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Bachelor of Arts, Majors and Minors

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Philosophy

- A Major and Minor are offered
- Program Fees: [Domestic Students](#), [International Students](#)
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[Program requirements prior to June 2015](#)

General Description

Philosophy is the critical and systematic study of the fundamental assumptions at play in the entire range of human activity. It concerns itself with explorations into the nature of reality, human knowledge, moral and scientific reasoning, art and society. The study of philosophy fosters the ability to think critically and innovatively, to communicate in a logical manner, to interpret and evaluate core concepts and theories in a number of disciplines and to articulate well-reasoned arguments. These competencies are vital to public discourse in a flourishing democracy and are particularly useful in such professions as law, medicine, business and public administration. Recent studies have demonstrated that students who have completed a program in philosophy score significantly higher than all other humanities and social sciences students on standardized tests for admission to graduate and professional study.

The program's first year courses are designed to introduce students to philosophy and to assist them in the development of analytical skills. Second year courses apply these skills to historical and contemporary issues. Upper division courses allow for some narrowing of focus, either in the direction of applied ethics and political philosophy or in the direction of traditional problems of epistemology and metaphysics. Students may include specified courses from political studies or liberal studies in their program of study.

Requirements for a Major

Students must complete all the [Institutional B.A. degree requirements](#), including [Degree English Requirements](#), and the courses listed below. For the rotation of required courses, students should see the [Tentative Course Scheduling](#).

Lower-Level Course Requirements

Students should take a minimum of six courses (18 credits) in lower-level* philosophy, which must include:

- all three core introductory courses:
 - [PHIL 100](#) - (Rhetoric and Reasoning)
 - [PHIL 111](#) - (Knowledge and Reality)
 - [PHIL 112](#) - (Intro to Philosophy: Ethics)
- at least two historical philosophy courses (at least one must be in modern philosophy):
 - [PHIL 200](#) - (The History of Modern Philosophy I)
 - [PHIL 201](#) - (The History of Modern Philosophy II)
 - [PHIL 240](#) - (Ancient Philosophy I: The Pre-Socratics to Plato)
 - [PHIL 241](#) - (Ancient Philosophy II: Plato and Aristotle to the Roman Period)
 - [PHIL 242](#) - (Greco-Roman Philosophy)
 - [PHIL 243](#) - (Medieval Philosophy)
- at least one second year logic or reasoning course:
 - [PHIL 251](#) - (Formal Logic)
 - [PHIL 252](#) - (Understanding Scientific Reasoning)

* *Lower-level courses are 100- and 200-level courses.*

Recommendations

- Students take [LBST 111](#) and [LBST 112](#) as electives.
- Students *considering graduate work* take [PHIL 251](#).

Alternatives

In partially fulfilling the requirements of two lower-level courses in the history of philosophy (and six lower-level courses in philosophy overall), students can use:

- [PHIL 340](#) - (Issues in Medieval Philosophy) in place of [PHIL 243](#) - (Medieval Philosophy).

Upper-Level Course Requirements

Students should take a minimum of ten courses (30 credits) in upper-level* philosophy, which must include:

- [PHIL 361](#) - (The Philosophy of Mind) *or* [PHIL 362](#) - (Special Topics in the Philosophy of Mind),
- [PHIL 363](#) - (Epistemology) *or* [PHIL 364](#) - (Metaphysics), *and*
- [PHIL 443](#) - (Moral Theory).

* *Upper-level courses are 300- and 400-level courses.*

* *PHIL 310 cannot be used to meet the requirement of ten upper-level philosophy courses.*

Recommendations

- Students *considering graduate work* take both [PHIL 363](#) and [PHIL 364](#).

Alternatives

In partially fulfilling the requirements of 30 upper-level credits in philosophy, students can make some substitutions for philosophy credits. As substitutes, they can use three credits from each course below to a maximum total of six credits:

- [LBST 360](#) - (New Worlds and New Heavens),
- [LBST 370](#) - (Revolutions of the Modern World),
- [POLI 340](#) - (Equality, Freedom, Authority: Modern Political Thought), *or*
- [POLI 440](#) - (Contemporary Themes in Political Thought).

In other words, students can use a maximum of two courses from this list in partially fulfilling the requirements of ten upper-level philosophy courses.

Note: all PHIL courses are three credits each, but the above LBST courses are six credits each. However, only three credits of any of the above LBST courses can be counted towards the upper-level PHIL requirement; the other three credits will count towards upper-level general electives. The above POLI courses are, like the PHIL courses, three credits each.

Requirements for a Minor

Students must complete all the [Institutional B.A. degree requirements](#), including [Degree English Requirements](#), and the courses listed below. For the rotation of required courses, students should see the [Tentative Course Scheduling](#).

Lower-Level Course Requirements

Students should take a minimum of four courses (12 credits) in lower-level* philosophy, which must include:

- all three core introductory courses:
 - [PHIL 100](#) - (Rhetoric and Reasoning)
 - [PHIL 111](#) - (Knowledge and Reality)
 - [PHIL 112](#) - (Intro to Philosophy: Ethics)
- at least one second-year course

* *Lower-level courses are 100- and 200-level courses.*

Recommendations

- Students take required courses ([PHIL 100](#), [PHIL 111](#), and [PHIL 112](#)) *early* in their studies.
- Students doing an *applied* minor take at least one of the following courses: [PHIL 230](#), [PHIL 231](#), [PHIL 232](#), [PHIL 233](#), [PHIL 234](#), or [PHIL 252](#).

Upper-Level Course Requirements

Students should take a minimum of six courses (18 credits) in upper-level* philosophy.

* *Upper-level courses are 300- and 400-level courses.*

* *PHIL 310 cannot be used to meet the requirement of six upper-level philosophy courses.*

Recommendations

- Before taking their upper-level courses, students complete the required courses ([PHIL 100](#), [PHIL 111](#), and [PHIL 112](#)).
- Students doing an *applied* minor take at least one of the following courses: [PHIL 330](#), [PHIL 331](#), [PHIL 333](#), PHIL 431, or [PHIL 465](#).

Alternatives

In partially fulfilling the requirements of 18 upper-level credits in philosophy, students can make some substitutes for philosophy credits. As substitutes, they can use three credits from any one course below:

- [LBST 360](#) - (New Worlds and New Heavens)
- [LBST 370](#) - (Revolutions of the Modern World)
- [POLI 340](#) - (Equality, Freedom, Authority, Modern Political Thought), *or*
- [POLI 440](#) - (Contemporary Themes in Political Thought).

In other words, students can use a maximum of one course from this list in partially fulfilling the requirements of six upper-level philosophy courses.

Note: all PHIL courses are three credits each, but the above LBST courses are six credits each. However, only three credits of any of the above LBST courses can be counted towards the upper-level PHIL requirement; the other three credits will count towards upper-level general electives. The above POLI courses are, like the PHIL courses, three credits each.

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