

## **Preface**

The Department of Philosophy is part of the College of Arts and Humanities at the University of Maryland, and as such is bound by all of the rules and policies of these bodies. It is the student's responsibility to be informed about these rules and policies, which are summarized on the University of Maryland Graduate Catalog website under "policies", and also to be informed about the rules and policies of the Department of Philosophy, which are contained in this Handbook.

The faculty is the official interpreter of the rules and policies set forth in this document, which delegates the power in the first instance to the Graduate Director. The Department retains the right to modify, alter, overrule, or change any of the rules or policies set forth in this Handbook, in accord with its established practices for doing so.

## **The PhD program: Basic requirements**

### **Course Requirement**

In order to satisfy the Course Requirement, each student must complete twelve courses, or a total of thirty-six hours of credit. Each course must be completed with a grade of B- or higher in order to count toward meeting this and all other requirements in this document. As detailed below, two of these courses must be Core Courses. The expectation is that the other ten will be graduate seminars offered by the Department, but substitutions, including undergraduate courses offered by the Department, or courses offered by other departments, are allowed with permission of the Graduate Director.

#### *Core Course Requirement*

Each year the Department will offer the following two graduate courses, known as Core Courses, specifically designed for students beginning their graduate careers:

Core Analytic Philosophy

Core Ethics

These Core Courses will: (i) be taught at a suitable level for first year graduate students; (ii) be broad, covering at least a handful of central topics (although not necessarily attempting a general survey); (iii) be aimed at preparing students for further graduate work in the area; and (iv) have a final examination and, although perhaps numerous smaller papers, not a long term paper.

In order to satisfy the Core Course Requirement, student must complete both of the two Core Courses within the first year of graduate study, unless the Graduate Director permits an exception.

#### *History Requirement*

In order to satisfy the History Requirement, a student must complete at least one course focusing primarily on a particular period or on particular figures in the history of

philosophy. (Courses only part of which are historical can count toward satisfying the history requirement, but only for those students who opt to write a largely historical term paper for assessment purposes.) Graduate courses taken elsewhere can be used to satisfy the History Requirement, with permission of the Director of Graduate studies.

### *Philosophy of Science Requirement*

In order to satisfy the Philosophy of Science Requirement, a student must complete at least one course in the philosophy of science. Graduate courses taken elsewhere can be used to satisfy the Philosophy of Science Requirement, with permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

### *Logic Requirement*

A student can satisfy the Logic Requirement in one of four ways:

1. by completing Philosophy 370;
2. by completing the final exam for that course, even though the student did not enroll in the course;
3. by completing a more advanced course in logic offered by the Department that presupposes the material from Philosophy 370; or
4. by demonstrating completion elsewhere of course work equivalent to or more advanced than Philosophy 370. (Note that Philosophy 370 is a not a seminar, and so would not normally count as one of the twelve courses required for the PhD degree.)

### **Prospectus Requirement**

In order to satisfy the Prospectus Requirement, a student must form a Prospectus Examining committee, write a Dissertation Prospectus, and have the Prospectus approved by the Prospectus Examining Committee at a formal Prospectus Meeting.

(1) A Prospectus Examining Committee is an internal Departmental committee appointed by the Graduate Director for the sole purpose of evaluating a particular student's Prospectus. The Committee must have a minimum of three members. The Chair of the Committee and at least two other members must be members of the Department.

(2) A Dissertation Prospectus is a written document, prepared by the student, that describes the nature of the proposed dissertation project, and also demonstrates the student's competence to write such a dissertation. The Department requires that a Prospectus should contain at least the following four parts:

1. an overview of the proposed dissertation, typically ten to fifteen pages, though some Committees may ask for considerably more;
2. an extensive bibliography, demonstrating familiarity with the relevant literature;
3. a tentative schedule for completion of the dissertation; and
4. a writing sample demonstrating the student's competence to work in the area (the writing sample need not be part of the projected dissertation, but may be simply a relevant paper in a related field).

Depending on the nature of the student's proposed dissertation project, the Examining Committee may impose other requirements on the Prospectus. Since there are a variety of different models for what a Prospectus should look like, students are advised to get clarification of the expectations of their committee members in advance.

(3) With the consent of the Chair of the Examining Committee, the Prospectus will be distributed to members of the Committee, and a Prospectus Meeting will be scheduled. At this meeting, the members of the Committee discuss the Prospectus with the student, to determine whether it is a viable dissertation project. The Committee may accept the Prospectus as it stands, or accept it conditional upon the satisfaction of certain specified requirements; alternatively, the Committee may reject the Prospectus, and either require revisions for reconsideration at another Prospectus Meeting, or deem the entire project not viable.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

After all Basic Requirements have been completed, and the student's Dissertation Prospectus has been accepted by the Examining Committee, the student may apply for Admission to Candidacy for the PhD degree, following the procedures detailed in the Graduate Catalog.

### **Dissertation Requirement**

In order to satisfy the Dissertation Requirement, a student must write a Dissertation, and have that Dissertation approved by the Dissertation Examining Committee at a formal Dissertation Defense.

(1) A Dissertation Examining Committee is a University committee appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School for the purpose of evaluating the student's dissertation. The constitution and authority of this Committee is described in the Graduate Catalog. In the normal course of events, the Prospectus Examining Committee will form the core of the student's Dissertation Examining Committee, and the Chair of the Prospectus Examining Committee will become the Chair of the Dissertation Examining Committee, known as the student's Dissertation Director. A student may request that a Dissertation Examining Committee be formed at any point after he or she has satisfied the Prospectus Requirement.

(2) The University's policies concerning the style and form of Doctoral Dissertations are described in the Thesis and Dissertation Manual, available from the Graduate Records Office.

(3) Once a student's Dissertation is complete, the student will be examined on the contents of the dissertation in a final Dissertation Defense, which will be conducted in accord with the procedures set out in the Graduate Catalog.

Note that there is no set format for the Dissertation itself. On one model, a Dissertation might be organized around the defense of a single unifying thesis. On another—

“covering concept”—model, a Dissertation might consist of a set of related papers on a broader topic. Either model is acceptable in principle, but the detailed format will need to be negotiated with your Dissertation Director.

### **Auditing Requirement**

All students who have completed the coursework component of the program are required to audit at least one course in each semester thereafter. The main rationale for the rule is to keep students engaged with and learning new philosophy, as well as to strengthen their CVs. As a result, there is a presumption that the audited course should be a philosophy seminar. However, exceptions may be permitted by the Director of Graduate Studies where a course to be attended in another department would significantly help the student’s research or would better position the student for the job market. Students who can do so at no additional cost should formally register as Auditors.

### **The MA program: Basic Requirements**

Note: PhD students may obtain an MA degree upon request once they have completed their PhD coursework, since the PhD requirements encompass the MA requirements.

### **Course Requirement**

In order to satisfy the Course Requirement, a student must complete ten courses, or a total of thirty hours of credit, with a grade of B- or higher. As detailed below, two of these courses must be Core Courses. The expectation is that the other eight will be graduate seminars offered by the Department, but substitutions, including undergraduate courses offered by the Department, or courses offered by other departments, are allowed with permission of the Graduate Director.

In addition, if an MA student chooses to write an MA Paper, then as many of two of the ten required courses may be special MA Paper courses.

#### *Core Course Requirement*

The Core Course Requirement for the MA is identical to that for the PhD, described above.

#### *History Requirement*

The History Requirement for the MA is identical to that for the PhD, described above.

#### *Logic Requirement*

A student can satisfy the Logic Requirement in one of four ways: (i) by completing Philosophy 271 (Symbolic Logic); (ii) by completing the final exam for that course, even though the student did not enroll in the course; (iii) by completing a more advanced course in logic offered by the Department; or (iv) by demonstrating completion elsewhere of course work equivalent to or more advanced than Philosophy 271. Note that Philosophy 271 is not a seminar, and so would not normally count as one of the ten courses required for the MA degree.

### *The Scholarly Paper Requirement*

A student must complete at least one scholarly paper, exhibiting appropriate mechanics and standards of argument. Normally, a substantial seminar paper will satisfy this requirement, but the paper must be approved by the Graduate Director.

### **The MA Paper**

The Department does not require a thesis for the MA degree. However, a student who wants to concentrate on the production of a substantial piece of philosophical research in the course of obtaining the MA degree has the option of taking up to two terms (six credits) of Philosophy 798 (Master's Level Independent Study.) This course is run as a directed study with an individual faculty member, who is then designated as the student's MA Paper Director. The student's goal in the MA Paper Research Course is the production of an extended paper, equivalent in quality and scope to a standard Master's thesis.

## **Financial Support and Good Standing**

### **Financial Support**

PhD students are normally admitted to the Department with financial support—in the form of a TA, an RA, or a Fellowship. The Department guarantees that, barring financial emergencies, each of these students who remains in good standing and, in the judgment of the Department, satisfactorily carries out his or her teaching duties will receive financial support for a total period of ten terms, or five years. Both internal and external sources of funding are counted in determining the years of support. Normally, the department will award two fellowship terms over the five years, one in the first year, and another after advancing to candidacy.

The five-year rule will be adjusted on a case-by-case basis for supported students who are admitted with transfer credits, or for students who acquire the presumption of support at some time later than their first semester, since, in either case, the duration between the initial award of financial support and completion of the degree can be expected to be somewhat shorter.

Students who do not remain in good standing (see below) should not expect to receive any further financial support. There will be cases in which, due to staffing or other needs, students who are not in good standing, or students for whom there is no presumption of support, will nevertheless be hired as TA's or RA's by the Department. The Department makes no commitment of further support to students in this category.

Any student receiving full financial support must remain fully registered during the period of support, either to the full extent of available tuition remission or at least up to the part-time fees limit of 8 credits. Credit hours that are not used directly for seminars can be applied to private reading courses, mentoring courses, or seminar audits. It is expected, however, that each supported student will attend at least one graduate seminar offered by the Department during each term of support. This should be taken

for credit or official audit whenever the student can do so without paying fees at a higher level.

The following policy (effective fall 2019) refers solely to individuals who have advanced to candidacy and who have not yet received a PhD. Full support of graduate students, which includes fixed regular salary plus \$2500 in “fellowship money,” normally expires after the fifth year. However, conditional on teaching needs, departmental priorities, and availability of funds, students in the year following the expiration of full support (normally the sixth year in the program) *may* receive:

three quarters of full support for serving as an instructor or assistant for 2 courses over the year, or

full support for serving as an instructor or assistant for 3 courses over the year (the maximum allowable load).

Students in the subsequent year (normally the seventh year in the program) *will not receive the \$2500 fellowship*. They may receive:

one half of GA III fixed regular salary for serving as an instructor or assistant for 2 courses over the year, or

three quarters of GA III fixed regular salary for serving as an instructor or assistant for 3 courses, or

the full GA III fixed regular salary for serving as an instructor or assistant for 4 courses (the maximum allowable load). This amounts to the full support in year five, minus \$2500.

Please note: someone in the seventh year who receives the full GAIII fixed regular salary for teaching 4 courses would be *earning significantly more for the same work* if he/she were teaching 4 courses for us as a postdoc. So it is in the student’s financial interest to graduate before the seventh year.

### **Good Standing**

The concept of good standing applies only to students receiving financial support and is based on the rate of progress through the PhD program. It has three components: (1) Core Course completion rate, (2) course completion rate, (3) date of Admission to Candidacy. Students who fall out of good standing are subject to losing financial support or removal from the program.

In order to remain in good standing, a student who has not yet been Admitted to Candidacy must:

1. Complete one Core Course by the end of the student's first term, and the second by the end of the student's second term, so that both are finished after the first year, unless the Graduate Director has made an exception;

2. Satisfy the Logic Requirement by the end of the student's fourth term, or second year;
3. Satisfy the Course Requirement at the rate of three courses in the first-year fellowship term, and at the rate of two courses per semester otherwise and thereafter;
4. Choose a provisional dissertation topic, obtain the consent of a faculty member to chair the prospectus, and formulate with the chair a plan to complete the prospectus on time, by the end of the sixth term, which is usually the end of the third year;
5. Complete all Basic Requirements, satisfy the Prospectus Requirement, and be Admitted to Candidacy by the end of the seventh term, which is typically the first term of the student's fourth year.

Students should note that in order to be eligible to receive their second term of Fellowship in the Spring of their fourth year, it must be clear to the scheduling committee at the time that it schedules graduate teaching for the Spring that the student will have advanced by the start of the Spring semester. This normally means that the student will need to have advanced by *early* in the fall of their fourth year.

### **Periodic Review and Removal from the Program**

The faculty will meet each semester to review graduate student progress, and the Director of Graduate Studies will inform students and their advisors of concerns.

The Department reserves the right to remove students from the program in exceptional cases. Such decisions will normally be taken during graduate review, but may be initiated at other times as well. The Department's approach to such cases will be governed by the following principles:

1. There is a presumption that a student's prospects for completing the program are not in doubt if the student is in Good Standing and has no more than a small proportion of grades outside of the "A" range.
2. When practicable, the Department will attempt to warn students and their advisors if there are emerging doubts about their ability to complete the program successfully, and suggest appropriate remedies. Because of differences in particulars, not all problem-cases will be treated identically. However, in all cases, if the Department is considering asking a student to leave the program, the student will be informed in writing, and a final decision will be deferred for at least four weeks.
3. In cases where one of the concerns relates to the quality of the student's work, the student will be invited to provide some written work produced while at UMD that best demonstrates the student's philosophical abilities. This work must be submitted within four weeks of notification being sent, or a longer period if the Department permits. The Department will then take its final decision and notify the student in writing.
4. In cases where a student is asked to leave the program, an MA may be awarded if sufficient credits have been earned, or the student may request permission to transfer to the MA program if additional credits are required.

Students' funding is contingent on their ability to discharge their teaching duties, as judged by the Department. Students may be immediately relieved of their teaching duties when the Department judges that they are unable to discharge these duties. (Conduct that may trigger such a judgment includes gross incompetence, absenteeism or chronic lateness, or other unprofessional conduct.) Relief from teaching duties is to be seen as a last resort, and contemplated only after the student has been adequately apprised of his or her duties, and, where practicable, been given opportunities for remediation.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Any graduate student who receives a grade of F (understood to include a grade of XF for academic dishonesty) in connection with any course may be asked to leave the program. That student may appeal the decision to the Graduate Director or Department Chair.

### **Arbitrary and Capricious Grading**

In accordance with Graduate School policy, the Department has a standing committee to review allegations of arbitrary and capricious grading. (See the Graduate School Catalog under "other academic policies".) The committee shall consist of the Director of Graduate Studies and the Associate Chair, together with the two most senior graduate student representatives on Graduate Affairs Committee. If either the DGS or Associate Chair is the instructor in question, the Chair shall appoint a replacement. If two or more graduate student representatives happen to belong to the same year, the choice of one or more members of the committee shall be determined by lot. If the graduate student making the appeal is on the Graduate Affairs Committee, the other two student representatives shall be members of the grading review committee.

### **Informal Benchmarks of Progress (advisory only)**

1. Within the first three terms in the program students should aim to have given a short (conference-length) presentation at one of the departmental colloquia.
2. Within the first two years in the program students should aim to have given at least one presentation at a conference outside the university, and should aim to give at least two such presentations annually thereafter.
3. During the third year in the program students should register for 898 with a faculty member to write a paper that might form the basis for a dissertation proposal. This can be either in Fall or Spring semester of the third year, depending on the availability of the faculty member. Only one seminar should be taken during the semester in which the three credits of 898 are taken.
4. By the end of the third year in the program students should have a clear idea of the topic of their dissertation, and ideally should be well on the way to completing a prospectus, ready for a defense in September of the fourth year.
5. By the end of the third year in the program students should have a clear idea of the areas of competence (AOCs) that they propose to claim on their CV, and should have taken steps to make those claims justifiable (e.g. by taking clusters



- of seminars, and by requesting to TA and instruct appropriate courses).
6. By the middle of the fourth year in the program students should have submitted at least one excellent piece of writing to a journal to be reviewed for publication.
  7. By the end of the fourth year in the program students should aim to have been the instructor of record for at least one course (either in Winter, Summer, or during the regular year).
  8. By the end of the fifth year in the program students should aim to have at least one paper accepted for publication (or in press or print).
  9. Before going on the market (preferably earlier) students should have created a professional website containing their CV, publications and works in progress, material from the teaching dossier, and so forth.

### **Assignments as TAs and Instructors**

In addition to their work as TAs, the Department will often need to make a graduate student the instructor of record for a course, either during the regular semester, or in Winter or Summer terms. At various times through the year the DGS or Associate Chair will send out calls for proposals: either to TA a particular course in the following semester, or to instruct an existing course in a future term, or to design a novel course in a future term. Graduate students should then submit their proposals and priorities, accompanied by a brief narrative. The latter might briefly describe the proposed course, if the student wishes to design one; or in the case of TA assignments, it might give a brief rationale for TAing a particular course, appealing to the student's intended Areas of Competence, for example.

While the Department strives to make teaching assignments as fair and transparent as possible, it should be emphasized that there are always multiple constraints in play. Moreover, the Department has an obligation to provide the best education that it can for the undergraduate students whom it serves. Criteria the Department's Scheduling Committee considers in assigning teaching are specified on the Graduate Program page of the Department's website.

### **Travel Money for Graduate Students**

Travel money is available from various sources (the international travel fund, Graduate School Goldhaber Award, the College travel fund, and the Department). These are normally only given in cases where the student is presenting a paper at a conference. Awards from outside the Department will generally require matching funding from the Department, so applications should be cleared first with the Graduate Director. The Department sets aside a sum of money each year for graduate student travel, which is available for approved travel on a first-come-first-served basis. But it will not normally support more than one award for a given student in any given academic year.