

# Philosophy

Philosophy fosters the development of creative and critical thinking and helps one to understand human thought throughout history. Philosophical study involves an attempt to analyze, interpret, and logically explain what humans believe, value, and do. It is considered a branch of the language arts which is concerned primarily with forms of expression that lead to truth and the validation of sound arguments rather than aesthetic expression or entertainment.

With a philosophy major, your career options are as open as you allow them to be. Traditional paths include entering graduate school (Philosophy is a major favored by law, medical, and theological schools). A baccalaureate degree in Philosophy also provides a broad foundation of knowledge often useful in the fields of business, journalism, writing, and government.

## Skills and Competencies

A Philosophy major is a broad, humanistic degree that can prepare you for a variety of career possibilities. It is, how-ever, up to you to master the skills and competencies needed for a given career field. You may gain a number of skills through extra-curricular activities or even through a job or internship, but your academic course work may prove most beneficial. Philosophy is unique in placing primary emphasis on mastering the formal thinking skills needed for evaluating truth, claims, the structure of arguments, and the coherence of theories. Communication skills—both oral and written—are absolutely necessary in any career field today, and will be fine-tuned through your Philosophy course work and class activities. Reading skills are developed through analyzing and interpreting philosophical texts and materials. You will definitely need to become a critical and thorough reader in this discipline. Research skills are also developed in Philosophy, as is critical thinking, and the ability to develop a meta-level perspective than can help one make sense of diverse theories encountered in this world of value pluralism.

## Course Work

This degree includes the following courses as part of the program requirements, and specific major requirements along with general education courses and graduation requirements.

### Core

- \*PL200 History of Ancient/Medieval Phil. (4 cr.)
- \*PL210 History of Modern Philosophy (4 cr.)
- \**Recommended but not required.*

### Philosophy Electives (24 cr.)

*8 credit hours of 300-level courses*

- PL 100 Introduction to Philosophy (4 cr.)
- PL 160 Introduction to Logic (4 cr.)
- PL 180 Fundamentals of Ethical Theory (4 cr.)
- PL 181 Issues in Business Ethics (2 cr.)
- PL 182 Issues in Computer Ethics (2 cr.)
- PL 183 Issues in the History of Ethics (2 cr.)
- PL 184 Issues in Legal Ethics (2 cr.)
- PL 185 Issues in Medical Ethics (2 cr.)
- PL 186 Topics in Theoretical Ethics (2 cr.)
- PL 187 Issues Involving the Human Genome (2 cr.)
- PL 270 World Religions (4 cr.)
- PL 280 Philosophy of Religion (4 cr.)
- PL 295 Special Topics in Philosophy (2-4 cr.)
- PL 310 Social and Political Philosophy (4 cr.)
- PL 320 Philosophy of Science (4 cr.)
- PL 330 Existentialism (4 cr.)
- PL 370 Theory of Knowledge: Classical and Contemporary (4 cr.)
- PL 495 Special Topics in Philosophy (2-4 cr.)
- PL 498 Directed Study in Philosophy (1-4 cr.)

### Minor is required (16 cr.)

*\*The History Department offers the Religious Studies Minor*

*Detailed course descriptions can be found at [www.nmu.edu/bulletin](http://www.nmu.edu/bulletin).*

## Career Development

You should begin the resume-building process as soon as you can. The Academic and Career Advice-ment Center can assist you with career planning, while Career Services will help you fine tune your resume and look for jobs related to your field. In the meantime, the more hands-on experience you have, the better the chances are that you will find a job. Becoming involved in a professional related internship is a way to develop your professional skills and gain experience. Your academic course work is important as well, so be sure to maintain a high grade point average.

## Additional Considerations

Foreign language skills are valuable or required for some of these positions. A business minor may be helpful, but sometimes relevant experience is more beneficial. A writing minor can increase your desirability for potential employers, as would journalism and/or communications-related work or internships. Remember to take any necessary exams early, it can take six weeks for results to be sent to the schools to which you applied. Foreign language competency, sometimes in two languages, is required in many graduate programs.

## Job Outlook

Philosophy is about the meaning of human activities, thus all professions have a “philosophy of” component that justifies professional activities. The advent of the information age has encouraged philosophical dialogue about all areas of industry. Thus philosophical training can help someone in business, education, counseling and management. The earnings for these jobs greatly vary and will be dependent upon experience.

# Potential Careers

NMU's Philosophy Program prepares students for employment in the following careers:

- Banker
- Consultant
- Copy Editor
- Diplomat
- Editor
- FBI/CIA Agent
- Foreign Correspondent
- Journalist
- Lobbyist
- Market Research Analyst
- Peace Corps/VISTA Volunteer
- Politician
- Public Relations Specialist
- Publisher
- Research Assistant
- Sales Representative
- Technical Writer

# Additional Resources and Information

For Career Planning and Opportunities:  
Academic & Career Advisement Center  
3302.1 C.B. Hedgcock  
906-227-2971  
[www.nmu.edu/acac](http://www.nmu.edu/acac)

Department of Philosophy  
200A Gries Hall  
906-227-2512  
[www.nmu.edu/philosophy](http://www.nmu.edu/philosophy)

For Job Search, Resume and Career Information:  
Career Services  
3302.3 C.B. Hedgcock  
906-227-2800  
[www.nmu.edu/careers](http://www.nmu.edu/careers)

For Information about NMU Student Organizations Associated with this Major Contact:  
Center for Student Enrichment  
1206 University Center  
906-227-2439  
[www.nmu.edu/cse](http://www.nmu.edu/cse)

Philosophy Club

Internet Resource Links:  
[www.careers.org](http://www.careers.org)  
[www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)

For Career Information with National Organizations:  
[www.amphilsoc.org](http://www.amphilsoc.org) -American Philosophical Society  
[www.udel.edu/apa](http://www.udel.edu/apa) -The American Philosophical Association



**NORTHERN MICHIGAN  
UNIVERSITY**

MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

The Academic & Career Advisement Center  
2021



What to do with  
a major in...

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