Philosophy at Haverford aims as far as possible to reflect the richness, diversity, and reflexivity of philosophical inquiry. Grounded throughout in the history of philosophy, many courses focus on particular subfields, on value theory, for instance, or the philosophy of mind, ancient philosophy, or the philosophy of logic and language. A student of philosophy at Haverford might study views regarding the ultimate nature of reality or pursue questions about the nature of a good human life, might grapple with theoretical problems of social meaning or with puzzles that arise on reflection about language.

Global Philosophy

The department also provides courses in global philosophy that seek to cultivate global philosophical literacy for students across all majors. (These courses, which are not included within the major or minor, appear at the conclusion of this departmental description.)

The Department of Philosophy helps students—whether or not they are majors in the discipline—to develop the reflective, analytical, and critical skills required for thoughtful engagement with problems and issues in all aspects of life. Courses introduce students to seminal ideas that have changed, or have the potential to change, our most fundamental understanding of who we are and how we should live our lives. Because the study of philosophy is essentially reflexive, we also encourage students to reflect on and (if need be) problematize not only the methods of philosophy but also its history, goals, and achievements.

Careers and Graduate Work

Since the study of philosophy strengthens both the skill of analytical thinking characteristic of scientific investigation and the strong verbal and writing skills of the humanist, advanced undergraduate training in philosophy is excellent preparation for a wide range of career paths. It is also at the core of a liberal education—regardless of one's primary intellectual interests. Some Haverford philosophy majors go on to graduate school in philosophy. Most pursue careers in other disciplines such as medicine, law, education, public service, architecture, and business.

LEARNING GOALS

In studying the discipline of philosophy, students:

- learn to recognize and articulate philosophical problems, whether those that arise within philosophy or those to be found in other academic disciplines and outside the academy.
- become skilled at thinking, reading, writing, and speaking thoughtfully and critically about philosophical problems, through learning to recognize, assess, and formulate cogent and compelling pieces of philosophical reasoning both in writing and verbally.
- achieve literacy in a wide range of philosophical works and develop thoughtful views about their interrelations.
- develop attitudes and habits of reflection, appreciation for the complexities of significant questions in all aspects of their lives, and the courage to address those complexities.

CURRICULUM

Unless otherwise indicated, one philosophy course at the 100 level is a prerequisite for all other courses in philosophy. Courses at the 300 level require, in addition, a 200-level course plus junior standing, or consent of the instructor. Some advanced philosophy courses may require a reading knowledge of a foreign language as a prerequisite for admission.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

- One philosophy course at the 100 level, or Bryn Mawr Philosophy 101, 102, or 201, or the equivalent elsewhere.
- Five philosophy courses at the 200 level, at least four of which must be completed by the end of the junior year, and three philosophy courses at the 300 level.
- The Senior Seminar (399A and 399B).

The eight courses at the 200 and 300 level must furthermore satisfy the following requirements:

- Historical: One course must be from among those that deal with the history of European philosophy prior to Kant.
- Topical breadth:
  - One course must be from among those that deal with value theory, including
ethics, aesthetics, social and political philosophy, and legal philosophy.

- One course must be from among those that deal with metaphysics and epistemology, including ontology, philosophy of mind, philosophy of psychology, and philosophy of action.
- One course must be from among those that deal with logic, the philosophy of literature, and/or the philosophy of language.

**Systematic coherence:** Four of these courses, two at the 200 level and two at the 300 level, must exhibit some systematic coherence in theme or subject satisfactory to the major adviser and department.

Students electing a major in philosophy, but unable to comply with normal requirements because of special circumstances should consult the chairperson regarding waivers or substitutions.

Majors are also encouraged to be discussion leaders in their senior year.

**MINOR REQUIREMENTS**

- One philosophy course at the 100 level, or Bryn Mawr Philosophy 101, 102, or 201, or the equivalent elsewhere.
- Three philosophy courses at the 200 level.
- Two philosophy courses at the 300 level.

Among the 200- and 300-level courses: one must be in value theory (broadly conceived to include ethics, social and political philosophy, aesthetics, and legal philosophy), one must be in metaphysics and epistemology (including ontology, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of action), and one must be concerned with philosophical texts written before the twentieth century. This third requirement can be satisfied concurrently with either of the other two (e.g., by taking a course in ancient ethics, or in Descartes’ metaphysics), or can be satisfied separately from the other two.

**SENIOR PROJECT**

The capstone of the philosophy major is the Senior Seminar. This two course seminar (PHIL 399A and PHIL 399B) comprises (1) a year-long research project culminating in a senior thesis, (2) student presentations and discussion of the students’ works-in-progress in preparation for the final, formal presentation of the thesis at the end of the spring term, and (3) seminars with visiting speakers throughout the senior year.

The senior thesis (thirty pages) is on a topic of the student’s choice. It is written under the supervision of a first reader who meets with the student on a regular basis throughout the year, usually weekly. A second reader also reads and comments on the student’s written work and may also meet regularly with the student. In the fall, students write a twenty-page research paper introducing the literature on the topic and the issues it involves. In the spring, students build on this base, developing an analysis of the issues and an argument in defense of the conclusions drawn. A draft of the thesis is submitted in March; the final version is due the end of April.

After a very short initial presentation in the fall to introduce their research topics, students give three substantial presentations of their work: at the end of the fall semester, in March, and in May. Each presentation is followed by a question period.

In preparation for the fall Altherr Symposium, featuring a speaker of the students’ choice, students and faculty read works by the Altherr speaker, and students prepare discussion questions both for the Symposium lecture and for the seminar with the speaker. Seniors also attend all other invited speaker events, of which there are four or five over the course of the year, and they have a short seminar with each speaker to further discuss the presented work.

**Senior Project Learning Goals**

In the process of researching and writing the senior thesis, students should acquire and demonstrate:

- the ability to articulate a philosophically rich but also manageable research question.
- the ability to locate and to learn from relevant work on the topic by other philosophers.
- the ability to assess critically and fairly other positions and views, and to develop arguments in support of those assessments.
- the ability to explain in a compelling way the philosophical interest of the research topic and to develop a sustained and cogent philosophical argument for the conclusions reached.

In the course of repeated presentations and discussions, students should acquire and demonstrate:
PHILOSOPHY

- the capacity to develop and enact thoughtful and effective presentations.
- the ability to respond constructively to presentations on a very wide range of philosophical topics, even those with which one is unfamiliar.
- the ability to respond productively to questions about and criticisms of one's work.

Senior Project Assessment
A student’s faculty advisers collectively assess the thesis project (written and oral components) on the following criteria:

- Conceptualization of Research Question and Historical Argument: Students acknowledge and explore the full implications of an innovative thesis question.
- Familiarity with and Understanding of Primary Texts: Students engage primary sources to answer their research question and display a creative approach to existing sources or bring new and illuminating sources to bear on their research question.
- Engagement with Secondary Literature: Students demonstrate mastery of scholarly literature that pertains to their thesis topic by synthesis of and contribution to the scholarly conversation.
- Methodological and Theoretical Approach: Students ground their theses in current knowledge about their historical period, demonstrating a thorough understanding of relevant methodological and theoretical issues.
- Quality of Argument: Students construct a well reasoned, well structured, and clearly expressed argument.
- Clarity of Writing: Writing is consistently engaging, clear, well organized, and enjoyable to read.
- Oral Presentation: At the end of the semester, students demonstrate comprehensive understanding of their topic in an articulate and engaging presentation and are able to provide innovative and thoughtful answers to questions. Student demonstrates capacity to connect thesis project to prior coursework in history and related disciplines.

Requirements for Honors
The award of honors in philosophy will be based upon distinguished work in philosophy courses, active and constructive participation in the senior seminar, and the writing and presentation of the senior essay. High honors requires in addition exceptional and original work in the senior essay.

TRAVEL GRANTS
Travel grants of up to $100 each will be available to be awarded to philosophy majors (juniors and seniors) for travel to scholarly conferences. Students presenting papers at undergraduate conferences will be given priority, and no student will be eligible for more than one grant in a given academic year.

FACULTY

Jerry Miller
Department Chair and Associate Professor of Philosophy

Ashok Gangadean
The Emily Judson and John Marshall Gest Professor of Global Philosophy

Danielle Macbeth
T. Wistar Brown Professor of Philosophy

Kathleen Wright (on partial leave 2016-2017)
Professor of Philosophy

Joel Yurdin (on leave 2016-2017)
Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Brooks Sommerville
Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Affiliated Faculty:

Jill Stauffer
Assistant Professor and Director of the Interdisciplinary Concentration in Peace, Justice and Human Rights

COURSES

PHILH103 GLOBAL ETHICS
Ashok Gangadean
An exploration of selected texts on ethics in a global context. This course seeks to develop a global perspective on human values through a critical exploration of vital texts on ethics across diverse philosophical traditions. A central focus is on the challenge of articulating global ethics and global values across cultures, worldviews, and traditions. Readings include Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bhagavad-Gita, the Analects of Confucius, and Kant’s *Fundamental Principles*. Humanities (HU)
PHILH104 GLOBAL WISDOM  
Ashok Gangadean  
A critical exploration of classic texts from diverse philosophical traditions in a global context. This course seeks to cultivate a global perspective in philosophy and brings classical texts from diverse philosophical worlds into global dialogue. One aim is to help students to appreciate global patterns in rationality across traditions and to gain a critical understanding of common ground and significant differences in diverse wisdom traditions. Readings include Bhagavad-Gita, Dhamapada, Plato’s Phaedo, and Descartes’s Meditations. Humanities (HU)

PHILH105 LOVE, FRIENDSHIP, AND THE ETHICAL LIFE  
Kathleen Wright  
Different conceptions of the role of love and friendship in ethical life. Readings include ancient Greek philosophy (Plato’s Symposium, and Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics), modern European philosophy (Kant’s Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals, and Mill’s On the Subjection of Women), and contemporary postmodern and feminist philosophy (Derrida’s The Politics of Friendship, and Irigaray’s The Ethics of Sexual Difference). Humanities (HU)

PHILH107 HAPPINESS, VIRTUE, AND THE GOOD LIFE  
Joel Yurdin  
Happiness is something that we all want, but what exactly is it? This course considers the nature of the virtues and their roles in a happy life, the relations between happiness and morality, and the meaning (or meaninglessness) of life. Readings from classic and contemporary sources, including Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Nagel, and Wolf. Humanities (HU)

PHILH108 MODERN THEORIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS: RATIONAL ANIMALS  
Brooks Sommerville  
Humanities (HU)

PHILH110 MIND AND WORLD  
Danielle Macbeth  
An introduction to the history of our conception of ourselves as rational beings in the world through a close reading of central texts in the European tradition that address both the sorts of beings we are and the nature of the world as it is the object of our natural scientific knowledge. Humanities (HU)

PHILH111 THE WICKED AND THE WORTHY  
Jerry Miller  
The possibility of “doing good” in the world presumes that one can distinguish between good and bad actions, people, and consequences. But on what basis are we to make such distinctions? What grounds, if anything, our definitions of good and bad? How can we be certain that our actions, and thus our own selves, are not evil? This course examines such concerns through a survey of the history of ethical philosophy. In digging up the “root of all good,” we will consider as well questions of self-interest, justice, freedom, and duty. Readings include selections from Plato’s Republic, Mill’s Utilitarianism, Kant’s Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, and Nietzsche’s Beyond Good and Evil. Humanities (HU)

PHILH116 WHAT CAN WE KNOW?  
Staff  
An introductory course examining some of the most fundamental philosophical questions through a careful reading of pivotal texts in Western philosophy. Readings include Plato, René Descartes, David Hume, Thomas Reid, and G. E. Moore as well as some contemporary scholars. First year students only. Humanities (HU)

PHILH210 PLATO  
Brooks Sommerville  
A close reading of Plato’s Meno, Phaedo, Republic, Symposium, and Theaetetus, with a focus on issues in philosophical psychology, metaphysics, and the theory of knowledge. Emphasis is on a philosophical understanding of the views and arguments suggested by the texts, and special attention is paid to the roles of literary aspects of the texts in the presentation of philosophical content. Humanities (HU)

PHILH212 ARISTOTLE  
Joel Yurdin  
An analytic study of the main works of Aristotle. Particular attention is paid to the theory of being and substance developed in Aristotle’s Metaphysics, to the theory of animal life developed in his treatise On the Soul, and to the understanding of good human action and choice developed in the Nicomachean Ethics. Primary emphasis is on the interpretation and understanding of the philosophical arguments that are elaborated in these works. Humanities (HU)
PHILOSOPHY

PHILH221 EARLY MODERN CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY
Staff
A close analytical reading of selected texts from the classical Continental rationalists, with a focus on epistemology and metaphysics. Topics include: ideas, skepticism, belief, knowledge, science, bodies, minds, God, causation, natural laws, afterlife, and personal identity. Our main figures include Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Leibniz. Humanities (HU)

PHILH226 NIETZSCHE
Kathleen Wright
Humanities (HU)

PHILH235 EARLY CHINESE PHILOSOPHY
Kathleen Wright
An introduction to the lively and sharp disputes between competing schools of philosophy in ancient Chinese philosophy, that is, philosophy in the pre-Han period prior to the syncretism that marks Confucianism, neo-Confucianism, and most recently New Confucianism. Humanities (HU)

PHILH237 CONFUCIAN ETHICS
Kathleen Wright
This course is on contemporary debates in philosophy about the relation between Confucian ethics and (1) virtue ethics and (2) the feminist ethics of care. Prerequisite(s): one 100-level course in philosophy or by permission of the instructor; Humanities (HU)

PHILH241 HINDU PHILOSOPHY
Ashok Gangadean
A critical exploration of classical Hindu thought (Vedanta) in a global and comparative context. Special focus on selected Principal Upanisads, a close meditative reading of the Bhagavad Gita and an in depth exploration of Shankara’s Brahmastra Commentary. Humanities (HU)

PHILH242 BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT
Ashok Gangadean
An introduction to classical Indian Buddhist thought in a global and comparative context. The course begins with a meditative reading of the classical text-The Dhamapada-and proceeds to an in depth critical exploration of the teachings of Nagarjuna, the great dialectician who founded the Madhyamika School. Humanities (HU)

PHILH251 PHILOSOPHY OF MIND
Danielle Macbeth
The focus of this course is the question of the place of mind in nature, in the world. What sort of thing is a mind? What is it to be conscious? Can there be freedom of the will in a physical world? Could a computer ever be correctly described as thinking? Do animals have minds? Our aim is to clarify what we are asking when we ask such questions, and to begin at least to formulate answers. Humanities (HU)

PHILH252 PHILOSOPHY OF LOGIC AND LANGUAGE
Ashok Gangadean
A comparative exploration of alternative paradigms of logic, language and meaning from a logical and philosophical point of view. Special attention is given to the classical Aristotelian grammar of thought and the modern grammars developed by Frege, Wittgenstein, Quine, Heidegger, Sommers, Derrida and others. Focus is on the quest for the fundamental logic of natural language. Humanities (HU)

PHILH253 ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE
Danielle Macbeth
A close study of seminal essays by Frege, Russell, Kripke, Quine, Davidson, and others focusing on questions of meaning, reference, and truth. An overarching aim of the course is to understand how one can approach fundamental issues in philosophy through a critical reflection on how language works. Prerequisite(s): one 100 level class or its equivalent, or consent; Humanities (HU)

PHILH254 METAPHYSICS: GLOBAL ONTOLOGY
Ashok Gangadean
A critical examination of philosophical accounts of reality and being. Special attention is given to how world views are formed and transformed: an ontological exploration of diverse alternative categorical frameworks for experience. Metaphysical narratives of diverse thinkers in the evolution of the European tradition are explored in global context. Humanities (HU)

PHILH255 VIRTUE EPISTEMOLOGY
Danielle Macbeth
An introduction to various issues in the theory of knowledge through a critical examination of recent
work aiming to understand what it is good to believe by appeal to the virtues of an intellectually good person. Humanities (HU)

PHILH257 CRITICAL APPROACHES TO ETHICAL THEORY
Jerry Miller
This course examines efforts over the last century to engage the ethical without recourse to formal systems or foundational principles. How, these approaches ask, can we talk about good and evil, morality and immorality, while believing “truth” to be historically, linguistically, and culturally contingent? In the process of drafting possible answers, we shall think deeply about concepts such as violence, justice, and social responsibility. Humanities (HU)

PHILH259 STRUCTURALISM AND POST-STRUCTURALISM
Jerry Miller
An introduction to key readings in 20th century continental philosophy in the areas of semiotics, critical theory, and deconstruction. Of primary importance will be issues of mimesis and alterity, authority, and value. Readings include Barthes, Althusser, Foucault, Derrida, Kristeva, and Jameson. Humanities (HU)

PHILH260 HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO LOGIC
Danielle Macbeth
Our aim is two-fold: first, to understand - in the sense of having a working knowledge of - both traditional Aristotelean and modern quantificational logic (translating sentences into logical notation, assessing the validity of arguments, constructing proofs, and so on); and second, to understand logic, why it matters, what it can teach us (both as philosophers and as thinkers more generally), and how it “works” in the broadest sense. Humanities (HU)

PHILH261 EXPERIENCE, KNOW-HOW, AND SKILLED COPING
Joel Yurdin
An investigation of three debates concerning the character of experiential knowledge. (1) Is experience the same as expertise? Is it required for the acquisition of expertise? (2) What is the difference between knowing-how and knowing that, and how are they related? (3) What is the phenomenology of skillful behavior? Humanities (HU)

PHILH265 VALUE THEORY
Jerry Miller
A study of various modern and contemporary strains of metaethics and value theory. How can things and persons be objects of value? By what capacities do we apprehend worth? The objective is to better understand whether and how ethical knowledge is possible. Humanities (HU)

PHILH301 TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY OF LITERATURE
Jerry Miller
Humanities (HU)

PHILH311 TOPICS IN GREEK PHILOSOPHY: HEDONISM
Joel Yurdin, Brooks Sommerville
Humanities (HU)

PHILH321 TOPICS IN EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY: IDEALISM
Staff
Mind-independent physical objects obviously exist, right? Idealism, one of the most important and interesting movements in the modern period, holds that reality is entirely made up of minds and their ideas. The movement has been widely influential not only in philosophy but also in physics, neuroscience, psychology, art, and so on, in views which prioritize the role of the mental. Leibniz and Berkeley present two very different versions of idealism. How are their theories defended and which one is more plausible? Is Kant’s “Transcendental Idealism” another version of idealism? We will examine primary texts along with selected scholarly work. Students will practice interpreting, discussing, and writing about texts in the ways professional philosophers do. Humanities (HU)

PHILH335 TOPICS IN MODERN EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY
Marilyn Piety
Humanities (HU)

PHILH342 ZEN THOUGHT IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT
Ashok Gangadean
This advanced seminar focuses on the development of Zen (Japanese) Buddhism culminating in the work of Nishida and his influential Kyoto School of Zen Philosophy. The background in the Indian origins of Madhyamika dialectic introduced by Nagarjuna is traced through the Zen Master Dogen
and into flourishing of the modern Kyoto School founded by Nishida. The seminar focuses in the texts by Dogen and on selected writings in the Kyoto School: Nishida, Nishitani and Abe. The seminar involves intensive discussion of the issues on global context of philosophy. Nishida’s thought is developed in dialogue with thinkers such as Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Sartre and Heidegger, Nagarjuna and others. Prerequisite(s): an Intro Phil course (100 series) and either 241 (Hindu Thought) or 242 Buddhist Thought) or a course in Relg or EALC Thought or consent; Humanities (HU)

PHILH350 TOPICS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF MATHEMATICS
Danielle Macbeth
Humanities (HU)

PHILH352 METAPHOR, MEANING AND THE DIALOGICAL MIND
Ashok Gangadean
This course explores the nature of language with special attention to the origin of meaning and metaphor in the dialogical mind. Topics include: primary meaning: literal, symbolic, metaphoric; truth and reality; analogy and imagination; hermeneutics of communication and translatability; meditative meaning and the limits of language; indeterminacy and ambiguity across diverse language-worlds; voice and speech as determinants of meaning and the dynamics of dialogue between worlds. A unifying theme focuses on releasing the power of meaning in the transformation from egocentric patterns of thought to the dialogical awakening of mind. Readings include selections from such diverse thinkers as Plato, Aristotle, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Sommers, Derrida and Nagarjuna and others. Humanities (HU)

PHILH370 TOPICS IN ETHICAL THEORY: RACE
Jerry Miller
This course examines the relation of racial and evaluative difference in modernity. Readings will focus on the role of embodiment in determinations of comparative worth and as a site of ethical knowledge. Humanities (HU)

PHILH399 SENIOR SEMINAR
Staff
This course has several components: (a) participation in the Altherr Symposium, including

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