Philosophy

What Is Philosophy?

You probably didn't study philosophy in high school, so, naturally, you might wonder what it is. Philosophy is the search for reasoned answers to certain questions about the world and our place in it that tend to go unasked in everyday life, even though they're important.

- Is there a God who created the world and keeps it going?
- How can there be an objective difference between right and wrong?
- Do animals, or the most sophisticated computers, literally think?
- Why should we obey the law?
- What are the limits to human knowledge?

But there are many more.

What Can a Philosophy Major Do?

You might be surprised to learn that the median mid-career (10+ years of experience) salary of employees whose only degree is a BA in philosophy is $85,100.[1] How can this be? As you learn how to participate in philosophical debates, past and present, you must sort through issues of great complexity, grasp the big picture as well as the details, identify unstated assumptions, and notice crucial distinctions. You must understand multiple points of view. You must evaluate intricate reasoning. You must organize your thoughts and express them persuasively in speech and writing. In short, philosophy majors must learn how to think.
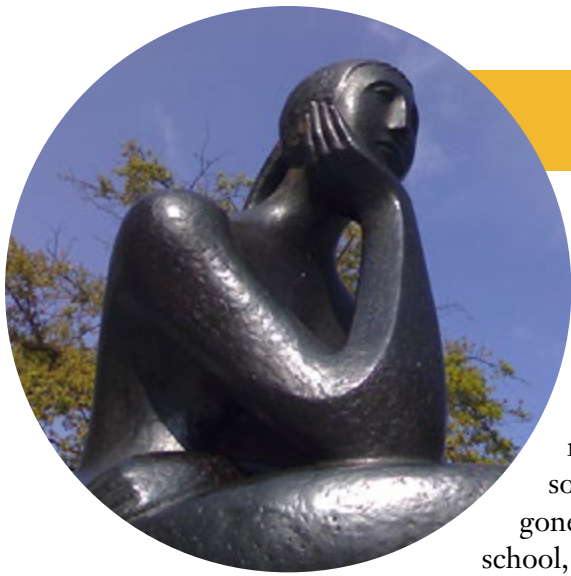
[1] Source: the PayScale College Salary Report.

$85 K

is the median salary, after 10 years in the workforce, for those with only a BA in philosophy

Life After MU

The most-common career path for MU's philosophy majors is to go to law school, for which they say their

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philosophical training prepared them well. But in recent years, some have also gone to medical school, to business school, to seminary, and to graduate programs in philosophy, as well as taking the many positions for which a well-educated generalist is qualified.

Just the Facts

MU's philosophy department offers two degrees, a BA and a BS. The BS emphasizes the use of formal methods in philosophy and the many connections between philosophy and the sciences; it may be the better choice if you wish to double major in philosophy and a science. Course requirements for both degrees may be found at: philosophy.missouri.edu/undergrad/majoring.

Personal Faculty Attention

The department's 13 faculty members love to teach and are committed to your success. Every new philosophy major is assigned a faculty mentor, a member of the faculty whose role is to be available to you whenever you wish to discuss the overall shape of your education at MU, your plans post-graduation, and any problems you might be having. Upper-division courses are small enough (usually 15 to 25 students) to allow you to get to know your professors well. A philosophy major who doesn't wish to be taught by a graduate teaching assistant doesn't have to be.

Benefits of a Research Department

Because it's a research department, MU's philosophy department can offer a wider range of courses than many other institutions: philosophy.missouri.edu/undergrad/undergraduate-courses. Faculty mem-

bers' research interests include all the main areas of philosophy and much else. Their distinction as researchers means that at MU you can take 4000-level courses in areas of philosophy with professors who are nationally and internationally renowned experts in those areas. You can also write an undergraduate thesis if you are eligible to graduate with departmental honors (see philosophy.missouri.edu/undergrad/majoring-departmental-honors).

Who Majors in Philosophy?

MU's philosophy department has about 60 majors, comprising men and women from many backgrounds, and representing a diversity of political and religious views. What unites them is that they all love to think about ideas.

For More Info

🌐   philosophy.missouri.edu

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Complete undergraduate course listing: catalog.missouri.edu/undergraduategraduate/collegeofartsandscience/philosophy/#courseinventory

MU Admissions: admissions.missouri.edu

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