

PHILOSOPHY, MA

The Department of Philosophy offers a program of graduate study leading to the degree of Master of Arts. The general purpose of this program is to provide students with the background and stimulus for critical and original philosophical thoughts. The program is designed to serve both those students who wish to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy degree in philosophy and those students who wish either to terminate their formal philosophical studies with the Master of Arts degree or to integrate a graduate level of study in philosophy with graduate studies in other academic areas.

Admission Requirements

Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/>) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (<https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/>).

Admission

An applicant must meet Graduate School requirements (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/>) plus these departmental requirements to be considered for admission to the program:

- Undergraduate major in philosophy or other academic background judged suitable by the Department.
- Three letters of recommendation concerning academic qualifications.
- A Reason Statement explaining why you are interested in completing an MA in Philosophy (recommended length 250 - 500 words).
- A sample of written work.
- Submission of scores on the General Test of the Graduate Record Examination (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/#gre>) is **optional**.
- **Language and Linguistics Concentration only: LINGUIS 464 or an equivalent.**

Credits and Courses

History Requirement

Students taking Option A or B will be required to demonstrate competence in history of philosophy by passing the following two courses with a grade of B or better.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|------------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| PHILOS 430 | Great Thinkers of the Ancient Period | 3 |
| PHILOS 432 | Great Thinkers of the Modern Period | 3 |

The Graduate Studies Committee may certify competence if the student has as an undergraduate taken PHILOS 430 and PHILOS 432 at UWM within the past five years or has taken their equivalent as determined by the Committee. The determination may include an equivalency exam.

Students selecting the language and linguistics concentration need only meet the requirement for PHILOS 432.

Logic Requirement

The student is required to demonstrate competence in logic by passing with a grade of B or better.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|------------|------------------------------|---------|
| PHILOS 511 | Symbolic Logic | 3 |
| PHILOS 712 | Fundamentals of Formal Logic | 3 |

The Graduate Committee may certify competence if within the last five years the student has taken PHILOS 511 or PHILOS 712 or has taken an equivalent course as determined by the Committee. The determination may include an equivalency exam.

Degree Alternatives

The Department of Philosophy offers three alternatives by which the Master of Arts degree in philosophy may be obtained: Option A, the non-thesis option; Option B, the thesis option; and a language and linguistics concentration with a thesis. There is no foreign language requirement for the completion of the Master of Arts degree in philosophy, though students are encouraged to develop proficiency in a foreign or classical language.

Option A: Non-Thesis Option (30 Credits Plus Exam)

Minimum degree requirement is 30 credits in coursework, 21 of which must normally be in philosophy, 9 of which may be in related fields. All 30 credits must be earned with grades of B or better; and at least 12 must be in graduate seminars.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|---|-------|-----------|
| Courses in philosophy | | 21 |
| At least 12 credits in graduate seminars ¹ | | |
| Related fields | | 9 |
| Total Credits | | 30 |

¹ The Philosophy Department Graduate Studies Committee may permit students to count PHILOS 681 or PHILOS 685 toward meeting this requirement, when the content and level of difficulty are equivalent to that of a graduate seminar.

A student proposing a program of study involving more than 9 credits of independent study, or fewer than 21 credits in philosophy courses, must gain specific approval of the student's advisory committee.

Every student choosing the non-thesis option takes a written exam of no longer than four hours on a philosophical area chosen by the student in consultation with the advisory committee. At least one full semester before the student is to take this exam, a specific list of primary and secondary sources to be covered on the exam is drawn up by the committee together with the student. The committee provides the student with sample questions.

Option B: Thesis Option (30 Credits Plus Defense)

Minimum degree requirement is 30 credits in coursework, 21 of which must normally be in philosophy, 9 of which may be in related fields. All 30 credits must be earned with grades of B or better; and at least 12 must be in graduate seminars.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|---|-------|-----------|
| Courses in philosophy | | 21 |
| At least 12 credits in graduate seminars ¹ | | |
| Related fields | | 9 |
| Total Credits | | 30 |

¹ The Philosophy Department Graduate Studies Committee may permit students to count PHILOS 681 or PHILOS 685 toward meeting this requirement, when the content and level of difficulty are equivalent to that of a graduate seminar.

The thesis is to be written on a philosophical subject chosen in consultation with the student's advisory committee. The student and the committee are to meet sufficiently often so that the committee may adequately supervise the writing of the thesis. Upon completion of the thesis the student is required to defend the thesis orally.

Language and Linguistics Concentration with Thesis (30 credits Plus Defense)

Minimum degree requirement is 30 credits, including the writing of a thesis, plus its defense. All 30 credits must be earned with a grade of B or better. Of the 30 credits at least 18 credits must be in philosophy with the remainder in linguistics.

| Code | Title | Credits |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| PHILOS 516 | Language and Meaning ¹ | 3 |
| Other credits in Philosophy | | 15 |
| LINGUIS 455 | Semantics ¹ | 3 |
| LINGUIS 564 | Advanced Syntax ¹ | 3 |
| Graduate Seminars ² | | 6 |
| Total Credits | | 30 |

¹ May be waived if the student has taken these courses at UWM within the past five years or has taken their equivalent as determined by the Graduate Studies Committee.

² The Philosophy Department Graduate Studies Committee may permit students to count PHILOS 681 or PHILOS 685 towards meeting this requirement, when the content and level of difficulty are equivalent to that of a graduate seminar.

A student proposing a program of study involving more than 9 credits of independent study must gain specific approval of the student's advisory committee.

Additional Requirements

Major Professor as Advisor

The student must have a major professor to advise and supervise the student's studies as specified in Graduate School regulations. At time of admission, the student's program will be supervised by the Graduate Advisor.

A student planning to work beyond the master's program should select, in consultation with the advisor, courses which will develop broad philosophical competence. A student intending to terminate studies with the master's degree may plan a more specialized program.

Advisory Committee

During the first year in attendance, the student chooses an advisor and an advisory committee of three faculty members. The student's advisor serves as chair of this committee. The choice of committee is made in consultation with the student's advisor, and submitted to the Department's Graduate Studies Committee for approval. No later than the second week of the student's second semester in the program, the advisory committee meets with the student to discuss the individual's background in philosophy and goals in this program. By the end of

the student's second semester the committee has conferred with the student's instructors and meets with the student to discuss that individual's progress in the program. At that time the student, together with the committee, plans the balance of the student's work in the program and how all requirements can best be met. The committee continues to gather information on the student's class work from the instructors, and at least once each semester meets with the student to discuss the student's continuing progress, future plans in the program and the meeting of departmental requirements. The student may at any time petition the Graduate Studies Committee for a change in the composition of the advisory committee.

Option A: Non-Thesis Option (30 Credits Plus Exam)

Thesis

Not required.

Time Limit

This program is designed to be completed in two years of full-time attendance. However, all 30 degree requirements must be completed within five years of initial enrollment.

Option B: Thesis Option (30 Credits Plus Defense)

Thesis

Required (as above).

Time Limit

This program is designed to be completed in two years of full-time attendance. However, all degree requirements must be completed within five years of initial enrollment.

Language and Linguistics Concentration with Thesis (30 credits Plus Defense)

Thesis

The thesis is to be written on a language-related subject chosen in consultation with the student's advisory committee. The student and the committee are to meet sufficiently often so that the committee may adequately supervise the writing of the thesis. Upon completion of the thesis the student is required to defend the thesis orally. PHILOS 990 may be taken only once.

Time Limit

This program is designed to be completed in two years of full-time attendance. However, all degree requirements must be completed within five years of initial enrollment.

Philosophy MA Learning Outcomes

A student who has successfully completed the MA program in Philosophy will be able to:

- Demonstrate general philosophical knowledge as well as thorough knowledge of the student's specialized area of research, including familiarity with major philosophical questions and problems, theoretical approaches, current philosophical debates, and methods of professional writing that characterize the student's program of study.
- Conduct original research that contributes meaningfully to ongoing philosophical debates or/and provides novel reading of important texts in the history of philosophy.
- Frame, analyze, and respond to complex issues related to the student's specialized area of philosophical research, and formulate

judgments about those issues in extended and in-depth critical analysis.

- Write effectively and develop a sustained philosophical argument.
- Submit a highly competitive application to strong Ph.D. programs in philosophy, should the student so desire.