Master of Arts in Philosophy

The Philosophy department at the University of Kansas comprises 14 full-time faculty members and about 35 graduate students. The department fosters teaching and research that reflects a broad range of philosophical orientations and fields of philosophy. The department’s chief strengths are in ethics, philosophy of science, and history of philosophy (ancient, modern, 19th century). 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.

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.graduate.ku.edu).

In addition to the general admission requirements (http://www.graduate.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/ma-admissions), or contact the department Graduate Academic Advisor, Carl Ann Kreienhop, ckreienhop@ku.edu.

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 will complete an oral defense of the thesis in accordance with Graduate Studies policy. The oral examination is held during the semester of the student’s final enrollment in course work and when the advisor approves the thesis for defense. Any philosophical issue that is relevant to the thesis may be explored in the oral exam to ensure the thesis reflects a breadth of philosophical knowledge.
   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.