

Philosophy

The Field of Philosophy

Philosophy is one of the fundamental domains of human thought. It grows out of basic life questions, including questions of ethics, religion, politics, and science. The study of philosophy has had an historic role in the core of sound education, because it helps sharpen skills of careful, independent thinking and aids people of all ages in defining their most important values and beliefs. Philosophy's examination of great philosophical ideas and emphasis on clear reasoning and personal development serve as a strong foundation for life, regardless of one's career objectives.

The Department of Philosophy

The Department of Philosophy offers a traditional B.A. in philosophy, while also providing optional emphases on pre-law or religious studies, and the philosophy minor. The department provides ample opportunity for individual attention and student participation in its activities through the student Philosophy Club, Phi Alpha Delta—the Law Fraternity, and an annual undergraduate philosophy conference.

The department has a diverse and well-trained faculty with expertise in a variety of subjects including: ethics, logic, epistemology, philosophy of lan-

guage, philosophy of religion, as well as topics in religious studies and world religions such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and critical Bible studies. All members of the department share the conviction that the best way to teach philosophy is through an intense but sympathetic interchange between the teacher and the student, designed to stimulate critical thinking and love of wisdom.

Available Options

Philosophy Major — Pre-Law Option

Philosophy is an excellent preparation for students interested in law. The pre-law option emphasizes the development of critical thinking, analytical skills, and ethics, including a culminating pre-law internship. Philosophy is an excellent preparation for success on the LSAT, the law school aptitude test. The pre-law option prepares students for success in law school.

Philosophy Major — Religious Studies Option

Religious studies offers objective methods for exploring religion. Students gain appreciation for the variety and diversity of religious beliefs and practices throughout the world. The religious studies option is excellent preparation for anyone who anticipates dealing with religion and religious diversity in future careers. It provides

knowledge about how religious beliefs influence all aspects of life.

Careers in Philosophy

The philosophy major provides an excellent foundation for a variety of professional careers, as well as for graduate study in philosophy. Law schools, seminaries, and various governmental and business training programs emphasize the critical thinking and communication skills required to complete the B.A. in philosophy. Research shows that philosophy majors tend to perform quite well on admissions tests for graduate work such as the GRE and LSAT—and that philosophy majors go on to become leaders in their professional fields. Philosophy students have gone on to become successful in medicine, law, ministry, teaching, social work, journalism, and fine arts. The philosophy degree provides a rigorous curriculum that hones critical thinking skills, helps students master written and oral communication, and allows students to delve deeply into the most important questions in life.

California State
University, Fresno

Department
of Philosophy

559.278.2621

B.A. in Philosophy

B.A. in Philosophy
Option: Pre-Law

B.A. in Philosophy
*Option:
Religious Studies*

Minor in Philosophy

FRESNO STATE

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Philosophy

Future Education

Careers in law or other professional studies require the appropriate graduate training and degree. A teaching career at the university level generally requires a doctorate.

General Preparation

Students interested in majoring in philosophy should have intellectual curiosity and good writing and critical thinking skills.

High School Preparation

Students should meet California State University's admission requirements in terms of college preparatory course requirements, grade point average, and test scores. Early development of good study habits is essential. A high school philosophy course, if available, will help but is not necessary.

College Program

Students should consult the university's *General Catalog* for major and university requirements. Community college transfers should consult their catalogs to ensure that courses taken are CSU transferable (baccalaureate level). Taking an introductory course in philosophy before transferring would be good preparation.

General Education

Students should complete as many of the Fresno State General Education requirements as possible during the freshman and sophomore years, whether they are attending Fresno State or a community college.

Academic Advising

The faculty of the Department of Philosophy will be pleased to provide assistance and advice as you plan your program of studies. Please contact our office to arrange an appointment.

Course Requirements

Requirements for the major in philosophy include courses from the following areas (for a total of 33 units):

- Reasoning and Logic (PHIL 25 or 45)
- History of Philosophy: Ancient and Modern (PHIL 101 and 103)
- Contemporary Philosophy (PHIL 105, 140, 146, 150, 151, 156 or 157)
- Value Theory (PHIL 115 or 118)
- Senior Seminar (PHIL 170T)
- Approved Upper Division Electives

Requirements for the **Pre-Law Philosophy Major** are similar to the above requirements, while also including the following:

- Applied or Professional Ethics (PHIL 120 or 122)
- Philosophy of Law or Criminal Justice Ethics (PHIL 121 or 127)
- Approved electives from related fields such as Anthropology, Political Science, Business or Communication
- A Pre-Law internship (PHIL 199)

Requirements for the **Religious Studies Philosophy Major** are similar to the above requirements, while also including the following:

- Philosophy of Religion and Comparative Religions (PHIL 130 and 131)
- Literature of the Bible (PHIL 133W or 134)
- Asian Religions (PHIL 136, 137, or 138)
- Islam or Judaism (PHIL 139 or 158)
- Approved electives from related fields such as Anthropology, History, or Sociology

Numbers refer to course number in the California State University, Fresno *General Catalog*.

For additional information, write

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Visit or call

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PLEASE NOTE: This document is for general informational purposes only. The information is subject to change; consult the appropriate department or an academic adviser. Entering freshmen must follow the revised General Education program effective fall 1999 and thereafter. The university catalog and schedule of courses are available online at www.fresnostate.edu/ClassSchedule and www.fresnostate.edu/catalog.

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