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)

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 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 are qualifications are given in the department’s
graduate regulations (http://philosophy.illinois.edu/grad/regulations/).

for the degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy

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/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 590</td>
<td>Directed Research</td>
<td>0-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or PHIL 583</td>
<td>Individual Topics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Hours</td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Requirements

Other requirements may overlap

Minimum Number of 500-level Hours Required Overall (excluding 583 and 590):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A one-year residence requirement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of a substantial essay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and passing an oral examination on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this essay OR admission to Stage II.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum GPA:</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

for the degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy
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.

**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/)

*for the degree of Master of Arts in Philosophy*

---

**Department of Philosophy**

Department Chair Robin Kar  
Director of Graduate Studies: Shelley Weinberg  
Philosophy Department website (https://philosophy.illinois.edu/)  
200 Gregory Hall, 810 South Wright Street, Urbana, IL 61801  
(217) 333-2889  
Philosophy Department email (phildept@illinois.edu)

**College of Liberal Arts & Sciences**

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

**Admissions**

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

*Information listed in this catalog is current as of 03/2024*