

Philosophy MA

Admission Requirements

Applicants must meet the general graduate admission requirements of the Graduate School, described in the UMSL Bulletin. Students are considered for admission to the graduate program in Philosophy only after they have formally applied for admission through the Graduate School. Applications are completed on-line. In addition to the application students must also submit:

- Transcripts of undergraduate study.
- Writing sample, preferably around 15 pages.
- Three letters of recommendation.
- Personal statement explaining one's interest in the program.
- GRE scores (strongly recommended although not required).

Degree Requirements

To earn a M.A. in philosophy, students must complete at least 30 hours of graduate-level course work. In addition, students must write a thesis, for which they must take three to six credit hours of Thesis Research. Entering students must demonstrate a competence in logic, either by having passed the relevant course prior to admission or by taking PHIL 5561: Graduate Formal Logic here at UMSL. Students should take PHIL 5400: Proseminar in Philosophy in the first year of residency. At least two-thirds of the course work must be completed in residence at UMSL. In addition, the courses taken are subject to two distribution requirements:

1. At least half of the courses must be at the 5000 level.
2. Two courses (6 credit hours) must be chosen from each of the following four subject areas:
 - Value Theory
 - History of Philosophy
 - Logic/Philosophy of Science
 - Epistemology/Metaphysics

Cooperative arrangement with Saint Louis University

The strengths of the UMSL Department of Philosophy are complemented by those of the Saint Louis University Philosophy Department, which has strengths in the history of philosophy as well as in philosophy of religion. To enhance students' opportunities for instruction and expertise, the two departments have worked out a cooperative arrangement that permits graduate philosophy students on each campus to take up to four courses at the partner institution. In any given semester, UMSL graduate students must take at least half of their courses at their home institution. Students admitted to the M.A. program on a probationary basis must take all their courses at UMSL during their first semester.

Learning Outcomes

- Acquire advanced knowledge of traditional philosophical issues in the western tradition.
- Develop critical thinking skills based on knowledge of the standards governing logical reasoning.
- Acquire familiarity with philosophical issues that arise in some other disciplines (e.g. biology, art, education, etc.).

- Acquire a basic understanding of ethical principles and their role in resolving ethical disputes.
- Acquire the knowledge and skills required to write a paper identifying a philosophical issue and presenting arguments supporting a thesis for resolving it.