PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

Department Website (http://as.nyu.edu/philosophy/)

NYSED: 20576 **HEGIS:** 1509.00 **CIP:** 38.0101

Program Description

Philosophy strives to answer the most fundamental questions about the world and our place in it. While people often implicitly assume answers to many of these questions, philosophy as a discipline seeks to identify and answer them through rigorous and informed inquiry and reasoning.

These questions have been pursued for thousands of years, in many different ways and in many different cultures, and the study of this rich history is itself part of the increasingly global discipline of philosophy. Its main branches include metaphysics (questions about the structure of reality); ethics (questions about the good, the right, and the virtuous); epistemology (questions about knowledge, truth, and inquiry); philosophy of mind (questions about cognition, consciousness, and emotion); philosophy of language (questions about meaning and its linguistic expression); and political philosophy (questions about justice, liberty, and the state). At the same time, no field of inquiry or endeavor is without its own most fundamental and therefore philosophical questions; hence, philosophy encompasses a wide range of interdisciplinary areas such as philosophy of science (including philosophies of physics, biology, cognitive science, and the social sciences); philosophy of mathematics; aesthetics; philosophy of law; and philosophy of religion. Many academic disciplines that are now well established as mature fields of inquiry in their own right began as branches of philosophy. Among philosophy's most important tools is logic—another field of inquiry originated by philosophers.

Faculty in NYU's internationally recognized Department of Philosophy are deeply engaged in developing new philosophical knowledge; in training graduate students to become the next generation of leaders in philosophy; and in preparing undergraduates for the many professional pursuits that benefit from critical thinking, analysis, and argumentation (including education, law, medicine, politics, business, computer science, and publishing) and for the kind of life deepened by awareness and reflection that is most worth living.

Dual Degree

The Philosophy Department offers a dual degree with the NYU School of Law: (https://www.law.nyu.edu/jdadmissions/dualdegreeprograms/jdma/) Philosophy PhD/Law JD.

See Philosophy (https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc/programs/philosophy.html) for admission requirements and instructions specific to this program.

Admissions

All applicants to the Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) are required to submit the general application requirements (https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc.html), which include:

- Academic Transcripts (https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/academic-transcripts.html)
- Test Scores (https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/test-scores.html) (if required)

- Applicant Statements (https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/statements.html)
- Résumé or Curriculum Vitae
- Letters of Recommendation (https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/letters-of-recommendation.html), and
- A non-refundable application fee (https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc.html#fee).

See Philosophy (https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc/programs/philosophy.html) for admission requirements and instructions specific to this program.

Program Requirements

The program requires the completion of 72 credits. 20 of the total 72 credits may be in dissertation research, although the student may include other courses toward that total as well. No more than 8 basic credits taken while enrolled in the program can be satisfied through courses taken outside of the NYU Department of Philosophy.

Course	Title	Credits
Major Requirements		
Proseminar		*8*
PHIL-GA 1000	Pro-Seminar (taken twice; 4 points each) [1]	
Basic Course Work		*36*
PHIL-GA ----	Basic Course Work (typically nine 4-credit courses) [2]	
PHIL-GA 3600	Third Year Review Preparation Course [3]	4
Work-in-Progress Seminar		
PHIL-GA 3601	Work in Progress Seminar [4]	4
Logic Requirement [5]		
Electives		
Other Elective Credits		*20*
Total Credits		**72**

[1] This seminar is open to first year Philosophy PhD. students only. It includes frequent short writing assignments, and the mode of instruction emphasizes discussion rather than lecture. The topics are determined by the instructors but include basic texts and ideas in analytic philosophy.

[2] See "Basic Course Work" below.

[3] See "Third-Year Review" below.

[4] Students are required to take at least one semester of PHIL-GA 3601 Work in Progress Seminar (4 credits), with the obligation usually to be fulfilled by the end of the student's fourth year. The Work-in-Progress Seminar is devoted to the discussion of students' work-in-progress under the supervision of a faculty member.

[5] See "Logic Requirement" below.

Basic Course Work

These nine courses are drawn from advanced introduction courses, intermediate-level courses, topics or advanced seminar courses, and research seminar courses. In special circumstances, students may earn 4 points (but no more than 4 points) of basic coursework by completing an Independent Study with a faculty member, in which they read up on an area of interest and write a paper with faculty guidance. There are three distribution categories: value theory (ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of law, and political philosophy), metaphysics and epistemology broadly conceived (metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language,

philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, philosophy of mathematics, and philosophy of logic), and history of philosophy (ancient, medieval, modern, 19th century, and early 20th century). Of the nine basic courses, at least two courses each must fall into two of these three distribution categories, and one course must fall into the other distribution category.

Third-Year Review

In the Third Year Review Preparation Course, students work with a faculty member to develop and refine an already existing paper or project. Except in special circumstances, it is expected that the Third Year Review Preparation Course paper will serve as the student's Third Year Review submission.

By the date one week prior to the first day of the fifth semester in the program, students must submit one paper written while enrolled in the NYU Ph.D. program. To satisfy the requirement, the paper should be a substantial and polished piece of work that demonstrates that the student is able to take his or her philosophical research and writing to the high level appropriate for writing a dissertation.

Logic Requirement

The department's logic requirement can be satisfied in four ways. Two ways are to take a graduate-level logic course in the NYU philosophy department or a graduate-level course elsewhere, but in both cases the appropriateness of the course must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. A third way is to satisfy the department that some course or courses taken previously meets the required standard. A fourth way is to schedule an oral examination covering an appropriate range of topics. In deciding whether to approve courses under the second and third headings, and in determining the content of the oral examination under the fourth heading, the department will be looking for competence in the following topics: formalization of English sentences in first-order logic; derivations within a proof system for first-order logic; formal definitions of models, truth in a model, and validity for first-order logic; basic meta-logical tools, including proof by mathematical induction and recursive definition; the statement of, and the basic methods for proving, basic meta-logical results, including soundness and completeness for systems of first-order or modal logic, and results concerning the decidability of some formal systems.

Additional Program Requirements

Thesis Prospectus

During their third year in the program, students develop a prospectus for their dissertation. The prospectus document, between five and a strict maximum of fifteen pages long, should not be a philosophy paper, but rather a thesis plan that clearly articulates an interesting philosophical project, situates the project in the space of philosophical ideas, and gives an indication of the main relevant literature.

Prospectus Defense

While the prospectus defense takes the form of an oral examination, its principal purpose is to reach an agreement with prospective future members of the student's thesis committee as to the shape and substance of the project. The thesis prospectus examination should satisfy the committee that the candidate can write a passing thesis meeting the description in the candidate's submitted prospectus.

Thesis and Oral Examination

The dissertation can consist of a monograph or, alternatively, of three outstanding papers. The department envisions that, in most cases, the dissertation will grow out of work done for the topics or advanced

seminars or while in PHIL-GA 3600 Third Year Review Preparation Course, and continued in PHIL-GA 3601 Work in Progress Seminar. Thus, there will be no sharp distinction between years of course work and years of dissertation writing. Students are expected to complete all degree requirements, including the dissertation, within six years.

Departmental Approval

All Graduate School of Arts & Science doctoral candidates must be approved for graduation by their department for the degree to be awarded.

Sample Plan of Study

Course	Title	Credits
1st Semester/Term		
PHIL-GA 1000	Pro-Seminar	4
PHIL-GA ----	General Elective	4
PHIL-GA ----	General Elective	4
	Credits	**12**
2nd Semester/Term		
PHIL-GA 1000	Pro-Seminar	4
PHIL-GA ----	General Elective	4
PHIL-GA ----	General Elective	4
	Credits	**12**
3rd Semester/Term		
PHIL-GA ----	General Elective	4
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	4
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	4
	Credits	**12**
4th Semester/Term		
PHIL-GA 3600	Third Year Review Preparation Course	4
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	4
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	
	Credits	**8**
5th Semester/Term		
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	4
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	4
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	4
	Credits	**12**
6th Semester/Term		
PHIL-GA 3601	Work in Progress Seminar	4
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	4
PHIL-GA ---	Basic Course Work	4
	Credits	**12**
7th Semester/Term		
Other Elective Credits		4
	Credits	**4**
	Total Credits	**72**

Following completion of the required coursework for the PhD, students are expected to maintain active status at New York University by enrolling in a research/writing course or a Maintain Matriculation (MAINT-GA 4747) course. All non-course requirements must be fulfilled prior to degree conferral, although the specific timing of completion may vary from student-to-student.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will have:

1. The ability to conduct independent philosophical research, with emphasis on the ability to identify questions of philosophical

significance, to master the philosophical literature surrounding a given question, and to analyze and critically assess that literature.

2. The ability to make significant, original contributions to the field, whether by advancing an ongoing contemporary debate or by enhancing our understanding of the history of philosophy.

3. A proficiency in written communication, with emphasis on the ability to write research articles meeting the highest professional standards, such that students will be able to publish their work in the most selective peer-reviewed journals in the field.

4. A proficiency in oral communication, with emphasis on the ability to present papers, comments, and ideas in professional conference, seminar, and colloquium settings.

5. A proficiency in the teaching of philosophy, with emphasis on the ability to function as a clear, effective, and stimulating teacher of philosophy at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

6. A familiarity with a broad range of areas in contemporary philosophy, including exposure to value theory and to metaphysics and epistemology, broadly construed.

7. A familiarity with one or more topics in the history of philosophy, and an ability to read, interpret, and critically assess texts from different eras and traditions.

8. A competence in formal logic, including the formalization of English sentences; derivations within a system of predicate logic; formal definition of truth and validity for a first-order language; basic metalogical tools, including the use-mention distinction, the concept of rigor, and proof and definition by mathematical induction; and statement and proof of basic metalogical results, including the deduction theorem, and soundness and completeness for sentential and predicate logic.

Policies
NYU Policies

University-wide policies can be found on the New York University Policy pages (https://bulletins.nyu.edu/nyu/policies/).

Graduate School of Arts and Science Policies

Academic Policies for the Graduate School of Arts and Science can be found on the Academic Policies page (https://bulletins.nyu.edu/graduate/arts-science/academic-policies/).