



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. 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](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool).

#### VI. Apply to Graduate Card

An Apply 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](http://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. 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 their faculty mentors, students 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. The first 3 credit hours of Readings & Research must be in conjunction with their Comprehensive Examination (see sec. V).
- Students may take a maximum of 12 credit hours of Readings and Research.

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<sup>\*</sup>

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 33 hours of those 42 hours of graduate credit must be at the 8000 level or higher.

#### V. Examination Requirements

The PhD Comprehensive Examination (Comp) will be based on a bibliography in the area in which the student 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 the Comp. The following guidelines describe how the process works.

- (1) Students will form a two-faculty member committee to supervise this exam, choosing faculty members they anticipate inviting to serve on their dissertation committees. In discussion with their students, 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. 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. This course is referred to as the "Comprehensive Exam Seminar."
- (2) Students are offered five essay questions of which they must select three on which to write their essays. At least one question must be about how the history of philosophy relates to the exam topic. The questions will be presented to the student two weeks before the oral exam date. They are not intended to prompt students to defend a thesis in the manner of a dissertation proposal, but to probe their understanding of the material included in the bibliography. Altogether, these questions should be answerable in approximately 12-25 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 is one hour long and 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 the Comp Exam. If the student 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](http://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

Students in the PhD program will be assisted and mentored, initially, by a Faculty Mentor and, later, by their Dissertation Committees.

### (1) Faculty Mentor

Upon admission to the PhD program, students will be assigned Faculty Mentors. They will meet with their Faculty Mentors at least twice a year. The Faculty Mentors will provide continuous assistance for their students up until the time their students have chosen their dissertation directors. Along with the Director of Graduate Studies, the Faculty Mentors will be responsible for advising the student on his or her overall progress, reviewing 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 students and their Faculty Mentors will provide an opportunity to address concerns or suggestions regarding the program, as well as an opportunity to inform students about whether they are meeting department expectations.

### (2) Dissertation Committee

During the third year of residence in the program, students (in consultation with their Faculty Mentors) will choose their dissertation directors and, subsequently, dissertation committees. The dissertation committees will be comprised of at least four members: a director plus three or more additional readers. 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 voting members on doctoral committees. Only one Adjunct or Affiliate member of the Graduate Faculty may serve as a voting member on doctoral committees. The dissertation committee should be formed no later than the end of the student's third year. A Faculty Advisory 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 the student's future in the program.

## X. Application for Admission to Candidacy

When PhD students have passed both the Comprehensive Exam and the Dissertation Proposal Defense, and when they have, in addition, satisfied all course and Research Tool requirements, a Departmental Recommendation of Admission to Doctoral Candidacy (Late) form must be submitted to the Graduate School. Late Doctoral Candidacy status means the dissertation is the only remaining requirement. The student is then classified as ABD (all but dissertation). 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](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool).

## 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](http://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. Apply to Graduate

An Apply 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 can be obtained from the Graduate School website: [www.memphis.edu/gradschool](http://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) two courses each in History of Philosophy, Theoretical Philosophy, and Practical Philosophy. Students may take a maximum of 6 credit hours of Readings and Research.

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 maximum)

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) students may take a maximum of 12 credit hours of Readings and Research; (g) 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Apply 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 Timetables for MA Program and PhD Program

We expect all students to complete their MA program requirements in two years and PhD students in five years -- at the latest. Examples of courses necessary to complete requirements follow this note. (Note: Students are expected to know the additional Research Tool, Comprehensive Exam, and Dissertation requirements for the PhD degree. These are explained above.)

### MA and PhD Course Requirements

The following tables detail the ideal MA and PhD timetables for the completion of course requirements. The tables are given as examples, not recommendations, of courses that students may take in order to complete the program requirements. **Students who choose to take non-philosophy courses, whether or not they are pursuing Certificate Programs, should remember that only 9 credit hours acquired from such courses can provide credits toward their philosophy degree program. Moreover, students who pursue non-philosophy coursework are likely to take longer to complete their philosophy degree program. Despite this, students on funding should *not* expect to have their funding extended in such a circumstance. Absent other customized arrangements, such as a shortened degree schedule based on credit for graduate work prior to entering the UM graduate program in Philosophy, MA students on Graduate Assistantship funding and in good standing will have two years of funding and PhD students on Graduate Assistantship funding and in good standing will have five years of funding.** In no case should a student expect additional funding for study or research. This should be kept in mind while reading the following ideal timetables to complete Philosophy Program Degree Requirements.

The abbreviations used in the tables are explained as follows: T=Theoretical Course, P=Practical Course, H=History Course, R&R = Readings and Research Course, DISS = Dissertation, CES = Comprehensive Exam Seminar, PRT = Pass Research Tool Exam, AG= Apply and Submit Forms for Graduation, DDP = Defend Dissertation Proposal, and DD = Defend Dissertation. GI = Graduate Instructor of Record

### MA Program Example

#### FIRST YEAR

##### Semester 1

PHIL 6441 (T)  
PHIL 7203 (T)  
PHIL 7040 (P)

##### Semester 2

PHIL 7442 (P)  
PHIL 7203 (H)  
PHIL 7414 (T)

#### SECOND YEAR

##### Semester 1

##### Semester 2

PHIL 7030 (T)  
PHIL 7201 (H)  
PHIL 7551 (P)

PHIL 7421 (T)  
PHIL 7541 (P)  
PHIL 7994 (P)  
AG in February

## **PhD Program Example**

### **FIRST YEAR**

#### **Semester 1**

PHIL 6441 (T)  
PHIL 8203 (T)  
PHIL 8040 (P)  
PHIL 8001 (Proseminar)

#### **Semester 2**

PHIL 8442 (P)  
PHIL 8203 (H)  
PHIL 8414 (T)

### **SECOND YEAR**

#### **Semester 1**

PHIL 8030 (T)  
PHIL 8201 (H)  
PHIL 8551 (P)

#### **Semester 2**

PHIL 8421 (T)  
PHIL 8541 (P)  
PHIL 8994 (P)  
PHIL 7002 (Teaching Skills)

### **THIRD YEAR**

#### **Semester 1**

PHIL 8201 (H)  
PHIL 8541 (P)  
PHIL 8994 (CES)  
GI (start independent teaching)

#### **Semester 2**

PHIL 8301 (H)  
PHIL 8551 (P)  
PHIL 8994 (R&R)  
PRT  
GI

### **FOURTH YEAR**

#### **Semester 1**

DDP  
PHIL 8514 (T)  
PHIL 8020 (H)  
PHIL 8414 (T)  
GI

#### **Semester 2**

PHIL 9000 (DISS)  
GI

### **FIFTH YEAR**

#### **Semester 1**

#### **Semester 2**

PHIL 9000  
GI

PHIL 9000  
AG in February  
DD  
GI