Applicants for admission to the Graduate School for work toward a master’s or doctoral degree with a major in philosophy are expected to have had 18 or more credit hours in undergraduate courses in the subject.

Students in the master’s and doctoral programs must satisfy a variety of requirements, including the completion of coursework. The Department of Philosophy has a diversified faculty that can supervise the writing of master’s theses and doctoral dissertations on a wide range of topics.

The department makes available teaching assistantships and then graduate part-time instructorships to doctoral students, and assists with job placement. Teaching assistantships are sometimes available to master’s students as well. Descriptions of both degree programs are available from the Department of Philosophy.

Students wishing to pursue graduate work in philosophy should note master’s degree requirements (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/degree-requirements/masters-degree-requirements/) and doctoral degree requirements (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/degree-requirements/doctoral-degree-requirements/), and should consult the graduate portion (https://www.colorado.edu/philosophy/graduate/) of the department’s website.

Course code for this program is PHIL.

Master's Degree

- Philosophy - Master of Arts (MA) (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/philosophy/philosophy-master-arts-ma/)

Doctoral Degree

- Philosophy - Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) (catalog.colorado.edu/graduate/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/programs-study/philosophy/philosophy-doctor-philosophy-phd/)

Faculty

While many faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate students, some instruct students at the undergraduate level only. For more information, contact the faculty member's home department.

Bailey, Dominic T.J. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_145110/) Associate Professor; PhD, University of Cambridge (England)

Boonin, David Isaac (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_113100/) Professor; PhD, University of Pittsburgh

Bredeson, Garrett Zantow (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_154933/) Instructor; PhD, Vanderbilt University

Cleland, Carol (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_105674/) Professor; PhD, Brown University

Demarest, Heather (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_159052/) Assistant Professor; PhD, Rutgers University

Fileva, Iskra Nikova (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_154600/) Assistant Professor; PhD, Boston University

Forbes, Graeme R. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_143615/) Professor; DPhil, Oxford University (England)

Heathwood, Christopher Charles (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_141144/) Associate Professor; PhD, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Huemer, Michael (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_113081/) Professor; PhD, Rutgers University–Newark

Jaggar, Alison M. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_100454/) Professor; PhD, SUNY at Buffalo

Kauffman, Daniel Patrick (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_134174/) Associate Professor; PhD, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Lee, Mi-Kyoung (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_141821/) Associate Professor; PhD, Harvard University

Norcross, Alastair J. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_144850/) Associate Professor; PhD, Syracuse University

Oddie, Graham James (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_104741/) Professor; PhD, University of London (England)

Pasnau, Robert C. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_115293/) Professor; PhD, Cornell University

Perl, Caleb Visiting Instructor; PhD, University of Southern California

Potter, Jason Timothy (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_103972/) Instructor; PhD, University of Colorado Boulder

Rupert, Robert D. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_139802/) Professor, Associate Chair; PhD, University of Illinois at Chicago

Saucedo Ceballos, Raul (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_153759/) Assistant Professor; PhD, Cornell University

Staffel, Julia (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_163744/) Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Southern California

Steup, Matthias P. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_157766/) Professor; PhD, Brown University

Sturgis, Daniel (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_111794/) Senior Instructor; PhD, University of Colorado Boulder

Talbot, Brian Thomas (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_147617/) Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Southern California

Wingo, Ajume H. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_144391/) Associate Professor; PhD, University of Wisconsin–Madison

Youkey, David A. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_105211/) Instructor; PhD, University of Colorado Boulder
Courses

PHIL 5010 (3) Single Philosopher
Philosophers covered include, from year to year, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Hume, and Kant. Includes at least one course per year on an ancient author and one course per year on a modern author.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4010  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 12.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5020 (3) Topics in the History of Philosophy
Examines a specific philosophical problem over an extended historical period.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4020  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5030 (1) Greek Philosophical Texts
Selected readings in classical philosophy, in the original language, with a focus on achieving fluency in reading philosophical Greek.  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 8.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.  

PHIL 5040 (1) Latin Philosophical Texts
Selected readings in classical and medieval philosophy, in the original language, with a focus on achieving fluency in reading philosophical Latin.  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 8.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.  

PHIL 5100 (3) Ethics
Presents representative positions in normative ethics and metaethics.  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5110 (3) Contemporary Moral Theory
Provides an in-depth look at some recent work in moral theory, usually organized around a single topic. Topics vary from year to year. Previous topics include: consequentialism and its critics, virtue theory, deontological ethics, moral psychology, well-being, and metaethics.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4110  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5120 (3) Philosophy and Animals
Examines the moral status of nonhuman animals, and its implications for the common use of animals as food and experimental subjects for humans.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 5120  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5150 (3) Topics in Applied Ethics
Discusses advanced work in applied normative philosophy. Topics vary from semester to semester and may focus on one or two specific areas (e.g., race, procreative ethics, military ethics, sports ethics) or take a broader approach that includes issues from across a wider range of subjects.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4150  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5200 (3) Contemporary Political Philosophy
Provides a survey of recent approaches to political philosophy: liberalism (Rawls, Dworkin); libertarianism (Nozick); communitarianism (Sandel, Macintyre); feminism (Jaggar). Topics and readings vary with the instructor.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4200  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5210 (3) Philosophy and Social Policy
Studies philosophical approaches to social and political issues such as abortion, bioethics, environmental preservation, human rights, and reverse discrimination. Gives attention to strengths and weaknesses of philosophical treatments of these issues.  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5230 (3) Bioethics and Public Policy
Examines public policy implications of contemporary biological, genetic, biomedical, and behavioral science in light of ethics and human values. Considers theoretical and practical grounds for moral assessment of scientific research and possible applications of technology.  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5240 (3) Seminar in Environmental Philosophy
Philosophical examination of several different approaches to environmental problems: economic, juridical, political and ecological. Discusses specific environmental problems, focusing on their moral dimensions, e.g., wilderness preservation, animal rights and land use and urban planning.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: ENVS 5240  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5260 (3) Philosophy of Law
Considers philosophical topics concerning law and the U.S. legal system. Topics that may be considered include the nature of law, relations between law and morality, justifications of punishment, the moral duty to obey the law, and law and liberty.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4260  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5290 (1-3) Topics in Values and Social Policy
Deals with topics in the area of philosophy and public policy and is often interdisciplinary in focus. Topics vary from one semester to another.  
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5300 (3) Philosophy of Mind
Discusses topics in the philosophy of mind, including the mind-body problem, consciousness, intentionality, rationality, mental causation and the nature of mental states.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4300  
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.  

PHIL 5340 (3) Epistemology
Studies some of the main topics of theory of knowledge, such as evidence, justification, prediction, explanation, skepticism, and concept acquisition.  
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4340
PHIL 5360 (3) Metaphysics
Traditional and contemporary theories of the basic categories of reality and the human relationship to it, including universals, substance, identity, change, mind and body, free will and modality.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4360
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5370 (3) Free Will and Determinism
Explores the full range of questions relating to the problem of free will and determinism. Topics may include: the scientific evidence for determinism, hard versus soft determinism, arguments for and against the compatibility of free will and determinism, moral responsibility and the principle of alternate possibilities, hierarchical motivation, the deep self, reactive attitudes, the intelligibility question for libertarianism, divine foreknowledge.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4370

PHIL 5400 (3) Philosophy of Science
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4400
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5440 (3) Topics in Logic
Provides for offering courses in a variety of topics in logic, including, but not limited to, mathematical logic, philosophical issues in logic, probability theory, decision theory, and inductive logic.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4440
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollments in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5450 (3) History and Philosophy of Physics
Investigates the role of experiment in physics; case studies in the history and philosophy of physics and in scientific methodology.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4450 and PHYS 5450
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5460 (3) Modal Logic
Introduces the most philosophically relevant kind of logic that builds on PHIL 2440. Modal logic is the logic of the concepts of necessity, possibility and contingency. A variety of systems of sentential modal logic will be covered, along with the standard system of first-order modal logic.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4460
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5470 (3) Probability and Rational Choice
Examines issues in four related areas: probability theory (e.g. the interpretation of probability), the raven paradox and the principle of indifference, decision theory (e.g., the Newcomb problem, the toxin puzzle and Pascal's wager), game theory (e.g., Prisoner's dilemma, tragedy of the commons and Schelling points) and social choice theory (e.g., Arrow's theorem). Familiarity with symbolic logic is strongly recommended.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4470
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5480 (3) Formal Methods in Philosophy
Introduces formal methods used in contemporary philosophy beyond classical first-order logic. Specific topics may vary. Examples: extensions of and alternatives to first-order logic (including propositional and quantified modal logic and higher-order and plural logic), alternatives to classical logic (including many-valued and intuitionistic systems), generalized and substitutional quantifiers, the lambda calculus, indicative and subjunctive conditionals, probability theory, inductive logic, and decision theory.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4480
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5490 (3) Philosophy of Language
Examines theories and problems regarding the nature of language and its relation to reality. Concepts discussed include sense, reference, conventions, intentions and their relation to science and social life. Relevant literature includes readings in Frege, Russell, Quine, Putnam, Kripke and Chomsky.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: PHIL 4490
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5550 (3) Metaphysics and Epistemology Proseminar
Covers seminal classic texts and/or fundamental topics in analytic metaphysics and epistemology.
Requisites: Restricted to Philosophy graduate students only.

PHIL 5600 (3) Philosophy of Religion
Studies topics falling under philosophy of religion, such as proofs for God's existence, religious language, mysticism, psychology of religion, modern theological movements, miracles, and study of individual theologians.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5700 (3) Aesthetics
Analyzes the principal topics of aesthetics, including such issues as formal structure of aesthetics, the nature of critical judgments, and the status of the work of art.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5800 (3) Open Topics in Philosophy
Variety of new courses at the 5000 level. See current departmental announcements for specific content.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollments in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5810 (1-3) Special Topics in Philosophy
Instructor meets regularly with three or more students to discuss special topics in philosophy.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollments in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 5840 (1-3) Graduate Independent Study
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollments in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
PHIL 6000 (3-4) Seminar in the History of Philosophy
Studies advanced topics in the history of philosophy. Content varies by semester, but may extend to any period in the history of philosophy, from the Presocratics into the modern era.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 12.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 6100 (3) Seminar in Ethics
Intensive study of selected topics in ethical theory.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 9.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 6200 (3) Seminar in Social and Political Philosophy
Provides an in-depth look at some particular topic in social and political philosophy, such as rights, political freedom, political obligation, or democracy.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 15.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 6300 (3) Seminar in Philosophy of Mind
Studies selected topics in philosophy of mind.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 6310 (3) Issues and Methods in Cognitive Science
Interdisciplinary introduction to cognitive science, examining ideas from cognitive psychology, philosophy, education, and linguistics via computational modeling and psychological experimentation. Includes philosophy of mind; learning; categorization; vision and mental imagery; consciousness; problem solving; decision making, and game-theory; language processing; connectionism. No background in computer science will be presumed.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: CSCI 6402 and EDUC 6504 and LING 6200 and PSYC 6200 and SLHS 6402
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.
Recommended: Prerequisite at least one course at the 3000-level or higher in CSCI, LING, PHIL, or PSYC.

PHIL 6340 (3) Seminar in Epistemology
Intensive study of selected topics in epistemology.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 15.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 6380 (3) Seminar in Metaphysics
Intensive study of selected topics in metaphysics.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 15.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 6400 (3) Seminar in Philosophy of Science
Topics connected with development of nature of science: the structure of scientific theories, the testing of hypotheses, the theory of decisions in science and the basic conceptions and models of abstraction in the history of science.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 6490 (3) Seminar in Philosophy of Language
Studies some of the main topics in the philosophy of language, such as meaning and theories of meaning, translation, speech acts, rules of language, reference, relevance of psycholinguistics, language and thought, and language and ontology.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 6940 (1) Master's Candidate for Degree
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to Philosophy graduate students only.
Grading Basis: Pass/Fail

PHIL 6950 (1-6) Master's Thesis
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 7.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to Philosophy graduate students only.

PHIL 7415 (2) Cognitive Science Research Practicum
Independent, interdisciplinary research project in cognitive science for graduate students pursuing a joint PhD in an approved core discipline and cognitive
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course CSCI 6402 or EDUC 6504 or LING 6200 or PHIL 6310 or PSYC 6200 (minimum grade D-).

PHIL 7425 (2) Cognitive Science Research Practicum 2
Independent, interdisciplinary research project in cognitive science for advanced graduate students pursuing a joint PhD in an approved core discipline and cognitive science. Research projects integrate at least two areas within the cognitive sciences: psychology, computer science, linguistics, education, philosophy. Students need commitments from two mentors for their project.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: CSCI 7422 and EDUC 6516 and LING 7425 and PSYC 7425 and SLHS 7428
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course CSCI 6402 or EDUC 6504 or LING 6200 or PHIL 6310 or PSYC 6200 (minimum grade D-).
Recommended: Prerequisite EDUC 6505 or PHIL 6310.

PHIL 7810 (1) Topics in Cognitive Science
Reading of interdisciplinary innovative theories and methodologies of cognitive science. Students participate in the ICS Distinguished Speakers series that hosts internationally recognized cognitive scientists who share and discuss their current research. Session discussions include analysis of leading edge and controversial new approaches in cognitive science.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: CSCI 7722 and EDUC 7775 and LING 7776 and PSYC 7775 and SLHS 7775
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 4.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to graduate students only.

PHIL 8990 (1-10) Doctoral Dissertation
All doctoral students must register for not fewer than 30 hours of dissertation credit as part of the requirements for the degree. For a detailed discussion of doctoral dissertation credit, refer to the Graduate School section.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 30.00 total credit hours.
Requisites: Restricted to Philosophy graduate students only.