

Philosophy Courses – Spring 2026

PH 101 Introduction to Philosophy

3 Cr.

This course introduces students to the study and the practice of philosophy. Through the analysis of historical and contemporary texts, class discussions and lectures students gain an understanding of philosophy both as a discipline and as a way of asking – and attempting to answer – fundamental questions about ourselves and the world. The emphasis is both on learning about philosophy and on doing philosophy.

Open to first- and second-year students or by permission of instructor.

Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirements.

PH 101-001 T/TH 11:10 – 12:30
PH 101-002 W/F 12:20 – 1:40
PH 101-003 M/W 8:40 – 10:00

R. Lilly
P. Murray
S. Carli

PH 204 Modern Philosophy: From Descartes to Kant

4 Cr.

An introduction to major thinkers and themes of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe. The dynamics of the Scientific Revolution - the collection of new discoveries and inventions and the evolving experimental methods in the early modern period - led philosophers to a profound reappraisal of fundamental issues such as the sources and limits of knowledge, the relation between mind and body, theories of human freedom and personal identity, and the apparently competing desires to explain the surrounding world in both natural and religious terms. Students will investigate how these philosophical developments led to distinctively modern ways of thinking about nature and the self. Primary documents will be read throughout.

Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirement.

T/TH 12:40 – 2:00 & M 12:20 – 1:15

L. Jorgensen

PH 210 Philosophy and the Arts

3 Cr.

Arguably more than any other human activity, the arts have been central to the origins and history of philosophical thought. This course will review the most important philosophies of art that have given us the 'tool box' for thinking about art, and will examine the emergence of philosophical thought in the 20th and 21st centuries as central to contemporary art and art criticism.

Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirement.

T/TH 2:10 – 3:30

R. Lilly

PH 223 Love & Friendship**3 Cr.**

What are love and friendship? What is the relation between self-love and love for others? How does one distinguish between infatuation and genuine love? Should we be monogamous? What role does vulnerability play in close relationships? Can love be an effective answer to oppression and social divisions? These are some of the questions that we will consider in this course. We will carefully “listen to,” discuss, and analyze both the authors we read and our peers’ interpretations of them. In addition, we will begin to form our own reasoned positions on the issues that we discuss, and practice community friendship in our daily interactions.

Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirement.

M/W 10:10 – 11:30

S. Carli

PH 226 AI, Vulnerability, and Rights**4 Cr.**

An examination of artificial intelligence (AI) in relation to human rights. Students learn how modern AI systems work, how they reflect existing structures of power, and also how those structures of power are often reshaped through the use of AI into increasingly dehumanizing forms. Our particular focus will be on how already vulnerable and marginalized populations are at risk of being further disadvantaged by the insufficiently critical adoption of these technologies. Students will also learn about the successes and failures of ongoing regulatory and legislative efforts to ameliorate violations of these populations’ human rights, particularly in the United States but also in the European Union.

Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry and Bridge Experience requirements.

T/TH 9:10 – 11:00

P. Murray

PH 230 Feminist Philosophy**4 Cr.**

This course introduces students to feminist philosophy through both a historical survey and an analytical examination of key texts and arguments. We will explore how feminists have engaged with, critiqued, and reshaped major areas of philosophy—including ethics, political theory, epistemology, and metaphysics—while also raising questions grounded in lived experience, social critique, and the pursuit of liberation. Readings will include classic and contemporary works from a diverse range of feminist philosophers. Topics may include the nature of gender and identity, the structures of power and oppression, feminist critiques of knowledge and objectivity, and the role of the body, language, and culture in shaping human experience. Throughout the course, students will develop skills in close reading, logical analysis, and philosophical writing, with an emphasis on clarity and argumentation. No prior background in philosophy is required—this course is designed for all students interested in feminism from a philosophical perspective.

Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirement. Counts toward Gender Studies.

T/TH 9:10 – 11:00

S. Kizuk

PH 307 Twentieth-Century Philosophy

4 Cr.

The age of the 'truth hero,' struggling to get at the truth 'out there' waiting to be discovered has given way to an age in which the nature of truth and our relation to the true have been radically questioned. Drawing on 20th and 21st century thinkers, this course engages in a 'genealogy of the present' to understand how we have come to our current disposition regarding the true and truth with the hope that we may be better positioned to cultivate truth. Among the thinkers we'll read are Heidegger, Gadamer, Foucault, Derrida, Judith Butler and others.

Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirement; fulfills the upper-level history of philosophy requirement in the major.

Prerequisites: PH 204 or permission of the instructor

M/W 2:30 - 4:20

R. Lilly

PH 330 Philosophy of Viola Faye Cordova

4 Cr.

This seminar-style course offers an in-depth exploration of the philosophical work of Viola Faye Cordova, the first Native American woman to earn a Ph.D. in philosophy (University of New Mexico, 1992). Through a close reading of Cordova's writings, we will examine her metaphysical views on the nature of reality, including the origins of the world; the relationship between matter and spirit; the nature of time; and the interconnections between culture and language. The course will also explore Cordova's argument on the role of the human being, our relationship to place, and the ethical responsibilities we bear in a sacred world. Particular attention will be given to her comparative methodology, in which she contrasts Native American philosophical traditions with what she termed "Euroman" philosophy--systems of thought rooted in Enlightenment and Christianized European frameworks. Throughout the course, we will critically engage with Cordova's assertion that any philosophical system claiming access to a singular, absolute Truth should be approached with skepticism. In doing so, students will gain a deeper understanding of Indigenous philosophy and its challenges to dominant Western paradigms.

Fulfills Humanistic Inquiry requirement.

Prerequisites: One course in Philosophy or permission of the instructor

T/TH 3:40 - 5:30

S. Kizuk

PH 375 Senior Portfolio

4 Cr.

A capstone course in which students develop a portfolio of representative work in philosophy. Students will compile at least three research papers from previous course work, which will form the basis of their senior portfolio. The development of the portfolio will have at least three stages: (1) a re-envisioning and significant revision of a previous research paper, including doing further research into scholarly literature on the topic and with an opportunity to explore interdisciplinary connections; (2) the redevelopment of that paper into a short presentation; and (3) a reflection exercise in which students synthesize their work in the major, considering the ways their interests have developed over the course of their time at Skidmore and the ways in which these might inform their future endeavors. Open to senior Philosophy majors.

Prerequisites: senior philosophy major or permission of instructor.

W/F 12:20 - 2:10

L. Jorgensen

Spring 2026

ID 310 Language and Thought

4 Cr.

Language and thought are intimately connected in human beings, but how exactly are they interrelated? Does the specific language you speak change how you experience the world? Do humans think and experience the world differently than other animals because of our unique linguistic abilities? Are human language abilities in fact unique in the animal kingdom? In this class, we will look to both historical and contemporary psychologists and philosophers to interrogate the nuances of the relationship between language and thought. In particular, students will read, write, discuss, and think about how different cultures and species perceive and represent such concepts as gender, agency, time, space, number, and color.

Fulfills the Humanistic Inquiry and Practice requirement. Counts toward Philosophy and Psychology.

Prerequisites: PS 202 or any course in Philosophy

W/F 10:10 - 12:00

P. Murray and E. Wojcik