

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Department of Philosophy offers two qualifications:

- ❖ Diploma in Philosophy (Dip. Phil)
- ❖ Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy (BA. [Phil.]

For Whom Are These Programmes?

The Diploma in Philosophy fulfils the requirement of the Roman Catholic Church for the academic formation of future priests in this discipline of Philosophy. It is structured to respond to the needs of various Orders and Congregations of the Catholic Church to separate their formation programmes in Africa.

The qualification should also be attractive to those who would like to study Philosophy from perspectives other than Positivism, Linguistic approaches and the post-Kantian move away from Metaphysics. It offers a well rounded view of Philosophy from a multitude of perspectives.

The BA.(Phil) offers more specialization in contemporary social and ethical matters and is thus seen as complementary to the Theological studies, forming students in critical thinking on a number of pressing contemporary issues, allowing them to engage as equals in current debate with clear, responsible and logically consequent thought. The diversity of approach also makes this qualification attractive to those who would like to explore the discipline of philosophy from a wide range of approaches.

DIPLOMA IN PHILOSOPHY

Qualification Type	Programme ID	NQF Exit Level	Field	Minimum Credits	DoE Registration
National Diploma	50165	6	007 Human & Social Sciences	240	19.11.2004

Programme Admission Criteria

Students registering for the Diploma in Philosophy must have proficiency in English (the medium of education) and have obtained a Matriculation Certificate or its equivalent.

Programme Duration

Students are usually required to attend lectures on a full time basis. Students registering for the Diploma in Philosophy are expected to complete their studies in two years. Students who wish to study on a part-time basis are also accommodated.

Exit Level Outcomes

Exit level outcomes are as follows:

- ❖ A fundamental knowledge of the main areas of philosophy, particularly in ethics and in the history of philosophy
- ❖ An ability to comprehend and digest basic philosophical positions
- ❖ To be able to assess the logical implications of basic philosophical positions
- ❖ To understand the ways in which social, political and ethical policies are built on philosophical presuppositions
- ❖ An ability to present arguments in a logical and clear manner
- ❖ To be able to engage critically with the ideas that give shape to our lives as individuals and as society
- ❖ A sound understanding of the major philosophical principles and theories covered in the programme and the ability to present and communicate philosophical ideas coherently

Credit Components:

Students are expected to successfully complete all the modules that are offered. However, because of the fact that some students do not complete their studies in an unbroken sequence, because others come from institutions where they have done part of their studies, and because the sequence of modules taught at the Institute may change from time to time due to unforeseen circumstances, it is accepted that not all students will be able to take all the possible modules. The minimum number of credits necessary for a student to graduate is as follows:

Foundational Modules:	128
Core Modules:	134
Total Credits for Diploma:	262

MODULE DESCRIPTIONS

FOUNDATIONAL MODULES

HUM 101a – ENGLISH AND STUDY SKILLS I (LRSS I)

(NSH: 52L0T0P0S88H18R0F2A16W14C)

Admission: Open

AIMS:

- The main purpose of this course is the improvement of academic and general writing skills in English. By the end of the semester, the students will be able to:
- Identify topic sentences and supporting, limiting and transitional sentences.
- Write topic, supporting, limiting and transitional sentences to form effective, well-structured, coherent paragraphs.
- Identify and eliminate wordiness (tautologies and redundancies) in their own writing and in that of others.
- Use effectively transitional words (indicating time, adding information, showing similarities and differences, contradicting or qualifying, introducing examples, providing emphasis, showing cause and effect, demonstrating condition, showing concession, summing up or concluding) to create coherence in essays.
- Identify accurately simple and compound subjects and verbs, phrases and clauses (main and subordinate), sentence types (simple, compound, complex, compound complex) with the purpose of eliminating sentence fragmentation. This learning outcome will also form a basis for accurate subject/verb agreement and pronoun referencing which will be covered in the second semester.

HUM 101b – ENGLISH AND STUDY SKILLS II (LRSS II)

(NSH: 52L0T0P0S88H18R0F2A16W14C)

Admission: Open

AIMS:

- The main purpose of this course is the improvement of academic and general writing skills in English. By the end of the semester, the students will be able to:
- Identify topic sentences and supporting, limiting and transitional sentences.
- Write topic, supporting, limiting and transitional sentences to form effective, well-structured, coherent paragraphs.

- Identify and eliminate wordiness (tautologies and redundancies) in their own writing and in that of others.
- Use effectively transitional words (indicating time, adding information, showing similarities and differences, contradicting or qualifying, introducing examples, providing emphasis, showing cause and effect, demonstrating condition, showing concession, summing up or concluding) to create coherence in essays.
- Identify accurately simple and compound subjects and verbs, phrases and clauses (main and subordinate), sentence types (simple, compound, complex, compound complex) with the purpose of eliminating sentence fragmentation. This learning outcome will also form a basis for accurate subject/verb agreement and pronoun referencing which will be covered in the second semester.

PHI 101 – INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H18R0F3A16W8C)

Admission: Open

AIM: The course aims to introduce the students to the meaning of philosophy and the methods of philosophizing. It also aims to introduce some major subdivisions of Philosophy and it aims to show in what way the philosophical manner of thinking differs from the ordinary way of thinking.

Students will become familiar with the broad branches of philosophy and basic terminologies used in philosophy. Major philosophical schools of thought will be discussed in brief. They will also learn that to philosophize is to wonder about life, about right and wrong, about love and loneliness, war and death, about freedom, truth, beauty, nature...etc. In short philosophy is wondering about reality or being.

PHI 102 – HISTORY OF ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Open

Required For: PHI 209 (Metaphysics)

AIM: The course will begin by looking at the primitive beginnings with Thales to the more complex philosophy of Aristotle. We will follow four major historical periods in ancient Greek philosophy: (1) Pre-Socratic philosophy, in which series of philosophers sought to understand and explain the fundamental principles of reality in rational terms and to develop technical skills for succeeding in life; (2) Socrates, the central figure of ancient Greek philosophy who, although he wrote nothing, marked a decisive change from previous development of philosophy and significantly influenced those who followed; (3) Socrates' student, Plato, who gradually developed his own philosophical positions in

response to his teacher; and (4) Plato's student, Aristotle who laboured to make philosophy scientific and systematic.

PHI 103 – GENERAL ETHICS

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Open

Required For: PHI 107 (Applied Ethics)

AIM: This course intends to introduce the students to a wide variety of historical and contemporary approaches to ethics. By examining theories such as relativism, subjectivism, natural law and utilitarianism, the students will be encouraged to discover the strengths and weaknesses of differing ethical approaches, and to recognize that, for an ethical theory to be successful it needs to have a proper understanding of human nature.

It is hoped that at the end of this course students will be familiar with major ethical theories and that the students will be equipped with the necessary tools to discuss and evaluate various contemporary moral issues, as well as develop their own moral ethical stance.

PHI 104 – LOGIC

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Open

Required For: PHI 209 (Metaphysics)

AIM: To help students perfect their natural ability to reason correctly by giving them a grasp of the laws which govern the processes of sound reasoning and by alerting them to the pitfalls known as fallacies, as outlined by classical (scholastic) logic.

PHI 105 – PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

(NSH: 52L0T0P0S88H24R0F3A16W14C)

Admission: Open

AIM: This course intends to enlighten students to have a deeper understanding of the Human Person. It employs the philosophical, in addition to the scientific, method to investigate the phenomenon of the Human Person. The course begins by analysing the Phenomenology of Human Action that takes into account selected topics including: Life, Sense and intellect knowledge, Passions, the Will, and Freedom. Then it concentrates on the metaphysical aspects of the Human Person. Topics covered here include: Self-Transcendence; the concept of Person; The Soul; the Relationship between Body and Soul; and Human Destiny (Death). The end result aims to come out with a clear philosophical concept of the Human Person.

PHI 106 – EPISTEMOLOGY

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Open

Required For: PHI 209 (Metaphysics)

AIM: The course will set itself the task of establishing the genuine validity of human knowledge. That is to say, it will seek to show that human knowledge is capable of gathering objective and necessary truths from contingent reality, thus arriving at a *critical realism*, a point of departure for metaphysics.

PHI 107 – APPLIED ETHICS

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Requires PHI 103

AIM: The course will attempt to examine some contemporary ethical issues that are of significance to South Africa and the global community. Among topics of investigation will be abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, and the ecology. Issues of gender and sexual orientation, the problem of war, and animal rights will also be examined.

PHI 209 – METAPHYSICS

(NSH: 52L0T0P0S88H24R0F3A16W14C)

Admission: Requires PHI 102 (History of Ancient Philosophy), PHI 104 (Logic) and PHI 106 (Epistemology)

Required For: PHI 221 (Phenomenology of the Symbol) and PHI 223 (Philosophy of Nature)

AIM: The course will commence with a brief look back at the course in Epistemology (PHI 106) which will have been taken by those taking this course. That course set forth a theory of knowledge known as critical realism. The course in metaphysics will deal with all the major topics demanded by a realistic ontology which brings to light transcendental values.

The course will aim to help students to face reality directly for themselves and show them that human reason is capable of attaining a fundamental nucleus of natural truths which, taken together, serve to give a coherent vision of reality and make sense of the universe we live in. It will examine critically theories which, historically, have sought to undermine the whole metaphysical enterprise. It will seek to show that metaphysics is a valid science or discipline which is not at odds with exact science on the one hand, nor replaced by exact science on the other.

CORE MODULES

HUM 121 – HISTORY OF CIVILIZATIONS

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H18R0F3A16W8C)

Admission: Open

AIM: This module examines some of the major civilizations of the ancient world and the influence that they have had on the modern world in which we live. The module begins with the transition of people from hunter-gatherers to settled farmers. Selected civilizations from those of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Crete, Greece, Rome, China and India, plus the Inca, Aztec and Maya in the Americas will then be studied. This examination will be mainly descriptive and historical with some analysis as to why these civilizations prospered and waned. Of particular importance will be the invention of writing and how it became a vehicle for the preservation, dissemination and the growth of knowledge and the development of thought and human progress.

HUM 125 – AFRICAN HISTORY

(NSH: 26L0T0P8S54H18R0F3A16W8C)

Admission: Open

AIM: The module intends to present an overview of the History of the continent of Africa. A fresh look at the events and characters that have shaped the continent from the origins of humanity to the end of South African apartheid will be taken.

The rise and fall of African civilizations, empires and kingdoms will be studied, leading to an objective study of the injustices of slavery and colonialism. A step further will be taken to study the winds of independence on the continent. There will also be a general assessment of the aftermath of independence, going on to an epoch which many have termed the 'African Renaissance'.

HUM 222 – PSYCHOLOGY I

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H12R0F2A16W8C)

Admission: Open

AIM: The module aims to introduce the students to a basic psychology of the human person as a basis for an anthropological theology and pastoral ministry. It seeks to develop a "Psychological mindedness" about human experience and faith, and to encourage a deepened personal reflection.

HUM 227 – CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H12R0F2A16W8C)

Admission: Open

AIM: The purpose of this module is to provide students with a basic understanding of Cultural Anthropology and some of its philosophical underpinnings.

HUM 329 – PEDAGOGY AND COMMUNICATION

(NSH: 26L0T0P0S54H12R0F2A16W8C)

Admission: Requires HUM 101 (LRSS)

AIMS:

- To give the students an overview of the various philosophies of education.
- To foster a critical awareness of contemporary pedagogies and systems of education.
- To analyze some of the language and terms used by educationalists today.
- To develop in the students a critical self-awareness in their own teaching roles.
- To explore the link between education and spirituality.

RST 222 – THEMES IN ISLAM

(NSH: 52L0T0P13S88H18R0F2A16W14C)

Admission: Open

AIMS: The module *aims* to (a) expose students to the selected themes of the Islamic traditions and teachings, (b) help students appreciate traditional Muslim beliefs and teachings of the Islamic faith and (c) engage students in inter-religious dialogue and tolerance on Islam's role in a global society. The *objectives* of the course are to deepen the student's to understanding of Islam, both as a religion and as a civilization - exploring topics such as Islamic doctrines and law; gender issues; Islamic government; the debate between secularism and traditionalism in contemporary Islamic societies with special focus to Africa.

PHI 114 – HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Requires PHI 102 (History of Ancient Philosophy)

Required For: PHI 208 (History of Modern Philosophy)

AIM: The aim of the course is to show that Medieval Philosophy, contrary to past consensus, is systematic and deeply thought out. We will try to show how philosophers belonging to this epoch were well vested in the Classical Ancients (esp. Plato and Aristotle) whom they sought to reinterpret in the light of the Christian faith. We will attempt to follow their thought as they try to show that revealed truths are not necessarily incompatible with reason.

PHI 208 – HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Requires PHI 102 (History of Ancient Philosophy) and PHI 114 (History of Medieval Philosophy)

Required For: PHI 210 (History of Contemporary Philosophy)

AIM: The course will begin with an examination of the Renaissance period, bringing to light both the continuity and the discontinuity which characterize the transition from Medieval Philosophy to Modern Philosophy. The strong reaction against the Aristotelian worldview which held sway throughout the medieval period will be dealt with. The humanistic and scientific phases of the Renaissance will be focused on. The classical modern period extending from Descartes to Kant, with rationalism and empiricism as the leading strands of thought, will be given pride of place in the course. Treatment of Kant's critical enterprise will bring the course to a conclusion.

PHI 210 – CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Requires PHI 102 (History of Ancient Philosophy) and PHI 208 (History of Modern Philosophy)

AIMS:

- To become familiar with the major figures of Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Philosophy
- To acquire an overview understanding of contemporary philosophies and their prominent representatives
- To see how major philosophical thought shaped contemporary life, political and otherwise.
- To show how Philosophy in the contemporary era tried to bring some enlightenment to the notion of human existence.
- To improve the student's ability to intelligently read and critically analyze philosophy

PHI 211 – PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S81H24R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Requires PHI 209 (Metaphysics)

AIM: It is natural for rational beings who have grappled with the mysteries of finite being in terms of its *intrinsic principles* to seek its ultimate explanation. As being is intelligible, we spontaneously seek to understand – and expect that we shall, in fact, understand – the universe to which we belong. It is our *reasonable hope* that we shall find an answer to *the* fundamental philosophical question, the one famously posed by Leibniz and Heidegger: *Why is there something rather than nothing?*

For the scientist as scientist, *existence* is simply a matter of fact, to be taken for granted; it is of no concern for science. For the philosopher, *existence* cannot be accounted for within the limits of the radically contingent universe of experience. However, contingent existence cries out for an explanation, a cause, in that which is not contingent, an ultimate being that is both self-explanatory and also capable of explaining every other being. Such a being is transcendent: it lies beyond experience.

PHI 212 – AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY

(NSH: 39L0T0P8S81H18R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Open

AIM: This course introduces students to a sphere that is being overlooked: WHO IS AN AFRICAN or what makes a person to be African? Starting from what they know and think they are challenged to look at themselves and other people differently, i.e. in a respectable way. Discussion on existence or non-existence of African Philosophy serves as the starting point of the Course. The focus is on topics like mythical consciousness, African worldview, African ontology, African Time, Religiosity, uBuntu. All this is to point out some values with which Africans distinguish themselves from other peoples so they interact with them in an assertive manner.

PHI 221 – PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE SYMBOL

(NSH: 39L0T0P8S81H18R0F3A16W12C)

Admission: Requires PHI 209 (Metaphysics)

AIM: This course intends to introduce students to the ‘third’ dimension of looking at reality. It serves as a bridge between core philosophy and theology. It helps the student to realise that our knowledge and language are limited when it comes to expressing certain life experiences. The course begins by defining the sign and the demonstration of its ramifications. It distinguishes between a natural sign and a conventional one and identifies language as a conventional sign. The dynamics of language are analysed. It looks at the six identified uses of language. The symbol is then explained distinguishing it from a sign and a signal. The module zeroes in on the nature and function of the symbol. Manifestations of the symbol are demonstrated. The symbol is identified with the myth and the ritual: expressions of Religion. This leads to the understanding of Sacraments as symbols. The outcome here is that the student, having the intuition of the symbol as an instrument, will appreciate better Catholic Liturgy, Sacred Scriptures, Theology and Life in general.

PHI 223 – PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE

(NSH: 39L0T0P0S41H12R0F2A16W8C)

Admission: Requires PHI 209 (Metaphysics)

AIM: The course aims to show how the philosophical thought of Aristotle’s *Physics* may still be relevant in the context of modern science, following the programme of William Wallace OP in his attempt to model nature, incorporating the successful findings of modern physics and chemistry. After a critique of this process, the course aims at introducing the student to physical evolution (the Big Bang Theory) and biological evolution (Darwin’s Theory of Natural Selection) and raises the philosophical issues concerning these, and to contemporary ideas of holistic evolution, according to the view of Ken Wilber.