

BACHELOR OF ARTS (BA) DEGREE WITH A MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY

Program Learning Outcomes for the BA Degree with a Major in Philosophy

Upon completing the BA degree with a major in Philosophy, students will be able to:

- 1. Demonstrate an understanding of the general historical development of philosophy and develop an in-depth understanding of at least one historical period or movement.
- 2. Demonstrate the ability to read philosophical texts critically and with understanding of the problems and contexts.
- 3. Demonstrate the cognitive and formal abilities to evaluate critically philosophical arguments.
- 4. Demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and logically their own views on a range of important philosophical problems.

Requirements for the BA Degree with a Major in Philosophy

For general university requirements, see [Graduation Requirements \(https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/). Students pursuing the BA degree with a major in Philosophy must complete:

- A minimum of 10 courses (30 credit hours) to satisfy major requirements.
- A minimum of 120 credit hours to satisfy degree requirements.
- A minimum of 5 courses (15 credit hours) taken at the 300-level or above.
- A maximum of 4 courses (12 credit hours) from study abroad or transfer credit. For additional departmental guidelines regarding transfer credit, see the [Policies](#) (p. 2) tab.

The courses listed below satisfy the requirements for this major. In certain instances, courses not on this official list may be substituted upon approval of the major's academic advisor, or where applicable, the department's Director of Undergraduate Studies. (Course substitutions must be formally applied and entered into Degree Works by the major's Official Certifier (<https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/degreeworks/officialcertifier/>)). Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the Major in Philosophy		30
Total Credit Hours Required for the BA Degree with a Major in Philosophy		120

Degree Requirements

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Core Requirements		
Core Courses		
PHIL 210	LOGIC	3
or PHIL 310	MATHEMATICAL LOGIC	
PHIL 281	HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY I	3
PHIL 283	HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY II	3
Areas of Study Requirements		
Group 1		
Select 2 courses from the following:		6
PHIL 318	PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE	
PHIL 320	METAPHYSICS	
PHIL 325	PHILOSOPHY OF ART	
PHIL 330	PHILOSOPHY OF MIND	
PHIL 340	PHENOMENOLOGY	
PHIL 345	THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE	
PHIL 350	PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE	
PHIL 353	PHILOSOPHY OF BIOLOGY	
PHIL 354	THE PHILOSOPHY OF MEDICINE	
PHIL 430	ADVANCED TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY OF MIND	
PHIL 431	ADVANCED TOPICS IN THE SCIENCES OF THE MIND	
PHIL 450	ADVANCED TOPICS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE	
Group 2		
Select 2 courses from the following:		6
PHIL 360	ETHICS	
PHIL 361	METAETHICS	
PHIL 362	HISTORY OF ETHICS	
PHIL 363	MORAL PSYCHOLOGY	
PHIL 370	SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY	
PHIL 372	HISTORY OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY	
PHIL 373	PHILOSOPHY OF LAW	
PHIL 460	ADVANCED TOPICS IN ETHICS	
PHIL 470	ADVANCED TOPICS IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY	
Elective Requirements		
Select 3 elective courses from departmental (PHIL) course offerings ^{1,2}		9
Total Credit Hours Required for the Major in Philosophy		30
Additional Credit Hours to Complete Degree Requirements *		59
University Graduation Requirements (https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/) *		31
Total Credit Hours		120

Footnotes and Additional Information

- * **Note:** University Graduation Requirements include 31 credit hours, comprised of Distribution Requirements (Groups I, II, and III), FWIS, and LPAP coursework. In some instances, courses satisfying FWIS or distribution requirements may additionally meet other requirements, such as the Analyzing Diversity (AD) requirement, or some of the student's declared major, minor, or certificate requirements. Additional Credit Hours to Complete Degree Requirements include general electives, coursework completed as upper-level, residency (hours taken at Rice), and/or any other additional academic program requirements.
- ¹ Students who pursue the senior thesis (departmental honors) option must take PHIL 498 and PHIL 499. These courses are required in addition to major requirements and will not fulfill Elective Requirements. For more information, see the Opportunities (p. 2) tab.
- ² No more than 2 courses (6 credit hours) can be taken at the 100-level to fulfill major requirements.

Policies for the BA Degree with a Major in Philosophy

Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see Transfer Credit (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/transfer-credit/>). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. The Office of Academic Advising maintains the university's official list of transfer credit advisors (<https://oaa.rice.edu/advising-network/transfer-credit-advisors/>) on their website: <https://oaa.rice.edu>. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program's transfer credit advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

Departmental Transfer Credit Guidelines

Students pursuing the major in Philosophy should be aware of the following departmental transfer credit guidelines:

- No more than 4 courses (12 credit hours) of transfer credit from U.S. or international universities of similar standing as Rice may apply towards the major.
- Requests for transfer credit will be considered by the program director (and/or the program's official transfer credit advisor) on an individual case-by-case basis.

Distribution Credit Information

The determination of distribution credit eligibility is done initially as part of the new course creation process (<https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/courseprocess/>). Additionally, as part of an annual roll call (https://registrar.rice.edu/facstaff/distribution_credit/) coordinated each Spring by the Office of the Registrar, course distribution credit eligibility is routinely reviewed and reaffirmed by the Dean's Offices of each of the academic schools.

Faculty and leadership in the academic schools are responsible for ensuring that the courses identified as distribution-credit-eligible meet the criteria as set in the General Announcements (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/#text>). Students are responsible for ensuring that they meet graduation requirements (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/#text>)

by completing coursework designated as distribution-credit-eligible at the time of course registration.

Distribution courses from Philosophy (PHIL) study basic questions of knowledge, value, and reality. They show students the importance of critical examination and careful reasoning about fundamental issues that affect us as persons, as professionals, and as citizens. These courses tend to be broad based and address foundational concerns connected to studies in many other disciplines. Many bear importantly on basic ethical and political issues. Many involve the study of perspectives that have broadly and profoundly shaped history and culture.

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Philosophy website: <https://philosophy.rice.edu>

Opportunities for the BA Degree with a Major in Philosophy

Academic Honors

The university recognizes academic excellence achieved over an undergraduate's academic history at Rice. For information on university honors, please see Latin Honors (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/>) (*summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *cum laude*) and Distinction in Research and Creative Work (<https://ga.rice.edu/undergraduate-students/honors-distinctions/university/>). Some departments have department-specific Honors awards or designations.

Distinction in Research in Philosophy

Students must submit an application to be considered for "Distinction in Research in Philosophy" by April 1. Minimum qualifications are a 3.50 GPA in philosophy courses and enrollment in Honors Thesis course PHIL 499 or the Research Seminar for majors, PHIL 400. The work to be considered must be submitted to a committee appointed by the Chair, which will include the Director of Undergraduate Studies, any Honors Thesis supervisors, and the instructor(s) of the Research Seminar.

Senior Thesis and Departmental Honors in Philosophy

There are two paths to departmental honors in philosophy: coursework and a senior thesis.

Departmental honors can be awarded to any student who applies for departmental honors upon completion of three (3) courses at or above the 400-level as part of completion of the degree requirements for the BA with a major in Philosophy.

Qualified majors may apply before their senior year for directed research leading to a senior thesis, carried out during both semesters of the senior year. Each semester will require 3 credit hours; these 6 hours (PHIL 498 and PHIL 499) are in addition to the course hours required for the major.

To qualify for the program, students must have an approved research proposal and the agreement of a faculty member to serve as advisor for that project. Applicants will normally be required to have a GPA of 3.75 in philosophy courses and to have completed at least two upper-level courses in the distribution area of the proposed research. (See the major requirements for the definition of the distribution areas.) Applications should be submitted to the departmental director of undergraduate studies and will be evaluated by the department.

Students who are considering applying to write a senior thesis should consult the departmental director of undergraduate studies and potential advisors as early as possible. Normally students will apply before preregistration in the second semester of their junior year and will spend time during the following summer reading from a list they have developed with their advisor. The thesis normally will be between 7,500 and 15,000 words (approximately 30–60 pages) in length. Students will enroll in PHIL 498 and PHIL 499. Students accepted into the Rice Undergraduate Scholars Program should enroll in HONS 470 and HONS 471 and will be awarded departmental honors for their work in that program if they meet the requirements in this statement. Note that acceptance into the departmental honors program is a separate process from acceptance in RUSP, as is the evaluation for departmental honors.

To be considered for honors, the senior thesis must be completed by the beginning of April. The thesis will be read and evaluated by the advisor and a second reader chosen by the department, and the final decision on honors will be made by the entire faculty. Students will receive honors if they receive a grade of A+, A, or A- in PHIL 499. Completion of the major with at least a 3.50 GPA in all philosophy courses is required for departmental honors. Students who miss the April deadline for thesis submission but meet the university deadline for the semester will receive a grade and credit for completed work but will not be considered for honors. Students whose thesis is not awarded honors will receive a grade and credit for completed work.

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Philosophy website: <https://philosophy.rice.edu>

See <https://humanities.rice.edu/student-life> (<https://humanities.rice.edu/student-life/>) for tables of fellowships, prizes, and internships/practica that may be relevant to this major.