

# Philosophy and Religious Studies

**Web Site:** <http://www.odu.edu/philosophy> (<http://www.odu.edu/philosophy/>)

Dylan Wittkower, Chair  
James R. Van Dore, Chief Departmental Advisor  
Office: (757) 683-3861

The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy with three major options: General, Political and Legal Studies, and Religious Studies. The degree program in Philosophy is dedicated to instruction in critical reading and critical thinking that supports students in discovering, clarifying, and reformulating their values and beliefs through open inquiry that looks across and is informed by the wide diversity of human experience. Students interested in the study of religion can minor in Religious Studies or choose Religious Studies as their major within the Philosophy degree.

## Programs

### Bachelor of Arts Programs

- Philosophy (BA) (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/philosophy-religious-studies/philosophy-ba/>)
- Philosophy with a Major in Political and Legal Studies (BA) (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/philosophy-religious-studies/philosophy-political-legal-studies-ba/>)
- Philosophy with a Major in Religious Studies (BA) (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/philosophy-religious-studies/philosophy-religious-studies-ba/>)

### Minors

- Administrative Leadership and Ethics for Professional Roles Interdisciplinary Minor (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/philosophy-religious-studies/administrative-leadership-ethics-professional-roles-minor/>)
- Applied Ethics Minor (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/philosophy-religious-studies/applied-ethics-minor/>)
- Philosophy Minor (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/philosophy-religious-studies/philosophy-minor/>)
- Political and Legal Studies Minor (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/philosophy-religious-studies/political-legal-studies-minor/>)
- Religious Studies Minor (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/philosophy-religious-studies/religious-studies-minor/>)

### Linked BA in Philosophy and MA in Humanities

The linked BA in philosophy and MA in Humanities makes it possible for exceptional philosophy majors to count up to 12 hours of graduate courses toward both an undergraduate and graduate degree. Students must earn a minimum of 150 credit hours (120 discrete credit hours for the undergraduate degree and 30 discrete credit hours for the graduate degree). For more information, consult the Humanities section of this catalog (<http://catalog.odu.edu/undergraduate/collegeofartsletters/humanities/>).

### BA or BS to MBA (Master of Business Administration) Linked Program

The linked BA/MBA or BS/MBA program is an early entry to the MBA program of study. The early-entry program is designed for well qualified non-business undergraduate ODU students to start their MBA program prior to completing their undergraduate degree. Well qualified non-business undergraduate students may take MBA-level courses as early as three semesters prior to graduation and count up to 12 graduate credits toward their undergraduate degree. Students participating in the early-

entry program must earn a minimum of 150 credit hours (120 discrete credit hours for the undergraduate degree and 30 discrete credit hours for the graduate degree). Early-entry program students should carefully consider their undergraduate degree program requirements when planning their course of study. Students in the early-entry program work in close consultation with the MBA Program Office and should refer to information in the Strome College of Business section in the graduate catalog (<http://catalog.odu.edu/graduate/stromecollegeofbusiness/>) to develop an individualized plan of study based on the required coursework.

### BA or BS to MPA (Master of Public Administration) Linked Program

The linked BA/MPA or BS/MPA program provides qualified Old Dominion University undergraduate students with the opportunity to earn a master's degree in public administration while taking credits in the MPA program as an undergraduate student. The program is designed for highly motivated students with the desire to immediately continue their education after the bachelor's degree. The program is especially relevant to individuals seeking to work (or currently working) in the public or non-profit sectors, but is suitable for students from any undergraduate major. Graduate courses may be taken during the fall and spring semester of the student's senior undergraduate year. Up to 12 graduate credits can count toward both the undergraduate and graduate degree and can meet upper-level General Education requirements. After receiving the undergraduate degree, a student will continue with the MPA program, taking MPA courses until completing the required 39 credit hours. Students in the linked program must earn a minimum of 150 credit hours (120 discrete credit hours for the undergraduate degree and 30 discrete credit hours for the graduate degree).

Requirements for admission to the graduate program can be found in the School of Public Service section of the Graduate Catalog (<http://catalog.odu.edu/graduate/business/public-service/>). For additional information, please contact the School of Public Service in the Strome College of Business.

## Courses

### Philosophy (PHIL)

#### PHIL 110P Introduction to Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)

An introduction to basic concepts, methods and issues in philosophy, and a consideration of representative types of philosophical thought concerning human nature, the world, knowledge, and value.

#### PHIL 120P Logic and Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)

A study of the principles of correct reasoning and the types of fallacious reasoning. Includes an examination of the philosophical and historical context of logic, and the application of logical methods to philosophical questions.

#### PHIL 126P Honors: Introduction to Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)

Open only to students in the Honors College. A special honors section of PHIL 110P.

#### PHIL 127P Honors: Introduction to Philosophy of Science (3 Credit Hours)

Open only to students in the Honors College. Scientific developments are used as an occasion for philosophical reflection. In the process the student is led to a better understanding of science. The course introduces and makes use of basic logical and conceptual tools of philosophy.

#### PHIL 150P Life, Death, and Meaning (3 Credit Hours)

What is the meaning of life, and what role might the end of life play in living meaningfully? This course provides an introduction to philosophy and religious studies through an investigation of different views on death and the meaning of life from diverse cultures and identities. (Cross-listed with REL 150P)

**PHIL 155E Human Nature (3 Credit Hours)**

What ways of thinking, feeling, and acting are essentially human? This course focuses on some of the most influential and fascinating philosophical and religious accounts of human nature from diverse cultural perspectives. Topics may include the nature of human beings in relation to God, society, ethics, politics, knowledge, the environment, freedom, evolution, the mind, language, race, gender, and technology. (Cross-listed with REL 155E)

**PHIL 160R Raising Moral Issues in STEM (3 Credit Hours)**

This course provides training in how to speak up in defense of moral concerns in a STEM organizational context, and how to do so in an effective and productive way.

**PHIL 195 Study Abroad: Introduction to Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is the study abroad equivalent of PHIL 110P, an introduction to basic concepts, methods and issues in philosophy, and a consideration of representative types of philosophical thought concerning human nature, the world, knowledge, and value.

**PHIL 202G Information Literacy for Cybersecurity (3 Credit Hours)**

This course provides an in-depth introduction to information literacy from library and information science, information ethics, and computer science perspectives along with applications to cybersecurity research and professional activity. This course is aligned with Old Dominion University's general education learning outcomes for information literacy.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**PHIL 227E Honors: World Religions: Beliefs and Values (3 Credit Hours)**

Open only to students in the Honors College. A special Honors section of PHIL 250E.

**PHIL 228E Honors: Introduction to Ethics (3 Credit Hours)**

Open only to students in the Honors College. A special Honors section of PHIL 230E.

**PHIL 230E Introduction to Ethics (3 Credit Hours)**

An introduction to the study of ethics through philosophical reflection on a variety of moral issues of contemporary significance. Topics covered will vary by semester and instructor, and may include issues drawn from professional fields such as business, medicine, and information technology, plus matters of public concern like the environment, the treatment of animals, the use of military force, social justice, and civil and human rights.

**PHIL 235E Love, Sex, and Desire (3 Credit Hours)**

Is love universal or culturally bound? Is sexual desire biologically driven or learned? This course provides an introduction to Philosophy and Religious Studies through an investigation of love, sex, and desire vis-a-vis ethical values and societal norms. (Cross-listed with REL 235E)

**PHIL 250E World Religions: Beliefs and Values (3 Credit Hours)**

A comparative and philosophical study of major world religions in the Eastern and Western traditions with particular attention being paid to their views about the basis of right action and the nature of good and evil. Other points of comparison include the foundations of religious knowledge and belief, the meaning of human life, divinity, and death and immortality.

**PHIL 270P Truth and Perception (3 Credit Hours)**

What is truth? How do we know when something is real or fake? Are you certain that other people perceive the world in the same way you do? In this course we'll try to answer questions like these and more through an exploration of the relationship between our minds, our bodies, and the world around us.

**PHIL 290G Philosophy of Digital Culture (3 Credit Hours)**

This course provides practical training in information access, critical information assessment, and ethical information use in a theoretically-oriented research context, as well as a theoretical exploration of issues in information literacy, the ethics and politics of online informational spaces, and the philosophy of digital culture.

**PHIL 295 (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of selected topics designed for non-majors. These courses will appear in the course schedule, and will be more fully described in information distributed to academic advisors.

**PHIL 300 Knowledge and Reality (3 Credit Hours)**

Metaphysics is the study of the ultimate nature of reality and epistemology is the study of what we can know about reality. This introduction to metaphysics and epistemology will engage with views of what exists and how we can know about it from a diverse collection of traditions and figures.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 301 Ethics and Metaethics (3 Credit Hours)**

An examination of the philosophical foundations of ethical inquiry from a diverse collection of traditions and figures, including historically marginalized voices. Various ethical systems are considered, and different views of metaethics and moral psychology may be as well.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 303E Business Ethics (3 Credit Hours)**

A philosophical examination of ethical issues that arise in business and commerce. Topics discussed will vary by semester and instructor, but may include affirmative action, ethical versus unethical sales and marketing techniques, the obligations of business to society (if any), and the moral foundations of capitalism.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**PHIL 313 Philosophy of Religion (3 Credit Hours)**

An analytical and critical consideration of the philosophical foundations of religion. Such topics as the existence of God, the problem of evil, theism and atheism, prayer, and immortality are discussed.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 324 Philosophy of Art (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of the various theories of art and human creativity in the context of historical and cultural backgrounds.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 330 Ancient Greek Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is a study of the thought of the classical Greek philosophers from the sixth century B.C.E. to the fifth century C.E.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 331 Early Modern European Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is a survey of the rise of modern philosophy in the 17th and early 18th centuries in Europe.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 332 Medieval Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

This course examines the significant contributions of medieval philosophers to the development of philosophy of religion as well as other fields, including philosophy of language, logic, and ethics. Students examine the writings of medieval philosophers from Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 334 Late Modern European Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is a survey of modern philosophy in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe, addressing figures such as Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 340 Logic (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of the basic concepts and methods of logic as they occur in ordinary language, formal logical arguments, and an elementary logical system. Traditional Logic is emphasized, but some elements of Modern Logic are also introduced.

**Prerequisites:** junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 344E Environmental Ethics (3 Credit Hours)**

An examination of the nature and basis of human obligations for the welfare of the environment with special attention to the foundations of ethical decision making.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**PHIL 345E Bioethics (3 Credit Hours)**

An examination of the philosophical foundations of ethical decision making in biology, medicine, and the life sciences.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**PHIL 353 Asian Religions (3 Credit Hours)**

This course introduces students to several key religious traditions originating in Asia, such as Hindu traditions in India; Confucianism, Daoism, and popular religion in China, Buddhism and Shinto in Japan; and Buddhist traditions of China, Tibet, and Mongolia. Students will read and analyze primary sources in English translation. By examining artifacts from literature, art, and poetry, students will also learn about cultural history. Throughout the course, students will employ hermeneutical methods in the field of religious studies, such as methods of comparisons.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 355E Cybersecurity Ethics (3 Credit Hours)**

This course examines ethical issues relevant to computing and information technology, including: privacy; freedom of speech and content control on the Internet; individual and social responsibility; cybersecurity; cybercrimes; social impact of computers and other digital technologies; and ethical obligations of IT professionals. Students will gain a broad understanding of central issues in cyberethics and the ways that fundamental ethical theories relate to these core issues.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**PHIL 357E Ethics and Data (3 Credit Hours)**

This course explores, from a philosophical perspective, ethical questions arising from collecting, drawing inferences from, and acting on data, especially when these activities are automated and on a large scale. This course will provide students a framework for considering the ethical implications of data usage. Emphasis will be placed on discussing how historic and contemporary examples of potentially unethical practice could be altered to reduce harm and increase equity. Topics to be covered may include, but are not limited to, systematic approaches to assessing ethical issues; privacy and confidentiality; defining research and the responsibilities associated with conducting ethical research; implicit and structural biases in data collection and analysis; freedom of speech; and consent to data collection.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**PHIL 364 African-American Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is a survey introduction to major African-American philosophical thinkers and will address themes such as: What is the nature of race, and what is the nature of racism? What is the nature of the good? What does the good life look like, how should we make sense of beauty, and are those values different for each of us? And how should we make sense of social and civil life and of social and civic obligations in the context of deep and persisting injustice?

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 365 Race & Power (3 Credit Hours)**

This course will draw on historical and contemporary scholarship to explore the evolution of the concept of race in relation to different theories of power. Topics may include how to define race, how people are racialized, genocide and social death, the use of racial epithets, cultural appropriation, ally-ship, and the role of activism.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 368 Internship (1-3 Credit Hours)**

A structured work experience using analytical, research, and communication training from philosophy in a relevant industry, such as law, tech, finance, libraries, or in the public or nonprofit sectors. May be paid or unpaid. Criteria for evaluation will be determined by work supervisor and cooperating faculty advisor. May be repeated for credit. Available for pass/fail grading only.

**Prerequisites:** Available to philosophy majors only; approval of the department chair required

**PHIL 369 Practicum (3 Credit Hours)**

The course offers three forms of practical experience for philosophy majors: Professional (for students anticipating careers in relevant professions, including philosophy); Classroom (for students anticipating graduate study and a teaching career); Civic/Social Affairs (for students interested in grassroots activism). Consult the department for details and certain specific prerequisites.

**Prerequisites:** junior standing; minimum of 15 credit hours in philosophy

**PHIL 380 Hinduism (3 Credit Hours)**

An intensive study of the basic teachings of Hinduism as manifested in its sacred writings.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 381 Buddhist Traditions (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of the origin, historical development, and contemporary status of Buddhism, in terms of its religious and philosophical elements and its influence in Asian cultures.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 383T Philosophy of Technology & Innovation (3 Credit Hours)**

This course engages in a critical exploration of what technology is as a human practice and how it develops over time in ways that influence and are influenced by society, culture, and human values. Students will also learn responsible, inclusive, and creative design and development practices through an understanding of how social structures are embedded in technology.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**PHIL 395 Topics in Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of selected topics designed for nonmajors, or for elective credit within a major. These courses will appear in the course schedule, and will be more fully described in information distributed to academic advisors.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing or approval of the department chair

**PHIL 396 Topics in Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of selected topics designed for nonmajors, or for elective credit within a major. These courses will appear in the course schedule, and will be more fully described in information distributed to academic advisors.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing or approval of the department chair

**PHIL 400/500 Philosophy and Video Games (3 Credit Hours)**

An examination of the metaphysical, aesthetic, and ethical philosophical issues that accompany the creation, play, and critique of video games. Students will learn and analyze theories about what games are. They will think about and discuss the aesthetic qualities of video games and critically engage with attempts to fit video games into the larger art world. Students will engage with moral issues that arise from creating and consuming video games with morally problematic content. Finally, students will learn how to think critically about and interpret larger philosophical problems raised by video games and their themes.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and a grade of C or better in PHIL 110P or ENMA 480, or instructor permission

**PHIL 402/502 Gender and Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

A philosophical survey of approaches to understanding gender and gender differences. The course will also serve as an introduction to feminist philosophy, with a particular emphasis on feminist ethics.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 404/504 Existentialism and Phenomenology (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is an examination of the writings of some of the major philosophers in the Existentialist and Phenomenology movements of the 19th and 20th centuries.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C and six credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 405/505 American Pragmatist Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is an examination of the writings of some of the major American philosophers in the Pragmatist tradition.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C and six credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 406/506 Language and Thought: History of Analytic Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is a study of the history of the Analytic tradition in philosophy up through the 20th century.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C and six credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 410/510 Social and Political Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

A philosophical analysis of the relation between man, society, and the state, studying about a dozen philosophers since Plato on such topics as justice, authority, law, freedom, and civil rights.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C, or ENGL 231C and 6 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 411/511 Post-Modernism and Post-Structuralism (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is an examination of intellectual currents in postmodernism and post-structuralism as they pertain to central questions in social and political thought.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C, or ENGL 231C and 6 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 412/512 Philosophy of Law (3 Credit Hours)**

An examination of the nature of law and philosophical issues concerning the law.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C, or ENGL 231C and 6 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 417/517 Philosophy of Education (3 Credit Hours)**

Considers the relationship of philosophy and education. Topics considered include: philosophy as a foundation for education, education as an institution, and educational and philosophical issues as they relate to each other.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C, or ENGL 231C and 6 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 423/523 Philosophy of Work (3 Credit Hours)**

An examination of philosophical issues surrounding the practice of work. Topics to be discussed may include the definition of work, alienation, exploitation, whether there is a right to work or a right not to work, religious perspectives on work, and gender issues in work.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C, or ENGL 231C and 6 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 425/525 Kant and Hume (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is an examination of the philosophical writings of Hume and Kant and their influence.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C, or ENGL 231C, and six credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 430/530 Marx and Hegel (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is an examination of the philosophical writings of Hegel and Marx and their influence.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C and six credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 432/532 Nietzsche and Life Affirmation (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is an examination of Nietzsche's attempt to provide a life-affirming philosophy after laying waste to many traditional Western efforts to find life meaningful.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C/ENGL 221C/ENGL 231C and six credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 434/534 Contemporary Theory of Knowledge (3 Credit Hours)**

This course provides students with a problem-oriented, critical, and comparative understanding of problems in contemporary epistemology. Topics include skepticism and responses thereto, analyses of knowledge, the externalist versus internalist debate, foundationalism and coherentism, and social approaches to knowledge including contextualism and feminism.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 435/535 Philosophy of Psychology (3 Credit Hours)**

An examination of various ways in which the mind has been understood in philosophy and in psychology and of the methods that have been used in the study of the mind.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 440/540 Philosophy of Science (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of the concepts and philosophical problems in the sciences: scientific reasoning, confirmation, explanation, laws, meaning, theories, revolutions, progress, and values.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C, or ENGL 231C and 6 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 442E/542 Studies in Applied Ethics (3 Credit Hours)**

An intensive examination of ethical issues in a particular field or profession; an emphasis on ethical theory underlying practical decisions.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and Junior standing

**PHIL 451/551 Native American Philosophies (3 Credit Hours)**

This course will provide students with an introduction to Native American philosophies with a focus on issues of identity, genocide, personhood, gender, sovereignty, and decolonization. Topics will be approached through a consideration of Native American philosophical methodologies and Native views regarding metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. (Cross-listed with REL 451)

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**PHIL 482/582 Chinese Religion and Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of Chinese thought emphasizing Early and Classical Confucianism and Taoism, Chinese Buddhism, and NeoConfucianism. Modern currents of Chinese thought is also discussed.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 485/585 Japanese Religion and Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of the religious and philosophical traditions of Japan. Emphasis will be given to Shintoism, Buddhism, and Neo-Confucianism and their contemporary status and influence in Japanese culture.

**Prerequisites:** junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 491W/591 Seminar in Philosophy (3 Credit Hours)**

Intensive examination of the thought of one major philosopher or philosophical movement. This is a writing-intensive course.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C/ENGL 221C/ENGL 231C and 6 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 495/595 Topics in Philosophy (1-3 Credit Hours)**

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit small groups of qualified students to work on subjects of mutual interest which, due to their specialized nature, may not be offered regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule, and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

**Prerequisites:** appropriate survey course or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 496/596 Topics in Philosophy (1-3 Credit Hours)**

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit small groups of qualified students to work on subjects of mutual interest which, due to their specialized nature, may not be offered regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule, and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

**Prerequisites:** appropriate survey course or permission of the instructor

**PHIL 497/597 Tutorial Work in Special Topics in Philosophy (1-3 Credit Hours)**

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

**Prerequisites:** senior standing and approval of the department chair

**PHIL 498/598 Tutorial Work in Special Topics in Philosophy (1-3 Credit Hours)**

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

**Prerequisites:** senior standing and approval of the department chair

## **Religious Studies (REL)**

**REL 147G Cults and Conspiracies (3 Credit Hours)**

This course will explore why people believe conspiracy theories and why people become dedicated to religious cults or new religious movements, and will provide training in tools and strategies for examining truth claims of various groups.

**REL 150P Life, Death, and Meaning (3 Credit Hours)**

What is the meaning of life, and what role might the end of life play in living meaningfully? This course provides an introduction to philosophy and religious studies through an investigation of different views on death and the meaning of life from diverse cultures and identities. (Cross-listed with PHIL 150P)

**REL 155E Human Nature (3 Credit Hours)**

What ways of thinking, feeling, and acting are essentially human? This course focuses on some of the most influential and fascinating philosophical and religious accounts of human nature from diverse cultural perspectives. Topics may include the nature of human beings in relation to God, society, ethics, politics, knowledge, the environment, freedom, evolution, the mind, language, race, gender, and technology. (Cross-listed with PHIL 155E)

**REL 226G Honors: Muslims & Media (3 Credit Hours)**

Open only to students in the Honors College. A special honors section of REL 260G.

**REL 235E Love, Sex, and Desire (3 Credit Hours)**

Is love universal or culturally bound? Is sexual desire biologically driven or learned? This course provides an introduction to Philosophy and Religious Studies through an investigation of love, sex, and desire vis-a-vis ethical values and societal norms. (Cross-listed with PHIL 235E)

**REL 260G Muslims & Media (3 Credit Hours)**

Television, film, and journalism play an influential role in introducing Muslim life to broad audiences. This course provides an introduction to the representation of Islam in news and popular culture over the past century. In examining the relationship between Muslims and media we will develop information literacy skills and learn how to critically evaluate and interpret these sources.

**REL 311 Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (3 Credit Hours)**

An investigation of the Hebrew Bible on the basis of Biblical criticism and research. Attention is given to the cultural and historical background of these writings.

**Prerequisites:** junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**REL 312 New Testament (3 Credit Hours)**

An investigation of New Testament literature and thought on the basis of Biblical criticism and research. Attention is given to the religious and cultural background of early Christianity, particularly in late Judaism.

**Prerequisites:** junior standing and three semester hours in philosophy, or permission of the instructor

**REL 315 Qur'an (3 Credit Hours)**

The course will examine the Qur'an, the scripture of Islam, as well as other sacred texts such as the Hadith literature (sayings of Muhammad) and the Sira literature (accounts of Muhammad's life). This course will explore the role of these literatures in the faith, culture, and history of Islam. Our survey will include explorations of the history and reception of various texts, their literary and stylistic features, and various themes such as mystical, legal, modern, and feminist interpretations.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**REL 333 Historical Jesus (3 Credit Hours)**

This course examines the several quests to uncover the historical reality behind Jesus of Nazareth in modern biblical-historical scholarship, including the work of scholars like Albert Schweitzer, Rudolph Bultmann, and the many contemporary inquirers. Students are expected to have some familiarity with the New Testament and/or early Christianity.

**Prerequisites:** Junior standing and three semester hours in REL or PHIL

**REL 350 Judaism (3 Credit Hours)**

This course is a basic introduction to Judaism. We will explore the fundamental tenets of Jewish belief, examine primary expressions of Jewish ritual and practice, discuss the historical development of Judaism, and explore sacred texts, secular Yiddish texts, and contemporary issues confronting Jews and Judaism.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C

**REL 351 Christianity (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of the Christian tradition, including its primary texts, historical development, intellectual tenets, and contributions to human culture. Specific attention will be given to Christianity as a way of life.

**Prerequisites:** three semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor

**REL 352 Islam (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of the Islamic tradition, including its primary texts, historical development, intellectual tenets, and contributions to human culture. Specific attention will be given to Islam as a way of life.

**Prerequisites:** three semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor

**REL 353 Asian Religions (3 Credit Hours)**

This course introduces students to several key religious traditions originating in Asia, such as: Hindu traditions in India; Confucianism, Daoism, and popular religion in China, Buddhism and Shinto in Japan; and Buddhist traditions of China, Tibet, and Mongolia. Students will read and analyze primary sources in English translation. By examining artifacts from literature, art, and poetry, students will also learn about cultural history. Throughout the course, we will be employing hermeneutical methods in the field of religions studies, such as methods of comparisons.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credits of PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**REL 354 African and African American Religious Traditions (3 Credit Hours)**

This course surveys key historic and contemporary religions and socio-religious ideas that help shape African and African American life, culture and practices. It also reflects on culture and practice to discover ways in which lived experience shapes religious thought and practice.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credits of PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**REL 380 Hinduism (3 Credit Hours)**

An intensive study of the basic teachings of Hinduism as manifested in its sacred writings.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**REL 381 Buddhist Traditions (3 Credit Hours)**

A study of the origin, historical development, and contemporary status of Buddhism, in terms of its religious and philosophical elements and its influence in Asian cultures.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**REL 395 Topics in Religious Studies (3 Credit Hours)**

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule booklet and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

**Prerequisites:** 3 hours in PHIL or permission of the instructor

**REL 396 Topics in Religious Studies (3 Credit Hours)**

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

**Prerequisites:** three hours in PHIL or REL or permission of the instructor

**REL 403/503 Gender and Sexuality in Islam (3 Credit Hours)**

This course explores the shifting constructions of gender and sexuality in Muslim communities from the early period until the present, considering feminism, patriarchy, gender identity, masculinity, femininity, homosexuality, heteronormativity, and transgender people.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 211C, ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, and three credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**REL 451/551 Native American Philosophies (3 Credit Hours)**

This course will provide students with an introduction to Native American philosophies with a focus on issues of identity, genocide, personhood, gender, sovereignty, and decolonization. Topics will be approached through a consideration of Native American philosophical methodologies and Native views regarding metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. (Cross-listed with PHIL 451)

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of instructor

**REL 483/583 Tibet, Happiness, and this Precious Life (3 Credit Hours)**

Throughout this course, students will examine Tibetan texts and artifacts that address the meaning of happiness and the human condition. The course covers the indigenous religion Bön; the four main Tibetan Buddhist traditions (Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu, and Geluk), Islam in Tibet, and contemporary social issues, such as gender, identity politics, and the use of social media.

**Prerequisites:** ENGL 110C and 3 credit hours in PHIL or REL, or permission of the instructor

**REL 495/595 Topics in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)**

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

**Prerequisites:** 3 hours in PHIL or REL or permission of the instructor

**REL 496/596 Topics in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)**

The advanced study of selected topics designed to permit qualified students to work on subjects that, because of their specialized nature, may not be taught regularly. These courses will appear in the course schedule and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors.

**Prerequisites:** three hours of PHIL or REL or permission of the instructor

**REL 497/597 Tutorial Work in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)**

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

**Prerequisites:** permission of the instructor

**REL 498/598 Tutorial Work in Religious Studies (1-3 Credit Hours)**

Independent reading and study of a topic to be selected under the direction of an instructor. Conferences and papers as appropriate.

**Prerequisites:** permission of the instructor