

Philosophy B.A.

Philosophy Major

The B.A. Philosophy major requires a minimum of 120 total hours to graduate. This total includes UNIFI/General Education requirements, coursework in the major, plus electives to complete the minimum of 120 hours.

The philosophy major is designed to provide depth and breadth in the study of philosophy, emphasizing the skills of logical reasoning, analytic reading, effective writing, and ethical reasoning, as well as focused study of the history of western philosophy, and fundamental conceptions of human nature and human practices. The major is also flexible, so that students can take courses of interest to them. Courses in the philosophy major give students an opportunity to gain useful conceptual tools, increase their flexibility of mind, and improve their ability to view issues from multiple perspectives. Philosophy is one of the best pre-law majors; philosophy majors typically do extremely well in admission tests to graduate and professional schools.

The philosophy major stresses learning goals that enable students to achieve the skills deemed essential by employers, in particular, strong critical thinking and communication skills. Because the major is organized around learning goals, students know exactly why they are taking each class. As they explore philosophy, they also see that each class is helping them to become college graduates who possess knowledge and skills valued by employers as well as professional and graduate schools.

Philosophy Major - Learning Goals and Courses

What is a learning goal?

A learning goal is a set of skills or body of knowledge that a student should expect to acquire or expand their mastery of by completing a particular major.

By establishing learning goals, majors in Philosophy know exactly why they are taking each class. These learning goals divide the classes taken by majors in Philosophy into categories that are easily understood and that guide the student through the major and the learning process.

Learning Goal 1: Skills: Philosophy majors will demonstrate proficiency in critical thinking, analytical writing, reading and understanding complex materials; as well as analyzing, evaluating, and constructing arguments.

Courses that support Learning Goal 1:

Logical Reasoning

Required: 3
PHIL 1030 Elementary Logic ^{QR}

Reading for Arguments and Assumptions

Students who have completed Learning Goal 4 will have satisfied this requirement.

Analytic Writing

Students who have completed Learning Goal 4 will have satisfied this requirement.

Learning Goal 2: Ethical Reasoning: Philosophy majors will understand ethical theories and use this understanding to think through moral and ethical problems in a principled and systematic way.

Courses that support Learning Goal 2:

Required:
PHIL 2500 Ethics * 3

Learning Goal 3: History of Philosophy: By reading key texts from the rich western philosophical tradition, Philosophy majors will gain useful conceptual tools, increase their flexibility of mind, and improve their ability to view issues from multiple perspectives.

Courses that support Learning Goal 3:

Required: at least three course from the following: 9

PHIL 2210	Dawn of Western Thought: Ancient Philosophy
PHIL/RELS 2220	Faith and Reason: Philosophy in the Middle Ages
PHIL 2230	The Age of Reason: Philosophy in the Renaissance and Enlightenment
PHIL 2240	The Limits of Reason: Modern Philosophy

Learning Goal 4: Philosophy majors will investigate conceptions of what it means to be a person and to engage in fundamental human activities.

Courses that support Learning Goal 4:

A. Understanding Human Nature

Required: at least two courses from the following: 6

PHIL 3310	Consciousness and Mind: Philosophical Perspectives
PHIL 3330	Death, Sex and the Body: Phenomenology and Foucault
PHIL 3360	Character, Wisdom, and Mind: Philosophical Perspectives
PHIL 3610	Nietzsche, Nihilism, and Technology *

B. Understanding Human Practices

Required: at least two courses from the following. 6
At least one of these courses must be in "analytical philosophy": either PHIL 3350 or PHIL 3620. (Taking both of these courses will completely satisfy this requirement.)

PHIL 2140	Philosophy of Religion
PHIL 3320	Political Philosophy *
PHIL 3350	How We Know: Philosophical Perspectives
PHIL 3370	Philosophy of Law
PHIL 3620	Philosophy of Language: Wittgenstein

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Learning Goal 5: Career Preparation: Philosophy majors will be able to relate their major to their careers and to their future goals.

Required:

PHIL 4490	Professional Development Seminar	3
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Through thoughtful reflection and critical discernment, students synthesize their work in the major, clarifying what they have done and linking their achievements with life goals, while they also explore how deep learning outcomes in the major offer preparation for a career, graduate or professional school.

Electives: in order to reach 36 hours, students can choose from courses not used above or from the following courses in Philosophy. No more than two courses in applied ethics (PHIL 1540, PHIL 1560, PHIL 1580, PHIL 2550, PHIL 2570, PHIL 3110, PHIL 3510, PHIL 3974) count toward the philosophy major:

PHIL 1040	Justice and the Good Life: Philosophical Perspectives ^R	
PHIL 1050	The Art of Critical Thinking and Writing ^{WC}	
PHIL 1080	World Philosophies ^{HCG}	
PHIL/RELS 1540	Ethics in Business	
PHIL 1560	Science, Technology, and Ethics (STE) ^R	
PHIL 1580	Ethics for Professional Life	
PHIL/RELS 2550	Environmental Ethics [*]	
PHIL 2570	Good Sex: The Ethics of Human Sexuality [*]	
PHIL/RELS 3110/ CAP 3194	Perspectives on Death and Dying ^{*^HCG}	
PHIL 3080/5080	Individual Readings in Philosophy	
PHIL/RELS 3510/ CAP 3173	Bio-Medical Ethics ^{*^R}	
PHIL 3974/5974	Ethics, Responsible AI, and Business	
PHIL 4186/5186	Studies in Philosophy	
Total hours		36

* Courses followed by asterisk (*) count toward the Ethics minor (15-hour minor).

^ Courses followed by the symbol (^) also satisfy the Liberal Arts Core Capstone requirement.

Q Courses followed by (QR) also satisfy the UNIFI Quantitative Reasoning category.

R Courses followed by (R) also satisfy the UNIFI Responsibility category.

WCourses followed by (WC) also satisfy the UNIFI Written Communication category.

HCCourses followed by (HCG) also satisfy the UNIFI Human Condition: Global category.

Four-Year Plan Philosophy, B.A.

This is a sample plan of study with a suggested sequencing of classes for the major. University electives may be applied to earn additional academic majors, minors, or certificates. Students should regularly meet with their academic advisor to plan their specific semester schedule to include UNIFI/General Education program and/or university elective hours required.

Course	Title	Hour
Freshman		
Fall		
PHIL 1040	Justice and the Good Life: Philosophical Perspectives (or PHIL 1050 or PHIL 1560)	3
UNIFI/General Education or University Electives		12
Hours		15
Spring		
PHIL 1030	Elementary Logic	3
UNIFI/General Education or University Electives		12
Hours		15
Sophomore		
Fall		
PHIL 2210	Dawn of Western Thought: Ancient Philosophy	3
UNIFI/General Education or University Electives		12
Hours		15
Spring		
PHIL 2220	Faith and Reason: Philosophy in the Middle Ages (or RELS 2220)	3
PHIL 2500	Ethics	3
UNIFI/General Education or University Electives		9
Hours		15
Junior		
Fall		
PHIL 2230	The Age of Reason: Philosophy in the Renaissance and Enlightenment	3
PHIL 4490	Professional Development Seminar (if Even Fall)	3
UNIFI/General Education or University Electives		9
Hours		15
Spring		
PHIL 2240	The Limits of Reason: Modern Philosophy	3
Any Philosophy Course		3
UNIFI/General Education or University Electives		9
Hours		15
Senior		
Fall		
PHIL 4490	Professional Development Seminar (If Even Fall)	3
Any Philosophy Course		3
UNIFI/General Education or University Electives		12
Hours		18
Spring		
Any Two Philosophy Course		6

UNIFI/General Education or University Electives	6
Hours	12
Total Hours	120

Related Programs

- Ethics Minor
- History B.A.
- Religious Studies B.A.