

Philosophy Course Learning Outcomes

The following are examples of course learning outcomes for use in all sections of each respective course. They serve to connect the course to the program, such that student learning in each course is tied to student learning expectations in the program.

Individual instructors assigned to teach any of these courses should ensure that they stipulate clear learning outcomes in their syllabi. These examples may be used for that purpose.

Some courses also include specific General Education or Graduation Requirement learning outcomes. These do not replace Philosophy-related learning outcomes.

Student assessment plans for each course must be aligned with the course learning outcomes such that grades in the course, or on specific assignments, are reliable indicators of students having demonstrated the attainment of the stipulated learning outcomes.

PHIL 002 Ethics

Students will be able to:

1. *Describe* and *distinguish* key ethical concepts, including concepts such as good, right, permissible, free will, pluralism, universality, reason, relativism, absolutism, obligation, virtue, prima facie, duty, action, intention, etc.
2. *Read* and *comprehend* philosophical texts, classical or contemporary, in the area of ethics.
3. *Discuss* core ethical problems, such as whether religion is a source of values, what does it mean to be virtuous, are we free to make choices, what is justice, how can we know what is right or wrong, etc.
4. *Write* clear and concise explanations and arguments about basic ethical problems.
5. *Distinguish* the basic ethical theories and approaches, including: deontology, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, social contract theory, and one or more non-traditional or non-western positions (feminist theory, critical race theory, Confucian ethics, Buddhist ethics, etc.).
6. *Apply* basic ethical concepts and approaches to solving practical problems in ethics, including: sex and reproduction, environment, non-human animals, drug use, capital punishment, war, euthanasia, affirmative action, abortion, economic inequality, etc..

PHIL 004 Critical Thinking

Students will be able to:

1. *Describe, explain* and *distinguish* key concepts in critical thinking.
2. *Identify* an argument in a passage of ordinary text, including *identifying* the premises and conclusions and *distinguishing* them from extraneous information.
3. *Identify* errors of reasoning and *explain* what the error in reasoning is.
4. *Engage* with peers in cogent and respectful discussion.
5. *Analyze* specific arguments for consistency and credibility.
6. *Apply* good reasoning to issues and problems in professional and personal contexts.
7. *Evaluate* evidence and *draw* inferences from that evidence.

8. *Determine* what evidence is necessary to support a conclusion and *identify* and *apply* key strategies to find that evidence.
9. *Construct* and *defend* arguments in support of or in opposition to particular propositions.
10. *Analyze* and *solve* complicated strategic challenges in various areas of life.

PHIL 006 Introduction to Philosophy

Students will be able to:

1. *Describe* and *distinguish* key philosophical concepts in the main subfields of philosophy, including concepts such as free will, mind, knowledge, belief, reality, faith, reason, good, etc.
2. *Read* and *comprehend* philosophical texts, both classical and contemporary.
3. *Discuss* core philosophical problems, such as whether there is a god, what does it mean to be conscious, are we free to make choices, what is justice, etc.
4. *Explain* and *defend* a position on basic philosophical problems.
5. *Write* clear and concise explanations and arguments about basic philosophical problems.

PHIL 26 History of Philosophy

Students will be able to:

1. *Identify* and *distinguish* the main historical traditions in western philosophy, from Pre-Socratics to the Enlightenment.
2. *Identify* and *explain* key philosophical concepts as they arise in the different historical periods, including knowledge, reality, reason, substance, identity, mind/soul, causation, experience, etc..
3. *Read* and *comprehend* key texts in the history of philosophy.
4. *Write* clearly and cogently on a variety of topics in the history of philosophy.
5. *Apply* basic philosophical concepts to *discuss* problems of historical significance, including the mind-body problem, the challenge of skepticism, the relation of sensation/experience to knowledge, the limitations of reason, the relation of reason to passions, the existence of god, the challenge of determinism, etc.