

Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

The Ph.D. degree requires 39 hours of graduate coursework, which begins with a first-year proseminar and ends with an independent research seminar that culminates in the writing and oral defense of a qualifying paper. Ph.D. candidates must also satisfy a set of course requirements in distinct areas of philosophy and the University's Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement. Students write and defend a dissertation prospectus to complete the oral comprehensive examination and advance to candidacy, after which they are expected to write and successfully defend a dissertation.

Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (<https://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies/>) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (<https://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/>) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Admission to the Ph.D. in Philosophy

Apply to the graduate program via the Office of Graduate Studies online application system (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/>).

For Fall admission, applications must be received by **January 5th** to be considered for funding support. The deadline for Fall admission is **May 1st**.

For additional information, including relevant deadlines and a list of required supplemental documentation to be submitted with the online application, please visit the graduate page of the Philosophy website (<https://philosophy.ku.edu/phd/>), or contact the department Graduate Program Coordinator (<https://philosophy.ku.edu/staff/>).

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

1. **39 credit hours of graduate coursework in philosophy** (<https://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/philosophy/#courseinventory>), with a grade of B- or higher in each course and an overall GPA of at least 3.0 in philosophy. At least 24 of these credit hours must be in courses numbered 800 or above.
2. **PHIL 800: Proseminar** must be taken in the first year of study.
3. **Required Coursework**
 - a. Formal Philosophy Requirement: students must take one course in formal methods. Eligible courses include: PHIL 610 Metalogic, PHIL 612 Modal and Non-classical Logics, and PHIL 666 Rational Choice Theory.
 - b. Distribution Requirement: Students must complete seven courses that fulfill the following distribution requirements. The Graduate Handbook lists the department's graduate course offerings and indicates which courses count toward which distribution area. For courses that can count toward multiple areas, the semester

course schedule will indicate which topic and distribution area(s) are relevant.

- i. Value Theory – 2 courses
- ii. Metaphysics & Epistemology - 2 courses
- iii. History of Philosophy – 3 courses
 1. Ancient Philosophy - 1 course
 2. Modern Philosophy - 1 course
 3. Philosophical Traditions - 1 course

4. **Elective courses.** Elective coursework can be selected from the department's graduate course offerings. Students are encouraged to consult the Director of Graduate Studies when choosing elective courses.
5. **PHIL 901 Qualifying Paper .** Independent research seminar that results in the writing and successful oral defense of a qualifying paper. Should be taken during the final semester of coursework.
 - a. As students near the end of coursework, they should decide on a tentative topic for their Qualifying Paper and then consult with appropriate faculty members to identify an advisor. This should be done by the penultimate semester of coursework (standardly, the first semester of a student's 3rd year in the program).
 - b. Once an advisor is identified, the student should enroll in PHIL 901 Qualifying Paper with the advisor. While enrolled, the student works on the paper under the advisor's supervision. The aim is to produce a high-quality paper that is of *near publishable quality* (i.e. a viable candidate for publication in a well-ranked professional journal). The department recommends a length of 8,000-12,000 words for the qualifying paper as standard, but recognizes that adequate length can vary by subdiscipline and topic.
6. **Research Skills & Responsible Scholarship Requirement.** This requirement must be met before taking the comprehensive oral exam. For Philosophy doctoral students, this requirement is met by the following:
 - a. PHIL 800 Proseminar, which includes a basic introduction to philosophical methodology and research practices alongside content.
 - b. PHIL 901 Qualifying Paper, where the student works, in close consultation with a faculty advisor, to write a research paper of near publishable quality.
 - c. Demonstrated competence in an approved foreign language OR completion of a DGS-approved course in a discipline related to the student's research interests
7. Pass the **comprehensive oral examination** for Ph.D. candidacy. In the philosophy department, this is done by passing a prospectus for the dissertation. This examination is taken after all of the above requirements have been completed.
8. After satisfaction of the above requirements, the student enrolls in PHIL 999 Dissertation with their Dissertation Director.
9. Write and successfully defend a dissertation, following both Graduate School (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-dissertation/>) and Department Guidelines (<http://philosophy.ku.edu/phd/>).