Proposal for Independent Research in Philosophy Capstone Course

(PHL 493, 495 or 496)

*Your name and anticipated date of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Instructions*: As you know, the completion of a philosophy capstone course is required for the major in philosophy. So that you can be enrolled in such a course, please complete this form. *Please do not hesitate to ask your capstone advisor, your advisor in philosophy or the chair of the department for any help you need in completing any of these forms*.

1. this Proposal for Independent Research in Philosophy Capstone Course (“Proposal”).

--In the box for item 1 below, please provide a provisional description of your capstone project or thesis.

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--In the box for item 3 below, please indicate work that prepares you for the research you will do in connection with your capstone course.

1. Description of project. Please provide a brief (provisional) description of your proposed capstone project or thesis.

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1. Amount of time. Work for the capstone course will take the form of a paper, with requirements to vary depending on whether the capstone is a “project” (PHL 493), “senior thesis research” (PHL 495) or “senior thesis” (PHL 496). (For additional details, please see the Bulletin.) In the case of the project, the amount of time devoted to research and the amount of time devoted to writing and revising will be approximately equal. In the case of senior thesis research, more than half the time will be devoted to research. In the case of the senior thesis, more than half the time will be devoted to writing. In each case, departures from that allocation are permitted upon agreement with the capstone advisor.
2. Preparation. Enrollment in the capstone course in philosophy is limited to philosophy majors who are have completed or are now completing their junior year. Such students will typically have had a sufficient number of courses in philosophy to prepare them for their capstone course. If, however, by the end of this term you will have completed *fewer than five philosophy courses*, please list those courses and any philosophy courses you anticipate completing the first term of your senior year. In addition, if your capstone topic is interdisciplinary, please list any courses *outside philosophy* you have completed or are now completing that will significantly support your capstone project.

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1. Frequency and duration of meetings with advisor. Frequency and duration of meetings will be determined by agreement at the beginning of the term between the student and the capstone advisor and may vary as needed. The typical schedule will include meeting with the capstone advisor every one to two weeks for sessions last approximately one hour.
2. Milestones. Submissions of research findings or partial drafts shall be submitted at regular intervals on a schedule to be set by agreement at the beginning of the term between the student and the capstone advisor. In the case of the senior project and the senior thesis, a refined draft should be submitted to the capstone advisor approximately 5-6 weeks prior to the end of the term. The draft may then be revised multiple times prior to final submission. In the case of the senior thesis research, a schedule of research (which may include writing) will be set by agreement at the beginning of the term between the student and the capstone advisor.
3. Means of evaluation. Both the research and writing components of the capstone course will be evaluated in light of the established learning objectives for the senior capstone in philosophy. Those learning objectives include the ability to (A) understand and explain the distinction between valid and invalid arguments and (where appropriate) translate segments of a natural language into symbolic form and construct proofs; (B) identify, interpret, and develop a sustained critique of arguments, theories, and positions in philosophical works; articulate multiple points of view on philosophical questions demonstrating an understanding of their respective virtues, deficiencies, and implications; and argue clearly and cogently, both orally and in writing, for positions and against alternatives; (C) formulate and defend your own philosophical positions clearly and cogently while demonstrating a firm grasp of opposing positions and objections and (D) undertake philosophical research at a sophisticated level through the careful and in-depth use of primary and (as appropriate) secondary texts. Other, more specialized objectives relating to the particular topic may be included as determined early in the term of enrollment and upon the agreement of the capstone advisor and the student.

Revised 11/08/2021