PHILOSOPHY

Students may complete a major or minor in Philosophy.

The Department of Philosophy introduces students to some of the most compelling answers to questions of human existence and knowledge. It also grooms students for a variety of fields that require analysis, conceptual precision, argumentative skill, and clarity of thought and expression. These include administration, the arts, business, computer science, health professions, law, and social services. The major in Philosophy also prepares students for graduate-level study leading to careers in teaching and research in the discipline.

The curriculum focuses on three major areas: the systematic areas of philosophy, such as logic, theory of knowledge, metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics; the history of philosophy through the study of key philosophers and philosophical periods; and the philosophical explication of methods in such domains as art, history, religion, and science.

The department is a member of the Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium comprising 13 member institutions in the Delaware Valley. It sponsors conferences on various topics in philosophy and an annual undergraduate student philosophy conference.

Cross-Registration

Students may take advantage of cross-registration arrangements with Haverford College, Swarthmore College, and the University of Pennsylvania. Courses at these institutions may satisfy Bryn Mawr requirements, but students should check with the major advisor to make sure specific courses meet requirements.

Prerequisites

No introductory-level course carries a prerequisite. However, most courses at both the intermediate and advanced levels carry prerequisites. Unless stated otherwise in the course description, any introductory course satisfies the prerequisite for an intermediate-level course, and any intermediate course satisfies the prerequisite for an advanced-level course.

Major Requirements

Students majoring in Philosophy must take a minimum of 11 semester courses in the discipline and attend the monthly noncredit departmental colloquia which feature leading visiting scholars. The following six courses are required for the major:

Code	Title	Units
Historical Introduction		
PHIL B101	Happiness and Reality in Ancient Thought	1
PHIL B102	Science and Morality in Modernity	1
Ethics		
PHIL B221	Ethics	1
Theory of Knowledge or Logic		
Select one of the following:		1
PHIL B211	Theory of Knowledge	
PHIL B212	Metaphysics	
PHIL B103	Introduction to Logic	
Senior Conference		
PHIL B398	Senior Seminar	1
PHIL B399	Senior Seminar	1
Total Units		**6**

At least three of the five elective courses must be at the 300 level, one of which must concentrate on the work of a single philosopher or a period of philosophy.

All majors will be required to complete two writing attentive courses prior to the start of their senior year.

Philosophy majors are encouraged to supplement their philosophical interests by taking advantage of courses offered in related areas, such as anthropology, history, history of art, languages, literature, mathematics, political science, psychology, and sociology.

Major Requirements for Students Who Entered in Fall 2023 and Onward

Students majoring in Philosophy must take a minimum of 11 semester courses in the discipline and attend the monthly noncredit departmental colloquia which feature leading visiting scholars. The following seven courses are required for the major:

Code	Title	Units
Historical Introduction to Philosophy		
PHIL B101	Happiness and Reality in Ancient Thought	1
PHIL B102	Science and Morality in Modernity	1
Ethics		
PHIL B221	Ethics	1
Theory of Knowledge or Metaphysics		
PHIL B211	Theory of Knowledge	1
or PHIL B212	Metaphysics	
Logic		
PHIL B103	Introduction to Logic	1
Senior Conference		
PHIL B398	Senior Seminar	1
PHIL B399	Senior Seminar	1
Electives		
Select at least four electives, of which at least three must be at the 300-level: At least two of these three 300-level courses must be taken within Bryn Mawr's Philosophy Department		4
Total Units		**11**

All majors will be required to complete two writing attentive courses prior to the start of their senior year.

Philosophy majors are encouraged to supplement their philosophical interests by taking advantage of courses offered in related areas, such as anthropology, history, history of art, languages, literature, mathematics, political science, psychology, and sociology.

Honors

Honors will be awarded by the department based on the senior thesis and other work completed in the department. The Milton C. Nahm Prize in Philosophy is a cash award presented to the graduating senior major whose senior thesis the department judges to be of outstanding caliber. This prize need not be granted every year.

Minor Requirements

Students may minor in Philosophy by taking six courses in the discipline at any level. They must also attend the noncredit department colloquia. At least three of the six courses must be taken within Bryn Mawr's Philosophy Department.

PHIL B101 Happiness and Reality in Ancient Thought (1 Unit)
What makes us happy? The wisdom of the ancient world has importantly shaped the tradition of Western thought but in some important respects it has been rejected or forgotten. What is the nature of reality? Can we have knowledge about the world and ourselves, and, if so, how? In this course we explore answers to these sorts of metaphysical, epistemological, ethical, and political questions by examining the works of the two central Greek philosophers: Plato and Aristotle. We will consider earlier Greek religious and dramatic writings, a few Presocratic philosophers, and the person of Socrates who never wrote a word.

PHIL B102 Science and Morality in Modernity (1 Unit)
In this course, we explore answers to fundamental questions about the nature of the world and our place in it by examining the works of some of the central figures in modern western philosophy. Can we obtain knowledge of the world and, if so, how? Does God exist? What is the nature of the self? How do we determine morally right answers? What sorts of policies and political structures can best promote justice and equality? These questions were addressed in "modern" Europe in the context of the development of modern science and the religious wars. In a time of globalization we are all, more or less, heirs of the Enlightenment which sees its legacy to be modern science and the mastery of nature together with democracy and human rights. This course explores the above questions and considers them in their historical context. Some of the philosophers considered include Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, and Wollstonecraft.

PHIL B103 Introduction to Logic (1 Unit)
Logic is the study of formal reasoning, which concerns the nature of valid arguments and inferential fallacies. In everyday life our arguments tend to be informal and sometimes imprecise. The study of logic concerns the structure and nature of arguments, and so helps to analyze them more precisely. Topics will include: valid and invalid arguments, determining the logical structure of ordinary sentences, reasoning with truth-functional connectives, and inferences involving quantifiers and predicates. This course does not presuppose any background knowledge in logic.

PHIL B206 Introduction to the Philosophy of Science (1 Unit)
Scientific ideas and inferences have a huge impact on our daily lives and the lives of practicing scientists. But what is science, how does it work, and what does it able us to know? In this introductory course, we will be considering some traditional philosophical questions applied to the foundations and practice of natural science. These questions may include the history of philosophical approaches in science, the nature of scientific knowledge, changes in scientific knowledge over time, how science provides explanations of what we observe, the justification of false assumptions in science, the nature of scientific theories, and some questions about the ethics and values involved in scientific practice.

PHIL B208 Black Political and Social Thought (1 Unit)
In this class, we will focus our attention on the philosophical works of a diverse range of Black thinkers, both historical and contemporary, who take up questions about race, racism, oppression, authenticity, solidarity, justice freedom, power, identity, and beauty. This is a discussion-based class, and at least one previous course in philosophy is strongly recommended. Prerequisite: At least one previous course in Philosophy is strongly recommended.

PHIL B211 Theory of Knowledge (1 Unit)
Epistemology focuses on three central philosophical questions: "What is knowledge?", "What can we know?", and "How do we know what we know?" In addition to their role in our daily lives, these questions are central to almost every discipline include the sciences, history, and philosophy itself. This course is an extended investigation into the nature of knowledge, understanding, and justification. We will look at a number of debates including skepticism, relativism, the value of knowledge, the nature of understanding, scientific knowledge, scientific realism, naturalistic epistemology, feminist epistemology, testimonial knowledge, and pragmatic influences on knowledge. The aim of this course is to develop a sense of how these concepts and theories interrelate, and to instill philosophical skills in the critical evaluation of them.

PHIL B212 Metaphysics (1 Unit)
Metaphysics is inquiry into basic features of the world and ourselves. This course considers two topics of metaphysics, free will and personal identity, and their relationship. What is free will and are we free? Is freedom compatible with determinism? Does moral responsibility require free will? What makes someone the same person over time? Can a person survive without their body? Is the recognition of others required to be a person?

PHIL B220 Dreams and Philosophy (1 Unit)
Philosophers have long puzzled over the nature of dreams and what they can teach us about ourselves and our world. This course surveys the philosophy of dreams, from Socrates' Dream in the Theaetetus, to Descartes' skepticism, to contemporary debates in cognitive science. Some questions that we will discuss include: Why do we dream? Are dreams different from hallucinations, and how so? Can you learn something new in a dream? Are dreams conscious, or are they more like false memories that you invent upon waking? How can scientists best study dreams? We will analyze arguments from philosophy and the relevant sciences in order to reveal the philosophical significance of dreams.

PHIL B221 Ethics (1 Unit)
An introduction to ethics by way of an examination of moral theories and a discussion of important ancient, modern, and contemporary texts which established theories such as virtue ethics, deontology, utilitarianism, relativism, emotivism, care ethics. This course considers questions concerning freedom, responsibility, and obligation. How should we live our lives and interact with others? How should we think about ethics in a global context? Is ethics independent of culture? A variety of practical issues such as reproductive rights, euthanasia, animal rights and the environment will be considered.

PHIL B225 Global Ethical Issues (1 Unit)
The need for a critical analysis of what justice is and requires has become urgent in a context of increasing globalization, the emergence of new forms of conflict and war, high rates of poverty within and across borders and the prospect of environmental devastation. This course examines prevailing theories and issues of justice as well as approaches and challenges by non-western, post-colonial, feminist, race, class, and disability theorists.

PHIL B226 Authority, Obligation, and Justice (1 Unit)
What gives the government the right to tell us what to do? When and why should we obey the law? What is a just society? These are some of the most important questions of political philosophy. In the liberal tradition, one of the most influential answers to these questions is the idea of the social contract, which centers on the agreement of society's members to live by certain rules. In this course, we'll examine this idea from the early modern period to the present day. We'll also discuss its criticisms and alternatives from traditions such as utilitarianism, Marxism, feminism, and critical race theory

PHIL B227 Contemporary Moral Problems (1 Unit)
This is an introductory survey course in which we will discuss the philosophical dimensions of several contemporary moral issues including affirmative action, the ethics of immigration, our obligations to the world's poor, abortion, our treatment of non-human animals, and so on. As we delve into specific issues, we will also explore different conceptions of morality and justice that justify particular responses regarding these issues.

PHIL B230 Tragedy and the Value of Life (1 Unit)
Tragic dramas present tales of human misery, drawing our attention to precisely those aspects of life that seem to put its value in question. What, then, do these bleak tales ultimately suggest about our prospects for happiness? Do tragic works simply condemn life, identifying its horrible features and leaving it at that? Alternatively, do they help identify places where life could be improved, or perhaps even offer a surprising celebration of life's value? In this class, we will consider the answers to these questions offered by a variety of historical and contemporary thinkers. We will also test these thinkers' answers against some of the tragic dramas they seek to explain. Philosophers discussed will include Schopenhauer, Hegel, Nietzsche, Camus, Weil, Williams, Nussbaum, and Murdoch. Plays read will include work by Sophocles, Aeschylus, and Shakespeare.

PHIL B233 Philosophy of Life and Death (1 Unit)
Death seems to be an unavoidable feature of human life. Our task in this class will be to consider what this means for life's value. Are our lives better for having an end, or does having an end undermine life's worth? Moreover, should we even view death as an end in the first place? We will consider a range of different answers to these questions defended by thinkers including Plato, Epicurus, Lucretius, Zhuangzi, Unamuno, Kierkegaard, Williams, Nussbaum, Setiya, and May.

PHIL B234 Public Art, Historical Preservation, and the Ethics of Commemoration (1 Unit)
Philadelphia has the largest number of public artworks in the country and is also the first city in the nation to require that developers use a portion of their construction budget for public art. It is also home to a number of well-known memorials. In this course, we will take up a number of philosophical questions about the nature of public art, political aesthetics, and the ethics of commemoration using case studies drawn from Philadelphia. Some of the questions we will consider include the following: What is public art? What is public space? What is the role of public art in a democracy? Is there a distinct category of "street art" which can be distinguished from public art on the one hand and graffiti on the other? What is the moral value of commemorative art? What, if anything, do we have a moral obligation to commemorate and what grounds that obligation? How should we assess controversies surrounding the removal of art honoring persons or groups many judge to be morally objectionable, such as Confederate monuments? How should we memorialize victims of injustice? Prerequisites: At least one previous Philosophy class is suggested.

PHIL B238 Science, Technology and the Good Life (1 Unit)
"Science, Technology, and the Good Life" considers the relation of science and technology to each other and to everyday life, particularly with respect to questions of ethics and politics. In this course, we try to get clear about how we understand these domains and their interrelationships in our contemporary world. We try to clarify the issues relevant to these questions by looking at the contemporary debates about the role of automation and digital media and the problem of climate change. These debates raise many questions including: the appropriate model of scientific inquiry (is there a single model for science?, how is science both experimental and deductive?, is science merely trial and error?, is science objective?, is science value-free?), the ideological standing of science (has science become a kind of ideology?), the autonomy of technology (have the rapidly developing technologies escaped our power to direct them?), the politics of science (is science somehow essentially democratic?, and are "scientific" cultures more likely to foster democracy?, or is a scientific culture essentially elitist and autocratic?), the relation of science to the formation of public policy (experts rule?, are we in or moving toward a technocracy?), the role of technology and science in the process of modernization, Westernization, and globalization (what role has science played in industrialization and what role does it now play in a post-industrial world?). To find an appropriate way to consider these questions, we look at the pairing of science with democracy in the Enlightenment project and study contemporary work in the philosophy of science, political science, and ethics.

PHIL B240 Environmental Ethics (1 Unit)
This course surveys rights- and justice-based justifications for ethical positions on the environment. It examines approaches such as stewardship, intrinsic value, land ethic, deep ecology, ecofeminism, Asian and aboriginal. It explores issues such as obligations to future generations, to nonhumans and to the biosphere.

PHIL B248 Markets and Morality (1 Unit)
Markets are everywhere today: if you want to find a job, if you want to buy some good, or if you want to sell some service, you will inevitably have to submit yourself to their norms. Yet, this omnipresence of markets raises fundamental ethical questions. Is it really good that we organize exchange and production largely through markets? How are societies and individuals impacted by centrally relying on them? Should we, much rather, prefer a planned economy? Or would such a planned economy unduly constrain people's freedom? And, if we opt for markets, what are their moral limits? Should human organs or access to lawmakers be distributed via a market? Should access to health-care be governed by market principles? This seminar explores these ethical and political questions through an unusually diverse set of texts. The syllabus brings together a broad set of perspectives from both the history of philosophy as well as from the contemporary Anglo-American debate. That way, we draw on a broad set of ideas in order to tackle the philosophical, moral and existential challenge that markets pose: and, while going along, familiarize ourselves with classic authors from both the European and Anglo-American traditions in social/political philosophy.

PHIL B249 Ideology and Propaganda (1 Unit)
In contemporary political discourse, we often hear the accusation that a belief is "mere ideology" or that an utterance is "pure propaganda." We sometimes even hear that we live in an age of heightened "ideological conflict" or that we are now more than ever inundated by propaganda. What do we mean, though, by "ideology"? And what do we mean by "propaganda"? What is their relationship to one another? What is their relationship to truth? And what is their relationship to our ethical and political values? In this course, we will examine these questions from both historical and contemporary perspectives, tracing "ideology" and "propaganda" from their origins in the early-modern critique of prejudice, through Marx and the Marxist tradition, to cutting-edge debates among recent political philosophers – all with the aim of developing a sharper analysis of ideology and propaganda as they function in the real world.

PHIL B251 Women Philosophers in the Long 19th Century (1 Unit)
The history of 19th century European philosophy is often told exclusively as a history of male voices – as a story 'From Kant to Hegel', 'From Hegel to Marx' and so on. By contrast, the voices of women philosophers (such as Karoline von Günderrode, Bettina von Arnim or Clara Zetkin) are rarely remembered, and even less frequently taught. This course aims to change that. Reading a wide array of texts written by women intellectuals of the time, we will aim to understand their philosophical contributions to German Idealism (e.g. Günderrode and Arnim), Feminism (e.g. Zetkin and Hedwig Dohm) and classical Socialism (e.g. Rosa Luxemburg). We will also examine their relationship to, and, more importantly, their critique of the work of some of their male counterparts (such as Fichte, Schelling, Marx and Nietzsche). Finally, we will consider why these women voices have been so frequently neglected – and why it is, from a contemporary philosophical standpoint, worthwhile to discover them again.

PHIL B252 Feminist Theory (1 Unit)
Beliefs that gender discrimination has been eliminated and women have achieved equality have become commonplace. We challenge these assumptions examining the concepts of patriarchy, sexism, and oppression. Exploring concepts central to feminist theory, we attend to the history of feminist theory and contemporary accounts of women's place and status in different societies, varied experiences, and the impact of the phenomenon of globalization. We then explore the relevance of gender to philosophical questions about identity and agency with respect to moral, social and political theory. Prerequisite: one course in philosophy or permission of instructor.

PHIL B255 Philosophy of Love and Friendship (1 Unit)
The course examines various philosophical accounts of the nature of love and friendship, approaching the topic from a number of perspectives that range from ancient dialogues to contemporary articles. By investigating several philosophical positions on love and friendship, we aim to clarify and understand what these phenomena mean to us. Readings will draw from various philosophical sources, including (but not limited to): classical dialogues and treatises, essays, psychoanalysis, sermons, political science, and literary studies. Among other questions, we will explore the following: What is love? Is it an emotion? a skill? an activity? What is friendship and what are its varieties? Do we need love and friendship to be happy? What do we love: someone's singular personality or the repeatable qualities that they possess? Are friends replaceable? Can lovers be friends? Should we love our enemies

PHIL B258 Data Ethics in Social Media (1 Unit)
From sharing our life experiences to reading the news, social media permeates our daily lives. It affects how we communicate, what we buy, and who we vote for. It also generates an immense amount of data, which is eagerly collected by individuals, corporations, and governments. In this course we will investigate some of the threats (and promises) of this data. We will ask questions like: What is the value of privacy online, and how might it be protected? Are we being manipulated by algorithms? Are the algorithms that generate and moderate content biased? What are some of the ways online data can be used for good? Students will investigate these questions through practical and theoretical approaches. Course materials will be drawn from diverse sources including philosophy, data science, sociology, legal theory, and the Internet. Visiting speakers will enrich our discussion by offering academic and professional perspectives on the uses and misuses of data.

PHIL B264 Science and Democracy (1 Unit)
Champions of science claim that, in addition to being our best source of truth and our most effective lever for progress, science is also a crucial aid to good governance. For the past century, scientists—in the role of "experts"—have helped to shape public policy in the United States. Both early advocates for and contemporary defenders of this model argue that the objectivity of science makes it especially well-suited to democratic societies, in which it is essential that policy decisions not reflect the interests or prejudices of any one group. However, recent debates (e.g., about social equity, climate change, and vaccine safety) have surfaced questions about just how democratic science and scientific governance really are. Progressive critics argues that science reflects the interests and biases of scientific inquirers, such that making science democratic requires ensuring that differing identity groups are fairly represented among scientists. Until this is done, they argue, scientific governance cannot be democratic. Populist critics argues that scientists, just in virtue of being scientists, have prejudices and interests all their own —that the interests of scientists are different from and even opposed to the interests of non-scientists. For this reason, their argument suggests, "experts" can never be impartial contributors to democratic governance. In this course, we will examine science and democracy from a philosophical point of view, develop a rigorous conceptual framework to make sense of the so-called "science wars," and take a tour of key issues in both the philosophy of science and political theory.

PHIL B271 Minds and Machines (1 Unit)
What is the relationship between the mind and the body? What is consciousness? Is your mind like a computer, or do some aspects of the mind resist this analogy? Is it possible to build an artificial mind? In this course, we'll explore these questions and more, drawing on perspectives from philosophy, psychology and cognitive neuroscience. We will consider the viability of different ways of understanding the relationship between mind and body as a framework for studying the mind, as well as the distinctive issues that arise in connection with the phenomenon of consciousness. No prior knowledge or experience with any of the subfields is assumed or necessary.

PHIL B300 Reason and Its Discontents (1 Unit)
Philosophers have often cherished reason as the most important and illustrious human capability. This can be seen already in Aristotle's definition of the human being as the animal with a rational function but comes especially to the fore among early-modern philosophers, for whom reason is the wellspring of progress, virtue, and enlightenment. Even according to tradition, however, human beings are characterized by at least two other essential powers: we have a power of reason, but we also have distinctly human powers of feeling (i.e., sensation and emotion) and will (i.e., volition and action). In this course, we will investigate one of the most creative and exciting eras in the history of philosophy—the philosophy of 19th-century Germany—focusing on the debate concerning the hierarchy of the human faculties: Is reason in fact the most decisive human capability? If not, is feeling primary? The will? How should this impact our understanding of human nature? What impact does it have on our understanding of social progress? Of morality? Of religion? Of science? The course doubles as an intensive introduction to 19th-century German philosophy. Figures discussed will include Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Feuerbach, Marx, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. One prior philosophy course (PHIL 102 will be especially helpful) or consent of instructor

PHIL B305 Topics in Value. (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Topics may vary.

PHIL B309 Topics in Philosophy (1 Unit)
This is a topics course, and the description varies according to the topic. Prerequistie: At least one previous Philosophy course is required.

PHIL B319 Philosophy of Mind (1 Unit)
The conscious mind remains a philosophical and scientific mystery. In this course, we will explore the nature of consciousness and its place in the physical world. Some questions we will consider include: How is consciousness related to the brain and the body? Are minds a kind of computer? Is the conscious mind something non-physical or immaterial? Is it possible to have a science of consciousness, or will consciousness inevitably resist scientific explanation? We will explore these questions from a philosophical perspective that draws on relevant literature from cognitive neuroscience.

PHIL B330 Kant (1 Unit)
The significance of Kant's transcendental philosophy for thought in the 19th and 20th centuries cannot be overstated. His work is profoundly important for both the analytical and the so-called "continental" schools of thought. This course will provide a close study of Kant's breakthrough work: The Critique of Pure Reason. We will read and discuss the text with reference to its historical context and with respect to its impact on developments in epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, philosophy of religion as well as developments in German Idealism, 20th-century phenomenology., and contemporary analytic philosophy. Prerequisite: PHIL 102 or at least one 200 level Philosophy course.

PHIL B334 Karl Marx and his critics (1 Unit)
Karl Marx is one of those philosophers who are often cited, but not equally as often carefully read. This seminar aims to change this. It offers a close reading of Karl Marx's most important philosophical works, alongside the work of his most influential critics. We will begin, in the first part of the course, by considering Marx's early fragments, his revolutionary political writings and the economic-philosophical theory of Capital. In the second half of the course, we will examine criticisms from both the left and the right: criticisms that target Marx's labor theory of value, his theory of history, or his theory of alienation. Special attention will be paid to criticisms that argue that he lacks attention to the way that economic oppression intersects with structural racism, structural misogyny and colonialism. Reading Marx from this contemporary perspective will allow us to evaluate what parts of Marx's views, if any, still possess relevance for contemporary social thought. Prerequisite: One previous philosophy course or permission from instructor.

PHIL B346 Ethics Without the Individual (1 Unit)
We typically take the world to be filled with many discrete individuals. From the time I was born until this very moment, I have remained the same person, and I will continue to be that person at least until the day of my death. Moreover, the person who I am differs from the person who you are. We are each a self-contained whole, fundamentally the same as ourselves and fundamentally different from everyone else. In this course, we will discuss thinkers who challenge this common view, denying either that each individual has a persistent self, or that each individual's self is unique to her alone. Most of the thinkers we discuss will suggest that the typical picture of the discrete individual is not only false, but ethically disastrous: believing that we possess a unique and persistent self stands in the way of true happiness, genuine moral action, or both. Readings will mainly draw on early Hindu, Buddhist, and Daoist thought, however, we will also consider more recent work by figures such as Hume, Schopenhauer, and Russell. Prerequisites: One previous Philosophy course or permission of instructor.

PHIL B398 Senior Seminar (1 Unit)
Senior majors are required to write an undergraduate thesis on an approved topic. The senior seminar is a two-semester course in which research and writing are directed. Seniors will meet collectively and individually with the supervising instructor.

PHIL B399 Senior Seminar (1 Unit)
The senior seminar is a required course for majors in Philosophy. It is the course in which the research and writing of an undergraduate thesis is directed both in and outside of the class time. Students will meet sometimes with the class as a whole and sometimes with the professor separately to present and discuss drafts of their theses.

PHIL B403 Supervised Work (1 Unit)

PHIL B425 Praxis III: Independent Study (1 Unit)
Praxis III courses are Independent Study courses and are developed by individual students, in collaboration with faculty and field supervisors. A Praxis courses is distinguished by genuine collaboration with fieldsite organizations and by a dynamic process of reflection that incorporates lessons learned in the field into the classroom setting and applies theoretical understanding gained through classroom study to work done in the broader community. Note: Students are eligible to take up to two Praxis Fieldwork Seminars or Praxis Independent Studies during their time at Bryn Mawr.

CMSC B325 Computational Linguistics (1 Unit)
Introduction to computational models of understanding and processing human languages. How elements of linguistics, computer science, and artificial intelligence can be combined to help computers process human language and to help linguists understand language through computer models. Topics covered: syntax, semantics, pragmatics, generation and knowledge representation techniques. Prerequisite: CMSC B151 , or CMSC H106 or CMSC H107, and CMSC B231 or CMSC H231 or MATH B231 or MATH H231, or permission of instructor.

CMSC B373 Artificial Intelligence (1 Unit)
Survey of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the study of how to program computers to behave in ways normally attributed to "intelligence" when observed in humans. Topics include heuristic versus algorithmic programming; cognitive simulation versus machine intelligence; problem-solving; inference; natural language understanding; scene analysis; learning; decision-making. Topics are illustrated by programs from literature, programming projects in appropriate languages and building small robots. Prerequisites: CMSC B151 or CMSC H106 or CMSC H107, and CMSC B231, or CMSC H231 or MATH B231 or MATH H231.

COML B213 Theory in Practice: Critical Discourses in the Humanities (1 Unit)
What is a postcolonial subject, a queer gaze, a feminist manifesto? And how can we use (as readers of texts, art, and films) contemporary studies on animals and cyborgs, object-oriented ontology, zombies, storyworlds, neuroaesthetics? By bringing together the study of major theoretical currents of the 20th century and the practice of analyzing literary works in the light of theory, this course aims at providing students with skills to use literary theory in their own scholarship. The selection of theoretical readings reflects the history of theory (psychoanalysis, structuralism, narratology), as well as the currents most relevant to the contemporary academic field: Post-structuralism, Post-colonialism, Gender Studies, and Ecocriticism. They are paired with a diverse range of short stories across multiple language traditions (Poe, Kafka, Camus, Borges, Calvino, Morrison, Djebar, Murakami, Ngozi Adichie) that we discuss along with our study of theoretical texts. We will discuss how to apply theory to the practice of interpretation and of academic writing, and how theoretical ideas shape what we are reading. The class will be conducted in English, with an additional hour taught by the instructor of record in the target language for students wishing to take the course for language credit.

FREN B333 Nature and Freedom (1 Unit)
When referring to Rousseau's political theory, the conjectural state of nature first described in his Discourse on the Origin of Inequality (1755) has frequently been identified with native societies as observed in America since 1492. Many scholars have been opposing this primitivist interpretation of his second discourse and showed that Rousseau might instead be considered the father of all 'social construct' theories. But in spite of this scholarly consensus, Graeber and Wengrow still tend to assume Rousseau's state of nature is mostly inspired by the encounter of Europeans with native people. Why is this confusion still informing the way we read Rousseau? How did considerations on the so-called 'noble savage' taint his political theory? How can we assess the role an 'indigenous critique' played in defining Rousseau's state of nature? And incidentally: how 'indigenous' is this 'indigenous critique'? Answering to Graeber and Wengrow's (mis)reading of Rousseau will allow us to cast a new light not only on Rousseau's 'unnatural' anthropology, but also on Graeber & Wengrow's broader claims on human nature and political freedom. Our end goal is not to offer a scholarly take on either Rousseau's discourse of Graeber and Wengrow's book, but to answer this pressing question: should/could we discard the very notion of nature to regain political agency here and now? Authors include: Léry, Montaigne, Hobbes, Rousseau, Lévi-Strauss, Serres, Graeber and Wengrow.

ITAL B221 What is Aesthetics? Theories on Art, Imagination, and Poetry (1 Unit)
This course investigates how global thinkers, poets, and artists reflected in their works on the roles and powers of art, poetry, and human creativity. The course approaches this theme through a cross-cultural and trans-historical approach, which encompasses the Italian Humanism, which argued for the first time for the importance of aesthetic knowledge, as well as the Age of Enlightenment, which founded 'aesthetics' as a specific scientific discipline. Readings from these writers will show how artistic products, human imagination, and poetry are not just light-hearted activities but powerful cognitive tools which can reveal aspects of human history. If the human being is deemed to be a combination of reason and feeling – soul and body – art and poetry, which border both the rational and irrational realms, appear the most appropriate scientific tool to reveal the human essence and its destiny. The discussion will focus on pivotal global writers and philosophers such as Giambattista Vico and Giacomo Leopardi, who pioneered aesthetic, historical, literary, and anthropological ideas which are still crucial in the current theoretical debate on arts and poetry. All readings and class discussion will be in English. Students will have an additional hour of class for Italian credit.

ITAL B326 Love, Magic, and Medicine: Poetical-Philosophical Bonds (1 Unit)
The course investigates how the concepts of love, magic, and medicine emerged and developed throughout early modernity and beyond. In exploring the fields of Philosophy, Medicine, and Magic, global thinkers, poets, and artists drew not only from classical sources, but were also deeply influenced by a wide range of models, such as fictional ancient sources, Islamic philosophy, and the Jewish Kabbalah. In this interesting syncretism, love was considered as an inspiration experienced by the entire universe, and magical practice was understood as a philosophy in action, which had the power to establish a bond of a loving nature between the different realms of reality. Magicians were therefore conceived as wise philosophers capable of joining this network of correspondences and controlling them (art)ificially. As a result, the figures of poets and artists interestingly merged into those of magicians of physicians, and poetry was conceived both as a magic able to arouse mental images stronger than real visions, and as a medicine able to exert a mental and physiological agency on the body. The course will approach these themes through a multi-disciplinary and trans-historical approach, which will include in the discussion a wide variety of figures, such as global early modern and modern philosophers, physicians, poets, artists, and composers.All readings and class discussion will be in English. Students will have an additional hour of class for Italian credit.

POLS B224 Comparative Political Phil: China, Greece, and the "West" (1 Unit)
An introduction to the dialogic construction of comparative political philosophy, using texts from several cultures or worlds of thought: ancient and modern China, ancient Greece, and the modern West. The course will have three parts. First, a consideration of the synchronous emergence of philosophy in ancient (Axial Age) China and Greece; second, the 19th century invention of the modern "West" and Chinese responses to this development; and third, the current discussions and debates about globalization, democracy, and human rights now going on in China and the West. Prerequisite: At least one course in either Philosophy, Political Theory, or East Asian Studies, or consent of the instructor.

POLS B228 Introduction to Political Philosophy: Ancient and Early Modern (1 Unit)
An introduction to the fundamental problems of political philosophy, especially the relationship between political life and the human good or goods.

POLS B231 Introduction to Political Philosophy: Modern (1 Unit)
A continuation of POLS 228, although 228 is not a prerequisite. Particular attention is given to the various ways in which the concept of freedom is used in explaining political life. Readings from Locke, J.S. Mill, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche and others.

POLS B245 Philosophy of Law (1 Unit)
Introduces students to a variety of questions in the philosophy of law. Readings will be concerned with the nature of law, the character of law as a system, the ethical character of law, and the relationship of law to politics, power, authority, and society. Readings will include philosophical arguments about law, as well as judicial cases through which we examine these ideas within specific contexts, especially tort and contracts. Most or all of the specific issues discussed will be taken from Anglo-American law, although the general issues considered are not limited to those legal systems. Recommended Prerequisite: sophomore standing, freshman only with professor's consent.

POLS B272 The Power of the People: Democratic Revolutions (1 Unit)
We often invoke “democracy” as the very ground of political legitimacy, but there is very little agreement on what democracy means, why we might desire it, or how state institutions, law, and political culture might embody it. In this seminar we will grapple with some recent and influential accounts of democratic governance and democratic movements today. Our objective will be to develop a critical vocabulary for understanding what democracy might mean, what conditions it requires, and what “best practices” citizens committed to democracy might enlist to confront political challenges such as the structural divisions that persist among class, gender, and race; persistent inequality and influence of money and corporations; and the potential for democratic, grass-roots power as a vital ingredient to democratic flourishing. Writing Intensive.

POLS B327 Political Philosophy in the 20th Century (1 Unit)
A study of 20th- and 21st-century extensions of three traditions in Western political philosophy: the adherents of the German and English ideas of freedom and the founders of classical naturalism. Authors read include Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, Jurgen Habermas, and John Rawls. Topics include the relationship of individual rationality and political authority, cosmopolitanism, the “crisis of modernity,” and the debate concerning contemporary democratic citizenship. Prerequisite: Two courses in text-based political philosophy or political theory, or consent of the instructor.

POLS B358 Freedom in the 21st Century (1 Unit)
This course investigates what freedom means, how political communities organize themselves around freedom, and how contestation about freedom is essential in twenty-first century political life. We will take orientation from the argument developed by David Graeber and David Wengrow in The Dawn of Everything, which suggests that freedom and not equality is the site of political struggle today. We’ll give some time to contextualizing Graber and Wengrow’s historical inquiry as a political project in response to interrelated crises of ecology and democracy of the present moment. Expanding from this point of origin (which will be linked to the other courses in the 360), we’ll then consider how theorists and practitioners around the world have considered freedom’s perils and possibilities: abolitionist organizing in the work of Mariame Kaba; democratic socialism in the theory of Axel Honneth; freedom as a mask for state-sactioned violence in the critical queer work of Chanan Reddy; escape and flight from such states realized through “freedom as marronage”; and freedom as an Indigenous political project in the the work of Taiaiake Alfred, Glen Coulthard, and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson. Each approach will offer an opportunity to think through the meaning and politics of freedom as well as to develop frameworks of political analysis that can illustrate how struggles for freedom shape and structure politics today. Prerequisite: One course in Political Theory or Philosophy or Permission of instructor.

POLS B359 Depth Psychology, Politics, and the Social Order (1 Unit)
In this course, we examine a variety of political and social issues (among them racism, the economic organization of society, and demagoguery) from the perspective of "depth psychology." By "depth psychology" we refer to the study of human activity in terms of individual and collective, conscious and unconscious psychic dynamics. Modern depth psychology grew up in the late 19th century; its two greatest theorists were Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud, the latter of whom founded what is now the broad and diverse field of psychoanalysis. We will draw on works by Nietzsche, by Freud, by later psychoanalysts, and by writers were deeply influenced by these, such as Richard Wright, Franz Fanon, and Herbert Marcuse. We will also draw on the insights of depth psychology to try to help understand the use and organization of hate within contemporary politics. Prerequisite: One course in theory OR consent of instructor.

POLS B361 On The Human Condition: The Political Thinking of Hannah Are (1 Unit)
Pursuing a close study of Hannah Arendt's The Human Condition, one of the most influential works of political theory written in the twentieth century, this course will investigate Arendt's magnum opus in its contexts: situated in the history of political thought, in the political debates of the 1950s, and as political thinking of urgent relevance today. While we study Arendt's texts, focusing specifically on The Human Condition, we will also seek to understand and practice her unique form of political thinking by not only reading her texts in their historical contexts but also considering our own contexts as readers of Arendt in the twenty-first century. Our approach to Arendt will thus seek to develop her idea of "political thinking" while also creating our own exercises in political thinking over the course of the semester, drawing together issues in politics today, the concepts and arguments Arendt proposes, and the history of political thought her work engages.

POLS B371 Topics in Political Philosophy (1 Unit)
An advanced seminar on a topic in political or legal philosophy/theory. Topics vary by year. Prerequisite: At least one course in political theory or philosophy or consent of instructor.

POLS B381 Nietzsche (1 Unit)
This course examines Nietzsche's thought, with particular focus on such questions as the nature of the self, truth , irony, aggression, play, joy, love, and morality. The texts for the course are drawn mostly from Nietzsche's own writing, but these are complemented by some contemporary work in moral philosophy and philosophy of mind that has a Nietzschean influence.