

# Philosophy

Philosophers try to make sense of human experience through critical reflection and argument. The study of philosophy involves asking questions about the nature of knowledge, reality, and values, and formulating and evaluating answers to these questions. As a philosophy major or minor at Illinois Wesleyan University, you will be introduced to various traditional philosophical issues such as the nature of consciousness, personal identity, the nature of morality, and skepticism. Your understanding of these issues will be strengthened by reading the works of major philosophers, including Plato, Descartes, Hume, Kant, and more recent figures.

## Why Philosophy at Illinois Wesleyan?

- Philosophy classes typically have no more than 25 students.
- Frequent papers and other writing assignments will enable students to polish their critical analysis and communication skills.
- The philosophy faculty is committed to working closely with students and answering their questions in and out of class.
- A high percentage of our philosophy majors also pursue a major in another discipline. If you are interested in a double major with philosophy, the faculty will work with you to tailor your philosophy courses to your other disciplinary interest.
- Philosophy is recommended as one of the best preparations for the GRE and LSAT examinations.
- Recent philosophy students have been admitted to graduate programs at such prestigious institutions as Stanford University, Harvard University, University of North Carolina, University of Minnesota, MIT, University of Michigan, University of Colorado, University of California-Irvine, University of Michigan Law School and Yale Law School.

## Learning from a Quality Faculty

- **Thomas Blanchard**, *Assistant Professor of Philosophy*  
*Ph.D. — Rutgers University, New Brunswick*  
Specializes in the philosophy of science and metaphysics
- **Mary Clayton Coleman**, *Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophy*  
*Ph.D. — Harvard University*  
Specializes in ethics, philosophy of action, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, and early modern philosophy.



## A Sampling of Courses Offered by Philosophy

Mind and World  
Rights and Wrongs  
God and Science  
What is Law?  
Intro to Social and Political Philosophy  
Medical Ethics  
Philosophy of Religion  
Philosophy of Education  
History of Ancient Philosophy  
History of Modern Philosophy  
Ethical Theory  
Philosophy of Law  
Philosophy of Language  
Philosophy of Mind  
Major Philosophers and Philosophical Movements  
Epistemology  
Metaphysics

## Recent May Term Courses in Philosophy

Sex, Values, and Human Nature  
Ethics and Animals



“The philosophy department at Illinois Wesleyan is passionate about helping students to develop the critical thinking and creativity that are essential for

both academic and professional success. Students who study with us learn how to read complex texts closely, to identify the arguments made in those texts, to express those arguments clearly and precisely, and to develop persuasive arguments of their own in response.”

- **Mark Criley**, *Associate Professor of Philosophy*  
*Ph.D. — University of Pittsburgh*

Specializes in philosophy of language, epistemology, philosophy of law, meta-ethics, and philosophical logic.

- **Andrew Engen**, *Assistant Professor of Philosophy*  
*University of California, Berkeley*

Specializes in moral theory, moral psychology, political philosophy, applied ethics, and ancient philosophy.

- **Emily Kelahan**, *Assistant Professor of Philosophy*  
*Ph.D. — University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill*

Specializes in early modern philosophy, metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of religion.

### **Mary Clayton Coleman**

Associate Professor and Chair of  
Philosophy

## Putting Learning into Practice

- **Independent Study:** In the last several years, philosophy students have explored areas or topics outside the regular curriculum through projects on topics such as medical paternalism, skepticism, and reductionism.
- **Research Honors:** Students may pursue a project of original research in philosophy. Typically, after spending a semester of independent study during the junior year reading books and articles relevant to their research area and honing their thesis topics, students write their research thesis during the Fall term of their senior year. In recent years, students have written on topics such as intentionality, the nature of consciousness, and justice.
- **Internships:** Students have held positions at the Hastings Center (a medical ethics think-tank), the U.S. State Department in Washington, a New York City publishing firm, and the Muscular Dystrophy Association in Chicago.
- **Study Abroad:** Many philosophy majors elect to gain the invaluable experience of living and learning in a different cultural setting. In years past, students have studied at St. Peter's College, Oxford, or King's College in London or in Ireland at Cork University. Recently, several majors have studied in Copenhagen, Denmark.
- **Philosophy Club:** The Philosophy Club shows films, sponsors debates, and hosts and attends speakers series. They also host a listserv, which enables philosophy faculty and students to discuss philosophical issues and upcoming events.
- **Ethics Bowl:** The Ethics Bowl is an intercollegiate team competition centered around cases that explore a variety of ethical issues. Team members debate such issues as freedom of speech, our obligations to the environment, and racial and gender equality.



**ILLINOIS WESLEYAN**  
UNIVERSITY

## For Further Information, Write or Call:

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