

## DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

**Dr. Kip H. Redick, Chair**  
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### Faculty

**Professor:** Redick, Schweig, Strehle, J. M. Thompson, Underwood  
**Associate Professor:** Jelinek, Silverman, Timani  
**Assistant Professor:** Balay, Gardner  
**Senior Lecturer:** Hutchinson  
**Lecturer:** Homan, Tweedt  
**Emeriti:** Campbell, Beauchamp, Powell, Rose, Teschner

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Philosophy and Religion is to foster rational investigation toward the great philosophical questions of existence, knowledge, ethics and religious thought and practice. The department focuses on engaging students in ways of knowing and believing in diverse cultures and religions in the ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary world.

The faculty seeks to cultivate a learning environment in which students broaden their perspectives, refine their thinking, and learn to reason and communicate in a critical, clear, and consistent manner. Students and faculty work together addressing timeless questions related to the human search for meaning, truth, value and spirituality.

Majoring in Philosophy and Religion at CNU prepares students for graduate study in diverse fields including philosophy, theology, seminary, law, education, and international studies, as well as for living a productive and creative life in any vocation. In addition to preparing people for a profession in these fields and for an enriched life generally, philosophy is also an entry point for a variety of other professions. Philosophy majors enter graduate school for advanced degrees in various humanities disciplines and then go on to college-level teaching. Others enter graduate programs in business administration or law, for which training in logical analysis and value-awareness provides an excellent background. According to the Law School Admission Council data, philosophy and theology students rank first or second highest in performance on the LSAT among a set of 29 disciplines surveyed. Additionally, philosophy majors have among the highest rates of acceptance to law school of any major. The offerings of the department fully prepare students for graduate work in philosophy and religion as well as for the continuation of their education in other academic disciplines. Students who minor in philosophy are enriched in their understanding of their major field of study by gaining broader insight into its intellectual history and theoretical presuppositions. Students who take only a few

courses in philosophy benefit by enhancing their persuasive, expressive, and analytic skills. A liberal arts degree in general and a philosophy degree specifically situates students in the deepest reflections of humanity, empowering them to go into a broad range of practical professions that make use of critical reasoning and necessary communication skills in a dramatically changing world.

The Department of Philosophy and Religion offers the Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, the Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy with concentrations in Pre-Seminary Studies or Studies in Religion and a minor in philosophy. These concentrations allow students to explore their primary areas of interest while pursuing a Philosophy degree.

The **Pre-seminary** concentration provides the student with a broad view of various religions and a focus on the discipline of theology while at the same time applying religious concepts to issues of value and practice. The concentration seeks to prepare the student for further studies in religion beyond those encountered in their undergraduate education. Students who concentrate in pre-seminary studies are expected to do a practicum in the religion of their choice. The area provides opportunity to do field work at churches, mosques, synagogues, and Buddhist and Hindu temples.

The **Studies in Religion** concentration enables students to engage in the empathetic and critical analysis of religious traditions in order to understand their historical development and their present character. As an academic discipline, religion does not seek to promote or to censure any particular creed, institution, or way of life. Rather, it involves the exploration and clarification of diverse religious traditions with particular attention towards their similarities and differences. As a part of a liberal education, the studies in religion concentration fosters curiosity about the world's religious traditions and an awareness of one's own religious and cultural heritage both through knowledge of the religious traditions influencing one's own personal life and culture and also through knowledge of other traditions having comparable influence in the lives of other persons and in other cultures. Such awareness should aid in understanding and articulating personal convictions in relation to matters of religious concern. A central focus of the studies in religion concentration is the Vision Course Series. These courses explore the diverse visions of life opened up by religious traditions. They also provide insight into how cultures shape and are shaped by religions.

**Advising**

See the University Registrar to formally declare your major, minor or concentration. The Office of the Registrar will be able to assign the appropriate advisor in order to discuss career possibilities, requirements, and scheduling. For all other questions you may contact the department at (757) 594-8827.

**The Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy**

In addition to requiring successful completion of the liberal learning curriculum, the Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy requires successful completion of the following courses in major and elective studies:

1. PHIL 101, 205, 451, 490W;
2. PHIL 201, 202;
3. Select one (3 credits) Ethics/Value Analysis: PHIL 304, 315, 319, 337, 376 or 384;
4. Select one (3 credits) Epistemology/Metaphysics: PHIL 305, 317, 320 or 308;
5. Select four (12 credits) 300-400 level courses in PHIL and/or RSTD;
6. Submit a portfolio of all written work completed in all philosophy and religion courses taken at CNU;
7. Successfully complete the CNU Philosophy and Religion departmental comprehensive examination.

**Dr. Kip H. Redick**  
**Director of Pre-Seminary Studies**  
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**The Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy  
Pre-Seminary Studies Concentration**

The pre-seminary studies concentration will prepare the undergraduate student for further graduate seminary education in a number of religious traditions. This concentration will give students a broad view of religion and foster the necessary intellectual methods that open them to focused studies in particular traditions. Courses taken to fulfill the requirements of the pre-seminary studies concentration will challenge personal beliefs by presenting opportunities to understand the world's diversity of religious expression and thereby provide a greater context for understanding faith in a world where people of various religious traditions interact regularly.

In addition to requiring successful completion of the liberal learning curriculum, the concentration in pre-seminary studies requires successful completion of the following:

1. PHIL 101, 205, 451, 490W;
2. RSTD 361, 362, 491;
3. Select one (3 credits) Visions course: RSTD 220, 232, 260, 265, or 270;
4. Select one (3 credits) Historical Studies: RSTD 319,

335, 350; PHIL 317, 348 or 349;

5. Select one (3 credits) Value Analysis: RSTD 312, 326W, 337, 338; PHIL 304, 306, 308, 315, 319, 337 or 376;
6. Select one (3 credits) Comparative Studies: RSTD 236, 310, 318, 330, 340 or 345;
7. Select two (6 credits) courses in PHIL and/or RSTD;
8. Submit a portfolio of all written work completed in all written philosophy and religion courses taken at CNU;
9. Successfully complete the CNU Philosophy and Religion departmental comprehensive exam.

Those who complete the pre-seminary studies concentration are encouraged to take elective courses that support the concentration. Students interested in scholarship or teaching are strongly encouraged to pursue language studies in Greek, Latin, or German. Students interested in practical ministry should consider language studies in Spanish.

**Dr. Graham Schweig**  
**Director of Studies in Religion**  
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**The Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy  
Studies in Religion Concentration**

The studies in religion concentration can benefit those responsible for instructing others in religious matters (whether as paid professionals or as volunteers). Generally, in fact, any person responsible for dealing with other persons in counseling and healing roles should have some knowledge of the function of religion in the lives of individuals and cultures. Sensitive understanding of these matters can only enhance one's effectiveness.

In addition to requiring successful completion of the liberal learning curriculum, the studies in religion concentration requires successful completion of the following:

1. PHIL 101, 205, 451, 490W;
2. RSTD 211, 212;
3. Select three (9 credits) Comparative and Historical Studies: RSTD 220, 232, 260, 256, 270, 318, 319, 330, 335, 340 or 350;
4. Select three (9 credits) courses in PHIL and/or RSTD, two at the 300-400 level;
5. Submit a portfolio of all written work completed in all written philosophy and religion courses taken at CNU;
6. Successfully complete the CNU Philosophy and Religion departmental comprehensive exam.

Those who complete the studies in religion concentration are encouraged to take elective courses that support the concentration.

**The Minor in Philosophy of Law (18 credits)****Dr. Dawn Hutchinson, Director****McMurran Hall 259D****(757) 594-8828****dhutchin@cnu.edu**

The Philosophy of Law is a liberal arts inquiry into the foundations of law and an examination of law from the point of view of traditional topics in philosophy such as ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of language. The minor will approach these issues from global and comparative, classical, modern, and postmodern perspectives.

1. PHIL 205, 321W, 425;
2. POLS 316;
3. Select one: PHIL 337 or RSTD 321;
4. Select one: AMST 350; LDSP 386; POLS 240, 327; or PHIL 304.

**The Minor in Philosophy and Religion (18 credits)**

Philosophy supports other programs at the University wherever critical thinking and a sharpened sense of values are important. The general areas of ethics, aesthetics, political philosophy, and theology will be of special interest to students concentrating in the humanities and the social sciences. The areas of logic, theory of knowledge, philosophy of science, philosophy of language and philosophy of mind, with their stress on reasoning and logic, will be of interest to students concentrating in the natural sciences, mathematics, and computer science. Courses in Indian, Japanese, Chinese, and comparative philosophy provide a familiarity with non-Western cultures that is of value to those who are enrolled in international studies programs.

The minor requires:

1. PHIL 101 or 205; and
2. a minimum of 15 credits above the 100-level.
3. At least two courses must be taken at the 300- or 400-level.

**Practicum Program in Philosophy**

The internship program provides opportunities for students interested in applying critical thinking, value analysis, and philosophical concepts generally, to fields and professions outside the academic setting. Students are placed in national and regional environmental programs, hospices, national intelligence agencies, in hospital administrations, and in local church and religious organizations.

**THE CURRICULUM IN PHILOSOPHY****PHIL 101. Critical Thinking I (3-3-0) LLFR***Fall and Spring.*

Designed to impart the basic skills of logical reasoning in natural languages: analyzing statements for consistency, implications, contradictions; distinguishing fact from opinion and evaluating testimony; distinguishing inference and argument from other discourse; analyzing and evaluating arguments using arrow diagrams; addressing vagueness and ambiguity by a more precise rendering of language. Satisfies the logical reasoning foundation requirement.

**PHIL 195. Special Topics (3-3-0)**

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty.

**PHIL 201. Ancient and Medieval Philosophy (3-3-0) AIGM***Fall and Spring.*

A study of the philosophical thought of the European, Middle Eastern, and Far Eastern cultures from ancient times to 1500 A.D. Readings from original sources will include topics such as early Greek explanations of the physical world, Plato's theory of abstract forms and his account of political obligation, Aristotle's theory of the soul, Epicurean and Stoic accounts of the highest moral good, Medieval arguments for God's existence, Confucian and Taoist concepts of the individual and society, Buddhist and Hindu views of self and world and the significance of meditative techniques and practices.

**PHIL 202. Modern Philosophy (3-3-0) AIWT***Fall and Spring.*

A study of the philosophical thought of the European, Middle Eastern, and Far Eastern cultures from 1500 A.D. Readings from original sources will include topics such as Descartes' theory of mind and body, Hobbes' social contract theory, Berkeley's denial of the material world, Hume's attack on miracles, Kant's theory of the phenomenal and noumenal worlds, Neo-Confucian conceptions of the Tao, and Zen Buddhism's view of knowledge and enlightenment.

**PHIL 205. The Anatomy of Thought (3-3-0) LLFR***Fall and Spring.*

This course is designed to strengthen reasoning skills by examining the fundamental structures of argumentation in natural and formal languages. The course focuses on basic reasoning methodologies and common reasoning errors in deductive and inductive arguments. Special attention will be given to the commonalities and distinctions between discourse in formal and natural languages. Satisfies the logical reasoning foundation requirement.

**PHIL 207. Ethical Issues in Business: A Critical Thinking Approach (3-3-0) LLFR***Fall or Spring.*

Designed to impart the basic skills of critical thinking and reasoning in everyday language: analyzing arguments for validity, using both inductive and deductive arguments, increasing argument cogency, identifying common fallacies, analyzing statements for consistency, implications, contradictions; distinguishing fact from opinion; identifying inference and argument; addressing vagueness and ambiguity in language. This course focuses on applying these skills to ethical issues raised within a business setting. Satisfies the logical reasoning foundation requirement.

**PHIL 215. Philosophy and Literature (3-3-0) AIWT***Fall or Spring.*

The course studies and explores recent developments in philosophy of literature and literary theory, and their relevance to traditional and contemporary topics concerning the nature of knowledge, language, and reality. Questions will be considered such as: can fiction and poetry be true, does literature make us more moral, is literature always political, does literature reveal common structures of the human psyche? Seminal Western schools of thought will include Semiotics, Existentialism, Structuralism, Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Gender Theory, Value Theory, and Postmodernism. Readings will be from primary sources by such as writers Saussure, Freud, Sartre, Barthes, Foucault, Searle, Derrida, and Kristiva.

**PHIL 252. African Philosophy (3-3-0) AIGM***Fall or Spring.*

The course will survey recent literature in the area of African Philosophy and explore African philosophy historically and in terms of its relevance to contemporary Western Philosophy and non-Western philosophy. Topics will include: philosophy in post-colonial Africa; contemporary Muslim philosophies in North Africa; the nature of mind, body, self-identity and the moral order in indigenous African worldviews; African views of power and leadership; the role of individual and community; African thought and Western science; Colonialism, Postcolonialism and African culture; racism and culture; the feminine and African moralities; African ontology; African epistemology; and treatment of the problem of evil in African thought.

**PHIL 295. Special Topics (3-3-0)**

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty.

**PHIL 304. Ethics and Current Value Questions (3-3-0)***Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.**Fall or Spring.*

A systematic study of central problems of right action, stressing value and decision in the individual; the distinction

of facts from values; rules versus ends; generalization and moral rules; the ground and nature of moral obligation; freedom; moral responsibility; the justification of punishment; the viability of egoism; the relativity of moral values. At every stage the student is provided opportunities to bring his/her new theoretical and conceptual material to bear on the analysis of moral problems in real-life situations.

**PHIL 305. The Quest for Truth (3-3-0) AIGM***Prerequisite: PHIL 101, ENGL 223.**Alternate years.*

This course explores some of the main questions of human knowledge raised in the field of epistemology. What is the origin and extent of knowledge? What are the kinds of knowledge? What are the degrees of certainty? How reliable is the testimony of others? What is the relationship between language and the world? What distinguishes deductive from inductive reasoning? How reliable is memory? Can we trust our knowledge of the past? How does knowledge differ from belief?

**PHIL 306. Search for Beauty (3-3-0) AICE***Prerequisite: ENGL 223.**Alternate years.*

This course confronts the student with the artwork and its elementary descriptive terminology. It considers the general significance of the fine arts and aesthetic value in the life of man by a systematic treatment of these problems: expression; creativity; the objectivity of the aesthetic judgment; the nature of the aesthetic experience; aesthetic qualities and the aesthetic object; the analysis of aesthetic value; art and morality.

**PHIL 307. Current Trends in Modern Thought (3-3-0)***Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.**Alternate years.*

This course is an examination of the most important topics and theories of the leading philosophers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Selections from original works of major British, American and Continental philosophers will be studied. Topics include the nature and role of science, theories of language and truth, the validity of epistemology and ontology, the nature and structure of human existence, and the foundations of moral action.

**PHIL 308. Philosophy of Religion (3-3-0)***Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.**Offered once every three years.*

Topics will include an analysis of the nature and attributes of God with special reference to the problem of evil, arguments for the existence of God, the nature of religious language, the relation of faith and revelation to reason and sense-experience, the epistemological status of miracles, the role of the concept of God in metaphysics, and the relationship of religion to science.

**PHIL 312. American Philosophy (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.*

*Offered once every two years.*

This course is a study of American philosophy focusing on issues in such movements as Transcendentalism, Pragmatism, Naturalism, and the Philosophy of Language. Major American philosophers such as R. W. Emerson, D. Thoreau, C. S. Peirce, John Dewey, and William James may be treated as well as important contemporary figures in the fields of philosophy of mind, moral philosophy and the philosophy of language.

**PHIL 315. Philosophy of Gender (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

This course will focus upon recent literature in the philosophy of feminism. Feminist critiques of knowledge, metaphysics, history, morality, philosophical anthropology, and social institutions will be examined and discussed. The course will deal with such topics as ideals of masculinity and femininity, feminine and masculine paradigms, the social construction of reality, human nature, reason, sex and gender, ego and self, autonomy, caring and maternal thinking, the implications of feminist thought for concepts of language, authorship, literature, and the feminist claims concerning the epistemological role of theory, practice and experience. The philosophy of non-Western cultures will be considered in the light of the feminist critique.

**PHIL 317. Existentialism (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

This course is a study of existentialism from its 19<sup>th</sup>-century beginnings with Kierkegaard and Nietzsche to the work of Jaspers, Heidegger, and Sartre. Topics include the existentialist view of human existence, the concepts of anxiety, dread, and the absurd, the will to power, and the significance of human mortality. Both the methodological foundations of existentialism in the phenomenology of Husserl and its literary roots in such writers as Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, and Camus will be treated.

**PHIL 319. Philosophy of Love and Sexuality (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

*Alternate Years.*

This course will trace the development of the concept of Eros (sexual love, desire) through selected readings from the Western philosophical tradition. Topics to be covered include the attainability of "true love," the ethical imperatives of faithfulness and monogamy, the roles of masculinity and femininity, and the categorization of "normal" and "abnormal" sexual behavior. This course will focus upon several issues: 1) why the question of Eros is fundamentally a question of human existence; 2) why certain sexual values have become privileged in our culture; and 3) if these values are conducive to living a good life. Authors to be studied include Plato, Augustine, Freud, Jung, Kristeva, Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Merleau-Ponty.

**PHIL 320. Scientific Reasoning (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

*Alternate years.*

An analysis of scientific reasoning in the natural and social sciences. Topics to be discussed will include the role of observation and its relation to theory, the nature of abstraction, generalization, experimentation, induction, probabilistic and statistical reasoning, the role of mathematics, and the use of deductive models of explanation, theory as interpretation, the role of language, the epistemological significance of the history of science, the distinction between the humanities and the sciences, and the relation between technological thinking and scientific thinking.

**PHIL 321. WI: Legal Reasoning (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223 with a C- or higher and sophomore standing.*

*Alternate Years.*

Students learn how argumentation functions in the trial and the court of appeals, choice of law theory, rule and policy analysis, and the role and impact of statutes and precedence. The kind of reasoning that is involved in applying law to individual cases will be studied. The course will examine theories of legal decision making and legal interpretation from its enlightenment origins through post-realist legal thought. This course partially satisfies the writing intensive requirement.

**PHIL 326. WI: Philosophy in the Movies (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223 with a C- or higher, and junior standing.*

*Alternate Years.*

This course is a philosophical and experiential exploration of philosophical concepts within popular film. Course will focus on different themes each time it is taught. Themes will include images of good and evil, images of the future, science, technology, and humanities' relationship to the environment; images of women, love and sex; images of justice, the law, and the cosmos. This course partially satisfies the writing intensive requirement.

**PHIL 337. Radical Evil and the Philosophy of Law (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

*Alternate Years.*

Immanuel Kant describes "radical evil" as the rational choice to make the propensity to do evil supreme among the maxims of action. He claims that it is mysterious and inscrutable. Evil threatens human reason for it challenges the hope that the world makes sense. Whether expressed in secular or theological claims, evil poses the problem about the world's intelligibility. This course will distinguish different kinds of evil according to degrees of volition and cognition covering the spectrum from 'irresistible impulse' as in insane homicide, to 'malice aforethought' that defines murder, through 'wanton vileness' that warrants the death penalty.

**PHIL 344. Yoga: Philosophy and Practice (3-3-0) AIGM**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

*Alternate Years.*

Yoga is not dominated by any one tradition, yet its impact on mystical religious traditions has been powerful. This course explores the backdrop of the six systems of Indian foundational to later Hindu culture, thought and practice to understand the rich vision and many forms of yoga. Readings will include primary texts, such as the Bhagavad Gita, select Upanishads, the Yoga Sutra, as well as modern scholarly studies. The phenomena of yoga will also be examined comparatively with some of the mystical-philosophical systems in other major world religions.

**PHIL 348. Asian Philosophy (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.*

*Alternate Years.*

This course is an in-depth study of the history of one of the major traditions in Asian philosophy using original source material. Specific content will be determined by the instructor, but areas of emphasis may include Chinese, Japanese or Indian philosophy. Topics will include varieties of knowledge, liberation and enlightenment, the nature of the self and substance, techniques of meditation and concentration, and theories of action.

**PHIL 349. Islamic Philosophy (3-3-0) AIGM**

*Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.*

*Alternate Years.*

A study of the history of Islamic philosophy using original source material. The origins of Islamic thought will be examined in Greek and Neo-Platonic philosophy and in the literary tradition founded in interpretations of the Koran. Such thinkers as Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Al-Ghazali, Al-Arabi, and Rumi will be read and discussed with an emphasis on the development of the philosophical and religious themes in the tradition of Islam.

**PHIL 370. Philosophy Seminar Abroad (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor.*

The Philosophy Seminar Abroad is an in depth study of a central issue or problem in the philosophical and religious traditions of Eastern or Western thought. This course will be taught on-site in a region central to the genesis or perpetuation of the issue or problem. The seminar will include classroom orientation, lectures, discussion group activities, visits to sites of significance related to the central theme of the course. Contact may include activities prior to departure, on-site, and upon return. Criteria for admission into the Philosophy Seminar Abroad may include an application process at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to tuition, there will be a charge for travel, accommodations, and some activities, which will be published well in advance of the trip. This course will be repeatable for additional credit up to a maximum of two times with the consent of all affected instructors.

**PHIL 376. Environmental Ethics (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.*

*Alternate years.*

The course will analyze the major philosophical issues in the field of environmental ethics. Some of the topics will include the historical roots of the environmental crisis, a land ethic, intrinsic natural value, biocentrism, and biodiversity, the role of science and the scientific method, the aesthetic value of nature, animal rights, strong and weak anthropocentrism, Ecotheology, Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, environmental economics, Buddhist and Taoist attitudes toward nature. In addition to Western metaphysical and ethical systems, non-Western cultures and primal societies will be considered. The course will read and discuss major articles and essays in the literature of the environmental movement.

**PHIL 379. Philosophy of Language (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.*

*Fall.*

Philosophy of language seeks to understand the nature of language in the context of traditional concerns about the nature of knowledge and reality. Philosophy of language asks and attempts to answer questions such as: What is language? What is meaning? How do uses of language understand one another? What is the connection between names and the objects to which they refer? Are the truth and falsehood of our statements determined by the world, or by our linguistic conventions? Can we think without language? Do we have an innate linguistic faculty or do we learn to speak by observing the behavior of other speakers? The attempts to answer such questions are the source of various philosophical theories about language.

**PHIL 384. Medical Ethics (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

*Fall or Spring.*

The focus is on value issues in medicine. The aspects of moral theory relevant to problems in medicine are treated, and recent biomedical technology is examined briefly to discover where value issues arise. The moral problems attending birth and death are treated, abortion and the beginning of human life, severe congenital defects, rights of the dying, the definition and the determination of death. Moral issues in the relation between the health care provider and the patient are treated: confidentiality, informed consent, how much the patient should be told, screening for genetic disease and experimenting with human subjects.

**PHIL 386. Values and Postmodernity (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.*

*Alternate years.*

The rapid changes of the twentieth century, often called a postmodern era, have significantly challenged modern enlightenment ideals of individuality, free will, justice, and the good life. This course will consider, from the perspective of postmodernity, the dynamic relationship between the

personal and the political. This course will also explore what factors may have led to this devaluation of values or “nihilistic” attitude, as well as how we can again instill our culture and our lives with meaning, even if not in any absolutist sense (the “revaluation” of values).

**PHIL 395. Special Topics (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: As announced.*

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty.

**PHIL 425. The Constitutional Theory (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: PHIL 205, ENGL 223 or consent of the instructor.*

This course explores the purpose, nature, and interpretation of constitutions with particular emphasis on the United States Constitution. Students will examine Plato, Aristotle, Locke, Hobbs, Rousseau, the Federalist, John Rawls, U.S. Supreme Court decisions, foreign constitutions, and contemporary theories of constitutional interpretation. In doing so, students will explore the tension between contemporary politics and fundamental values as well as the role of the judiciary in resolving that tension.

**PHIL 451. The Great Philosophers (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.*

*Fall or Spring.*

This course is a comprehensive examination of the writings of one or more of the major thinkers of the ancient, medieval period or modern periods in philosophical thought. Course content will change periodically and the course is **repeatable twice for a total of nine credits with the consent of the instructor.**

**PHIL 490. WI: Senior Seminar (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223 with a C- or higher; and PHIL 451, and philosophy major.*

*Fall or spring.*

The course has a seminar format in which students are guided in the writing of a major research paper. In addition to instructor supervision, students provide feedback, commentary, and analysis of each other’s work. Required for all philosophy majors. This course partially satisfies the writing intensive requirement.

**PHIL 491. Practicum (credits vary 1-3)**

*Prerequisite: Philosophy major with senior standing.*

*Offered on request.*

This course provides opportunities for students interested in applying critical thinking, value analysis, and philosophical concepts generally, to field and professions outside the academic setting. Students are placed in national and regional environmental programs, hospices, national intelligence agencies, and in hospital administrations. **Course may be repeated for a maximum of three credits.**

**PHIL 495. Special Topics (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: As announced.*

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty.

**PHIL 499. Independent Study (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Philosophy major with senior standing, consent of instructor and Department Chair.*

*Offered on request.*

This course involves a research project involving substantial reading on a specific problem, theme, or the work of an individual philosopher. The research is supervised by a staff member who must approve the project before registration. A research paper is required.

## THE CURRICULUM IN STUDIES OF RELIGION

**RSTD 195. Special Topics (3-3-0)**

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty.

**RSTD 210. Interfaith Studies (3-3-0) AIGM**

**[Formerly RSTD 318, equivalent]**

This course will discuss the theologies of religious pluralism and comparative theology from multi-religious perspectives. Students learn how theologians step into the territory of the other, study the tradition of the other, and come back to reflect on their own traditions based on what they have learned from the other. We will attempt to answer the following: What is the relationship between theology of religions and comparative theology? Can comparative theology dispense with theology of religions? Is comparative theology a foundational discipline or just another name for syncretism? This course will also prepare students to be future leaders in interfaith dialogue and civic engagement.

**RSTD 211. Religions of the East (3-3-0) AIGM**

*Fall and Spring.*

This is an introduction to major religious traditions of the world, including indigenous religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto and other religions such as Sikhism, Baha’i, and Japanese new religions. In the course of exploring the historical and conceptual aspects of these religions, thematic issues, such as myth, ritual, the problem of evil, and the epistemological status of religion will be addressed.

**RSTD 212. Religions of the West (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Fall and Spring.*

Using the same approach described in the preceding entry, this course will explore a number of ancient and modern religious traditions, such as Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, modern Western religions such as Protestantism, Mormonism, Christian Science, and contemporary New Age movements.

**RSTD 218. The Qur'an (3-3-0) AIGM***Alternate Years.*

This course will discuss the Qur'an and its commentaries. Students will learn Islamic religious beliefs, the nature of God, human role and destiny, eschatology, and life after death in the Islamic tradition based on the scripture. Also, students will study and analyze controversial and sensitive verses on the concept of jihad, the status of women, and Christianity and Judaism from an Islamic point of view. In this course, the students will be asked to do a comparative study of the Qur'an and the Bible and discuss and analyze the similarities and differences between the two scriptures.

**RSTD 220. The Vision of Hinduism (3-3-0)***Alternate Years.*

An ancient Hindu visionary proclaimed, "Truth is one, though religious teachers call it by many names" (*Rig-Veda*). In other words, truth is universal and not the possession of any one religion. Yet, due to the different contexts within which human beings experience the sacred, there are many different ways of envisioning the universal truths of religion. Hinduism is rich with such visionary encounters with truth, as expressed, for instance, in the Vedas, the Upanishads, Vedanta, and Yoga. Depending on the focus of the course when it is offered, these topics may be addressed along with others, such as the guru-disciple relationship, worship of the gods, temple architecture and rituals, caste, paths to enlightenment, mythology, devotional poetry, and religious philosophy.

**RSTD 232. Visions of Christianity (3-3-0) AIWT***Fall and Spring.*

This course is an introduction to major events, persons, issues, and ideas within the development of the Christian tradition. Topics of discussion include: doctrines of God, the role of rituals and sacraments, the Trinity, the church Christology, salvation, Scripture, creation, sin, faith and reason, and eschatology. The course explores the diversity of ancient and modern expressions of Christianity.

**RSTD 236. Sacred Communication, Sacred Journeys (3-3-0) AIWT***Alternate Years.*

This course is a study of the religious significance of various media of sacred communication. Religion is conveyed through multiple means of communication. This course explores the effects of such media upon the actions and beliefs of people belonging to various religious traditions. Media that convey sacred communication to be explored include; sacred scriptures and holy books such as the TNK, the Bible, the Quran; sacred oral communication as found in non-literate traditions; sacred artifacts that convey information such as burial sites; the possibility of sacred electronic communication; and sacred visual communication such as iconography and possibly photography and film.

**RSTD 260. The Vision of Buddhism (3-3-0) AIGM***Alternate Years.*

Buddha taught a way to overcome suffering. His teaching proved so attractive that it rapidly spread across Asia, becoming the dominant religion in Asian countries. Buddhism is a tradition of meditation, philosophical analysis, and religious worship that continues to shape much of Asian religious thought and has recently become influential as well in the West. This course will approach Buddhism through an analysis of scripture, philosophical texts, and important teachers, both ancient and modern.

**RSTD 265. The Vision of Judaism (3-3-0) AIWT***Alternate Years.*

This course offers an introduction to the diverse religious life of the Jewish people, including the varieties of Israelite religion, Jewish life after the Babylonian Captivity and after the destruction of the Second Temple, the rise of rabbinical Judaism, medieval mystical and pietist movements, and trends in recent centuries. Special attention will be given to such topics as the Israelite conception of God and God's relationships to the gods and goddesses of Canaan and surrounding regions, law, prophecy, the land of Israel, the Talmud, Kabbala, Hasidism, and modern Jewish reform and renewal movements.

**RSTD 270. The Vision of Islam (3-3-0) AIGM***Alternate Years.*

This course will be an introductory survey of Islam, one of the most significant religious traditions in world history. We will cover major events in Islamic history as well as important rituals, practices and teachings to get a sense of how Islam shapes the daily lives of its followers. We will study the life of the Prophet Muhammad, read selections from the *Qur'an* (in English translation), and listen to recordings of professional reciters to get a sense of the important aural aspects of Muslim life. We will pay particular attention to Sufism, Islam in America, and major issues facing Muslims in the contemporary world.

**RSTD 295. Special Topics (3-3-0)**

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty.

**RSTD 310. Myth, Symbol, and Ritual (3-3-0)***Prerequisite: ENGL 223.**Alternate Years.*

Everyone knows that myths are false, symbols are arbitrary, and rituals are meaningless gestures, right? WRONG! Myths are actually important articulations of truths, symbols have deep resonance, and rituals define our ways of interacting with each other. This course will explore three important aspects of world religions: myths, symbols and rituals. We will critically examine, discuss and write about various dimensions of myth, symbol and ritual, noting similarities as well as differences across religious and cultural boundaries.



Our main concern will be to understand how religions shape our ways of thinking and living rather than debating alleged claims of “truth” or “falsity.”

**RSTD 312. Religion and the Arts (3-3-0) AICE**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

*Alternate Years.*

People have always had imaginative ways of expressing themselves in their religious lives. This course focuses on the human drive for creativity and self-expression through a study of religious invention. Students will examine creative works both structurally and within their cultural and historical contexts. This course will explore religion as it is expressed in music, dance, architecture, poetry, drama and the visual arts.

**RSTD 319. Religion and American Identity (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

*Alternate Years.*

Americans have always had imaginative ways of expressing religious identity. This course exposes students to the institutional structures of American society and the fluid role of the individual within that society. Students will analyze concepts, patterns, and issues that affect the organization of American society, shape individual thought and social mores and mold the relationship between individuals and American society at large.

**RSTD 321. The Church and the State (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Alternate Years.*

There is no more controversial issue these days than the relationship between church and state. Some believe that religion is a private matter and best left out of the political arena because it creates division and conflict. Others argue that religion is an essential aspect of our lives in general and an indispensable element of our corporate existence in particular, laying the foundation of our most sacred political concepts. In this course we will explore the religious heritage of modern ideals in Puritanism and the Reformation, trace the growth of secularism in the modern world from the times of the Enlightenment, and address contemporary issues related to the relationship of church and state.

**RSTD 326. WI: Religion in the Movies (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223 with a C- or higher and junior standing.*

*Fall or Spring.*

A theoretical and experiential exploration of religious concepts within popular films. Concepts considered will include: Rudolph Otto's *Mysterterium Tremendum et Fascinans*, film as postmodern bard, sacred time and space, spiritual journey, spiritual mediation, icons, hierophanic phenomena, transcendence, and Paul Schrader's understanding of Transcendental Style in Film. Theories of religious experience from the following authors will be integrated into the examination of film as a medium of religious communication: Rudolph Otto, Mircea Eliade, Peter

Berger, Clifford Geertz, Walter Ong, Marshall McLuhan, Evelyn Underhill and Paul Schrader. This course partially satisfies the writing intensive requirement.

**RSTD 330. Christian Prayer and Spirituality (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Prerequisite: Junior or senior standing or consent of instructor.*

*Alternate years.*

Christianity, like other religions, has an inward spiritual or mystical dimension that has nurtured a continuous stream of mystics, saints, and spiritual visionaries over the last two millennia. For example, John Tauler, a 14th Century mystic, taught that “prayer is the ascent of the mind to God.” In this course, we will explore the lives, teachings, and spiritual practices of a wide array of Christian spiritual teachers from the beginning of Christian history to the present day. Along the way, we will focus on the stages of the mystical life as it has been charted by the spiritual masters of the Christian mystical life. More broadly, we will study the teachings of the Christian mystics for insights into the nature of religion, the validity of contemplative experience, and the meaning of human existence.

**RSTD 335. Primal Religions: Myth, Ritual, and Oral Expression (3-3-0) AIGM**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

*Alternate years.*

This course will focus on religions that occur in non-literate cultures such as Native American and Australian Aboriginal societies. We will compare and contrast these oral traditions with literate traditions. These traditions will be drawn from ancient and contemporary examples. Topics to be considered include: the use of dance, vision quest, song, the bard, magic, shamanism, myth, paintings and other arts in the traditions of primal regions.

**RSTD 337. Religion and Ecology (3-3-0)**

*Alternate Years.*

Environmental concerns have become extremely important, underlying the contemporary discussion of environmental responsibility are some basic religious questions: What is the place of human beings in the natural world? Are there limits to the responsibility that humans have toward other species? Are human beings of nature or above nature? Answers to these questions are informed by answers to more obvious religious questions: What is the meaning of life? What is our purpose, if any, in the cosmos? These questions will be explored by looking at religious traditions, both ancient and contemporary, east and west. Finally, the course will explore a rising concept, ecological spirituality.

**RSTD 338. Pilgrimage on the Appalachian Trail (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.  
Offered Summer Term 1 only.*

Hiking the Appalachian Trail can be understood as a kind of modern spiritual journey. This class will be an experiential exploration, hiking the Appalachian Trail, comparing and contrasting the experience of walking through the wilderness with traditional pilgrimages, and communicating with others who are themselves not in the class, but hiking the trail for their own reasons. Class members will learn, through reading, journal writing, and interpersonal communication, how pilgrim backpackers experience *communitas* in relation to both persons and their environment.

**RSTD 340. Mindfulness, Meditation and Happiness (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.  
Alternate Years.*

Obituaries for religion are not uncommon, yet religion shows no signs of disappearing from human experience. Individual religions die; yet new ones replace them. Religion itself is thus an inexhaustible source of ever new and exotic ways of life. Reading contemporary and classical theorists of religion, this course will attempt to uncover the theological, philosophical, and bio-historical conditions that energize the continuous appearance of new religions.

**RSTD 345. Scriptures of the World (3-3-0) AIGM**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.  
Alternate Years.*

This course is an examination of the way religious peoples communicate using written texts, which focuses on one way religion is communicated. The primary goal of the course is to deepen student's understanding of the complexity, subtlety, and variety of various modes of textual use reflected by the great religious traditions of the world. In reflecting on these rich scriptural practices, students should realize a new appreciation for the intricacies of their own religious traditions. The course aims to develop student knowledge of uses of sacred scriptures that range from repositories of ritual to enumerators of ethical proclamations, from prompts for sacred chant to legal documents that require multiple layers of commentary.

**RSTD 350. Thinking About God (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.  
Alternate Years.*

From a position of unquestioned absolute rule over Western intellectual life as late as the thirteenth century, God in recent centuries has been eclipsed by humanity and its concerns. God is now marginal to the learned discourse of the academy, government, and the media. But God has not gone away, for God is now as popular as ever in America and also in the Muslim world. This rebirth of passionate concern with God is one of the most significant religious events of recent times.

In this course, we will trace the theological and philosophical revolutions that brought about these startling reversals in the fortunes of God.

**RSTD 361. Hebrew Bible (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.  
Spring.*

This course concerns the writings of the Old Testament and their role in the development of Hebrew religion. Archaeological, literary, and cultural backgrounds are used to illumine the historical, legal, prophetic, and poetic sections of the writings.

**RSTD 362. New Testament (3-3-0) AIWT**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.  
Fall.*

This course explores the place of Jesus in the writings of early Christianity to include the canonical writings of the four gospels and the writings of Paul, and the non-canonical writings of the Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Mary.

**RSTD 366. Bhagavad Gita and Sacred Hindu Texts (3-3-0) AIGM**

*Prerequisite: ENGL 223.*

The diverse corpus of literature that constitutes the sacred texts of Hindu traditions, such as Vedas, Upanishads, and the Puranas, is the general focus of this course. Among these texts, the Bhagavad Gita is the most prominent, the most loved, and the most commented upon by Hindu traditions over the millennia. Often thought of as the bible of India, it is indisputably one of the important sacred texts of the world, next to the Bible and the Qur'an. It presents a synthesis of the philosophical and religious systems of Hindu traditions, and projects a vision of the world and the human condition that has held the fascination of Western thinkers for at least two centuries.

**RSTD 370. Religious Studies Seminar Abroad (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor.  
Extended summer term, alternate years.*

This course is an in depth study of a central issue or problem in the religious traditions of Eastern or Western thought. The course will be taught on-site in a region central to the genesis or perpetuation of the issue or problem. Criteria for admission into the course may include an application process at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to tuition, there will be a charge for travel, accommodations, and some activities, which will be published well in advance of the trip. **This course is repeatable for a total of six credits with the consent of all affected instructors.**

**RSTD 395. Special Topics (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: As announced.  
Fall and Spring.*

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty.

**RSTD 491. Practicum/Internship (credits vary 1-3)**

*Prerequisite: Philosophy major with senior standing.*

*Offered on request.*

This course provides opportunities for students interested in applying critical thinking, value analysis, and philosophical concepts generally, to field and professions outside the academic setting. Students are placed in local church and religious organizations or non-profit organizations.

**RSTD 495. Special Topics (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: As announced.*

*As needed.*

Topics vary, determined by the special interests and needs of students and the expertise of faculty.

**RSTD 499. Independent Research (3-3-0)**

*Prerequisite: Philosophy major with senior standing,*

*consent of instructor and Department Chair.*

*Offered on request.*

A research project involving substantial reading on a specific problem, theme, or the work of an individual philosopher. The research is supervised by a staff member who must approve the project before registration. A research paper is required.