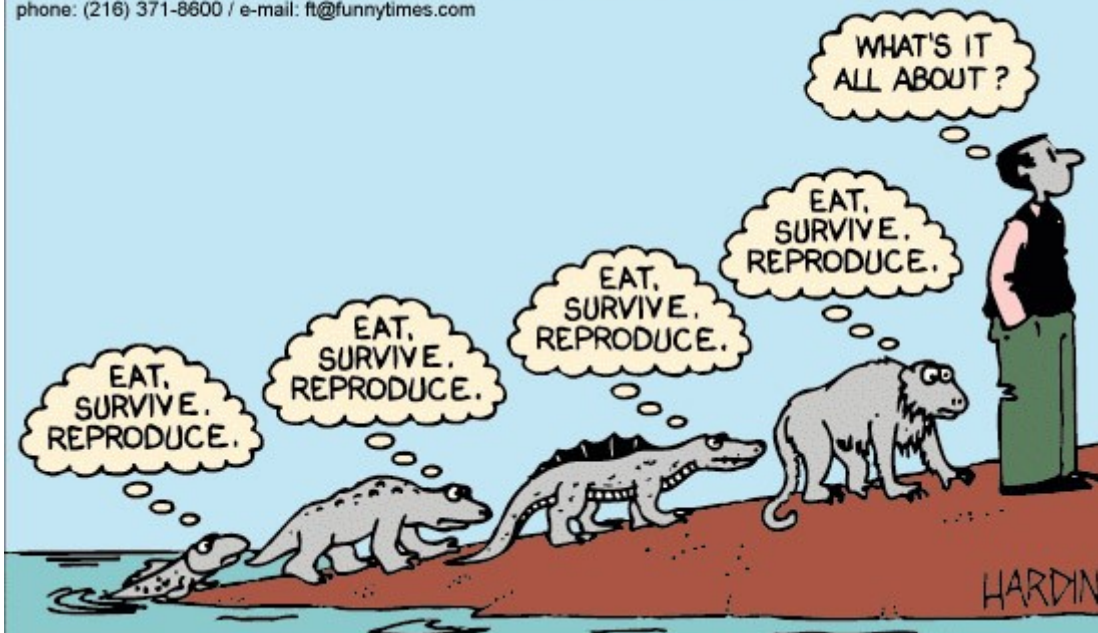




Studying Philosophy at York College

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phone: (216) 371-8600 / e-mail: ft@funnytimes.com



**“I would trade all of my technology
for an afternoon with
Socrates.”**

Steve Jobs, CEO, Apple Computer Co.
(*Newsweek*, Oct. 29, 2001)

*For I spend my whole life in going about and
persuading you all to give your first and
greatest care to the improvement of your
souls, and not till you have done that to think
of your bodies or your wealth....For the
unexamined life is not worth living.*

Socrates



Students pursuing a major in philosophy critically study the abiding questions facing humankind: What is the nature of God? Why be moral? Is there an afterlife? What is beauty? What is truth? What is justice? What does it mean to know? Philosophy majors at York College develop a comprehensive knowledge of the history of philosophy and the representative philosophical problems and issues of the discipline. They study some of the world's greatest literature, including masterpieces by such diverse thinkers as Plato, Augustine, Descartes, Marx, Nietzsche, Derrida, and Foucault. Along the way, they come to understand the extent to which philosophers have influenced and shaped the development of science, art, literature, politics, education, and theology. The study of philosophy develops analytical, critical, and interpretive abilities, cultivating a student's capacities for reflection and self-expression. The study of philosophy further enhances the student's capacity to apply philosophical methods to intellectual problems across academic fields of study.

The study of philosophy is excellent preparation for careers that demand careful reading, critical thinking, and decision-making abilities. A major in philosophy provides a solid foundation for students planning careers in medicine, law, education, and business. Philosophy majors are among the top performers on the Law School Aptitude Test and the Medical College Aptitude Test. Philosophy majors also succeed in executive and management sectors of business that require the ability to assimilate information, analyze situations, and produce effective solutions to complex problems.

Why Study Philosophy



Students are usually drawn to the study of philosophy because of their intrinsic interest in the discipline and the kinds of questions of it raises.

- Students of philosophy address the most basic issues behind the human quest for understanding: What does it mean to be human? Am I in charge of my destiny, or determined by my environment? How should I live my life? What's the nature of love, and of hatred? What is beauty? Does God exist? Is life meaningful? What happens when I die?
- The study of philosophy furnishes students with the skills in communications, and comparative and critical thinking, necessary for a successful career in competitive corporate America.
- Philosophy develops the capacity to see the world from the perspective of other individuals and other cultures; it enhances one's ability to perceive the relationships among the various fields of study; and it deepens one's sense of the meaning and varieties of human experience.
- The study of philosophy cultivates the capacities and appetite for self-expression and reflection, for exchange and debate of ideas, for life-long learning, and for dealing with problems for which there are no easy answers.

There are also many tangible benefits for studying philosophy.

- Students of philosophy develop the skills and abilities necessary for an enormous range of careers, including among others careers in business, law, medicine, research, public policy, ministry, government, and public relations.
- "For all the jokes about them, philosophy majors appear to do remarkably well" -- so says C. M. Cropper, in a New York Times article that explains that philosophy majors are increasingly successful in a world in which business and government depend more and more on abstract reasoning abilities.
- The New York Times Career Planner reports that "Philosophy is one fundamental area of study that has found a new role in the high-tech world." In an information-based economy, people who can think conceptually are more and more valuable.
- Philosophy majors consistently achieve among the highest scores of all majors on the LSAT, GRE, and GMAT.
- The Times of London reported in 1998, "The great virtue of philosophy is that it teaches not what to think, but how to think."

The Philosophy Major

Students can pursue a B.A. in Philosophy and a minor in Philosophy at York College. The Philosophy Major includes 45 credits in major courses and stresses the central fields of philosophical inquiry, such as metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics, and the history of philosophy. Courses like *Introduction to Philosophy*, *Critical Thinking*, *World Religions*, and *Contemporary Problems* are offered regularly as the major core credits. Additionally, the department offers a number of upper division and special topics courses each semester, including *Epistemology*, *Ethics*, *Metaphysics*, *Contemporary Philosophy*, *Philosophy of Technology*, *Aesthetics*, *Ethics in the Workplace*, and the *Philosophy Seminar*.

Students have 18 elective credits within the philosophy major, which can include up to nine credits in religious studies courses. Some of the department's more popular upper-division courses include *Feminist Philosophy*, *Philosophy of Religion*, *Philosophy and Film*, *Bioethics*, and *Images of Power*. Philosophy majors can also elect to undertake an Internship as part of their major experience.

Philosophy majors have 31-33 free elective credits, which they can use to pursue another course of study as a minor or work towards completing the requirements of a second major. Many Philosophy majors elect to pursue a second major in areas such as Political Science or Literary Studies. All Philosophy majors are required to take at least six credits in a foreign language.

The Philosophy Minor

Students also have the option of pursuing a minor in philosophy while majoring in another area. A minor in philosophy requires 18 credits, including *Introduction to Philosophy*, *Critical Thinking* or *Logic*, a course in ethics, and nine additional credits in philosophy and religion electives. At least six of the 18 credits in the minor must be at the 300 level or higher.

PHILOSOPHY Minor (18 credits)

PHL221 or PHL235 or PHL236

PHL222 or PHL231

PHL223 or PHL240 or PHL341 or PHL350

Nine additional credits in Philosophy

At least six of the 18 credits must be at the 300 level or higher

With either option, students are rewarded with the pleasures of critically addressing lasting philosophical issues.



What would be the value of the passion for knowledge if it resulted only in a certain amount of knowledgeableness and not in the knower's straying afield of himself? There are times in life when the question of knowing if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all.

Michel Foucault

Philosophy Worksheet

YORK COLLEGE OF PENNSYLVANIA

2009-2010 Academic Year

Baccalaureate Degree (Minimum 124 Credits)
Cumulative "2.0" or Better Required for Graduation

Worksheet for **PHILOSOPHY, B.A.**
Dept. of English & Humanities

NAME _____

COMMON CORE: 16 Credits
Analytical Reading/Writing WRT102 _____
Academic Writing WRT202 _____
Human Communication CM104 _____
Information Literacy IFL101 _____
Cr. Trngg./Pr. Sow. Main MAT111 _____
Physical Education (2 crs.) _____

AREA DISTR. REQUIREMENTS:

I. Fine Arts & Humanities 6 Credits

II. Social & Behav. Sciences 6 Credits

III. Laboratory Sciences 6-8 Credits

IV. Amer./West. Civ. Amer. Govt. 6 Credits

V. Foreign Language 6 Credits

ELECTIVE COURSES: 31-33 Credits

MAJOR COURSES 45 Credits
REQUIRED COURSES: (27 Credits)
Introduction to Philosophy PHL221 _____
Logic PHL231 _____
Ancient/Early Modern Phil PHL235 _____
Enlightenment/Postmod. Phil PHL236 _____
Epistemology PHL321 _____
Metaphysics PHL331 _____
Ethics PHL341 _____
Philosophy Seminar PHL401 _____
World Religions REL265 _____

REQUIRED ELECTIVES: (18 Credits)
(Additional Philosophy courses)*

*At least 9 credits must be at the 300 level or above. Up to 9 credits may be REL courses.

T A grade of "2.0" or better is required in all major courses.

NOTES:

1 All courses must be completed with a minimum "2.0" grade. Courses may not be taken on a pass/fail basis.

2 A minimum of twelve (12) credits of the Area Distribution Requirements must be at the 200-level or above. Courses may not be taken on a pass/fail basis. See Registrar's Office for official list of courses.

3 These credits must be taken in one language.

4 Requirements listed apply to students who matriculate into or declare this major during the 2009-2010 academic year.

(Signed) Faculty Advisor	Date
(Signed) Dept. Chair	Date

A Selection of Philosophy & Religious Studies Courses

PHL 221 Introduction to Philosophy

An examination of the fundamental problems of philosophy including a brief survey of the different philosophical schools of thought of historical importance and contemporary influence. Satisfies ADR I

PHL 223 Contemporary Moral Problems

This course attempts to apply philosophy to the problems and issues of contemporary life, such as moral issues (attitudes towards sex, abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality), and political questions (equality of women, reverse discrimination, civil disobedience, conflicts between control and freedom). Satisfies ADR I

PHL 224 Philosophy and Human Nature

MWF 11:00—11:50 Dr. Weiss

Are human beings basically animals? Or are we perhaps complex machines? Are we merely the sum of our genes or do we somehow enjoy a free will? From Genesis to Darwin and onto the android Data, human beings have been preoccupied with our nature and place in the world. This course examines this issue through various philosophical, scientific, and literary texts.

PHL240 Environmental Ethics

Environmental Ethics is fundamentally about understanding our collective and individual responsibilities to the world. Drawing on both classic and contemporary texts we will explore questions of environmental obligation, man's place in the world, and the manner in which we ought to act. Satisfies ADR I

PHL321 Epistemology

What is knowledge? What is truth? When are we justified in believing something to be knowledge? Is truth and knowledge in fact out there waiting to be discovered or is it somehow created by human beings? Is there "a" truth or are there separate truths cohering with distinct knowledges or discourses? These are the issues that are central to a discussion of epistemology. Satisfies ADR I

PHL 222 Critical Thinking

This course is aimed at providing students with the analytical and evaluative skills necessary to thinking clearly and critically. Such skills will enable students to distinguish good reasoning from poor reasoning and therefore enable students to further their intellectual development and ability to achieve success in their college studies. Satisfies ADR I

REL 265 World Religions

An introduction to the world's living religions-Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The role of primitive religions and the confrontation of religions in our contemporary world will also be studied. Satisfies ADR I

REL275 Tradition and Culture of Christianity

T/TH 2:00-3:15 Dr. Rashkover

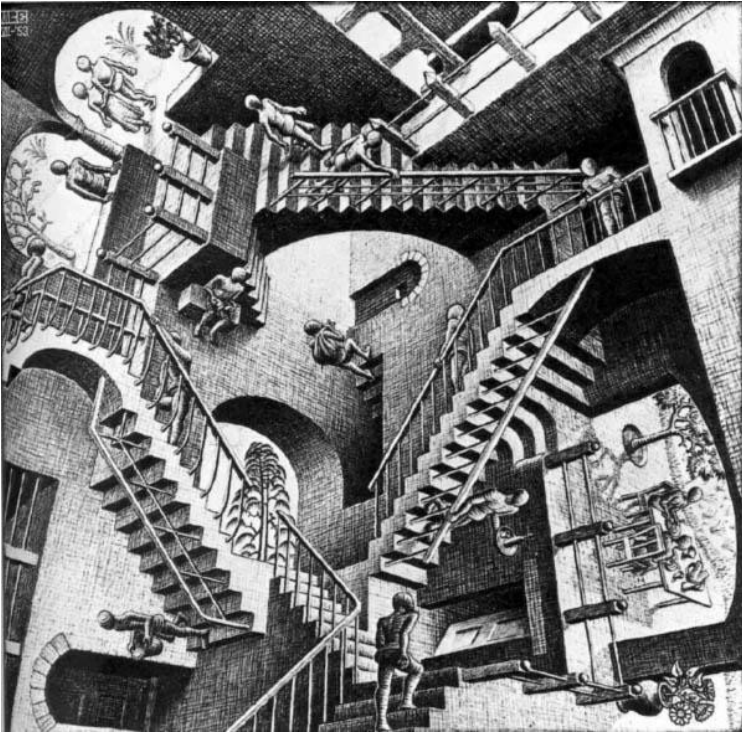
This course introduces students to Christianity's foundational concepts as developed in the New Testament, the writings of the Church Fathers and later writings. Additionally, the course introduces students to the historical development of the Christian tradition from a small Jewish sect into a world religion.

PHL231 Logic

MWF 2:00—2:50 Dr. Weiss

This course is designed to help students develop their abilities to understand, construct, and evaluate daily arguments. It examines the conditions for successful arguments and focuses on developing critical thinking skills. It is especially useful for students anticipating the LSAT and similar standardized courses.





PHL383 Philosophy of Religion

In this course, students will learn the various critical approaches philosophers have taken to central religious ideas. Topics will include, among others, faith versus reason, divine attributes, proofs for the existence of God, the problem of evil, and the nature of religious experience.

REL368 Religion, Society, and Culture

This course explores how religion interacts with, challenges, and is challenged by other aspects of human cultural life including art, politics, and ethics. The course examines these interactions as they are discussed by leading religious thinkers and their critics including Plato, Augustine, Kant, Marx, Nietzsche, Tillich, Niebuhr, Wittgenstein, Levinas, and others.

REL381/WGS381 Women and Religion

This course explores how women have factored into or been excluded from the roles, rituals, scriptures, theologies, and governing images of some of the world's major religions. Additionally, the course explores contemporary efforts to contend with challenges to women in these traditions.

PHL343 Ethical Issues in Peace and Conflict

A study of central concerns related to war and peace from an ethical perspective. The course will deal with ethical principles regarding war, and consider such issues as human rights, the causes of violence, ecological disorders, population problems and distribution of global resources, from an ethical standpoint.

PHL347 Philosophy of Law

This course explores such topics as what law is, what kinds of laws there are, how law is or should be related to morality, what sorts of principles should govern punishment and criminal justice in general.

PHL346 Bioethics

This course introduces students to important ethical issues pertaining to the healthcare professions. Following a brief overview of moral theories, this course may focus on, among other topics, patient-doctor relations, end-of-life issues, cloning and biotechnology, health care and social justice.

PHL351 Aesthetics

An introduction to theories of art. Analysis of aesthetic experience, expression, creation, and structure. The social role of art and function of aesthetic criticism will be considered.

PHL390 Philosophy of Technology

Philosophy of technology is a critical, reflective examination of the nature of technology as well as the effects and transformation of technologies in human knowledge, activities, societies, and environments. The aim of philosophy of technology is to understand, evaluate, and criticize the ways in which technologies reflect as well as change human life individually, socially, and politically. The goal of this course is to help us critically examine the impact of technology on our lives and address several key questions about technology, thereby arriving at a more reflective understanding of the nature of technology.

Minor in Religious Studies



Why Religious Studies?

The study of religion encourages increased understandings of human experience through analyses of religious texts, traditions, practices, and perspectives. Studying religion will help you develop the capacity to see the world from the perspectives of other individuals and cultures and to think carefully and critically about those individuals and cultures.

Current and Future Course Topics

- World Religions
- Tradition and Culture of Judaism
- Tradition and Culture of Christianity
- Religion, Culture, Society
- American Religious Thought and Culture
- Religion and Film
- Religion and Popular Culture
- New Religious Movements (Cults!)



For More Information Contact:

Professor Victor Taylor, vetaylor@ycp.edu
Professor Christa Shusko, cshusko@ycp.edu

Department of English and Humanities
York College of Pennsylvania





Philosophy & Religious Studies Faculty

Dr. Rory Kraft

B.A. Arizona State, M.A. American University, Ph.D. Michigan State

Professor Kraft works primarily in ethical and applied ethics (specifically medical/bioethics and business ethics). He has additional interests in aesthetics, 19th and 20th century German philosophy, and philosophy with children. He is co-editor of the journal *Questions: Philosophy for Young People* and is currently working on a collection of materials related to the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Adult Male Negro.

Christa Shusko

She received her M.A. and M.Phil. from Syracuse University and is currently working on her dissertation, entitled "The Body of Love: Conceiving Perfection in the Oneida Community." The dissertation incorporates many of her research and teaching interests, including the history of religion, specifically in the American context, religion and sexuality, religion and utopia, and religious conceptions of time. Her broader interests include the history of the academic study of religion. Recent presentations include "The Violence of Love: Eros, Transgression, and Religion in Georges Bataille" and "Master(Mistress)/Slave: Reading Power and Dialectic in Hegel and Masoch."

Dr. Victor Taylor

B.A., Lemoyne College; Ph.D., Syracuse University

Professor Taylor's areas of research are in religious theory, comparative literature, and philosophy. He is the author or editor of seven projects: *Para/Inquiry: Postmodern Religion and Culture* (Routledge 2000), *The Encyclopedia of Postmodernism* with Charles E. Winqvist (Routledge 2000), *Postmodernism: Critical Concepts* (Routledge 2001), *The Religious Pray, The Profane Swear* (PenMark Press 2002), *Jean-Francois Lyotard: Critical Assessment* with Gregg Lambert (Routledge 2006), *Religion, Myth, and Literature* (University of Virginia Press, 2008), and *Rhetoric/Culture/Theory* (Davies Group Publishers 2009).

Dr. Dennis Weiss

B.A., Emory University; Ph.D., The University of Texas at Austin,

Professor Weiss has interests in philosophical anthropology, philosophy of technology, and the post-human. He is the editor of *Interpreting Man* and has published articles on human nature, the digital culture, and human enhancement technologies. Among the courses he regularly teaches are Epistemology, the study of knowledge and truth, and Metaphysics, which examines the intersection of philosophy and science fiction.



Our Alumni

“I took EVERYTHING I ever learned from philosophy and have been applying it for going on 3 years in my current after college work-life. That is a sentence I never thought would come out of my mouth- better yet a thought that I never thought would exist in my head. I am currently the Director of Customer Service and Sales for the 2nd fastest growing privately held small business in the Philadelphia Metro area (as determined by the Philadelphia Business Journal in conjunction with UPenn Wharton School of Business). Everyday I try and, so far, succeed at using my grounding in Philosophy to better manage my staff.”

John Serrantino
Class of 06

- **Aaron Arndt, '04--Ph.D. Program, Michigan State University**
- **Steven Barnhart, '96--Intelligence Communications, Senior Airman, U.S. Air Force.**
- **John Braught '06--M.A. program Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL) in Leuven, Belgium**
- **Bonnie Eskridge '03--M.A. Program in Literacy, Technology, and Professional Writing at Northern Arizona University**
- **Jessica Kyle, '07--Ph.D. Program, SUNY Binghamton**
- **Brian Lonergan, '04, --M.A. Program. West Chester University, IRS**

“I accepted a position at the PA House of Representatives in June. I work as a research analyst for the Finance Committee and am enjoying the experience....I have found, as one would expect, that having a general understanding of government has been helpful. However, ironically, or naturally, depending on one's approach, it is philosophy that has been the greatest asset to me here. The critical thinking skills I have developed at York have proved invaluable.”

Chase Schaszberger



“I took...epistemology at YCP in the late 90s. It was one of the most satisfying courses I've ever taken and put me on the path to a BA in philosophy.... I got my graduate degree in Organizational Management, but my background in philosophy has been as much of an asset as my MA in that it taught me how to step back and think about things before acting on them.”

John Howard

- **Brian Medina, '06--Residential Life Director, Franklin Pierce College**
- **Marc Miller '00--Archivist for Philadelphia Fight, MLA Program University of PA**
- **Jamie Ray, '96--Center for Disability Law and Policy**
- **Julie Schneider, '02--Spanish Instructor, M.Ed. Program Saint Joseph's University**
- **Evan Smith '05--InterVarsity Christian Fellowship**
- **Samuel Waddell, '00--Adjunct Writing Instructor, York College**
- **Jeremy Seman '07—United Rentals**

“ I wanted to sincerely thank you for the education I received while studying philosophy. I didn't fully realize the enormous benefits I would realize from it. It took me about 3 months after graduation to secure a job, but when I did, I was able to flourish. I've been with United Rentals now since March of 2007 after graduating in December of 2006. I have a blast at what I do, despite the occasional crack about how I should be working at a Starbucks with a degree like Philosophy.”

Jeremy Seman
Operations Manager
United Rentals
Allentown, PA



What do philosophers do?

Most people think of philosophers as university professors (and many are), but here are some famous philosophers who have excelled in other areas:

Steve Allen (writer & comedian)
Woody Allen (director & comedian)
Max Baer Jr. (actor: Jethro on "The Beverly Hillbillies.")
William Bennett (former Drug czar & NEH leader, BOOK OF VIRTUES)
William Jefferson Clinton (President)
Mary Higgins Clark (mystery writer)
Philip K. Dick (science fiction writer)
David Duchovny (actor on X-FILES)
John Elway (quarterback, Denver Broncos)
Harrison Ford (actor)
Christy Haubegger (editor of LATINA)
Vaclav Havel (former President of Czechoslovakia)
Peter Hoeg (author of SMILLA'S SENSE OF SNOW)
Mark Hulbert (financial columnist for FORBES magazine)
Carl Icahn (business person & corporate raider, bought TWA)
Martin Luther King, Jr. (civil rights leader)
Bruce Lee (martial arts & actor)
Steve Martin (comedian & actor)
Tom Morris (corporate motivational speaker)
Bob Moses (civil rights activist)
Robert Motherwell (painter)
Lachlan Murdoch (son of Rupert Murdoch, media magnate)
Neil Peart (drummer for rock group, RUSH)
Pope John Paul II (vicar of Christ)
Joan Rivers (comedian)
Patricia Rozema (film-maker, I'VE HEARD THE MERMAIDS SINGING)
Mick Schmidt (former Philadelphia Philly)
Gene Siskel (movie reviewer, SISKEL & EBERT AT THE MOVIES)
John Silber (former president of Boston University)
George Soros (money manager, Soros Foundation)
Dave Thomas (SCTV)
Alex Trebeck (JEOPARDY)
David Foster Wallace (novelist & MacArthur prize recipient)
Robert Weaver (doyen of Canadian literature, head of CBC's ANTHOLOGY)
Moses Znaimer, (Owner of CITY-TV and MUCH-MUSIC, Toronto)

Philosophy Rocks the Graduate Record Exam!

Did you know...

Students declaring an intention to go to graduate school in Philosophy score higher on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) than all but four other major fields (out of fifty recorded by the Educational Testing Service, which runs the Graduate Record Exam)? The only fields that score higher mean scores on the combined Verbal, Quantitative, and Analytical sections of the GRE are (in rank order) Physics and Astronomy, Mathematical Sciences, Materials Engineering, and Chemical Engineering.

Philosophy students score higher than every other major in the Humanities and Arts, higher than every major in the Social Science, higher than every major in the Life Sciences, higher than every major in Education, higher than every major in Business, and higher than every major listed under "Other Fields." In fact, Philosophy students score higher than four out of the six majors listed in Physical Sciences, and five out of the seven listed in Engineering.

Students declaring an intention to go to graduate school in Philosophy have the highest mean scores on the Verbal section of the GRE than any other major in any of the fields listed (mean score: 589). English majors also score well on this section (mean score: 561), but not as good as Philosophy majors do! Honorable mention goes to History majors in this category (mean score: 546). Philosophy majors simply blew away other popular majors in this area (compare Foreign Languages at 526, Political Science at 517, Religion and Theory at 516, Sociology at 479, and Psychology at 479). Not surprisingly, dead last in this category were Accounting majors, who got a dismal mean of 408 in Verbal. The best score outside of the Humanities and Arts in this category was Physics, with a Verbal mean of 545.

Students declaring an intention to go to graduate school in Philosophy get the third highest mean scores of any major on the Analytical section of the GRE (mean: 625). The only higher majors in this area were Physics and Astronomy (mean: 646) and Mathematical Sciences (mean: 635). Philosophy majors scored better in this area than every major in the Life Sciences, Engineering, Social Sciences, Education, Business, and "Other Fields," as well as every other major in the Humanities.

Students declaring an intention to go to graduate school in Philosophy score much higher in the Quantitative section of the GRE than any of the other Humanities. Compare the mean scores of Philosophy students in Quantitative (593) with English (524) or History (532), for examples, who are the next best two in the Humanities in this area. Not surprisingly, majors in the Physical Sciences and Engineering do better in this area than Philosophy students do. But Philosophy students do better here than every major in the Life Sciences, Education, and "Other Fields," and all but one of the majors in Social Science (Economics students do well here, with mean scores of 660 in this area), and all but the Banking and Finance students in the Business area (whose majors get a mean score of 606 in Quantitative). Compare Philosophy students' mean score in Quantitative of 593 with Accounting majors, who get a mean of 513 in this area. Aren't they supposed to know math?

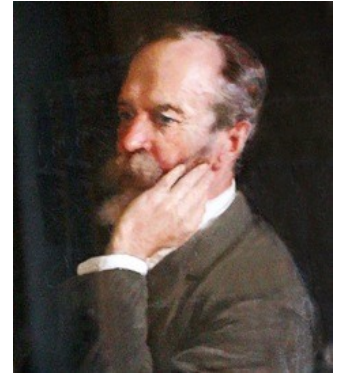
Thinking of going into Law? Compare the GRE mean scores with other popular pre-Law majors: Philosophy (overall mean: 1807), Political Science (overall mean: 1641), Communications (overall mean: 1505), Public Administration (overall mean: 1450). Now, which looks to you to be the best training for pre-Law? None of these majors did better than Philosophy students on any of the three sections of the GRE.

Want a major that will prepare you very broadly for whatever kind of challenge you might face later in life? All things considered, averaging the rank order in each of the areas of the GRE, Philosophy does better than any other major of the fifty listed. Tell that to your Mom and Dad, when they ask what good a philosophy major is!

Philosophy In the News

**Philosophy is the art
of imagining
alternatives.**

William James



- "For all the jokes about them, philosophy majors appear to do remarkably well" -- so says C. M. Cropper, in a *New York Times* article that explains that philosophy majors are increasingly successful in a world in which business and government depend more and more on abstract reasoning abilities.
- The *New York Times Career Planner* reports that "Philosophy is one fundamental area of study that has found a new role in the high-tech world." In an information-based economy, people who can think conceptually are more and more valuable.
- "To Beat the Market, Hire a Philosopher" -- that's the striking headline of a recent article in The New York Times Mutual Funds Report. Bill Miller, the manager of one of the most successful mutual funds in the country, was a philosophy graduate student at Johns Hopkins University before turning to investing. He uses his philosophical studies in his investment work, applying the ideas of the American thinker William James, examining the value of companies using philosophical thought experiments. Miller's success shows how a philosophical approach pays off financially to beat the market. The New York Times, 10 January 1999, BU 35
- The *Times* of London reported in 1998, "The great virtue of philosophy is that it teaches not what to think, but how to think."
- A 2007 article appearing in *Newsweek* reports that humanities majors outscored biology majors in all categories on the MCAT and that medical schools are seeking applicants who are well-rounded and versed in disciplines such as philosophy.
- Management consultant Matthew Stewart attributes his success to his philosophy degree in "The Management Myth," appearing in *The Atlantic Monthly*, arguing that a philosophy major bests an MBA.



Learn Philosophy

The classic discipline can help with contemporary dilemmas and modern careers

By Diane Cole
Monday, October 5, 2009

The questions are ripped from the daily head-lines: Should illegal immigrants be barred from enrolling in public universities? Should courts declare surreptitiously gathered DNA off limits as legal evidence?

No, it's not another spinoff of *Law & Order*. It's Ethics Bowl, an increasingly popular intercollegiate tournament where competing teams reason their way through thorny case histories. The winners are judged not on the sound and fury of their responses but on the thoroughness of their consideration and understanding of differing points of view.

If it all sounds a tad philosophical, you're right. The growth of Ethics Bowl competitions—which began in 1993 at the Illinois Institute of Technology, have since spread to 94 colleges nationwide, and are now filtering down to high schools—is emblematic of a burgeoning interest in philosophy and applied ethics. "To see 10th graders think this deeply just floors me," says Valerie Gallina, grant specialist in Florida's Pinellas County Character Partnership. "It shows our youth are thinking globally."

David Schrader of the American Philosophical Association sees "a growth in the number of students majoring in philosophy." The reason, he speculates, is that "in a world where people change careers many times, the skills that philosophy teaches you are wonderfully transferable." Those tools include critical thinking, logic, and analytical writing, which have practical applications in a range of careers—such as law, teaching, medicine, business, and management—and are valuable to have in times of economic (and employment) uncertainty.

Moreover, experts say, logical skills can be taught starting at an early age. In Springfield, Mass., philosophy Prof. Thomas Wartenberg and his students from Mount Holyoke College expose second graders to philosophy not through Kant and Descartes but by discussing children's picture books like the *Frog and Toad* series. Engaging youngsters in open-ended conversations helps them "see that there are wrong answers but no right answers, that you can disagree and you can have different points of view," says Wartenberg. "This is really philosophy in the Socratic tradition, thinking deeply about very puzzling issues and concepts that are present in your life."

In a New Generation of College Students, Many Opt for the Life Examined



Sylvia Kapuscinski for The New York Times

Zachary Perry, a junior at Rutgers University, reasons out a position at a meeting of the university's philosophy club.

April 6, 2008
New York Times
By WINNIE HU

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. — When a fellow student at Rutgers University urged Didi Onejeme to try Philosophy 101 two years ago, Ms. Onejeme, who was a pre-med sophomore, dismissed it as “frou-frou.”

“People sitting under trees and talking about stupid stuff — I mean, who cares?” Ms. Onejeme recalled thinking at the time.

But Ms. Onejeme, now a senior applying to law school, ended up changing her major to philosophy, which she thinks has armed her with the skills to be successful. “My mother was like, what are you going to do with that?” said Ms. Onejeme, 22. “She wanted me to be a pharmacy major, but I persuaded her with my argumentative skills.”

Once scoffed at as a luxury major, philosophy is being embraced at Rutgers and other universities by a new generation of college students who are drawing modern-day lessons from the age-old discipline as they try to make sense of their world, from the morality of the war in Iraq to the latest political scandal. The economic downturn has done little, if anything, to dampen this enthusiasm among students, who say that what they learn in class can translate into practical skills and careers. On many campuses, debate over modern issues like war and technology is emphasized over the study of classic ancient texts.

Rutgers, which has long had a top-ranked philosophy department, is one of a number of universities where the number of undergraduate philosophy majors is ballooning; there are 100 in this year's graduating class, up from 50 in 2002, even as overall enrollment on the main campus has declined by 4 percent.

At the City University of New York, where enrollment is up 18 percent over the past six years, there are 322 philosophy majors, a 51 percent increase since 2002.

“If I were to start again as an undergraduate, I would major in philosophy,” said Matthew Goldstein, the CUNY chancellor, who majored in mathematics and statistics. “I think that subject is really at the core of just about everything we do. If you study humanities or political systems or sciences in general, philosophy is really the mother ship from which all of these disciplines grow.”

Nationwide, there are more colleges offering undergraduate philosophy programs today than a decade ago (817, up from 765), according to the College Board. Some schools with established programs like Texas A&M, Notre Dame, the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, now have twice as many philosophy majors as they did in the 1990s.

David E. Schrader, executive director of the American Philosophical Association, a professional organization with 11,000 members, said that in an era in which people change careers frequently, philosophy makes sense. “It's a major that helps them become quick learners and gives them strong skills in writing, analysis and critical thinking,” he said.

Mr. Schrader, an adjunct professor at the University of Delaware, said that the demand for philosophy courses had outpaced the resources at some colleges, where students are often turned away. Some are enrolling in online courses instead, he said, describing it as “really very strange.”

“The discipline as we see it from the time of Socrates starts with people face to face, putting their positions on the table,” he said.

The Rutgers philosophy department is relatively large, with 27 professors, 60 graduate students, and more than 30 undergraduate offerings each semester. For those who cannot get enough of their Descartes in class, there is the Wednesday night philosophy club, where, last week, 11 students debated the metaphysics behind the movie “The Matrix” for more than an hour.

An undergraduate philosophy journal started this semester has drawn 36 submissions — about half from Rutgers students — on musings like “Is the extinction of a species always a bad thing?”

Barry Loewer, the department chairman, said that Rutgers started building its philosophy program in the late 1980s, when the field was branching into new research areas like cognitive science and becoming more interdisciplinary. He said that many students have double-majored in philosophy and, say, psychology or economics, in recent years, and go on to become doctors, lawyers, writers, investment bankers and even commodities traders.

As the approach has changed, philosophy has attracted students with little interest in contemplating the classical texts, or what is known as armchair philosophy. Some, like Ms. Onejeme, the pre-med-student-turned-philosopher, who is double majoring in political science, see it as a pre-law track because it emphasizes the verbal and logic skills prized by law schools — something the Rutgers department encourages by pointing out that their majors score high on the LSAT.

Other students said that studying philosophy, with its emphasis on the big questions and alternative points of view, provided good training for looking at larger societal questions, like globalization and technology.

“All of these things make the world a smaller place and force us to look beyond the bubble we grow up in,” said Christine Bullman, 20, a junior, who said art majors and others routinely took philosophy classes. “I think philosophy is a good base to look at a lot of issues.”

Frances Egan, a Rutgers philosophy professor who advises undergraduates, said that as it has become harder for students to predict what specialties might be in demand in an uncertain economy, some may be more apt to choose their major based simply on what they find interesting. “Philosophy is a lot of fun,” said Professor Egan, who graduated with a philosophy degree in the tough economic times of the 1970s. “A lot of students are in it because they find it intellectually rewarding.”

Max Bialek, 22, was majoring in math until his senior year, when he discovered philosophy. He decided to stay an extra year to complete the major (his parents needed reassurance, he said, but were supportive).

“I thought: Why weren’t all my other classes like that one?” he said, explaining that philosophy had taught him a way of studying that could be applied to any subject and enriched his life in unexpected ways. “You can talk about almost anything as long as you do it well.”

Jenna Schaal-O’Connor, a 20-year-old sophomore who is majoring in cognitive science and linguistics, said philosophy had other perks. She said she found many male philosophy majors interesting and sensitive.

“That whole deep existential torment,” she said. “It’s good for getting girlfriends.”



I think, therefore I earn

Philosophy graduates are suddenly all the rage with employers. What can they possibly have to offer?

Jessica Shepherd
The Guardian, Tuesday 20 November 2007

A degree in philosophy? What are you going to do with that then?"

Philosophy students will tell you they've been asked this question more times than they care to remember.

"The response people seem to want is a cheery shrug and a jokey 'don't know'," says Joe Cunningham, 20, a final-year philosophy undergraduate at Heythrop College, University of London.

A more accurate comeback, according to the latest statistics, is "just about anything I want".

Figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show philosophy graduates, once derided as unemployable layabouts, are in growing demand from employers. The number of all graduates in full-time and part-time work six months after graduation has risen by 9% between 2002-03 and 2005-06; for philosophy graduates it has gone up by 13%.

It is in the fields of finance, property development, health, social work and the nebulous category of "business" that those versed in Plato and Kant are most sought after. In "business", property development, renting and research, 76% more philosophy graduates were employed in 2005-06 than in 2002-03. In health and social work, 9% more.

The Higher Education Careers Services Unit (Hecsu), which also collates data of this kind, agrees philosophers are finding it easier to secure work. Its figures show that, in 2001, 9.9% of philosophy graduates were unemployed six months after graduation. In 2006, just 6.7% were. On average, 6% of all graduates were unemployed six months after graduation.

In 2001, 9.3% of philosophy graduates were in business and finance roles six months after graduation. In 2006, 12.2% were. In 2001, 5.3% were in marketing and advertising six months after graduation. In 2006, 7.3% were.

It is particularly significant that the percentage finding full-time work six months after graduation has risen, since the number of philosophy graduates has more than doubled between 2001 and 2006. In 2001, UK universities produced 895 graduates with a first degree in the discipline; in 2006, they produced 2,040.

And it is so popular with its graduates that many go on to postgraduate study rather than join the workforce. Charlie Ball, who runs Hecsu's labour market analysis, says: "More philosophy graduates are being produced, and they are much less likely to be unemployed than five years ago."

Philosophers have always come in handy in the workplace with their grounding in analytical thinking. Why, only now, are they so prized by employers?

Open mind

Lucy Adams, human resources director of Serco, a services business and a consultancy firm, says: "Philosophy lies at the heart of our approach to recruiting and developing our leadership, and our leaders. We need people who have the ability to look for different approaches and take an open mind to issues. These skills are promoted by philoso-

phical approaches."

Fiona Czerniawska, director of the Management Consultancies Association's think tank, says: "A philosophy degree has trained the individual's brain and given them the ability to provide management-consulting firms with the sort of skills that they require and clients demand. These skills can include the ability to be very analytical, provide clear and innovative thinking, and question assumptions."

Deborah Bowman, associate dean for widening participation at St George's, University of London, which offers medicine and health sciences courses, says philosophers are increasingly sought after by the NHS: "Graduates of philosophy who come in to graduate-entry medicine, or to nursing courses, are very useful. Growth areas in the NHS include clinical ethicists, who assist doctors and nurses. Medical ethics committees and ethics training courses for staff are also growing. More and more people are needed to comment on moral issues in healthcare, such as abortion."

Being on an ethics committee of the NHS is something Cunningham is looking into. "It would be a direct application of my skills," he says.

The popular philosopher Simon Blackburn, a professor at Cambridge University, sees the improving career prospects of philosophy graduates as part of a wider change of public perception. "I guess the public image of a philosopher has tended to concentrate on an ancient Greek in a toga, or some unwashed hippy lying around not doing very much," he says. "I do detect a change in the way the public sees philosophers. I have been pleasantly surprised by the number of people who come to philosophy events nowadays."

Blackburn can take some credit. The user-friendly books on philosophy that he and other philosophers such as AC Grayling, Stephen Law, Julian Baggini, Nigel Warburton and Alain de Botton write have made their way into the mainstream.

Course design

Those in charge of designing university courses have also become sensitive to claims that their subject has no relevance to the modern day.

Blackburn says: "In the years after the second world war, there was a sort of Wittgensteinian air about philosophy, which meant practitioners were proud of the fact that they appeared slightly esoteric and were not doing anything practical. There was very little political philosophy, and moral philosophy was disengaged from people's actual moral problems, and that did lead to the subject being marginalised. That has changed. Political philosophy is a central part of the Cambridge course."

Jonathan Lowe, professor of philosophy at Durham University, agrees that courses' concern with the real world has accelerated in the past five years.

"It's probably because of the new financial arrangements for students that courses have had to prove they are applicable to real world issues," he says. "And the teaching methods have changed. There are more student-led sessions. Students have to argue on their feet and give presentations. That probably shows at interviews."

News that employers and the public hold philosophers in higher regard should presumably be cause for celebration? Not entirely, says Blackburn. "It is also slightly worrying, because people turn to philosophers when they feel less confident and more insecure."

Careers and Philosophy

"What can I do with a degree in Philosophy?" The answer to this question would be, "Anything that any Liberal Arts major can do, and maybe more!" Because Philosophy tends to attract better-than-average students, B.A. graduates are found in government, business and service professions, and in graduate and professional studies such as law, medicine, and the ministry, as well as academic disciplines such as Philosophy, English, Anthropology, Psychology. The choice of career course is limited only by the individual's personal design.

Philosophy majors are trained to think hard, to think both creatively and critically about their understanding of things, as well as about the perceptions of others. They are trained to listen carefully, to ingest information, to analyze information, to assess information for pertinent solutions, and to communicate their responses clearly, concisely, and honestly. This specific training, coupled with the broader academics of a solid Liberal Arts curriculum, contributes to great academic success according to results from such tests as the GRE (Graduate Record Examination), LSAT (Law School Admissions Test), and GMAT (General Management Admissions Test).

Transferrable skills such as the ability to objectively analyze, efficiently organize, competently communicate (both orally and in writing), and thoroughly research contribute positively to a Philosophy major's marketability in law, teaching, diplomacy, public service, publishing, journalism, the ministry, the social or natural sciences, mathematics, business, or the arts.

Because of the rigorous practice it provides in logic, the analysis of abstract conceptual relationships, and the interpretation of difficult texts, a philosophy major develops exactly the qualities that employers and graduate schools in many fields seek in their future leaders. In addition to preparing one for graduate study in philosophy, a philosophy major is one of the best preparations available for graduate study in law, business, and education, as well for a wide range of positions in business, journalism, publishing, government, and ministry. According to US Department of Education studies:

- * On the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT), philosophy majors nationwide consistently achieve among the highest scores of all majors. Philosophy majors have as good a record as Political Science majors for admission to top law schools.

- * Philosophy majors outperformed all other disciplines on the verbal portion of the GRE exam, and outside the natural sciences, only philosophy and economics majors significantly beat the national average on the quantitative portion of the GRE.

- * As groups, only philosophy and biology majors performed significantly better than the national average on the LSAT and GRE exams, and the highest performers on the GMAT exam (for business school) were philosophy, mathematics, and engineering majors.

Do your parents and friends say that a philosophy major will be a disadvantage in getting a good professional job and developing a successful career after college? Then show them this.

College students usually become interested in philosophy in their first year of college after exposure to one or more courses in the field. The interest in possibly majoring or minoring in philosophy is usually a response to all that is intrinsically interesting in the subject matter of philosophy: its attempt to grapple with the hardest questions of human existence, to make sense of reality and our place in the cosmos, to give systematic form to our ethical and political intuitions, to explain the history of human ideas, and so on. The questions philosophy addresses are intrinsically interesting in themselves, and their study is often personally very rewarding for students in forming their own beliefs, value-judgments, and life commitments. But students exploring the possibility of further study in philosophy are forced to ask whether this pursuit will help them earn a living. Skeptical parents, understandably concerned for their children's economic well-being, may strongly dissuade them from majoring or minoring in philosophy. Contrary to popular belief, however, a philosophy major is one of the best preparations possible for careers in a large number of different areas. As statistical research shows, desirable employers throughout the country know this and hire graduates with majors and minors in philosophy all the time.

Law. Philosophy is one of the best—if not the best—majors you can choose to prepare you for law school, or other work in legal fields. It prepares you not only for the kinds of logical reasoning and conceptual analysis necessary to

do well in law school, but also teaches you the ethical and political traditions which underlie our legal system. Philosophy majors consistently score highly on the LSAT relative to students majoring in other fields. If you wish to combine legal work with other specializations, such as biotechnology, environmental science, communications, or foreign languages, consider a philosophy minor to supplement your major, and this will help make you more attractive to law schools. Furthermore, students with a philosophy major are often qualified for paralegal work with only the BA degree. Also of interest: two of the Philosophy Department's full-time faculty members—in addition to holding Ph.D.'s in philosophy—also have law degrees: Michael Baur (J.D. from Harvard University) and Charles Kelbley (J.D. from Fordham University).

Teaching. Philosophy and critical thinking courses are taught at the community college level and at virtually every public and private four-year college and research university in the country, as well as at some public and private high schools. A philosophy minor can be an excellent addition to the portfolio of someone planning to teach in another humanities area in high school, and a philosophy major can prepare you to teach general humanities courses in public and private high schools. Teaching at the college level requires an advanced degree, building on work that usually begins with an undergraduate philosophy major.

Journalism. Philosophy is one of the best possible majors for aspiring journalists, especially at schools that may not offer a separate Journalism major. Aside from teaching you to write well, analyze facts critically, and developing your research skills, courses in ethics, political philosophy, and the history of ideas expand your conceptual repertoire and provide essential background knowledge for informed journalists whose work will make a positive contribution towards educating their society. Although it is also advisable to work on a student paper and get practical experience writing for journals and magazines, a philosophy major can give you a solid foundation for becoming an insightful and persuasive writer. For this reason also, even if you are majoring in Communications, Media, or a Journalism program, a philosophy minor may be an invaluable addition to your training for a career in journalism.

Publishing. The diverse world of publishing employs many people with backgrounds in the humanities, including philosophy majors. From editors in charge of list-building at university presses, to agents working in education publishing, to acquisitions staff at large publishing houses with substantial non-fiction lists, to managing editors responsible for finding and selecting material for more specialized magazines and journals, there are many different sorts of opportunities open in the diverse world of publishing. Any major in humanities, including philosophy, is usually seen as good preparation for work in many of these different areas.

Politics and Public Policy. Like political science or government, a philosophy major is often excellent preparation for positions in state or national civil services, policy research institutions, jobs as congressional aides and researchers, and so on. If you are planning to go on to take an advanced degree in public policy, government administration, international affairs, or similar programs, an undergraduate major in philosophy will provide an excellent basis for further study in applied political fields. Among a field of graduate-program applicants who have usually majored in political science or economics, a philosophy major may stand out. Similarly, a philosophy minor may complement a major in political science, history, or languages as part of a solid portfolio for further work in politics.

Public Relations. The written and analytic skills which philosophical studies help to develop are essential tools for work in different kinds of public relations fields. If the student also has some experience with the media, and can develop a good ability to make oral presentations to groups of visitors, individual callers, donors, etc., then his or her philosophical training will enable them to convey complex ideas to the targeted audiences. An ability to help justify an institution's work, its future projects, and to develop consistent policies on controversial issues, can also be a vital asset for PR work with larger organizations.

Fundraising and Nonprofit Work. Students with degrees in philosophy are well prepared for any job in which difficult value-judgments and comparative analyses have to be made. This often suits them for work in college and university administrations, e.g., in admissions, or in major foundations, or other non-profit enterprises devoted to various social causes. In addition, fundraising for various non-profit interests often involves not only good written and spoken skills, but an ability to explain and justify why the organization's work is worthy of devotion, has long-term promise, or fulfills basic human needs. Many foundations and think-tanks also hire general researchers, who need the sorts of skills provided by prior training in philosophy.

Religion and Ministry. Students who go on for advanced degrees in theology or into seminaries to study for the ministry often start with an undergraduate degree in philosophy, which is often as good as a theology or religious studies major for these purposes. Especially if the student has theoretical interests, it is good to have some training in philosophy if planning to work in areas related to theology. Here is a case where a philosophy minor or an interdisciplinary major involving both philosophy, biblical languages, and religious studies, can be a powerful combination.

Business and Management. Many students with undergraduate majors or minors in philosophy go on to successful careers in business or management. Large firms often look for people who have a great all-round liberal arts education—which trains their mind for analysis—excellent communication skills, and an understanding of people. Of course any career in business or management will involve a lot of on-the-job training, and the student will have to learn particular knowledge not supplied by a philosophy degree or any other liberal arts major. But philosophy often provides a good basis on which to build. Students thinking of going on for MBA degrees need not major in business or economics alone; the best MBA schools like to admit students who have shown interests in other areas, such as history, languages, and philosophy, in addition to finance and management. Students with some background in philosophy are often better prepared for the kind of logical thinking required for more advanced administrative science and long-range planning.

Art and Architecture. Preparation for professional work in art and architecture often requires either advanced technical training or a graduate degree, but some background in philosophy is often very helpful for the student who wants to think theoretically about these creative endeavors. Both in aesthetics and in other areas, such as theories of meaning, culture, and society, philosophy has been a significant inspiration for innovation in art and architecture, and some training in philosophical disciplines provides a basis for a mature understanding of these disciplines, an understanding that extends beyond the technical competencies they also require.



The Philosophy program at York College is part of the English and Humanities Department and is housed in the College's Humanities Center.

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Check out the American Philosophical Association's brochure: *Philosophy: A Brief Guide for Undergraduates*, available at:

<http://www.apaonline.org/publications/texts/briefgd.aspx>

