

The Study of Philosophy

At the University of Oregon

Philosophy engages fundamental questions concerning human identity, the nature of knowledge and reality, moral virtue and responsibility, the nature of community and political authority, aesthetic judgments and values, and other concepts central to the meaning and value of human existence. Through the study of primary texts and concrete issues drawn from various historical periods and cultures, philosophy facilitates reflection on actions, beliefs, and values while developing critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. Philosophy also strengthens the ability to reason, enlarges the imagination, and refines aesthetic sensitivity.

With over 200 undergraduate majors and minors, the Philosophy major at the University of Oregon is one of the most vibrant in the country. Our program emphasizes the study of ethics, social and political philosophy, American philosophy, continental philosophy, feminist philosophy, philosophy of mind, the philosophy of race, the history of philosophy, and environmental philosophy.

The study of philosophy provides excellent preparation for a broad range of careers that require critical intelligence as well as oral and written communication skills. In addition to careers in business, students with a background in philosophy pursue careers in law, education, government, and work connected with social concerns. The undergraduate program is also structured to prepare students for graduate study. See our website <http://philosophy.uoregon.edu/> for links to research studies and articles in the national press that tout the value of a philosophy major for career success, preparation for graduate and law school, and personal development.

The philosophy department provides a wide range of opportunities for majors and minors outside the classroom. These include public lectures by prominent visiting philosophers as well as an undergraduate philosophy club. The department also routinely hosts regional, national, and international conferences, and all undergraduates are invited and encouraged to participate in these events.

The Department of Philosophy offers the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degrees, as well as minors in Philosophy and in Ethics.

To declare a philosophy major or to declare a minor in Philosophy or in Ethics, complete the major/minor declaration form online (you must log in with your Duck ID) at <http://philosophy.uoregon.edu/online-declaration-of-majorminor/>

Major Requirements

In order to graduate with a major in philosophy, students must satisfy both the University of Oregon's Requirements for a Bachelor's Degree and the Department of Philosophy Requirements listed below.

I. University of Oregon Bachelor Degree Requirements

Students pursuing a major in philosophy must satisfy all Bachelor's Degree Requirements of the University of Oregon. The UO Requirements for a Bachelor's Degree are available on the Registrar's webpage at http://registrar.uoregon.edu/bachelors_degree_requirements. They are also printed in the Registration and Academic Policies section of the UO Catalog

Please note: effective Fall 2011, students may earn either a B.A. or a B.S. in philosophy (previously, students could only earn a B.S. in philosophy while earning a second major in a science; this requirement has been dropped).

II. Department of Philosophy Requirements

Students who declare a philosophy major in Fall 2009 or after must complete all of the requirements listed below. Students who declared a major prior in Spring 2009 or earlier are not required to satisfy requirement c. Gender, Race, Class, & Culture.

1. 52 credit hours of Philosophy courses, of which 40 must be upper-division hours (300 or 400 level). These courses must include:

a. Three courses in the history of philosophy (12 credits)

Philosophy 310 (History of Philosophy: Ancient and Medieval)

Philosophy 311 (History of Philosophy: Modern)

Philosophy 312 (History of Philosophy: 19th Century)

b. Logic Requirement (4 credits)

Philosophy 325 (Logic, Argumentation, and Inquiry)

c. Gender, Race, Class, & Culture (GRCC) (4 credits). At least one of the following courses:

Philosophy 110 (Human Nature)

Philosophy 213 (Asian Philosophy)

Philosophy 216 (Philosophy and Cultural Diversity)

Philosophy 315 (Introduction to Feminist Philosophy)

Philosophy 342 (Introduction to Latin American Philosophy)

Philosophy 443 (Feminist Philosophy)

Philosophy 452 (Philosophy and Race)

Or an equivalent course on this theme as approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies

d. Author's Courses (8 credits) Eight credits of course work dealing with the works of specific philosophers (e.g., Plato, Kant, Dewey, Beauvoir, etc.) offered at the 400-level. At least one of the two author courses needs to be in philosophy (i.e., with a PHIL subject).

2. Students must receive a grade of C- or better in all courses that satisfy requirements of the major. No more than 8 hours of the 52 may be taken pass/no pass.

Residency Requirements for Transfer Students

Transfer students must complete at least 20 credits of upper division coursework in the University of Oregon Philosophy department.

Sample Course Plan for Majors

Freshman Year:

Philosophy 101, 102, 103 or some combination of 100- and 200-level courses. A 200-level GRCC course may be completed at this time. (12 lower-division credits in Philosophy).

Sophomore Year:

Philosophy 310, 311, 312 and one other 300-level course (16 upper division credits in Philosophy).

Junior Year:

Two 300-level courses, one 400-level "Authors" course (12 upper division credits in Philosophy).

Senior Year:

One 400-level "Authors" course, one 300-400 level GRCC course (if not completed at the 200-level), plus two additional courses consisting of any combination of 300-level courses or 400-level seminars (12 upper division credits in Philosophy).

Preparing for Graduate Study in Philosophy

Students who intend to do graduate work in philosophy are strongly urged to prepare themselves by acquiring a good reading knowledge of a second language appropriate to their interests. Meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies early in your undergraduate studies to discuss additional plans for graduate school preparation and for application advice.

Philosophy Minor Requirements

The undergraduate minor in Philosophy has the following requirements:

1. Required Credits

24 hours in philosophy, including 16 hours of upper-division courses (as described below). No more than 8 of these 24 hours may be taken pass/no pass.

2. Minimum Grade Requirement

C- or better in all courses used to satisfy the minor.

3. Course Distribution

a. three courses from the History of Philosophy (12 credits)

PHIL 310: History of Philosophy: Ancient and Medieval

PHIL 311: History of Philosophy: Modern

PHIL 312: History of Philosophy: 19th Century

b. one author's course (4 credits)

One course devoted to the works of specific philosophers (e.g., Plato, Kant, Dewey, Beauvoir, etc.) offered at the 400-level.

Please note that the history courses are sometimes prerequisites for the author's courses (consult catalog or course schedule for details), and that the latter are typically open to juniors and seniors only. Careful advance planning is essential.

Ethics Minor Requirements

The undergraduate minor in Ethics has the following requirements:

1. Required Credits

24 credit-hours (6 courses), including at least 12 credit-hours (3 courses) in upper-division (3xx- or 4xx-level) courses, of which at least 4 credit-hours (1 course) must be in a 4xx-level course. No more than 8 of the total 24 credit-hours may be taken as pass/no pass.

2. Minimum Grade Requirement

C- or better in all courses used to satisfy the minor.

3. Course Distribution

- a) a “*core ethics requirement course*” taken as either PHIL 102 or PHIL 323 (with a waiver option for this requirement if students with transfer credits from another institution can supply a syllabus indicating evidence of a similar course of study);
- b) 5 more “ethics electives” courses from the approved ethics minor course list at <http://philosophy.uoregon.edu/undergraduate/ethics-minor-courses/>

3. Residence Requirement

At least half of the required 24 credit-hours must be taken in residence (i.e., at UO).

Advising

The Director of Undergraduate Studies serves as the official advisor for all philosophy majors/minors, and handles all inquiries regarding transfer credits, course substitutions, the philosophy club, and graduating with honors. Every year, one or two graduate students in philosophy serve as Advising Assistants and are available to meet with students to discuss academic interests, progress towards the degree, and career plans.

Students should plan to meet with an advisor at least once a year to discuss their academic interests, progress, and plans. All students are urged to meet with an advisor the spring before they begin their senior year. Students interested in doing graduate work in philosophy should plan to meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, who serves as the advisor for applying to graduate school, although you should also feel free to discuss your plans with any member of the faculty. Students interested in combining philosophy with pre-law study are encouraged to meet with the department’s pre-law advisor.

Advisors for 2018-2019

Director of Undergraduate Studies

Erin McKenna, 237 Susan Campbell Hall, emckenna@uoregon.edu

Ethics Minor Advisor

Colin Koopman, 250A Susan Campbell Hall, koopman@uoregon.edu

Advising Assistant(s)

Maggie Newton, 331 Hendricks Hall, mnewton@uoregon.edu

Kenny Knowlton, 161 Susan Campbell Hall, kwk@uoregon.edu

Pre-Law Advisor

Colin Koopman, 250A Susan Campbell Hall, koopman@uoregon.edu

University of Oregon Philosophical Society

The UO Philosophical Society aims to offer students ample opportunity to share questions, concerns, and ideas. Besides organizing meetings, the UO Philosophical Society also alerts students to philosophical events on campus and throughout the Pacific Northwest, and arranges luncheons and meetings with visiting scholars whenever possible. The UO Philosophical Society is a hub of social and scholarly activity and a supportive network of students interested in philosophy; it's a great venue for continuing a conversation about all matters philosophical outside of the classroom, for getting to better know your peers in the program, the perfect place to pitch new (or old) ideas and explore alternative ways of thinking, and a unique chance to gather together and discuss philosophical ideas in a fun, relaxed, safe, and inclusive atmosphere.

It is our goal to provide an environment where students of all majors, levels of expertise, and backgrounds can come together to participate in philosophical discourse. We know that undergraduates often have rigorous school schedules in addition to other activities, and it is not our intention to add additional homework. For that reason, we will no longer assign readings. Rather, we will have presentations led by fellow undergraduates or by graduate students on a philosophical topic of their own personal interest. This could take the form of a conference-style presentation, an informal guided discussion, or a film screening accompanied by discussion, as chosen by that week's presenter. We encourage those of you interested in presenting or leading a discussion to contact us so that we can book you for a presentation date, and look forward to seeing the research and philosophical interests of our philosophical community!

UO Philosophical Society contacts for 2018-2019

Director of Undergraduate Studies

Erin McKenna, 237 Susan Campbell Hall, emckenna@uoregon.edu

UO Philosophical Society Representatives

Jacob Fogoros, jfogoros@uoregon.edu

Calvin Burke, cburke@uoregon.edu

Honors in Philosophy

The Philosophy Honors Program is designed to provide outstanding and highly motivated philosophy majors with the opportunity to develop their skills during the senior year through the independent exploration of a special topic of their own choosing under the guidance of a faculty mentor.

Admission

1. To be eligible for admission to the honors program, students must have completed at least 24 credits in philosophy of which at least 12 credits have been taken at the University of Oregon.
2. The honors candidate's grade point average (GPA) in philosophy must be at least 3.5, which must be maintained through graduation.
3. For admission to the honors program, philosophy majors must follow the "Procedures for Admission" indicated on the department's website.

Course of Study, Thesis, and Oral Examination

Besides the courses required of all philosophy majors, a candidate for honors must take 16 of the 52 credits in philosophy at the 400 level.

The honors thesis demonstrates the student's ability to formulate a significant research problem; to do research in primary sources; to interpret sources with imagination and technical skill; and to present the finished work in a form meeting professional standards in philosophy. In quality and length, the thesis goes well beyond normal expectations for a typical seminar paper in an advanced undergraduate philosophy course. The thesis must be an original document written for the sole purpose of fulfilling the honors program requirement in philosophy.

Thesis work is typically initiated during the fall term of their senior year. During this term, honors students typically sign up for PHIL 405: Reading and Conference. Then in winter or spring, students take PHIL 403: Thesis in order to complete their thesis work.

After the thesis has been approved by the faculty advisor and examination committee, a public oral examination is held. The defense is typically held at the end of the Spring term of the student's last year of classes, but it may be scheduled earlier in their senior year.

For more information about graduating with honors in philosophy, please consult our website or the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Department Directory

Philosophy Faculty

Steven Brence	250D Susan Campbell Hall	brences@uoregon.edu
Mark Johnson	240 SCH 541-346-5548	markj@uoregon.edu
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Undergraduate & Graduate Program Coordinator:

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Philosophy Major Planning Sheet

Name: _____ ID#: _____

1. History of Philosophy Requirement (PHIL 310, 311, and 312)

Course #	Title	Term	Credits	Grade
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_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

2. Logic Requirement (PHIL 325)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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3. Gender, Race, Class, & Culture (PHIL 110, 170, 213, 216, 315, 342, 443, or 452)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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4. Author's Courses (Two Required)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Elective Lower Division (Maximum of 12 credits)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

6. Elective Upper Division (Minimum of 40 credits)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Other Courses (Credits beyond minimum)

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Credit Summary:

Lower Division (1xx and 2xx): _____

Upper Division (3xx and 4xx, 40 minimum): _____

Total Credits (52 minimum): _____