

B.A.

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY

Thinking about a major? Major in thinking.

Philosophy wonders about the world, that there is one and what sort of place it is. Philosophical wonder, however, does not just think about these important matters; it thinks them through. In this process, we gain self-knowledge, knowledge of others and most profoundly the courage to think for ourselves and to be who we are.

Program Overview

- Bachelor of Arts
- Major, Minor

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.

The philosophy departmental seminar provides a forum for faculty members and students to interact in a thoughtful way. Each year, 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.

Program Highlights

Independent Research

We have developed a distinctive research track that culminates in grant-funded presentations at conferences.

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 Fall of their Senior Year.

This project includes a one-on-one, 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

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Career Significance

Many of our majors go on to law school and many go on to do graduate work in philosophy and law at distinguished universities, including

- Oxford University
- University of Miami
- Vermont Law School
- Cornell Law
- London School of Economics and Political Science
- Virginia Tech
- Columbia University
- University of Sussex
- University of Chicago
- Georgetown University
- Stetson College of Law
- University of Albany

Our majors worked in law, education, the tech industry, and medicine.

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creative thinking, formal writing and oral presentation of the project. Students are required to take Research in Philosophy during the Spring of their Junior Year in order to prepare them for their Senior Project. After defending their Senior Project, students are encouraged to present their findings undergraduate conferences. Substantial funding has been set aside by the philosophy department to support these presentations.

Philosophy Club

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.

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.

Rob Brady Memorial Scholarship in the Humanities is to provide scholarships for students in the Humanities who are succeeding academically at Stetson University but have difficulty meeting their costs.

Faculty

Our distinguished and dedicated faculty put their students' success as their number one priority.

Melinda Hall, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University

Ronald Hall, Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Susan Peppers-Bates, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania

Joshua Rust, Ph.D., University of California at Riverside

Success Stories

Joe Beery '17

A faculty that is relatively diverse in their areas of expertise and stellar interlocutors, compounded by the commitment of the department at large to foster double-major students and thus deepens the quality of discussion held within the department. ... I think you're all absolutely delightful.

Graham Ball '17

I am very pleased about the department's care in helping us develop our writing skills, reading skills, and ability to synthesize (to an extent) very difficult texts like Wittgenstein, Nietzsche, Foucault, Kant etc. The most notable strength of the department (In my opportunity) is that I had the opportunity to work extremely closely with the professors who made me feel like my education was important, my development was important, and that I as a person was important.

Olivia Otter '16

I was very grateful for my education at Stetson and my time with the Philosophy department. It was more rewarding than my previous college had led me to believe possible. I was encouraged and engaged in the material. While there are always ways to improve, I could not have hoped for a better experience or education.

Ryan Wright '13

[As an] Account Executive at LinkedIn, I attribute much of my post-graduate success to my liberal arts education and focus on philosophy/political science. Although I work on the business side of the tech industry, the most successful people here have a liberal arts background as opposed to studying business. I found that this is a trend across all top companies in Silicon Valley as well.