COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
The Department of Philosophy at Kent State University offers both bachelor’s and master’s programs of study in philosophy. An undergraduate student can major in philosophy, minor in philosophy or take philosophy courses to fulfill Kent Core requirements.

The Department of Philosophy is located in the College of Arts and Sciences, but a student in any college can minor (or double major) in philosophy. The department invites all university students to consider philosophy’s course offerings as a complement or supplement to any program of study. To educate humanity, not just to offer courses in philosophy as one of the humanities, is an aim of the Department of Philosophy at Kent State. Any person studying philosophy is urged to use philosophy’s courses:

1. To enhance analytic and critical capacities to facilitate understanding and articulation of careful prose;
2. To entertain and scrutinize options without mere, habitual or impulsive adoption or rejection;
3. To increase capacity to invent options to stated alternatives;
4. To start learning for life;
5. To broaden horizons and develop reflective and imaginative capacities; and
6. To begin appreciation of a discipline that is more than 2,000 years old, yet a discipline where questions of method and subject matter are persistently considered.

WHAT A STUDENT SHOULD EXPECT FROM PHILOSOPHY COURSES
Each student’s active participation is expected in any philosophy course, large or small. A student in a philosophy course should expect to be asked to think, not just to listen, and to be allowed to express his or her own ideas and views as opposed to repeating or agreeing with a correct answer. A student should expect also to be pressed to formulate reasons for specific views and explore consequences of those and other views. Also, a student should expect to become more able to identify beliefs and values, their origins and consequences.

Instruction in philosophy aims to help a student develop a self-imposed discipline and enable them to risk and sustain encounters with classical, relatively congenial thinkers, as well as authors who challenge assumptions and outlooks.

Philosophy helps a student search out not only similarities but also differences in human assumptions and objectives.

COURSE OFFERINGS AND FACULTY
Philosophy’s course offerings stress diversity with depth in classes that explore a wide range of ethical, epistemological and metaphysical concerns. Courses are taught by faculty differing not only in scholarly concentrations but also in teaching modes, life concerns and styles of interaction in instruction or advising. Students are urged to sample broadly from both course offerings and faculty interests.

The Department of Philosophy participates in a spectrum of interdisciplinary programs: American studies, Asian studies, British studies, classical humanities, German studies, health-care ethics, Hellenic studies, paralegal studies, pre-law, religious studies, women’s studies and the writing program.

Philosophy faculty activities have three aims: excellence in teaching, rigor in professional research activities and generosity and service to students, to the university and to the broader community. Full-time faculty have doctorates from the universities of California (Riverside), Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Notre Dame, Oregon, SUNY-Stonybrook, Washington and Waterloo; from Emory, Northwestern, Purdue, Vanderbilt, Wayne State and Yale universities. Faculty also participate in and contribute leadership within the American Philosophical Association, Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, Nietzsche Society, American Society for Value Inquiry, American Academy of Religion, Ohio Philosophical Association, International Society for Chinese Philosophy and Society for Women in Philosophy.

MAJORING OR MINORING IN PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHY MAJOR
The philosophy major comprises 42 hours of classes. A student majoring in philosophy starts with 15 hours of basics — introductions to philosophy, ethics, logic and comparative religious thought. The required basic courses for a student majoring in philosophy are:

- *11001 Introduction to Philosophy
- *11009 Principles of Thinking
- *21001 Introduction to Ethics
- *21002 Introduction to Formal Logic
- *21020 Comparative Religious Thought I

Career Opportunities
Because of their liberal arts backgrounds, philosophy majors may gain employment in a variety of areas. Training in critical thought may be especially important in business or health-related careers. A humanities background aids in the understanding of different people and their thought processes and beliefs sets, provides a foundation for employment in public relations, marketing and diplomatic or other government service, including public policy analysis.

By far, the large vocation of philosophers is teaching. This teaching is done mostly at the college and university level and requires a Ph.D. degree. Recently, a number of high schools across the country have begun to offer courses in philosophy or the humanities. One can teach at that level with a Bachelor of Arts or a Master of Arts degree in philosophy and the appropriate licensure in education. Some teaching at the community college level can be done with a Master of Arts degree in philosophy.
Beyond these basics a student chooses (at least) four courses (12 hours) in philosophy’s history. Philosophy’s eight history courses are:

- 31001 Ancient Greek Philosophy
- 31002 Medieval Philosophy
- 31003 Continental Rationalism
- 31004 British Empiricism
- 31005 German Critical Philosophy
- 31006 19th-Century Philosophy
- 31010 20th-Century Philosophy
- 31020 American Philosophy

Each of these courses in philosophy’s history is taught as a writing-intensive course so that a philosophy major takes (at least) four courses with a heavy emphasis on sequenced, varied and closely counseled writing endeavors.

In addition to the required 27 hours of basics and history courses, a philosophy major requires 15 upper-division hours, at least 9 hours (three courses) at the 40000 level. The 40000-level courses that a major may select are courses offered jointly to advanced undergraduates and to graduate students in the department’s master’s program. This graduate program emphasizes pluralism and aims to maintain philosophy’s traditions while exploring and expanding newer and emerging views of philosophy’s overlap and relevance to other areas of study.

**PHILOSOPHY MINOR**

To minor in philosophy a student must take seven courses. A student selects any three of these basic courses:

Philosophy

* 11001 Introduction to Philosophy
* 11009 Principles of Thinking
* 21001 Introduction to Ethics
* 21002 Introduction to Formal Logic

Along with these basics, a student chooses four additional courses, at least three of which (9 hours) are upper-division courses. These courses must include one of the history of philosophy courses (31001, 31002, 31003, 31004, 31005, 31010, 31020) and one course at the 40000 level.

When course prerequisites are taken into account, the sequence for a philosophy major (or minor) has these features: three introductory courses (including one of the logic courses) are to be taken before taking any of the history of philosophy courses, and at least one of the history courses must precede any 40000-level course. The philosophy major (and minor) leaves a student considerable flexibility for further focus in philosophy and leaves a student free to pursue substantial work outside philosophy.

The courses listed above marked with asterisks fulfill Kent Core Requirements. If a freshman student is undecided on a major or even a college, the department encourages the student to consider a philosophy major or minor. Kent Core courses in philosophy, whether in humanities or in math/logic/foreign languages, can be counted toward a philosophy major or minor if a student continues as a philosophy major or minor. If another major is selected, work in the philosophy major or minor, or even one or more philosophy courses, provides exposure to areas of learning broader than a current vocational concern and, at the same time, helps to develop capacities relevant to almost any vocational or scholarly discipline.

**FORMAL DECLARATION OF A MAJOR OR A MINOR IN PHILOSOPHY**

Beyond any statement of intent in admission or other documents, a formal declaration of a major or minor is required. The formal declaration starts in the student’s own college. To complete declaration of a philosophy major or minor, an undergraduate student needs to make an appointment (in 320 Bowman Hall) to meet with the undergraduate coordinator or the department chairperson. In that meeting, the student’s interests and background will be noted, the student’s questions will be answered or redirected and the student will be assigned a member of the philosophy faculty as a major advisor. The philosophy department’s approval and return of the student’s signed “major” or “minor” sheet to the college office completes the declaration.