

PHILOSOPHY

Welcome to Philosophy

Welcome to Youngstown State University and the program in Philosophy. Our program offers the opportunity to explore the “big questions” such as the nature of right and wrong, issues surrounding justice and fairness, and those that deal with what makes for a valuable life—matters of central importance to the lives of our students, university, and community. Additionally, the philosophy program provides students with logical, critical thinking, and writing skills that will prepare them for any number of careers after graduation as well as prepare them for graduate and professional programs. Philosophy majors who may be thinking of going into law or business or pursuing a graduate degree generally outperform most other disciplines on standardized entrance exams.

In addition to our wonderful course offerings, and life and job preparation, we have a vibrant student organization; organize a speakers’ series with world-class scholars; and are home to the Dr. James Dale Ethics Center, a 3+3 pre-law program, and the YSU Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Team. I encourage you to explore our website to learn more about the offerings of the Philosophy program at Youngstown State University.

The YSU program of Philosophy offers a wealth of productive studies for life and technical knowledge for career opportunities. Our program makes an excellent addition to complement any career.

-Alan Tomhave, Associate Dean

Contact Information

Dr. Alan Tomhave, Associate Dean of BCLASSE- aetomhave@ysu.edu - (330) 941-3456

Dr. Mark Vopat, Philosophy and Religious Studies Program Coordinator - mvopat@ysu.edu - (330) 941-3362

For more information, call (330) 941-3448

Program Highlights: 3+3 Articulations with Law Schools

The Philosophy program at YSU has joined with Case Western Reserve University Law and Akron Law (and working on one more!) to offer a 3+3 program. The 3+3 program is designed for you to complete all the requirements of the Philosophy BA at YSU in three years. Year four of your undergraduate program would be spent at one of the aforementioned law schools. Upon successful completion of your first year of law, those law school credits transfer back to YSU to complete the required 120 hours for your BA degree. If you know for sure that you want to attend law school, this is a great way to save a year of undergrad work (and tuition) and get started on your law degree.

If you are interested in taking advantage of the 3+3 programs, please be sure to see either Dr. Mark Vopat or Dr. Alan Tomhave to discuss it. Your advising appointments will focus on ensuring that you meet all the requirements for the program and stay on track with the admissions requirements for the law schools in the program. It is important to note that you are not guaranteed admission into either law school and must still meet the usual requirements for admittance to the law school.

Ethics Bowl

The Philosophy program is home to YSU’s Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl team. Ethics Bowl is a debate style competition in which teams do research and work collaboratively to address ethical questions about cases that are prepared for the competition. The topics can range from the 3D printing of guns to college admissions and the use of algorithms in various aspects of our lives. Teams must also show an awareness of the views of those who disagree with their

advocated position and how to resolve those concerns. Teams work with Philosophy faculty to develop positions and practice presentations, then get judges from across campus help in final preparations. This is a great way to get to know faculty from across YSU and your fellow students. It involves travel in November to a regional Ethics Bowl competition and can involve travel in the spring semester as well. If you are interested in participating, please contact either Dr. Mark Vopat (mvopat@ysu.edu) or Dr. Alan Tomhave (aetomhave@ysu.edu).

The Dr. James Dale Ethics Center

The Dr. James Dale Ethics Center was founded in 1993 to support the study and teaching of ethics and to promote moral reflection and conduct in personal and professional life. Its activities are guided by the conviction that institutions of higher education play a crucially important role in creating and sustaining a democratic people, concerned not only with private but also common purposes. To accomplish its mission, the Center:

- Sponsors ethics seminars, workshops, and conferences for regional professionals;
- Offers lectures to the University and general community;
- Provides ethics consultation for regional organizations;
- Promotes the scholarship of teaching and learning of ethics

The Director of the Ethics Center is Dr. Mark Vopat, Professor of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies.

The Philosophy Circle

The Philosophy Circle is a group of more than 140 faculty, alumni, and friends whose donations support special departmental activities, including awards for outstanding student papers and funding for the Dr. Thomas and Albert Shipka Speakers Series. The Shipka Speakers Series has sponsored over 40 lectures by outstanding scholars, on topics related to philosophy and religious studies that are of wide interest to both the university and the larger community. For videos of recent talks, see the Shipka Speakers Series (<http://philrel.yosu.edu/shipka-speakers-series/>) page.

Departmental Scholarships

The programs of Philosophy and Religious Studies offer the following scholarships. Please contact the department office for more information.

- Evangelos Michelakis Meshel Scholarship in Philosophy
- Robert G. & S. Ann Berich Meigetter Scholarships in Philosophy
- Dr. Earl Eugene Eminhizer Scholarship in Religious Studies
- Sister Jean Gillespie Memorial Award in Religious Studies
- Bevan-Dillingham Scholarship in Philosophy and Religious Studies
- Helen Pavlov Memorial Scholarship in Philosophy and Religious Studies

Philosophy and Religious Studies Club

The Philosophy and Religious Studies Club is a student-run group open to all persons interested in philosophy and religious studies. The club hosts an annual educational fundraiser that showcases the interests of a department faculty member. Topics vary for this popular evening complete with music, food, and wine tasting. The students also organize bi-monthly “Eat Drink Think” events (EDT), which are social events focused on classic and modern texts held over food and drinks. EDT events provide a nice forum for majors, non-majors, and community members to delve deeply into persistent questions in philosophy and religion and their relation to public policy, national and global events, and academics. For more information, please visit Philosophy and Religious Studies (<http://www.yosu.edu/philrel/>) website and join our Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/YSU-Philosophy-and-Religious-StudiesDepartment/188613781180674/>) group, “YSU Philosophy and Religious Studies Club,” for updates about upcoming events.

Professor

Alan E. Tomhave, Ph.D., Professor

Mark C. Vopat, Ph.D., Professor

Majors

- Philosophy Major (<http://catalog.ysu.edu/undergraduate/colleges-programs/college-liberal-arts-social-sciences-education/department-philosophy-religious-studies/philosophy-major/>)

Minors

- Professional Ethics Minor (<http://catalog.ysu.edu/undergraduate/colleges-programs/college-liberal-arts-social-sciences-education/department-philosophy-religious-studies/professional-ethics-minor/>)
- Philosophy Minor (<http://catalog.ysu.edu/undergraduate/colleges-programs/college-liberal-arts-social-sciences-education/department-philosophy-religious-studies/philosophy-minor/>)

Philosophy

PHIL 1560 Introduction to Philosophy 3 s.h.

The nature of philosophy and its relation to science, religion, and art; study of the philosophical approach and attitude, the basic problem areas in philosophy, and some typical philosophical viewpoints.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 1561 Technology and Human Values 3 s.h.

An examination of the impact of technology and science on contemporary human values and investigations of social and political perspectives on modern technocracy, based on case studies in science, medicine, and engineering.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 1565 Critical Thinking 3 s.h.

An examination of the logical skills needed for critical thinking in practical situations. Topics include procedures and guidelines for identifying and evaluating arguments, recognizing and eliminating informal fallacies, and writing and critiquing argumentative essays.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 2610 Global Ethics 3 s.h.

Examination of morality and justice from a global perspective, including such topics as war, terrorism, and states; poverty and the global economy; religion, gender, and identity; globalization and the environment; and markets and intellectual property.

Cross-Listed: as REL 2610.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 2612 Ancient & Medieval Philosophy 3 s.h.

An examination of philosophers and philosophical systems in Western civilization from the pre-Socratics until the Renaissance.

PHIL 2619 Introduction to Logic 3 s.h.

Introduction to syllogistic or classical logic, symbolic and inductive logic. Emphasis on the rules of syllogism, immediate inferences, propositional functions, classes, truth tables, Venn diagrams; the use of analogy, generalization, the verification of hypotheses, and scientific method.

Prereq.: MATH 1501 or at least Level 20 on the Mathematics Placement Test.

Gen Ed: Mathematics.

PHIL 2625 Introduction to Professional Ethics 3 s.h.

An examination of the ideals and virtues central to professionalism; study of selected codes of professional ethics and their roots in classical ethical traditions; and analysis of selected ethical issues and problems in a variety of professions.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 2626 Engineering Ethics 3 s.h.

An examination of ethical problems in the major fields of engineering and an explanation of the methodology needed to address them; an analysis of the rights and duties of engineers in their relations to clients, employers, the public, and the engineering profession.

Prereq.: One 2600-level PHIL course, or PHIL 1560 or ENTC 1505 or ENGR 1550.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 2627 Law and Criminal Justice Ethics 3 s.h.

Examination of major theories in philosophy of law and justice, and the study of ethical issues and professional standards in criminal justice practice.

Prereq.: Any 2600-level PHIL course or PHIL 1560 or CJFS 2601, CJFS 2602 or CJFS 2603.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 2628 Business Ethics 3 s.h.

Examines ethical problems in business, ethical responsibilities of business professional, and business as a global institution. Topics include the corporation, at-will employment, unions, technology, privacy, advertising, whistle-blowing, globalization, environmental impact, human rights, just distribution, affirmative action and cultural diversity.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 2629 Research Ethics in Science 3 s.h.

This course will focus on issues of ethics in scientific research. Topics covered include: ethical decisions with respect to appropriate and legitimate exploration pathways of scientific research; ethical standards for research publication and peer review procedures; research misconduct such as inaccuracy, misrepresentation data fabrication, data omission, negligence, and fraudulent enterprise; fair, unbiased objectivity in scientific research; obligation to human research subjects regarding rights and welfare; resulting in consequences for individuals influenced by scientific research.

Prereq.: None.

PHIL 2631 Environmental Ethics 3 s.h.

Application of ethical theories in evaluating human interaction with the natural environment, analysis of rights and duties regarding other species and future generations, the ethics of environmental activism, and philosophical and religious perspectives on environmental issues.

Gen Ed: Environmental Sustainability, Social and Personal Awareness.

PHIL 2635 Ethics of War and Peace 3 s.h.

Examines reasons for making war, for restraint on the conduct of war, and for rejecting war as an instrument of national policy as understood within a variety of moral traditions, both secular and religious.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 2698 Introductory Individual Study in Philosophy 1 s.h.

Introductory study of a philosophical problem, movement, thinker, or the relationship of philosophy to problems in other disciplines. Intended to be an independent study course with subject matter dependent upon approval of the faculty member and student. May be repeated up to 3 s.h.

PHIL 3702 History of Modern Philosophy 3 s.h.

Study of major Western philosophical figures and movements from the Renaissance through the 19th century.

Prereq.: One 2600-level PHIL course or PHIL 1560.

PHIL 3708 Social and Political Philosophy 3 s.h.

A study of the philosophical foundations of democracy, dictatorship, and communism, especially their views of reality, knowledge, human nature, and morality, with attention to rights, duties, freedom, authority, dissent, censorship, crime and punishment, and religion.

Prereq.: PHIL 1560.

PHIL 3711 General Ethics 3 s.h.

Examination and evaluation of the major ethical theories in classical, dialectic, pragmatic and naturalistic, analytic and positivist, and existentialist thought.

Prereq.: PHIL 1560.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

PHIL 3712 Philosophy of Religion 3 s.h.

The philosophical investigation of religious questions such as existence and nature of the divine, the problem of evil, death and immortality, religion and science, and religious experience.

Prereq.: PHIL 1560 or REL 2601.

Cross-Listed: REL 3712.

PHIL 3713 Philosophy of the Family 3 s.h.

Examines the family from philosophical, political, and historical perspectives and considers issues of justice in familial relationships. Explores the relationship among parents, children, and the state, and reviews the evolving conceptions of childhood, child well-being, and children's rights.

Prereq.: ENGL 1551.

PHIL 3714 Language and Mind 3 s.h.

Introduction to the study of traditional philosophical problems in the analysis of linguistic structures and functions and of their implications for the nature of mind, including meaning, mental representation and causation, information processing, and psychological explanation.

Prereq.: One 2600-level PHIL course or PHIL 1560.

PHIL 3715 Philosophy of Science 3 s.h.

A philosophical consideration of some of the fundamental concepts and assumptions of the sciences: the nature of scientific knowledge; the relation of scientific to other kinds of knowledge and experience.

Prereq.: PHIL 1560.

PHIL 3719 Symbolic Logic 3 s.h.

The structure and properties of axiomatic systems; the theory of propositional and relational logic; the algebra of classes; related topics.

Prereq.: PHIL 2619.

PHIL 3723 Philosophy of Law 3 s.h.

Examination of the nature and limits of law, the justification of the legal system, the relationship between law and morality, state punishment of individuals, the justification for punishment, citizens' rights and issues of privacy, liberty, discrimination, and civil disobedience.

Prereq.: One 2600-level PHIL course or PHIL 1560.

PHIL 3725 Biomedical Ethics 3 s.h.

An examination of ethical issues posed by biomedical research and technology, including issues of informed consent, patients' rights, experimentation, genetic research and intervention, death and dying, and the allocation of scarce resources.

Prereq.: One 2600-level PHIL course or SOC 3703 or SOC 3745 or PSYC 3780 or admission to the NEOMED-YSU program or the BS in Nursing program.

PHIL 3740 Muslim Thinkers and Thinkers 3 s.h.

Examination of the theological, philosophical, legal, and political writings and ideas of major Muslim thinkers and mystics from the classical through the modern period, covering the continuities and differences.

Prereq.: any 2600-level REL course or PHIL 1560.

Cross-Listed: REL 3740.

PHIL 3745 Classical Asian Philosophy 3 s.h.

Focus is on selected classical philosophical texts in Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.

Prereq.: Any lower division course in Philosophy or ASST 1550.

PHIL 3798 Intensive Individual Study of Philosophy 1 s.h.

Intensive study of a philosophical problem, movement, thinker, or the relationship of philosophy to problems in other disciplines. Intended to be an independent study course with subject matter dependent upon approval of the faculty member and student. May be repeated up to 3 s.h.

Prereq.: One 3700-level PHIL course.

PHIL 4801 Data Ethics 3 s.h.

In the very early days of computing, there is an expression that is generally attributed to William Mellin: "garbage in, garbage out". As many are aware the phrase loosely denotes that what comes out of the computer process is only as good as what goes into the machine. While some outputs may be seen as trivially bad, others carry with them substantial moral harm. The way data is collected and processed has real-world ethical implications. In this course, we examine the ways data can have unintended moral consequences in the hopes of avoiding these errors in the future.

Prereq.: None.

PHIL 4805 Direct Readings in Philosophy 3 s.h.

Independent study course with subject matter dependent upon approval of the faculty member in consultation with student.

Prereq.: Any 3700 level PHIL course.

PHIL 4820 Seminar in Philosophy 3 s.h.

Study in depth of a particular philosopher, topic, or area in philosophy, as determined by the instructor; may be repeated with different course content.

Prereq.: One 3700-level PHIL course.

Gen Ed: Capstone.

PHIL 4820U Seminar: How to Live Good Life 3 s.h.**PHIL 4861 Senior Capstone Project 3 s.h.**

Research and writing of a paper, or other committee approved project, on a philosophical topic, under the supervision of a full-time faculty member and in consultation with a committee of at least two other members of the department.

Prereq.: Philosophy major with senior standing and completion of at least 21 s.h. of PHIL courses.

Gen Ed: Capstone.

PHIL 4870 Internship in Ethical Practice 1-3 s.h.

Students work with professionals in a local organization, thereby gaining direct access to the ethical issues involved in such an environment. Students will be supervised by an appropriate working professional and either a faculty member of the Dr. James Dale Ethics Center or another faculty member in the department selected for this purpose. The course grade shall be assigned by the YSU supervisor, based on the project journal, an evaluation of the student's on-site work by the participating professional and the YSU supervisor, and a final project paper. Registration by permit only. 1 s.h., repeatable to a total of.

Prereq.: One 3700-level PHIL or REL course.

Religious Studies

REL 2601 Introduction to World Religions 3 s.h.

A survey of the major world religions exploring their distinctive features and common threads. A study of their founders, systems of thought, symbols, and sacred literatures.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities, International Perspectives, Social and Personal Awareness.

REL 2602 Introduction to Religious Studies 3 s.h.

Examines the religious features of doctrines, myths or practices and surveys various methods by which religion is explored and scrutinized.

REL 2605 Myth, Symbol, and Ritual 3 s.h.

An introduction to the nature and function of myth, symbol, and ritual. Myth interpretation, the relationship between societies and their myths, and the cultural use of myths, symbols, and rituals in religious and spiritual contexts.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

REL 2610 Global Ethics 3 s.h.

Examination of morality and justice from a global perspective, including such topics as war, terrorism, and states; poverty and the global economy; religion, gender, and identity; globalization and the environment; and markets and intellectual property.

Cross-Listed: as PHIL 2610.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

REL 2611 Judaism Christianity and Islam 3 s.h.

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Examines the origins, foundational texts, beliefs and practices, intellectual and spiritual dimensions, and cultural norms and values of each religion, as well as the structures of authority in the community founded by each religion and the factors that have promoted the survival of each.

REL 2617 Introduction to Asian Religions 3 s.h.

A survey of the religions of India, China, and Japan, their systems of thought, moral values, and methods of personal transformation.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities, International Perspectives, Social and Personal Awareness.

REL 2621 Religion and Moral Issues 3 s.h.

The relation of specific religious and moral issues to questions of personal conduct and social policy.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

REL 2621H Honors Religion and Moral Issues 3 s.h.

The relation of specific religious and moral issues to questions of personal conduct and social policy.

Gen Ed: Arts and Humanities.

REL 2623 Introduction to Christianity 3 s.h.

Introduction to the Christian religion, exploring its origins, emergence as the official religion of the Roman Empire, and global expansion into one of the largest religions of the world. Attention is given to core beliefs, events, and persons of significant impact, to the diversity of approaches available within the Christian tradition, and to such contemporary issues as gender, the environment, and war. No familiarity is presupposed with the Bible, Christianity, or the academic study of religion.

REL 3712 Philosophy of Religion 3 s.h.

The philosophical investigation of religious questions such as existence and nature of the divine, the problem of evil, death and immortality, religion and science, and religious experience.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

Cross-Listed: PHIL 3712.

REL 3720 The World of Islam 3 s.h.

The study of the origins and development of classical and modern Islam, including the Prophet Muhammad, the Quran, and Muslims in America.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

REL 3722 Popes Saints and Rebels 3 s.h.

The origin and development of Christianity; examination of the life and teachings of Jesus; Christian theology, liturgy, and symbolism; and divisions of contemporary Christianity.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

REL 3726 Buddhist Beliefs Practices and Debate 3 s.h.

An Introduction to Buddhist traditions, their historical development in countries like India, China, Tibet and Thailand, and Buddhist positions on contemporary issues. Special attention to practices, beliefs, and ethics.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

REL 3728 Hindu Traditions 3 s.h.

Examines Yoga, meditation, karma, reincarnation, and major devotional and ceremonial traditions that have developed around Shiva, Vishnu, and the Goddess. A central part of the course is the study of the dynamics between popular worship and the contemplative traditions of Hindu culture.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

REL 3731 Hebrew Scriptures 3 s.h.

A critical analysis of the Hebrew scriptures in terms of historical background, textual development, and religious and ethical themes.

Prereq.: One 2600-level REL course or HIST 2600.

REL 3732 Jesus and the Gospels 3 s.h.

The life and teachings of Jesus in their historical context. Examination of the ways in which Jesus is interpreted within the synoptic gospels. **Prereq.:** One 2600-level REL or PHIL course 3740. Muslim Thinkers. Examination of the theological, philosophical, legal, and political writings and ideas of major Muslim thinkers from the classical through the modern period, covering the continuities and differences.

Prereq.: any 2600-level REL course or PHIL 1560.

Cross-Listed: REL 3740.

REL 3733 Women And the Bible 3 s.h.

A study of Biblical interpretation utilizing narratives that portray women in Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. Students will learn analytical skills required for narrative interpretation and exegetical analysis.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

REL 3740 Muslim Thinkers and Mystics 3 s.h.

Examination of the theological, philosophical, legal, and political writings and ideas of major Muslim thinkers and mystics from the classical through the modern period, covering the continuities and differences.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

Cross-Listed: PHIL 3740.

REL 3743 Reform, Revolt, or Revolution in Islam 3 s.h.

Critical examination of the movements of change in Islam intended to (1) reassert the primacy of Islamic religious norms in society (reform); (2) challenge the dominant political structures (revolt); or (3) bring about a radical societal change (revolution). The course examines in depth the use of Islamic motifs and symbols in all these movements.

Prereq.: REL 2601 or POL 1550 or permission of instructor.

REL 3744 Islamic Culture and Literature 3 s.h.

Introduction to the diversity of Muslim culture and literature across the world. Emphasis on classical and premodern literature, art and architecture.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

REL 3748 Islam and the West 3 s.h.

Examination of the historical relationship between the and Islamic and Western worlds, as well as their interaction in modern contexts.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

REL 3760 Sex and Religion 3 s.h.

Explores the tensions between religion and sex through the Western and non-Western lens. Divided into sections, this course covers attitudes toward sex by early modern Christians, a few non-Western religious traditions and contemporary Western religion.

Prereq.: 12 credits of undergraduate coursework.

REL 4825 Methods and Study of Religion 3 s.h.

This course explores the principal methodological issues in the scholarly study of religion and enables students to expand and synthesize disciplinary knowledge.

Prereq.: REL 2602.

REL 4871 Senior Capstone Project 3 s.h.

Research and writing of a paper, or other committee approved project, on a topic in religious studies, under the supervision of a full-time faculty member and in consultation with a committee of at least two other members of the department.

Prereq.: Religious Studies major with senior standing and completion of at least 21 s.h. of REL courses.

Gen Ed: Capstone.