

Department of Philosophy

Contact Information:

Campus Location: 1421 University Hall (UH)
(312) 996-3022
phil.uic.edu

Administration:

Chair, David Hilbert
Director of Undergraduate Studies, John Whipple, whipple@uic.edu

Philosophy (from the Greek “love of wisdom”) originated as the search for understanding concerning the most basic features of reality, the natural world, and human life. The discipline prizes and develops the skill of engaging effectively with arguments on a tremendous range of subjects. In ancient times, philosophers pioneered the study of topics from the physical cosmos to the gods to human conduct. They debated not only the character of fundamental reality but also questions of how we can attain knowledge of it. To this day, philosophy engages with questions drawn from every part of our life and experience. For example: Is there such a thing as a purely objective observation? Am I identical with my brain? Is it ever permissible to break the law? Why is there evil in the world? Is death to be feared, and why?

Job candidates and applicants to professional schools can only be helped by being able to examine both sides of a question, think critically, write cogently, and solve very general abstract problems. Moreover, the powers of reflection, imagination, self-expression, and engagement with the ideas of others that philosophy cultivates are in themselves of fundamental value for human life.

Distinction

Departmental Distinction

Students may declare themselves as candidates for Distinction after completion of 16 hours of philosophy course work. Distinction will be awarded to students who:

1. satisfy the requirements for the Major in Philosophy,
2. complete one 400-level course in addition to courses taken to satisfy requirements of the major, and
3. earn a GPA of 3.70/4.00 in all philosophy courses, including transferred courses.

High Departmental Distinction

In addition to satisfying the requirements for Departmental Distinction, students must satisfactorily complete PHIL 390. To select this option, students must have the approval of both the director of undergraduate studies as well as the professor with whom the student will be writing the thesis.

Degree Program

- BA with a Major in Philosophy (<http://catalog.uic.edu/ucate/colleges-depts/liberal-arts-sciences/phil/ba>)

Minor

- Minor in Philosophy (<http://catalog.uic.edu/ucate/colleges-depts/liberal-arts-sciences/phil/minor>)