

# The Study of Philosophy

At the University of Oregon

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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 addition to meeting all University of Oregon Requirements for a **Bachelor of Arts** or **Bachelor of Science** Degree, students must meet the following requirements to complete a **Major in Philosophy**:

## 1. Credits, Course Levels and Grades:

**52 credits** earned from Philosophy courses

- **Upper Division:** At least 40 credits must be earned via Upper-Division courses (300 or 400-level).
- **Residence:** At least 20 Upper-Division credits must be from courses taken in residence (i.e. at UO).
- **Grades:** All credits must be from courses completed with a grade of C- or higher. No more than 8 credits may be earned from courses graded P/NP.

## 2. Required Courses:

- **History of Philosophy:** At least **four** of the following courses (with at least two from PHIL 310, 311, and 312):\*  
PHIL 310: History of Philosophy: Ancient and Medieval  
PHIL 311: History of Philosophy: Modern  
PHIL 312: History of Philosophy: 19th Century  
PHIL 342: Introduction to Latin American Philosophy  
PHIL 415: Continental Philosophy  
PHIL 420: American Philosophy
- **Gender, Race, Class, and Culture (GRCC):** At least **one** of the following courses:  
PHIL 110: Human Nature  
PHIL 170: Love and Sex  
PHIL 213: Asian Philosophy  
PHIL 216: Philosophy and Cultural Diversity  
PHIL 315: Introduction to Feminist Philosophy  
PHIL 342: Introduction to Latin American Philosophy  
PHIL 443: Feminist Philosophy  
PHIL 451: Native American Philosophy  
PHIL 452: Philosophy and Race  
(or another course on this theme approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies)
- **Logic:** PHIL 225: Introduction to Formal Logic
- **Authors Courses:**  
At least **two** 400-level courses that focus on the works of specific philosophers (e.g. Plato, Kant, Dewey, Beauvoir, Arendt, etc.). One of them must have a PHIL subject.

\*Students who declared a Major in Philosophy prior to Fall 2019 may satisfy the History of Philosophy course requirement by taking all three of PHIL 310, PHIL 311, and PHIL 312.

## Sample Course Plan:

### First Year:

PHIL 101, 102, 103 or some combination of 100- and 200-level courses (12 lower-division credits in Philosophy).

### Second Year:

PHIL 310, 311, 312, 342, 415, or 420 (16 upper division credits in Philosophy).

### Third Year:

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

### Fourth Year:

One 400-level “Authors” course, plus three 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 [Undergraduate Director](#) early in your undergraduate studies to discuss additional plans for graduate school preparation and for application advice.

# Philosophy Minor Requirements

In addition to meeting all University of Oregon Requirements for a **Bachelor of Arts** or **Bachelor of Science** Degree, students must meet the following requirements to complete a **Minor in Philosophy**:

## 1. Credits, Course Levels and Grades:

**24 credits** earned from Philosophy courses

- **Upper Division:** At least 16 credits must be earned via Upper-Division courses (300 or 400-level).
- **Residence:** At least 12 credits must be from courses taken in residence (i.e. at UO).
- **Grades:** All credits must be earned via courses completed with a grade of C- or higher. No more than 8 credits may be earned from courses graded P/NP.

## 2. Required Courses:

- **History of Philosophy:** At least **two** of the following courses:  
PHIL 310: History of Philosophy: Ancient and Medieval  
PHIL 311: History of Philosophy: Modern  
PHIL 312: History of Philosophy: 19th Century
- **Authors Course:**  
At least **one** 400-level course that focuses on the works of specific philosophers (e.g. Plato, Kant, Dewey, Beauvoir, Arendt, etc.).\*

\*Often the History of Philosophy courses are prerequisites for Authors courses, which are typically recommended for third and fourth-year students. Consult the [catalog](#) or [course schedule](#) for details.

## Ethics Minor Requirements

In addition to meeting all University of Oregon Requirements for a **Bachelor of Arts** or **Bachelor of Science** Degree, students must meet the following requirements to complete an **Ethics Minor**:

### 1. Credits, Course Levels and Grades:

**24 credits** earned by completing **six** courses on the large [Approved Ethics Minor Course List](#).

- **Upper Division:** At least 12 of these credits must be earned from Upper-Division courses (300 or 400-level), with at least 4 of those credits from a 400-level course.
- **Residence:** At least 12 of these credits must be from courses taken in residence (i.e. at UO).
- **Grades:** All 24 credits must be earned via courses completed with a grade of C- or higher.

### 2. Required Course:

**Core Ethics:** Out of six courses, at least **one** must be one of the following:

- PHIL 102: Ethics
- PHIL 323: Moral Theory
- An approved alternative course from another institution

## 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 2019-2020

#### **Director of Undergraduate Studies**

Steven Brence, 250C Susan Campbell Hall, [brences@uoregon.edu](mailto:brences@uoregon.edu)

#### **Ethics Minor & Pre-Law Advisor**

Colin Koopman, 250A Susan Campbell Hall, [koopman@uoregon.edu](mailto:koopman@uoregon.edu)

#### **Advising Assistant(s)**

Mary McLevey, 336 Susan Campbell Hall, [mmclevey@uoregon.edu](mailto:mmclevey@uoregon.edu)

Shunji Ukai, 11 Susan Campbell Hall, [shunjiu@uoregon.edu](mailto:shunjiu@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 2019-2020

### **Director of Undergraduate Studies**

Steven Brence, 250C Susan Campbell Hall, [brences@uoregon.edu](mailto:brences@uoregon.edu)

### **UO Philosophical Society Representatives**

Simon Narode, [snarode@uoregon.edu](mailto:snarode@uoregon.edu)

Isabelle Amezcua, [iia@uoregon.edu](mailto:iia@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.

## ***Eligibility for 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 honor's candidates grade point average (GPA) in philosophy must be at least 3.5, which must be maintained through graduation.

## ***Procedures for Admission***

1. Admission to the honors program is contingent upon the student's obtaining the agreement of a faculty member in the philosophy department to supervise the student's research and writing and to chair the student's oral examination committee.
2. Potential honors students must also obtain agreements from one additional philosophy faculty member who will serve on an oral examination committee.
3. Students who satisfy the credit and grade eligibility requirements must complete the [Honors Candidacy Form](#), upon which they are to list the names of their supervising committee members and give a tentative title for the project.
4. This form must be approved and signed by the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and then returned to the department office; completion of this process signals admission to the honors in philosophy program.

## ***Course of Study***

1. 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.
2. Honors students take PHIL 405: Reading and Conference, in **the fall or** winter term of their senior year. PHIL 405 is taken for 4 credits, P/NP only. During this term, the student will carry out guided independent research intended to clarify and refine the research question of the thesis. Although this research should be carried out independently, it should involve regular meetings and consultations with the faculty adviser.
3. In the term in which the student intends to complete the thesis, he or she must enroll in PHIL 403: Thesis, for 4 credits (P/NP only). This will be during the winter **or spring** term of the student's final year of classes.

## ***The Thesis***

1. The thesis must demonstrate 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.

2. In quality and length, the thesis will go well beyond normal expectations for a typical seminar paper in an advanced undergraduate philosophy course.
3. The thesis must be an original document written for the sole purpose of fulfilling the honors program requirement in philosophy.
4. The thesis should follow a standard system of style throughout, such as the style manual of the Modern Language Association (MLA), the University of Chicago, or the American Psychological Association (APA).

### ***Completion of Thesis and Oral Examinations***

1. At the beginning of the term in which a student intends to complete the thesis and is enrolled in PHIL 403, she or he will notify the Director of Undergraduate Studies of that intent.
2. When the thesis is completed and has received the approval of the faculty adviser, the student will consult with the members of the examination committee to select the day and time of the oral examination.
3. The finished thesis must be in the hands of the examining committee at least 10 days before the examination.
4. The oral examination will be open to other students, faculty, and friends as observers.
5. Although the defense is typically held at the end of the Winter term of the student's last year of classes, it may be scheduled at the end of the Spring term. In that case, it must be scheduled no later than the end of the eighth week of classes.
6. Acceptance of the student's thesis may depend on revisions made after the defense, under the supervision of the thesis adviser. In this case, the student will be informed on the day of the defense of the nature of the expected revisions and a deadline to complete them.
7. A final copy of the approved thesis should be submitted to the Director of Undergraduate Studies no later than the date of the student's graduation.

### ***Honors Designation***

Students whose theses are approved by the committee, pass the oral examination, satisfy the philosophy major requirements, complete at least 16 credits in philosophy at the 400 level, maintain a GPA of 3.5 or above in courses in philosophy, and have deposited a copy of the thesis with the director of undergraduate studies, will receive a baccalaureate degree with honors in philosophy.

For more information about graduating with honors in philosophy, please consult with the [Director of Undergraduate Studies](#).



# Department Directory

## Philosophy Faculty

Ramón Alvarado	245 Susan Campbell Hall	<a href="mailto:ralvarad@uoregon.edu">ralvarad@uoregon.edu</a>
Steven Brence	250D Susan Campbell Hall	<a href="mailto:brences@uoregon.edu">brences@uoregon.edu</a>
Mark Johnson	240 SCH 541-346-5548	<a href="mailto:markj@uoregon.edu">markj@uoregon.edu</a>
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Bonnie Mann	234 Susan Campbell Hall	<a href="mailto:bmenn@uoregon.edu">bmenn@uoregon.edu</a>
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## Budget Manager:

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## Undergraduate & Graduate Program Coordinator:

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Philosophy Major Planning Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. History of Philosophy Requirement**

(at least four of these six: PHIL 310, 311, 312, 342, 415, or 420 – two of these must be PHIL 310, 311, or 312)

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

**2. Logic Requirement (PHIL 225)**

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
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**3. Gender, Race, Class, & Culture (PHIL 110, 170, 213, 216, 315, 342, 443, 451, 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): \_\_\_\_\_