

BACHELOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The Bachelor of Philosophy (B.Phil.) is an intercollege degree program that allows students to work with a faculty mentor to create their own, individually tailored undergraduate major and personalized curriculum. Bachelor of Philosophy degrees culminate in a capstone project that allows for deep engagement with a topic of the student's choosing.

The Bachelor of Philosophy degree is intended for those few students for whom the present degree requirements are restrictive and not responsive to their needs and who are seeking a rigorous, integrative educational experience. While the educational goals of most students are adequately met by existing degree programs, those who can demonstrate that the usual requirements of conventional programs prevent them from adequately meeting their goals may apply. An important standard for admission to the Bachelor of Philosophy degree program will be the ability of students to demonstrate that their stated goals are viable and worthy of a college degree.

What is the Bachelor of Philosophy Degree?

The Bachelor of Philosophy degree is Penn State's individualized major program. Bachelor of Philosophy degrees bridge traditional disciplines and colleges across the University. Students may bring together perspectives from the arts, humanities, sciences, and applied fields like engineering and business on topics such as sustainability, democracy, technology, religion, and much more.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You are deeply invested in your learning and want to create a unique educational experience.
- You seek to integrate knowledge across traditional disciplinary boundaries to address a topic of significance.
- You are motivated to cultivate a relationship with a faculty mentor.
- You are seeking the experience of creating and defending your own scholarly work.

Entrance to Major

- An entry interview with the candidate, the faculty mentor, and the members of the Bachelor of Philosophy Degree Committee is required prior to admission to the program. This preliminary interview provides an opportunity for the candidate to discuss and justify the intended use of the Bachelor of Philosophy degree program, and the unique circumstances that surround the applicant.
- Second-, third-, and fourth-semester students may apply; those selected will begin their programs the following semester. Exceptions may be approved by the committee.
- Evidence of successful completion of course work requiring independent research is required. In addition, the committee will consider the applicant's cumulative grade-point average as an

index of academic performance and responsibility. Applicants must possess the capability of performing at a 3.0 minimum level.

- Approval of the student's program by the committee is required.

Requirements for Graduation

- Satisfactory completion of a program approved by the committee:
 - a. a minimum of 120 credits to include at least 18 credits at the 400 or 500 level;
 - b. certification by the faculty mentor; and
 - c. approval of a capstone, thesis or equivalent, by the faculty mentor.
- Approval by the committee for graduation following presentation and defense of the capstone, thesis or equivalent.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

Bachelor of Philosophy Program Coordinators

Division of Undergraduate Studies

814-865-7576

bphil@psu.edu

Career Paths

Each Bachelor of Philosophy student will gain a unique set of knowledge and skills that will prepare them for career paths and graduate studies of their choosing. Graduates of the program have found work in many different professions, including as business executives, consultants, professors, therapists, marketing managers, interpreters, pastors, and much more. They work in various organizational settings, from global corporations like Nike to government agencies like the U.S. Forest Service to nonprofits like the Urban Sustainability Directors Network. The possibilities are endless and depend on each student's interests.

Please visit dus.psu.edu/bphil (<https://dus.psu.edu/bphil/>) for more information.

Contact

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