

# Undergraduate Philosophy

## Degrees Available at SIUE

- Bachelor of Arts, Philosophy (specialization available in the following)
  - Law
- Bachelor of Science, Philosophy

## Philosophy at SIUE

Philosophy is the attempt to think carefully, critically and systematically about the most challenging questions that face humanity. Philosophy is the oldest academic discipline, with roots that trace to ancient Greece and to thinkers who asked probing questions about themselves and the world around them. Philosophy is called, “the queen of the sciences” because every major academic discipline—from math to psychology—was part of philosophy at one time. Philosophy continues to spawn new cutting-edge fields, such as cognitive science.

At SIUE, pursuing a degree in philosophy allows you to follow your interests. Classes are centered on discussion so you can be an active participant every day. In order to develop your abilities to solve complex problems, generate ideas, communicate clearly, respond to others, adapt to change, and think creatively, faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences Department of Philosophy will challenge you throughout your course of study. Being challenged helps students develop deep analytical skills that will translate into everyday life, as well as their chosen profession. Philosophical questions you will encounter in your coursework include:

- How do you know your perceptions are real?
- What does it mean to live well?
- What are persons, minds, and bodies, and how are they related?
- Should we fear death?
- Can wars ever be just?
- Why do we punish people?
- Do human beings have free will?
- Is it wrong to tell jokes about race or gender?
- Is lying ever ok?
- Is science compatible with religion?

## Career Opportunities

The focus on clear thinking and writing prepares students for a wide range of careers, including law, medicine, bioethics, finance, diplomacy, journalism, public relations and business. Philosophy students tend to score higher on the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) and the verbal and analytical writing portions of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) than students from other majors, and are among the highest scorers on the Graduate Management Test (GMAT). Famous philosophy majors include: Steven Colbert, Angela Davis, Carly Fiorina, Mary Higgins Clark, Carl Lchan, Bruce Lee, George Soros and David Souter. The skills developed by philosophy majors help ensure they will thrive wherever their interests take them.

Many students choose to double major, combining philosophy with another academic field. Since philosophy engages many of the assumptions and questions that pertain to other areas of study, a major in philosophy can deepen and broaden one’s understanding of another major. The relatively modest number of hours required in philosophy (33) make the program compatible with many second majors.

# SIUE

College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of Philosophy



## Faculty

**Matthew C. Cashen, PhD**  
2007, Washington University

**Michelle E. Catalano, MA**  
2010, University of Missouri - St. Louis

**Judith K. Crane, PhD**  
1999, Tulane University

**Raymond C. Darr, MA**  
1984, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

**Susan C. Dieleman, PhD**  
2011, York University

**Saba Fatima, PhD**  
2012, Binghamton University

**Gregory P. Fields, PhD**  
1994, University of Hawaii

**Erik R. Krag, PhD**  
2012, University of Tennessee

**William S. Larkin, PhD**  
1998, University of California - Santa Barbara

**Bryan L. Lueck, PhD**  
2007, The Pennsylvania State University

**Greg Littmann, PhD**  
2004, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Erik J. Meade, MA**  
2001, Southern Illinois University Carbondale

**Christopher H. Pearson, PhD**  
2007, University of Washington

**Alison Reiheld, PhD**  
2010, Michigan State University

**Matthew Schunke, PhD**  
2009, Rice University

**Meredith E. Verrochi, PhD**  
2015, Michigan State University

**Robert Ware, DPhil**  
1995, Oxford University

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
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## Philosophy as Pre-Law Preparation

Students are admitted to law school from a wide variety of academic disciplines, and no specific major is required for entrance. The American Bar Association (ABA) recommends pursuing an area of study that interests you and helps you develop a strong skill set in problem solving, critical reading, writing, oral communication and research. Law schools judge applicants based on their diversity of experiences, GPA, and LSAT scores.

The Philosophy major offers excellent preparation for law school because it excels at teaching the skills needed for law school and in legal professions. On average, philosophy majors tend to excel on the LSAT, and philosophy majors have a high law school admission rate. The Department of Philosophy offers a BA in philosophy with a specialization in law that specifies 15 hours of 33 required credit hours to complete the philosophy major. By including this coursework, the BA in philosophy with a law specialization is designed to guide students toward curricular decisions that will facilitate their future success in law school and in subsequent legal professions.

Students aspiring to law school may also wish to complete the pre-law minor. Students completing the BA in philosophy with a specialization in law will need to complete five additional courses outside of philosophy for the pre-law minor. Other programs of study correlated with high law school acceptance rates and high LSAT scores include economics, English, history and political science. These may be combined with the philosophy major as either a second major or a minor.

## Admission Requirements

To be admitted to the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science program, students must:

- Complete all academic development courses required by the University.
- Complete any courses required to address high school deficiencies.
- Complete RA 101, PHIL 212, or PHIL 213 with a grade of C or better.
  - Note: RA 101 does not count for credit toward the major in philosophy.

## Degree Requirements

In addition to standard University requirements for a bachelor of arts or bachelor of science, the philosophy major requires the completion of 33 hours of philosophy course credits. These include six hours in the history of philosophy and 12 hours distributed among the areas of metaphysics and epistemology, value theory, cultural pluralism and religion. Philosophy majors must also complete a philosophy seminar (PHIL 490) and senior assignment (PHIL 480).

## Philosophy Minor

A minor in philosophy can deepen and broaden one's understanding of another major. A minor in philosophy is especially appropriate for those who plan to enter the professions of computer science, teaching, medicine, journalism, business, science, social science, law, or theology.

## Admission Requirements

Students must successfully complete RA 101 or any PHIL course with a C or better before applying for a minor in philosophy. (Note: RA 101 does not count for credit toward the minor in philosophy.)

## Course Requirements

A minor in philosophy consists of successful completion (C or better) of 18 hours in philosophy, including three different courses in three of the following areas: history of philosophy, metaphysics and epistemology, value theory, cultural pluralism and religion.

## Contact Information

Department of Philosophy  
College of Arts and Sciences  
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