

Modern Philosophy

Last Updated: Mon, 12/08/2025

Course prefix: PHIL

Course number: 3103

Section: AC

CRN

28671

Instructor first name: Clint

Instructor last name: Johnson

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

Why did modern scientific thought emerge when it did and not thousands of years earlier? What can the history of inquiry into the natural world tell us about why we think the way we do today? Does the history of science matter for scientific practice today?

To answer these questions, this course will trace through Western intellectual history from the Renaissance into the modern age and finish in the early 20th century.

Often, scientific revolutions have been characterized by questioning and altering fundamental assumptions about self and world understanding. By seeing the developments that led to the modern world, we can bring to light our own assumptions and better understand the philosophical assumptions implicit in scientific theories. Knowing where the boundaries of thought are and why they are there can be critical in overcoming them. By participating in an ongoing dialog about the worldview changes that shaped philosophical thought from the Renaissance to the 20th century, students will see how modern thought emerged, why it emerged when it did and what implications this has for creative scientific thought today.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts in English or other languages, or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence