the Western tradition, focusing on ethical relativism, egoism, utilitarianism, Kantianism, natural law and natural rights, virtue ethics, and feminist ethics and the ethics of care. Then in the second part of the course we will apply these theories to some contemporary moral dilemmas, such as those mentioned above, that we face individually and collectively.

Required Textbooks:

- Barbara MacKinnon, *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues*, (9th Ed.) Cengage. We will be using a full-text, interactive eBook version connected to MindTap--a Cengage multi-faceted learning system. Students will order the MindTap eBook online.

Dialogue  
PHIL 5302 CRN #31702  
TR 12:30 – 1:50 PM, Comal 116

Instructor: Jo Ann Carson, Ph.D.

Description: Dialogue is a collaborative course that is a part of the Philosophy Dialogue Series. The class will explore dialogical and dialectical reasoning, with emphasis on both philosophical conversation and philosophical writing. Each student will research and conduct at least one dialogue and will contribute to others through discussion. There are three parts to the course: Part I: Background of dialogical and dialectical reasoning in philosophy; Part II: Open dialogues led by members of the class; Part III: Paper writing.

Required Texts: Readings posted on TRACS

Philosophy of Language  
PHIL 5304 CRN #38969  
MW 12:30 – 1:50 PM, Derrick 111

Instructor: Ivan Marquez, Ph.D.

Description: This course will study (1) the nature, structure, and functions of language, (2) the uses and misuses of language, and (3) an assortment of theoretical views about language from Plato and Aristotle through Frege, Russell, Carnap and Quine to Wittgenstein, Austin, Chomsky, Pinker, Foucault, and Derrida.

Required Textbooks:

- (1) Horsby, D. (2014). *Linguistics - A Complete Introduction*. Hodder & Stoughton.
- (2) Cappelen, H., & Dever, J. (2019). *Bad Language (Contemporary Introductions to Philosophy of Language)*. Oxford UP.
- (3) Paired readings by Plato & Aristotle, Frege & Russell, Carnap & Quine, Wittgenstein & Austin, Chomsky & Pinker, Foucault & Derrida.

American Philosophy  
PHIL 5314 CRN #37966  
TR 11 – 12:30 PM, ED 3068

Instructor: Olga Gerhart, Ph.D.

Description: American Philosophy is a survey course in the history of Western philosophy that stretches from the early 1700s to the present day. We will conduct a historical examination of the development of American philosophy, beginning with its origins in European thought. We will spend a significant amount of time discussing classical American pragmatism, the paradigmatic American philosophical tradition. The texts for the course focus on the American themes of optimism, pluralism, and reform in metaphysical, epistemological, ethical, and social-political contexts.

Required Textbooks:

- *Pragmatism and Classical American Philosophy: Essential Readings and Interpretative Essays*
- John J. Stuhr, Oxford University Press 2nd edition (September 16, 1999), ISBN-10: 0195118308, ISBN-13: 978-0195118308 One copy placed on reserve in library
- *Drama of Possibility: Experience as a Philosophy of Culture*, John J. McDermott, Fordham University Press. 1st edition (June 15, 2007) ISBN-10: 0823226638 , ISBN-13: 978-0823226634. Available as an e-book at library
- *Philosophy Americana: Making Philosophy at Home in American Culture*, Douglas R. Anderson. Fordham University Press. 1st edition (May 15, 2006) ISBN-10: 0823225518 , ISBN-13: 978-0823225514. Available as an e-book at the library

History of Ethics  
PHIL 5320 CRN #36198  
MW 9:30 – 10:50 AM, Comal 114

Instructor: Dean Geuras, Ph.D.

Description: This course is a survey of major ethical theories in the Western philosophical tradition.

Required Textbooks: TBA

Environmental Ethics  
PHIL 5323.D01 CRN #37147  
Online section through Distance & Extended Learning\*

Instructor: Eli Kanon, Ph.D.

Description: This web-based course will endeavor to acquaint students with basic environmental science and traditional ethical concepts applied to concerns involving how humans utilize natural resources and the environment. This course narrowly focuses upon Corporate Responsibility regarding business, ethics and the environment. In addition, it seeks to assist students in their future employment; in particular, critical thinking and persuasive writing. The instructor-paced format with content pertaining to moral reasoning, environmental science and contemporary business ethics will be beneficial to students who prefer cultivating their knowledge with a non-traditional process.

Required Textbooks:

- Kanon, Elizabeth P. (ed.) Basics for Environmental Ethics. ISBN 1256197297.
- DesJardins, Joseph R. Business, Ethics, and the Environment: Imagining a Sustainable Future. ISBN 013189174X.

Note that these textbooks have been bundled for purchase under ISBN 1-256-19730-0.

Philosophical Logic  
PHIL 5340 CRN #37970  
MW 3:30 – 4:50 PM, Derrick 241

Instructor: Eric Gilbertson, Ph.D.

Description: Logic, understood as a generic skill, has no special subject matter. It can be usefully applied in any area. Understood as an object of study, on the other hand, logic has all sorts of philosophically interesting properties. This course will investigate many of them. We'll study the metatheory of first-order predicate logic, including proofs of the soundness and completeness theorems, the incompleteness of second-order predicate logic, introductions to set theory and number theory, and other topics. All issues will be addressed with an eye toward understanding philosophically significant implications and clarifying certain technical notions that are often taken for granted in contemporary philosophy.

Textbooks:

- Required: Yaqub, *An Introduction to Metalogic* (ISBN 978-1-55481-171-7)
- Recommended not required: Papineau, *Philosophical Devices* (ISBN 978-0-19-965173-3)

Philosophy of Knowledge  
PHIL 5356 CRN #33017  
MW 11 – 12:30 PM, Comal 114

Instructor: Peter Hutcheson, Ph.D.

Description: Is there a good case for the belief that we know nothing at all? Has it been proven that we know considerably less than we ordinarily think we do? What arguments are there for and against what we ordinarily take to be knowledge? What must someone's reasons be like in order to know? To what extent must she be aware of those reasons? Is there a defensible definition of knowledge? What knowledge (if any) do we obtain by perception?

We will attempt to answer these questions by examining contemporary arguments and counter-arguments.

Required Textbooks:

- EPISTEMOLOGY: AN ANTHOLOGY, second ed. Sosa, Kim, Fantl, and McGrath, eds. Blackwell, 2008. ISBN 978-1-4051-6966-0
- EPISTEMOLOGY. Hutcheson. PHILOSOPHY 4356/5356. University Bookstore.

Nonviolence and Social Change  
PHIL 5360C CRN #37975  
MW 3:30 – 4:50 PM, Comal 103

Instructor: Greg Moses, Ph.D.

Description: The broad human practice of nonviolence has historical roots that go back for millennia and was widely practiced for example in the movement to abolish chattel slavery in the United States. However, modern-day nonviolence takes intentional form in a seven-year struggle (1906-13) waged by Indian immigrants against racist policies in South Africa. The leader of that movement, M.K. Gandhi, coined the term satyagraha to denote the power of truth that is waged by means of civil disobedience, marches, and strikes. Concepts and methods of the satyagraha movement continue to inspire anti-colonial struggles that resist oppressions which Martin Luther King, Jr. called “the triple evils” of racism, poverty, and war. In 2019 alone we find newsworthy nonviolence campaigns waged in behalf of democracy in Hong Kong, Egypt, Iraq, Ecuador, and Puerto Rico. Meanwhile, a global environmental movement wages nonviolent fights against pollution, global warming, and ecocide. While it is possible to argue at length about the comparative values of violence vs. nonviolence, in fact the vast majority of college students will not make a study of war or arm themselves for revolution. Therefore, literacy in nonviolence will be the practical literacy of our lives, so we should seek to improve our understanding of how it works, why it works, and why we should choose to wage it relentlessly, intelligently, and truthfully. Students in this course will be invited to study movements that speak to their interests, read theorists who analyze values and meanings relevant to nonviolence, and apply these insights to problems that face us this day. As the catalogue description says: In this course students will study themes and concepts related to nonviolence, sustainability, and social change. Participants will critically examine the works of thinkers such as Thoreau, Addams, Tolstoy, Gandhi, King, and Chavez.

Required Textbooks: None

Problems in Philosophy  
Special topic: Philosophy in Law  
PHIL 5388 CRN #37982  
TR 2 – 3:20 PM, Comal 116

Instructor: Vincent Luizzi, Ph. D

Description: Study of major areas of jurisprudence including law, judging, and punishment.

Required Textbooks:

- The Laws by Plato, Penguin Publishing Group, ISBN: 9780140449846

Environmental Ethics  
PHIL 7323 CRN #38974  
MW 2 – 3:20 PM, Comal 103

Instructor: Robert Fischer, Ph.D.

Description: Why think that biodiversity is important? Do animals have rights? Should we extend legal protections to rivers? These are all questions with an environmental ethics. The goal of this course is to explore the philosophical issues that come up when we try to answer them.

Required Textbooks: None