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# Philosophy

**Professor:**

Steven G. Smith, Ph.D.

**Associate Professors:**

Theodore G. Ammon, Ph.D.

Kristen M. Brown, Ph.D., Chair

Patrick D. Hopkins, Ph.D.

**Requirements for major:** Students may complete a major in philosophy with 36 semester hours in 9 courses, including Logic, History of Philosophy, and Senior Seminar. One Core topics course taught by an instructor from the philosophy department may be used to meet the requirements of the philosophy major. At least five courses in the major must be taken at Millsaps. Completion of Heritage may be counted as one four hour course toward the nine-course requirement.

**Requirements for minor:** Students may elect a minor in philosophy with any four courses from the philosophy department. At least two of the courses for the minor must be taken at Millsaps. Neither Heritage nor Core topics courses count toward the minor.

## Philosophy-Religious Studies Major

**Requirements for major (Total of 11 courses):** Students may complete a major in philosophy-religious studies with five additional courses in philosophy, and five additional courses in religious studies. The philosophy courses must include Philosophy 3010, 3020, and 3310; the religious studies courses must include at least two courses representing primary emphasis in TRADITIONS, COMPARISONS, and ARGUMENTS (see designations below, under course descriptions, for how courses ordinarily count) and the Religious Studies Seminar (3900 or 4900). Students pursuing this major will be given a specially adapted comprehensive examination by a committee of faculty from the two departments. Each student will choose to follow either the philosophy major or the religious studies major format for comprehensive examinations; when the philosophy format is chosen, Philosophy 4900 must be taken. Neither Heritage nor Core Topics courses count toward the combined major.

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## Courses

**1000 Problems of Philosophy (4 sem. hours).** An introductory course on the classic problems and methods of philosophy. Topics may include logic, critical thinking, the existence of God, the basis of knowledge, human nature, the mind/body problem, free will, ethics, the meaning of life, and some applied ethical problems. Offered occasionally.

**2000 Ways of Knowing (4 sem. hours).** An introduction to theories of knowledge from a variety of philosophical traditions, including mysticism, empiricism, rationalism, pragmatism, and feminism. Offered occasionally.

**2010 Social and Political Philosophy (4 sem. hours).** An inquiry into the basic principles of social and political organization, with special emphasis on the concepts of government, justice, punishment, family, property, work, and peace. This course is the same as Political Science 2500. Offered occasionally.

**2120 Ethics: Theories and Applications (4 sem. hours).** An introductory course on morality,

including topics in metaethics (such as the definition of good and evil, the source of morality, morality's relationship to religion and biology, the proper goals of human life), ethical theory (the importance of consequences versus duties, virtue versus right and wrong, the ethical theories of Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Mill, Kant, Nietzsche, feminists, evolutionists), and applied ethics (abortion, euthanasia, death penalty, privacy rights, biotechnology, gay rights, animal rights, racism, sexism, multiculturalism, military policy, and others). Offered occasionally.

**2130 Biomedical Ethics (4 sem. hours).** An introductory course on conceptual and ethical issues in medicine and biotechnology, including the definition of death and disease, the definition of personhood, abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, reproductive technology, patients' rights, human and animal research, organ transplants, cloning, biotechnological enhancement, and health care rights. Offered occasionally.

**2140 Environmental Ethics (4 sem. hours).** An introductory course on conceptual and ethical issues concerning the environment, including the definition of "nature" and "technology," major types of environmentalism, green politics, wilderness preservation and restoration, deforestation, animal rights, transgenic crops, pesticides, population control, pollution, and sustainable practices. Offered occasionally.

**2150–2153 Topics in Applied Ethics (1–4 sem. hours).** An introductory course on special issues of applied ethics not covered by PHIL 2130 or PHIL 2140. Possible topics include business ethics, computer and Internet ethics, legal ethics, and the philosophy of law. Offered occasionally.

**2160 Philosophy of Human Nature (4 sem. hours).** An introductory course on the very nature of human beings, including such issues as whether there is a universal human nature, types of explanations of human nature (religious, psychological, biological), whether humans are essentially different from animals or machines, the importance of gender in shaping human identity, the source of human morality and politics (religion, rationality, evolution), the role of the unconscious, the limitations of humans' ability to understand themselves, and whether human nature could be changed. Offered occasionally.

**2210 Aesthetics (4 sem. hours).** A study of the nature of art and specific art forms, aesthetic experience and judgment, and relations between the aesthetic values and other kinds of values (moral, political, religious, etc.). Offered occasionally.

**2220 Philosophy and Literature (4 sem. hours).** A study of various works of literature with an eye to issues such as the nature and function of language, perception and reality, self and the spoken word, theories of meaning, and texts and subtexts. Authors considered include Beckett, Borges, Pinter, Gass, O'Connor, DeLillo, Robbe-Grillet, Abish, Woolf, and others. Offered occasionally.

**2300 Philosophy of Film (4 sem. hours).** A study of issues in the formation of personal and social experience through the mediation of film, using historically important films and film theories along with philosophers as primary sources. Offered occasionally.

**FWRK 2400 The Meaning of Work (4 sem. hours).** An investigation into the phenomenon that is arguably at the foundation of human civilization and the human psyche: work. The course explores issues of value, purpose, function, organization, and justice in relation to the meaning of work from a variety of perspectives, including philosophy,

theology, sociology, psychology, and management. (This course counts toward the philosophy, religious studies or philosophy-religious studies major as an elective in the major.)

**2750–2753 Special Topics (1–4 sem. hours).** Special topics courses offered in the last few years include: Gender and Technology, Philosophy of History, Mind and Body, Pain and Aggression, Philosophy of Time, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of War, Nietzsche and Gender, and Pragmatism. Usually at least one special topics course is offered each semester. The topics vary widely and new courses are routinely created.

**2900 Logic (4 sem. hours).** This course will focus upon propositional logic and quantification, and to a lesser extent upon syllogistic logic. Attention will be given to scientific method and induction and to informal analysis of arguments in language.

**3010–3020 History of Philosophy I and II (4 sem. hours each).** The first semester is a survey of Western philosophy through the medieval period, and the second semester is a survey from the Renaissance through the 19th century. Phil 3010 is the same as Classics 3500. These courses do not function as introductions to philosophy; students are strongly advised to take them only if they have had Heritage or a Core course with a philosophy focus or another philosophy course other than Logic.

**3040 Ancient Philosophy (4 sem. hours).** An in-depth study of ancient Greek and/or Hellenistic philosophers. Offered occasionally.

**3060 Twentieth Century Philosophy (4 sem. hours).** An examination of one or more of the newer philosophical traditions such as phenomenology, analytic philosophy, existentialism, pragmatism, process philosophy, critical theory, poststructuralism, and post-modernism. Offered occasionally.

**3110 Philosophy of Embodiment (4 sem. hours).** This course examines questions about the concept of body from philosophical perspectives such as Cartesian dualism, idealism, phenomenology, gender theory, and disability theory. Offered occasionally.

**3120 Nietzsche, Faith, and Passion (4 sem. hours).** An examination of writings by 19th century philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and Nietzsche's thought in light of contemporary debates about faith and passion. Offered occasionally.

**3310 Philosophy of Religion (4 sem. hours).** Investigation of issues arising from religious experience and beliefs, including the nature of the divine, evil, and human destiny. (Same as Religious Studies 3310.) Offered in alternate years.

**3330 Zen and Phenomenology (4 sem. hours).** This course explores ways in which ancient and contemporary traditions of Buddhism (especially Zen) and philosophy (especially phenomenology) describe the world and human experience. Offered occasionally.

**3340 Philosophy of Mind (4 sem. hours).** An upper-level introductory course on the nature of mind, including mental versus physical explanations of minds, perception, optical and cognitive illusions, the limits of human knowledge, personal identity, artificial intelligence, evolutionary explanations of moral and religious beliefs, and thought experiments about zombies, brains in vats, brain implants, and robot civil rights. Offered occasionally.

**3610 Metaphysics (4 sem. hours).** A consideration of traditional philosophical questions

about “being” such as, but not limited to: What is reality? Do I have free will? Is there a God? What kind of thing am I? The course may either survey the history of metaphysics or cover one or two philosophers or issues in detail. Offered occasionally.

**3750–3753 Special Topics (1–4 sem. hours).** Special topics courses offered in the last few years include: Gender and Technology, Philosophy of History, Mind and Body, Pain and Aggression, Philosophy of Time, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of War, Nietzsche and Gender, and Pragmatism. Usually at least one special topics course is offered each semester. The topics vary widely and new courses are routinely created.

**3850 Major Philosophers (4 sem. hours).** A careful consideration of a single philosopher’s work. Offered occasionally.

**4000 Epistemology (4 sem. hours).** This advanced course in theory of knowledge usually focuses upon one or two trends in the 20th century such as pragmatism, logical positivism, analytic philosophy, feminism, deconstruction, neurobiology, and epistemology, etc. Offered occasionally.

**4120 Ethical Theory (4 sem. hours).** An advanced course on classical and contemporary theories of ethics including basic concepts of ethical decision making, issues in cognitive moral perception, how to analyze moral issues, relativism, moral skepticism, egoism, utilitarianism, deontological ethics, virtue ethics, care ethics, rights theory, the law and ethics, religion and ethics, evolutionary theory and ethics, moral insanity and disease, and selected applied ethical issues. Offered occasionally.

**4800–4803 Directed Readings (1, 2, 3, and 4 sem. hours).**

**4900 Senior Seminar (4 sem. hours).** Intensive reading in selected issues, schools, and thinkers. Since the comprehensive exam is administered through the Senior Seminar, this course is open only to those completing the philosophy major. Students are strongly encouraged to finish History of Philosophy I and II before taking Senior Seminar.

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## Religious Studies

**Professor:**

Steven G. Smith, Ph.D.

**Associate Professors:**

James E. Bowley, Ph.D., Chair  
Darby K. Ray, Ph.D.

**Visiting Assistant Professor:**

Lola Williamson, Ph.D.

**Requirements for major:** Students may complete a major in religious studies with nine courses, including Introduction to Religious Studies, four courses including at least one with a primary emphasis on issues in the study of sacred TEXTS, another with a primary emphasis on description and interpretation of existing religious TRADITIONS, a third with a primary emphasis on COMPARISONS of different religious traditions, and a fourth with a primary