Philosophy, MA

By learning the teachings of philosophy and current philosophical topics, you are prepared for a future in education or the workforce with foundational skills that support philosophical thinking.

Program Description

Degree Awarded: MA Philosophy
The School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies offers an MA degree program in traditional and contemporary philosophy. General areas of research include ethics, political philosophy, metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of law, philosophy of science, feminist philosophy, philosophy of language, experimental philosophy and the history of philosophy.

Members of the faculty are involved in interdisciplinary work in a variety of fields and enjoy close ties with the Lincoln Center for Applied Ethics, the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, and a number of other graduate programs at ASU. The philosophy program sponsors an active colloquium series and regular philosophical conferences on diverse topics. The Lincoln Center for Applied Ethics also sponsors a wide range of activities, including large-scale conferences, distinguished visitors and support for graduate study.

The program seeks to maintain a balance between course offerings in the traditional areas of philosophy and opportunities for study of current philosophical developments.

At a Glance

- College/School: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Location: Tempe

Degree Requirements
30 credit hours and a portfolio, or
30 credit hours and a thesis

**Required Core Areas (9 credit hours)**
- epistemology (3)
- metaphysics (3)
- value theory (3)

**Electives and Research (15 or 21 credit hours)**

**Culminating Experience (0 or 6 credit hours)**
- PHI 599 Thesis (6) or
- portfolio (0)

**Additional Curriculum Information**
There are two culminating experience options for the master's degree program in philosophy: the thesis option and the nonthesis portfolio option.

Thesis students take 15 credit hours of electives. Portfolio students take 21 credit hours of electives, which must include PHI 592 Research for three credit hours.

Students should see the academic unit for the list of courses approved for each core area in epistemology, metaphysics and value theory.

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**Admission Requirements**

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree, in any field, from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. statement of purpose
4. curriculum vitae
5. writing sample
6. three letters of recommendation
7. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information
An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of English proficiency regardless of current residency as well as a copy of an article or research paper in their native or principal research language in addition to the English writing sample required of all students. The philosophy program requires a TOEFL score of at least 600 (PBT) or 90 (iBT).

The statement of purpose should explain the applicant's specific intent and be no more than 600 words in length.

The writing sample must be a piece of philosophical writing, preferably a seminar paper or published article of no more than 20 pages and not a thesis or dissertation.

Application Deadlines

Fall

Program Learning Outcomes

Program learning outcomes identify what a student will learn or be able to do upon completion of their program. This program has the following program outcomes:

- Identify and articulate a philosophical problem or question in one of the core areas in philosophy--that is, metaphysics, epistemology, and value theory.
- Construct a reasoned defense of a clear, creative, and original solution to a philosophical problem in one of the core areas of philosophy--that is, metaphysics, epistemology, and value theory.
- Evaluate a solution or answer to a philosophical problem or question (such as one of those explicated in the course readings)
- Explain a philosophical argument or point verbally.

Career Opportunities

Both the Master of Arts and doctoral programs in philosophy help students to develop and hone skills that are highly marketable and easily transferable. As routine jobs are increasingly being lost to advances in automation and artificial intelligence, philosophy teaches its students to think critically, creatively and imaginatively. These skills are irreplaceable by technology, highly sought-after by employers, and transferrable from one occupation to another. They include the following skills and abilities: to read closely and with a critical eye, to analyze complex problems, to identify all the possible solutions to that problem, including some creative solutions, to assess the merits of each possible solution, and to articulate and argue for or against various possible solutions in clear, precise and unambiguous language.
As philosophy focuses on honing certain skills rather than acquiring a particular body of knowledge, philosophy prepares its students for a wide variety of careers rather than for just one particular occupation. Indeed, philosophy prepares its students for any career requiring problem-solving; clear, critical and creative thinking; and excellent reading, writing and communication skills.

The master's degree program in philosophy is designed to prepare students to enter doctoral programs, teach philosophy at the community college level, or work in any area that requires critical, analytical thinking, such as medicine, law, government or publishing.

Career examples include:

- businessperson
- computer programmer
- counselor
- educator
- journalist
- lawyer
- politician
- public policy analyst
- publisher
- writer

Contact Information

Historical, Philosophical & Religious Studies, Sch | COOR 4595
SHPRSGradInfo@asu.edu | 480-965-5778