

Changes to The Philosophy Capstone effective Fall 2020

The Philosophy Department is making some significant changes to its PHIL 475 Capstone course, beginning Fall 2020. We believe that these changes will enhance the experience for all involved.

In this new version of the course, with the aid of a Capstone advisor assigned by the Philosophy Department, you will develop important independent research skills by *revising* and *expanding* a paper that you have already written for a previous philosophy course. The essential skills to be developed here include the ability to (1) search philosophy databases for journal articles related to your topic; (2) select the most relevant of those articles based on their abstracts; (3) expand previously written work using the selected material; and (4) revise, edit, and polish your philosophical writing. The end result will be the same as it was in the old format, only we believe that it will be achieved more easily and effectively: a 10-15 page research paper of a quality sufficient to serve as a writing sample for graduate school applications.

Here are a few key differences between the new and old formats:

- (1) No longer will there be any association between PHIL 475 and another, concurrently taken, upper-level philosophy course.
- (2) Students will be required to complete at least 27 (as opposed to the old 21) philosophy credits prior to taking PHIL 475. This is intended to broaden the knowledge base from which students can select their Capstone projects.
- (3) Since students will be revising a term paper they have already written, rather than writing a new paper “from scratch”, they will have a “head start” on the project that should make the process easier.
- (4) All PHIL 475 Capstone students will have the opportunity to attend an orientation meeting early in the semester at which questions can be answered and the department’s expectations can be made clear. This should help to “regularize” the process and make it more predictable.

If you have any questions about the new PHIL 475 Capstone course, ask any member of the department, or contact the department Chair, Dr. Herzberg, at herzberg@uwosh.edu.