

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

This supersedes previous announcements by the Department of Philosophy. All regulations are to be interpreted in conformity with the latest Official Bulletin on Graduate Studies.

The University of Rochester provides equal opportunity in admissions and student aid regardless of sex, race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

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<http://www.rochester.edu/College/PHL>

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WORK FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

A. REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for the Ph.D. are detailed below. The most important requirements are the passing of the Qualifying exam and the defense of an acceptable dissertation. In order to pass the Qualifying Examination a student must satisfy a number of preliminary requirements including a course requirement, a teaching requirement, and a series of comprehensive examinations. All these elements of the program are described below.

Students should consult the *Regulations and University Policies Concerning Graduate Studies*, which stipulates that

All work for the degree Doctor of Philosophy, including the final oral examination, must be completed within seven years from the date of initial registration, except that a student who enters with a master's degree or its equivalent for which the full 30 credit hours is accepted in the doctoral program must complete all work within six years from the date of initial registration.

The Department will approve extensions of time to degree only in extraordinary circumstances, and in no circumstances for more than one year.

Pre-Dissertation Requirements

1. Preliminary Requirements

- a. Students must establish competence in the history of philosophy to the level of PHL 201, History of Ancient Philosophy, and PHL 202, History of Modern Philosophy. This may be established on the basis of previous training. The faculty instructors for 201 and 202 will determine the student's competence at the outset of the first semester in residence.
- b. Students are required to establish competence in logic to the level of PHL 110, Introductory Logic. This may be done by (a) auditing PHL 110 and passing the test given at the end of the semester; (b) passing a certifying examination in logic during the first semester in residence; or (c) by establishing to the satisfaction of the faculty instructor(s) of 110 that s/he has taken a logic course elsewhere equivalent to or more advanced than 110.

Every student is required to meet this part of the logic requirement in the first year of graduate study.

2. Course Requirements

A total of 15 courses are required. The course requirements are divided into two parts: a Foundation Requirement and an Advanced Requirement. Up to three appropriate graduate level courses from other departments may be used to satisfy Ph.D. program course requirements, but only with the written approval of the student's faculty advisor.

a. Foundation Requirements

1. **By the end of the 3rd semester in the program**, students must complete six (6) 400-level courses including:
 - a. One 400-level logic course.
 - b. One 400-level history of ancient philosophy course.
 - c. One 400-level history of modern philosophy course.
 - d. At least three other 400-level courses.

(Note: It may turn out that some 400-level courses will not satisfy the Foundation requirements. The Department will specify each year any courses which do not satisfy this requirement.)

b. Advanced Requirements

1. Each student is required to complete at least nine additional graduate level courses. At least six of these must be 500-level seminars. Ordinarily, no more than two of these may be reading courses. No course used to satisfy the Foundation requirement may also satisfy this requirement. These courses, with the possible exception of the Writing Seminar, should be completed **by the end of the 6th semester of graduate study**.
2. Each student is required to select a primary and secondary concentration area from a list of areas drawn up by the Department. The list of potential concentration areas may be revised occasionally by the Department. The list currently includes epistemology, ethics, history of ancient philosophy, history of modern philosophy, logic, metaphysics, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of science. It is intended that students declare their two concentration areas during their second year. They need not decide which is the primary area and which is the secondary area until the third year when they choose the area of their written comprehensive exam. At least two courses at the 500-level must be taken in each area. Normally, no more than one of the two courses in each area may be a reading course. Students may petition the Department to grant an exception, and should include in the petition the names of a two faculty members who are willing to serve as examinees as well as a tentative reading list. **Students are required to notify the department office once the areas of concentration are selected. Students must also supply the office with the names of the two faculty examining committee members once the appropriate committee has been formed.**
3. Each student is required to complete the Writing Seminar (PHL 560). The Writing Seminar may be counted as one of the six required seminars. It may not count as one of two required courses in either of a student's concentration areas. In the Writing Seminar a student continues to work on a paper the student has written previously, usually in a seminar. This work is done under the supervision of a faculty member. The revised paper is then presented to the Department. **The Writing Seminar should be completed no later than the 7th semester of graduate study.**
4. Each student must take a comprehensive 3-hour closed book written exam in his/her primary concentration area. The exam will consist of 3 questions selected by the exam committee from a list of approximately 12 questions distributed at least a semester or a summer prior to the exam. A reading list will also be distributed with the questions. The exam committee will be composed of at least two faculty members chosen by the student in consultation with the student's principal advisor in the concentration area.

5. Each student must take an exam in his/her secondary concentration area. The exam will be on the general topic of a paper chosen by the student. The exam committee will be composed of at least two faculty members chosen by the student in consultation with the student's principal advisor in the concentration area. The paper is selected by the student and a suitable reading list on its topic will be drawn up by the student and the appropriate faculty member. The student may select either an oral or a written exam.

Primary and secondary exams will be given at the beginning of each academic year (by the end of the first full week of the fall semester) and during the final exam week of each semester. **To remain in good standing, a student should complete one exam by the end of exam week of the Spring semester of the student's third year, and the other exam by the end of exam week of the Fall semester of the student's fourth year.** (Students may take either concentration exam during exam week of earlier semesters in their program.) A student who does not take a concentration exam on or before the required time places in jeopardy any financial support received over which the department has discretion.

In the event that an examining committee is unable to assign either a passing or failing grade to an exam, it may, at its discretion, re-examine the student on all or part of the material of the examination, in a manner and at a time that the committee determines. Students who fail an exam must wait one semester before retaking an exam on the same topic. An exam on a different topic may be taken at any time. Students shall consult closely with appropriate faculty members about their plans for completing advanced requirements.

3. Transfer Credit

With Department approval up to seven graduate-level courses from another school may be transferred for Ph.D. candidates. One of the seven may be a 500-level seminar. These courses may be used to fulfill the foundation requirements.

4. Teaching Requirement

All students must complete the teaching requirement, either by taking one semester of PHL 581 (4 credit hours, Supervised Instruction: Lectures to Undergraduates) or by teaching a course during the academic year. The teaching requirement is normally fulfilled in the third year. When taking PHL 581, the lectures are to be discussed in advance with the instructors in the courses in which they are to be given and the instructor will attend (or listen to a tape recording of) at least one of the lectures and discuss the student's performance with him/her. When the requirement is fulfilled by teaching a course during the academic year, the student will plan the course in consultation with a faculty member. That faculty will attend (or listen to a tape recording of) at least one class meeting and will discuss the student's performance with him/her.

Exemption from this requirement will be granted only when the student has no expectation of seeking a teaching position in the United States or any other Anglophone country. Students who seek exemption should understand that if they decide to seek a teaching position anywhere, their exemption from the teaching requirement will significantly limit the Department's ability to testify to the student's suitability for employment in a teaching position. Petitions for exemption are to be made in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies. This statement will be included in the Director's letter notifying the student that an exemption has been granted.

Although serving as a teaching assistant is not a degree requirement, most students do receive their stipends in the form of teaching assistantships. Additional information about teaching assistantships may be found later in this handbook.

5. The Qualifying Examination

The Qualifying Examination is an examination held by a committee appointed by the Dean.

After completing all foundation, advanced, and teaching requirements, a student petitions the Department to conduct a Qualifying Examination. The letter petitioning the Department should contain the following:

- a. a dissertation proposal that has been approved by the student's dissertation advisor,
- b. a description, including course names and numbers, of how the foundation, advanced and teaching requirements have been met,
- c. an indication of the student's preference regarding advisors.

The Department will decide whether to grant the student's petition. If the petition is denied, the student will be informed of the reasons for its denial. If the petition is approved, then the Chair will recommend to the Dean a committee of three faculty members to evaluate the student's record. If the committee finds that the student has satisfactorily completed all the requirements described above, the student passes the Qualifying Examination. The Qualifying Examination must be passed at least seven months prior to the date of the Final Examination on the thesis.

A student who has passed the Qualifying Examination is excused from all further participation in courses and seminars, and may devote full time to thesis research. However, such students are encouraged to audit courses and seminars, to attend departmental colloquia and meetings of the writing seminar.

The Master's Degree will be awarded on application to a student who has passed the Qualifying Examination.

Dissertation Requirements

The dissertation is the most important single part of the work for the Ph.D. Normally the thesis will be written in the primary area of concentration. The thesis must be a contribution to knowledge in a publishable form.

The topic for the thesis is to be chosen by the candidate in consultation with a member of the Department selected by the student as the student's dissertation advisor. A second member of the Department will serve as the second reader. A third member of the committee is to be chosen from outside the department, with the help of the advisor. This person will be the outside examiner at the final oral defense of the thesis. This early selection of the outside examiner helps to insure that the student can take advantage of extra-departmental input from the outset, or, alternatively, helps ensure that the outside examiner has ample opportunity to learn the style and standards of our Department.

Directions for the mechanical preparation of the dissertation, which must be meticulously followed, are given in a booklet obtainable from the Office of the University Council of Graduate Studies.

The dissertation will be microfilmed by University Microfilms, Inc. and the abstract will be published.

The Final Examination is an oral examination conducted by an examining board appointed by the University Dean of Graduate Studies. It is largely based on the candidate's dissertation. Normally the examination has a part open to the public, during which the candidate presents his/her thesis, and a closed part, during which the candidate discusses the thesis with the members of the Final Examination Committee.

University regulations require that the dissertation be approved by the research supervisor before the candidate may take the final examination.

A vote of approval of the final oral examining committee must be unanimous, but if there is a single dissenting vote the case will be presented for decision to the University Council on Graduate Studies. A candidate who fails the final examination shall be allowed one repeat examination.

B. STIPENDS

Stipends are typically awarded annually, in the form of fellowships and assistantships. University Fellowships are awarded for the first year and assistantships are awarded for all other semesters. Fellowships are not payment for any services. Teaching assistantships do require service to the Department. This service may take the form of being a teaching assistant who assists a faculty instructor in correcting papers, leading discussion sections, etc. or being an instructor, who teaches his/her own course, typically in the College Writing Program. Some philosophy graduate students will be freshmen writing instructors and will teach to freshmen small introductory philosophy courses that emphasize written work.

Incoming students are awarded fellowships and assistantships in the expectation of outstanding performance. Support usually continues through five years of graduate work, but the renewal of awards is not automatic. Continuation of support is contingent upon timely completion of program requirements, and work that is merely "satisfactory" may not suffice to insure the renewal of any award.

In addition to assistantships and University Fellowships, some special University dissertation fellowships are awarded in annual competitions.

C. TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

Students who receive stipends normally receive them in the form of teaching assistantships. (During the first year of graduate study students receiving stipends are awarded fellowships.) Teaching assistants must register for PHL 580, Supervised Instruction in Philosophy. The Department has a Teaching Handbook which all students (whether TA's or not) would be well advised to read.

So far as possible the preferences of students for particular undergraduate course assignments in 580 will be honored, subject to the approval of the graduate student advisor, the exigencies of scheduling, and the needs of the undergraduate courses. No graduate student will be expected to change his or her academic plans in order to accommodate the Department's needs for assistants.

At the beginning of the semester, the instructor of the undergraduate course will meet with the teaching assistants assigned to that course to discuss the objectives of the course, the role that he or she expects them to play in it, and to determine specific grading policies. The final responsibility for the assignment of grades should be determined at that time.

Given the purpose of the assistantship, the instructor is encouraged to allow graduate students conducting section meetings to introduce new material when this is appropriate to the nature of the course.

Graduate students conducting section meetings are encouraged to invite the instructor of the course to attend a few of the meetings, with a view to providing advice on teaching technique.

The instructor under whom a student is taking 580 will be available for consultation, advice, and discussion concerning the conduct of sections, the grading of papers, and the like. Graduate students are encouraged to make use of this availability. When appropriate, criticism of the T.A.'s performance will be made at these private meetings.

To insure both fairness to undergraduates, and to enhance the educational value of the Assistantship, the following guidelines for grading sets of papers will be followed:

- 1) When appropriate and feasible, the instructor will meet with the T.A.'s to read some of the undergraduate tests and papers with them.
- 2) Grading standards for a set of papers should be set out in private consultation between the instructor and the T.A. before the grading of that set of papers, or according to prior agreement.
- 3) In cases in which more than one person grades papers of one assignment, the grading standards and corrected papers should be compared to assure parity of grading.
- 4) During the course of a semester, should a professor decide to change a grade originally assigned by a T.A., he or she is urged to consult with that assistant, if possible, in order to explain the reason for that change.
- 5) The instructor is urged to review sets of graded papers before returning them to undergraduates.
- 6) No graduate student T.A. should grade the assignments, papers, or tests of another graduate student or assign a course grade to another graduate student.

At the end of the semester, graduate students are encouraged to administer to their sections an evaluation form which has been developed by philosophy graduate students to offer guidance for the improvement of their teaching. At the student's option the results may be discussed with the instructor.

There will be a final meeting near the end of the semester, before the semester-end general faculty evaluation of students, at which the instructor will privately review, with the T.A., her/his performance in 580.

The instructor will submit an evaluation of the student's performance to be included in the student's departmental letter of evaluation.

If the assistant believes that these guidelines have not been followed, he should first consult the instructor. If the difficulties cannot be resolved by this consultation, the assistant should appeal to the chair of the department or another faculty member in the department who will seek to adjudicate the disagreement.

Training in preparation for college teaching is part of the Ph.D. program and will be judged by the same standards applied in seminars and courses. 580 carries 0 hours of credit and a grade is reported at the end of the semester. In the semesters when a student is registered for 580, he/she will not normally register for more than twelve hours of other course work.

D. PARTICIPATION IN COLLEGE WRITING

Students in their second year or beyond who are receiving teaching assistantships are eligible to apply to teach two sections of College Writing in lieu of serving as assistants in Philosophy

courses. Students can be released to teach sections of the College Writing only to the extent that departmental needs for teaching assistants are met. The College Writing course is required of all freshman; it introduces students to disciplinary writing at the college level. Prior to teaching a section of College Writing, a student who is accepted as a College Writing instructor must take a summer training course. This course is expected to take place in May and June, and for the two weeks prior to the Fall semester. There is financial compensation for taking this course (currently \$2,000). There is an enhanced stipend for each semester during which a writing course is taught (currently \$1,750 per semester). College Writing instructors must meet monthly while teaching for a practicum.

E. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Residence Requirements

The minimum residence requirement for those entering with the B.A. is three academic years of full-time study. For those entering with the M.A. it is two years of full-time study. Part-time study for the Ph.D. is ordinarily not authorized.

A graduate student who has completed 90 hours of graduate credit beyond the bachelor's degree, or 60 hours beyond an accepted Master's degree, will be considered to have fulfilled the full-time study requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree. At this time a graduate student may continue in residence as a part-time doctoral candidate with written approval of the College Dean. Once all degree requirements except the dissertation have been fulfilled full-time students should then register each semester for 0 hours of PHL 999 Doctoral Dissertation or 0 hours PHL 899 Masters Dissertation. If the full-time student is T.A.ing he or she should register for 0 hours of PHL 999 and 0 hours of PHL 580, Supervised Instruction. Full-time students who are not in residence should register for 0 hours of PHL 995 Continuation of Doctoral Enrollment. Beyond 90 credit hours, students are required to pay a registration fee each semester for which they are registered. In the fifth year, a departmental grant will cover the fee. Students should expect to pay the fees in full after the fifth year.

Though it is possible for some students to complete work for the Ph.D. in four academic years, typically a student remains in residence for five years.

2. Prerequisites

Instructors may stipulate prerequisites for admission to their courses. Since these may vary according to the specific material to be covered, and since there may be a variety of ways of meeting these prerequisites, students should consult the graduate advisor or the instructor before registering. In general a prerequisite for a seminar in any category will be knowledge of the material covered in the regular undergraduate/graduate courses (numbered 200/400) in that area.

3. Credit for Reading Courses

Any graduate student may take a reading course (591), given by a cooperating faculty member, at any time before his/her Qualifying Examination. A reading course is administered under the following conditions: (1) The topic of the reading course is not expected to be covered in a seminar which the student could take, and (2) reading courses are not to exceed 12 hours of the student's 15 course requirement. Reasons for denying a student's petition to take a reading course for seminar credit must be given explicitly to the student by the Department.

4. Incomplete Grades

Under the University rules, the grade of I should only be used in conjunction with a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the student and the instructor describing precisely what additional work must be completed by the student to enable the instructor to assign a final course grade. The additional work must be completed no later than one calendar year (two semesters) after the end of the semester in which the original course was taken. A copy of the MOU between the instructor and the student should be provided to the College Graduate Office for approval at the time the grade of I is assigned.

5. Colloquia

The program of colloquia is regarded as an important element in the education of a graduate student. Graduate students are expected to attend the colloquia given by outside speakers and department members. All graduate students are strongly encouraged to attend meetings of the writing seminar at which graduate students present papers to the Department.

6. Orientation Meetings

During the first two weeks of the Fall semester, there will be a required orientation meeting for each Ph.D. class, from first year through fifth year. The main purpose of the meeting will be to discuss how to make good progress in the program during the academic year. Efforts will be made to schedule the meetings at convenient times. Any Ph.D. student who misses the orientation meeting for that student's class must promptly give the graduate director a written explanation for the absence, in order to remain in good standing in the program.

7. Advising

First year students are assigned advisors by the Graduate Program Director. At the end of each ensuing year, until the student passes the qualifying examination and has a thesis advisor, the student selects a faculty member to be his or her advisor for the following year. Students must have their advisors approve and sign their registration forms. Courses taken without the approval of the student's advisor may not be used to satisfy Department requirements.

8. Optional Certification in a Foreign Language

The Department conducts examinations in Greek, Latin, French, and German for those who want to establish credentials in a foreign language. Students who pass one of these examinations will have this accomplishment recorded in their dossiers. The Department believes that mastery of a foreign language is useful for the study of many topics in philosophy, especially in the history of philosophy. In some cases individual faculty members may require their dissertation advisees to pass one of the language examinations.

9. English as a Second Language

If English is not the native language of a student, the student is required to take the University's courses in English as a second language until able to demonstrate proficiency in both oral and written English. Those who fall under this requirement should note that the University offers an intensive program in English as a second language each August. They are encouraged to enroll in

this program before beginning their studies in philosophy. The Department will help offset the tuition costs.

10. Summer Teaching

The Philosophy Department offers several courses for undergraduates each summer. Our primary goal in assigning instructors to these courses is to offer the best program possible to our undergraduate students. Graduate students who have given evidence that they will be effective teachers are permitted to teach summer courses. It should be noted that it is the Department's obligation to provide experienced and highly qualified instructors for the students in these courses. As a result, these opportunities are definitely limited. The department's criteria for selecting instructors of courses in the summer session are included in the Teaching Handbook. A graduate student is eligible to teach a summer course only if that student has completed three years of graduate work and is judged by the Department to be capable of teaching the course effectively. A student writing a dissertation will be eligible to teach a summer course only if his or her thesis director reports that he or she is making satisfactory progress on the dissertation. Similar rules apply to independently taught courses during the regular academic year.

11. Travel Grants

The Philosophy Department provides up to \$3,000 in subsidies for graduate student travel to present papers and interview for jobs at the APAs. The maximum possible reimbursement a student may receive each year will be \$500. Students must be in residence to be eligible.

Students on the job market will be reimbursed up to \$300 to attend and interview at the Eastern APAs. Funds will be earmarked for this purpose in September of each year. To be assured of funding, job seekers must declare their intentions to the philosophy Placement Director by September 1. Please note that reimbursement for interview expenses is subject to federal income taxes under IRS regulations. Travel to give a talk is considered a business expense and reimbursement for such expense is not subject to federal tax.

The remaining funds will be designated as "Departmental Travel Awards." They will be allocated as requests are received, with priority being given to talks at the APAs, national and international conferences, and other professional meetings. Requests should be made in writing to the department Chair as early in the academic year as possible, and they should identify the talk or response, conference and venue, dates, and estimated costs.

Funds will be allocated in advance of a trip; reimbursement of actual incurred costs is made on the basis of receipts provided to the department's Administrative Assistant.

12. Graduate Student Exchange Scholar Program

The following description is from the *Official Bulletin on Graduate Studies*: "Cornell, Syracuse, and Rochester offer graduate students the opportunity, when the appropriate course or facility is unavailable in the home university, to take special courses and seminars and to use the libraries at the other two universities. Inasmuch as each university has unique courses and programs, this exchange considerably expands opportunities for some students. More information about this program is available in the Office of the University Dean of Graduate Studies."

Students must secure permission from the instructor and apply 6 weeks in advance of the term. Each student is limited to no more than 2 exchange courses, and such courses may not be used to fulfill foundations or seminar requirements for the degree. They do count towards the total of 90 funded Ph.D. credit hours.

WORK FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

Students working toward an M.A. in Philosophy fall into three main categories. Some are students who are deeply interested in philosophy and wish to study it beyond the undergraduate level but have no intention of academic careers in philosophy. Others are students who want to continue their study of philosophy but are as yet undecided about working toward a Ph.D. and do not yet wish to commit themselves to a Ph.D. program. Finally, there are students whose primary field of study is in another discipline but who wish to devote a year or so of study to concentrated work in philosophy, perhaps to those areas of philosophy most closely related to their primary interest.

Both part-time and full-time students are admitted to the program. The program described below can be completed by a full-time student with a good undergraduate background in philosophy in one calendar year. In no case should it take a full-time student more than two academic years to complete the program.

Students may take an M.A. under Plan A, which requires a Master's Thesis, or under Plan B, which does not require a Master's Thesis. Each plan permits students to take some courses outside the Philosophy Department, but all such courses require Departmental approval.

Students taking an M.A. under any of these plans are required to audit Introductory Logic (110) and pass a test given at the end of the course. This requirement will be waived for students with exceptionally strong undergraduate training in logic who take and pass a certifying examination at the beginning of their first semester in the Department.

Students with insufficient training in the history of philosophy, as determined by the student's advisor or other appropriate member of the Department, will be required to take History of Ancient Philosophy (201) and/or History of Modern Philosophy (202). These courses will not contribute toward the 32 credit hour requirement detailed below. M.A. students are not required to serve as teaching assistants.

Plan A (Thesis)

Total credit hours required: 32, to be made up as follows:

- a. Three graduate courses at the 400-level.
- b. Two graduate seminars (500-level) and at least one other graduate course (12 hours).
- c. Thesis (8 hours).

The thesis is to be written under the supervision of one member of the Department and must be defended in an oral examination before a committee of three, one of whom will be from another department.

Plan B

32 credit hours of graduate level work are required. Courses taken must include at least four graduate courses at the 400-level and at least two graduate seminars (500-level) in Philosophy and may include no more than two courses outside the Department. No more than two courses (8 credits) may be in reading courses (Independent Study, PHL 491). The student must pass a comprehensive examination in an area of concentration. The student may choose to take either an oral or a written exam on the general topic of a paper chosen by the student. The paper is selected by the student and a suitable reading list on its topic will be drawn up by the student and an appropriate faculty member.