Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

The Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies helps students to learn how to think, not what to think. Philosophy majors develop critical thinking skills, appreciate cultural diversity, become careful readers, and write clearly and accurately. The philosophy major is for students who are passionate about ideas and curious about the world.

The disciplines of Philosophy and Religious Studies ask pressing questions: What does it mean to be human? How do people make meaning in this world? What is the relationship of individuals to society? These questions are complicated by topics such as class, race, ethnicity, and gender - all of which are addressed by classes in the Department. From Existentialism to Epistemology, and raging across time and place from Ancient Israel to Contemporary Tibet, the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies has something for everyone.

Studying Philosophy or Religious Studies provides excellent preparation for professional employment in any area where critical thinking, problem solving, careful reading, and the ability to communicate well are important.

The Department takes pride in working with students to connect their immediate studies with their long-term goals. Because of the size of our program, students are mentored by the faculty and are known as individuals.

A student graduating with a B.A. degree in Philosophy will be able to demonstrate the following:

1. Present and explain the thought of a philosopher or philosophical theory accurately and clearly, demonstrating a strong background in discipline-specific knowledge, including the history and major periods of Philosophy, major thinkers, and major fields of study and theories of Philosophy.
2. Critically evaluate philosophical positions, identifying central arguments and their support, demonstrating an ability to think through complex issues with clarity.
3. Present an independent evaluation of or response to the material. Support one’s own philosophical positions with well-reasoned argumentation, providing a thesis that is properly stated, focused, and clear, and defending this thesis in a way that is well-organized and well-supported.

A student graduating with a B.A. degree in Philosophy (Concentration in Religious Studies) will be able to demonstrate the following:

1. Analyze philosophical arguments and religious data by critically assessing relevant primary and secondary texts.
2. Utilize theories and methods from different disciplinary approaches within Philosophy and Religious Studies.
3. Synthesize relevant data to support an argument that explains some aspect of religion, providing a thesis that is properly stated, focused, clear, and defending this thesis in a way that is well-organized and well-supported.

Minors


Programs

Majors

