

The Enchiridion
(Handbook)
Department of Philosophy
Dallas Baptist University

PART ONE:
**THE VISION FOR THE PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM
AT DALLAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY**

PART TWO:
**THE VISION FOR THE PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM
AT DALLAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY**

PART THREE
RATIONALE FOR THE PHILOSOPHY CURRICULUM

PART FOUR
THE SENIOR RESEARCH PROJECT

PART FIVE
**DEGREE PLANS, ADVISING AND REGISTRATION,
INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSES**

PART SIX
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

PART ONE:

THE VISION FOR THE PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM AT DALLAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

The program in philosophy at Dallas Baptist University desires to make a lasting impression on the minds and lives of its students. The program is Christian in its foundation, and aspires to be broad in perspective, generous in spirit, and insightful in content. The vision consists of professional, personal, spiritual, and practical aspects which join together to fulfill its overall purpose.

The Professional Vision

"Will philosophy adequately prepare me for a useful and fulfilling calling/career?"

Professionally, the program seeks to provide undergraduate-level competency in the discipline of philosophy, to help students develop various multi-use intellectual abilities, and to prepare its graduates for careers not only in philosophy, but also for those many occupations in which philosophic training is of enormous benefit. Thus, the professional vision consists of three parts.

Philosophical Competency: as a student of philosophy, you should obtain an overall understanding of the nature and content of the discipline of philosophy, gain a working knowledge of the principles of logic and critical thinking, become aware of the presuppositional nature of all thought and life, understand the essential tenets of fundamental world views or meaning systems, grasp how philosophic thought has unfolded throughout the centuries, and become familiar with the leading philosophers who have contributed to the history of philosophy. Furthermore, you will gain competencies in the areas of metaphysics (God, creation, time, mind, freedom, self, etc.), epistemology (the nature, means, justification and limits of knowledge), ethics (fundamental moral systems and issues), and aesthetics (the principles concerning the production, interpretation, and criticism of works of art). You will also have the opportunity to gain undergraduate-level expertise on a topic of philosophical importance through the research, writing and presentation of a bachelor's thesis. The knowledge and abilities gained through this program should adequately prepare you for any kind of graduate school whether it is in philosophy, theology, law, etc.

Intellectual Skills: You will not only know something about the subject of philosophy, but will also "know how" to do it. In this program, you will have the opportunity to observe, develop, and employ numerous intellectual abilities such as the following:

- To think logically, critically, analytically, and synthetically.
- To read with depth, comprehension, and insight.
- To write clearly, cogently, coherently, persuasively, and perhaps even stylishly.
- To process information, assess plans of action, make decisions and solve problems.
- To do focused research.
- To understand, interpret, and criticize ideas, doctrines, and texts.
- To frame hypotheses, and formulate questions, and respectively to test and answer them.
- To develop moral discernment and mature aesthetic judgment and taste.
- To obtain enlightened consciousness or awareness, and to achieve a depth and breadth of understanding (especially of the alien "other").
- To develop the imagination, intuition, and creativity and to employ them in the enterprise of philosophy and life.

These qualities and characteristics are the intended results of studying philosophy and are the overall consequences of liberal arts education of which philosophy is obviously a vital part.

Vocational Preparation: From the above list, it is clear that as a student of philosophy, you will not only gain philosophical knowledge, but also intellectual abilities that are useful in other academic areas, in careers far removed from professional philosophy, and in the living of everyday life. Today, learning how to learn — recovering "the lost tools of learning," — is probably more valuable than developing an expertise in any one area that may soon be outdated. Specialized technical/vocational training in today's rapidly changing world is quickly rendered obsolete. Not only are jobs rapidly changing, but individuals frequently change jobs (from three to seven times) in this day of economic uncertainty, accelerated change, and hyper-technology.

One solid way you can avoid obsolescence, prepare yourself for our changing environment, and secure "vocational resilience" is to obtain the kind of knowledge, skills and abilities that the study of philosophy provides. Many study philosophy not only out of sheer intellectual fascination or to make philosophy a calling/career, but also to pursue vocations in all kinds of areas including law, journalism, ministry, theology, government, industry, business, finance, marketing, management, teaching, medicine, missions, counseling, social work, the military, etc. In other words, because of its content and concomitant intellectual capacities, your study of philosophy is excellent preparation for almost any occupational calling.

The Personal Vision

"How will I benefit personally from the study of philosophy?"

The study of philosophy is not only for professional purposes, but for personal ones as well. The study of philosophy should have a profound impact on the kind of person you are and on the kinds of experiences you have. Philosophy can help you flourish as a human being and enhance the richness and meaning of your personal existence. Classically, wisdom, truth, goodness, beauty, as well as faith, hope, and love (among other things) have been the transcendental ideals motivating people to study philosophy. Through the study of this discipline, you will be exposed to and have opportunity to incarnate these edifying virtues in your own life and experience. Philosophy, therefore, can make an indelible mark on your character and conduct.

Philosophical education also makes an important contribution to your daily experience. It can deepen your personal outlook, broaden the range of things you can enjoy, provide self-knowledge, self-understanding, and self-awareness. It can add valuable insights to your reading, conversations, and relationships. Philosophy can enhance your self-esteem and assist in the development of your personality and identity. Philosophical knowledge can enable you to undertake the responsibilities of citizenship in the democratic political process more effectively. Most importantly, it can enable you to know God better. The significance of philosophy for your personal life is hard to exaggerate. Two areas are especially noteworthy.

The quest for truth and wisdom: The Book of Proverb states: "How much better it is to get wisdom than gold, and to get understanding is to be chosen above silver" (Prov. 16: 16). Philosophic study and reflection should enable you to realize the truth of this aphorism, help you to re-evaluate previous priorities, and to encourage you in the lifelong pursuit of truth and wisdom. The benefits of a life spent in pursuit of enduring truth and wisdom, you will discover, will far outweigh the results of a life focused on the quest for temporal riches.

World view development: The gems of truth and wisdom discovered in your personal quest may be used as building-blocks in the construction of a personal, comprehensive world and life view. The philosophical process should help you to understand and deepen the foundational presuppositions upon which your thinking and living is based. It should also contribute to the answers you are seeking to life's perennial questions. The development and deepening of your world view is a crucial project that should be inspired by your study of philosophy and is one of its most, if not the most, important product.

Spiritual Vision

"What is the relationship of Christianity to the discipline and study of philosophy?"

"Can the study of philosophy become a viable ministry?"

The Christian student of philosophy is dedicated to the goal of spiritual maturity — seeking to attain to "the measure of the stature that belongs to the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4: 13). The study of philosophy can make a significant contribution to the spiritual maturation process. Spiritual maturity via philosophy develops when Christian faith and philosophy are properly related. Philosophical investigation is ideally undertaken on the foundation of faith and within the parameters of divine revelation. The teachings of the Scriptures become the basis and boundaries for understanding and evaluating philosophical concepts and for developing a philosophy or world view of your own. The operative phrases might be: "reason (or philosophy) within the boundaries of revelation," and "faith seeking understanding." If philosophy is to contribute to your spiritual development, and if you seek to do philosophy "Christianly," then this order of things must be upheld. This arrangement implies the following.

The primary need for biblical and theological understanding: If you are to "do Christian philosophy," if you are to "integrate Christian faith and philosophic learning," and if you are to adhere to the dictum that "all truth is God's truth" in your own quest for truth — all of which contribute to spiritual maturity — then you must first understand basic biblical teachings and theological doctrines. Without a Christian knowledge base, it would be impossible to do any of the above. A sufficient measure of biblical and theological sophistication is, therefore, necessary. As a Christian philosophy student, then, you must develop two competencies: the first one in the Bible and theology, and the second in your chosen discipline of philosophy.

The integration of faith and learning: Given an adequate understanding of Christian basics, you will be able to participate in the challenging intellectual task of bringing your faith and philosophy together into a creative and imaginative synthesis. St. Augustine (Plato) and St. Thomas (Aristotle) both engaged in this project and you, too, may perpetuate this scholarly and spiritual heritage as you seek to do the same. The integration of faith and philosophy entails at least these two matters.

A critical dialogue with philosophy: On the basis of Christian conceptions, you will be able to evaluate the roots and branches of the tree of philosophic knowledge to which you will be exposed. In your

inquiry, you will find some ideas to be contrary to Christian truth, and be able to detect them as error. You will discover other ideas to be compatible with the Christian faith, and be able to receive them as God's insights and truth. On the basis of the orthodox Christian tradition, then, you will be able to engage *fearlessly and fruitfully* in a critical and constructive dialogue with the various philosophic traditions in which the faith becomes both the critic of falsehood, and illuminator and interpreter of philosophic truth. This kind of engagement lays the foundation for the following grand enterprise.

Building a positive, comprehensive, Christian philosophy or world view: What is needed today is a poignant, profound, and practical articulation of the Christian faith that is based on Scripture and informed by human learning — a dynamic combination of the biblical world view plus the best that has been thought, said, written, and done by human beings. Since all truth is God's truth, and since some of that truth (part of the best that has been thought, said, written, and done) has been discovered by the philosophers, then the discovery of that truth obtained through your study of philosophy can contribute to the development of this needed Christian vision. A comprehensively constructed Christian world view drawn from special and natural revelation, from the Bible and the humanities, from faith and philosophy, from the Scriptures and science, needs to be set forth as the credible alternative among modern and postmodern options in our contemporary, multi-cultural, relativistic, pluri-verse struggling for mental, spiritual, and moral direction.

As a philosophy major or minor, God may be calling you to become part of and meet the need for a new generation of intellectually and spiritually sophisticated Christian scholars who seek to understand, incarnate, and communicate the Christian vision in the context of the twenty-first century — the beginning of the third millennium. In this sense, the study of philosophy becomes a spiritual calling, a redemptive opportunity, and a viable ministry.

The Practical Vision

"Is philosophy practical? Can it be applied?
Is the study of philosophy of any contemporary
relevance?"

The program in philosophy at Dallas Baptist University seeks to be an instrument of peace and reconciliation between the quarreling parties of theory and practice. Philosophy is largely a theoretical discipline and has often developed (not unjustly so) the pejorative reputation for being an ivory-tower, irrele-

vant, egg-headish, impractical discipline unrelated to the real questions, concerns, and needs of ordinary men and women. This program in philosophy seeks to reverse this reputation and passionately desires to see philosophical theories practiced and its knowledge applied. It believes that there is nothing more useful or practical than a good theory. It stands for profound thinking and positive action. It wants to cogitate and activate, to reflect and reform. Contemporary culture is the context in which this model of philosophic thought and action should be applied.

No one needs to inform us today about our decaying society. The human condition is critical. The need for socio-cultural, and economic amelioration is great. Indeed, Fredrick Nietzsche at one pointed asserted that the most vital question for philosophy is the extent to which the world can be altered, and that those who philosophize should "set about improving that part of it recognized as alterable" (*Richard Wagner at Beyreuth*).

Hence, the program in philosophy at DBU is concerned not only about the head, but also the hand, with mastering philosophical terms and theories, and also with applying philosophic truth and wisdom in every realm of human experience. The goal could possibly be subsumed under the broad heading of procuring social justice and seeking shalom, namely, that philosophic truth and wisdom should be directly employed in serving and redeeming human kind and used as a guide to treating others with the same kindness and fairness that you would like to be treated. Philosophy should change the world, not just interpret it. As a philosophy student, you should pursue your studies with the end in view of helping to establish social justice and peace in every realm.

Thus, the philosophy program here is practical as well as theoretical in tone. Your studies will focus on the relevant, not the obscure. You will examine the "Big Questions" (God, knowledge, creation, identity, purpose, morality, evil, suffering, death, hope, salvation, history, etc.). You will investigate the "Big Areas of Human Concern" (work, economics, relationships, art, culture, politics, government, education, law, science, technology, etc.). You will be taught that knowledge incurs responsibility. You will be exhorted to apply what you learn. Philosophy literally means the "love of wisdom." And wisdom has been aptly defined as "knowledge applied." Hence, philosophy may be more precisely defined as the love of applied knowledge. The application of knowledge is exactly the goal of the philosophy program at this university. Perhaps the tension between theory and practice will, at least in your own experience, be partially resolved.

PART TWO

REQUIRED COURSES FOR A MAJOR AND MINOR IN PHILOSOPHY

CATALOG DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSES

ELECTIVE COURSES IN PHILOSOPHY

Required Courses for a Major in Philosophy

The Philosophy Program at Dallas Baptist University is dedicated, on the foundation of the Christian faith, to the pursuit of an understanding of reality, both infinite and finite, to the systematic study of ideas and a reasoned pursuit of truth, to an examination of the principles of moral conduct and aesthetic experience, and overall, seeks to understand the world and human life from the perspective of the Christian world view. The program is designed to provide the student with undergraduate level competency in the discipline. The following core, historical, and disciplinary courses are required for a major in philosophy, leading to the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree. Students may also minor in philosophy (18 hours required).

Core Courses:

Phil 2301 (3-3-0) Introduction to Philosophy
Phil 2302 (3-3-0) Introduction to Logic
Phil 2301 (3-3-0) Introduction to World Views

History Courses:

Phil 3301 History of Philosophy I: Classical and Medieval
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)
Phil 3302 History of Philosophy II: Modern and Postmodern
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)

Disciplinary Courses:

Phil 4301 Metaphysics
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)
Phil 4302 Epistemology
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)
Phil 4303 Ethics
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)
Phil 4304 Aesthetics
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)

Phil 4305 Senior Research Project
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301, 2302, 2301, 3301, 3302,
and two of the following: Phil 4301, 4302, 4303, 4304)

Required Courses for a Minor in Philosophy

A minor in philosophy is designed to provide the student with adequate exposure to and training in the discipline of philosophy. You will not only gain philosophical knowledge, but also intellectual abilities that are useful in careers far removed from professional philosophy, and in the living of everyday life. Hence, undergraduate students are encouraged to consider seriously a philosophy minor as an excellent complement to any academic major. Courses required for a minor in philosophy amount to eighteen hours, nine and the upper level, with Phil 2301 as the only pre-requisite.

Catalog Course Description of Philosophy Courses

PHIL 2301 (3-3-0) Introduction to Philosophy

An introduction to basic philosophic concerns such as metaphysics, logic, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics, including a survey of major philosophic problems and the answers proposed by various major philosophers. A Biblical and theological framework for thinking Christianly about philosophy will be presented. Fall, Spring, Online.

PHIL 2302 (3-3-0) Introduction to Logic

A study of the principles of correct thinking. This course examines the laws of logic, inductive and deductive reasoning, and shows the relevance of sound argumentation to philosophic, scientific, academic, and personal enterprises. The nature of formal and informal logical fallacies is considered. The course is designed to help students obtain proficiency in critical thinking. Spring, odd-numbered years.

PHIL 2303 (3-3-0) Introduction to World Views

An introduction to the nature, definition, and importance of world views in general and to basic world view systems in particular (e.g., theism, deism, naturalism, pantheism). This course will highlight the importance of thinking "worldviewishly" by giving special attention to the role of assumptions and presuppositions in the academic disciplines, in the diversity of cultures, and in personal life. Fall.

PHIL 3301 (3-3-0) History of Philosophy I: Classical and Medieval

A survey and critique of the major Western philosophers and their ideas in the Ancient, Christian, and Medieval Periods (i.e., from the pre-Socratic philosophers to Thomas Aquinas). Fall.

Prerequisite: PHIL 2301 or instructor approval.

PHIL 3302 (3-3-0) History of Philosophy II: Modern and Postmodern

A continuation of PHIL 3301 consisting of a survey and critique of the major Western philosophers and their ideas in the Modern and Contemporary or Postmodern Periods (from the Renaissance to the present). Spring.

Prerequisite: PHIL 2301 or instructor approval.

PHIL 3370 (3-3-0) The Philosophy of Science and Technology

An investigation of the characteristic issues which arise when serious attempts are made to integrate twentieth century science and the Christian worldview in a constructive manner. The study will focus on how theological/scientific concerns have interfaced historically with the central philosophical categories of ontology, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics as well as emphasize what these concerns contribute to contemporary technologies. Spring, odd-numbered years.

PHIL 4301 (3-3-0) Metaphysics

A study of issues which arise from an attempt to understand reality and its manifestations, both infinite and finite. Topics include God and Trinitarianism, substance and accidents, space and time, possibility and necessity, causality, mind and body, and universals. Fall, odd-numbered years.

Prerequisite: PHIL 2301 or instructor approval.

PHIL 4302 (3-3-0) Epistemology

A study of the nature, source, types, justification, and limits of human knowledge with a focus on the Contemporary Period. The role and importance of the concept of Biblical revelation will be included. Spring, even-numbered years.

Prerequisite: PHIL 2301 or instructor approval.

PHIL 4303 (3-3-0) Ethics

A survey of the development of ethical thought, both ancient and modern. Various ethical systems and their proponents, including alternative Christian perspectives, will be covered along with a discussion of contemporary ethical problems such as abortion, homosexuality, war, ecology, business ethics, social justice, etc. Fall, even-numbered years.

Prerequisite: PHIL 2301 or instructor approval.

PHIL 4304 (3-3-0) (ART 4304)

An examination of the principles involved in the production, interpretation, and criticism of works of art, as well as basic principles of Christian aesthetic theory. Illustrative material from various artistic disciplines will be utilized. Spring, even-numbered years.

Prerequisite: PHIL 2301 or instructor approval.

PHIL 4305 (3-3-0) Senior Project

A sustained, scholarly treatment of a topic of philosophical interest to the student, guided by the student's advising professor in tutorial fashion, required as a capstone to the major. The thesis should be at least 30 pages in length and must be defended orally before a review committee. As needed.

Prerequisites: PHIL 2301, 2302, 2303, 3301, 3302, and at least two of the following: PHIL 4301, 4302, 4303, or 4304.

Minor Requirements

A minor in philosophy is designed to provide the student adequate exposure to and training in the discipline of philosophy and is an excellent complement to any academic major. Courses required for a minor in philosophy include: PHIL 2301, plus any combination of additional courses in philosophy, including 9 upper-level hours, which lead to the required 18 total hours.

Other Philosophy Courses at DBU**PHIL 3304 (3-3-0) The Christian World View
(RELI 3374)**

A description of the concept of world view in general and the content of the Christian world view in particular, focusing on the Biblical themes of creation, fall, redemption, and their implications in the totality of life including spiritual experience, education, the arts, vocation, the family, etc. Fall.

PHIL 3370 (3-3-0) The Philosophy of Science and Technology

An investigation of the characteristic issues which arise when serious attempts are made to integrate twentieth century science and the Christian worldview in a constructive manner. The study will focus on how theological/scientific concerns have interfaced historically with the central philosophical categories of ontology, epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics as well as emphasize what these concerns contribute to contemporary technologies. Spring, odd-numbered years.

**PHIL 4374 (3-3-0) Christian Apologetics
(RELI 4374)**

A survey of representative approaches to Christian Apologetics from the Greek

fathers to the present. These will be analyzed in the light of Biblical revelation, and a comprehensive Christian apologetic will be attempted. Offered periodically.

Prerequisite: PHIL 2301 or instructor approval.

PHIL 4390 (3-3-0) Independent Study

Individual reading and written research on selected philosophical topics done on an independent basis guided by a professor in the philosophy program. Offered periodically.

Prerequisite: Instructor approval.

PART THREE

RATIONALE FOR THE PHILOSOPHY CURRICULUM

The courses required for a major in philosophy have been intentionally selected with specific academic purposes in mind. There are four groupings of courses — the core, history, and disciplinary courses, plus the bachelor's thesis project — each contributing important dimensions to the philosophy major (and minor). We want you to understand the nature and purpose of each course, the reasons for taking the courses in the prescribed order, and the learning outcomes and objectives which should be obtained upon the successful completion of each course.

Core (Foundations) Courses:

Phil 2301 (3-3-0) Introduction to Philosophy
Phil 2302 (3-3-0) Introduction to Logic
Phil 2301 (3-3-0) Introduction to World Views

As the heading (and parenthetical remark) indicates, the first three courses are at the core of, and lay the foundation for, the philosophy major. **Introduction to Philosophy** is designed to introduce you at a very basic level to what philosophy is all about. In this course, you will learn about the disciplines of study within philosophy (logic, metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, etc.), basic philosophical terminology (which you must master to survive this major!), and you will become familiar with leading philosophers and some of their contributions to philosophical thinking. Also, the biblical basics for doing philosophy Christianly will be presented in this course. Upon its completion, you should have a good grasp about the nature, concerns, problems, and terms of philosophy.

Integral to philosophy is the ability to think well. Thus, at the outset it is necessary to learn the basic principles of logic and sound reasoning, and to establish the ambition of becoming a critical thinker. These are the purposes of **Introduction to Logic**. A study of deductive and inductive reasoning, learning to detect informal logical fallacies and using your newly acquired logical skills in the critical analysis of an argumentative text is the substance of this course. Introduction to Logic is capped with the presentation of a logical disputation in the tradition of medieval education practices.

Next is **Introduction to World Views**. World views are a way of looking at life and the world at the level of assumptions and presuppositions. This class is designed to teach you to think and observe presuppositionally, and to learn the tenets of the fundamental world view meaning systems that make up modern and postmodern thinking: theism, deism, naturalism, nihilism, existentialism, new age,

pantheism, modernism and postmodernism. Taking this course at the beginning of your studies should enable you to become aware of your own world view assumptions, the presuppositional base upon which all reasoning proceeds, and help you to recognize the ultimate assumptions upon which various philosophers have built their systems of thought.

The first course you should take is, not surprisingly, **Introduction to Philosophy** which will give you the basic building blocks of the discipline. If possible, you might want to take **Introduction to World Views** next since it will complement the first course, lead you to the bedrock upon which philosophies are based, and help you to recognize the contexts or paradigms in which logic and reason is employed. Then take **Introduction to Logic** which will provide the mental tools you will need to continue your philosophical studies critically and constructively. With the foundation laid by these courses, you will be able to move on to get the "big picture" through a study of the discipline's history.

History Courses:

Phil 3301 History of Philosophy I: Classical and Medieval

(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)

Phil 3302 History of Philosophy II: Modern and Postmodern

(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)

Who were the key philosophers and what did they believe and teach? How has philosophical thought developed throughout the centuries? What is the history of key philosophical terms and themes? How have various social and cultural settings affected the development of philosophy? What kind of impact has philosophy had on development of culture and civilization especially in the West? How has philosophic thought interacted with theology and the Church? What key ideas have captured the minds and imaginations of people, and how have these ideas affected the human experience? Questions like these, and many others, are dealt with in these two courses that trace the history of philosophy in broad brush strokes from the classical to the postmodern period. Getting the big picture, developing historical perspective, and understanding the concepts of key philosophers are the major outcomes of these two courses.

The **History of Philosophy I** is noteworthy because the perennial philosophical issues of all time were first posited in the classical era, and also because of the introduction of Christianity into the philosophical matrix. How the faith has related to and affected the history of philosophy is presented in this course.

The **History of Philosophy II** is important because it charts the departure of philosophy from Christian moorings, and chronicles how thinkers increasingly sought to understand and explain the sum total of the human experience without reference to God in a movement that is typically called "Modernity." This class

also surveys the recent criticisms leveled against modernist paradigm by a *nouveau* philosophical movement called "postmodernism." These significant developments, and the philosophers who made it happen, will be covered in this course.

You can take these courses in any order, but for the sake of continuity, it is much better to take them in their proper sequence. With the foundation laid, and the big picture in place, the next segment of courses focuses directly and intensely on the main disciplines within philosophy and the specific issues associated with each. At this point in your study of philosophy you will begin to move much deeper into the philosophical forest as you pursue your senior level course work.

Disciplinary Courses:

- Phil 4301 Metaphysics
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)
- Phil 4302 Epistemology
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)
- Phil 4303 Ethics
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)
- Phil 4304 Aesthetics
(Pre-requisite: Phil 2301 or instructor approval)

These courses embrace some of the most sublime themes and significant questions in human experience, namely the study of being and reality (metaphysics), the nature and limits of knowledge (epistemology), the principles of morality and human conduct (ethics), and the concepts of creating, interpreting, and criticizing works of art (aesthetics). What a privilege and opportunity to investigate these weighty matters in your major course work.

Metaphysics is the study of the general character of reality. What kinds of things exist? Is reality rational? What is the nature of familiar things? What is time? How do things change, and yet be the same, especially human beings? What is the nature of God, the self, and the human mind? Are human beings free or determined? These questions are imposing, and the proposed answers fascinating. This is the best place to begin your advanced course work.

Epistemology comes from the Greek word *episteme*, (knowledge) and, as a field of philosophy, deals with questions like these: What are the sources of knowledge? What is the nature of knowledge? How do we know anything at all? Is there a real world outside the mind, and if so, how can we know it? What is the difference between appearance and reality? Is our knowledge valid? What are legitimate tests for truth? The investigation of these questions in this class will reveal the fact that "there is more to human knowing than human knowing will ever know!"

Ethics, or the question of morality, is one of the central issues of our time. Many of the ordinary questions and issues we deal with every day — telling the truth, sexual relations, family life, etc. — are all ethical questions. The moral teachings and ethical systems that various thinkers have devised throughout the centuries will be the initial focus in this course. Then a consideration of important, contemporary moral problems will follow including a discussion of how the various ethical systems respond to these concerns. The Christian contribution to ethical thinking and Biblical perspective on each contemporary issue will be at the heart of this course.

Aesthetics — the philosophy about art and beauty — completes your study of the disciplines of philosophy. Again, very lofty conceptions are considered: Are there any timeless, universal aesthetic principles that govern the production, appreciation, and evaluation of works of art? Does the Bible prohibit artistic representation in its pronouncement against "graven images"? Does art distort reality, and detract us from the truth? Or does it enable us to experience powerful emotions of anger or pity, and purge our souls of them? Does art even need justification? Why not do art for art's pure aesthetic sake? Can art bring people together, and even unite us in some way with God? Should art have a role in worship? What about the moral or immoral content of artistic expression? Can art serve political, and even revolutionary purposes? Proposed answers to questions like these, and a Christian perspective on aesthetics, will constitute this exciting course.

The content of these four disciplinary courses should convey a couple of important messages to you: philosophy is important and philosophy is also enriching! *Important* because of the very subjects you deal with, and *enriching* because of the things you get to talk about and learn.

From here you will move on to the capstone experience, the pinnacle of your career as a philosophy major, the course in which you have the opportunity to do a little philosophy yourself in the research, writing, and presentation of your bachelor's thesis!

Senior Research Project

Phil 4305 (3-3-0) Senior Research Project

Now, in order to take this course, you must have already completed the core and history courses, as well as at least two of the senior level disciplinary courses. No doubt as you make your way through the courses in this major, you will come across topics about which you may say: "I sure would like to find out more about this!" Here is the place to do exactly that! Under the direction of your academic advisor in tutorial fashion, you will select a topic of genuine philosophical importance and produce a sustained treatment of it. The process

will involve the three stages of research, writing, and the oral defense of your work. In this project you should concentrate on content, clarity, cogency, and creativity as you seek to understand, communicate, critique, and contribute to some aspect of philosophic knowledge. This project will allow you to enter most fully into the philosophic enterprise providing you with the opportunity to draw upon the knowledge you have gained and deploy the intellectual abilities you have developed as a major in philosophy. More details about this project are found next.

PART FOUR

THE SENIOR RESEARCH PROJECT

Requirement and prerequisites

As a philosophy major you are required to take Phil 4305 Senior Research Project/Bachelor's Thesis as a condition for graduation. The project consists of an acceptable paper of 30-50 pages (excluding bibliography) on a philosophical topic of personal interest and significance that represents your best philosophical efforts to date. You may take this course at any point in your senior year, during either the fall or spring semesters (after the completion of the core and history courses, and at least two of the four senior level discipline courses).

Purposes

The rationale for a senior research project is intrinsic to the discipline of philosophy itself. The opportunity to research, write, and present a sustained, rigorous, and refined analysis of some philosophical issue that allows you to display and further develop the fruits of your philosophical education seems natural. It is the capstone experience to your undergraduate education in philosophy.

Additionally, the paper will also help faculty members to write more specific and informed letters of recommendation to would-be employers and graduate schools. You should write this paper in such a way that you could use it as a writing sample for admission to graduate school or to show to a prospective employer. Your very best effort is, therefore, recommended.

Topics and style

The philosophical topics that may be pursued are virtually limitless, but must be sufficiently narrow in order to cover the topic adequately in the relatively short space of twenty to twenty five pages. Topics must be chosen in consultation with an advisor, and must be approved by the faculty member supervising the project. Here are some suggested topics for your consideration:

- The analysis and evaluation of a major theme or topic in the thought of one of the leading philosophers (for example, the aesthetics of Immanuel Kant, Plato's view of the forms, etc.).
- The history of an idea (*begriffsgeschichte*) such as tracing the unfolding of the concept of evolution in the pre-Socratic, or the notion of individualism in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, or the history of the concept of world view.

- Any major moral or aesthetic subject or concept (social justice, war, abortion; and the concept of "art for art's sake," the political role of art, etc.).
- Any major philosophical topic or problem such as evil, freedom, the self, mind, dualism, skepticism, etc.
- A major philosophical school like the sophists, or the positivists, or the skeptics, etc.
- Topics indigenous to the philosophy of religion such as religious experience, the existence of God, religious language, faith and reason, etc.
- A critical thinking paper in which you analyze and evaluate a piece of argumentative writing.
- You may write out your personal philosophical credo, and state what philosophers or philosophical ideas have influenced your thinking and why.

In terms of style, your paper may be in any one of several approved genres including a historical narrative, a critical analysis, a dialogue, a first person account (especially if it is your personal credo), or a free style piece of original writing. Other possibilities may also be acceptable.

Précis or abstract

Once you have decided upon an topic that has been approved by your advisor, then you must write out a one to two page summary of the project stating the topic and its importance, the purpose and approach you plan to take, and the tentative evaluations and conclusions you will possibly draw. Obviously, writing the abstract will require some preliminary reading and investigation. Due dates for the abstract are found below.

The oral presentation

While the prospect of having to present your work orally in the presence of evaluators sounds frightening, it is not meant to be so. The setting will be friendly and but rigorous. Before your two faculty evaluators, you will present an overview of the content of your paper, state your criticisms and/or conclusions, and be prepared to answer questions about your work. As a philosopher, you must learn to communicate persuasively not only in written form but orally as well, and this is one opportunity to develop this art. Part of the final grade will depend on your performance at this presentation.

Parameters, deadlines, and grading

- The research project must be 30-50 in length (excluding bibliography), word-processed, double-spaced.
- The paper should employ normal scholarly procedures and must be constructed according to the guidelines set forth in the most recent edition of either Kate Turabian's *Manual of Style*, or the *MLA Handbook*. Part of the grade will depend upon its proper form, including spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- The paper should contain a bibliography of at least fifteen to twenty sources used in the body of the work, (including a substantial number of periodicals or journals). Electronic resources are acceptable, but should be less in quantity than books and journals.
- The topic must be approved such that the abstract or précis might be submitted to your advisor by September 15 in the Fall semester, February 15 in the Spring semester, and June 10 in the Summer semester.
- You will meet with your advisor about once every two or three weeks during the semester in which you are developing your bachelor's thesis for the purposes of guidance and discussion of the topic.
- The paper will be due on a date designated by your advisor allowing adequate time for the oral defense of your project and to meet grade deadlines assigned by the University.
- Your work will be evaluated by two professors at DBU, one of which will be your advisor in the philosophy program, and the other either from the department of philosophy if your topic is purely philosophical, or a faculty member from another college or department on campus if your topic overlaps into other disciplines (religion, aesthetics or art, business ethics, etc.).
- The percentages for the grading your research project will be as follows: Form: 25%; Content: 50%; Oral presentation: 25%. These percentages may be subject to change.

PART FIVE

DEGREE PLANS, ADVISING AND REGISTRATION, INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSES

Degree plans

Once you have decided to major in philosophy, you will need to have an official degree plan prepared as soon as possible to give guidance and structure to your chosen program of study. Contact the Director of the Philosophy Program as soon as possible (Dr. David Naugle: ext. 5248; davey@dbu.edu) and make an appointment to discuss your academic goals, and to have the degree plan prepared. Once it is prepared, it will be explained to you in detail.

Also, you must bring it with you each time you register for new courses semester by semester. You should keep up with exactly what you are taking along the way, and check off the courses as you successfully complete them. In this way, you will know "where you stand" academically, and prevent any "surprises" (i.e., uncompleted courses) as you approach your anticipated graduation.

Advising and registration

Each philosophy major will be assigned an advisor (probably Dr. Naugle) who will work with you personally and professionally to guide you through the process of majoring in philosophy. As you prepare to register for courses per semester, you must have your registration form sign by your advisor. Make the necessary arrangements to do this during registration periods.

Your advisor will not only sign your registration forms, but also inquire about how you are doing academically, spiritually, and otherwise. He/she will be available to you to answer questions about the major and to discuss career options, etc. The goal of the advisor/advisee relationship is to create a community spirit and a sense of belonging that will foster the richest possible educational experience. As the program grows in numbers, group advising sessions will be held each term to discuss general concerns and answer questions about curriculum, professors, careers, grad school, etc.

Independent study courses

To enroll in Phil 4390 Independent Study in Philosophy, you must first secure an instructor's agreement to work with you on a specific topic that is not offered in the regular curriculum in the Philosophy Program at DBU.

Once the arrangements have been made, and you have registered for the course, you must meet with the supervising professor during the first week of the

term to discuss in detail the proposed plan of study. By the end of the second (maybe third) week of the semester, the student should submit for approval a *prospectus* of the anticipated course of study that should include the following elements:

- The topic and objectives
- Statement of required readings and written work
- Due dates for the completion of each aspect of the course work
- Schedule of meetings every two to three weeks with the professor to discuss progress and problems

The student is responsible for keeping the appointments with the professor, for properly fulfilling each assigned task, and for completing each stage of the work on time. Phil 4390 may not be substituted for any required course in the philosophy major except for exceedingly significant reasons.

Continuous progress courses are also available. These are courses in the DBU curriculum, but the student is unable to take them when offered because of unavoidable scheduling conflicts. They can be taken like an independent study course. See your advisor for details.

PART SIX

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Most philosophy majors are members of the Pew College Society.
For more information on Pew, go to www.dbu.edu/naugle and click on Pew!