The Department of Philosophy is located in the College of Arts and Sciences, but a student in any college can minor (or double major) in philosophy. The department invites all Kent State University students to consider our course offerings as a complement or supplement to any program of study. Philosophy courses offer students training in vital workplace and life skills by:

1) Enhancing analytic and critical reading, writing and thinking skills;
2) Teaching them to consider and analyze various sides of an issue, rather than automatically adopting or rejecting a given position;
3) Fostering creative thinking and the ability to see alternative solutions to problems;
4) Building a foundation for lifelong learning;
5) Broadening their horizons and encouraging inquiry and reflection;
6) Developing global literacy; and
7) Introducing them to a discipline whose history stretches back well over 2,000 years, and which considers basic, timeless questions.

WHAT A STUDENT SHOULD EXPECT FROM PHILOSOPHY COURSES

We expect each student to actively participate in every philosophy course, large or small. A student in a philosophy course will be asked to think, not just to listen, and to express his or her own ideas and views as opposed to merely repeating or agreeing with a correct answer. Students will also be required to formulate reasons and arguments in support of their views and to explore the consequences of those views.

Philosophical training helps students develop intellectual discipline and enables them to appreciate the ideas of mainstream thinkers as well as those of authors who challenge assumptions and commonly held viewpoints.

COURSE OFFERINGS AND FACULTY

The Department of Philosophy’s course offerings stress both diversity and depth, offering classes that explore a wide range of topics in all of the historical eras and main subfields of philosophy. Courses are taught by faculty who differ not only in scholarly concentrations, but also in teaching methods, values, and styles of interaction in both instruction and advising. Students are encouraged to sample a wide range of both course offerings and instructors.

The Department of Philosophy participates in a wide range of interdisciplinary programs, including Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Classics, Health Care Ethics, Pre-Law, Religion Studies, and Women’s Studies.

Philosophy faculty have three professional aims: excellence in teaching, rigor and quality in professional research activities, and generosity and service to students, the university, and the broader community. Full-time faculty have doctoral degrees from the Universities of California (Riverside), Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Notre Dame, Oregon, and Washington; from Emory, Purdue, Vanderbilt, and Wayne State Universities, and from CUNY and SUNY (Stony Brook). Faculty participate in and take on leadership roles within the American Philosophical Association, Ohio Philosophical Association, American Academy of Religion, American Society for Value Inquiry, International Society for Chinese Philosophy, North American Nietzsche Society, Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, and Society for Women in Philosophy.

MAJORING OR MINORING IN PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHY MAJOR

The philosophy major consists of 36 hours of classes (12 courses). A student majoring in philosophy starts with 9 hours of basics: introductions to philosophy, ethics, and formal logic. The required basic courses for the philosophy major are:

- PHIL 11001 Introduction to Philosophy
- PHIL 21001 Introduction to Ethics
- PHIL 21002 Introduction to Formal Logic or PHIL 41038 Intermediate Logic

Career Opportunities

Philosophy majors gain employment in a wide variety of fields. Training in critical thinking and argumentative writing is particularly important in business, legal, and health-related careers. A humanities education aids in the understanding of different people and cultures, which provides an outstanding foundation for employment in fields such as public relations, marketing, and diplomatic or other government services, including public policy analysis. Some students find a philosophy major to be an excellent complement to a degree in education, counseling, or social work, while others go on to pursue an MA or PhD in philosophy and to teach at the university level.

A philosophy major is excellent preparation for:

- LAW SCHOOL: Philosophy majors perform better on the LSAT than all other majors except for physics/math
- BUSINESS SCHOOL: Philosophy majors perform better on the GMAT than economics majors or any type of business majors
- GRADUATE SCHOOL: Philosophy majors perform better on the GRE verbal and analytic writing sections than any other majors and are within the top five (higher than any other humanities majors) on the quantitative section
Beyond these basics, philosophy majors choose at least three courses (9 hours) in the history of philosophy, one from each of the following groups:

**Group 1**
- PHIL 31001 Ancient Philosophy
- PHIL 31002 Medieval Philosophy

**Group 2**
- PHIL 31003 Continental Rationalism
- PHIL 31004 British Empiricism
- PHIL 31005 German Critical Philosophy

**Group 3**
- PHIL 31006 19th-Century Philosophy
- PHIL 31010 20th-Century Philosophy
- PHIL 31020 American Philosophy

Each of the history of philosophy courses is taught as a writing-intensive course (WIC); thus, a philosophy major takes at least three courses with a heavy emphasis on the development of critical and argumentative writing skills.

In addition to the 18 hours of basics and history courses, the philosophy major requires 18 hours of upper-division PHIL coursework, at least 9 hours (three courses) of which must be at the 40000 level. The 40000-level courses are offered jointly to advanced undergraduates and to graduate students in the department’s master’s program. This affords undergraduates the opportunity to interact with and be challenged by more advanced students, further enhancing their learning experience in their 40000-level philosophy courses.

**PHILOSOPHY MINOR**

The philosophy minor consists of 21 hours of classes (7 courses). Students select any three of the following basic courses:

- PHIL 11001 Introduction to Philosophy
- PHIL 11009 Critical Thinking
- PHIL 21001 Introduction to Ethics
- PHIL 21002 Introduction to Formal Logic

In addition to these basics, philosophy minors choose four additional courses, at least three of which (9 hours) must be at the upper-division level. These must include at least one of the history of philosophy courses listed above (31001, 31002, 31003, 31004, 31005, 31006, 31010, 31020) and one course at the 40000 level.

Course prerequisites require that either PHIL 11001 or PHIL 21002 or PHIL 21003 be taken prior to any 40000-level course. In general, though, the philosophy major and minor allow students considerable flexibility with scheduling and leave them with ample time to pursue other coursework, including additional majors and/or minors.

The courses listed above marked with asterisks fulfill various Kent Core requirements. Thus, we encourage students who are undecided on a major, or even a college, to consider majoring or minoring in philosophy. We offer Kent Core courses in the Humanities and Fine Arts, Mathematics and Critical Reasoning, and Additional categories, which can be counted toward the philosophy major or minor as well as the Kent Core requirements. Regardless of which major or minor a student ultimately chooses, philosophy courses provide exposure to fundamental areas of learning, while at the same time helping develop capacities relevant to almost any vocational or scholarly discipline or career path.

**FORMAL DECLARATION OF A MAJOR OR MINOR IN PHILOSOPHY**

Students are required to formally declare all major(s) and minor(s); this process begins in the student’s own college advising office. In addition, however, prospective philosophy majors are strongly encouraged to make an appointment to meet with the Department of Philosophy’s Undergraduate Coordinator in 320 Bowman Hall. The Coordinator will be able to answer any questions the student might have and will also assign each declared major to a member of the philosophy faculty as a major advisor. We encourage each major to meet with his or her major advisor at least once a semester.

**CAREER AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Majoring in philosophy helps prepare students for success, regardless of what their career goals are. Students majoring in philosophy develop skills attractive to a broad range of potential employers. They receive intensive training in critical thinking and argumentation skills, careful reading and analysis of texts, argumentative and analytic writing, evaluating and responding to arguments in both written and oral form, and global literacy. These important skills are vital in today’s job market, and no job seeker can afford to be without them. Our 36-credit-hour major makes it easy for students to choose one or more complementary minors, or even a second major, depending on their career interests. Particularly with an appropriate companion minor or major, philosophy majors are very well-prepared for a wide range of careers, including law, business, medicine, public relations, government, education, writing, editing, journalism and communications, technology, and social work.

While there are no scholarships specifically for philosophy majors, well-qualified students should consider applying to the Honors College, which offers scholarships to exceptionally talented applicants. Please contact the Honors College for further information.