M.A. in Philosophy

Overview of the Program

The program focuses on the core strengths of the department in Philosophy of science and ethics while providing students the opportunity to become competent as generalists in the history of Philosophy and as teachers of introductory logic. In doing so, the program primarily prepares students for entry into Ph.D. programs in Philosophy and related disciplines. It also meets the ongoing demand for qualified Philosophy teachers from area community colleges as well as training students to teach in Mexican universities and secondary schools. With the flexibility of the Non-Thesis Philosophy Project option, students are able to meet a variety of local and regional needs as well, serving the needs of local secondary school systems, pre-law preparation, and community administration and activism.

Requirements for Admission

1. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited U.S. institution or proof of equivalent education at a foreign institution.
2. Submission of official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores.
3. A writing sample.
5. Two letters of recommendation.
6. Optional: a resume or other supporting materials to give a full picture of the applicant’s potential.

The materials submitted for admission to the MA Program will be judged holistically to assess the potential of the applicant. The successful applicant would typically have an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher that demonstrates focus on philosophy or philosophy related fields, a verbal reasoning score that corresponds to a competitive percent rank, a writing sample that reflects a student’s ability to address issues and raise questions philosophically, analyze and construct sound arguments, and/or evaluate complex ethical issues. The personal statement should include discussion of the student’s preparation in philosophy, indicate a high level of maturity and commitment to study philosophy, elucidate the student’s interest in UTEP’s M.A. program in particular, and specify the student’s goals in philosophy. The letters of recommendation should be from supporting faculty who can serve as judges of the applicant’s competence, philosophical talent, and suitability for the program.

Requirements for the Degree

1. Thesis Option: Thirty (30) semester hours consisting of 24 semester hours of coursework plus a six-hour thesis and an oral examination.
2. Non-Thesis Option: 36 semester hours of coursework plus an oral examination based on two seminar papers in the areas of ethics and philosophy of science.
3. Evidence of competency in introductory-level logic.

Electives

Electives can include any graduate philosophy courses not being counted as part of the Required Courses. With the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, for the Thesis Option, one graduate-level course from outside of the Department of Philosophy can be counted towards the degree requirements. For the Non-Thesis Option, two appropriate courses outside of the department can be counted. With the guidance of their faculty advisor and the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, students will choose from an array of prescribed electives in order to fashion their particular course of study that will either result in the composition of an original MA thesis or a plan of study that will significantly strengthen their preparation in graduate-level work in philosophy. The choice of courses will be relative to how each student structures their degree plan and could entail taking some of the prescribed electives more than once depending on the instructor and content of the course.

Logic Requirement

The logic requirement should be fulfilled by providing evidence of competency in introductory logic and include mastery of propositional and predicate logic and some standard metalogical notions such as consistency or completeness. A student can petition for a waiver if logic has been studied elsewhere. Passing PHIL 1304 Logic with a "B" or better can satisfy this requirement. This requirement can also be met by passing a department administered exam.

Oral Examinations

1. Thesis Option: At the end of the first year of study, students intending to write a thesis must submit a proposal (of no less than 1000 words) to the Director of Graduate Studies that includes the names of the members of their thesis committee, minimally, the graduate committee Chairperson, a second reader from the department of Philosophy, and an outside reader. The proposal will be evaluated by the graduate committee Chairperson and the Director of Graduate Studies. Before the beginning of the third semester, the thesis committee will meet with the student who will defend her or his thesis. If accepted, the student will deliver the completed thesis to the committee at least two weeks before the end of the fourth semester, which will be followed by an oral defense. In all cases, a majority vote of the committee will determine acceptance or rejection.
2. Non-Thesis Option: At the beginning of the fourth semester, the student will submit two substantial papers that have been written for two different professors in two different classes while in the program. These papers should give evidence not only of the depth but also of the breadth of the student’s understanding of the two core areas of ethics and philosophy of science in philosophy. A three-person committee, chosen by the Graduate Director in Philosophy, will conduct the final oral exam in accord with the appropriate deadlines of the Graduate School.

**Degree Plan**

Required Credits: 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MA in Philosophy (All courses require a grade of C or better)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Required Courses:</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 5304</td>
<td>Science and Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 5305</td>
<td>Philosophical Research &amp; Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 5351</td>
<td>World Historical Philosophers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 5352</td>
<td>Basic Philosophical Issues</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Thesis/Project Option:**

Select one sequence below: 6-12

**Thesis Option:**

- PHIL 5398 Thesis I
- & PHIL 5399 and Thesis II

**Non-thesis Option:**

Select twelve hours from the following:

- PHIL 5301 Philosophy of Law & Society
- PHIL 5302 Topics in Latin Amer Thought
- PHIL 5303 Ethics and Engineering
- PHIL 5353 Independent Study
- PHIL 5354 Topics in Philosophy/History
- PHIL 5355 Topics in Philosophy of Educ.
- PHIL 5356 Topics in Philosophy of Science
- PHIL 5359 Philosophy and Psychology
- PHIL 5398 Thesis I
- PHIL 5399 Thesis II

**Other Electives:**

Select twelve hours from the following: 12

- PHIL 5301 Philosophy of Law & Society
- PHIL 5302 Topics in Latin Amer Thought
- PHIL 5303 Ethics and Engineering
- PHIL 5353 Independent Study
- PHIL 5354 Topics in Philosophy/History
- PHIL 5355 Topics in Philosophy of Educ.
- PHIL 5356 Topics in Philosophy of Science
- PHIL 5359 Philosophy and Psychology
- PHIL 5398 Thesis I
- PHIL 5399 Thesis II

**Total Hours** 30-36