Philosophy

The Department of Philosophy houses two doctoral programs: a PhD in Philosophy and an interdisciplinary PhD in Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology (PNP). The Philosophy program covers a broad array of philosophy, with particular strengths in ethics, moral psychology, and political philosophy; philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and metaphysics; and the history of philosophy. The PNP program draws on a core faculty in philosophy and on Washington University’s exceptional psychology and neuroscience faculty.

The department accepts about 10 percent of the applicants to these programs and maintains about 25 students in both programs. We are especially open to interdisciplinary work and are committed to providing methodologically and substantively broad training. Applicants from a wide range of backgrounds are welcome; the most successful applicants have evidence of philosophical talent and promise.

Both programs take six years, during which all PhD students are fully supported. The first six or seven semesters are dedicated primarily to course work, which may include independent studies and courses in other programs, such as classics, law, political science, and women’s studies. Students in their first seven semesters must also complete two or three qualifying papers that bridge the gap between seminar papers and professional publications. In addition, the department houses two dissertation workshops, one required for Philosophy students in their third year and beyond and the other for PNP students in all years. Students in their fourth year finish their third qualifying paper, devise a dissertation prospectus, and defend the prospectus in an oral exam. Then, the fifth year typically offers fellowship support to draft the full dissertation, before a sixth year is given over to revisions, a required colloquium, and job applications.

The department also works hard to prepare its students as teachers and as potential academic job applicants. Students typically serve as teaching assistants for four of their six years in residence, and teach at least one of their own courses in University College or Summer School. Placement efforts begin during the first-years‘ orientation and intensify in the spring of the student’s fifth year.

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Faculty

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Professors
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Associate Professors
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Assistant Professors

Charlie Kurth (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/charlie-kurth) PhD, University of California, San Diego

Elizabeth Schechter (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/elizabeth-schechter) PhD, University of Maryland

Julia Staffel (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/julia-staffel) PhD, University of Southern California

Postdoctoral Fellows

Joseph McCaffrey
PhD, University of Pittsburgh

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Lecturer

Brian Talbot (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/brian-talbot) PhD, University of Southern California

Adjunct Professors

John Bruer (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/John_Bruer) PhD, Rockefeller University

Linda Nicholson (http://history.artsci.wustl.edu/linda_nicholson) Susan E. and William P. Stiritz Distinguished Professor of Women's Studies PhD, Brandeis University

Professors Emeriti

Robert B. Barrett Jr. (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/robert-barrett) PhD, Johns Hopkins University

William H. Gass (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/william-gass) David May Distinguished University Professor Emeritus in the Humanities PhD, Cornell University

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Jerome P. Schiller (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/jerome-schiller) PhD, Harvard University

Joseph S. Ullian (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/joe-ullian) PhD, Harvard University

Richard A. Watson (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/richard-watson) PhD, University of Iowa

Carl P. Wellman (http://philosophy.artsci.wustl.edu/people/carl-wellman) Hortense and Tobias Lewin Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Humanities PhD, Harvard University

Degree Requirements

PhD in Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology (PNP)

Successful completion of 72 units of courses and seminars at the 400 level or above (with the exception of Phil 301G Symbolic Logic) in a way that meets both the detailed course requirements and the following minima:

1. 33 units of Philosophy course work
2. 18 units of empirical course work/laboratory work
3. Participation in the PNP Dissertation Seminar (PNP 501) in semesters when it is offered.
4. Regular attendance at the weekly Philosophy Colloquium, except with the permission of the director of PNP.
5. Completion of two qualifying papers, to be submitted on the first day of Years 2 and 3 respectively. (There should be no significant overlap within the two papers.)
6. Satisfaction of any colloquium requirement imposed by the department
7. Completion and defense of a dissertation prospectus (typically during the fourth year)
8. Completion and defense of a dissertation

Additional Information

For additional information, visit our Graduate Program (http://pnp.artsci.wustl.edu/graduate) webpage.
Please contact the department for further requirements.

**PhD in Philosophy**

1. Every student must complete the logic requirement, either by passing the exam given during orientation or by receiving at least a B in Phil 301G Symbolic Logic or Phil 405 Philosophical Logic.

2. Every student must complete at least 42 units of graduate-level (400-level or above) philosophy courses, each with at least a B-. No units can be transferred from other institutions. These units must include the following distribution requirements:
   a. Phil 502 Proseminar in Philosophy, taken in the first semester
   b. at least two additional 500-level seminars
   c. at least two core surveys in theoretical philosophy (Phil 4141 Advanced Epistemology, Phil 4142 Advanced Metaphysics, Phil 4065 Advanced Philosophy of Language, Phil 4210 Topics in Advanced Philosophy of Science)
   d. at least two core surveys in practical philosophy (Phil 4315 Normative Ethical Theory, Phil 4310 20th-Century Metaethics, Phil 4320 British Moralists, Phil 4400 Advanced Social and Political Philosophy)
   e. at least one core survey in ancient philosophy (Phil 451 Plato, Phil 452 Aristotle, Phil 4530 Hellenistic Philosophy)
   f. at least one core survey in modern philosophy (Phil 4550 Continental Rationalism, Phil 4560 Empiricism, Phil 4575 Kant and Kantian Practical Philosophy, Phil 4570 Kant's Critique of Pure Reason)

3. Additional work to 72 hours (at the 400 or 500 level; may consist of directed research Phil 591 or additional, germane course work)

4. Completion of teaching requirements

5. Completion of three qualifying papers, to be submitted on the first day of Years 2, 3 and 4 respectively

6. Completion of dissertation requirements

7. Completion of colloquium requirements

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Please contact the department for further requirements.