

PHILOSOPHY, MA

Banner Code: LA-MA-PHIL

Academic Advising

B465 Robinson Hall
Fairfax Campus

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Website: philosophy.gmu.edu/programs/la-ma-phil

Students in the MA program in philosophy can choose a master's degree with a focus on traditional and contemporary philosophy, or choose one of two concentrations: ethics and public affairs, or philosophy and cultural theory. Course offerings provide grounding in the history of philosophy, ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, contemporary continental thought, contemporary analytic philosophy, and philosophy of science. Students pursue the degree to satisfy intellectual interest and to further professional expertise. Graduates of the program move on to careers in law, technology, health care, education, and public service, or use the program to prepare for doctoral studies in philosophy.

Admissions & Policies

Admissions

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions. For information specific to the MA in philosophy, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (<http://philosophy.gmu.edu/programs/LA-MA-PHIL/application>).

Policies

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: 31

Students pursuing this degree must successfully complete 31 credits, which may include a thesis. They may choose a course of study that focuses on traditional and contemporary philosophy or choose to complete one of three concentrations. Students need to identify an advisor on entering the program and meet regularly with that advisor during their course of study.

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies.

MA with a Focus on Traditional and Contemporary Philosophy

The focus in traditional and contemporary philosophy is for students who want to deepen their understanding of philosophical issues and for students who are preparing to pursue doctoral studies in philosophy or related fields, e.g. political theory, gender studies.

Students may apply up to 9 credits from other departments toward the degree with focus on traditional and contemporary philosophy with prior written approval of their advisor.

Proseminar

PHIL 600	Proseminar in Philosophy ¹	1
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Ancient or Medieval Philosophy

Select one course from the following:		3
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PHIL 603	Aristotle: Selected Works
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PHIL 681	Figures and Topics in Ancient Philosophy
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PHIL 721	Advanced Seminar in Philosophy ²
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Modern Philosophy

Select one course from the following:		3
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PHIL 608	Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit
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PHIL 682	Figures and Topics in Early Modern Philosophy
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PHIL 721	Advanced Seminar in Philosophy ²
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Contemporary Philosophy

Select one course from the following:		3
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PHIL 615	Postmodernist Thought
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PHIL 616	Phenomenology
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PHIL 683	Contemporary Philosophical Figures
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PHIL 694	Special Topics in Contemporary Philosophy
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PHIL 721	Advanced Seminar in Philosophy ²
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Advanced Seminar

Select one from the following:		3
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PHIL 720	Nietzsche and his Readers
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PHIL 721	Advanced Seminar in Philosophy
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PHIL 733	Current Issues in Cognitive Science
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Electives in Philosophy

Select four to six electives in philosophy ³		12-18
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Optional Thesis

Three or six credits of	
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PHIL 799	Thesis ⁴
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Total Credits	31
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¹ This course should be completed in the first fall semester in which the student is enrolled in the MA program.

² May be taken when the topic is relevant and with approval of advisor.

³ Students who choose to write a thesis (3 or 6 credits) will take correspondingly fewer electives.

⁴ Students must follow the thesis enrollment policy of the university and once enrolled in PHIL 799 Thesis, maintain continuous enrollment as specified in Academic Policies.

Concentration in Ethics and Public Affairs (ETPA)

The concentration in ethics and public affairs is designed for professionals who want to combine the study of ethics and the analysis of social and public policies in a variety of settings, including business, health care, biomedical technology, law, or government.

Proseminar

PHIL 600	Proseminar in Philosophy ¹	1
History of Philosophy ²		
PHIL 640	History of Ethical Theory	3
PHIL 603	Aristotle: Selected Works	3
or PHIL 608	Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit	
Public Administration		
PUAD 540	Public Policy Process	3
Ethics		
Select three courses from the following: ³		9
PHIL 642	Biomedical Ethics	
PHIL 643	Environmental Ethics	
PHIL 644	Business and Organizational Ethics	
PHIL 645	Research Ethics	
Electives		
Select two to four electives from the following or from other relevant courses: ⁴		6-12
PUAD 700	Ethics and Public Administration	
HAP 714	Ethical Issues in Health Administration and Policy	
EVPP 635	Environment and Society	
Optional Thesis		
Three or six credits of		
PHIL 799	Thesis ⁵	
Total Credits		31

¹ This course should be completed in the first fall semester in which the student is enrolled in the MA program.

² Depending on the topic, PHIL 681 Figures and Topics in Ancient Philosophy, PHIL 682 Figures and Topics in Early Modern Philosophy, or PHIL 721 Advanced Seminar in Philosophy may be applied to this concentration with prior written permission of the graduate director.

³ Other courses may be used to fulfill this requirement where appropriate and with prior written approval of the student's academic advisor.

⁴ Students who choose to write a thesis (3 or 6 credits) will take correspondingly fewer electives. Students are encouraged to use courses from around the university in disciplines relevant to their areas of interest, subject to the prior written approval of their academic advisor.

⁵ Students must follow the thesis enrollment policy of the university and once enrolled in PHIL 799 Thesis, maintain continuous enrollment as specified in Academic Policies.

Concentration in Philosophy and Cultural Theory (PHCT)

The concentration in philosophy and cultural theory is especially for students interested in pursuing a doctorate in cultural studies. Students may apply up to 9 credits from other departments toward this concentration with prior written approval of their advisor.

Proseminar

PHIL 600	Proseminar in Philosophy ¹	1
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Ancient or Medieval Philosophy

Select one course from the following: ³

PHIL 603	Aristotle: Selected Works	
PHIL 681	Figures and Topics in Ancient Philosophy	
PHIL 721	Advanced Seminar in Philosophy ²	

Modern Philosophy

Select one course from the following: ³

PHIL 608	Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit	
PHIL 682	Figures and Topics in Early Modern Philosophy	
PHIL 721	Advanced Seminar in Philosophy ²	

Contemporary Philosophy

Select one course from the following: ³

PHIL 615	Postmodernist Thought	
PHIL 616	Phenomenology	
PHIL 683	Contemporary Philosophical Figures	
PHIL 694	Special Topics in Contemporary Philosophy	
PHIL 721	Advanced Seminar in Philosophy ²	

Advanced Seminar

Select one from the following: ³

PHIL 720	Nietzsche and his Readers	
PHIL 721	Advanced Seminar in Philosophy	
PHIL 733	Current Issues in Cognitive Science	

Cultural Studies

CULT 802 Histories of Cultural Studies ⁶

Select one elective in consultation with an advisor.

Electives in Philosophy ⁶⁻¹²

Select two to four electives in philosophy ³

Optional Thesis

Three or six credits of

PHIL 799	Thesis ⁴	
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Total Credits ³¹

¹ This course should be completed in the first fall semester in which the student is enrolled in the MA program.

² May be taken when the topic is relevant and with approval of advisor.

³ Students who choose to write a thesis (3 or 6 credits) will take correspondingly fewer electives.

⁴ Students must follow the thesis enrollment policy of the university and once enrolled in PHIL 799 Thesis, maintain continuous enrollment as specified in Academic Policies.

Dual Degree Options

Dual Master's

Students interested in pursuing a dual master's program linking philosophy and another discipline should discuss their interest with the graduate program directors of both programs and review the university policies regarding Individualized Dual Master's Degree Programs. Students approved to pursue dual master's study linking the MA philosophy degree and the Interdisciplinary Studies, MAIS with a concentration in women and gender studies will complete WMST 630 Feminist Theories across the Disciplines/PHIL 658 Feminist Theory and 3 additional credits of WMST courses approved by the Department of Philosophy to apply to the philosophy degree as elective credit. Six credits of approved PHIL credits will apply to the MAIS degree as elective credit. Application to the second master's program should be pursued with consultation of the directors of both programs. Admission to the second master's program will require that the student has met the

minimum prerequisites for admission to the second program. If a student lacks the minimum prerequisites and seeks to be admitted to a second master's program, the director of the second program may identify ways in which the prerequisite can be completed prior to admission.

Accelerated Master's

Philosophy, BA/Philosophy, Accelerated MA

Overview

Highly qualified Mason philosophy majors may apply to the accelerated master's degree program. If accepted, students will be able to earn a BA and a MA in philosophy after satisfactory completion of as few as 145 credits, sometimes within five years.

For more detailed information, see AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees. For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies.

Application Requirements

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions. For information specific to the accelerated MA in philosophy, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (<http://philosophy.gmu.edu/programs/application/LA-MA-ACEL-PHIL>) on the departmental web site.

Accelerated Option Requirements

While undergraduate students, accelerated master's students complete six credits of PHIL courses at the 600-level (chosen in consultation with the graduate program director and indicated on the Accelerated Master's Program Application) with a minimum grade of 3.00 in each course. Once admitted to the accelerated master's pathway, students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 in all course work. On completion and conferral of the undergraduate degree in the semester indicated in the application, they submit the Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Transition Form and are admitted to graduate status.

As graduate students, accelerated master's students have an advanced standing. They must meet all master's degree requirements, taking 25 graduate credits beyond the two courses (6 credits) they completed as undergraduates. Students must begin their master's program the semester immediately following conferral of the undergraduate degree.

Reserve Graduate Credit

Students may take up to 6 additional credits of PHIL coursework at the 600-level as reserve graduate credit. These credits do not apply to the undergraduate degree. To apply these credits to the master's degree, students should use the Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Transition Form.

The ability to take courses, including ones not listed above, for reserve graduate credit is available to all high achieving undergraduates with the permission of the department. Permission is normally granted only to qualified Mason seniors within 15 hours of graduation. See AP.1.4.4 Graduate Course Enrollment by Undergraduates.