

PHILOSOPHY, BA

Degree: Bachelor of Arts (BA)

Major: Philosophy

Program Overview

The Department of Philosophy offers an undergraduate major leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree. Its course offerings are designed not only to provide knowledge and skills required for students whose main interest is in philosophy, but also to educate students in general about the intellectual issues that a reflective person is likely to encounter in various life contexts. The department emphasizes the relevance of philosophy to mathematics, computer science, the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities and arts, and law.

The major program in philosophy, besides offering a solid foundation for advanced study in philosophy and enriching programs in other disciplines, develops the skills for analytical and critical thinking, effective communication, and rational decision making needed in a wide range of endeavors. The program thus provides majors with unusual flexibility in the choice of subsequent careers, including law, medicine, and management, while complementing the pursuit of career objectives with a greater perspective and a richer quality of intellectual life.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to demonstrate basic knowledge regarding the history of philosophy, including appropriate technical vocabulary, and apply ideas from this history to contemporary problems.
- Students will be able to distinguish between the aspects of a debate that can be resolved through the empirical inquiry and those that require an appeal to ethical principles, values, or metaphysical claims.
- Students will be able to interpret, contextualize, and evaluate complex philosophical texts in oral and written presentation.
- Students will be able to identify fallacies in reasoning and analyze arguments using the basic tools of symbolic logic.
- Students will be able to articulate personal beliefs about the nature of knowledge, reality, and the good, and critically evaluate those beliefs from alternate standpoints.
- Students will be able to present persuasive written arguments for a controversial point of view, identify the assumptions underlying such arguments, and articulate potential opposing arguments.

Undergraduate Policies

For undergraduate policies and procedures, please review the Undergraduate Academics section of the General Bulletin.

Accelerated Master's Programs

Undergraduate students may participate in accelerated programs toward graduate or professional degrees. For more information and details of the policies and procedures related to accelerated studies, please visit the Undergraduate Academics section of the General Bulletin.

Program Requirements

Students seeking to complete this major and degree program must meet the general requirements for bachelor's degrees and the Unified General Education Requirements. Students completing

this program as a secondary major while completing another undergraduate degree program do not need to satisfy the school-specific requirements associated with this major.

The major consists of 30 credit hours (ten 3 credit hour courses) in philosophy, including PHIL 101, PHIL 201, PHIL 301, PHIL 302, and six other elective philosophy courses to be determined in consultation with the department's undergraduate advisor. However, a student may request permission to take up to 6 credit hours (two 3 credit hour courses) of the required 18 credit hours of philosophy electives in another field or other fields. Such a request should be supported by considerations showing how the substitution(s) would strengthen the student's major in philosophy. The advisor must approve the substitution(s) in advance.

| Code | Title | Credit Hours |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Major Required Courses | | |
| PHIL 101 | Introduction to Philosophy | 3 |
| PHIL 201 | Introduction to Logic | 3 |
| PHIL 301 | Ancient Philosophy | 3 |
| PHIL 302 | Modern Philosophy | 3 |
| PHIL courses ^a | | 18 |
| Total Credit Hours | | 30 |

^a Must be approved by advisor. With permission, 6 credit hours may be taken outside of the department.

Philosophy Capstone

Students may fulfill their capstone requirement in philosophy by registering for PHIL 398 after devising a suitable project in consultation with the undergraduate advisor and the supervising faculty member. The honors thesis counts for capstone credit as well.

Departmental Honors

The department offers an honors program for students pursuing a major in philosophy. Students in this program must complete a substantial thesis, pass an oral examination on the thesis, and maintain a B average in philosophy courses. To be eligible for admission, a student should have an overall grade point average of B or better, and a grade of B or better in each philosophy course already taken. A student normally should have taken at least four, and at most seven, philosophy courses at the time of application for admission. An honors student should register for PHIL 399 to do honors work. Interested students should apply for admission to the program during the first semester of junior year. The honors thesis counts for capstone credit as well.