

# Philosophy or Religious Studies

Students are required to complete three (3) credits from the approved menu of Philosophy and Religious Studies courses.

Courses in this category must acquaint students with primary sources as appropriate and encourage the development of independent judgment and critical thinking. These courses must also acquaint students with the European/Euro-American Intellectual Heritage.

Courses in philosophy and religious studies should provide content that treats concepts, themes and events in sufficient depth to enable students to appreciate the complexity, history and current implications of what is being studied. These courses also should suggest the major intellectual questions/problems that interest practitioners of a discipline and explore critically the important theories and principles presented by the discipline. Students should be provided opportunities to understand and apply the methods of inquiry and vocabulary commonly used in the discipline.

## a. Philosophy

### **Philosophy Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes**

Syllabi for courses designed to fulfill the Liberal Studies Philosophy requirement must provide course content that enables students to achieve the Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes identified below. Course proposals may identify additional objectives from the list of Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes as appropriate to the course content.

Informed Learners understand nature and society through forms of inquiry fundamental to the sciences, the humanities, and the arts. Learners are informed by knowledge and ways of knowing that extend beyond core concepts enabling them to link theory and practice.

As *Informed Learners* students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the past and present from historical, philosophical and social perspectives
- the interrelationships within and across disciplines

Empowered Learners are critical thinkers who demonstrate intellectual agility and creativity and the ability to manage or create change. They are able to derive meaning from experience and observation. They communicate well in diverse settings and employ various strategies to solve problems. They are empowered through mastery of intellectual and practical skills.

*Empowered Learners* students will demonstrate:

- effective oral and written communication abilities
- ease with textual, visual and electronically-mediated literacies

- information literacy skills including the ability to access, evaluate, interpret and use information from a variety of sources
- the ability to transform information into knowledge and knowledge into judgment and action
- critical-thinking skills including analysis, application and evaluation
- reflective thinking and the ability to synthesize information and ideas As

Responsible Learners are engaged citizens of a diverse democratic society who have a deep sense of social responsibility and ethical judgment. They are responsible for their personal actions and civic values.

*Responsible Learners* students will demonstrate:

- intellectual honesty
- concern for social justice
- an understanding of the ethical and behavioral consequences of decisions and actions on themselves, on society and on the physical world
- an understanding of themselves and a respect for the identities, histories, and cultures of others

### **Philosophy Required Course Content**

Proposals for courses designed to fulfill the Liberal Studies Philosophy requirement must:

- introduce students to great philosophers of Western civilization
- introduce students to some of the major areas of philosophy (aesthetics, epistemology, ethics, logic, and metaphysics) and where appropriate, the relationships among them; courses choosing to approach these areas by examining one or more of the recognized historical periods in philosophy (e.g., ancient, medieval, modern or contemporary) should aim to show students the contrasts and similarities with other periods
- provide opportunities through the close analysis and evaluation of fundamental issues, for students to gain both an understanding of philosophy and to think critically and responsibly about important issues
- investigate relationships with non-Western traditions and cultures where appropriate
- give due attention to the philosophical work of women and minorities, where appropriate or possible
- use primary sources when feasible and appropriate

### **Philosophy Common Learning Objectives**

All courses meeting the Philosophy requirement will establish the following common learning objectives:

At the conclusion of the course the student should be able to:

- accurately represent and explain philosophical positions across a range of philosophical topics

- accurately represent and explain objections to these same positions
- express their thoughts clearly, coherently and precisely in both written and oral form
- engage in close, careful reading of philosophical texts, both contemporary and historical
- construct arguments in defense of own philosophical view
- identify the premises, conclusions, and inferential relationships among statements within arguments
- accurately represent the logical structure of different types of arguments
- critically assess the strengths of different types of arguments, whatever the subject matter of the arguments

## **b. Religious Studies**

### **Religious Studies Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes**

Syllabi for courses designed to fulfill the Liberal Studies Religious Studies requirement must provide course content that enables students to achieve the Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes identified below. Course proposals may identify additional objectives from the list of Expected Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes as appropriate to the course content.

Informed Learners understand nature and society through forms of inquiry fundamental to the sciences, the humanities, and the arts. Learners are informed by knowledge and ways of knowing that extend beyond core concepts enabling them to link theory and practice.

As *Informed Learners* students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the past and present from historical, philosophical and social perspectives
- the human imagination, expression and traditions of many cultures
- the interrelationships within and across cultures and global communities
- the interrelationships within and across disciplines As

Empowered Learners are critical thinkers who demonstrate intellectual agility and creativity and the ability to manage or create change. They are able to derive meaning from experience and observation. They communicate well in diverse settings and employ various strategies to solve problems. They are empowered through mastery of intellectual and practical skills.

*Empowered Learners* students will demonstrate:

- ease with textual, visual and electronically-mediated literacies
- the ability to transform information into knowledge and knowledge into judgment and action
- critical thinking skills including analysis, application and evaluation
- reflective thinking and the ability to synthesize information and ideas As

Responsible Learners are engaged citizens of a diverse democratic society who have a deep sense of social responsibility and ethical judgment. They are responsible for their personal actions and civic values.

*Responsible Learners* students will demonstrate:

- intellectual honesty
- concern for social justice
- an understanding of the ethical and behavioral consequences of decisions and actions on themselves, on society and on the physical world
- an understanding of themselves and a respect for the identities, histories, and cultures of others

### **Religious Studies Required Course Content**

Proposals for courses designed to fulfill the Liberal Studies Religious Studies requirement must:

- introduce students to the study of religion as a means to understanding the Western world view and its global impact
- provide a balanced, critical, nonsectarian examination of religion
- emphasize an interdisciplinary approach to the study of religion
- investigate the nature of religion and the forms of its expression or the foundational roots and development of one or more Western religious tradition(s) over a significant time span
- investigate relationships with non-Western traditions and cultures where appropriate
- give due attention to the religious involvement and ethical perspectives of women and minorities
- guide students in the critical reading of religious texts emphasizing analysis, evaluation and application
- encourage the development of an understanding of the ethical and behavioral consequences of religious belief and practices

### **Religious Studies Common Learning Objectives**

All courses meeting the Religious Studies requirement will establish course objectives stating:

At the conclusion of the course the student should be able to:

- understand the cultural/religious heritage of our society and the historical and political ramifications of the Judeo-Christian heritage
- think critically about this heritage by careful attention to textual sources, artistic representations, autobiographical accounts, critical scholarly analyses and experiential study
- show the ability to apply this information through enhanced communication skills, reflection and synthetic thinking, and analytical-critical abilities
- develop and exercise thoughtful responses to the many challenges in a global society

- think critically about fundamental issues of human existence
- exhibit appropriate knowledge, skills and appreciation of religious studies as an academic discipline
- provide broad knowledge of the beliefs and practices of major world religions
- develop competence in the different methodological approaches to the study of religion
- demonstrate the ability to write and research topics in the discipline