

# Philosophy

Bachelor of Arts Degree

## Contact

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## Admission Requirements

*(In years as established by the college)*

A high school diploma with the following specific courses:

- 4 English
- 2 Algebra I & II
- 1 Geometry
- 2 Lab Science (including biology)
- 2 History/Social Studies
- 2 Foreign Language (same language or two years of American Sign Language)
- Academic electives (to equal at least 17 credits)

*To ensure current mathematical skills, students should take a mathematics course during their senior year of high school.*

## Did You Know?

Nationally as a group, philosophy majors had higher mean scores on the Graduate Record Examination Verbal Section than students in any other major. And only philosophy majors were five percent or more above the mean on the LSAT (law), GMAT (graduate management), GRE Verbal and GRE Quantitative examinations.

## College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

### Program Description

Philosophy is a discipline devoted to rigorous reflection on human nature, culture and the world. It has a long history, beginning with the Ancient Greeks, that is the foundation of Western culture and a philosophical education. The curriculum is organized so that advanced courses will prepare motivated students to continue studying philosophy in graduate school. The wide array of topics encourages students to approach the fundamental questions of philosophy from many different perspectives: What is truth? What is real? What is the good life? What does it mean to know? What values should inform human relationships with other people, their communities, their creative work, and the natural environment? Courses enable students to study a variety of periods in the more than 2,000-year history of philosophy — from Plato and Aristotle to the latest 21st-century developments. Students also will find courses in existentialism, social and political philosophy, ethical theory, environmental and biomedical ethics, Hinduism and Buddhism, aesthetics, logic, phenomenology and the philosophies of mind, language, and the natural and human sciences. In addition to its major, the Department of Philosophy offers two minors: one in philosophy, and one in ethics, and social and political philosophy. These minors combine well with many majors offered at UMaine. The department welcomes double majors and minors from other fields. For students who have theoretical interests and/or a concern with ethical and political issues related to their main disciplines, philosophy can be an excellent addition to the major field of study.

### Specialized Information

Each year, there are regional and national undergraduate conferences in philosophy. Philosophy majors are encouraged to submit papers for these conferences and to participate. In recent years, several of our majors have presented papers to their peers at these venues. There are also several undergraduate philosophy journals in the U.S. that solicit submissions from students. Majors are encouraged to send in their best work to be considered for possible publication in these journals. Faculty have published numerous books and journal articles in their areas of expertise, and received Smithsonian and Fulbright Fellowships, as well as grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

### Associated Honor Societies and Student Organizations

A Student Philosophical Society and the philosophy honors society, Phi Sigma Tau, provide focal points for students interested in the discipline. Philosophy majors have organized weekly meetings to discuss philosophical topics and to hear invited speakers. In addition, students are welcome at the department's colloquium series that brings several philosophers to campus each year to speak. The department offers the Levinson Award for the best philosophy paper in an annual competition in the spring semester. Awards are also offered in recognition of the outstanding senior and excellence in the study of ethics, as well as for applying philosophy to some activity outside the curriculum. A scholarship is also awarded each year to the most promising philosophy major in his or her junior year.

## Representative Courses

PHI 100 Contemporary Moral Problems  
PHI 102 Introduction to Philosophy  
PHI 103 Methods of Reasoning  
PHI 104 Existentialism and Literature  
PHI 200 Problems in Philosophy  
PHI 210 History of Ancient Philosophy  
PHI 212 Hegel and 19th Century Philosophy  
PHI 214 20th Century Continental Philosophy  
PHI 230 Ethics  
PHI 232 Environmental Ethics  
PHI 233 Business Ethics  
PHI 235 Biomedical Ethics

PHI 240 Social and Political Philosophy  
PHI 244 Philosophy of Law  
PHI 250 Formal Logic  
PHI 286 Religion/Philosophy of the East: Hinduism  
PHI 287 Religion/Philosophy of the East: Buddhism  
PHI 312 History of Modern Philosophy  
PHI 317 Existentialism and Phenomenology  
PHI 342 Marxist Philosophy I: Philosophy of Karl Marx  
PHI 344 Theories of Justice  
PHI 420 Topics: Recent Continental Philosophy  
PHI 432 Environmental Philosophy and Policy  
PHI 475 Junior/Senior Philosophy Seminar

## Career and Graduate Opportunities

Philosophy majors have many options following graduation. Each year, some students go on to graduate school in philosophy or, in the case of double majors, their other area of study. They also commonly pursue law or business school. Philosophy graduates can be found in all walks of life. They have become philosophy professors, actors, novelists, filmmakers, professional athletes, business executives, schoolteachers and principals, ministers, environmental activists, farmers, small business entrepreneurs, politicians and political analysts.

## About UMaine

The University of Maine, founded in Orono in 1865, is the state's premier public university. It is among the most comprehensive higher education institutions in the Northeast and attracts students from across the U.S. and more than 60 countries. It currently enrolls 12,000 total undergraduate and graduate students who can directly participate in groundbreaking research working with world-class scholars. Students are offered 88 bachelor's degree programs, 64 master's degree programs, 25 doctoral programs and one of the oldest and most prestigious honors programs in the U.S. The university promotes environmental stewardship on its campus, with substantial efforts aimed at conserving energy, recycling and adhering to green building standards in new construction. For more information about UMaine, go online ([umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu)). Equal opportunity information also is available online ([umaine.edu/eo](http://umaine.edu/eo)).

## How do I apply?

Visit [go.umaine.edu](http://go.umaine.edu) for an application, as well as information about academics and life at UMaine.



## Academic Programs 2011–12

The latest versions of the UMaine fact sheets are online ([factsheets.umaine.edu](http://factsheets.umaine.edu)). This fact sheet is intended for informational purposes only and is subject to change.

