PHILOSOPHY

Studying philosophy at St. Kate’s helps students develop skills they can use to expose and question hidden assumptions, challenge perceived authorities and problematic traditions, and engage a wide range of perspectives on some of life’s most fundamental questions.

Studying philosophy also helps prepare students for a career by developing skills in communication, critical thinking and creativity, leadership and collaboration, and ethics and social justice.

Our courses are women-centered. Our courses engage diverse philosophical perspectives. And our courses teach students how to apply philosophical thinking to their everyday lives.

Major

- Philosophy - BA [http://catalog.stkate.edu/undergraduate/humanities-arts-sciences/philosophy/ba/]
- Philosophy (pre-MPH) dual degree - BA [http://catalog.stkate.edu/undergraduate/humanities-arts-sciences/philosophy/dual-degree/]

Minor

- Philosophy - Minor [http://catalog.stkate.edu/undergraduate/humanities-arts-sciences/philosophy/Minor/]

PHIL 1000 Philosophy and Human Life — 4 credits

In this course, students are introduced to issues of philosophy as they apply to everyday life. Ways of establishing beliefs about the world and the moral life and the nature and task of philosophic questioning will be explored. This course can serve as students’ only study in philosophy, satisfying the liberal arts core requirement, or it can be the basis for further study toward a minor or major in philosophy. Offered every semester. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 2100 Critical Thinking — 4 credits

This course involves understanding patterns of reasoning as they occur in ordinary language contexts, developing the practical skills of identifying and critically evaluating arguments. Topics include distinguishing arguments from rhetoric and other forms of persuasion; how to construct an argument; how claims are supported by reasons; distinguishing good arguments from bad ones; how the poor arguments can manage to be persuasive. The course is offered alternate years. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 2150 Logic — 4 credits

This course focuses on techniques and applications of contemporary formal logic. Topics include the structures and forms of arguments; identifying arguments and translating them from ordinary language contexts to symbolic forms; validity, invalidity and soundness; deductive techniques for testing arguments; logical consistency; inductive logic and its applications. Offered every year. This course fulfills the mathematics and logical reasoning core requirement. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 2200W Ethics — 4 credits

This course involves the examination and evaluation of the major ethical theories of Western philosophical tradition. Contemporary ethical issues will be discussed in light of theories such as virtue ethics, natural law, deontological theory, utilitarianism and feminist ethics. The course is offered every semester. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 2300 Social and Political Philosophy — 4 credits

This course covers fundamental concepts and controversies in the philosophic understanding of human social and political life. Discussions will involve concepts such as justice, power, liberty, equality and nationalism; social contract theory and its alternatives; contemporary debates about national sovereignty, universal human rights, attempts to limit warfare. This course is offered annually.

PHIL 2400 Philosophy and Women — 4 credits

This course offers an examination of the portrayal of women in Western philosophic tradition and the influence of views on the nature, status and role of women. Readings from women who contributed to the development of philosophic ideas will be included. Representative contemporary issues might include the debate about pornography, violence against women and censorship. The course is offered alternate years. Also offered as WOST 2400. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 2450 Philosophy and Film — 4 credits

This course covers issues of knowledge and reality as they arise in film, such as what it means to know, what counts as certainty, what sort of being a human being is, and what it means to know another person. Offered in alternate years. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 2600 Philosophic Themes in Literature — 4 credits

This course offers an examination of philosophic issues, such as the meaning of life, suffering, the relationship between language and reality, and the question of human freedom, as they arise in literary texts. It involves discussion of the connections between literature and philosophy and the kinds of truth offered by each. Offered in alternate years.

PHIL 2650 Philosophy of Science — 4 credits

Modern science is a vast and very successful enterprise. This course explores its successes. Does the best science reveal laws of nature? Make bold predictions? Provide explanations? Achieve control? Students also study revisions and failures in science. Given these, to what extent should we trust today’s facts? Finally, students consider science as a social institution, discussing the ways science and society influence each other. Offered every other year.

PHIL 2700 Philosophy of Psychology — 4 credits

Examination of attempts to explain our psychological states and capacities focuses on cognition, sensation, perception, emotion and memory. Philosophical theories of psychology such as mentalism, behaviorism and functionalism are discussed. Course also looks at the philosophical significance of recent work in psychology and computer science: computer simulation of cognitive processes, artificial intelligence and cognitive psychology. Also offered as PSYC 2700. Meets either the philosophy or social science liberal arts and science core requirement, not both. Offered annually. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 2800 Philosophy of the Arts — 4 credits

This course involves questions of the definition of artworks, the functions of art, aesthetic experience, aesthetic value, forgery and the original work of art, realistic representation and photography; and current controversies about public art, such as offensiveness, censorship and public funding. Offered alternate years. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 2994 Topics — 4 credits

The subject matter is announced in the annual schedule of classes. Content varies from year to year but does not duplicate existing courses. Offered in the College for Women.
PHIL 3000 Philosophy of Law — 4 credits
This course involves the fundamental questions of law and legal systems. Issues discussed include the nature of law, the relationship of law to morality, what counts as a valid law, civil disobedience, the limits of law, punishment and forms of dispute resolution. Recent developments in legal theory such as feminist jurisprudence will be discussed. Offered in alternate years.

PHIL 3100 Environmental Ethics — 4 credits
This course is an examination of the relationship of humans to the natural environment. Topics include an overview of philosophic ethics, definitions of nature, comparison of anthropocentric, biocentric and land ethics, ecofeminism and deep ecology, the rights of animals and other living things, and our responsibilities to future generations. Offered in alternate years.

PHIL 3300 Ethics in Communication — 4 credits
This course involves basic principles of ethical decision making and application to ethical problems that arise in verbal and nonverbal communication. Issues discussed include deception and withholding information, persuasion and advertising, freedom of speech and the press, confidentiality and privacy. Offered annually. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 3400 Biomedical Ethics — 4 credits
This course is an overview of normative ethical theory. It has application to topics in biomedicine, such as the concept of health, the provider-patient relationship, informed consent and refusal of treatment, truth-telling and confidentiality, research involving human subjects, life-sustaining treatment and physician-assisted death, reproductive decisions and technologies, genetic screening and interventions, allocation of scarce resources. Offered every semester. Offered in the College for Women and the College for Adults. Also offered as CRST 3400.

Recommended: PHIL 2200W. Open to students with no prior work in philosophy, but recommended that students be juniors or seniors.

PHIL 3450 Faith and Doubt — 4 credits
This course involves examination and evaluation of traditional philosophic arguments for and against the existence of God. It includes discussion of the foundations and implications of claims regarding the possible immortality of the human person, the problem innocent suffering poses to any claim for the benevolence of the universe and the question of miracles. Offered alternate years.

PHIL 3900 Feminist Philosophy — 4 credits
This course involves the exploration of feminist contributions in the traditional philosophical inquiries of metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics, as well as questions unique to feminist thought. Students will explore the social conception of the self, social constructions of knowledge, the objectivity and subjectivity debates, standpoint epistemologies, and the philosophic implications of multiple differences, including race, class, sexuality. Also offered as CRST 3900 and WOST 3900. Offered annually. Offered in the College for Women.

PHIL 4684 Directed Study — 4 credits
Directed study is provided for students whose unusual circumstances prohibit taking a regularly scheduled course but who need the material of that course to satisfy a requirement. Availability of this faculty-directed learning experience depends on faculty time and may be limited in any given term and restricted to certain courses.

Prerequisites: Faculty, department chair and dean approval.