

# DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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## Anthony Ellis

Professor and chair

philosophy.vcu.edu (<http://philosophy.vcu.edu>)

Philosophy aims at a deeper understanding of matters that should most concern the human race. Philosophical questions crop up in science, religion, art, morality, politics, medicine and in everyday life. Students enrolled in philosophy are encouraged to think seriously about fundamental issues in all these domains and to formulate coherent and well-grounded points of view. Because of its extensive use of critical and analytical reasoning, philosophy equips students for careers in medicine, law, business and other fields that require careful thought and the clear expression of ideas.

The Department of Philosophy offers a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. The department offers courses for students in other programs, as well as for those majoring in philosophy or religious studies.

### PHIL 521. Aesthetics. 3 Hours.

Semester courses; 3 lecture hours. 3, 3 credits. A critical survey of aesthetics from antiquity to the 20th century. First semester: antiquity to the Renaissance; Second semester: the Renaissance to the present. Topics to be considered include the nature of art, aesthetic experience, the aesthetic analysis in the arts of painting, music, architecture and the motion picture.

### PHIL 522. Aesthetics. 3 Hours.

Semester courses; 3 lecture hours. 3, 3 credits. A critical survey of aesthetics from antiquity to the 20th century. First semester: antiquity to the Renaissance; Second semester: the Renaissance to the present. Topics to be considered include the nature of art, aesthetic experience, the aesthetic analysis in the arts of painting, music, architecture and the motion picture.

### PHIL 591. Topics in Philosophy. 1-4 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-4 credits. Prerequisite: written permission of instructor or graduate standing. A graduate-level, in-department study of an individual philosopher, a particular philosophical problem or a narrowly defined period or school. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester.

### PHIL 592. Independent Study. 1-4 Hours.

Semester course; 1-4 credits. An independent study course to allow graduate students to do research, under the direction of a professor qualified in that field, in an area of major interest.

### PHIL 601. Principles of Ethics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisite: graduate standing. An examination of major ethical theories and their application to contemporary issues in medicine, science and public policy.

### PHIL 602. Biomedical Ethics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of ethical theory and its application to moral problems in medicine and biotechnology.

### PHIL 635. Philosophy of the Social Sciences. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A philosophical study of the nature of science and scientific explanation, with emphasis upon the social sciences. Topics include the philosophical analysis of objectivity in the social sciences, theories of human action and the relation of social sciences to the physical sciences.

### PHIL 683. Administrative Ethics. 2,3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 or 3 lecture hours. 2 or 3 credits. A philosophical investigation into the problems of making ethical decisions, focusing on issues likely to confront the public administrator. Examples of such issues are equity in social services delivery, affirmative action, loyalty to the bureaucracy vs. "whistle blowing," and conflicts of interest between personal and public interest. Crosslisted as: PADM 683/GVPA 683.

### PHIL 691. Topics in Philosophy. 1-4 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-4 credits. Prerequisite: written permission of instructor or graduate standing. A graduate-level, in-depth study of an individual philosopher, a particular philosophical problem, or a narrowly defined period or school. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester.

### PHIL 692. Independent Study. 1-4 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-4 credits. Open to graduate students only. An independent study course to allow graduate students to do research, under the direction of a professor qualified in that field, in an area of major interest.

### PHIL 713. Ethics and Public Policy. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Doctoral students only. An examination of the main theories of morality and justice. These theories' implications for public policy will be discussed.