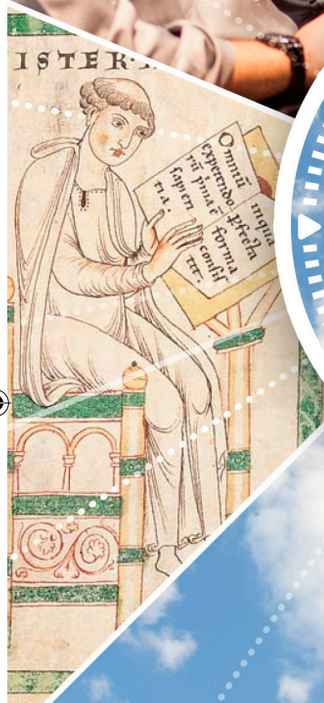
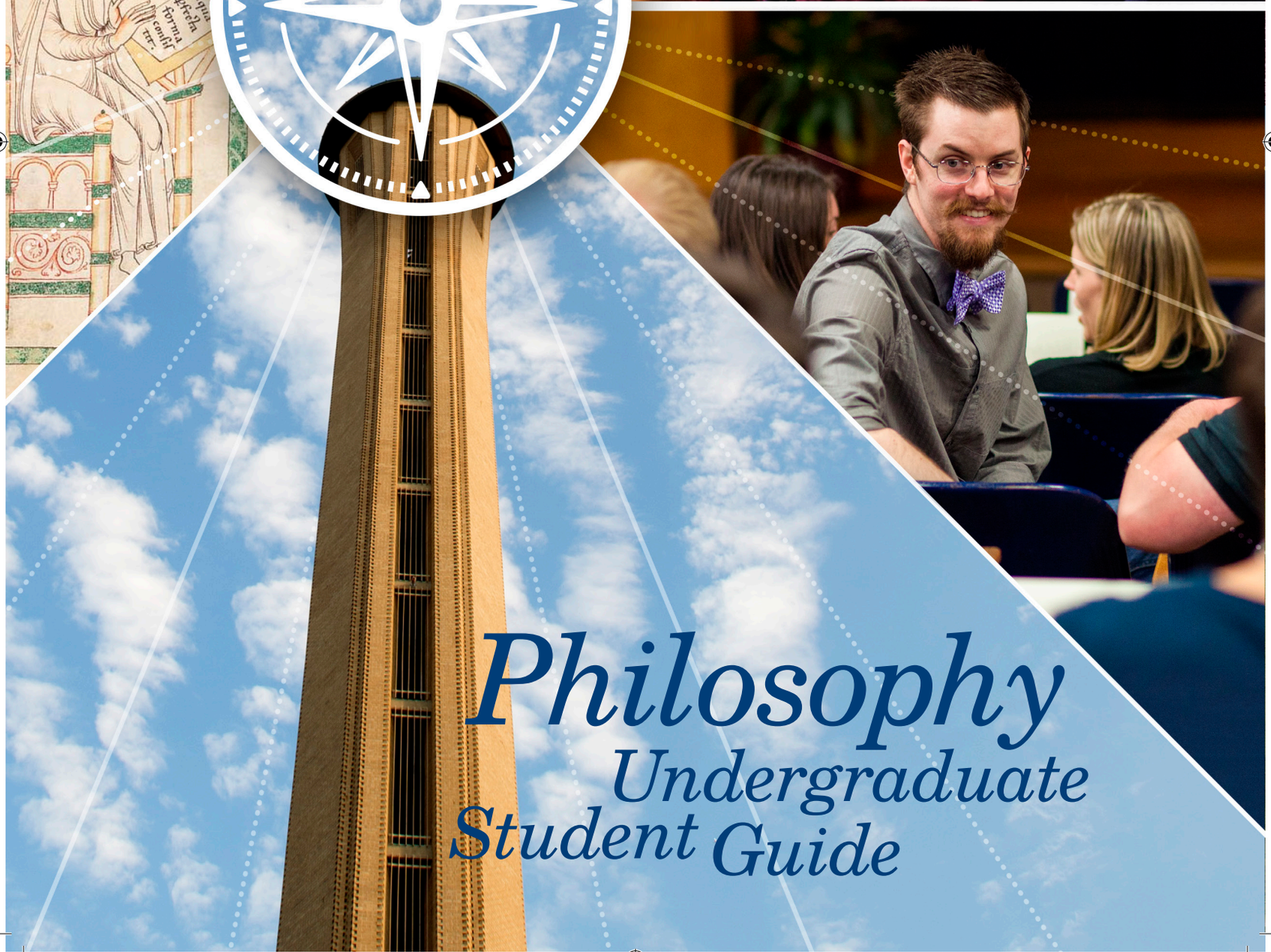
UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS





Philosophy

Undergraduate Student Guide

The UD Philosophy Department has 12 regular professors on its staff. Each faculty member will be happy to talk to you about any questions that may arise in connection with your studies. Sometimes, it may be useful to seek out a professor with a particular field of expertise. This is why these fields are listed along with each professor's name and contact details.

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Welcome to the UD Philosophy Department

WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?

Philosophy is a tradition of rational inquiry into the most basic principles of existence. There are various ways of defining this inquiry. Etymologically, the Greek term *philosophia* means "love of wisdom." But what is wisdom? Leibniz said that the very first question philosophy should ask is, "Why is there something rather than nothing?" Philosophy thus understood is concerned with the source and nature of being; this is what philosophy fundamentally meant for Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas. Turning away from this metaphysical tradition, Immanuel Kant later tried to capture the tasks of philosophy in the three famous questions: "What can I know? What ought I to do? What can I hope?" The nature of philosophy is itself part of the philosophical debate.

Philosophy overlaps with many other disciplines: the question of knowledge, for example, has implications that touch on psychology and neuroscience. In dealing with ethical questions, the philosopher may need to be in dialogue with medicine (medical ethics), biology (environmental ethics) or economics (business ethics). Philosophy of language partially overlaps with linguistics, while the philosophy of religion is related to religious studies. What always distinguishes the philosophical approach, however, is its focus on fundamental principles and givens that are not reducible to natural science or empirical data. Furthermore, although philosophy is a theoretical discipline that is engaged in a disinterested quest for knowledge, most philosophers, from Plato to the present, have also considered philosophy as an existential quest for the true and the good. Philosophers, one could say, do not only want to understand the world; they also want to lead a life that reflects this understanding.

PHILOSOPHY VIS-À-VIS THEOLOGY

In the questions that it asks, philosophy is not unlike theology. It is not surprising, therefore, that many Western philosophers—especially in the patristic and medieval periods—were also or even primarily theologians. There are, however, important differences between the two disciplines: although many of the questions that philosophy and theology ask are the same, they arrive at their answers by different means. Whereas theology draws on Scripture and tradition as its principal sources, philosophy relies on reason and human experience. Philosophical inquiry is therefore accessible to believers and nonbelievers alike.

PHILOSOPHY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DALLAS

Philosophic studies at the University of Dallas have three features that set the UD philosophy program apart from many others. First, UD philosophy students read the great philosophers themselves, not textbook summaries. The Core courses and the historical courses, in particular, focus on the study of some of the most influential texts of the Western philosophical tradition, from Plato's Republic, Aristotle's "Metaphysics," Augustine's "Confessions" and Thomas Aquinas' "On Being and Essence" to Descartes' "Meditations," Kant's "Prolegomena" and Heidegger's "Being and Time." Second, majors in the UD philosophy program receive a solid grounding in the history of Western philosophy. In this fashion, they acquire an understanding of not merely an isolated thinker or theory, but of the unfolding of the philosophic tradition as a whole. Third, as a philosophy department at a Catholic university, the UD philosophy program encourages dialogue with theological texts and ideas.

As a philosophy major, you will take five different kinds of philosophy courses:

1) **Core courses** (Philosophy and the Ethical Life, Philosophy of the Human Person, and Philosophy of Being). Since all UD students take these courses, they lay a foundation for cross-disciplinary philosophical conversation. As a philosophy major, you will often find yourself discussing philosophical Core texts with other majors. The different perspectives—literary, political, theological, scientific, aesthetic, etc.—will help you come to a more complete understanding of these extraordinarily rich texts.

2) **Historical courses.** Every philosophy major is required to take a four-course sequence that comprises From Ancient to Medieval, From Medieval to Modern, From Modern to Postmodern, and either Analytic Tradition or Continental Tradition. The main goal of these courses is to enable majors to come to an understanding of the Western philosophical tradition as a whole. A major should be able to situate a thinker within the tradition, and therefore have a grasp of significant sources and influences. Moreover, it is important to understand the dynamism of the Western philosophical tradition at the crucial points when one dominant form of thought changed into another: when the ancient paradigm of philosophy, for example, gave way to the medieval one, or when modern thought arose from the waning Middle Ages.

3) *Studium philosophiae non est ad hoc quod sciatur quid homines senserint, sed qualiter se habeat veritas rerum*, as Thomas Aquinas famously said: "The study of philosophy is not about getting to know what people have held, but in what manner the truth of things stands." Hence the importance of the **topical courses,** in which you will study some of the central subject areas of philosophy: logic, epistemology, ethics and the philosophy of God.

4) **The Junior and Senior Seminars.** Complementing the Core courses and the historical courses, which always present several thinkers together (usually in historical sequence), the Junior Seminar is devoted to the in-depth study of one thinker and his works. The Senior Seminar, for its part, focuses on a specific topic. The Senior Seminar's main goal is to lead the student from an attitude of (critical and intelligent) absorption of material to the ability to construct detailed philosophical arguments, and to present these arguments both orally and in writing in a methodologically sound way. Thus, the Senior Seminar prepares for the Senior Thesis. In both seminars, philosophy majors discover the degree to which philosophical inquiry can be not only a private endeavor, but also a communal one.

5) **Electives.** Every major must take at least one elective in philosophy (the department offers courses such as Epistemology, Aesthetics, Philosophy of Education, Bioethics, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of History, Thomas Aquinas, and Philosophy of Technology). In the schedule of the philosophy major, there is room for additional electives, typically about four. You can take these electives either in philosophy itself or in other areas that complement your philosophical studies. The selection of electives is a matter you may wish to discuss with your adviser.

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How to Plan a Four-Year Course of Study with a Philosophy Major

Because everyone's situation and interests are different, it is important that you discuss your course of studies at UD with your adviser, who will be happy to help you plan your schedule. Based on the logic of how the different philosophy courses build upon each other, and on the general requirements every UD student has to meet, a four-year degree plan for a philosophy major tends to look like this:

FRESHMAN YEAR	Credits	Courses	Credits
Art, Drama, Music, Math	3	Art, Drama, Music, Math	3
English 1301	3	English 1302	3
History 1311	3	History 1312	3
Language 1301 (or 2311)	3	Language 1302 (or 2312)	3
Philosophy 1301	3	Theology 1310	3
Total Fall Semester	**15**	**Total Spring Semester**	**15**

SOPHOMORE YEAR	Credits	Courses	Credits
English 2311–2312	6	Politics 1311	3
History 2301–2302	6	Language 2311–2312 (or Elective)	6
Philosophy 2323	3	Philosophy 3311	3
Theology 2311	3		
Total Sophomore Year (with a semester in Rome)			**30**

JUNIOR YEAR	Credits	Courses	Credits
Philosophy 3339	3	Philosophy 3345	3
Philosophy 3344	3	Philosophy 3351	3
Philosophy 4336	3	Philosophy Elective	3
Life Science (with Lab)	4	Physical Science (with Lab)	4
Economics 1311	3	Elective	3
Total Fall Semester	**16**	**Total Spring Semester**	**16**

SENIOR YEAR	Credits	Courses	Credits
Philosophy 3346 and/or 3347	6	Philosophy 3343	3
Philosophy 4341	3	Philosophy 4337	3
Electives	6	Philosophy 4342	3
		Electives	6
Total Fall Semester	**15**	**Total Spring Semester**	**15**

Your **freshman and sophomore years** will be taken up primarily by the university's Core courses, which provide the foundation for the common conversation that brings UD faculty and students together. As soon as possible, try to relate the different Core courses to each other in thinking about the Western tradition. For example, when reading Plato's "Republic" in Philosophy and the Ethical Life (Philosophy 1301), keep in mind what you've learned in Literary Tradition I (English 1301) about Homer. When studying Greek art in History of Art and Architecture I (Art 1311), ask yourself whether (and how) Greek architecture and art reflect the mindset that you discovered in Homer, Plato and Aristotle.

In their **sophomore year,** most UD students spend a semester in Rome. For a philosophy major, it is preferable to do this in the fall. Your choices of what to take during your Rome semester are determined by the more streamlined offerings there. The Philosophy Department, for example, teaches only Philosophy of the Human Person (Philosophy 2323) in Rome. Hence, you will typically take this course there. In planning for Rome, consider the possibility of taking Elementary Italian I in Irving or Survival Italian in Rome. It is much more rewarding to spend time in a foreign country if one has at least an elementary grasp of the language.

A philosophy major's **junior year** is devoted to two historical courses, the Junior Seminar, two topical courses and an advanced elective. During this year of intense philosophical studies, you will be acquainted with the Western philosophical tradition, from Thomas Aquinas through Heidegger. The Junior Seminar (Philosophy 3351) deepens this historical approach while shifting the emphasis toward more independent research by the student. In the Junior Seminar, you will learn how to use and synthesize secondary literature, write an advanced philosophical paper and present your findings to a group of fellow students. In this year, you also take Ethics (Philosophy 4336), Symbolic Logic (Philosophy 3339) and an advanced elective of your choosing.

In the **senior year,** finally, you'll bring your broad knowledge of different philosophical arguments and approaches to bear upon central philosophical issues. The senior year requires Senior Seminar (Philosophy 4341) in the fall and Senior Thesis (Philosophy 4342) in the spring. This is also when you'll take the topical course Philosophy of God (Philosophy 4337 or 4338). And, toward the end of your studies, you're going to return to ancient philosophy and its transformation in the early Middle Ages (Philosophy 3343). This will enable you to reconsider some of the thinkers and problems from the beginning of your student career—remember that Philosophy and the Ethical Life has a strong focus on Plato and Aristotle, for example—but from a more mature perspective. At the same time, you have the option of taking several electives. Discuss these with your adviser. Some students may find it advantageous to cluster their electives around a particular area of interest, even in conjunction with their senior thesis. It's also possible, however, to use the electives to pursue interests and satisfy curiosities that may have remained marginal during one's studies.

Senior Year
The Senior Seminar and Senior Thesis

SENIOR SEMINAR

In the medieval European guild system, every young apprentice who aspired to full membership in a guild had to submit a piece of work—the "masterpiece"—that proved he had acquired the skills necessary to practice his particular craft. Our modern universities are still modeled on the guild system, even in the names of the degrees they award. Thus, each stage of a student's academic career (the bachelor's degree, the master's degree, the doctorate) requires such a masterpiece. The senior thesis, then, is meant to demonstrate that its author is worthy of being admitted into the philosophers' ranks. It's a short piece of writing—about 30 pages on average—devoted to a particular philosophical topic that arises in connection with the focus of the Senior Seminar. Past Senior Seminars have covered themes such as "Philosophy in the Digital Age," "Philosophy and Architecture," "Melancholy, Acedia, Depression," "Citizenship," "Friendship," and "The Heart." The Senior Seminar first establishes a common foundation in major texts that are read together, then gives each student the opportunity to develop the common topic in a direction of his or her choosing.

SENIOR THESIS

The senior thesis that is the ultimate fruit of this work needs to be informed by the careful consideration of secondary literature. It needs to be clearly structured and well-written, as well as professionally documented. The Philosophy Department requires that you familiarize yourself with the conventions of academic writing that are codified in the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition.

Students are expected to present the principal results of their investigations to the university community at the annual Senior Colloquium.

Senior Year
The Comprehensive Examination

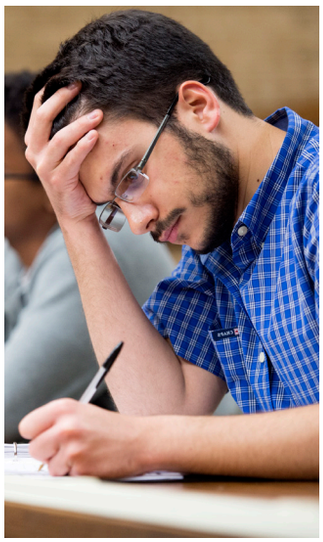
Toward the end of their senior year—at the end of March or beginning of April—philosophy majors take a comprehensive examination. This has two parts, written and oral. Whereas the senior thesis is meant to show that you are capable of treating one significant philosophical issue in depth, the comprehensive exam tests the breadth of your knowledge of Western philosophy, with an emphasis on some of its principal authors and themes, as well as your ability to think through a topic philosophically. The nature of the comps of course reflects the kind of material that we teach at UD—in other words, you can be confident that you know what you need to know for the comps if you have successfully taken all the classes required of a philosophy major and if you have carefully reviewed your notes in preparation, perhaps rereading some major texts. To provide further guidance for students majoring in philosophy, the department has compiled the following reading list. It contains texts that we judge to be so central to an understanding of Western philosophy that every philosophy major should have read and studied them before graduating.

Parmenides	*On Nature*
Plato	*Republic* *Apology* *Crito* *Phaedo* *Symposium*
Aristotle	*Categories*, 1–5, 10–14 *Physics,* I–II *On the Soul,* I, II.1–7, 12, III.1–8 *Nicomachean Ethics* *Metaphysics,* I, VII, IX, XII
Augustine	*Confessions*
Aquinas	*Summa Theologiae,* I, qu. 1–13, 75–89; I–II, qu. 90–97 *On Being and Essence*

Descartes	*Meditations on First Philosophy* *Discourse on Method*
Hume	*An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
Rousseau	*A Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*
Kant	*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*
Hegel	*Introduction to Philosophy of History*
Kierkegaard	*Fear and Trembling*
Mill	*Utilitarianism*
Nietzsche	*Genealogy of Morals*
Heidegger	"What is Metaphysics?" "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking"

The written portion of the comps is a four-hour examination that covers both the history of philosophy (Part A) and systematic issues in philosophy (Part B), thus reflecting the division of our upper-level courses. In a third part (Part C), you are asked to interpret a brief philosophical text that you may not yet have encountered in your studies.

The oral portion of the comps in much shorter, taking about 50 minutes. The oral exam will be administered by the two professors who have (blindly) graded the written examination. The written exam therefore constitutes the starting point of the dialogue: professors will ask you to clarify your arguments, elaborate on significant points and so forth. Often, however, the conversation will move on to other matters, unrelated to the written examination, so that the oral examination is another opportunity for you to prove that you have acquired significant mastery of the great texts and ideas of the Western philosophical tradition.



A Word About Languages

Many of the most influential philosophers did not compose their writings in English. This situation produces two consequences: first, serious study of many thinkers, from Plato through Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus to Martin Heidegger, requires that one learn the language in which a particular philosopher has expressed him- or herself. (There are even philosophers who have written in several languages, like Avicenna, Maimonides, Meister Eckhart, Hobbes, Descartes, Leibniz, Kant, Cassirer, Wittgenstein and Hannah Arendt.) Secondly, much of the relevant secondary literature on many philosophers is published in languages other than English. It is therefore highly useful—although the Philosophy Department does not require it—that you take your philosophical interests into consideration in choosing your language. For example, if you know you're most interested in the patristic and medieval periods, you may wish to consider taking Latin. If you're most attracted to the ancient philosophers, Greek is an ideal choice. Heidegger's etymologizing language makes some knowledge of German highly desirable. And so forth. By the way, if you're considering taking your philosophical interests to the graduate level, many graduate schools will view proficiency in a relevant language as a significant asset.

The Philosophy Colloquium

The Philosophy Colloquium (Philosophy 2141) is a one-credit course that takes place once a week, typically on a Friday afternoon. Each week during the semester, a speaker—who may be a member of the faculty, a graduate student, a senior or even a visiting scholar—proposes a significant philosophical question for discussion. The Philosophy Colloquium is an opportunity to discuss matters philosophically in an open forum, without the constraints (of time, topic, etc.) that characterize the typical classroom. It is graded pass or fail, on the basis of brief reflections on two of the presentations. Since all are welcome to attend, the colloquium brings philosophical discussion to the larger university community.

The Library

As your studies advance, your philosophy papers will become more demanding in the extent to which they expect you to engage in dialogue with the philosophical community. This is just another way of saying that you'll be expected to do more independent reading and research. Until a few years ago, this meant spending many hours in the library: retrieving, photocopying and reading scholarly materials. Nowadays, much of the literature that you'll need—though, by far, not everything—is available online. You may have heard of Google Books, a project that has scanned over 10 million (mostly English-language) books and made their contents available online. Yet the library still constitutes an important resource. Go to the website of UD's William A. Blakley Library to find a philosophy subject guide; it provides an overview of the most important available resources. Most physical books on philosophy are located in the "B" range of call numbers on the lower level of the Braniff building; you will find journals across the walkway, in the reading room of the Blakley building. Through various databases, the University of Dallas has access to a large number of full-text e-journals, which you can consult from your residence hall room or home. Again, a list is available through the library website.

Two of the most useful online resources are the Philosopher's Index and the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. The former, which can be accessed through the Blakley Library website, provides a searchable database of philosophical literature, both books and articles. Many entries feature abstracts composed by the authors themselves. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (http://plato.stanford.edu/) offers articles on a wide range of philosophical topics and philosophers, authored by acknowledged experts and accompanied by valuable bibliographies.

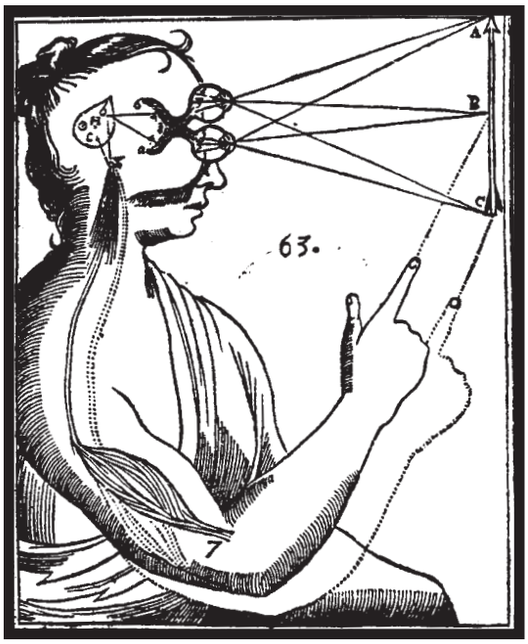
There are some things, however, that the Internet cannot do for you. The Blakley Library has a display of the most recent journals to which it subscribes; browsing through these journals will give you an idea of the most burning philosophical issues that are currently being discussed. And, as books are arranged on the library's shelves according to a system that groups together works on related subjects, you will often find that retrieving one book from the shelves leads to the discovery of several other related ones.

The Father Thomas Cain Aquinas Medal

Each year, the most outstanding UD philosophy senior has the opportunity to be awarded the department's Aquinas Medal: a beautiful plaque to celebrate the graduating student's accomplishment before the entire university community and to encourage the recipient to pursue further studies in the field.

Concentrations and Double Majors

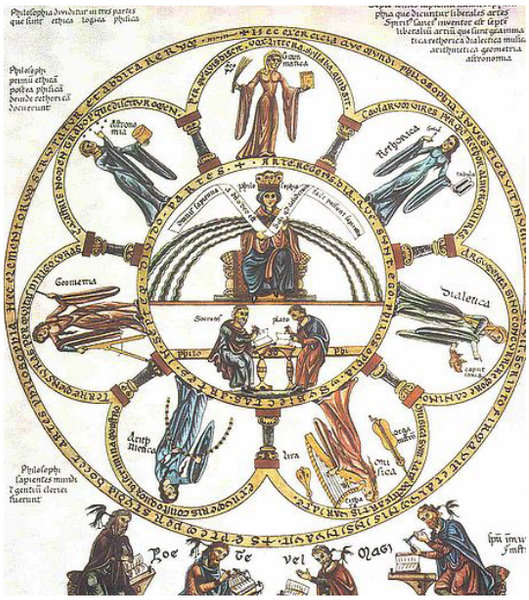
We've already said that philosophy, as a reflection on the fundamental principles of everything, is related to many other disciplines. Some of these disciplines play an auxiliary role for the philosopher: for example, classics provides the knowledge of ancient languages and cultures that is necessary for a full understanding of the ancient philosophers; medieval studies has the same function for those interested in medieval thought. Other disciplines naturally lead to philosophy if they pursue a radical questioning of their own foundations; thus, thorough analysis of the principles of historiography crosses over into the philosophy of history, while the linguistic question of whether natural languages possess deep structures that are ultimately the same for all languages leads to reflections in the philosophy of language. Conversely, the philosopher may discover that there are questions of great existential significance that philosophy itself is not in a position to address: "What can I hope?" may be such a question. Pursuit of such inquiries leads the philosopher to theology.



This situation means that philosophy can very usefully be combined with studies in almost every other field. The unique place that philosophy occupies within the system of knowledge is something you should bear in mind when you choose your electives or when you decide that you would like to add a concentration to philosophy as your major subject. The Philosophy Department has also had many successful double majors—although you should be aware of the challenges that come with adding a second major. Not only will you have to fulfill all the course requirements of your two majors, but you will also face the task of having to complete two senior projects, and possibly pass two comprehensive exams, in your senior year. So, you should weigh the pros and cons of double-majoring carefully in dialogue with your adviser.

The Through Plan for an M.A. in Philosophy at the University of Dallas

The Through Plan allows philosophy majors to continue their studies after their graduation, earning an M.A. in just one additional year. Up to two approved graduate courses taken during your senior year may count toward the M.A. Interested students should contact their undergraduate adviser and the philosophy master's graduate director by the spring semester of their junior year.



BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM

- Competitive advantage when applying to Ph.D. programs or pursuing a career
- GRE and application fee waived

THROUGH PLAN OVERVIEW

Senior Year Options

- Up to two graduate courses (6 credit hours)
- 3000-level language course with a final grade of B or higher

Master of Arts in Philosophy

- Comprehensive examination
- Thesis (6 credit hours)
- 24 additional credit hours, minus approved graduate credits taken during the senior year

Preparing for Life after UD

Beginning in your junior and certainly during your senior year, you will want to firm up the plans that you have for life after graduation. If you intend to pursue graduate studies in philosophy, you may find it helpful to discuss with your adviser the graduate schools to which you are going to apply. Most graduate programs in philosophy are highly specialized, so your choice of schools to which to apply will have to be made in light of your interests. The Internet is obviously an excellent tool in finding out about the particular strengths of graduate schools, the profiles of faculty members teaching there, admission requirements and so forth. Don't hesitate to write to a professor at another school whose work you find interesting. While there is no guarantee that you'll receive a reply (especially from the best-known people), many professors are delighted to hear from someone who is interested in studying with them. Graduate schools in the United States require you to take a GRE (Graduate Record Examination) and include the results with your application. A recent graduate of the UD philosophy program, Peter Antich, BA '12, has prepared a helpful guide, "Applying to Graduate Philosophy Programs: A Short Guide," that you're welcome to pick up in the departmental office.

Finally, please bear in mind not to ask your adviser or other professors at the last minute if you need a recommendation letter. Your recommender will be able to write a much stronger letter if he or she has enough time to think about and compose it.

Career Opportunities

Moving on to a graduate degree in philosophy is not the only way—nor the most frequently chosen one—to use one's philosophy degree in one's further career. Some of our philosophy majors have opted for advanced theological studies, for which the UD philosophy degree constitutes an excellent preparation. A recent philosophy graduate who devoted her senior thesis to Nietzsche and Freud is now pursuing doctoral studies in psychology. Philosophy majors with an interest in bioethics have moved on to medical studies. Many recent graduates are in law school or are practicing law. In fact, philosophy majors acquire abilities that will serve them well in almost any field: the close study of texts by different authors and composed in different styles, the examination of difficult arguments about fundamental issues, coherent speaking and writing about things that matter, the willingness to reflect deeply about one's own and others' convictions—these are skills no profession ought to be without. Perhaps it isn't too surprising, then, that according to a recent article in The Atlantic magazine, an undergraduate philosophy degree ranks No. 1 among the humanities in terms of long-term earning opportunity. *

* Bourree Lam, "The Earning Power of Philosophy Majors," *The Atlantic* (September 3, 2015).

"The unexamined life is not worth living for a human being."

– Socrates, *Apology* 38a

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