

Philosophy

Philosophy wonders about the world, that there is one and what sort of place it is. It wonders about persons, what sort of creatures we are, how we relate to each other and how we ought to live our lives.

Philosophical wonder, however, does not simply think about these important matters, it thinks them through, disciplined and guided by logical standards for clear and critical thought. In this process of critical wonder, we gain self-knowledge, knowledge of others and, most profoundly, the courage to think for ourselves and to be who we are.

The study of philosophy -- and the love of wisdom it engenders - - is thus an excellent foundation for further study and for careers in many fields. More importantly, the study of philosophy helps us to develop what Socrates called "the examined life," which for him was the only life worth living.

Philosophical studies lead us to examine ourselves and to clarify our own basic commitments and values. Why study philosophy? Because it deepens and enriches our lives.

A Distinctive Program

The philosophy departmental seminar provides a forum for faculty members and students to interact in a thoughtful way. Each semester, the entire philosophy faculty joins students for an upper-level course. One faculty member chooses the topic and leads the class, but all participate, allowing students to experience and engage in philosophical dialogue in a collaborative environment.

Academics and Research

Independent research

The senior project is the capstone course in the philosophy curriculum and is designed for students seeking the bachelor of arts degree with a major in philosophy. This project takes the form of a senior thesis and is usually undertaken in the semester just prior to the student's graduation.

This project includes a faculty-supervised process of planning, research, writing and oral defense of the thesis, and provides philosophy majors with an opportunity to integrate and focus their philosophical interests and skills on a subject of their own choosing. It also allows philosophy majors to demonstrate their disciplined ability to conduct academic research of a selected topic. Guided by a supervisor from the philosophy faculty, students are expected to exemplify skills of independent research, critical and creative thinking, formal writing and oral presentation of the project.

Philosophy majors choose topics as varied as intergenerational justice as it relates to environmental protection, and the philosophical grounding of human rights in a pluralistic world, and have conducted philosophical investigations on the morality of practices such as sex-selective abortion in India.

Fast Facts

Number of faculty: 3

Can you major in this program? Yes

Can you minor in this program? Yes

Emphasis within the major: inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry, physical chemistry, analytical chemistry, biochemistry

Popular second majors: political science, English

Program website:

stetson.edu/philosophy

The study of philosophy prepares students for further study and for careers in many fields including education and law.

Facilities and opportunities

The department is housed in Davis Hall. Opportunities for students include participation in the philosophy club, a monthly meeting of the minds involving faculty, philosophy majors and minors, and students interested in pursuing advanced studies in philosophy. A student convener sets the agenda and distributes texts for discussion. Philosophy club meetings allow students and professors to continue their philosophical dialogue outside of class in a congenial atmosphere.

Preparation for graduate study

Many of our majors go on to law school and many go on to do graduate work in philosophy at distinguished universities, including Oxford University, the University of Miami and Georgetown University.

Awards and Recognition

Distinguished faculty

Faculty members and their specialties are:

- [Ronald Hall](#), Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; existentialism and the philosophy of religion, Wittgenstein, Kierkegaard
- [Susan Peppers-Bates](#), Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania; early modern philosophy, feminist philosophy, free will and moral responsibility, philosophy of religion
- [Joshua Rust](#), Ph.D., University of California at Riverside; meta-philosophy, philosophy of science, metaphysics, philosophy of language
- [Melinda Hall](#), Ph.D., Vanderbilt University; bioethics, continental philosophy, social and political philosophy

Grant-funded research

Students are encouraged to participate in the summer Stetson Undergraduate Research Experience, which provides funding for equipment, room and board and travel.

Undergraduate awards and honors

The Ronald L. and Margaret Smith Hall Philosophy Award is a \$1,000 award honoring the most outstanding graduating senior in philosophy.

The university awards three Lawson Scholarships annually to students of unusual ability, academic achievement and commitment to principled citizenship. This award can be renewed up to four years. Preference is given to students intending to major in philosophy and/or related field within the humanities.

After Stetson

Diverse careers

The study of philosophy and the love of wisdom it engenders make an excellent foundation, not only for further study, but for careers in almost any field, especially in law, religion, higher education and business. Our alumni have studied at the London School of Economics and Political Science, Virginia Tech, Columbia University, University of Chicago, Georgetown University, Stetson University College of Law and others. Alumni work as teachers, attorneys, professors and physicians.

More Information



Office of Admissions
421 North Woodland Boulevard, Unit 8378
DeLand, Florida 32723



386-822-7100 or 800-688-0101



admissions@stetson.edu



stetson.edu/admissions