

## **Philosophy and Religious Studies**

**Professor Wolters**

**Assistant Professor Betz**

Both philosophy and religious studies offer students the opportunity to explore deep-rooted values and ideals that have shaped the development of human culture, particularly in the West. Questions about the nature of being human, the nature of our private and social obligations, and faith and its relation to reason are discussed in many of the courses. Discussed are the historical dimensions of these questions, how answers to them have developed historically, and how both questions and answers have shaped the growth of our civilization. Students do this through such religion courses as Introduction to the Bible and special studies in such areas as Genesis and Revelation. In a non-religious context, they see many of the same concerns arising in such courses as Ethics or Ancient and Medieval Philosophy.

In all courses, a major emphasis is to help students develop the ability to think knowledgeably, rationally and critically for themselves. Thus, at the end of either major, each student completes a senior thesis, in which he or she has the opportunity to work closely with one member of the department to explore in-depth an issue of the student's choosing.

### **Requirements for the Philosophy Major:**

Complete the following 33 credits:

1. One course chosen from Philosophy-Religion 110, 111, 231
2. Philosophy 114 (or 214), 210
3. One course chosen from Philosophy 311, 411, or 371 (3 credits)
4. Nine additional credits in philosophy, three of which must be at the 400 level
5. Philosophy-Religion 120 (or 121)
6. Two additional Religious Studies courses at the 300 or 400 level
7. Philosophy 495

### **Requirements for the Philosophy Minor:**

Complete the following 18 credits:

1. One course chosen from Philosophy-Religion 110, 111, 231
2. Philosophy-Religion 120 (or 121) plus three additional credits in Religious Studies
3. Philosophy 210 (or 214)
4. One course chosen from Philosophy 311, 411, 317, 417
5. Three additional credits in Philosophy at the 300 or 400 level

### **Requirements for the Religious Studies Major:**

Complete the following 33 credits:

1. Philosophy-Religion 120, 121
2. Fifteen credits in Religious Studies, three of which must be at the 400 level

3. One course chosen from Philosophy-Religion 110, 111, 231, Philosophy 114
4. Two courses chosen from Philosophy 210, 214, 311, 317, 371, 411, 417, 471
5. Religious Studies 495

**Requirements for the Religious Studies Minor:**

Complete the following 18 credits:

1. Philosophy-Religion 120, 121
2. Six credits in Religious Studies at the 300 or 400 level
3. Six credits in Philosophy

**PHILOSOPHY-RELIGION (PRE)**

**110 Philosophical Problems (3)**

An examination of several major philosophical problems and traditionally influential solutions to them. The student is encouraged to develop his or her own solutions to the answers provided by the philosophers discussed. **A student cannot count both Philosophy-Religion 110 and 111 toward a major or minor in Philosophy or Religious Studies.**

**111 Ethics (3)**

An examination of theories and forms of reasoning about moral problems. Procedures for reasoning about ethical issues are examined as well as several major philosophical theories, such as Utilitarianism, which attempt to provide guidance in these issues. The student is encouraged to seek his or her own solution, guided by the theories discussed. **A student cannot count both Philosophy-Religion 110 and 111 toward a major or minor in Philosophy or Religious Studies.**

**120 Understanding the Old Testament (3)**

An introduction to the great ideas and stories of the Bible, focusing on the Old Testament. Students examine leadership in the Bible through daily assignments, short written papers, and a research project.

**121 Understanding the New Testament (3)**

An introduction to the literature and thought of the New Testament, focusing on the life and teachings of Jesus and the letters of Paul.

**231 History and Philosophy of Technology (3)**

A focus on aspects of the history of technology; the moral and social dilemmas that past technologies gave rise to (even when those dilemmas were not clearly acknowledged); the potentials of selected current technologies; and the moral and social dilemmas that those technologies raise. Students study the ways major thinkers have tried to deal with the dilemmas technologies have posed, and are asked to think through their own responsibilities concerning the technologies discussed.

**PHILOSOPHY (PHI)**

**114 Informal Logic (3)**

A course providing a non-formal examination of the nature of good reasoning. Students will examine and learn the nature of cognitive argument, the role of inductive and deductive reasoning, and the effects of non-cognitive aspects of language on the cognitive. Students will examine informal fallacies and apply what is studied to examples of reasoning in such areas as science and law.

**210 Ancient and Medieval Philosophy (3)**

An examination of Greek philosophy, concentrating on Plato's Republic and ending with Aristotle. This is followed by a brief study of the spiritual renaissance seen in Plotinus and culminating in the works of St. Augustine. *Offered alternate years.*

**214 Formal Logic (3)**

A study of propositional logic, including truth tables, symbolization, deductive formal proof, quantification theory, and deductive completeness of formal systems.

**271, 371, 471 Selected Topics (1-3) (1-3) (1-3)**

An investigation of topics not offered in other courses, selected on the basis of student interest and available instruction. *Offered alternate years.*

**290, 390, 490 Directed Study (1-3) (1-3) (1-3)**

An opportunity for supervised, independent study of a particular topic based on the interest of the student and the availability and approval of the faculty.

**301 Philosophy of Yoga (3)**

How do we conduct an inquiry in the self? This is the central question asked in Philosophy of Yoga. Students will study and integrate an inquiry into the self through the ancient philosophy of hatha yoga. Students are introduced to three preparatory stages in yoga: asana (poses), pranayama (breath), and meditation. By studying these three stages of practice, students will begin to ponder the steps necessary to understand a contemplative discipline. Heavy emphasis is placed on experiential and participatory study of yoga. Upon successful completion of this course, students will have a broad spectrum of direct experience with yoga and a grounded perspective on the application of philosophy to their own life.

**305 World Views (3)**

An overview of major ideas and events shaping Western civilization through the examination of narratives, discourses, artworks, films and popular culture. Upon successful completion of this course, students will have a better understanding of classical mythology and philosophy, the biblical concept of reality, modern secularism, the intellectual foundations of totalitarianism, post-modernism, New Age spirituality and alternative concepts of history. **This course fulfills the Cultural Perspectives requirement of the Doane Plan.** *Offered alternate spring terms.*

**311, 411 Philosophy of Science (3) (3)**

An examination of the philosophical questions raised by science – particularly physics – and the implications science has for other areas of thought and practice, such as religion. **Students may complete at one level only.** *Prerequisite: One course in philosophy or religious studies, or permission. Offered alternate years.*

**317, 417 Human Rights (3) (3)**

An examination of theories about the nature, scope, and importance of human rights. There will be an exploration of both religious and non-religious roots of these doctrines, their developments through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the role human rights play today in both the national and international arenas. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to trace the origins of the belief in human rights and articulate at least two ways in which the doctrine of human rights is justified. **Students may complete at one level only.** *Prerequisite: Philosophy-Religion 110 or 111 or permission. Offered alternate years.*

**395 Proseminar I (1)**

A course to supplement a student's background in the history of philosophy. Students independently watch a previously agreed upon number of videotapes on the history of philosophy and complete essays reviewing them. Videos will be supplemented by various readings, by resources from the Internet, and by regular discussions with the professor. Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to continue learning about philosophy on their own, with minimal guidance from a professor. *Prerequisite: Philosophy or Religious Studies major or minor.*

**396 Proseminar II (1)**

A concentrated examination of current journal literature in philosophy. Students read from, and do research in, specified journals on a given topic. The work is reviewed regularly by the course professor. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to identify the major journals in their area of interest, and articulate the major positions in the journal literature on an area of their interest. *Prerequisite: Philosophy or Religious Studies major or minor.*

**495 Examination and Thesis (3)**

A comprehensive examination, emphasizing depth and interrelationships among ideas, is required of every major. An individually chosen thesis is read to the faculty and other students. *Prerequisite: One course in philosophy.*

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RST)**

**271, 371, 471 Selected Topics (1-3) (1-3) (1-3)**

An investigation of topics not offered in other courses, selected on the basis of student interest and available instruction.

**290, 390, 490 Directed Study (1-3) (1-3) (1-3)**

An opportunity for supervised, independent study of a particular topic based on the interest of the student and the availability and approval of the faculty.

**316, 416 The Book of Genesis (3) (3)**

A course which enables students to follow the narrative in Genesis as it tells how God sets the scene and places humans in it, watches what they do and responds with corrective measures, and sets in motion Divine plans for humans. The story is everyone's, for in it we can recognize our own personal and communal pilgrimage with its recurring cycles of hopeful beginnings, faltering and failure, and recovery through grace for new beginnings. Students will learn an approach which will not set intellect against faith, nor promote one doctrinal viewpoint at the cost of others. Instead, in the context of inquiry, they will learn in an atmosphere which can affirm and nourish the intellectual and spiritual journey of each student. **Students may complete at one level only. Offered alternate years.**

**320 Old Testament Archaeology (3)**

A course which develops an understanding of the life and times of the people who lived during the Old Testament period in the Middle East. Starting with the material remains of early Stone Age humans in Syria-Palestine, the course proceeds chronologically through the archaeological periods to the end of the Old Testament period. In the process, it surveys the history of excavating in the lands of the Bible; methods, approaches, and schools of thought; and the major biblical sites. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to articulate and utilize both the value and the limits of archaeology for biblical study; and recover, so far as possible, the physical and cultural setting in order to understand the hopes, fears, and issues of faith for the actors in the Old Testament drama. *Offered alternate spring terms.*

**321 New Testament Archaeology (3)**

A course which develops an understanding of the life and times of the people who lived during the New Testament period in the Middle East. It surveys the results of excavating in the land of the Bible for the New Testament period; methods, approaches and schools of thought; the major biblical sites; ancient texts like the Dead Sea scrolls; and the value and limits of archaeology for biblical study. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to articulate and utilize both the value and the limits of archaeology for biblical study; and recover, so far as possible, the physical and cultural setting in order to understand the hopes, fears and issues of faith for the actors in the biblical drama of the New Testament period. *Offered alternate spring terms.*

**326, 426 The Book of Revelation (3) (3)**

A course which enables students to follow the narrative in the Book of Revelation which many groups use as a central guide to their view of the future. As a result, coming to terms with this most famous and baffling of biblical books becomes a practical enterprise of all people. The understanding which students will acquire will take two general forms: (a) the original purpose, meaning, and function of the Book of Revelation in its own place and time; and (b) the history of its interpretations and applications – both use and

abuse – to the present. **Students may complete at one level only. Offered alternate years.**

**328 Religion and Culture in the Middle East (3)**

Culture and religion are profoundly joined as a way of life in the Middle East. The goal of this course is to understand these links using case studies from recent history and current events. Also included are attention to daily relations among Muslims, Jews, and Christians at street level, and misunderstandings between the Western world and the Middle East. Relevant background from the history of the region, and from the beliefs and practices of its major religions, is introduced throughout. **This course fulfills the Cultural Perspectives requirement of the Doane Plan.**

**495 Examination and Thesis (3)**

A comprehensive examination, emphasizing depth and interrelationships among ideas, is required of every major. An individually chosen thesis is read to the faculty and other students. **Prerequisite: One course in religious studies.**