

Philosophy Honors Concentration

The Philosophy Department has created the major honors program for several reasons.

- To give students who excel in the major an opportunity to pursue additional courses in philosophical topics of their choice.
- To enable students to pursue philosophical research and develop their writing by completing an Honors Thesis.
- To enhance the preparation and competitiveness of those students who wish to go on to graduate studies in philosophy, law, or related fields.

The program also allows the department to recognize outstanding student achievement. And it is an important development for the caliber and growth of the department.

Who is eligible for the Honors concentration?

- **Current GPA:** To graduate in the honors concentration students must maintain a 3.5 or higher cumulative GPA and get a B or better (not B-) in each of the courses taken for Honors. Failure to maintain at least 3.5 cumulative GPA will result in denial of the Honors designation at graduation regardless of having met the other requirements.
- **Maintaining GPA:** If an Honors Major scores below the minimum B in any course taken for Honors, they will either have to repeat it (if the original grade was below C), or will be required to take a substitute course and score at least B in that course to maintain Honors eligibility.
- **Additional Courses:** Any of the upper division and 190/192 Philosophy courses may be applied towards the Honors Major program requirements. Students must take at least one of the three additional courses as a 190/192.
- **Writing a Supervised Thesis:** Students will write a thesis under the supervision of one of the Philosophy Department Faculty. To do so, students will enroll in PHIL 197: Honors Thesis. The thesis must be either an original research essay or a substantially revised and researched existing essay. Honors students may elect to work with one of the Philosophy professors to select the topic of their research and to submit drafts for revision/editing. The final thesis will be submitted to the faculty supervisor for grading. This will constitute the grade for PHIL 197. The thesis must be completed in the semester in which PHIL 197 is taken, so plan accordingly. Ideally, this requirement is completed in the senior year, and recommended in the penultimate semester for students who intend to apply to graduate/professional programs – this makes an excellent writing sample!

What is the benefit of completing the Honors concentration?

- Students working toward the Honors concentration will have the opportunity to develop their philosophical interests, talents, and acumen under the guidance of one of our faculty.
- They will have the opportunity to work closely with one of the Philosophy Department Professors on a research topic of their interest and choosing – developing their professional academic skills.
- Those who complete the Honors concentration will be recognized for their work with a designation of Honors on their transcripts and diploma.
- They will receive an Honors tassel or stole at graduation.
- They will have a substantial quality essay to submit for graduate school or for submission for publication in an undergraduate philosophy journal or for presentation at an undergraduate philosophy conference.
- And... it will reflect positively on students seeking to have letters of recommendation written or references provided.

What are the requirements for the Honors concentration?

The requirements for the program are listed in the course catalog [here](#).

How do I apply for the Honors concentration?

Steps:

- Download the application linked [here](#), read it carefully – know what you’re signing up for!
- Talk to your major advisor, the director of the Honors concentration, or the department chair about your desire to apply.
- Fill out the application form completely, including obtaining all the required signatures.
- Submit your application to the Philosophy Department Office.
- You will be notified whether your application has been approved within three weeks of submission.
- Upon acceptance into the Honors concentration, you will be required to resubmit your graduation application (if already submitted) or complete your graduation application to reflect the addition of the Honors concentration to your degree program. Failure to do so will result in your not receiving the Honors designation on your transcript and diploma.