

# Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

The Ph.D. degree requires 39 hours of graduate coursework, which begins with a first-year proseminar and ends with an independent research seminar that culminates in the writing and oral defense of a qualifying paper. Ph.D. candidates must also satisfy a set of course requirements in distinct areas of philosophy and the University's Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement. Students write and defend a dissertation prospectus to complete the oral comprehensive examination and advance to candidacy, after which they are expected to write and successfully defend a dissertation.

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

## 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 Ph.D. 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.

## Ph.D. Degree Requirements

### Formal Philosophy Requirement

Upon entering the program, students must demonstrate competence in symbolic logic by passing a placement exam with a grade of B or higher. Students who do not pass the placement exam with a grade of B or higher, or who choose not to take the placement exam, must enroll in

PHIL 310 for additional preparatory training and pass with a grade of B or higher.

## Required Course Work

Students must receive a grade of B- or higher in all graduate philosophy coursework and an overall GPA of at least 3.0 in philosophy. At least 24 of these credit hours must be in courses numbered 800 or above.

Code	Title	Hours
PHIL 800	Proseminar (must be taken in the first year of study)	3
PHIL 901	Qualifying Paper (to be taken during the final semester of coursework)	3

### Complete at least seven courses from the following areas distributed as below:

Metaphysics & 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: _____	
Ancient Philosophy		3
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 805	Plato	
PHIL 807	Aristotle	
PHIL 820	Topics in the History of Philosophy: _____ (when and only when seminar focuses on a topic in ancient philosophy)	

Modern Philosophy	3
PHIL 558	Seventeenth Century Philosophy
PHIL 557	Kant
PHIL 559	Eighteenth Century Philosophy
PHIL 648	Theory of Knowledge
PHIL 650	Metaphysics
PHIL 654	Philosophy of Mind
PHIL 820	Topics in the History of Philosophy: _____ ((when and only when seminar focuses on a topic in modern philosophy)
PHIL 824	Hume
Philosophical Traditions	3
PHIL 506	Chinese Thought
PHIL 560	Nineteenth Century Philosophy
PHIL 570	Nietzsche
PHIL 582	Existentialism
PHIL 590	Phenomenology
PHIL 592	Contemporary Continental Philosophy
PHIL 820	Topics in the History of Philosophy: _____ (if appropriate in content)
<b>Additional Electives</b>	
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
<b>Four additional graduate-level courses (500+) from the lists of courses above</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>39</b>

## Qualifying Paper

As students near the end of course work, they should decide on a tentative topic for their Qualifying Paper and then consult with appropriate faculty members to identify an advisor. This should be done by the penultimate semester of course work (standardly, the first semester of a student's 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the program).

Once an advisor is identified, the student should enroll in PHIL 901 Qualifying Paper (an independent research seminar that results in the writing and successful oral defense of a qualifying paper) with the advisor. While enrolled, the student works on the paper under the advisor's supervision. The aim is to produce a high-quality paper that is of *near publishable quality* (i.e. a viable candidate for publication in a well-ranked professional journal). The department recommends a length of 8,000-12,000 words for the qualifying paper as standard, but recognizes that adequate length can vary by subdiscipline and topic.

## Research Skills & Responsible Scholarship Requirement

This requirement must be met before taking the comprehensive oral exam. For Philosophy doctoral students, this requirement is met by completing all of the following:

- PHIL 800 Proseminar, which includes a basic introduction to philosophical methodology and research practices alongside content.
- PHIL 901 Qualifying Paper, where the student works, in close consultation with a faculty advisor, to write a research paper of near publishable quality.
- Demonstrated competence in an approved foreign language OR completion of a DGS-approved course in a discipline related to the student's research interests

## Comprehensive Oral Examination for Ph.D.

In the philosophy department, this is done by passing a prospectus for the dissertation. This examination is taken after all of the above requirements have been completed.

Following completion of required course work, students will enroll in PHIL 999 Dissertation. Students enrolled in dissertation hours will have selected a member of the Department as advisor and, with the help of their advisor, selected three other faculty members to serve on their committee. In the prospectus the candidate should state the topic of their thesis, introduce problems to be investigated, and suggest anticipated conclusions. The candidate should outline their methods and include a preliminary list of works to be consulted. The candidate should also provide a brief account of previous experience in the field of the subject matter. The prospectus should be between 3,000 and 6,000 words long.

Having prepared a prospectus in consultation with the advisor, the student will solicit comments on the prospectus from the other three members of the committee; the committee will then decide whether to approve the prospectus or call for revision. A unanimous vote of the committee is necessary for approval.

Once the prospectus has been approved by the committee, the student will be formally notified by the advisor.

The student is encouraged to have the oral exam no later than the end of the first semester of enrollment in PHIL 999 and must attempt the oral exam no later than the end of the subsequent semester. At the conclusion of the oral exam, the committee determines the grade (honors, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory).

## Post Comprehensive Exam Enrollment

Starting the semester following successful completion of the oral comprehensive exam, students must enroll in accordance with the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Candidacy Policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-candidacy/>). This enrollment includes, but is not limited to, at least 1 dissertation hour or approved dissertation hour equivalent every semester until graduation. See the Doctoral Candidacy policy for more information about this University level requirement.

## Dissertation

The length of doctoral dissertations can and will vary widely, but 35,000 words is a reasonable length, and dissertations longer than 65,000 words are strongly discouraged. In addition, dissertations can be composed of three high-quality papers that do not constitute an extended argument, provided that those papers are thematically related. The dissertation must also comply with the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Dissertation policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-dissertation/>) and Department of Philosophy requirements outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook (<http://philosophy.ku.edu/phd/>).

## Successfully defend the Dissertation

The Dissertation Examination Committee configuration must comply with University requirements. It should contain four members (the advisor serving as chair, two other members of the Department, and one tenured or tenure-track KU faculty member who is not a member of the Department serving as Graduate Studies Representative). The three additional members must be given adequate opportunity to read the final version of the dissertation and are not expected to read or comment on any earlier versions. The grade on the examination is determined by the Dissertation Examination Committee.

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