PHILOSOPHY

Connecticut Hall, 203.432.1665  
http://philosophy.yale.edu  
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair  
Verity Harte

Director of Graduate Studies  
Zoltán Szabó (C301, 203.432.1669, zoltan.szabo@yale.edu)

Professors  

Assistant Professors  
Robin Dembroff, Daniel Greco, Elizabeth Miller, John Pittard

FIELDS OF STUDY

The department offers a wide range of courses in various traditions of philosophy, with strengths and a well-established reputation in the history of philosophy, ethics, philosophy of law, epistemology, philosophy of language, and philosophy of religion as well as other central topics.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

1. In the first two years all students must complete a total of twelve term courses. Graduate courses are grouped: (1) metaphysics, theory of knowledge, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, philosophy of science; (2) ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of religion, political philosophy, philosophy of law, and theory of value; (3) history of philosophy. No more than six of the twelve and no fewer than two courses may be taken in each group. At least one of the twelve courses taken must be logic (unless the logic requirement is satisfied in some other way) and this course does not count towards the required minimum of two within any of the three categories.

2. Two qualifying papers must be submitted, one in the history of philosophy, the other in another distribution area. These papers must be more substantial and professional than an ordinary term paper.

3. Approval of the dissertation prospectus is expected before the end of the sixth term. Upon completion of all predissertation requirements, including the prospectus, students are admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. Admission to candidacy must take place by the end of the third year of study.

4. Students in Philosophy teach in the third, fourth, and sixth years.

5. In addition to the twelve required philosophy courses, before the dissertation defense students must take at least one class that is not listed in philosophy on a subject that is relevant to their research.

6. The dissertation is expected to be submitted in the end of the fifth to sixth year.

CLASSICS AND PHILOSOPHY COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAM

The Classics and Philosophy Program is a combined program, offered by the Departments of Classics and Philosophy at Yale, for students wishing to pursue graduate study in ancient philosophy. Suitably qualified students may apply for entry to the program either through the Classics department for the Classics track or through the Philosophy department for the Philosophy track.

Applicants for the Classics track of the combined program must satisfy the general requirements for admission to the Classics graduate program, in addition to the requirements of the Classics track of the combined program. Details of the Classics track of the program are available online at http://www.yale.edu/classics/research_philosophy_program.html.

Applicants for the Philosophy track of the combined program must satisfy the general requirements for admission to the Philosophy graduate program, in addition to the requirements of the Philosophy track of the combined program. Details of the Philosophy track of the program are available online at http://philosophy.yale.edu/graduate-program/classics-and-philosophy-program.

The combined program is overseen by an interdepartmental committee currently consisting of Verity Harte, David Charles, and Brad Inwood together with the director of graduate studies (DGS) for Classics and the DGS for Philosophy.

PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAM

The Philosophy and Psychology Program is a combined program, offered by the Departments of Philosophy and Psychology at Yale. Students enrolled in the program complete a series of courses in each discipline as well as an interdisciplinary dissertation that falls at the intersection of the two. On completing these requirements, students are awarded a Ph.D. either in Philosophy and Psychology, or in Psychology and Philosophy.
Students can be admitted into the combined program either through the Psychology department or through the Philosophy department. Students must be accepted into one of these departments (the “home department”) through the standard admissions process, and both departments must then agree to accept the student into the combined program.

Students can be accepted into the combined program either (a) at the time they initially apply for admission to their home department, or (b) after having already competed some course work within the home department. In either case, students must be accepted into the combined program by each department.

Students in the combined program complete two-thirds of the course requirements of each of the two disciplines, then write a qualifying paper and a dissertation that are fully interdisciplinary. For more details about the program requirements, see http://philosophy.yale.edu/graduate-program/philosophy-and-psychology-combined-phd-program.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) An M.A. degree is awarded to students after completion of seven term courses with an average grade of High Pass.

Please see the Philosophy website for information on the program: http://philosophy.yale.edu.

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COURSES

PHIL 567a, Mathematical Logic I  Sun-Joo Shin
An introduction to the metatheory of first-order logic, up to and including the completeness theorem for the first-order calculus. An introduction to the basic concepts of set theory is included.

PHIL 602a / CPLT 699a / GMAN 603a, Heidegger’s Being and Time  Martin Hägglund
A systematic, chapter-by-chapter study of Heidegger’s Being and Time, arguably the most important work of philosophy of the twentieth century. All the major themes of the book are addressed in detail, with a particular emphasis on care, time, death, and the meaning of being.

PHIL 615b, Hume and Reid  Kenneth Winkler
A study of Hume’s epistemology and metaphysics and his science of human nature. Topics include space and time; inductive reasoning; causation; belief in an external world; personal identity; liberty and necessity; moral judgment; religious belief; and skepticism. Readings in Book I of A Treatise of Human Nature, An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding, and Dialogues concerning Natural Religion.

PHIL 617a / GMAN 649a / JDST 651a, Critical Theory and the Frankfurt School  Asaf Angermann
This course is an introduction to the thought and writings of the philosophers known as the Frankfurt School, who founded and developed the idea of Critical Theory. Taken in its original meaning as a method or even a practice, rather than a systematic theory, Critical Theory suggests a way of thinking about the interrelations between philosophy and society, culture and politics, and on the complex relation between philosophical concepts and social reality. By reading key texts of Frankfurt School authors such as Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, Benjamin, Kracauer, and Fromm, the course inquires into the meaning of concepts such as critique, history, freedom, individuality, emancipation, and aesthetic experience.

PHIL 619a, Descartes  Michael Della Rocca
An examination of Descartes as a founder of the modern world picture. Consideration of all his major works.

PHIL 627b, Computability and Logic  Sun-Joo Shin
A technical exposition of Gödel's first and second incompleteness theorems and of some of their main consequences in proof theory and model theory, such as Löb’s theorem, Tarski’s undefinability of truth, provability logic, and nonstandard models of arithmetic.

PHIL 630a, Social Epistemology  Daniel Greco
Survey of recent work in social epistemology, the branch of philosophy that concerns the social dimensions of knowledge. Topics to be addressed include the epistemic significance of disagreement, judgment aggregation, and how various social institutions look when viewed through an epistemological lens (e.g., epistemic arguments for democracy, error-minimization arguments for trial-by-jury).

PHIL 634b, Disagreement and Higher-Order Evidence  John Pittard
An investigation of the epistemic significance of disagreement, focusing on recent work on this question and on several related issues in the theory of rationality.

PHIL 637a, Philosophy of Logic  Sun-Joo Shin
Exploration of valid reasoning, mainly in the context of propositional and predicate logic. Topics include the well-known debate on the justification of modus ponens; Tarski’s analysis of logic consequence; and the relatively recent and provocative claim (made by Etchemendy) that Tarski’s analysis of logical consequence fails in capturing ordinary and intuitive concept of logical consequence.

PHIL 639b, Modal Logic  Sun-Joo Shin
Basic philosophical concepts and logical tools underlying different modal systems, mainly focusing on necessity and possibility. Topics include propositional logic and its natural deductive system; modal operators and development of the simplest natural deductive system;
extensions of the basic propositional modal system; intensional semantics; a diagrammatic method to check validity or invalidity; and quantified modal logic (QML). These topics lead to interesting philosophical issues and several nonstandard logical assumptions.

**PHIL 644b, Social Ontology**  Robin Dembroff
Study of conceptual and methodological foundations of social ontology, as well as particular topics within social ontology, such as the nature of gender and race.

**PHIL 650a, The Problem of Evil**  Keith DeRose
The evils of our world can seem to present strong reasons for disbelieving in the existence of God. This course examines the main forms that this problem for theism takes, and some of the proposed ways of solving, or at least mitigating, the problem.

**PHIL 651b, Beyond the "God Hypothesis"**  Kristie Dotson
Many theologians have considered it misguided to understand religious faith as a hypothesis about the existence of a super-empirical entity. We begin by trying to understand why this is. We then consider a series of modern Christian and Jewish attempts to re-envision what faith might be if not a hypothesis, and what God might be if not an entity. Finally, we ask what religious life looks like given this re-envisioned theism. We read thinkers such as Friedrich Schleiermacher, Martin Heidegger, Simone Weil, and Abraham Joshua Heschel, among others.

**PHIL 654a, The Moral Theories of Moore and Ross**  Shelly Kagan
An examination of two of the most important works of moral philosophy of the twentieth century, *Principia Ethica* by G.E. Moore and *The Right and the Good* by W.D. Ross.

**PHIL 655b, Normative Ethics**  Shelly Kagan
A systematic examination of normative ethics, the part of moral philosophy that attempts to articulate and defend the basic principles of morality. The bulk of the course surveys and explores some of the main normative factors relevant in determining the moral status of a given act or policy (features that help make a given act right or wrong). Brief consideration of some of the main views about the foundations of normative ethics (the ultimate basis or ground for the various moral principles).

**PHIL 657b / PLSC 611b, Recent Work on Justice**  Thomas Pogge
In-depth study of one contemporary book, author, or debate in political philosophy, political theory, or normative economics. Depending on student interest, this might be a ground-breaking new book, the life’s work of a prominent author, or an important theme in contemporary political thought.

**PHIL 663a / PLSC 605a, Rethinking Sovereignty: Human Rights and Globalization**
The crises of sovereignty and the end of sovereignty have been discussed in law, political science, and philosophy. Post-nationalist, cosmopolitan, as well as neoliberal critics of sovereignty abound. This course discusses alternative models of sovereignty, ranging from democratic iterations to popular constitutionalism, and considers the implications of these models for the definition and enforcement of rights. Recent developments in the U.S. and the European Union law regarding immigration and refugee issues are a special focus. Readings include Hobbes, Kant, Schmitt, Arendt, Kelsen, Habermas, Waldron, Walker, and Benveniste. *Also LAW 20662.*

**PHIL 664a, Justice, Taxes, and Global Financial Integrity**  Thomas Pogge
This seminar studies the formulation, interpretation, and enforcement of national and international tax rules from the perspective of national and global economic justice.

**PHIL 668a, Metaethics**  Stephen Darwall
A study of moral theorizing and moral discourse. The linguistic role of words like good, bad, right, and wrong; whether propositions that use these terms can be true or false. What ethical claims mean, if anything, and what kinds of reasoning or evidence might justify such claims.

**PHIL 684b, Teleology and Mechanism**  Paul Franks
Examination of teleology, with special emphasis on Aristotle, Kant, Schelling, and Hegel, as well as recent discussions of invisible hand explanations, which explain the appearance of purposiveness. Additional exploration of conceptions of mechanism, both in the history of modern philosophy and science, and in recent debates about so-called new mechanical philosophy.

**PHIL 703b, Philosophy of Law: Analytical Jurisprudence**  Scott Shapiro
This course examines a variety of historically influential responses to basic questions concerning the nature of law and the difference (if any) between law and morality. Readings include works by legal positivists, natural lawyers, legal realists, and critical legal scholars. PHIL 715 is a companion to this course. The two together comprise a literacy course in the philosophy of law. They can be taken in either order or separately. Neither is a prerequisite for the other, but students seeking a strong background in philosophy of law are encouraged, but not required, to take both. Self-scheduled examination or paper option.

**PHIL 705a, First-Year Seminar**  Michael Della Rocca and Robin Dembroff
Required of and limited to first-year students in the Philosophy Ph.D. program. Topic varies from year to year. Preparation for graduate work. Reading, writing, and presentation skills.
PHIL 706a, Work in Progress I  Paul Franks
In consultation with the instructor, each student presents a significant work in progress, e.g., a revised version of an advanced seminar paper or a dissertation chapter. Upon completion of the writing, the student presents the work in a mock colloquium format, including a formal question-and-answer period.

PHIL 715a, Philosophy of Law: Normative Jurisprudence  Gideon Yaffe
This course concerns philosophical topics that arise in connection with particular areas of law. Such topics include the justification of criminal punishment; discrepancy in punishment of attempted and completed crimes; the relevance of ignorance of the law to criminal responsibility; self-defense and other forms of preventive violence; the rationale for double-jeopardy restrictions; the conception of justice of import to tort law; the concepts of causation and intention in tort law; the relationship between promises and contracts; the fundamental rationale for property rights; the grounds for and nature of the individualization of the reasonable person standard; the rationale for variations in standards of proof across areas of law. A selection of such topics are examined through consideration of both philosophical essays written about them and legal materials that bear on them. PHIL 703 is a companion to this course. The two together comprise a literacy course in the philosophy of law. They can be taken in either order or separately. Neither is a prerequisite for the other, but students seeking a strong background in philosophy of law are encouraged, but not required, to take both. Enrollment limited to twenty-five. Self-scheduled examination.

PHIL 717b, Recent Work and Research in Epistemology  Keith DeRose and Timothy Williamson
A study of some prominent issues in current epistemology, focusing on literature relevant to research interests of students and the instructor. Topics may include skepticism, internalist vs. externalist accounts of knowledge and of justification, the structure of knowledge and of justification (foundationalism, coherenceism), contextualism in epistemology, relevant alternative accounts of knowledge, and the epistemology of lotteries. Students not in the Philosophy graduate program are welcome, but should contact the instructor for permission and further information before enrolling.

PHIL 718a / PLSC 553a, Social Justice  Bruce Ackerman
An examination of contemporary theories, together with an effort to assess their practical implications. Authors this year include Peter Singer, Richard Posner, John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Michael Walzer, Marion Young, Avishai Margalit, and Cass Sunstein. Topics: animal rights, the status of children and the principles of educational policy, the relation of market justice to distributive justice, the status of affirmative action, and the rise of technocracy. Self-scheduled examination or paper option. Follows Law School academic calendar. Also LAW 20104.

PHIL 721b, Context  Zoltán Szabó
The problem of context-dependence in natural language. Topics include objective and subjective conceptions of context, types of context-sensitivity, vagueness and imprecision, compositionality and rule-following.

PHIL 736a / CLSS 879a, Stoicism  Brad Inwood
Stoicism was one of the most important philosophical movements in the ancient Graeco-Roman world and has exercised great influence on European philosophy (and culture more generally) since the Renaissance. This course is a high-level introduction to ancient Stoicism, open equally to those who have a reading knowledge of Greek and/or Latin (as relevant) and those who don’t.

PHIL 738a, Aristotle: Metaphysics Book 9 [Theta]  David Charles
The class reads and discusses the Greek text of Aristotle’s Metaphysics 9 [Theta], which discusses substances, processes, activities, and capacities: central features of Aristotle’s metaphysics. This book is important for its discussion of a series of arguments concerning necessity, possibility, metaphysical priority, and truth. This is a core course for the combined Ph.D. program in Classics and Philosophy. It is open to all graduate students in Philosophy or Classics who have suitable preparation in Attic Greek and some prior knowledge of ancient philosophy. Others interested in taking or attending the class must have prior permission of the instructors.

PHIL 743b, Law and Psychology  Tom Tyler and Gideon Yaffe
This seminar explores recent research in psychology and philosophy concerned with free will, agency, and moral and criminal responsibility, and the bearing of this research on the law. Topics include the nature of agency and free will; the distinction between compulsion and weakness; causality and responsibility; conceptions of just deserts; excusing, mitigating, and aggravating conditions; neutral and genetic sources of conduct, and situational and unconscious factors shaping conduct.

PHIL 747a, Experimental Jurisprudence  Joshua Knobe
Investigation of legally relevant concepts using systematic experimental methods. Topics include the concepts of causation, consent, similarity, intention. Emphasis is on helping students develop and implement their own experimental studies.

PHIL 750a or b, Tutorial  Staff
By arrangement with faculty.