

Philosophy

The BA degree in philosophy is the natural choice for students who want to go on to graduate work in philosophy or law. But the study of Philosophy is also a useful preparation for students who intend to work in other areas.

Philosophy provides a transferable skill, one that can be used in many walks of life. It provides training in thinking rationally that cannot be obtained elsewhere and it gives students a general training in thinking and writing clearly. It also provides experience in problem solving, in thinking critically, and in thinking laterally. Both ethics and logic are part of philosophy, and most people will face significant ethical questions in the course of their work and would do better in their work if they thought logically.

Studying the history of philosophy is also essential to the understanding of the history of ideas and the history of culture. Perhaps Socrates was going a little far in suggesting that the unexamined life was not worth living, but it is surely true that an examined life will be all the better for it.

"Excellent teaching, high standards and methods for achieving those standards were common denominators of every UNO philosophy course. The faculty was genuinely interested in helping each student learn and apply philosophical principles. They taught me the skills of good writing and careful reading of texts. These skills have proven invaluable to me both in the business world and in my graduate level philosophy work."

--Patty Steck
Full-time Faculty
Century College

"The thorough undergraduate education and high degree of personal encouragement I received from UNO's Department of Philosophy and Religion faculty afforded me the competitive edge in graduate school – and thus in career opportunities as well."

-- Nicolae Roddy, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
of Old Testament
Creighton University

Philosophy - what can you do with it?

Apart from preparing students for graduate work in philosophy, a degree in philosophy is useful for careers where careful and analytical thought is required, and is excellent preparation for the standard professional examinations, such as the LSAT and the MCAT.

Religion - what can you do with it?

A major in religion can prepare students for a career in a variety of fields where an understanding of the religious influences on people is needed. Those fields may range from publishing to social work, from research to archeology to education, or from the ministry to international business.

In addition, a major or minor in either philosophy or religion may be combined successfully with a major or minor in the companion field, or with many other courses of study in the university. A graduate in either field may choose to pursue graduate study within the discipline, graduate work in another subject, or professional work in a field such as ministry, social work, law, business or medicine.

Department of Philosophy and Religion
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Religion

Put most simply, to major in religion means to pursue the academic study of religion. It is not "Sunday school" at the college level or a professional program that trains people for the ministry. It is not about which religion to believe but is, rather, the study of many religions. You don't have to be religious to study religion! On the other hand, you certainly can be religious and still study your own religious tradition, and others, from an academic perspective.

Study in religion begins with an introductory course in the religions of the world. Sub-topics covered here can lead to more specialized work: The "Three Great Western Traditions" of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are subjects of study, as are their sacred books. The Religions of the East are covered in a survey course, as well as in individual courses and special topic courses. The department regularly teaches courses related to Native American religious traditions and it offers a selection of new "special topics" courses every year. Religion and literature, religion and film, religious aspects of ethics, religion and women – you will find all of this and more in the UNO religion department.

Philosophy and Religion

at the
University of Nebraska
at Omaha



Why Study them?

- ✓ Learn to Think for Yourself
- ✓ Challenge Assumptions
- ✓ Explore the History of Ideas
- ✓ Understand Diverse Spiritual Traditions and Worldviews
- ✓ Understand Ethics
- ✓ Learn to Think Logically
- ✓ Work Out the Meaning of Life

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Faculty

Philosophy

Dr. William Blizek
Dr. Rory Conces
Dr. Laura Grams
Dr. Halla Kim
Dr. Andrew Newman, Chair
Dr. Jerry Cederblom (CF)
Dr. Imafedia Okhamafe (CF)

Religion

Dr. Michele Desmarais
Dr. Guy Matalon
Dr. Dale Stover
Dr. Paul Williams
Dr. Rami Arav
Dr. Russell Palmer (Emeritus)

CF=Courtesy Faculty
Students considering a major or minor in either Philosophy or Religion are encouraged to meet with a faculty member of the appropriate discipline.

Departmental Projects

- **The Rabbi Sidney H. Brooks Lecture**
- ***The Journal of Religion and Film***
- **Shirley & Leonard Goldstein Lecture on Human Rights**
- ***International Third World Studies Journal and Review***
- **Bethsaida Project**

BA Degree Requirements

The general BA Requirements are required for both Philosophy and Religion majors.

Philosophy Major:

33 credit hours in philosophy, 21 of which must be upper division.

Lower division courses must include:

1. Critical Reasoning (1210) or Symbolic Logic (2010). Logic is required of students who wish to be recommended for graduate school in philosophy.
2. Contemporary Moral Problems (1020) or Introduction to Ethics (2030).

Upper division courses must include:

3. Ancient Philosophy (3110).
4. History of Modern Philosophy (3130)
5. Theory of Knowledge (3600).
6. Metaphysics (3700).
7. Contemporary Ethical Philosophy (3050).

Recommended Courses:

One of the following courses is strongly recommended: Philosophy of Natural Science (3400) or Philosophy of Social Science (3410).

One of the following is also strongly recommended:

Social Philosophy (3210) or Philosophy of Religion (3200) or Philosophy of Art (3200).

Philosophy Minor

1. Critical Reasoning (1210) or Symbolic Logic (2010).
2. Contemporary Moral Problems (1020) or Introduction to Ethics (2030).
3. 12 hours of upper division courses in philosophy.

Religion Major:

27 credit hours in religion (18 hours at upper division).

The following courses are required:

Introduction to World Religions (1010)
Old Testament/ Hebrew Bible (2150)
New Testament (2160)
Senior Seminar in Religion (4010) [third writing course]

One of the following is also required:

Native American Religions (3020)
Shamanism (3030)
Religions of the East (3050)
Islam (3200)
The Buddhist Tradition (4020)

Religion Minor: 12 hours of upper division religion courses.