

# PHILOSOPHY, MA

*for the degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy*

The normal program of graduate study in philosophy is directed toward the Ph.D. The M.A. degree is awarded after completing Stage One. Only under exceptional circumstances and without any commitment of financial aid, students may be allowed to seek only the Master of Arts degree. This happens only rarely. Students seeking solely an M.A. degree are encouraged to apply elsewhere.

## Admission

The Graduate College admission requirements apply. Applicants should have had a course in symbolic logic and general courses in the history of ancient and early modern philosophy. Students deficient in these areas may be admitted, but they are required to remedy their deficiencies by taking such courses in their first year. Applicants should also have done some coursework in such central areas of philosophical inquiry as ethics and the theory of knowledge. All applications for admission must be supported by three letters of recommendation from persons qualified to comment on the applicant's aptitude for graduate study in philosophy. They are further required to submit a sample of their written work in philosophy (10-20 pages). International applicants whose native language is not English must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and submit their scores; a score of at least 600 on the paper-based test (115 on the computer-based test) is required for regular admission. In addition, these students must demonstrate competence in oral English before they will be allowed to assist as preceptors for the department, as described in the information for teaching assistants. ([http://cte.illinois.edu/testing/oral\\_eng/main.html](http://cte.illinois.edu/testing/oral_eng/main.html))

The deadline for applications is January 1 for admission in the following fall semester. Students are not normally permitted to start the program in the spring semester. For additional information see the department's information for prospective graduate students (<http://philosophy.illinois.edu/grad/admissions/>).

## Language Requirement

Every student must demonstrate competence in one of the four basic philosophical languages (French, German, Latin, or Greek) or else satisfy an alternative requirement (as described below), before advancing to the Third Stage of the program. In the case of French this may be done by passing with a grade of B or better or by passing an examination administered by the Department of French. In the case of German this may be done by passing with a grade of B or better or by passing an examination administered by the Department of German. In the case of Latin this may be done by passing with a grade of B or better any LAT course at the 300-, 400-, or 500-level. In the case of Greek this may be done by passing with a grade of B or better any GRK course at the 400- or 500-level (with the exception of and ). Alternatively students may pass a proficiency examination in Latin or Greek administered by the Department of the Classics, the form of which must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

To substitute a language other than one of the basic four, a student must first obtain approval of his or her adviser and of the Graduate Program

Committee. Such approval normally will be granted only where the language is directly relevant to the student's work in philosophy.

The student may petition the Graduate Program Committee to replace the language requirement by an approved program of study in her or his area of research. This petition must include a written justification by the student or the advisor. If written by the student, the justification must be approved by the student's advisor. This program of study should be deemed more useful to the student's research than a study of one of the philosophical languages. It may, for example, involve intensive study of specific methods that will greatly enhance the student's research, such as scientific, mathematical, or statistical methods, or it may involve obtaining crucial knowledge of some field outside of philosophy, such as concentrated studies in law, psychology, or religion.

## Graduate Teaching Experience

Although teaching is not a general Graduate College requirement, experience in teaching is considered an important part of the graduate experience in this program.

## Financial Aid

Students admitted to the Ph.D. program are offered financial aid, in the form of fellowships or assistantships, which cover living expenses and include a waiver of tuition and service fees. This aid will usually be continued for up to five years provided the student is making normal progress. Further details and qualifications are given in the department's graduate regulations (<http://philosophy.illinois.edu/grad/regulations/>).

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The M.A. degree is awarded after completing Stage I. Students may not apply to the M.A. degree program. Students qualify for the M.A. degree by earning at least 32 hours of graduate credit with at least a 3.25 grade point average (A = 4.0), as specified below.

For additional details and requirements refer to the department's Graduate Program Regulations (<http://www.philosophy.illinois.edu/grad/>) and the Graduate College Handbook (<http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/>).

Code	Title	Hours
Hours in regularly scheduled courses (excluding PHIL 583 and PHIL 590)		24-32
PHIL 590	Directed Research	0-8
or PHIL 583	Individual Topics	
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>32</b>

## Other Requirements

Requirement	Description
Other requirements may overlap	
Minimum Number of 500-level	12
Hours Required Overall (excluding 583 and 590):	
A one-year residence requirement	
Submission of a substantial essay and passing an oral examination on this essay OR admission to Stage II.	
Minimum GPA:	3.25

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College of Liberal Arts & Sciences website (<https://las.illinois.edu/>)

#### **Admissions**

Graduate College Admissions & Requirements (<https://grad.illinois.edu/admissions/apply/>)

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The Philosophy Department aims to produce four main learning outcomes.

1. **Philosophical Knowledge:** Students will have advanced familiarity with major figures and movements in the history of western philosophy; with central topics, theories, and debates in epistemology and metaphysics, in ethics and value theory, and in logic; and with current developments in professional philosophy.
2. **Philosophical Reading:** Students will develop advanced ability to analyze persuasive and argumentative prose: identifying the main claims asserted, the reasons alleged to support those claims, and the logical relations between the claims and the reasons, including identifying any gaps in the arguments.
3. **Philosophical Inquiry:** Students will have advanced ability to formulate abstract principles in epistemology and metaphysics, in ethics and value theory, in logic, and in related special topic areas in philosophy; they will have advanced ability to identify consequences of the principles they formulate, and they will have advanced ability to construct arguments for those principles and compare them to competing principles.
4. **Philosophical Writing:** Students will have advanced ability to write clearly and with logical precision on a wide range of important issues, including (but not limited to): civic and social challenges at local, national, and global levels; social and cultural issues related to race, indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, language, and disability; and the ways that complex, interdependent global systems—natural, environmental, social, cultural, economic, and political—affect and are affected by the local identities and ethical choices of individuals and institutions.

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#### **Graduate Degree Programs in Philosophy**

- Majors
  - Philosophy, MA (p. 1)
    - optional concentrations
      - Medieval Studies (<http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/las/concentration/medieval-studies/>)
  - Philosophy, PhD (<http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/las/philosophy-phd/>)
    - optional concentrations
      - Medieval Studies (<http://catalog.illinois.edu/graduate/las/concentration/medieval-studies/>)

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#### **Department of Philosophy**

Department Chair: Robin Kar

Director of Graduate Studies: Shelley Weinberg

Philosophy Department website (<https://philosophy.illinois.edu/>)

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#### **College of Liberal Arts & Sciences**