

Core

The goal of the Core Programme is to help students strengthen their theoretical reasoning skills and practical (ethical) reasoning skills. A central feature of Core courses is to achieve these goals not within the parameters of any given discipline but by requiring students to begin thinking critically about the very notion of "discipline" and about the relationship between disciplines. These courses will be offered by faculty from no single academic Department or programme.

2013. Critical Reasoning

In university, the student is exposed to a variety of disciplines and, in studying each discipline, is taught to reason through certain kinds of arguments and to distinguish good ones from bad ones. But what is an argument? What does it mean to reason through an argument? What allows us to distinguish good arguments from bad ones? What happens when the arguments and conclusions of one discipline disagree with those of another? Are there universal rules for good reasoning or does each discipline have its own set of rules? In this course, students will pursue these questions by comparing and contrasting the ways in which distinct disciplines actually engage in the practice of reasoning and arguing. 3 credit hours.

3013. Ethical Reasoning

In the first part of this course, we will consider a range of concrete ethical issues (e.g., euthanasia, pacifism, freedom of speech, etc.) and we will discuss what it means to justify the ethical decisions we make and why this justification is so important for all our day-to-day actions. In the second part, we will focus explicitly on the question, "What is ethical justification and what are its limits?", examining this question from a variety of disciplinary standpoints (e.g., biology, psychology, history, economics, etc.) 3 credit hours.