Philosophy is the oldest, broadest, and most fundamental form of inquiry. Some philosophical questions have to do with the understanding of ourselves and whatever else there may be. Others focus upon the nature of different forms of knowledge and experience, and upon ethical issues and problems of value. The study of philosophy is one of the most important elements in a good liberal education. It also improves one's ability to think clearly, and to construct, analyze, and criticize arguments of any kind. The major and minor are sponsored by the Department of Philosophy.

A Major Plan of Study Form must be completed and submitted to the LAS Student Affairs Office before the end of the fifth semester (60-75 hours). Please see your adviser.

Major With Distinction

To become a candidate for graduation with distinction in philosophy, a student must satisfy the major requirements and must satisfy the further requirements of either the Thesis option or the Coursework option. If a candidate has satisfied both sets of requirements, the student will graduate with whichever is the highest level of distinction earned.

THESIS: Requires 35 hours of philosophy courses (including PHIL 492 and 4 other courses at the 300 level or above), a GPA of 3.5 in all philosophy courses, and a written thesis with a grade of A- or above.

Students wishing to pursue this option must have at least a 3.5 GPA in all philosophy courses to begin thesis work, though students may petition the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Philosophy for an exemption. In order to earn distinction for thesis work, the student must graduate with at least a 3.5 GPA. The student should have a preliminary idea of the sort of thesis research he or she would like to conduct. If the professor expresses a preliminary willingness to advise the thesis, the student should prepare a Plan for Thesis Work. The Plan should be 600-800 words. It should include the following information:

- A tentative project title
- The name of the proposed thesis adviser
- The primary area of philosophy (e.g., political philosophy, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, etc.) the project will concern and the particular discussions it will engage
- A lucid statement of the central claim(s) that the project will defend (bearing in mind that this may change during the course of the project)
- An overview of the kind of research that will be completed and, as far as they are known, the arguments and considerations that the student hopes to marshal in support of the central claim(s).

The student should submit the Plan for Thesis Work to both the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the proposed adviser. If both approve of the Plan for Thesis Work, the student should register for thesis work (PHIL 492) with the selected adviser and meet with that adviser to set up a research schedule. Thesis projects are usually in the 25-30 page range, and occasionally take two semesters to complete. When the thesis adviser decides that the thesis is ready for defense, the department chairperson will appoint a committee of two members of the department (including the thesis adviser). The committee will judge the project's quality, originality, and impact and assign a grade (which may be different from the grade the student's thesis adviser assigns for thesis coursework). If the thesis earns a grade of A- or above, distinction will be awarded as follows:

- Thesis Grade A-: Distinction
- Thesis Grade A High Distinction
- Thesis Grade A+: Highest Distinction

As a rough guideline, High Distinction is awarded when committee members feel that the work is of high enough quality that the student should be encouraged to pursue graduate study in philosophy. Highest Distinction is where the work is of such high quality that it would be a shame if the
student did not pursue graduate study. Distinction is where the work is of high quality, though not so high as to clearly evidence potential for graduate study.

**COURSE WORK:** 38 hours of philosophy courses (including eight courses at the 300 level or above) and a 3.5 GPA in all philosophy courses.

The level of distinction will be determined by the Director of Undergraduate Studies on the basis of the student's Philosophy GPA in the following manner:

- **GPA 3.5 - 3.69 Distinction**
- **GPA 3.7 – 3.89 High Distinction**
- **GPA 3.9 – 4.0 Highest Distinction**

**General education:** Students must complete the [Campus General Education](https://courses.illinois.edu/) requirements including the campus general education language requirement.

**Minimum required major and supporting course work:** normally equates to 44 hours including at least 32 hours of Philosophy courses. Twelve hours of 300- and 400-level courses in the major must be taken on this campus.

**Minimum hours required for graduation:** 120 hours

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 202</td>
<td>Symbolic Logic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 203</td>
<td>Ancient Philosophy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 206</td>
<td>Early Modern Philosophy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 421</td>
<td>Ethical Theories</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 426</td>
<td>Metaphysics</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>or PHIL 430</td>
<td>Theory of Knowledge</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 499</td>
<td>Capstone Seminar</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

At least 12 additional hours of coursework in Philosophy, with 9 of those hours being above the 100-level (including at least two 300- or 400-level courses)

A student may select either of two types of programs of supporting course work and should work out a specific program of the type chosen with the help and approval of a departmental adviser.

**Twelve hours minimum. Select from:**

- **Option I:** Intensive study in another discipline. Courses normally beyond the 100 level in one other discipline. Most approved minors satisfy this requirement. A second major may also be used to satisfy this requirement

- **Option II:** A special program of study built around a unifying theme or topic. Course work outside philosophy in one or more other discipline(s), normally beyond the 100 level.

**Total Hours** 44

*Information listed in this catalog is current as of 05/2022*