

# philosophy of fashion

They say that once at a banquet, Dionysius desired all the guests to dance in purple garments; but Plato refused, saying:

**“I could not wear a woman’s robe, when I was born a man, and of a manly race.”**

But Aristippus took the garment, and when he was about to dance, he said very wittily:

**“She who is chaste, will not corrupted be by Bacchanalian revels.”**

—Diogenes Laertius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*

Since the single tattered robes of Socrates and Diogenes, philosophy has long endeavored to define itself in opposition to fashion. Plato tells us that truth is eternal and of the mind. By contrast, fashion is ephemeral and of the body.

This course questions that binary. Here, we will treat clothing as theory in motion: a runway where meaning, society, the self, and power, are generated and negotiated. Blending aesthetics, ethics, philosophy of language, and social theory, the seminar will reframe the dressed body as a site of creativity, conflict, and critique.

Prerequisite(s): At least one upper division course in ethics or value theory, or instructor consent.

PHIL 292 | ADVANCED TOPICS IN ETHICS OR AESTHETICS  
TH 6:00-8:45 PM | FALL 2026 | DR. EMMIE MALONE