



South Central College

## PHIL 205 Philosophy 205 Special Topics

### Common Course Outline

#### Course Information

##### Description

All PHIL 205 courses will help students learn about other areas of philosophy which are important to the study of other disciplines and philosophy itself. Students will explore broader areas of philosophical concern such as metaphysics (free-will, truth, realism, universals, necessity/contingency, causation, mind, time, God, etc.); epistemology (skepticism, inferential justification, knowledge, internalism/externalism, a priori/a posteriori, closure, direct/indirect realism, memorial knowledge, etc.); meta-ethics (moral knowledge, moral realism/anti realism, ethical intuitionism, reductionisms such as utilitarianism, relativism, subjectivism, divine command theory, contractarianism, Aristotelianism/teleology, virtue ethics, etc.). Furthermore, students can also focus on political philosophy, philosophy of religion, and philosophy of science or specialize in some facet of the above topics.

All PHIL 205 courses will emphasize the use of primary texts and the development of philosophical thought throughout history. These courses will focus on the most basic questions of human existence (this indeed is philosophy) such as truth, knowledge, free-will, moral rightness, justice, and so forth. We assume answers to these questions in every other study we partake in. For instance, science presupposes the legitimacy of inductive reasoning, the law of non-contradiction, the justification of using inference to the best explanation, the uniformity of nature, the reliability of perception, the nature and possibility of a posteriori knowledge and others. These courses will deal with the questions we presuppose answers to in discussing those things that matter to us.

In the end, PHIL 205 courses will give philosophy instructors and students the opportunity to explore areas of philosophy which are of interest not only to the psychologist, historian, and novelist, but also to those who wish to pursue a career in philosophy or become competent in philosophical problems. As Socrates said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." These courses will help encourage others to avoid the unexamined life.

**Total Credits** 3

**Total Hours** 48

#### Types of Instruction

##### Instruction Type

Classroom Presentation

##### Credits/Hours

## Pre/Corequisites

Must have a score of 78 or higher on the Reading portion of the Accuplacer test or completion of READ 0090.

## Course Outcomes

### 1. Examine various kinds of philosophy

#### Learning Objectives

Distinguish between kinds of philosophy  
Read original texts from the history of philosophy  
Discuss the development of philosophical thought from Plato to the present

### 2. Develop the ability to exegete philosophical texts

#### Learning Objectives

Identify different schools of philosophy  
Recognize the premises and conclusions of complex arguments  
Summarize the most essential points of a philosopher's argument

### 3. Develop the analytical skills peculiar to philosophy

#### Learning Objectives

Continue to analyze until one reaches the primitives of ontology  
Recognize the role of necessary and sufficient conditions in establishing the nature of a thing  
Practice searching for necessary and sufficient conditions and constructing counterexamples

### 4. Practice the role of a philosopher

#### Learning Objectives

Develop new ideas or replies to particular theories  
Learn how to express those ideas coherently and in the language of philosophy

### 5. Master the best arguments for the most plausible theories in a philosophical area

#### Learning Objectives

Memorize and understand the best arguments for and against various views  
Use these arguments to develop new ideas or criticisms  
Expand one's conceptual repertoire and easily identify when someone is attempting to endorse a particular view or when they are irrationally vacillating between different views

### 6. Address the characteristics of a good argument

#### Learning Objectives

Develop the ability to first examine the evidential link between the support for a claim and the claim being supported  
Learn about the foundationalist structure of philosophical arguments and the use of reflective equilibrium

### 7. Write about philosophy

#### Learning Objectives

Learn the characteristics of a good philosophy paper such as the economic use of words and making clear a particular line of thought  
Develop the ability to give a succinct description of a theory and its implications  
Complete a research paper

### 8. Develop the ability to relate different fields of philosophy

#### Learning Objectives

Understand how a debate like realism/antirealism has implications not only for metaphysics but for epistemology and moral philosophy as well  
Address the ways in which each philosophical field presupposes answers to others and how one's beliefs in one area of philosophy may preclude adopting a theory in another area

### 9. Skillfully discuss various philosophical issues

### **Learning Objectives**

Apprehend what is tangential and what is essential in a philosophical discussion

Quickly identify the arguments and subarguments a person could give and possible counterarguments to help clarify the path the discussion should take

Move from the most basic considerations to the less basic and learn the right questions to ask first

## **10. Identify the relation between philosophy and the practical things of life**

### **SCC Accessibility Statement**

Disability Services provides accommodations and other supports to students with permanent and temporary disabilities that affect their SCC experience. Disabilities may include mental health (anxiety, depression, PTSD), ADHD, learning disabilities, chronic health conditions (migraine, fibromyalgia), sensory disabilities, and temporary disabilities (broken arm, surgery). Common accommodations are extended test time, private room for testing, audiobooks, and sign language interpreter.

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