

PHILOSOPHY, B.S.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The Philosophy B.S. option is intended for students who wish to study philosophy as part of a multiple major program with other B.S. degree programs, especially those connected to the life sciences, the physical sciences, mathematics, engineering, or technology. It allows such students to study the philosophical, critical, and ethical dimensions of pure and applied sciences, including the areas of philosophy foundational for such study. The focus is, then, on analytic and normative reasoning connected to reasoning and explanation; theory and practice; the nature and limits of human understanding; and the structure and knowability of the world it seeks to understand.

What is Philosophy?

Philosophy is the oldest of the liberal arts, and is often defined simply as the love of wisdom. Philosophy is at the core of the liberal arts tradition and provided the foundation for the modern university, yet it remains highly relevant to life in technologically complex, diverse, global, information driven societies such as our own. The Philosophy major provides in-depth study of fundamental issues that inescapably confront all persons, such as ethics, social and political philosophy, aesthetics, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of religion, epistemology, philosophy of science, and logic. These studies enhance imaginative, interpretive, analytical, critical, and communicative capacities. Majors thus may acquire intellectual abilities crucial for self-fulfillment, responsible participation in public life, and success in a wide range of careers—including law, business, education, journalism, medicine, and public service.

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science degree in Philosophy, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	36
Requirements for the Major	39

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree

is earned. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
PHIL 12	Symbolic Logic	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 9 credits in Philosophical Foundations of Science:		9
PHIL 11	Science and Truth	
PHIL 13	Nature and Environment	
PHIL 110	Philosophy of Science	
PHIL 125	Theories of Knowledge	
	or PHIL 125\Theories of Knowledge	
PHIL 126	Metaphysics	
	or PHIL 126\Metaphysics	
PHIL 127	Philosophy of Mind	
PHIL 129	Philosophy of Language	
Select 6 credits in Ethics and Science:		6
PHIL 107	Philosophy of Technology	
PHIL 118	Environmental Philosophy	
PHIL 132	Bioethics	
PHIL 133N	Ethics of Climate Change	
PHIL 134	Food, Values, and Health	
Select 6 credits in Advanced Topics:		6
PHIL 403	Seminar in Environmental Ethics	
PHIL 407	Seminar in Philosophy of Technology	
PHIL 410	Seminar in Philosophy of Science	
PHIL 425W	Seminar in Epistemology	
PHIL 426W	Seminar in Metaphysics	
PHIL 427	Seminar in Philosophy of Mind	
PHIL 432	Medical and Health Care Ethics	
Select 6 credits in Formal Reasoning:		6
CMPSC 111	Logic for Computer Science	
CMPSC 121	Introduction to Programming Techniques	
CMPSC 131	Programming and Computation I: Fundamentals	
CMPSC 360	Discrete Mathematics for Computer Science	
CMPSC 441	Artificial Intelligence	
CMPSC 442	Artificial Intelligence	
ECON 306	Introduction to Econometrics	
ECON 402	Decision Making and Strategy in Economics	
ECON 411	Behavioral Economics	
ECON 414		
ECON 474	Experimental and Behavioral Economics	
IST 230	Language, Logic, and Discrete Mathematics	
IST 240	Introduction to Computer Languages	

MATH 315	
MATH 427	Foundations of Geometry
MATH 457	Introduction to Mathematical Logic
MATH 465	Number Theory
MATH 475Y	History of Mathematics
MATH 486	Mathematical Theory of Games
RM 301	Risk and Decisions
SC 205N	BS: Identifying Bias and Falsehood
SRA 231	Decision Theory and Analysis
STAT 318	Elementary Probability

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better

Select 3 credits PHIL elective, unrestricted topic	3
Select 6 credits Advanced Topics supporting program, choose from: Advanced Topics, Formal Reasoning, or by approval	6

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN,** may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Program Learning Objectives

- Learning about major philosophical figures, issues, traditions, methods, and trends.
- Understanding the relevance of the philosophical ideas and approaches for contemporary life, including in theoretical, scientific, existential, religious, cultural, ethical, social, and political contexts.
- Developing critical writing, reading, and speaking skills with an eye towards understanding, constructing, and assessing abstract, complex, or controversial philosophical arguments.
- Acquiring an inquisitive disposition toward philosophical questions and a willingness to justify and modify one's views about those questions through respectful conversation.

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/>)

University Park

Liberal Arts Academic Advising

814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2024-25 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

Philosophy, B.S. at University Park Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
GWS	3 GWS	3
First-Year Seminar	3 Philosophy (Foundation Course)	3
Philosophy (Any Course)	3 General Quantification	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Quantification	3 General Education Course	3
	15	15

Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
Philosophy (Foundation Course)	3 Philosophy (Foundation Course)	3
Philosophy Ethics and Science Course	3 Formal Reasoning Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	15	15

Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
Formal Reasoning Course	3 GWS	3
Philosophy Ethics and Science Course	3 PHIL 12	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	15	15

Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
Advanced PHIL Topics	3 Advanced PHIL Topics	3
Supporting Advanced PHIL	3 Supporting Advanced PHIL	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
Elective	4.5 Elective	4.5
General Health and Wellness	1.5 General Health and Wellness	1.5
	15	15

Total Credits 120

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

Contact

University Park

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