Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy

Philosophy engages the most deep, important and persistent questions, questions concerning the nature of the good life, why we believe and how we know, the nature of the self and its connection with the world and with society, and the foundations of justice. Philosophy engages such questions through critical analysis of textual evidence, clear and rigorous argumentation, and questioning of unexamined personal and cultural assumptions. The study of the history of philosophy is central to this pursuit. The BA in philosophy not only provides excellent preparation for graduate and professional school in a variety of areas; it also provides marketable skills in high demand and a broad range of employment opportunities.

UT Dallas benefits from an unusual structure in the School of Arts and Humanities, which lacks traditional departments and has many levels of coordination and integration across programs, including our interdisciplinary Humanities PhD program. Far from being an abstruse, removed, and self-contained subject, philosophy degree at UT Dallas is an engaged and interdisciplinary pursuit. It is particularly suited to the STEM excellence of UT Dallas, with a practical and theoretical emphasis on the philosophy of science, technology, and medicine. and the presence of the Center for Values in Medicine, Science, and Technology.

Careers in Philosophy

A degree in philosophy provides graduates with skills that are highly sought after in today’s market. According to the Committee on Economic Development, which surveyed CEOs and business leaders, the two skills that were deemed both essential and in short supply are critical thinking and problem solving. Writing skills were the third most essential skill among those desirable skills that are difficult to find in new graduates entering the job market. These three skills are among the most central to philosophical education.

Philosophy courses strive to teach students not only about the basics of effective communication in writing and speech, but ultimately about the way to argue a position based upon a critical analysis of textual evidence. Philosophy students learn how to craft persuasive arguments that attunes them to the interpretive power of writing.

Philosophy provides some of the best preparation for graduate and professional schools, as measured by test scores like GRE and LSAT, of almost any other majors.

High School Preparation

To major in philosophy, students should have a curiosity about a wide array of subjects from history and economics to biology and physics in both Western and non-Western viewpoints. Prospective students should also demonstrate a high aptitude for reading comprehension, writing and language arts.

Philosophy at UT Dallas

After graduation, a Philosophy major from UT Dallas will be able to meet the following objectives:

- Students will articulate and employ basic methodologies of philosophical enquiry and textual engagement.
- Students will be able to make and defend, as well as recognize and critique, philosophical claims and arguments.
- Students will engage with central philosophical concepts and ideas, making effective use of them to address contemporary problems.
- Students will display a broad knowledge of contemporary philosophical traditions and historical movements in philosophy, and the reasons for their significance.
School of Arts and Humanities

The School of Arts and Humanities prepares students for the changes they will face in a media-rich 21st century. By connecting the visual and performing arts with the humanities (philosophy, literature, history), students learn how to think creatively as well as critically. More than 50 full-time faculty members, many of whom are internationally recognized scholars and performers, provide quality instruction on topics ranging from the history of the Holocaust to the world of Harry Potter.

Degrees Offered

Bachelor of Arts: Historical studies, literature, philosophy, visual and performing arts

Master of Arts: Art history, history, history of ideas, humanities, Latin American studies, literature, visual and performing arts

Doctor of Philosophy: History of ideas, humanities, literature, visual and performing arts

Minors Offered

If your academic focus leads you elsewhere at UT Dallas, but you would still like to pursue studies in the School of Arts and Humanities, the following minors are available:

- Art history
- Asian studies
- Communication
- Creative writing
- Dance
- Film Studies
- History
- Literature
- Medical and scientific humanities
- Music
- Performing arts
- Philosophy
- Spanish and Hispanic area studies
- Theatre
- Visual arts

Additional Facts

- Twenty-two faculty members have been awarded prestigious fellowships, including those from the Guggenheim, Fulbright, Alexander S. Onassis and Woodrow Wilson foundations. Others are recipients of the Füst Literary Award, as well as awards from the National Endowments for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

- The school’s centers further enhance students’ educational experience by bringing the concept of globalism to campus, by bringing world events into focus through research and by encouraging innovation and creativity.

Contact Information

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