

Georgia State University

# *Philosophy* **GUIDEBOOK** for Majors

Major in Thinking.

Major in *Philosophy!*



[www.gsu.edu/philosophy](http://www.gsu.edu/philosophy)



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## Why Philosophy?

Philosophy is the study of what exists, how we know, and how to live. Students of philosophy consider questions about the scientific method, human nature, justice, God, art, and the meaning of life. Philosophy majors develop the intellectual abilities to think critically and write effectively. They learn to apply these valuable skills in other disciplines, in their career, and in their life. Because philosophy deals with fundamental questions and explores methods for answering them, it is highly interdisciplinary, connecting to every other discipline in the university curriculum. Hence, philosophy is an ideal double major or minor. Philosophy prepares students for careers or graduate programs that value the abilities to solve problems, to communicate clearly, to learn new skills, and to use new knowledge. It is an excellent major for a wide range of careers, including law, government, the sciences, medicine, public service, education, religion, and business.

The Department of Philosophy offers a B.A. in Philosophy and B.A. in Philosophy with a Pre-Law Concentration, as well as minors in Philosophy and in Ethics. Majors are urged to consult with their advisers in order to prepare the course of study most appropriate to their individual interests and needs.

For more information, visit the department's website at <http://philosophy.gsu.edu/>, including the pages: [Why Philosophy?](#), [Majors in Their Own Words](#), and the [Major in a Minute video](#).

## What to Do First?

1. DECLARE THE MAJOR: In order to declare philosophy as a major, you must make an appointment by email to meet with either the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) in Philosophy, **Eddy Nahmias** ([enahmias@gsu.edu](mailto:enahmias@gsu.edu)) on the 16<sup>th</sup> floor of 25 Park Place, or with **Emily Buis** ([ebuis@gsu.edu](mailto:ebuis@gsu.edu)), the Philosophy Advisors in the Undergraduate Advisement Center (UAC) on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor of 25 Park Place.
2. Get your FREE Philosophy Department T-shirt! (Come to the Department and meet with Prof. Nahmias or ask the wonderful Administrative Coordinator, Felicia Thomas).
3. JOIN THE LISTSERV: The department's primary means of communication with philosophy majors is the philosophy majors' listserv. All philosophy majors must subscribe to this listserv. Other interested individuals are welcome to subscribe. To subscribe, send an email message to: [listserv@listserv.gsu.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.gsu.edu). In the body of the message (not the subject line) include *only* two words: subscribe philmajor  
You should receive a welcome message confirming your subscription. For more information, go to <http://philosophy.gsu.edu/undergraduate/listserv/>
4. FRIEND US AT FACEBOOK! <https://www.facebook.com/GSUPhilosophy/>
5. JOIN THE PHILOSOPHERS' GUILD: Search **Philosophers' Guild** on orgsyn.com  
[gsuphilguild@gmail.com](mailto:gsuphilguild@gmail.com) |

## Synopsis of What to Take as a Philosophy Major

See <http://catalog.gsu.edu/undergraduate20152016/philosophy/> for GSU Catalog.

To graduate with a major in philosophy, you must take a total of 11 philosophy courses in which you receive a grade of C or better

**\*\* Note that a grade of C- or D will NOT be applied to the major (area G).**

The courses should, where possible, be taken in order according to the margin numbers below.

### **In Area F:**

- 1) PHIL 2010 (Introduction to Philosophy) *or* PHIL 2030 (Introduction to Ethics)
- 2) PHIL 2500 (Introduction to Symbolic Logic) *or* PHIL 1010 (Critical Thinking)  
\* We recommend that majors take Phil 2500 in Area F and Phil 1010 in Area B, but Phil 1010 can be used in Area F. (Phil 2500 is required to graduate with distinction in the major.)
- 2) Foreign Language 1002 (or 2000-level)
- 3) Courses to complete area F (9-10 hrs to get to 18 hrs): these courses can be any 1000-2000 level courses in subjects (prefixes) that satisfy the core areas A-E.

### **In Area G (9 courses, 27 hours):**

- 2) PHIL 3000 (Introductory Seminar in Philosophy, CTW course)—**YOU SHOULD TAKE THIS COURSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE after declaring your major**, since it prepares you for 4000-level courses in philosophy.
- 3) History requirements:  
PHIL 3010 (Origins of Western Philosophy) *and*  
PHIL 3020 (History of Western Philosophy II: Modern)  
Try to take these two history courses in order (3010 then 3020) and *early in your major*, since they provide a historical background for most other classes.
- 4) Ethics and Social/Political requirement. Take at least 1 course from this list:

PHIL 4700 Ethics (suggested)	PHIL 4820 Philosophy of Law
PHIL 4740 Advanced Biomedical Ethics	PHIL 4830 Philosophy of Art
PHIL 4750 Topics in Ethics	PHIL 4855 Adv. Topics Political Theory
PHIL 4760 Ethics&Contemp. Public Policy	PHIL 4860 Feminist Philosophy
PHIL 4770 Moral Psychology	PHIL 4890 Topics in Social/Political Phil
PHIL 4780 Neuroethics	
PHIL 4790 Topics in Neuroethics	
PHIL 4800 Social and Political Philosophy	
- 4) Metaphysics & Epistemology (M&E) requirement. Take at least 1 course from this list:

PHIL 4100 Epistemology	PHIL 4330 Philosophy of Mind
PHIL 4130 Philosophy of Science	PHIL 4340 Philosophy of Cognitive Science
PHIL 4150 Topics in Epistemology	PHIL 4350 Topics in Metaphysics
PHIL 4300 Metaphysics	PHIL 4530 Philosophy of Language
- 4) At least 4 other courses at the 3000-level or 4000-level  
(see <http://catalog.gsu.edu/undergraduate20152016/subject/phil/> for all philosophy courses).

## The Pre-Law Concentration

The study of philosophy is excellent preparation for law school. The critical thinking skills, clarity in writing and argumentative rigor required in philosophy provide students with the tools they need to be successful in law school and as lawyers. Moreover, philosophy majors have among the highest average scores on the LSAT and the highest admission rates to law school of any major. The Pre-law faculty advisor is Andrew I. Cohen ([aicohen@gsu.edu](mailto:aicohen@gsu.edu)).

The requirements for the Pre-Law Concentration include:

- Area F requirements same as above: PHIL 2010 or PHIL 2030, PHIL 2500 or PHIL 1010, Foreign Language 1002, plus 3 other courses (ECON 2105 and ECON 2106 recommended).

**\* PHIL 2500 (Intro to Symbolic Logic) is recommended as preparation for the LSAT.**

- PHIL 3000 same as above
- History requirements same as above: PHIL 3010 *and* 3020
- Ethics requirement same as above
- M&E requirement same as above
- PHIL 4820 (Philosophy of Law)
- At least 2 other philosophy courses.
- At least 1 course outside of philosophy relevant to the study of law (see Appendix I)

**Majors considering law school will need to get two letters of recommendation from professors who know their work well and will need to take the LSAT exam.**

### Second Majors and Minors in Other Disciplines

Philosophy complements almost any other major, since philosophy is both interdisciplinary and foundational, considering the methods for attaining knowledge in the sciences and humanities and the ways such knowledge can be synthesized. Philosophy also teaches reasoning, writing, and communication skills that are valued by and useful in other fields. Philosophy majors are not required to get a second major or minor, but they may wish to consider getting one that will help them move towards their career or education goals after graduation (for instance, a pre-law major may want to consider a minor in Political Science, History, or Economics; a major interested in philosophy of mind may want to consider a minor in Psychology or Neuroscience; etc.). Minors in most departments require 15 hours (5 courses).

### Pre-med with Philosophy

It is possible to complete pre-med requirements while majoring in philosophy, and most medical schools look very favorably upon philosophy majors. Consult with GSU's pre-med advisor and consider getting a second major or a minor in Chemistry, Biology, or Neuroscience.

### Education with Philosophy

Philosophy majors make great teachers! Those who are interested in teaching middle or high school will need to position themselves to teach English, Social Studies, Math, Sciences, or Foreign Language, and hence get a second major in one of those subjects, ideally with a pre-education concentration or complete a one-year MAT program to get certified.



CHECKLIST OF REQUIREMENTS:	PHILOSOPHY MAJOR	PRE-LAW CONCENTRATION
Area A-E	Complete Core requirements	Complete Core requirements
<b>Area F Requirements</b> (3 required courses)	1. PHIL 2010 <i>or</i> PHIL 2030 2. PHIL 2500 (required for Distinction) <i>or</i> PHIL 1010 3. Language 1002	1. PHIL 2010 <i>or</i> PHIL 2030 2. PHIL 2500 (required for Distinction; good for LSAT) <i>or</i> PHIL 1010 3. Language 1002
Area F (3-4 more courses <u>required</u> to get to 18 hours)	+ 3-4 more courses—these courses can be any 1000-2000 level courses from the core areas A-E	+ 3-4 more courses Recommended courses: ECON 2105 ECON 2106
<b>Area G (9 courses)</b> <b>1. Introductory Seminar</b>	PHIL 3000	PHIL 3000
<b>2. History Requirement</b> (2 courses)	PHIL 3010 <u>and</u> PHIL 3020	PHIL 3010 <u>and</u> PHIL 3020
<b>3. Ethics and Social/Political Requirement</b> (1 course)	PHIL 4700, PHIL 4740, PHIL 4750, PHIL 4760, PHIL 4770, PHIL 4780, PHIL 4790, PHIL 4800, PHIL 4820, PHIL 4830, PHIL 4855, PHIL 4860, <i>or</i> PHIL 4890	PHIL 4700, PHIL 4740, PHIL 4750, PHIL 4760, PHIL 4770, PHIL 4780, PHIL 4790, PHIL 4800, PHIL 4830, PHIL 4855, PHIL 4860, <i>or</i> PHIL 4890
<b>4. Metaphysics and Epistemology Requirement</b> (1 course)	PHIL 4100, PHIL 4130, PHIL 4150, PHIL 4300, PHIL 4330, PHIL 4340, PHIL 4350, <i>or</i> PHIL 4530	PHIL 4100, PHIL 4130, PHIL 4150, PHIL 4300, PHIL 4330, PHIL 4340, PHIL 4350, <i>or</i> PHIL 4530
<b>5. Other Requirements</b> (4 more courses required)	+ 4 more philosophy courses at 3000-level or 4000-level  * Courses can count in Area G only with grades of C or better	PHIL 4820 + 1 course from approved list (see Appendix I) + 2 more philosophy courses at 3000-level or 4000-level  * Courses can count in Area G only with grades of C or better
<b>Residency Requirement</b>	At least 39 hours of 3000-4000 level courses must be taken at GSU	At least 39 hours of 3000-4000 level courses must be taken at GSU

\*\* See [http://catalog.gsu.edu/undergraduate20152016/course\\_curriculum/b-a-in-philosophy/](http://catalog.gsu.edu/undergraduate20152016/course_curriculum/b-a-in-philosophy/) for a possible schedule of courses over four years.

### **Course Scheduling**

Go to <http://philosophy.gsu.edu/undergraduate/lower-division-studies/> for information on philosophy courses, a selection of which is offered each semester (majors will get a flier with descriptions of courses before registration each semester). In an effort to assist majors in planning their schedules, the department of philosophy offers a number of high-demand courses on a regular schedule. While we cannot guarantee that the schedule below will always be followed, the department will do everything possible to follow it. There will be at least three 4000-level courses offered each Fall and Spring semester in addition to those listed below, and at least two 4000-level courses offered in Summer semesters.

Phil 1010, Critical Thinking – Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters

Phil 2010, Introduction to Philosophy – Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters

Phil 2500, Introduction to Symbolic Logic – Fall and Spring Semesters

Phil 3000, Introductory Seminar in Philosophy – Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters

Phil 3010, History of Western Phil I, Ancient and Medieval – Fall and Spring Semesters

Phil 3020, History of Western Phil II, Modern – Fall and Spring Semesters

Phil 3720, Contemporary Moral Problems – Fall and Spring Semesters

Phil 3730, Business Ethics – Fall and Spring Semesters

At least one 4000-level history course – Fall and Spring Semesters

At least one 4000-level course that satisfies the metaphysics & epistemology requirement – Fall and Spring Semesters

At least one 4000-level course that satisfies the value theory requirement – Fall and Spring Semesters

Phil 4820, Philosophy of Law –Spring Semesters

At least two 4000-level courses –Fall, Spring, and Summer Semesters

### **Majors Considering Graduate School in Philosophy**

If you are considering continuing your education in Philosophy beyond your undergraduate degree (i.e., applying to an MA or PhD program in Philosophy):

- We strongly encourage you to take PHIL 2500 (Introduction to Symbolic Logic), PHIL 4100 (Epistemology), PHIL 4300 (Metaphysics), PHIL 4700 (Ethics), and/or as many other 4000-level courses central to your interests as you can fit in your schedule.
- We strongly encourage you to establish a relationship with at 3 philosophy professors who will know your work well and will be able to write you helpful and informative letters of recommendation. Most programs require at least 3 letters and expect them to come from academic faculty.
- Develop one of your philosophy papers into a writing sample (12-15 pages) under the supervision of a faculty member (independent studies and Honors Theses are one effective way to do this).
- Write an Honors Thesis (see below).
- Attend the annual meeting for Applying to Graduate School in Philosophy.
- If you are considering a career in philosophy, discuss with your philosophy professors how best to proceed and the prospects for getting a teaching position in a college or university.

### **Honors Thesis and Honors Program**

Majors with a GPA above 3.5 should consider joining the Georgia State Honors College, which allows students to enroll in honors classes, to register for classes early, to take graduate courses, to graduate with recognition in the Honors College, and to write an Honors Thesis. For more information, see <http://honors.gsu.edu/> and meet with Prof. Christie Hartley, the Honors Advisor for philosophy majors. In general, Honors students must take 12 hours of honors courses, which can include up to two graduate courses in philosophy, and (to get Research Honors) two courses to complete the Honors Thesis, and (to get Advanced Honors) two Honors Colloquium (Hon 3260) or Honors Forums (Hon 3750). Philosophy majors in the Honors Program should consider writing an Honors thesis in philosophy. The Honors thesis involves two semesters of work, a semester of Honors Research (PHIL 4870) and a semester of Honors Writing (PHIL 4880), both under the close supervision of a faculty advisor. Students considering the thesis must plan early by discussing it with Prof. Hartley and with the faculty member with whom they plan to work. *They must present a proposal to the Honors Program by the deadline near the end of the semester prior to enrolling in the honors research class.*

### **Graduation with Distinction in the Major and Honors**

To Graduate with Distinction in the Philosophy major, the student must have excelled in his or her philosophy courses and undergraduate career. To graduate with distinction, the student must have a 3.5 GPA in the major and a 3.5 GPA overall, must have taken Phil 2500 (Introduction to Symbolic Logic), and must be in good academic standing. Rare exceptions may be made by faculty vote. In addition, students graduate with Honors if their overall GPA is greater than 3.5 (Cum Laude 3.50-3.69; Magna Cum Laude 3.70-3.89; Summa Cum Laude 3.90-4.00)

### **Internship (PHIL 4960)**

Internships allow students the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and to enhance their collegiate education. The Department of Philosophy encourages majors and minors to complete an internship prior to graduation. Students who choose an internship that allows them to apply and develop their philosophical skills and knowledge can receive 3 hours of philosophy credit if they meet the eligibility and course requirements: see <http://philosophy.gsu.edu/internship/>

### **Overview of University Requirements (see *Undergraduate Catalog* for details)**

- **120 hours to graduate**
- **39+ hours at the 3000-4000 level at GSU for academic Residency Requirement**
  - Area A, Essential Skills: 9 hrs/ 3 courses (Engl 1101, Engl 1102, and one math course)
  - Area B, Institutional Options: 4 hrs/ 2 courses
    - \* Note that majors can use PHIL 1010 in Area B only if they do not use it in Area F.
  - Area C, Humanities & Fine Arts: 6 hrs/ 2 courses
    - \* Note that majors cannot use PHIL 2010 in Area C since it is required in Area F.
  - Area D, Science, Math & Tech: 11 hrs/ 3 courses
  - Area E, Social Sciences: 12 hrs/ 4 courses
  - Areas F & G, Major: See above



### **Transfer Students**

Make sure to get credit for all the transfer courses you can. Go to <http://advisement.gsu.edu/transfer-students/> for information. To get credit for a philosophy course you should drop off a syllabus for the course at the Department for Prof. Nahmias, who will review it in order to determine which, if any, GSU philosophy course it matches for credit. Transfer students should make sure they are aware of the GSU Residency Requirement (**39+ hours at the 3000-4000 level at GSU**) and that they must complete **at least half of their courses for the major in the Philosophy Department at Georgia State University**.

### **Advising for Philosophy Majors**

Majors are given both academic and career advising from the Undergraduate Advisement Center (UAC)—meet with Emily Stallings—Office of Academic Assistance (OAA), and from the Department of Philosophy. UAC and OAA are located on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> floors of 25 Park Place. In addition to questions about the major, meet with advisors there to discuss areas A-E, questions about transfer credits, residency requirements, AP or IB credits, CLEP exams, etc.

- Advisement website: <http://advisement.gsu.edu/>
- Enrollment Services: <http://enrollment.gsu.edu/>
- For financial aid questions, students should go to the One Stop Shop: <http://sfs.gsu.edu/>
- For Career Services, go to: <http://career.gsu.edu/>

### **Academic Evaluation Form or Degree Works**

The Academic Evaluation form or Degree Works is used to determine both what classes the student has taken as well as the classes that are remaining to be taken. The easiest way for students to obtain these forms is through PAWS. Your Advisors can review these forms with you. These forms indicate how many hours are required to graduate, to satisfy the residency requirement, and to satisfy the university and major requirements (areas A-G).

### **Requests for Overloads**

If a course you need to take to satisfy the major is full, attend the first class and speak to the instructor about overloading. You should try to register for the class during the first week by taking a spot opened by students who drop it. If that does not work and the instructor allows the overload, then have the instructor send an email to the Department's Business Manager requesting that you be added to the course. If you have questions, see the DUS.

### **Graduation Audit**

Students must apply for graduation at least TWO semesters prior to the planned completion of their degree requirements (in the semester they plan to complete their 90<sup>th</sup> hour of coursework). Instructions on how to apply to graduate are here: <http://registrar.gsu.edu/graduation/>. You will be sent a Graduation Audit and must then set up an appointment with the Philosophy DUS, Eddy Nahmias, by emailing him at [enahmias@gsu.edu](mailto:enahmias@gsu.edu). The DUS reviews and signs the audit form and discusses with you any remaining requirements needed to graduate. You have the responsibility for returning the audit form to the Office of Academic Assistance or Graduation Office promptly. The student must meet with the DUS to have it signed.

- To graduate in Fall, apply by June 15 deadline.
- To graduate in Spring, apply by September 15 deadline.
- To graduate in Summer, apply by January 15 deadline.

### **Activities, Colloquia, Clubs**

The Department of Philosophy offers various extracurricular activities that we encourage philosophy students to take advantage of. They have the potential to enhance your experience as a philosophy major and student at Georgia State University.

- **The Philosophers' Guild**: This philosophy club hosts and sponsors events for majors and others interested in philosophy. Please become an active member! Check out the Guild page on Facebook!
- **Philosophy on Friday**: The Department of Philosophy hosts a gathering with free lunch, usually on the first Friday of every month during the fall and spring semesters. Philosophy students are encouraged to come. These events are announced through the Majors Listserv.
- **Colloquium Series**: Philosophy majors are encouraged to attend some talks in the Department's Colloquium series, Ethics Center talks, and Neurophilosophy Forum. The Department brings leading philosophers from around the world to present talks on contemporary debates. The schedule of speakers can be found at the department's website.
- **Phi Sigma Tau**: Majors may become members of Phi Sigma Tau, the International Honor Society in Philosophy, if they meet the requirements. All majors may participate in activities sponsored by Phi Sigma Tau, such as the *Georgia State Student Philosophy Symposium*. Go to the department's website for more information.
- **Ethics-in-Film Movie Series**: Watch movies that raise ethical issues and then discuss them with a panel of relevant discussants. For more information, go to the Blumenfeld Center for Ethics website: <http://ethics.gsu.edu/students/films/>

### **Contests and Awards**

The Department of Philosophy offers:

- The *Troy Moore Undergraduate Essay Contest* in Ethics.
- The *George W. Beiswanger Award* for most outstanding philosophy major.
- The *Robert Almeder Award* for best paper at Georgia State Student Philosophy Symposium.
- The *Arlene and Alvin Altman Scholarship*.
- The *Kay Craigie Scholarship*.

See the Department website for more information.

### **Minor in Philosophy**

Students who wish to minor in philosophy must take at least 5 courses (15 hours) in philosophy, including at least 3 courses (9 hours) at the 3000-level or 4000-level. Students taking more than 15 hours in philosophy may count the additional hours toward their electives or may consider completing a double major. (A grade of C or better is required in all courses counting toward the minor.) If, for some reason, you choose to change majors from philosophy, you should discuss with the DUS whether you can still get a minor in philosophy.

\* Note that courses applied to the minor cannot also be used to satisfy Areas A-F.

### **Minor in Ethics**

The minor in Ethics is designed to complement any major. Students with a major in business, education, the natural sciences, the social sciences, or the health and human sciences are particularly encouraged to consider a minor in Ethics. Students completing this minor must take 5 classes from an approved list (see Appendix II). (A grade of C or better is required in all courses counting toward the minor.)

\* Note that courses applied to the minor cannot also be used to satisfy Areas A-F.

**Top Ten Reasons to Major in Philosophy ... or**  
**“What to Tell Your Friends and Family When They Ask You *The Question?*”**

Inevitably, people will want to know why you have chosen to be a philosophy major.

Here are some answers you can give them:

- 10) Because philosophy *Feeds Your Head*. As a major you get a *free* Department of Philosophy T-shirt with this slogan on the back ... and this one on the front:
- 9) Because philosophers are *Rational Animals* (philosophy courses improve one’s reasoning abilities and argumentative skills, helping you discover when other people are being irrational or trying to trick you with bad arguments).
- 8) Because I really enjoyed my first philosophy class.
- 7) What did *you* major in? What exactly was *it* good for?
- 6) Because I get to read and discuss some of the greatest works ever written, from Plato to Kant, from Aquinas to Nietzsche, from Frege to Freud, from Descartes to Dennett ...
- 5) Because philosophy improves my ability to read, write, and think critically and carefully, skills that are essential in any profession, from law to business to medicine to teaching to ... you name it.
- 4) And most jobs don’t really care what your major was anyway—they just want you to be a smart and interesting person who communicates clearly and learns fast.
- 3) Philosophy majors rock the LSAT (for law), Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and other standardized tests for graduate schools (see below).
- 2) Because I get to discuss the most fascinating questions in the world, from “How should I live my life?” to “Does God exist?” to “Can science explain everything?” to “Do we have free will?” to “What type of government is best?” to “What is Beauty?” to “What is human nature?”
- 1) Because it will make the rest of my life more interesting.

For more on the above, see below. Much of this information is also on our website at “Why Philosophy?” <http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwphi/12991.html>

- New York Times “Philosophers Find the Degree Pays Off in Life And in Work”:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/1997/12/26/business/philosophers-find-the-degree-pays-off-in-life-and-in-work.html>
- New York Times “In a New Generation of College Students, Many Opt for the Life Examined”:  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/06/education/06philosophy.html?\\_r=1&ex=1208145600&en=1c3585fc82773e7f&ei=5070&emc=eta1](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/06/education/06philosophy.html?_r=1&ex=1208145600&en=1c3585fc82773e7f&ei=5070&emc=eta1)
- Why Study Philosophy:  
<http://www.louisiana.edu/Academic/LiberalArts/PHIL/WhyStudyPhilosophy.html>
- <http://www.scordo.com/blog/2008/12/why-major-in-philosophy.html>
- How Does Philosophy Relate to My Career:  
[http://cubic.wlu.ca/page.php?grp\\_id=57&s\\_id=464&sb\\_id=797](http://cubic.wlu.ca/page.php?grp_id=57&s_id=464&sb_id=797)
- <http://philosophy.illinoisstate.edu/major/careers.shtml>
- <http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~janzb/humanities/humcareers.htm>
- How philosophy majors do on various graduate exams (also see below):  
<http://www.lclark.edu/%7Ephil/gre.html>
- <http://www.phil.ufl.edu/ugrad/whatis/LSATtable.html>
- <http://campus.belmont.edu/philosophy/info/tests.html>
- Just a few famous philosophy students (majoring in philosophy does *not* guarantee fame!):  
<http://www.philosophy.eku.edu/phimajors.htm>

# THE POWER OF PHILOSOPHY

## Mean GRE Scores By Intended Graduate Field, 2011–2012

Source: Educational Testing Service, "GRE Guide to the Use of Scores" ([http://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/gre\\_guide\\_table4.pdf](http://www.ets.org/s/gre/pdf/gre_guide_table4.pdf))

Charts by Ty Fagan  
and Matty Silverstein

### Verbal

Scores range from 130–170

Philosophy	160
English Literature	157
Art History	156
History	156
Physics	156
Political Science	156
Economics	154
Mathematics	154
Biology	153
Chemistry	153
Sociology	152
Engineering	150
Computers	149

### Quantitative

Scores range from 130–170

Mathematics	161
Physics	161
Economics	159
Engineering	159
Computers	158
Chemistry	157
Biology	153
Philosophy	153
Political Science	151
Art History	149
English Literature	148
History	148
Sociology	148

### Analytical Writing

Scores range from 0–6

Philosophy	4.4
English Literature	4.3
Art History	4.2
History	4.2
Political Science	4.2
Economics	4.0
Physics	4.0
Sociology	4.0
Biology	3.9
Chemistry	3.9
Mathematics	3.9
Engineering	3.6
Computers	3.4

## Mean LSAT and GMAT Scores by Intended Undergraduate Major

Sources: Michael Nieswiadomy, "LSAT Scores of Economics Majors," *Journal of Economic Education* 41, no. 3 (Summer 2010): 331–3  
Graduate Management Admission Council, "Profile of GMAT Candidates" (<http://www.gmac.com/market-intelligence-and-research/research-library/gmat-test-taker-data.aspx>)

### Law School Admission Test

Required by U.S. Law Schools

2007–2008 Tests; Scores range from 120–180

Philosophy	157.4
Economics	157.4
Engineering	156.2
History	155.9
English Literature	155.2
Biology	154.8
Art History	154.2
Political Science	153.1
Psychology	152.5
Sociology	151.2

### Graduate Management Admission Test

Required by U.S. Business Schools

2010–2011 Tests; Scores range from 200–800

Physics	610
Mathematics	609
Philosophy	599
Engineering	594
Economics	584
History	575
English Literature	564
Political Science	555
Psychology	533
Sociology	511



# DO PHILOSOPHY MAJORS MAKE ANY MONEY?

## Annual Salaries and Salary Growth by Undergraduate Major

Source: "Salary Increase by Major," *Wall Street Journal* ([http://www.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/info-Degrees\\_that\\_Pay\\_you\\_Back-sort.html](http://www.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/info-Degrees_that_Pay_you_Back-sort.html))

### Annual Salary

Median salary of mid-career graduates without higher degrees

Data collected in 2008

Economics	\$98,600
Engineering	\$93,600
Mathematics	\$92,400
Philosophy	\$81,200
Chemistry	\$79,900
Political Science	\$78,200
Business	\$72,100
History	\$71,000
Biology	\$64,800
English Literature	\$64,700
Art History	\$61,900
Psychology	\$60,400
Sociology	\$58,200

### Salary Growth

Increase from starting to mid-career median salary of graduates without higher degrees

Data collected in 2008

Philosophy	103.5%
Mathematics	103.5%
Economics	96.8%
Political Science	91.7%
Chemistry	87.6%
Art History	81.3%
History	81.1%
English Literature	70.3%
Engineering	69.1%
Psychology	68.2%
Business	67.7%
Biology	67%
Sociology	59.5%

### I think, therefore I earn

***Philosophy graduates are suddenly all the rage with employers. What can they possibly have to offer?***

By [Jessica Shepherd](#), November 20 2007

"A degree in philosophy? What are you going to do with that then?"...

Figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show philosophy graduates, once derided as unemployable layabouts, are in growing demand from employers. The number of all graduates in full-time and part-time work six months after graduation has risen by 9% between 2002-03 and 2005-06; for philosophy graduates it has gone up by 13%.

It is in the fields of finance, property development, health, social work and the nebulous category of "business" that those versed in Plato and Kant are most sought after. In "business", property development, renting and research, 76% more philosophy graduates were employed in 2005-06 than in 2002-03. In health and social work, 9% more....

For complete article, go to:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2007/nov/20/choosingadegree.highereducation>



# PHILOSOPHY

## What can I do with this major?

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
<p><b><u>EDUCATION</u></b></p> <p>Teaching            Research            Administration            Student Affairs, e.g. Student Activities, Leadership Development, Admissions, Orientation, Career Services, Residence Life, Multi-cultural Affairs, Study Abroad, International Student Services            Academic Affairs, e.g. Academic Support Services, Advising, Educational Advancement Programs, Honors Programs            Library Sciences</p>	<p>Colleges and universities            Professional or graduate schools, including medical            Adult education programs            Vocational-technical educational programs</p>	<p>Obtain a doctorate degree to teach at colleges and universities. Maintain a high GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations to prepare for graduate school.            Develop one or more concentration(s), such as mathematics, medical or business ethics, science, or religion.            Become an effective writer.            Earn a master's degree in a specialized area e.g., College Student Personnel, Higher Education Administration, or Library and Information Sciences to work in other roles at post-secondary institutions.            Seek campus leadership positions such as peer mentor, orientation leader, or resident assistant.            Build strong interpersonal skills.</p>
<p><b><u>ETHICS</u></b></p> <p>Teaching            Research            Medical/Clinical            Bioethics            Environmental            Law-Related</p>	<p>Hospitals            Medical and professional schools            Colleges and universities            Bioethic centers            Research institutes            Medical organizations, e.g. American Medical Association            Health science funding agencies            Environmental agencies            Law firms specializing in health or bioethics            Consulting services</p>	<p>Plan to obtain a doctorate in philosophy for academic research and teaching positions. Some hospitals and healthcare organizations prefer to hire individuals who also have a clinical background in nursing or medicine. Another potential educational path is to earn a law degree.            Complete an internship in a relevant setting while in graduate school to gain experience.            Participate in professional organizations in ethics.            Develop excellent research skills as well as verbal and written communication skills.            Demonstrate a passion for ethical issues.            Investigate interdisciplinary degrees in bioethics offered at some universities.</p>

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
<p><b><u>LAW</u></b> <i>See also What Can I Do With This Major in Law?</i> Prosecution Defense Contractual Corporate Nonprofit or Public Interest Government Mediation Other Specialties Law Assistance</p>	<p>Law firms Federal, state, and local government Private practice Corporations Special interest groups Universities and colleges Legal aid societies Nonprofit and public interest organizations, e.g.     ACLU, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Legal     Services Corporation Legal clinics Other private legal services</p>	<p>Plan on attending law school or a paralegal training school/program depending on area of interest. Develop strong research skills and attention to detail. Participate in debate or forensic team to hone communication skills. Choose courses or a minor to specialize in a particular area of law, e.g. a minor in business for a career in corporate law. Gain experience and build skills through part-time or summer work in a law firm or an organization related to your particular interests. Shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties. Get involved in pre-law and mock trial organizations. Volunteer with a public advocacy group. Seek experience with mediation and conflict resolution. Maintain a high GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations. Prepare for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test).</p>
<p><b><u>BUSINESS</u></b> Sales Management Office Administration Human Resources Training and Development Writing/Editing Underwriting and Claims Management</p>	<p>Product and service organizations Retail stores Hotels Restaurants Wholesalers Manufacturers Banks and financial institutions Insurance companies Real estate agencies Consulting firms Other business corporations</p>	<p>Earn a minor in business. Develop excellent communication skills. Gain experience in an area of interest through internships or other employment. Obtain leadership roles in campus or community organizations. Demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills and a high energy level. Learn to use various technologies and software packages such as databases, spreadsheets and presentations. Be prepared to start in entry level positions, such as management trainee programs. Consider earning an MBA to advance into higher levels of business management.</p>

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
<b><u>RELIGIOUSLY AFFILIATED AREAS</u></b> Clergy and Other Religious Leaders Including: Buddhist, Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Islamic, Hindu, Greek Orthodox Vocation as Monk or Nun Chaplaincy: Military Institutional Mission Work: Church Development Community or Agricultural Development Educational Medical Metropolitan Evangelism Local Ministries Including: Youth Ministries Adult Ministries Leisure Ministries Counseling/Recovery Religious Education Day Care, Children and Adult Food Bank/Emergency Ministries Family Life Center Management Music-Oriented Ministries Religious Camp Administration	Local churches, synagogues, mosques Religious organizations Religious communities, e.g. convents and monasteries Religious retreat centers, Christian and Buddhist Denominational boards and agencies Monasteries All branches of military service Hospitals, hospices Homes for children, youth, senior citizens Correctional institutions Police and fire departments Missions boards Local churches Evangelical organizations e.g. Billy Graham Evangelistic Association Religious-based camps and youth programs	Obtain general knowledge of practices, procedures, guidelines and doctrine of one's faith. Possess understanding of human spiritual and social needs. Research requirements to enter leadership in the faith you want to pursue. Master of Divinity and denominational ordination are required for most clergy positions, for example. Possess high moral and ethical standards. Develop leadership ability and self discipline. Obtain excellent written and verbal communication skills. To become a chaplain, obtain ordination and two years' service in local church or after acceptance into branch of military service, attend chaplaincy school. Obtain any needed advanced degrees, certification or licensing in area of interest for missions. Seek related experience by participating with missions groups. Obtain travel and cultural experience with group of interest. Foreign language skills are a plus. Develop fund raising skills and contacts. People interested in religious vs. secular work possess deep faith, want more than filling one's own personal needs and desire to make a difference. May be more opportunities for specific ministries in urban areas and large religious institutions. Obtain experience and contacts through extensive involvement in campus organizations or local religious institutions. Leadership on the local, state and regional level is crucial. Seek camp experience to improve organization and counseling skills as well as network within the denominational/organizational structure. Learn to work well with people of all different back- grounds and socioeconomic status. Earn dual degrees where appropriate, e.g. music.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
<b><u>SOCIAL/COMMUNITY SERVICES</u></b> Administration/Management Fund Raising/Development Public Relations Policy Analysis Research Grant Writing Direct Service	Local and national nonprofit agencies Foundations Charitable organizations Trade or professional associations Special interest groups Labor unions Research organizations and think tanks	Gain experience through volunteering or completing an internship. Supplement curriculum with courses in business, psychology, sociology, or social work. Obtain leadership roles in relevant campus and community organizations. Develop strong communication and research skills. Learn how to write grants. Demonstrate knowledge and experience in a specialty area, e.g. public health, environment, urban issues. Research organizations' values to find a good fit with yours. It is critical that you are knowledgeable about and committed to the work you plan to do. Investigate term of service or service corps positions as a way to gain entry into the field. Consider earning a graduate degree for more job opportunities and advancement.
<b><u>GOVERNMENT/POLITICS</u></b> Public Policy Research Regional Planning City Management Intelligence Foreign Service Law Enforcement Legislative, Executive, or Judicial Services Program Administration Elected or Appointed Leadership Campaign Management Staff Administration Special Interest Advocacy	State and local government Federal departments and agencies Foreign Service Federal Municipal Archives National and State Endowments for the Humanities Legislative, executive, or judicial officials Political action committees Special interest groups Political parties Campaigns (national, state, or local)	Take courses or minor in applicable interest area(s). Seek leadership roles in relevant campus organizations such as model United Nations, student government, and cross-cultural organizations. Write for campus publications focused on national and international affairs. Participate in national campaigns. Develop skills in computers, statistics, and data analysis. Acquire foreign language competency and travel experience for international positions. Complete an internship with the federal government. There are a large number of specialized agencies within the federal government. Do extensive research to find the area that best fits your interests. Earn a graduate degree in political science or public administration for advancement. Become familiar with the government application process. Utilize applicable websites and seek assistance from your college career center.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
<b><u>COMMUNICATIONS</u></b> Writing Editing Technical Writing Journalism	Publishing companies Magazine and newspaper publishers Professional and trade associations Electronic media organizations Websites	Take courses or minor in journalism, advertising, public relations, or English. Develop excellent writing, editing, and desktop publishing skills. Learn how to design websites. Gain related experience through internships. Volunteer to help campus or local organizations with their communications. Serve on college newspaper or other campus publication staffs. Join relevant professional associations.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Philosophy students develop many transferable skills that can be utilized in a variety of careers and jobs, demonstrating the flexibility and capacity for growth that employers find valuable. These skills include analytical, organizational, research, as well as oral and written communication.
- Other skills emphasized in philosophy that are attractive to employers are idea generation, problem formulation and problem solving, diverse data integration, adaptation to change, the ability to elicit hidden assumptions, persuasion, and summarization of complicated material.
- It is important for philosophy students to identify potential career goals and seek out the experiences and education required to enter those fields.
- An undergraduate degree qualifies one for entry-level positions in business, nonprofit organizations, and government.
- Graduate and/or professional studies usually lead to careers in law, medicine, ministry, finance, psychology, counseling, diplomacy, ethics, and related areas.
- Ph.D. is required for college/university teaching and research.
- Consider earning a minor or concentration in another discipline such as: mathematics, religion, science, business, political science, women's studies, or Eastern philosophy.
- Develop aptitudes for analytical thinking, logic, and statistics in order to apply philosophy to a broad range of professions such as law, government, finance, management, consulting, and related areas.
- Seek related summer or part-time work experience or internships in area(s) of interest.
- Join related student or professional organizations. Work toward leadership roles.
- Conduct informational interviews or shadow professionals in fields of interest.



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## **Think Your Liberal Arts Degree Won't Get You a Real Job? THINK AGAIN!**

By Laura Raines *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* 05/04/07

Your passion is philosophy, English literature or American history. That's fine for college, but what does it get you in the real world? Are you doomed to a sequence of random, boring and low-paying jobs once you leave the ivory towers behind? Not if you know how to translate your education into the world of work....

"Liberal arts majors are in high demand by the employers who interview on our campus," said Phil Rockwell, a counselor with Georgia State University Career Services. "Companies want employees with good communication skills. They need people who can think critically; who can write and speak well; who can run projects, interact on teams and sell on paper or in person...."

Students think that their GPAs and majors are the most important factors to employers, Rockwell said, but skills and initiative are what the job market requires. A National Association of Colleges and Employers survey showed that what companies want most from new college graduates are communication skills, motivation/initiative, teamwork, leadership, flexibility, technical skills and interpersonal skills....

Far from useless or unmarketable, your liberal arts degree can lead to a range of job titles — not just "waiter," as the old joke states. The key is to move beyond your specific knowledge of Shakespeare and Plato to sell the benefits of your broad-based education.

If you can argue that four years of papers, projects, activities and interpersonal relationships taught you how to think and solve problems, you're well on your way to being a good investment for employers.

For complete article, go to:

[http://www.ajc.com/hotjobs/content/hotjobs/careercenter/articles/2007\\_0506\\_degrees.html](http://www.ajc.com/hotjobs/content/hotjobs/careercenter/articles/2007_0506_degrees.html)

## **APPENDIX I: Courses for the Pre-Law Concentration**

- [AAS 3070](#) African-Americans in the Criminal Justice System (3)
- [AAS 4600](#) Enslavement and Resistance in North America (3)
- [AAS 4780](#) African-American Lesbian and Gay Activism
- [CRJU](#) Any 3000 or 4000-level course.
- [HIST 3900](#) Human Rights in Historical Perspective (4)
- [HIST 4240](#) American Labor and Working Class (4)
- [HIST 4460](#) Bill of Rights (4)
- [HIST 4470](#) Legal and Constitutional History (4)
- [HIST 4532](#) Crime, Law, and Society in Early Modern Europe (4)
- [HIST 4620](#) Europe: Culture and Ideas (4)
- [LGLS](#) Any 3000 or 4000-level course
- [POLS](#) Any 3000 or 4000-level course
- [RELS 4140](#) Religion and Law (3)
- [RELS 4150](#) Religion, Nation, and Law
- [RELS 4670](#) Church and State (3)
- [SOCI 3224](#) Crime and Punishment (3)
- [SOCI 3225](#) Youth and Crime
- [SOCI 4218](#) Power and Politics (3)
- [SOCI 4366](#) Law and Society (3)

Or other law-related 3000-level or 4000-level courses (in any College) ONLY IF THEY ARE APPROVED IN ADVANCE by the Philosophy Pre-Law Advisor, Dr. Andrew I. Cohen. No courses will be approved after a student has enrolled in the course.

## **APPENDIX II: Minor in Ethics**

Select 15 semester hours from the following courses:

- Phil 3710 Marriage and Family (3)
- Phil 3720 Contemporary Moral Problems (3)
- Phil 3730 Business Ethics (3)
- Phil 3855 Topics in Political Theory (3)
- Phil 4070 Marxism (3)
- Phil 4700 Ethics (3)
- Phil 4740 Advanced Biomedical Ethics (3)
- Phil 4750 Topics in Ethics (3)
- Phil 4760 Ethics and Contemporary Public Policy (3)
- Phil 4770 Moral Psychology (3)
- Phil 4780 Neuroethics (3)
- Phil 4790 Topics in Neuroethics (3)
- Phil 4800 Social and Political Philosophy (3)
- Phil 4820 Philosophy of Law (3)
- Phil 4855 Advanced Topics in Political Theory (3)
- Phil 4860 Feminist Philosophy (3)
- Phil 4890 Topics in Social and Political Philosophy (3)

The following courses may count towards the Ethics minor with the advance approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies. No courses will be approved after the mid-point of the semester of the course.

- Phil 3000 Introductory Seminar in Philosophy-CTW (3)
- Phil 3060 Existentialism (3)
- Phil 4030 Topics in Ancient Philosophy (3)
- Phil 4050 Topics in Modern Philosophy (3)
- Phil 4075 Topics in 19th Century Philosophy (3)
- Phil 4090 Topics in Continental Philosophy (3)
- Phil 4095 Topics in Analytic Philosophy (3)
- Phil 4900 Issues in Philosophy (3)
- Phil 4990 Advanced Seminar in Philosophy (3)



“The unexamined life is not worth living.”  
-Socrates

"One cannot conceive anything so strange and so implausible  
that it has not already been said by one philosopher or another."  
-Rene Descartes

“The aim of philosophy is to understand how things in the broadest possible  
sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term.”  
-Wilfred Sellars

