Master of Arts in Philosophy

The philosophy department at the University of Kansas comprises of 13 faculty members and about 35 graduate students. The department has traditionally fostered teaching and research that reflects a number of different philosophical orientations and fields of philosophy. Courses are taught on a broad range of topics. Master's theses and dissertations have had a similarly wide range of themes. The department's chief strengths are in history of philosophy (ancient, modern, 19th century), ethics, social-political philosophy, and analytic philosophy, including philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and metaphysics. The department is in Wescoe Hall, the main humanities building.

The M.A. degree requires 30 hours of graduate course work, including a first-year graduate tutorial and at least 12 additional hours of seminar and/or thesis work. M.A. candidates must pass a comprehensive examination over their course work or must write and successfully defend an M.A. thesis.

Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (http://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (http://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Admission to the M.A. in Philosophy

Apply to the graduate program via the Office of Graduate Studies online application system (http://www.graduat.e.ku.edu).

In addition to the general admission requirements (http://www.graduat.e.ku.edu/application-process) from the Office of Graduate Studies, applicants are expected to have taken the following seven courses or their equivalents as preparation for graduate work:

1. symbolic logic
2. history of ancient philosophy
3. history of modern philosophy
4. history of 20th-century analytic philosophy (roughly from Frege to Quine)
5. history of 19th/20th-century Continental philosophy
6. value theory
7. metaphysics/epistemology (broadly construed to include philosophy of language and philosophy of mind).

Students may be admitted without some of these courses, but they are expected to make up the deficiencies early in their graduate careers and outside of the minimum hours required for degree.

For additional information, including relevant deadlines and a list of required supplemental documentation to be submitted with the online application, please visit the graduate page of the Philosophy website (http://philosophy.ku.edu/graduate-admissions), or contact the department Graduate Academic Advisor, Carl Ann Kreienhop, ckreienhop@ku.edu.

Fast-Track M.A. (for Undergraduate Majors in Philosophy at KU)

The fast-track M.A. provides excellent KU undergraduates in Philosophy an opportunity to complete an MA in Philosophy within a year of completing the bachelor's degree. Talented students who are planning to continue their studies at the doctoral level or to continue to law school will receive a competitive advantage by acquiring a graduate degree in less time than a traditional terminal M.A.

Admission Requirements

1. All requirements for a bachelor's in philosophy from KU complete or in progress
2. GPA of 3.5 in philosophy
3. GRE not required, though the department will consider GRE scores as part of an application

Degree Requirements

Students must complete all of the following requirements for the Fast-Track M.A. within one calendar year post-bachelor's:

1. 24 credit hours of graduate coursework (500-level or above) in philosophy post-bachelor’s with a grade of B or higher. At least 15 of these hours must be in courses numbered 800 or above. Students must complete two courses at the 500-level or above (or the equivalent) in each of these areas: history of philosophy, metaphysics and epistemology (broadly construed), and value theory. Courses taken during the undergraduate career may be counted toward these area requirements, but such work does not count toward the overall 24-hour graduate credit requirement unless the student took this course work for graduate credit and it has department approval.
2. PHIL 800 Tutorial with a grade of B or higher
3. An M.A. exam consisting in the oral defense of a seminar paper of the student's choosing

Time Limits and Other Restrictions

Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.5 in the first semester of graduate study in order to maintain eligibility for the program. They will be subject to a formal mid-year review to ensure satisfactory progress towards completion of the degree.

A student who receives a bachelor's degree in Spring or Summer begins the M.A. portion of the degree that Fall. The student must then complete all requirements for the Fast-Track M.A. by the first day of classes the following Fall. For example, if a student receives the bachelor's in Spring 2014 and is accepted into this M.A. track, that student begins the additional year of coursework in Fall 2014 and must complete all requirements for the Fast-Track M.A. by the first day of classes in Fall 2015. Similarly, a student who receives the bachelor’s in the Fall begins the M.A. portion of the degree in the Spring. The student must then complete all requirements for the Fast-Track M.A. by the first day of classes the following Spring.

If a student does not complete the Fast-Track M.A. requirements within one year post-bachelor’s, the student may petition the department for admission to the standard 30-hour M.A. track. In extraordinary.
circumstances, for example, serious illness, students may petition the department to remain in the 24-hour track.

Application Deadlines
Students who receive a bachelor’s from KU in Spring or Summer must have a completed application with all supplemental documentation by August 1. Priority consideration is guaranteed for students whose applications are complete by April 30. Students who receive a bachelor’s in Fall must have a completed application by November 30.

Students that submit an application by January 15 may be considered for funding in the form of a graduate fellowship.

Interested students are encouraged to contact the department Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Dale Dorsey, ddorsey@ku.edu, as early as possible during their undergraduate studies.

M.A. Degree Requirements
The department offers thesis and non-thesis M.A. options. Both require:

1. 30 credit hours of graduate work in philosophy with a grade of B- or higher, with a GPA of at least 3.0 over all courses in philosophy. At least 15 of these hours must be in courses numbered 800 or above and, for the thesis option, may include up to 6 hours of PHIL 899 Master’s Thesis. Students must complete two courses at the 500 level or above (or the equivalent) in each of these areas: history of philosophy, metaphysics and epistemology (broadly construed), and value theory. Courses taken during the undergraduate career may be counted toward these area requirements, but such work does not count toward the overall 30-hour graduate credit requirement unless the student took this course work for graduate credit and it has department approval.

2. PHIL 800 Tutorial must be taken in the first year of study

3. A final examination:
   a. For the thesis option, the student must submit an acceptable thesis and pass a 2-part oral or written examination including 1 part covering the material of the M.A. program generally and a second part devoted to a defense of the thesis.
   b. For the non-thesis option, the student must pass an oral examination covering the material of the M.A. program. The non-thesis option final exam can be satisfied by Ph.D. students who successfully complete PHIL 901 Ph.D. Tutorial with a grade of B or higher.

Time Limits and Other Restrictions
Information on time limits may be found under Master’s Degree Requirements and Program Time Constraints in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog. The rule for transferring credit toward the M.A. appears under General Regulations in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.