



Department of Philosophy

Graduate Studies Guidebook

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MA Program in Philosophy

I. Introduction

This section describes requirements and procedures for masters (MA) students in Philosophy at the University of Memphis. The requirements and procedures described here constitute a supplement to the University of Memphis Graduate School Graduate Catalog, which takes precedence in any case of conflict. Students should become familiar with the policies and regulations set forth in the Graduate Catalog and with the various pertinent deadlines published each semester in the Schedule of Classes. In case of conflict between anything stated here and the Graduate Catalog, the latter takes precedence. The policies and regulations stated here are subject to change by vote of the graduate faculty in Philosophy.

II. Retention Requirements

A student will be retained continuously in the program until completion of the degree providing the following conditions are met:

- (1) Students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 (A = 4.0). Should the student's GPA fall below that mark, a period of one semester will be allowed to correct the deficiency.
- (2) Students must demonstrate satisfactory progress in fulfilling the graduation requirements outlined below.

III. Course Requirements

A total of 33 semester hours are required. At least 24 hours of coursework for the degree must be at the 7000 level or above. Students with approved collateral areas may take up to 9 credit hours of non-Philosophy courses. Students may take a maximum of 6 credit hours of Readings and Research.

Specific courses requirements:

- (1) two courses in the history of philosophy;
- (2) two courses in theoretical philosophy;
- (3) two courses in practical philosophy.

Each course taught in the Philosophy Department and counting toward graduation will count toward at least one core area. Normally only courses with a pre-20th-century concentration will count in area (1). No course used to satisfy a course requirement may be counted as satisfying a course requirement in another area (e.g., a course that satisfies (1) may not also be used to satisfy (3)).

Students who are in doubt regarding which requirement a course satisfies should consult the Director of Graduate Studies.

IV. Comprehensive Examinations

Together with the maintenance of the required GPA, the successful completion of all distribution requirements constitutes passing the MA Comprehensive Exam.

V. Application for Admission to Candidacy

Once an MA student has passed the Comprehensive Exam, the Director of Graduate Studies will file the Comprehensive Exam form with the Graduate School. The Application for Admission to Candidacy for the Master's Degree must be filed by the student with the Graduate School by the last day to add classes in the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. If this form is not filed by the deadline, the student will not graduate in that semester.

See The University of Memphis Academic Calendar for deadline dates. There are no exceptions. The forms may be obtained from the Graduate School website: www.memphis.edu/gradschool.

VI. Intent to Graduate Form

An Intent to Graduate Card must be filed by the student with the Graduate School by the last day to add classes in the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. This form may be obtained from the Graduate School website: www.memphis.edu/gradschool.

PhD Program in Philosophy

I. Introduction

This section describes requirements and procedures for doctoral (PhD) students in Philosophy at the University of Memphis. The requirements and procedures described here constitute a supplement to the University of Memphis Graduate School Graduate Catalog, which takes precedence in any case of conflict. Students should become familiar with the policies and regulations set forth in the Graduate Catalog and with the various pertinent deadlines published each semester in the Schedule of Classes. In case of conflict between anything stated here and the Graduate Catalog, the latter takes precedence. The policies and regulations stated here are subject to change by vote of the graduate faculty in Philosophy.

II. Retention Requirements

A student will be retained continuously in the program until completion of the degree providing the following conditions are met:

- (1) Students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.5 (A = 4.0). Should the student's GPA fall below that mark, a period of one semester will be allowed to correct the deficiency. At the discretion of the Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies, this period may be extended one additional semester.
- (2) Students must demonstrate satisfactory progress in fulfilling the graduation requirements outlined below.

III. Course Requirements

A total of 72 credit hours above the Bachelor's degree.

- At least 60 credit hours must be earned at the 7000 level or higher.
- At least 24 hours must be earned while the student is in continuous residence.
- With the support of his/her faculty mentor, a student may petition to count up to 9 credit hours of non-Philosophy, graduate-level coursework toward the 72 credit hour minimum required for the PhD.
- No non-Philosophy courses may be taken in the first two years.
- Students may register for no more than 3 credit hours of Readings & Research prior to the third year. And the first 3 credit hours of Readings & Research must be in conjunction with their Comprehensive Examination (see sec. V).

Students must take a core consisting of:

- (1) four courses in the history of philosophy (at least one in ancient and one in modern);
- (2) two courses in theoretical philosophy;
- (3) two courses in practical philosophy.

Each course taught in the Philosophy Department and counting toward graduation will count toward at least one core area. Normally only courses with a pre-20th-century concentration will count in area (1). No course used to satisfy a core-course requirement may be counted as satisfying a core-course requirement in another area (e.g., a course that satisfies (1) may not also be used to satisfy (3)).

Students who are in doubt regarding which requirement a course satisfies should consult the Director of Graduate Studies.

A minimum of six dissertation credit hours (PHIL 9000) is required for the PhD. No more than 18 credit hours of dissertation will count toward satisfying the total number of graduate hours required for the PhD.

IV. Credit for Previous Coursework^{*}

Students may be granted up to 18 hours credit for graduate work in philosophy at an institution other than the University of Memphis. These hours may not be counted toward satisfaction of the core requirements.

For students who have attained a master's degree, up to 30 hours of graduate credit may be accepted toward the PhD. A minimum of 42 hours of graduate credit is required beyond that master's degree. At least 36 hours of graduate credit must be at the 7000 level or higher.

^{} This policy is under review by the faculty and may be updated during the 2015-16 academic year.*

V. Examination Requirements

Each student's PhD Comprehensive Examination (Comp) will be based on a bibliography in the area in which he/she intends to write a dissertation. This exam has two components—a written part and an oral part—both of which must be passed in order for the student to pass his/her Comp. The following guidelines describe how the process works.

- (1) Each student will form a two-faculty member committee to supervise this exam, choosing faculty members they anticipate inviting to serve on his/her dissertation committee. In discussion with the student, these faculty members will approve a reading list for the selected area. This bibliography—a substantial portion of which must incorporate entries from the history of philosophy—should be manageable in one semester's worth of independent work, and students will register for 3 credit hours of Readings & Research with one of the faculty members on their committee in order to complete this work.
- (2) In conjunction with the faculty committee, the student will schedule a time for the oral exam. Two weeks before the oral exam date, the committee will deliver 1-4 questions meant to probe the student's understanding of the material included in the bibliography (i.e., these questions should not ask the students to defend a thesis in the same way a dissertation proposal would). Altogether, these questions should be answerable in approximately 12-18 typed, double-spaced pages.
- (3) Students must provide written replies at least 48 hours before the oral exam. Answers must be polished, composed in a professional, academic style, with proper citation. The use of further secondary literature is permissible.

- (4) The oral exam may include questions concerning the student's written answers and/or questions about any text included on the bibliography.
- (5) Students are encouraged to complete the Comp by the August preceding their third year. Students who fail to pass their Comp by the conclusion of their third year may be ineligible for funding in future years.
- (6) Following initial completion of the written and oral components of the PhD Comp, the faculty committee may
 - (a) pass the exam outright;
 - (b) fail the exam outright; or
 - (c) determine that additional work is required in order to pass.

In the event of (a) or (b), the results will be recorded and communicated as described in (8) below. In the event of (c), the student faces a choice:

- Option A: complete the revisions required by the Comp Exam committee. This will involve attempting to complete written and/or oral examinations covering the same literature (though the specific questions may be different). At the conclusion of this process, the student will be deemed by the committee to have passed or failed this Comp Exam. If he/she fails, this failure will be reported to the Graduate School as described in (8) below.
 - Option B: abandon further work in the area of the first exam and begin again in a different area. In this case, the work that the student completed for the first attempt at their Comp Exam will be deemed to constitute a failed attempt. This result will be reported the Graduate School as described in (8) below.
- (7) Passing the PhD Comprehensive Exam is sufficient for passing the MA Comprehensive Exam; so students who pass the PhD Comp will also be deemed to have passed the MA Comp. Students who pass the MA Comp and are later accepted into our PhD program will need to take the PhD Comp.
 - (8) Results of the Comprehensive Examination are not graded in the way that courses are and so cannot be appealed; nor can they be changed after the form has been filed with the Graduate School. A second failure of the Comprehensive Exam will result in termination from the program. The judgment to terminate a student from the program can be appealed. The retention appeals process is formalized and must be followed in all cases. See the section on "Retention Appeals" in the University of Memphis Graduate School Graduate Catalog for information and procedures regarding appeals. The results of the Comprehensive Examination process (positive or negative) will be communicated to the Graduate School via the Comprehensive Results Form within the same semester those results are achieved. The link for that form is available on the Graduate School website: www.memphis.edu/gradschool.

VI. Research Tool Requirements

PhD students must demonstrate sufficient ability in *either* (1) one natural language relevant to the student's dissertation area (or two natural languages if the director of the student's dissertation

determines that this additional capability is required for successful research in the student's area of specialization) *or* (2) one non-natural language or research tool (e.g., logic) if such a language or tool is determined to be most useful to the student's area of research.

The natural language examination will consist of a translation of a passage of a philosophical text in that language. The translation must be completed within four hours; use of a bilingual dictionary is permitted. Students may also petition to do a translation project instead of a four-hour exam. Petition should be made to the Director of Graduate Studies. (Note: petitions to substitute translation projects for language examinations will not be granted unless, among other things, the Director of Graduate Studies determines that there are faculty members with relevant expertise willing to undertake such projects.)

VII. Mentoring

Each student in the PhD program will be assisted and monitored, initially, by a Faculty Mentor and, later, by his/her Dissertation Committee.

(1) Faculty Mentor

Upon admission to the PhD program, each student will be assigned a Faculty Mentor. Each student will meet with his/her Faculty Mentor at least twice a year. The Faculty Mentor will provide continuity throughout the student's time in the program and will be responsible for advising the student on his or her overall progress, keeping an eye on course selection, anticipating the need to develop particular skills or areas of expertise, encouraging the student at the appropriate time to formulate a dissertation topic and form a dissertation committee. One-on-one meetings between the student and his/her Faculty Mentor will provide an opportunity to address concerns or suggestions regarding the program, as well as an opportunity to inform the student about whether he or she is meeting department expectations.

(2) Dissertation Committee

During his/her third year, the student (in consultation with his/her Faculty Mentor) will choose a dissertation director and, subsequently, a dissertation committee. The dissertation committee will be comprised of at least four members: the student's director plus three or more additional readers. At least one of the additional readers must be working in an area of philosophy that is not related to the dissertation topic. All members of the dissertation committee must have Graduate Faculty Status. The University bestows the designation "Graduate Faculty" upon faculty following a review of their credentials and recommendation by their colleagues. The University maintains six levels of graduate faculty: Full, Associate, Adjunct, Adjunct Research Co-Mentor, Affiliate, and Adjunct Teaching. Only Full members of the Graduate Faculty may chair doctoral committees. Full or Associate members of the Graduate Faculty may serve as a voting member on doctoral committees. Only one Adjunct or Affiliate member of the Graduate Faculty may serve as a voting member on doctoral committees. This committee should be formed no later than the end of the student's third year. A Dissertation Committee Form must be filed with the Graduate School at that time.

VIII. Dissertation Proposal Defense

Before beginning the dissertation, a student must submit a dissertation proposal (see Appendix C for more information regarding the dissertation proposal) and pass a 1.5 hour oral examination on the proposal. The oral exam will cover the feasibility of the project, the student's preparation for carrying out the project, and the student's knowledge of the area of philosophy in which the proposed dissertation falls.

IX. Annual Review of PhD Students

At the end of each Spring semester, the Philosophy Department faculty meets to discuss the progress of PhD students: their academic progress as well as their performance as teaching and/or research assistants and instructors. If, in the opinion of the faculty, a student is not making adequate progress in the program, that student will be asked to meet with the Director of Graduate Studies, the student's Faculty Mentor, and/or the student's Dissertation Advisor(s) to discuss his/her future in the program.

X. Application for Admission to Candidacy

When a PhD student has passed both the Comprehensive exam and Dissertation Proposal Defense, and when he/she has, in addition, satisfied all course and language requirements, a Departmental Recommendation of Admission to Doctoral Candidacy (Late) form will be submitted to the Graduate School. Late Doctoral Candidacy status means the dissertation is the only remaining requirement for the doctoral degree. The student is then classified as ABD (all but dissertation).

XI. Dissertation

An acceptable dissertation is a requirement for all doctoral degrees. The dissertation must represent a significant scholarly effort that culminates in an original contribution to the field of inquiry. It should reflect the candidate's ability to conduct independent research and interpret in a logical manner the facts and phenomena revealed by the research.

Students must follow the University of Memphis Graduate School policies concerning theses and dissertations. These policies can be found on the Graduate School website: www.memphis.edu/gradschool.

XII. Oral Dissertation Defense

After completion of the dissertation and all course and language requirements, candidates will be given a final oral examination dealing primarily with the dissertation and its relation to the candidate's major field of study. The exam will be conducted by the student's dissertation committee and will be open to the public.

XIII. Application for Admission to Candidacy

The Application for Admission to Candidacy for the Ph.D. Degree must be filed with the Graduate Office by the last day to add classes for the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. See

the University Academic Calendar for deadline dates. There are no exceptions. The form may be obtained from the Graduate School website: www.memphis.edu/gradschool.

XIV. Intent to Graduate Card

An Intent to Graduate Card must be filed with the Graduate School by the last day to add classes of the semester in which the student wishes to graduate. This form is obtainable from the Graduate School website: www.memphis.edu/gradschool.

Appendix A

MA Student Record Form

Name _____ UUID _____

Date Admitted: by Department _____ by Grad School _____

Undergraduate Courses Required _____

Course Requirements

Summary: (a) 33 credit hours required; (b) at least 24 credit hours at 7000-level or above; (c) non-Philosophy courses: no more than 9 credit hours; (d) Readings and Research: 6 credit hours max.; (e) two courses each in History of Philosophy, Theoretical Philosophy, and Practical Philosophy.

History of Philosophy (course title, instructor, semester and year)

1. _____
2. _____

Theoretical Philosophy (2 courses)

1. _____
2. _____

Practical Philosophy (2 courses)

1. _____
2. _____

Readings and Research (2 courses)

1. _____
2. _____

Degree Awarded: _____

Appendix B

PhD Student Record Form

Name _____ UUID _____

Date Admitted: by Department _____ by Grad School _____

Status _____

Course Requirements

Summary: (a) 72 credit hours required (9 graduate-level credit hours of which may be taken outside of Philosophy, following successful petition); (b) at least 60 credit hours at the 7000-level or higher; (c) at least 24 credit hours while in continuous residence; (d) no non-Philosophy coursework in the first two years; (e) only 3 credit hours of Readings & Research may be taken prior to the third year, and this must be in conjunction with the Comprehensive Examination; (f) four courses in History of Philosophy (at least one ancient and one modern) and two courses each in Theoretical Philosophy and Practical Philosophy.

History of Philosophy (course title, instructor, semester and year)

1. Ancient: _____
2. Modern: _____
3. _____
4. _____

Theoretical Philosophy (2 courses)

1. _____
2. _____

Practical Philosophy (2 courses)

1. _____
2. _____

Research Tool (1 required)

Natural language: _____

Non-natural language: _____

Comprehensive Examination

First Attempt

Area: _____

Faculty 1: _____ Faculty 2: _____

Date (oral exam): _____

Outcome: _____

Second Attempt (if necessary)

Area: _____

Faculty 1: _____ Faculty 2: _____

Date (oral exam): _____

Outcome: _____

Certificate

Dissertation Proposal Defense

Date: _____

Dissertation

Title: _____

Chair: _____ Co-Chair: _____

Reader: _____ Reader: _____

Reader: _____ Reader: _____

Oral Defense Date: _____ Outcome: _____

Application for Admission to Candidacy: _____

Intent to Graduate: _____

Degree Awarded: _____

Appendix C

Dissertation Proposal

A dissertation proposal should contain the following:

1. Table of contents for the proposal
2. Abstract (approximately 150 words)
3. Summary of the dissertation project (5-10 pages)
4. Description of the contents of each chapter/essay (5-10 pages)
5. Schedule for completion
6. Bibliography (as complete as possible)
7. Curriculum vitae

Appendix D

Timetables

Ideal Timetable for MA Program

tbd

Ideal Timetable for PhD Program

tbd