



Philosophy

The Philosophy Department of Gonzaga University seeks to communicate to students and the wider academic community, an appreciation of the value of the philosophical life; a life focused on the love and pursuit of wisdom (sophia). In and out of the classroom, in interactions with students and in presentations to other audiences, members of the Department promote appreciation for this discipline.

Philosophy has played a central role in Jesuit education since its inception, a tradition reflected by the central place of philosophy in the Gonzaga University Core Curriculum. Philosophy develops the skills of thought and analysis, engages in sustained reflection on questions of human nature and personhood, and critically examines human morality and values.

THE PROGRAM

At Gonzaga, undergraduate students are invited to explore the discipline through four programs of study: the University Core Curriculum, a minor, a major, and the Kossel concentration. Gonzaga Philosophy courses also serve as components of interdisciplinary concentrations in Catholic Studies, Environmental Studies, Solidarity and Social Justice, and Women's and Gender Studies. Gonzaga philosophy courses are also offered in the Gonzaga-in-Florence study abroad program. With more than 25 full-time members and many part-time members, the Philosophy Department at Gonzaga University is among the largest in the western United States.

With its focus on central and fundamental questions about reality, truth, and meaning, philosophy is at the heart of the academic life. Philosophical reasoning and familiarity with philosophical concepts and argumentation are therefore central components of intellectual formation. Gonzaga's Philosophy program hones analytical and communication skills by requiring students to discuss and write about complex ideas.

THE MAJOR

The Philosophy major includes a 3-course sequence in the History of Philosophy; topical seminars that focus on philosophical research, discussion, and writing; and a broad range of 400-level electives, which allows students to develop a program of studies tailored to their own interests.

400-Level Courses include:

- Chinese Philosophy
- Ethics of Eating
- Happiness
- Health Care Ethics
- Phenomenology
- Philosophical Reflections on Christianity and Science
- Philosophy of Technology
- Philosophy of Sex and Gender
- Theories of Solidarity and Social Justice

THE MINOR

The Philosophy minor program features flexibility, since students are permitted to choose their upper-level electives from a large number of courses. These include courses on philosophical issues that arise within a particular profession, such as **Health Care Ethics, Environmental Ethics, and International Ethics.**

KOSSEL CONCENTRATION

The Kossel concentration is named after Clifford Kossel, S.J., who taught Thomistic Philosophy at Gonzaga for many years. The concentration is open to all students seeking a Philosophy major that emphasizes Catholic thought and is designed to provide preparation for advanced professional study of theology. It includes all the requirements for the Philosophy major with specialized pre-theology courses. In addition to the Philosophy major, Kossel students must complete one year of Latin studies.

THE CORE CURRICULUM

The sustained study of philosophy is at the very heart of any education that is Jesuit, Catholic, and humanistic. All Gonzaga University students complete the following two courses:

- **Reasoning:** Reasoning helps students develop the foundational skills of critical reading, thinking, analysis, and writing. Students will analyze and evaluate different approaches to formal and informal arguments, reconstruct arguments from a range of sources, assess the quality of various types of evidence, and demonstrate careful use of statistics.
- **Philosophy of Human Nature:** This course initiates students into the study of the human condition, the meaning and value of human life, and the human relationship to ultimate reality.

To complete the Core Curriculum, students must also take the following two courses:

- **Ethics:** In this course, students will learn to understand, apply, and critique multiple ethical theories, traditions, and modes of ethical analysis.
- **Core Integration Seminar:** The CIS engages the Year Four Question: "Imagining the possible: What is our role in the world?" by offering students a culminating seminar experience in which they integrate the principles of Jesuit education, prior components of the Core, and their disciplinary expertise as they reflect back on their experience at Gonzaga and anticipate life after graduation.



OUTCOMES

Philosophy majors routinely outperform other undergraduate majors on the standardized entrance exams for graduate programs in the humanities, business, law, and the sciences.

Recent philosophy graduate programs:

- Arizona State University
- Boston College
- Georgetown University
- Loyola University - Chicago
- Marquette University
- Purdue University
- University of Notre Dame

Recent fields of employment for graduates:

- Computer networking
- Education (many levels)
- Health care administration
- Law
- Politics/government work
- Publishing

For students interested in continuing their exploration into philosophy, Gonzaga offers a Master of Arts in Philosophy.

Contact: gradadmissions@gonzaga.edu

FACULTY CONTACTS

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