Philosophy Addresses Your Life & Career

Philosophers inquire into the great questions that address the human condition and the basic orientations that shape our understanding of contemporary life.

Our department is especially concerned to promote a genuine engagement with the most important issues that concern us today.

From matters of law and politics to ethics and medicine, from justice and society to art and literature, we enable students to thoughtfully understand and critically assess the essential dimensions of these pressing issues.

Nationally, philosophy majors rank second of all (nearly 100 tested) majors in verbal and analytical aptitudes. Philosophy assists the student in reasoning well and writing effectively. Consequently, a philosophy major serves as an excellent preparation for the professions, including law, business, and government service as well as for graduate study and the teaching of philosophy.

Philosophy Major Program

The department offers a program of study that can be tailored to the student's specific interests. Students may build a major by completing six common core courses: Philosophy 102, Philosophy 104, Philosophy 111, Philosophy 210, Philosophy 404 or 407 or 361, and Philosophy 498; and four elective courses, two of which must be philosophy courses at the 300 level or higher.

To help guide the student, the philosophy faculty has developed four tracks that constitute pre-approved topic areas for the major.

A major in philosophy may be completed either by following any one of these tracks, or in an individualized program developed by the student with the guidance of a philosophy faculty adviser and approved by the chair.

Track 1: Philosophy, Law and Politics

Philosophy provides an excellent basis for the study of law, and Professor Nuttall has taken the requirements of law schools in the United States into account in devising this track.

Track 2: Philosophy and Social Justice

Building on the work of Professor Gan in nonviolence and peace studies, and Professor Amico on diversity, oppression and privilege, this track will appeal to students who take our Franciscan values to heart and seek to use those values to guide their career choices.

Track 3: Philosophy, Art and Literature

Based upon the interdisciplinary efforts of Professor Tate and colleagues in creating the Art History major, as well as Professor Dooley's work in philosophy and literature, this track will appeal to students interested in critical perspectives on contemporary culture or in careers in the arts.

Track 4: Philosophy, Ethics and Medicine

This track, devised by Professor Woodruff, will appeal particularly to students interested in exploring the philosophical and ethical issues in scientific research, medicine, aging, and the end of life.

A student may obtain a **minor in philosophy**, either a general minor or in one of the above tracks.

Complementary Activities

The Philosophy Club is composed of students of any major who are interested in philosophy. Members come together in the spirit of collaboration to learn about and discuss philosophical topics of interest.

The club is open to every student who has broad philosophical interests and a desire to participate and contribute to the group, and students may participate at their leisure.

Mock Trial prepares students to compete in the American Mock Trial Association's regional and national mock trial tournaments. Students learn to construct all components of a trial, from opening statements, to direct and cross examinations of witnesses, to closing arguments.

They become familiar with many of the rules of evidence and procedure governing trial courts across the nation. The program is an excellent introduction to the trial process as it operates in the United States.