

# PHILOSOPHY

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Throughout our lives, we are frequently assailed by philosophical perplexity. Are knowledge and morals a matter of preference and perspective, or are there such things as objective truths and values? What indeed is worth valuing? Is there a God? Is the mind separable from the body? What is the nature of meaning? How ought we to organize ourselves in society? How can we balance considerations of liberty with those of equality?

The ultimate aim of a philosophy course is not merely to assist students in understanding the writings of those thinkers who have addressed these important issues, but also to equip students with the means by which they themselves can profitably grapple with the same questions.

A student's development within the discipline, therefore, depends not just on a critical and imaginative engagement with the material, but on dialogue with others, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Philosophy furnishes a good grounding for personal development and citizenship. It contributes significantly to the development of inquisitive and independent minds. Given the emphasis in philosophy on argument and analysis, there is no better preparation for a career in law. And since philosophy places a premium on precision of thought and communication, it provides an excellent background for a career in journalism and publishing, policy-making, education, and counseling.

Philosophy graduates also attest to the indispensable value of their education to careers in management, healthcare, research, and planning.

The Department of Philosophy offers a full range of undergraduate courses. Students may obtain an honours degree in philosophy, be a philosophy major, do a minor in philosophy, or earn a concentration in philosophy. Students should consult with the undergraduate advisor to arrange a selection of courses that fits their individual interests and meets Department requirements. In addition, the Department offers a pre-law option, a double-honours with physics, and a master's degree.

Critical Thinking (PHIL 1200) is the **only** philosophy course that satisfies regulation 3b of the Faculty of Arts degree requirements.

## Programs

The Bachelor of Arts (BA) is a well-established, foundational degree and requires the requirements listed below alongside general graduation requirements (<https://smu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/undergraduate/faculties/faculty-arts/bachelor-arts/>).

## Major in Philosophy

Students majoring in philosophy must complete at least thirty-six (36) credit hours in philosophy. At least twenty-four (24) of these credit hours must be above the 1000 level, and of these twenty-four credit hours, at least eighteen (18) credit hours must be at the 3000 level or above.

## Double Major in Philosophy

A student may major in philosophy and another subject. The student normally completes thirty-six (36) credit hours in philosophy and should consult the undergraduate advisor.

## Concentration in Philosophy

To obtain a concentration in Philosophy in partial fulfilment of the B.A. General degree [i.e., one with Double Arts Concentrations and a minimum of ninety (90) credit hours], a student must acquire twenty-four (24) credit hours in PHIL, at least twelve (12) of which are above the 3000 level, and attain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00. Further details are available from the Undergraduate Advisor.

## Honours in Philosophy

To qualify for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in philosophy, a student must:

1. meet the general requirements of the Faculty of Arts set out in regulations 8-14, of this *Calendar*; and
2. complete sixty (60) credit hours in philosophy, no more than twelve (12) credit hours at the 1000 level and a minimum of twenty-four (24) credit hours at or above the 3000 level.

Typically, an honours graduate will have completed Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 1201), twenty-four (24) credit hours in 2000-level credits, and thirty (30) credit hours in 3000- and 4000-level credits.

Students have the option of completing an Honours Thesis PHIL (PHIL 4599). The Chairperson or the Undergraduate Advisor will assist the student in selecting courses.

## Double Honours in Philosophy and Physics

Students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in philosophy and physics or a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in physics and philosophy must complete a minimum of forty-two (42) credit hours of courses in each discipline. Philosophy course recommendations include:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Select nine credit hours of the following core courses: <sup>1</sup>		9
PHIL 1255/ PHYS 1370	Scientific Method	
PHIL 2318	Science and Society	
PHIL 3448	Philosophy of Science	
PHIL 4515/ PHYS 4370	Philosophy of Physics	
Select 12 credit hours in history of philosophy		12
Select 12 credit hours in contemporary philosophy		12
Select nine additional credit hours		9
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>42</b>

1 Counting as nine (9) hours from PHIL and three (3) hours from PHYS.

It is recommended that Bachelor of Arts (Honours) students also complete the honours thesis, Honours Thesis PHIL (PHIL 4599), while Bachelor of Science (honours) students are required to complete Research Thesis (PHYS 4790). Please consult the Astronomy and Physics Calendar entry for detailed four-year plans for each of these combined degree options. Students are also encouraged to consult each department's undergraduate advisor for further details.

## Minor in Philosophy

A minor in Philosophy requires a minimum of twenty-four (24) credit hours, at least twelve (12) credit hours of which must be at or above the 2000 level.

## Prerequisites

Except where otherwise stated:

- the prerequisite for 2000 level courses is at least nine (9) credit hours in the University;
- the prerequisite for 3000 level courses is six (6) credit hours in philosophy; and
- the prerequisite for 4000 level courses is twelve (12) credit hours in philosophy, of which at least six (6) credit hours must be above the 1000 level.

## Master's Program

The general requirements for a Master of Arts in Philosophy (<https://smu-ca-public.courseleaf.com/graduate/programs/philosophy-ma/>) are set out in the *Graduate Academic Calendar*.