PHILOSOPHY - BA

This program cultivates critical thinking and problem-solving skills, empowering students to analyze complex issues and excel in various fields like law and business, preparing them for a rapidly changing world

Curiosity matters! Philosophers and those who are philosophically minded have long asked key questions, evaluated possibilities and arrived at those answers that have shaped and reshaped who we are, how we do things and how we understand the world in which we live. The study of philosophy is not the study of antiquated views. It is not the study and use of a single method. The study of philosophy transforms intellectual curiosity into a potent, flexible set of skills by inculcating the ability to identify unstated assumptions, to take a critical attitude towards the information that others accept, and to evaluate and articulate the reasons that compel us to do and believe things. Philosophy is what college is all about: delving deeply into subjects that matter to you, while cultivating skills that will carry you the rest of your life.

Educational economists, such as G. Duncan, remind us that jobs that pay well are increasingly requiring employees to be able to solve unexpected problems as team members. In a world that is typified by unpredictable and complex professions, professionals who can cross intellectual boundaries and make connections between previously discrete domains of knowledge are primed to resolve unexpected problems; they are primed to succeed. While there is no single path to success, there is a set of skills that can help solve unexpected problems. Creativity researchers have identified two key factors: breadth of learning and an aptitude for broad conceptual thinking. You cannot combine what you don't know and you cannot combine if you have not cultivated an ability to move freely among conceptual categories. Philosophy is among the best intellectual activities for cultivating creative, critical thinking. Indeed, philosophy students typically score among the top in entrance exams for graduate school (GRE), and professional schools for law (LSAT) and business (GMAT) within national rankings.

The Department of Philosophy supports breadth of learning and broad conceptual thinking while offering a degree program with maximum flexibility. At its core are a limited number of requirements including three courses in the history of philosophy. These courses enable students to step outside of their own world-view and learn how to understand and critique unfamiliar perspectives. Students also take a course in formal logic in fulfillment of one of their core math requirements. Formal logic requires that students use one of the highest forms of reasoning in the taxonomy of learning: creative thinking. There is no algorithm for constructing a formal proof. Students who study formal logic learn a system, and use that system to create their own proofs.

In addition to history and logic, students are free to select among a range of courses that allow them to better understand the limits of knowledge, the limits of scientific thinking, the theories behind our legal and political system, the foundations of ethics and more. In addition to traditional course work, high-achieving students in philosophy can undertake a sustained research project in the form of an honor's thesis, serve as Editor for our undergraduate journal or complete internships either within the department or in other professional settings.

Students pursuing the BA in Philosophy have the option of pursuing early admission to Texas A&M's School of Law. Under this plan, students can complete both degrees in 6. Participation requires formal application to and admission by the School of Law during year 3. Admission is fully at the discretion of the School of Law. Careful planning is key, so interested students should work closely with an advisor from their first semester of study.

Program Requirements

First Year		
Fall		**Semester Credit Hours**
ENGL 104	Composition and Rhetoric	3
Select one of the following:		3
PHIL 111	Contemporary Moral Issues	
PHIL 208	Philosophy of Education	
PHIL 251	Introduction to Philosophy	
PHIL 282	Ethics in a Digital Age	
Foreign language [1]		4
Government/Political science (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#government-political-science)		3
Mathematics (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#mathematics)		3
	Semester Credit Hours	**16**
Spring		
PHIL 240	Introduction to Logic	3
Select one of the following:		3
COMM 203	Public Speaking	
COMM 205	Communication for Technical Professions	
COMM 243	Argumentation and Debate	
ENGL 203	Writing About Literature	
ENGL 210	Technical and Professional Writing	
Foreign language [1]		4
Government/Political science (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#government-political-science)		3
Life and physical sciences (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#life-physical-sciences)		3
	Semester Credit Hours	**16**
Second Year		
Fall		
American history (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#american-history)		3
Foreign language [1]		3
Language, philosophy and culture (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#language-philosophy-culture) [2]		3
Life and physical sciences (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#life-physical-sciences)		3
Social and behavioral sciences (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#social-behavioral-sciences)		3
General elective [3]		1
	Semester Credit Hours	**16**

Spring		
American history (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#american-history)		3
Foreign language [1]		3
Life and physical sciences (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#life-physical-sciences)		3
Social and behavioral sciences (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#social-behavioral-sciences)		3
Philosophy elective [4]		3
	Semester Credit Hours	**15**
Third Year		
Fall		
Select one of the following:		3
HUMA 304/ RELS 304	Asian Religions	
PHIL 410	Classical Philosophy	
PHIL 411	Medieval Philosophy	
Creative arts (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#creative-arts)		3
Literature directed elective (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/arts-and-sciences/)		3
Philosophy elective [4]		3
General elective [3]		3
	Semester Credit Hours	**15**
Spring		
Select one of the following:		3
PHIL 414	Nineteenth-Century Philosophy	
PHIL 415	American Philosophy	
PHIL 416	History of Early Analytic Philosophy	
PHIL 417	Phenomenology	
PHIL 418	Existentialism	
Language, philosophy and culture or creative arts (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/university-core-curriculum/#language-philosophy-culture) [2]		3
Literature directed elective (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/arts-and-sciences/)		3
Philosophy elective [4]		3
General elective [3]		3
	Semester Credit Hours	**15**
Fourth Year		
Fall		
PHIL 412 or PHIL 413	Seventeenth-Century Philosophy or Eighteenth-Century Philosophy	3
Philosophy elective [4]		3
General elective [3]		3
General elective [3]		3
General elective [3]		3
	Semester Credit Hours	**15**
Spring		
Philosophy elective [4]		3
General elective [3]		3
General elective [3]		3
	Semester Credit Hours	**12**
	Total Semester Credit Hours	**120**

1. Complete 14 hours of a foreign language (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/arts-and-sciences/) through the intermediate level. If you choose to enroll in a language you have studied previously without receiving college credit, you must first take a placement test. See academic advisor.
2. Philosophy courses cannot be used to meet this requirement.
3. Select from any 100-499 course not used elsewhere. Maximum of 3 hours of PHIL 484 may be used as general electives.
4. To be selected in consultation with an advisor PHIL 100-499 (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/course-descriptions/phil/). At least four of the courses must be 300-400 level. Maximum of 3 hours of PHIL 484 may be used as Philosophy electives.

Graduation requirements include 3 hours of International and Cultural Diversity (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/degree-information/international-cultural-diversity-requirements/) courses and 3 hours of Cultural Discourse (https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/degree-information/cultural-discourse-requirements/) courses. A course satisfying a Core category, a college/department requirement or a free elective can be used to satisfy this requirement. The required 6 hours may be met by courses satisfying other areas of a degree program. See an academic advisor for further information.

A grade of C or higher is required for a course to be counted in the major field.