

Master of Arts in Philosophy

The M.A. degree requires 30 hours of graduate course work. Coursework begins with a first-year proseminar and, in addition, must include 2 courses each from the department's 3 research areas: Value Theory, Metaphysics & Epistemology, and History of Philosophy. Students have the option of writing an MA Thesis. All students finish the program with a comprehensive exam, either focused on the thesis, a final exam based on an integrated overview of coursework, or a qualifying paper.

More details regarding the M.A. program can be found in the department's Graduate Handbook (<https://philosophy.ku.edu/ma/>).

Admission to Graduate Studies

Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

Admission to the M.A. in Philosophy

Apply to the graduate program via the Office of Graduate Studies online application system (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/>).

Departmental application materials required:

- Resume/CV
- A Brief Personal Statement of Academic Goals
- A Writing Sample preferably a sample of philosophical prose approximately 10-15 pages in length
- Three letters of recommendation
- Copies of official transcripts
- **OPTIONAL:** Graduate Record Examination Scores (verbal, quantitative, analytical) KU GRE Code: 6871

Please contact the department Graduate Program Coordinator (<https://philosophy.ku.edu/staff/>) with any questions regarding admissions.

M.A. Degree Requirements

Students must receive a grade of B- or higher in all graduate philosophy course work and an overall GPA of at least 3.0 in philosophy. At least 15 of these credit hours must be in courses numbered 800 or above.

The department offers a thesis, final exam, and qualifying paper option to complete the program.

Code	Title	Hours
PHIL 800	Proseminar (must be taken first year of study)	3
At least two graduate-level courses (500 or above) in each of the following 3 areas:		
For courses that can count toward multiple areas, the semester course schedule will indicate which topic and distribution area(s) are relevant		
History of Philosophy		6
PHIL 506	Chinese Thought	
PHIL 557	Kant	
PHIL 558	Seventeenth Century Philosophy	
PHIL 559	Eighteenth Century Philosophy	
PHIL 560	Nineteenth Century Philosophy	
PHIL 570	Nietzsche	
PHIL 582	Existentialism	
PHIL 590	Phenomenology	
PHIL 592	Contemporary Continental Philosophy	
PHIL 605	The Philosophy of Plato	
PHIL 607	The Philosophy of Aristotle	
PHIL 608	Hellenistic Philosophy	
PHIL 648	Theory of Knowledge	
PHIL 650	Metaphysics	
PHIL 654	Philosophy of Mind	
PHIL 805	Plato	
PHIL 807	Aristotle	
PHIL 820	Topics in the History of Philosophy: _____	
PHIL 824	Hume	
Metaphysics and Epistemology		6
PHIL 620	Philosophy of Natural Science	
PHIL 622	Philosophy of Social Science	
PHIL 630	Philosophy of Mathematics	
PHIL 638	Philosophy of Language	
PHIL 648	Theory of Knowledge	
PHIL 650	Metaphysics	
PHIL 654	Philosophy of Mind	
PHIL 666	Rational Choice Theory	
PHIL 850	Topics in Recent Philosophy: _____ (when and only when seminar focuses on a topic in metaphysics and epistemology)	
PHIL 860	Topics in Philosophy of Science: _____	
PHIL 868	Topics in Philosophy of Language: _____	
PHIL 872	Topics in Theory of Knowledge: _____	
PHIL 877	Topics in Philosophy of Mind: _____	
Value Theory		6
PHIL 504	Philosophy of Sex and Love	
PHIL 662	Aesthetics	
PHIL 666	Rational Choice Theory	
PHIL 668	Political Philosophy	
PHIL 670	Contemporary Ethical Theory	
PHIL 671	Feminist Theories in Ethics	
PHIL 674	Philosophy of Law	
PHIL 676	Medical Ethics: Life and Death Issues	

PHIL 850	Topics in Recent Philosophy: _____ (when and only when seminar focuses on a topic in value theory)	
PHIL 880	Topics in Ethics: _____	
Additional Electives		3
PHIL 500	Studies in Philosophy: _____	
PHIL 593	Marxism and Critical Theory	
PHIL 600	Readings in Philosophy: _____	
PHIL 610	Metalogic	
PHIL 612	Modal and Non-classical Logics	
PHIL 833	Nietzsche	
PHIL 835	Frege	
Completion Option		6
Students select one of the following degree completion options for a total of 6 hours:		
Thesis (6 hours)		
PHIL 899	Master's Thesis	
Final Exam (6 hours total)		
Two PHIL courses 800+ level (from courses listed above)		
Qualifying paper (6 hours total)		
PHIL 901	Qualifying Paper	
One PHIL course 800+ level (from courses listed above)		
Total Hours		30

Final Examination/Defense:

All MA students must pass an oral examination conducted by a committee of three philosophy department faculty. There are three ways to satisfy the final examination requirement:

- **Thesis Option:** MA students have the option to write a thesis. The decision about whether to do so is standardly made early in the second year of the M.A. program.
 - A student interested in writing a thesis should decide on a tentative topic and then consult with appropriate faculty members to identify an advisor.
 - Once an advisor is identified, a student should enroll in PHIL 899: Master's Thesis hours with the advisor.
 - The grading scale SP / LP / NP will be used to indicate research and writing progress in PHIL 899. Regular contact with the thesis advisor and steady progress will generally yield a grade of SP (Satisfactory Progress). Failure to maintain regular contact will result in a grade of LP (Limited Progress) or NP (No Progress).
 - While enrolled in PHIL 899, the student works on the thesis under the advisor's supervision. The department recommends a length of 10,000-12,000 words as standard for an M.A. thesis.
 - The student will work with their advisor to identify two additional committee members. Once the thesis draft is approved by the advisor, it will be sent to the other committee members for their approval. The committee must be afforded a reasonable interval within which to read the thesis and suggest revisions (standardly, 2 weeks). Once all three committee members approve the thesis, the student will work with the Graduate Coordinator to schedule the final examination.
- The student will complete an oral defense of the thesis in accordance with Graduate Studies policy. The oral examination is held during the student's final semester of course work. While

the examination focuses on the written thesis, the committee may pursue any philosophical issue deemed relevant for ensuring the thesis reflects a breadth of philosophical knowledge.

- **Final Exam Option** - The examination can include any material from the student's M.A. program. In advance of their final semester of course work, the student will work with the Director of Graduate Studies to identify three faculty members to serve on the student's examination committee. The specific format of the exam is then decided by the student and the committee, often in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. A frequently used option is for the student to select (and perhaps subsequently revise) a paper written for a class and to use the topic of that paper as the focus of the examination.
- **Qualifying Paper Option** - Students who are earning the M.A. while enrolled in the Ph.D. program can satisfy the requirement with a final examination focused on the paper written in PHIL 901. The student will work with their PHIL 901 advisor to identify two additional committee members. Once the Qualifying Paper draft is approved by the advisor, it will be sent to the other committee members. The committee must be afforded a reasonable interval within which to read the paper prior to the examination (standardly, 2 weeks).

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- demonstrate, in written and oral form, an understanding of key.
- identify and extract arguments from texts, evaluate the cogency.
- articulate an oral argument that clearly and persuasively presents.
- articulate an oral argument that clearly and persuasively presents.
- develop a written argument that clearly and persuasively.
- demonstrate understanding of and sensitivity to professional.
- identify, pursue, and develop argument and analysis.