



GRADUATE HANDBOOK

Department of Philosophy

California State University Long Beach

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ADMISSION TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

Applicants need not have majored in Philosophy. However, admission is competitive; most applicants have a prior course of study that includes ≥ 15 units of upper-division Philosophy courses, and typically go far beyond these minimal requirements. Beyond just satisfying the University requirements, admitted students shall have a background that provides evidence of strong academic promise. Such evidence may include GRE scores, a high GPA, advanced/honors coursework, or demonstrations of

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Philosophy at Cal State Long Beach offers a rigorous program of study leading to the degree of Master of Arts (MA). Four areas of philosophical scholarship are emphasized: logical, theoretical, practical, and historical. These emphases manifest in scholarship about major figures and movements of the past, the logical evaluation of science and theory in pursuit of truth, and the maturation of values in service of meaningful action, inter alia.

The MA Program in Philosophy at CSULB has a strong record of **student success**, which feeds into a strong **placement record**. Accordingly, it was listed among the top seven MA programs in the United States by quality of placement in the 2025 edition of *The Philosophical GourMA*. And it has routinely been named by *The Philosophical Gourmet Report* as being among the top fifteen MA programs in the United States, and among the top five MA programs in the Western United States. (There are approximately 186 such programs world-wide.)

The MA program offers rigorous philosophical training and is ideal for those who are looking to be more competitive in pursuing further doctoral-level work or other advanced study in professional programs in medicine, law, information technology, and science. It is also suited for those seeking only the terminal MA, especially in cases where the student was not an undergraduate philosophy major.

The department has developed this handbook to help both prospective and current graduate students understand and efficiently navigate the requirements for the MA degree in Philosophy. It should be read carefully. For correction of errors or broken links, contact **Cory Wright**.

research abilities or scholarly commitment. The Graduate Committee is looking to admit students with excellent potential for success, and evaluates on the merits of their applications. Typically, there are around 35 graduate students working toward the MA each academic year.

Deadlines occur in both spring and fall semesters. As of FA24, a deposit is required of matriculants; upon enrollment, the deposit is applied to the cost of attendance. This deposit is waived for those with an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of \$0.00 or an Athletic Scholarship. In special cases, college deans can authorize waiving the enrollment deposit.

CONDITIONAL ADMISSION AND DEFICIENCIES

All matriculants are admitted in what the university calls 'Conditionally Classified Status' (see 'Classified Status' for further information). The MA program at CSULB is ideal for several types of students: those who majored in Philosophy and desire to be more competitive at applications to PhD, JD, MD, etc. programs; those who minored in Philosophy or who majored in a cognate discipline, but who want to continue their formal education in Philosophy; and those looking for personal enrichment.

An admitted student who does not have a previous course of study comparable to that required for the BA in Philosophy at CSULB may need to rectify certain deficiencies in their prior record and their background knowledge of the subject. Deficiency courses are of two kinds: (i) unit deficiencies and (ii) area deficiencies. A graduate student has unit deficiencies if she or he has not completed enough coursework in Philosophy (typically what would at least be needed for a minor). A graduate student has area deficiencies if he or she has not yet demonstrated proficiency in either historical, logical, practical, or theoretical areas of Philosophy. (For a given area, a grade of at least a 'B' earned in a semester or quarter course, or some equivalent experience, would usually be deemed sufficient for any such demonstration.) Both unit and area deficiencies can be rectified by either earning the appropriate number of upper-division units, or by successfully completing an appropriate undergraduate course in the area, respectively.

The rectification of unit or area deficiencies is determined on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Advisor after a close examination of the student's transcripts and other academic records and in consultation with the Graduate Committee. Students levied with deficiency coursework and wanting to appeal should notify the Graduate Advisor to state the mitigating factors or unknown background that would justify such an appeal. Students are responsible for checking policies on credit for prior learning (see [AS Policy 23-12](#)) and adducing evidence.

Students who anticipate being conditionally admitted with deficiencies should contact the Graduate Advisor early in the admissions process and upon beginning the graduate program in order to facilitate assessment and to plan a program of study. If admitted with deficiencies, students must begin rectifying deficiencies as quickly as possible, and should consult with the Graduate Advisor about enrollment in any seminars prior to their first semester in the program.

GETTING ACQUAINTED

Newly admitted students have several tasks to attend to, and [initial steps to take once matriculated](#). Lining up basic living arrangements is usually the first priority—housing/residence, transportation, and other basic needs. The university's [Office of Housing & Residential Life](#) is sometimes a good place to start. Another such step to take, upon arrival, is to become acquainted with [the university campus](#). New and continuing students should visit the university's [Navigating Graduate Studies](#) website, which has a wide variety of helpful information, from the basics of registration and enrollment (courses, key dates, final exam schedules), parking, online resources (MyCSULB, BeachBoard, e-mail, etc.), to

graduation. Students are encouraged to visit this site as needed. The Office of Graduate Studies runs a virtual new graduate student orientation, which students are highly encouraged to attend. Graduate students should also be aware of the [Schedule of Classes](#) as well as [Key Dates and Deadlines](#).

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

The Graduate Advisor in Philosophy convenes a new student orientation at the beginning of each fall semester to help introduce students to the department and to take next steps. Normally, this orientation is held during the first week of its Proseminar (PHIL610), when the calendar year's incoming cohort is all together for the first time each fall. The orientation provides students with an overview of the program and curriculum, an introduction to its teaching and research strengths, and an opportunity to have questions answered. At that time, students are also re-reminded of the existence and import of this [Graduate Handbook](#).

ADVISING

Early in their first semester, new matriculants should arrange for an initial appointment with the Graduate Advisor to discuss their goals, plan a program of study, and anticipate any special problems (unit or area deficiencies, leaves, etc.). Thereafter, students should consult with the Graduate Advisor as needed, but especially whenever there is an impending step or major change in her or his current program (basic qualifying examination, advancement to candidacy, etc.). Open advising / office hours for the Graduate Advisor are posted in the department. It is always best to e-mail for an appointment.

Regular consultation with the Graduate Advisor is encouraged. The Graduate Advisor is the primary point of contact for all matters relating to the graduate program, and should be contacted prior to escalating any issues or concerns to the Department Chair. There are no circumstances in which the Administrative Staff Coördinator (ASC) can provide substitute advising. College policy requires that all CLA Graduate Advisors be tenure-line faculty.

Students may wish to seek out and develop rapport with a faculty mentor early in their graduate career (preferably, during the first or second semester), with whom to work more closely in planning and carrying out their graduate program. Typically, this will be a full-time member of the Department of Philosophy who is able and willing to work with the student in this capacity. Normally, once the student has been advanced to candidacy, the chair of her or his committee for the culminating activity will begin function as their main faculty mentor through graduation.

COMMUNICATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The department maintains a listserv <phil-grad@list.csulb.edu> for the purposes of communicating with graduate students. Students are subscribed upon matriculation using their campus address, and remain so until program completion. Students wanting also to be subscribed at a personal e-mail address should contact the department webmaster.

E-mails to the listserv are routed to all graduate students currently in the program. Faculty, staff, and lecturers can post to the list but do not receive posts. Additionally, there is a Philosophy Graduate Student Group in Canvas, as well as an SPA-maintained Discord server, where messages may be sent and notices posted regarding events in the department and upcoming deadlines and opportunities are posted. All official university correspondence should traverse through students' university accounts.

GRADUATE TEACHING FACULTY

Dr. **Nellie Wieland**

Professor (PhD, University of California San Diego)

Philosophy of Literature (esp. Metaphysics of Fiction), Philosophy of Language (esp. Quotation),
Philosophy of Law, Kant, Applied Metaphysics (esp. Agency), Social Philosophy

Dr. **Max Rosenkrantz**

Associate Professor (PhD, University of Texas Austin)

Ancient Philosophy (esp. Plato and Aristotle), Analytic Philosophy (esp. Russell and Wittgenstein),
History of Political Philosophy (esp. Marx and Foucault)

Dr. **Marie Jayasekera**

Assistant Professor (PhD, University of Michigan)

Early Modern Philosophy (esp. Descartes), Applied Metaphysics (esp. Free Will), Normative Ethics,
History of Political Philosophy, Moral Psychology

Dr. **Cory Wright**

Professor (PhD, University of California San Diego)

General Philosophy of Science (esp. Explanation), Philosophy of Neuroscience, Cognitive Science,
Analytic Philosophy, Metaphysics (esp. Truth and Fact)

Dr. **Per-Erik Milam**

Assistant Professor (PhD, University of California San Diego)

Moral Psychology, Normative Ethics, Applied Metaphysics (esp. Agency), Political Philosophy,
Social Philosophy

Dr. **Kyle Banick**

Assistant Professor (PhD, University of California Irvine)

Phenomenology (esp. Husserl), Philosophical Logic, Analytic Philosophy (esp. Wittgenstein),
Philosophy of Mind, Metaphysics

Dr. **Amanda Parris**

Lecturer (PhD, DePaul University)

Early Modern Philosophy (esp. Spinoza), Continental Philosophy, Social Philosophy, Political
Philosophy

Dr. **Patrick Dieveney**

Professor (PhD, University of Arizona)

Metaphysics (esp. Ontology), Philosophy of Mathematics, Applied Ethics

Dr. **Lawrence Nolan**

Professor (PhD, University of California Irvine)

Early Modern Philosophy (esp. Descartes and Malebranche), Medieval Philosophy, Metaphysics

Dr. **Wayne Wright**

Professor (PhD, Temple University)

Philosophy of Psychology (esp. Visual Perception), Philosophy of Mind (esp. Consciousness), Kant,
General Philosophy of Science (esp. Causation)

Dr. **Charles Wallis**

Professor (PhD, University of Minnesota)

Epistemology, Critical Thinking, Philosophy of Cognitive Science

PROSEMINAR

A main port of entry is the proseminar (PHIL610), which is designed to initiate first-year graduate students into the program, assemble cohorts for a shared academic experience, and introduce the academic skills that are needed to perform at higher levels of philosophical and professional competence. It extends the new student orientation by allowing students to become familiar with the expectations of the department and its faculty, including the requirements of the program, the department's basic qualifying examination (BQE), the thesis and non-thesis options.

Graduate students are required to complete the proseminar in the first semester in which it is available to them. (Normally, the proseminar is offered every fall semester.) Completion of the proseminar is also necessary for advancement to candidacy. Students who fail to comply with the proseminar requirement are subject to administrative academic probation (see [AS Policy 09-06](#)).

The philosophical topics and methods of instruction vary by instructor; recent topics have included theories of truth, the metaphysics of fiction, scientific understanding, animal cognition, and epistemic certainty. While the content varies each year, it shall be appropriate for a wide range of new matriculants. More importantly, the constant unifying focus of each iteration of the course is on developing the analytical, writing, and research skills that are required to successfully complete the MA program. Students are trained in how to conduct themselves in a graduate-level setting, how to analyze texts through presentations and discussion, how to conduct philosophical research, writing focused argumentative papers in stages, how to properly cite sources and avoid common causes of plagiarism, and other related skills.

GRADUATE-LEVEL COURSES

PHIL513: Continental Rationalism	PHIL584: Philosophy of Language
PHIL514: British Empiricism	PHIL590: Special Topics: Early Philosophy
PHIL515: Marx	PHIL591: Special Topics: Modern Tradition
PHIL516: Pragmatism	PHIL592: Special Topics: 20th Century Philosophy
PHIL517: Phenomenology	PHIL593: Special Topics: Metaphysical Studies
PHIL518: Existentialism	PHIL594: Special Topics: Epistemological Studies
PHIL519: Analytic Philosophy	PHIL595: Special Topics: Logic and Semantics
PHIL520: Foucault	PHIL596: Special Topics: Value and Evaluation
PHIL521: Plato	PHIL597: Teaching Philosophy
PHIL522: Aristotle	PHIL599: Graduate Tutorial
PHIL523: Kant	PHIL610: Proseminar
PHIL524: Hegel	PHIL620: Seminar in History of Philosophy
PHIL525: Wittgenstein	PHIL630: Seminar in Philosophy of Religion
PHIL548: Freedom and Agency	PHIL640: Seminar in Metaphysics
PHIL552: Studies in Law and Humanities	PHIL663: Seminar in Ethics
PHIL555: Philosophy of Sex and Love	PHIL680: Seminar in Epistemology
PHIL570: Advanced Symbolic Logic	PHIL681: Seminar in Philosophy of Science
PHIL571: Problems in Logic	PHIL690: Seminar in Selected Special Topics
PHIL572: Problems in Value Theory	PHIL697: Directed Research
PHIL575: Truth and Fact	PHIL698: Directed Thesis or Project
PHIL583: Philosophical Psychology	

PROGRAM OF STUDY

A graduate student's official program of study is a set of courses that are approved by the Graduate Advisor and that are necessary for receiving the degree. In Philosophy, the program of study consists of not less than 30 units of graduate courses (500- and 600-levels). At least 24 graduate units must be in Philosophy. Of these 24 units, a minimum of 9 units must be in graduate seminars; of these 9 units, 3 must come from the graduate proseminar (see below). The remaining 6 units may be taken either in Philosophy or, with the approval of the Graduate Advisor, in another field of study closely related to the candidate's educational objectives in her or his thesis. No course with a grade lower than 'C' may be applied toward the fulfillment of degree requirements.

The university has several general [regulations governing the Master's degree](#), which all graduate students need to be acquainted with. Among the more important are that students must complete at least 70% of their program units in graduate-level courses, and must also complete at least 50% of their program units in courses that are organized primarily for graduate students (§7). (The university defines 'courses organized primarily for graduate students' so as to exclude 500-level classes that co-convene with a 400-level section involving a preponderance of undergraduates.) More generally, students must make satisfactory progress toward timely completion of the degree (§4), as determined by the department, and may be subject to academic or administrative probation otherwise.

ACADEMIC LOAD

Students should plan out a program of study with the Graduate Advisor that optimizes their academic success by several parameters, such as time to degree, cost, curricular offerings, availability of thesis supervision, and impact of other personal, family, work or other non-academic constraints. *Ceteris paribus*, courses should be front-loaded at the start of the program of study and tapered over time.

A normal academic load for graduate students is 6–9 units per semester. The maximum load for graduate students is 16 units per semester. Students who are employed full-time outside of the university should not enroll in more than 6 units per semester. Note that, for financial aid and other purposes, the University designates part-time study as 4 units per semester and full-time study as 7 or more units. The difference between these two is primarily the cost of tuition/fees.

PROTOTYPICAL PROGRAM OF STUDY

Preliminaries

Students should meet with the Graduate Advisor to review previous academic experience, possible deficiencies in undergraduate preparation, and program requirements and policies. Students who anticipate taking any non-Philosophy units, regardless of their intention to count them toward the program of study, should first seek approval from the Graduate Advisor.

The following plan is for illustrative purposes only. It assumes (i) admission in conditionally classified status with no area/unit deficiencies, (ii) matriculation in a fall semester, (iii) continuous enrollment, and (iv) attendance at most or all [department events](#), such as the Department's bi-annual *Philosophy Day!* symposium and other fora or colloquia.

Semester I

Ceteris paribus, it is best to front-load as many courses at the beginning of the program of study as is feasible. Hence, students should enroll in at least 6–9 units of approved graduate courses in their first term. At least 3 of these units should be in PHIL610, as the proseminar must be taken in the first available semester and may not be postponed. Unless overridden by other concerns or issues or more fitting curricular options, students should prioritize taking a second 600-level seminar.

Students may take either portion of the BQE. Toward the end of the semester, students should meet with the Graduate Advisor to review current progress and update plans for semester II, and to develop plans for the following summer. By the end of the first term, students should begin thinking about possible thesis and non-thesis topics, and about possible committee preferences. The more swiftly these two items come together, the faster the prospectus can be assembled.

Semester II

Students should register for up to 12 units of approved graduate courses, at least 3 units of which should be 600-level courses. Students must have attempted both portions of the BQE. By the end of the spring term, students should have more robust views about possible thesis topics, or about whether the exam or paper portfolio is more suitable or advantageous, as well as about committee preferences. Students should have a clear and cogent plan for the summer.

Semester III

Students should register for up to 9 units of approved graduate courses, at least 3 units of which should be at the level of 600-series courses. A meeting with the Graduate Advisor by or before the second week of instruction is strongly encouraged, with the expectation that students will be in a position to determine whether they intend to pursue the thesis or non-thesis options. Students must have passed both portions of the BQE.

Before the end of the semester, students should submit to the Graduate Advisor an endorsed prospectus for the culminating activity (normally a thesis). Students should proceed to [advancement to candidacy](#) pending faculty approval and [file intent to graduate](#) (check deadlines).

Semester IV

Students pursuing the comprehensive examination will normally register for 1 unit of PHIL697 with each of the three examiners, for a total of 3 units. Students pursuing the paper portfolio option will normally register for 2 units of PHIL698 with each committee member, for a total of 6 units. Students pursuing the thesis option should register for 6 units of PHIL698 with their thesis director (normally their committee chair). The balance of remaining units, if any, should be taken in approved graduate-level courses. Students must be enrolled the semester they graduate.

SEMINAR REQUIREMENT

Graduate students must take at least 9 units of 600-level seminars, and are encouraged to exceed this minimum requirement. The proseminar accounts for 3 of these 9 units. Normally, 3–4 seminars are offered each academic year. Neither PHIL697 nor PHIL698 count toward these 9 units.

GRADUATE CENTER AND LIBRARY RESOURCES

The university's [Graduate Center](#) runs a wide variety of professionalization [workshops and events](#) throughout the year on topics such as cv development, statement of purposes, funding, overcoming writing anxiety, thesis formatting, literature reviews, and so forth. Students are strongly encouraged to be familiar with these resources, and to make appointments for writing support as needed.

The Library has various resources for helping with research in Philosophy, including links to [databases](#), [journals](#), and citation style guides. The PhilPapers database and the Philosopher's Index are among the two main gateways to finding articles in philosophy; and [CSU+](#), [LINK+](#), and [BeachReach](#) are useful resources for obtaining materials. For help with Library research, please contact the subject librarian for Philosophy, Tracy Gilmore.

GRADUATE WRITING ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENT

Per order of the Chancellor's Office, the university no longer requires graduate students to satisfy its **Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement** (GWAR) prior to advancement to candidacy.

LOGIC AND LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

The Department of Philosophy expects incoming graduate students to have proficiency in areas of basic formal and informal logic prior to entering the MA program. This expectation is normally met by either previous coursework or equivalent preparation in logic or related areas (formal linguistics, advanced statistics or mathematics, etc.). It is indicated by successful completion of the BQE. Students without such proficiency may be required to rectify one or more area deficiencies in logic; normally, this can be done through PHIL270 or PHIL370.

The Department of Philosophy normally does not impose a foreign language requirement. However, it does reserve the right to require minimal competence in a foreign language if the student's program of study is in an area in which study of the original texts is essential, or in which the major research material is not available in English. Students intending to pursue doctoral research are encouraged to consider coursework in at least one foreign language, such as Greek, Latin, or German. In such cases, both the Graduate Advisor and a faculty mentor should be consulted.

BASIC QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The Basic Qualifying Exam (BQE) is a diagnostic exam for checking whether students have adequately mastered the basic skills that are prerequisite for the successful study of Philosophy at an advanced level, as well as related pursuits (e.g., teaching at the community college level, entering a PhD program in Philosophy). Unsuccessful completion of the BQE is evidence that a student does not yet have basic skills facility in textual interpretation and analytic reasoning. These abilities are necessary for engaging in philosophical studies and writing philosophical papers, exams, and theses.

The BQE is a pass/fail examination given each November and April. The duration of each test is three hours. The exam consists in two parts:

- *Text Portion*: answer one set of questions on each of two journal-length articles or chapters.
- *Analytic Portion*: answer two sets of questions on any of four novel passages.

Texts for the BQE are announced immediately after the start of each term. Graduate students are expected to be able to locate the texts autonomously.

BQE Orientation

After the two texts are announced, the Graduate Advisor holds an orientation session to answer questions about the BQE and to help students prepare for taking the exam. Immediately prior to the examination, students will be asked to register for the exam in the form of an RSVP.

Text Portion

The purpose of the text portion of the exam is to test an examinee's ability to comprehend and critically assess important texts on a philosophical topic with sufficient facility as to answer questions about its thesis, argumentative structure, and technical concepts and their application. The exam is in essay and 'open book' format (i.e., bring texts to the exam). Examinees should expect to demonstrate

their mastery of the material and their ability to critically evaluate and/or apply the theses, concepts, and arguments by answering questions of both an expository and an evaluative nature. *Ceteris paribus*, examinees are discouraged from focusing on immaterial issues that fall outside of the scope of the text, such as the identity of the author or other biographical facts, details about historical antecedents or schools of philosophical thought, or even other related texts. The examinee should be concerned only with addressing what is specifically asked about the assigned texts for that semester.

Analytic Portion

The purpose of the analytic portion of the exam is to test a examinee's ability to read a novel passage with comprehension and depth of insight so as to be capable of identifying, analyzing, and critically evaluating arguments, concepts, and theses contained within the passage. Questions on this portion are based on short excerpts and passages taken from various philosophical works supplied at the time of the exam. Examinees should expect questions that ask them to do things like locate arguments contained in the passage by identifying and differentiating premises and conclusions and reconstructing arguments in standard form; motivate or articulate certain lines of reasoning or consider objections; and evaluate inferences in light of basic logical concepts.

When to Take the BQE

Conditionally classified students who are admitted without area or unit deficiencies in prerequisite preparation (i) must have attempted both portions of the BQE by the end of their second full semester in the program, and (ii) must have passed both portions by the end of their third full semester. ('Full semester' refers to either spring or fall terms; winter and summer are excluded.)

~~Conditionally classified students who are admitted with deficiencies (iii) must have attempted both portions of the BQE by the end of their third full semester in the program, and (iv) must have passed both portions by the end of their fourth full semester. [policy suspended while under revision]~~

For most students, it is best to take the BQE in their first semester; for others, it may be better to wait a semester until they are back in the rhythm of graduate school, acclimated to the expectations of the faculty and department, or better able to gauge what level of writing and analysis is sufficient to succeed. For help in deciding when to attempt the BQE, please contact the Graduate Advisor.

BQE Assessment

The BQE is graded by the Graduate Committee, whose membership changes from year to year. The Graduate Committee abides by the standard of double-blind review whenever possible. Examinees' identities are coded and masked by the department's administrative staff coordinator, and then decoded and revealed only after assessment has been completed.

All members of the Committee grade each of the two questions for both Analytic and Text portions of the exam, assigning quantitative scores mapped to outcomes of 'pass' or 'fail'. Scores on each question are averaged across all committee members for both portions of the BQE. (Necessary for passing a given portion of the BQE is that the averages for each question be above the passing threshold; exceptions to this condition will be determined by the Committee on a case-by-case basis.) The averaged scores for each question are then averaged again between questions to determine a composite score. Lastly, the Graduate Committee meets to deliberate about the results of grading and to achieve some consensus about the overall outcomes.

It is possible to pass one portion of the exam but not the other. When students pass only one portion, they need not take the entire BQE again, but only the portion that was not passed. If a student twice fails the BQE, the department may recommend that the student discontinue the program.

Students who fail to comply with any part of BQE policy or requirements may be notified that they have failed to show satisfactory progress towards the departmental requirements for the degree, and

may be subject to administrative academic probation (see [AS Policy 09–06](#)). Such students may also be denied eligibility for departmental scholarships (consistent with the terms of the donation) or other awards or benefits; denied eligibility for Graduate Assistantships; and/or denied eligibility for any course for which permission from the faculty or department is required.

CLASSIFIED STATUS

Because all graduate students matriculate with ‘conditionally classified’ status, they must satisfy the necessary conditions recorded in the offer of admission. For all students, there are two such conditions: successfully passing both the proseminar and the BQE. Additionally, for students admitted with deficiencies, the courses required to rectify them must have also been successfully completed before moving to ‘classified’ status. Having successfully completed the proseminar, passed both portions of the BQE, and rectified deficiencies (if any), a student immediately gains ‘classified’ status.

Students in classified status should be able to demonstrate proficiency in core areas of philosophy: (i) theoretical philosophy, such as epistemology, metaphysics, and related areas; (ii) practical philosophy, such as normative ethics and related areas; (iii) logical philosophy, such as argument reconstruction and proof theory; and (iv) historical philosophy, from the ancient Greeks to the major movements of the 20th century. (Grades of ‘B’ or better in semester or quarter courses in each of these areas are standard ways of demonstrating proficiency.) Upon gaining ‘classified’ status, the student should be focused on completing their coursework and considering which culminating activity to pursue for degree completion.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

Any unauthorized break in continuous enrollment will change the student’s status to ‘inactive’, and will trigger the university to drop the student from the program. Inactive students who are dropped from the program cannot receive an MA degree in Philosophy from CSULB until they successfully apply for re-admission to the MA program. Re-admission is not guaranteed.

EDUCATIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Following consultation with the Graduate Advisor, eligible students may take an official one or two semester [educational leave of absence](#). Eligibility requires good academic standing with the University, completion of at least one semester of CSULB courses, and no breaks in continuous enrollment.

The deadline for graduate students to apply for an educational leave of absence is the last day of the prior semester. Students who miss that deadline may apply until the end of the semester, but will be subject to a late fee. The [application form](#) must be signed by the Graduate Advisor.

HEALTH SERVICES AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

CSULB’s [Student Health Services](#) (SHS) provides care for the usual array of issues (injuries, illnesses, acute medical conditions, etc.), and also offers various support services (including radiology, laboratory, pharmacy, immunization clinic, sexual and reproductive health, psychiatry, behavioral health, sports medicine, nutrition services, etc. Most care and services are free of charge. Students should ensure that they have adequate health coverage. The university also has a large [Student Recreation and Wellness/Fitness Center](#). The Division of Student Affairs also has [an array of other](#)

[student services](#). More resources about student services can be found at [Navigating Grad Studies](#).

The university provides a wide variety of [student support programs and services](#), from basic needs to accessible materials to veterans and student parenting resources and many dozens of others besides, as well as numerous programs and student outreach initiatives. For further information, please visit the Division of Student Affairs website.

STUDENT PHILOSOPHY ASSOCIATION

The [Student Philosophy Association](#) (SPA) is an SLD-approved student-run organization for students with an interest in Philosophy at Cal State Long Beach. Membership is open to undergraduate and graduate students alike, and is open to both majors, minors, and non-majors. The SPA is primarily focused on socializing and camaraderie, albeit with an eye toward philosophical discussion. Graduate students are encouraged to participate and to run for a position on the executive board.

DEPARTMENT EVENTS

The Department of Philosophy hosts various [events throughout the year](#). Besides colloquia, these have included conferences, professional development workshops, and oral defenses of MA theses. The [Applied Ethics Forum](#) also hosts a regular colloquium series each semester as well, and the department hosts its biannual *Philosophy Day!* symposium at the end of each semester. The department also sponsors interdisciplinary events with other programs and departments, such as the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and CLA Scholarly Intersections. The Student Philosophy Association (SPA) has taken to hosting a student speaker series, and there is a chapter of Minorities in Philosophy (MAP).

Attendance

Graduate students are expected to attend talks and other department events. One reason why is that doing so remains one of the best ways for students to learn how to give a proper talk and develop their senses of what professional philosophy looks like. For students who intend to go on in the profession, it is all the more imperative that they attend all such events, regardless of area or topic.

PROGRAM NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS

The department stands up for the traditions that have been constitutive of a genuine liberal arts education (or, what amounts to nearly the same thing, a proper university degree) for centuries. Graduate students are expected to take up the mantle of this academic inheritance.

The department encourages a culture of inclusion in which its graduate students engage each other and their professors with sincerity and civility and dignity of purpose. Graduate students should model academic norms for their undergraduate peers and wider academic community; they should conduct their research according to the highest standards of scholarship; and they should contribute positively to the intellectual life of the department and college. Their behavior should reflect well upon the department and be consistent with [campus rules and regulations](#).

Graduate school involves at least some measure of professionalization, as well as elevated academic expectations—particularly with respect to reading, discussion, and original composition. Students privileged with admission to the graduate program are expected not only to be more engaged, more

self-sufficient, and more responsible and mature than their undergraduate counterparts, but also to actively make the most of the opportunity to exercise this privilege.

PROBATION AND DISQUALIFICATION

Academic Probation

It goes without saying that graduate students should be performing well in all courses. At the very least, graduate students must maintain a 3.00 GPA in all courses in the program of study, and must maintain a cumulative 3.00 GPA. Failure to do so results in academic probation. Graduate students in conditionally classified or classified status who are placed on academic probation will have two semesters to increase their GPA above the 3.00 threshold and thus remove themselves from academic probation. Graduate students may not advance to candidacy while on academic probation. Students who are already advanced to candidacy and who fail to maintain a 3.00 GPA may have their candidacy revoked. Students who fail to remove themselves from academic probation may be disqualified from the program. (Note that the current grading regime at CSULB is coarse-grained: there are no plusses or minuses, and so no grades of 'A-' or 'B+'.)

Administrative Probation

Withdrawal from the program of study in either two successive semesters or any three semesters may result in administrative probation. Students may also be subject to administrative probation for failing to make satisfactory progress towards timely completion of the degree, such as failure to pass the proseminar; failure to comply with program requirements, such as the 600-level seminar or BQE policies; failure to abide by either university or department principles of shared community; or other similar issues. Students who do not satisfy the conditions to remove themselves from administrative probation may be disqualified from the program by the Graduate Committee.

Disqualification and Reinstatement

Disqualification from a degree program bars such students from any further enrollment at CSULB. For more information, see the section on [academic probation and disqualification](#) in the University catalog ([AS Policy 09-06](#)). Students seeking reinstatement should first contact the Graduate Advisor, as the policies and procedures are different than those for undergraduates pursuing [reinstatement](#), [readmission](#), or other [academic appeals](#).

DIRECTED STUDIES

Directed independent studies (PHIL599) are supervisory courses that allow students to work closely with (tenure-line) faculty on a well-defined research project. They are not intended as substitutions for standard coursework, and should be used sparingly. Students often enroll in PHIL599 for the purpose of broadening their curricular options, or pursuing curricular interests that are more particular than the department's main offerings, or to explore advanced or specialized topics that are narrower in scope and for which no regular graduate course is likely to be offered in the near future. In directed studies courses, students often develop material for either the thesis or non-thesis options. An outcome of some directed studies is the development of research papers that, with substantial revision and further research, may be appropriate for Philosophy conference submissions.

Enrollment in PHIL599 requires faculty permission. Ideally, students will want to have completed some coursework with a faculty member before soliciting him or her about working on the student's own ideas and research interests. Upon enrolling in PHIL599, students should negotiate in writing a reasonable reading list and a set of assignments with the faculty member; see the department's ASC

for the appropriate forms). Readings and assignments for a directed study should be equivalent to a regular graduate level course in rigor, content, and assignments. Up to 6 units of directed independent study may count towards a student's MA degree.

FORMING A COMMITTEE

Regardless of which culminating activity students pursue (see [AS Policy 25–12](#)), they must form a committee. For each option, the process usually begins by meeting with the Graduate Advisor, followed by soliciting a current member of the tenure-line faculty, with whom they have good rapport, to serve as the committee chair. (Importantly, note that no faculty member is required or obligated to serve on a student's committee.) Students should then consult with her or his chair on her culminating activity to determine appropriate persons to invite to fill out the rest of the committee.

For all options for the culminating activity, the committee must consist of at least three faculty members. In addition to the university regulations on committee formation, the Department of Philosophy requires that the committee chair and at least one other member be a tenured or tenure-track faculty member of the CSULB Philosophy Department. The third committee member is normally just another tenured or tenure-track faculty member, but may be a part- or full-time lecturer in Philosophy, a tenured or tenure-track faculty member at another department at CSULB or at another university, or someone with equivalent expertise in the subject matter. Although many part- and full-time lecturers are generous in volunteering their time, students must remember that the university does not compensate them for this work and many have teaching schedules on other campuses as well. Consequently, tenured or tenure-line faculty should always be prioritized whenever possible.

No graduate student shall be advanced to candidacy without official approval of their committee and prospectus by a vote of the faculty. Any reconstitution of a student's committee or change in option must be re-approved by the same voting process.

CHOOSING THE THESIS VERSUS NON-THESIS OPTION

There are three options for the culminating activity. Students may choose to pursue either the thesis, non-thesis project, or comprehensive exam. The department intends all options and their attendant coursework to be equivalent in rigor for the purposes of receiving the MA degree. None of these options will necessarily increase or decrease students' chances of being admitted to a PhD or JD program, since all options allow for the same possibility, *ceteris paribus*, of extracting a writing sample. Nevertheless, one option might be more advantageous over others, relative to factors such as the student's strengths, topic(s) of interest, goals, coursework, aid, etc. More information on the distinction between culminating activities is available in the catalog ([AS Policy 25–12](#)).

It is wise for students to seek guidance from both the Graduate Advisor and their faculty mentor(s) in making this choice, particularly if the student wishes to enter a PhD or JD program or teach at the community college level. Students wishing to do these things should take seriously the question of pursuing the thesis option, as this is a significant signal to admissions committees and prospective employers.

In general, the thesis has the advantage that one can investigate a single specialized topic of interest with a unified focus; gain experience doing advanced and original philosophical research (of the kind that is important for completing a PhD program, or for publishing or presenting conference papers); obtain practice at writing an essay longer than the standard term paper; and have a sustained body of scholarship in hand after completing the program.

In general, the other options have the advantage that one can investigate multiple topics of interest with disunified foci; demonstrate a greater breadth of knowledge over a larger range of topics; and, potentially, to finish the degree faster. Also, it allows the student to work more closely with multiple faculty members (rather than just the faculty thesis director).

The Thesis Option

MA theses are original academic disquisitions on a problem or issue of disciplinary interest, and should make a modest contribution to the philosophical literature. The contribution may manifest in different ways. It could involve constructively criticizing a significant line of argumentation, extending a theory or finding a novel application, defending a controversial view, or adjudicating a debate. Theses explain the significance of the undertaking, normally by stating the major assumptions and reviewing the relevant literature, and then move to analyze evidence and develop and critique the appropriate logical inferences and argumentation. The average length of the body of a Master's thesis is around 75 double-spaced pages. An oral defense of the thesis is required of all students who pursue this option.

Students who pursue the thesis option should enroll in 6 units of PHIL698 (either 6 units in one semester or 3 units across two semesters) with their thesis director. Such students should work closely with their thesis director, and should consult with their committee chair about what is involved in preparing for the oral defense of their thesis. (Normally, the committee chair just is the thesis director, *eo ipso*.) Theses must be fully finalized before submission to the college's Director of Graduate Studies for review. Students pursuing the thesis option should consult with the Graduate Advisor regarding the [CLA and OGS deadlines for thesis submission](#).

The Project Option

The University provides for a non-thesis project option. In Philosophy, this option takes one of two types. The most common type is the paper portfolio. Students who pursue the paper portfolio select three papers written in three different courses in their program of study (often in their 600-level seminars), and substantially revise and develop them. The instructors for those courses normally serve as the *de facto* committee members for the paper portfolio. Alternatively, students can elect to write an original paper (i.e., a paper that was not drawn from a student's coursework so long as they can find a faculty member to serve as the examiner or supervisor). The average length of the body of the portfolio is around 75 double-spaced pages, or about 25 pages per each of the three papers—equivalent to an MA thesis in Philosophy.

For this more common type, the student will normally prepare his/her portfolio with three different faculty members. Students pursuing the portfolio normally register for 2 units of PHIL698 with each of the three committee members, for a total of 6 units—again, equivalent to the thesis option in Philosophy. Advancement to candidacy is required. An oral defense of the paper portfolio is not required; but, for various reasons or circumstances, it may be recommended or even insisted upon.

The second type of non-thesis project is an artistic or technical endeavor culminating in a creative product (e.g., a student film or podcast series, a scientific experiment, some AI software design, digital humanities data collection and visualization, archival discovery, fieldwork, etc.). Non-thesis projects of this type are uncommon. Consequently, students pursuing this second type of non-thesis project option must consult extensively with the Graduate Advisor in addition to the committee members responsible for shepherding and assessing the project.

Depending on the nature of the project, up to 6 units of PHIL698 with the project director may be appropriate. In addition to the creative product itself, this second type requires a technical or project report. The average length of the body of a project report is around 30 double-spaced pages. As with the thesis, an oral defense of the project may be required of students who pursue this option.

The Comprehensive Examination

Students who pursue the comprehensive examination option may be examined in different ways.

In some cases, a given faculty member may examine a student on a selection of works across the department's four distribution areas of philosophy—theoretical, practical, historical, and logical—by evaluating their answers to a stock of short-answer prompts.

In other cases, a faculty member will have the student demonstrate their understanding of something as broad as a recognized philosophical subdiscipline, or an important philosophical school or movement, or the themes of a major philosopher; but the focus may also be as narrow as a particular set of chapters or articles or a book. Alternatively, students can also elect to write an original paper (i.e., a paper that was not drawn from a student's coursework so long as they can find a faculty member to serve as the examiner or supervisor).

A comprehensive exam committee will normally involve three different faculty members. The student should come to some agreement with each examiner on the precise format that the exam/paper will take. Students pursuing the comprehensive examination normally register for 1 unit of PHIL697 with each of the three examiners, for a total of 3 units, and must be advanced to candidacy to do so. Students should ensure that the final results of any examination or paper for the non-thesis option are promptly reported to the Graduate Advisor.

PROSPECTUS

Goals and Norms

The goal of the prospectus is to present the faculty of the Department of Philosophy with a general outline of the student's intended project, together with a brief justification of its merit as a culminating activity warranting an MA degree.

A good prospectus for the thesis will have several elements. It should have a clear and concise statement of the position to be articulated and defended in the thesis. It should articulate the student's position to the philosophical literature, which indicates how her position connects with important thought on the subject by other philosophers. It should outline of how exactly the student intends to structure her or his exposition in the thesis. This outline should present a chapter-by-chapter account, indicating how each chapter relates to the overall project. It should specify the timeline and background preparation for completing the project. And, finally, it should contain a well-researched bibliography.

A good prospectus for the comprehensive exam and paper portfolio options will also have several elements. It should contain a clear and concise statement of the exam/paper areas, including some motivation or discussion of the question(s) or problem(s) that the student's exams/papers will explicitly address. It should articulate an explanation as to why or how the student's chosen areas and texts constitute a comprehensive and representative sampling of well-respected works on widely recognized figures or topics.

The average prospectus is approximately 8–10 pages, plus a bibliography of 3–5 pages. Examples of prospectuses for the thesis option are available from the Graduate Advisor; a template is available for prospectuses for the exam or paper portfolio option.

Submission

To submit a prospectus to the faculty for departmental approval, students must first obtain real signatures from all committee members. A signature page template is available on the department

website or from the Graduate Advisor. Once all committee members have signed off on the prospectus, the graduate student should forward the signed prospectus as a single collated .pdf document to the Graduate Advisor. The Graduate Advisor will coordinate a department vote on both the committee and the prospectus, and will notify the student of the result. Students must give the faculty no less than seven days to read and review the prospectus.

ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

To advance to candidacy, a student must be in classified status. The procedure for advancing to candidacy requires that a graduate student, working under the supervision of the committee chair, submit an endorsed prospectus for either the thesis option or the non-thesis project, comprehensive examination, or paper portfolio options. Advancement to candidacy can occur as early as the completion of 6 units, and must occur at least one semester prior to graduation.

Advancement to candidacy upon the recommendation of the department is of importance to both the department and the student. Until advanced to candidacy, a student is operating under no official catalog requirements (which can and do change), and is therefore without an approved degree program. Students must be enrolled in the semester of advancement. A student may enroll in PHIL697 (comp exam) or PHIL698 (thesis or project) courses, or in GS700B, only after he or she has been advanced to candidacy.

GRADUATE STUDIES 700B

Graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment with the university. Students who are advanced to candidacy may do so by enrolling in GS700B, which is a 0-unit 'course' orchestrated by CPaCE (formerly the College of Professional and International Education (CPIE)).

Although no unit credit is added to the student's degree program or transcript, GS700B is considered as a unit of credit for fee payment purposes and for maintenance of continuous enrollment. GS700B also satisfies the requirement of registration in the semester that the student graduate. It allows utilization of university facilities (including the Library or computer labs), is a fraction of the cost of part-time tuition and fees, and requires no class attendance.

Students are allowed to register for GS700B for up to four semesters. After four semesters a hold is placed on their registration.

THESIS REVIEW AND ORAL DEFENSE

Title V requires that every thesis have an oral defense. Being one of the more intellectually oriented disciplines, Philosophy holds students to this requirement. The defense should be scheduled 1–2 months in advance, and should occur no later than one week prior to the [CLA deadline for thesis submission](#). A separate handout outlining the requirements and guidelines for an oral defense is available from the department office or Graduate Advisor.

Before the oral defense, students should meet with their committee chair. Students should also ensure that the final title and abstract of the thesis, along with the date and time of the defense, are sent to the Graduate Advisor and webmaster so that the event can be announced.

The oral defense is a public event in which the student defends the thesis on its merits. Normally, the defense will begin with the student presenting a brief synopsis (approximately 5–10 minutes), followed

by brief questions from student attendees or audience members and then predominantly from each member of the student's committee. The objective of defenses are (i) demonstration by the student of his or her ability to articulate and explain the details of the argument of the thesis; and (ii) demonstration of her or his ability to respond to questions about the thesis's presuppositions, its wider implications, and objections. No defense should last more than three hours.

Immediately following the defense, the thesis committee shall meet in private to determine the outcome of the oral defense. The thesis committee collectively determines whether the student has passed the oral defense by assigning one of three outcomes: (i) pass without revisions, (ii) pass conditional on the satisfactory completion of specified revisions, or (iii) fail.

The thesis director must take into account the oral defense in determining the grade for the thesis. Once the thesis and oral defense are complete and have passed to the committee's satisfaction, the student should **initiate the electronic approval process** and have committee members DocuSign the signature page. Only after that process is initiated shall the grade be submitted.

MA theses are reviewed by the College Designee or the Director of Graduate Studies, and the student must pass that review and obtain the signature of the College Designee prior to submitting to the university. All theses must ultimately conform to the formatting regulations specified by the university's **Thesis and Dissertation Office**, which assesses its clearance. It is best to simply use their template while working on the thesis, as well as to be familiar with all of their regulations. Students are also urged to attend a workshop on thesis formatting, scheduled by the thesis reviewer and/or the Graduate Studies Resource Center each semester.

UNIVERSITY SEVEN-YEAR RULE

It is in every student's interests to finish the Master's degree efficiently. All requirements of the degree program must be completed within seven years of the date the program was initiated. Coursework older than seven years will not count toward the degree, unless an extension of time beyond the limit is approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies, or else outdated work is revalidated by a suitable examination or other such demonstration of competence.

REVALIDATION OF COURSEWORK

Policy

It is the student's responsibility to request revalidation of a course and to contact faculty to do so. The department will revalidate no more than three courses on a student's program of study, should the seven-year rule be exceeded and if individual circumstances warrant it. The department will not revalidate any course for which the student received a grade lower than 'B'. If more than three courses require revalidation, or if the grade for that course is lower than 'B', then the student must retake that course if it is a requirement for the MA program, or else replace that course with a current course that completes the student's program of study.

Procedures

If the instructor of record is still available and agrees to the student's request to revalidate the course, the student must provide a written demonstration of current competence. Such a demonstration may include an essay discussing at least four central texts, or an annotated bibliography and an essay that reviews at least four secondary sources, published since the date of the lapsed coursework.

If the student cannot demonstrate his competence in the course to the faculty member's satisfaction,

it will no longer be possible for the student to revalidate the course. Otherwise, once the student's competence is demonstrated to the faculty member's satisfaction, the submitted work will be forwarded to the Graduate Advisor, covered by a memo from the faculty member outlining the specifics of the revalidation procedure for that course and attesting to its satisfactory completion. The Graduate Advisor will then request that the revalidation be approved by the CLA Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.

If the instructor of record is no longer available or does not agree to the student's request, the student shall notify the Graduate Advisor, who will consult with faculty currently teaching that course to determine if someone is willing to assess the student's competence. If no appropriate faculty member consents to overseeing recertification of a course, the student cannot revalidate that course and must either take a replacement course or revalidate another appropriate course.

FUNDING, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND AWARDS

State University Grant

Graduate students who meet certain conditions are often awarded the State University Grant (SUG). For eligible students, the SUG can cover the cost of tuition for the 30 units needed for the MA degree. For eligibility, students must be CA residents; must be pursuing their initial Master's degree; and must be enrolled in ≥ 4 units. Students must also have a current FAFSA on file by the priority deadline (normally March 1st of each year) and have an eligible Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The earned unit maximum is 125% of the published unit requirement for their degree. For help [understanding SUG eligibility](#), contact the Office of Financial Aid.

Nonresident Tuition/Fee Waivers and Residency

The Graduate Advisor can elect to request, on behalf of qualified and competitive applicants, a waiver from the Dean of Graduate Studies of the non-resident portion of tuition/fees. Recruitment requests are most successful when applicants have a strong academic record (excellent grades, GRE scores, awards, research presentations, etc.); additionally and historically, applicants are more likely to be approved for a non-resident tuition/fee waiver only when they have at least one additional offer of admission from another program. The award substantially decreases students' tuition and fees: over the course of a 30-unit program of study, the value of the waiver is approximately \$12,000.

Normally, the award is input for two semesters. In this amount of time, out-of-state students who are awarded the waiver should take the steps necessary to declare [CA residency](#) by or before the end of their second semester whenever possible. The department's ability to recruit top-quality out-of-state students depends, in part, on its ability to secure non-resident waivers for new applicants; but its ability to secure non-resident waivers for new applicants in turn depends, in part, on those current graduate students who were admitted in a previous cohort and who are currently taking the steps necessary to declare residency themselves, thus 'returning the favor' by freeing up waivers for new applicants, both in Philosophy and across the University more generally. There is the possibility of requesting an extension for a second year.

Departmental Scholarships and College Awards

Eligible undergraduate and graduate students may apply for various [departmental scholarships](#), including the Whittington Scholarship and the Friends of Philosophy Scholarship. Calls for applications are usually announced at the end of the calendar year, and are usually due on or around February 15th. Only one application is necessary to be considered for all scholarships. Previous recipients of the Whittington Scholarship are ineligible for a second Whittington Scholarship. Previous recipients of other departmental scholarships, however, are eligible for a second scholarship. For application

procedures, filing deadlines, and other information, contact either the Department Chair or the Chair of the Scholarship Committee.

The Department of Philosophy may nominate select graduate students for certain commencement awards. This includes nominations for the annual [Best Graduate Thesis Award](#) competition, as well as for the Dean's List of Graduating MA Students ([AS Policy 14-03](#)), which is limited to the top 1% of the students pursuing a graduate degree from each college per year.

The College of Liberal Arts has inaugurated a new recruitment initiative beginning FA21, which is designed to promote excellence in research and to support access to mentorship and research training in the Liberal Arts. Thus far, the department has awarded this '[Equity Scholar](#)' RAship to six graduate students:

- AY21-22: EQS Ning Shao, Chavva Olander (mentor: Cory Wright)
- AY22-23: EQS Esther Sims, Victoria Cinquegrani, Frank Mendoza (mentor: Max Rosenkrantz)
- AY23-24: EQS Camille Wold, Sarah Nolte (mentor: Max Rosenkrantz)
- AY24-25: EQS Daniel Mangandi-Escobar, Paige Kim (mentor: Max Max Rosenkrantz)
- AY25-26: EQS Lancy Lopez, Isaiah Navarro (mentor: Max Rosenkrantz)

These positions are—in effect—similar to an RAship; they do not come with any teaching assignments or requirements, grading, office hours, or the like. Students are expected to use the funding and time to hasten their progress on their own research. For more information, contact the Graduate Advisor.

[Graduate Fellowships and Sally Casanova Predoctoral Scholarships](#)

Graduate students in CLA may compete in the annual Graduate Research Fellowship (GRF) competition. The competition is announced each winter, with deadlines the following spring. The University typically awards one fellowship per college per year. Fellows are awarded \$4,500 each semester. To apply, students must be nominated by a faculty sponsor and be eligible. Eligibility requires satisfying the conditions for California residency and meeting criteria for financial aid eligibility (including having filed the FAFSA). Eligible nominees then co-apply with their faculty sponsor.

Beyond timely progress toward degree, the GRF requires research output beyond the culminating activity, such as a book review or article, a presentation, poster, etc. A final report of work accomplished is due to the Dean of Graduate Studies at the end of the fellowship period.

The [Sally Casanova Predoctoral Scholars Program](#) (SCPS) provides funding for current CSU graduate students either to explore whether graduate school is right for them or to prepare them to pursue a doctoral program. SCPS recipients are awarded a budget of \$5,000 and may complete a summer research experience at a major U. S. research university. For more information or questions, please contact the Graduate Center about [deadlines, eligibiity, and application materials](#).

The department has been extraordinarily successful, having had Fellows and Scholars in nine of the last thirteen years:

- AY11-12: GRF Neil Richmond (mentor: Charles Wallis)
- AY13-14: GRF Emily Barrett (mentor: Cory Wright)
- AY15-16: GRF Nathan Lackey (mentor: Cory Wright)
- AY18-19: GRF Christopher George (mentor: Nellie Wieland)
- AY19-20: GRF Avery Amerson (mentor: Nellie Wieland)
- AY20-21: GRF Michael Lara (mentor: Charles Wallis)
- AY21-22: GRF Ryan Lam (mentor: Nick Laskowski)
- AY21-22: CDIP Caitlin Mace (mentor: Cory Wright)
- AY21-22: SC Keilee Bessho (mentor: Cory Wright)

- AY21–22: SC Tom Ho (mentor: Cory Wright)
- AY22–23: SC Tanner Whitlow (mentor: Nick Laskowski)
- AY23–24: GF Manuel Rojas (mentor: Max Rosenkrantz)
- AY23–24: SC Cody Spjut (mentor: Max Rosenkrantz)
- AY24–25: SC Abel Peña (mentor: Cory Wright)
- AY25–26: JASSO Liz Sato

For information on the research projects of these and other fellows from around the college, visit the [CLA GF webpage](#). The CSULB [Scholarship Office](#) keeps various lists of sources of research funding.

GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Graduate Assistantships:

The department typically employs 6–7 Graduate Assistants (GAs) each semester. Each GA is assigned to a particular section of a course to assist with things like classroom management, grading, and office hours. GAs also sometimes gain teaching experience, if called to give a guest lecture, and supervision and mentorship from the faculty member. In AY25–26, GAships paid approximately \$3,576–\$4,097 per semester. The standard length of a GA assignment is for 10 hrs/week, although students can work up to 20 hrs/week. A call for applications for GAships is made before the beginning of each term. Please check with the Graduate Advisor for more information, deadlines, expectations, etc.

Graduate Tutorialships:

The department also occasionally hires graduate students to provide tutoring support across all sections of General Education courses such as Introduction to Ethics (PHIL160) or Critical Reasoning (PHIL170). Hence, rather than being assigned to a particular section, graduate student tutors run open advising/office hours (5–10 hrs/week) to help students with coursework, test preparation, and generally improving their skills in critical thinking and mastery of basic logical concepts. Tutors are support resource only, and are not responsible for grading. Pay for graduate student tutorialships is equivalent to that of a regular GAship.

Teaching Associateships:

The department occasionally offers select graduate students the opportunity to teach their own lower-division course as the instructor of record. This opportunity is great experience for teaching at the community-college level and beyond. In AY20–21, a TAship paid approximately \$4,008–\$4,170. The College of Liberal Arts keeps a [list of TAships and GAships throughout the university](#). Application procedures may vary between departments. The Office of Graduate Studies may have similar lists.

Supplemental Instructorships and Tutorialships:

The university's [Learning Center](#) occasionally hires graduate students in Philosophy to serve as 'Peer Leaders' in their [Supplemental Instruction program](#) or as humanities tutors. The SI program is designed to help certain underprepared students to fill in gaps in their educational skills so that they can handle college-level coursework. Students interested in an SIsip or as an LC tutor should first contact the Graduate Advisor.

Writing Tutorialships:

In addition to the Learning Center, the university's [Writing Center](#) hires tutors each summer. Writing tutors must be excellent writers themselves, and are required to maintain and update their skills through ongoing professional development and training. The Writing Center may require enrollment as a condition of employment. Interested students should first contact the Graduate Advisor.

Federal Work/Study and Student Assistantships:

The department occasionally has funds available to hire students for FWS, SA, and ISA positions for the regular academic year. FWS and SAs are typically responsible for assistance within the Philosophy Department Office, and normally work 10 hours per week. Interested students should first contact the Graduate Advisor, and then the Department Chair.

Residential Assistantship:

The [Office of Housing and Residential Life \(OHRL\)](#) offers several different types of [Residential Assistantship positions](#). RAs live in an assigned apartment within University Housing, and work with staff to handle daily operations within the residence halls. The position involves coordination with staff, residential curriculum implementation, advising, community development support, student behavior management, and other administrative responsibilities. Applications are typically due the March prior to each academic year.

Internships

CLA has led the university in the creation and maintenance of a wide variety of [internship programs](#), classes, and [career-readiness workshops and events](#). Interested students should consult the CLA Internship Specialist, [Beth Manke](#).

Other Sources of Campus Employment and Funding

Other programs, centers, and offices around CSULB hire students part-time: e.g., Disabled Student Services (BMAC), the Library, the 49er Bookstore, the Isabel Patterson Child Center, etc. Much of this student employment is run by Associated Students. Lastly, for additional opportunities both on- and off-campus, students may also check with the [Career Development Center](#) or CSULB's [CareerLink](#).

PLACEMENT

While people pursue advanced study in Philosophy for various reasons, none do so flippantly. Graduate students in Philosophy are members of a self-selecting group, typified by strong written, oral, and analytic skills, as well as skills in formal logic, problem-solving, and ethical reasoning.

The academic job market in Philosophy—and the labor market more generally—continues to be constricted. Hence, placements out of any BA or MA program anywhere in the United States are generally limited. Despite that, our graduate program at Cal State Long Beach has a [strong placement record](#) comparable with the very top terminal MA programs in the United States. Many students have found jobs teaching with an MA, including lecturer positions within the CSU and within the constellation of community colleges throughout the region.

Typically, MA students who are interested in applying to Ph.D programs or in obtaining a teaching position in Philosophy apply to a minimum of 13–15 programs. This can be costly. It can also be very time-consuming; determining which ones to apply to always requires some investigation. A good place to begin in the [Philosophical Gourmet Report](#). Next, students should consult their committee chair and the Graduate Advisor.

It is worth keeping in mind that only students with very strong academic records have a chance to be competitive for PhD programs. An excellent GRE score is often more than just merely advantageous; and this fact implies that students should study hard for it, in part by taking advantage of the Graduate Center's [low-cost GRE prep classes](#). Graduate students who anticipate applying to doctoral programs in Philosophy will need at least three strong letters of recommendation from faculty as well as an outstanding writing sample, and so should work closely with faculty. This may come in the form of GA or RA experience, or other things besides. Students should try to present papers at nearby graduate

student conferences or professional conferences, and may want to join organizations such as the *Society for Philosophy of Neuroscience*, the *Society for the History of Analytic Philosophy*, the *Philosophy of Science Association*, or the *Society for Exact Philosophy*.

An open secret is that graduate training in Philosophy prepares students for a wide variety of job types outside of Philosophy. In non-academic sectors, **alumni** have found employment in fields like architecture, grant writing, environmental conservation, archival management, educational technology, medicine, and real estate, as well as various branches of civil service and NGOs. Many have gone on to law schools, such as University of Southern California Law School, Loyola Law School, and UC Irvine School of Law, or have secured work in the District Attorney's office. Still others have chosen to combine their graduate studies in Philosophy with a teaching credential in secondary or elementary education. Ultimately, the main thing to know is that **student success** drives **graduate-level placement**.

GRADUATION, DEGREE, TRANSCRIPTS

Graduate students must **apply to graduate**. Advancement to candidacy is required to do so, and should occur at least one semester prior to the graduation term. Students who miss the deadline can still apply with a missed deadline fee of \$10 or can apply to change the date/term. Necessary for graduation is that all requirements be completed. For degree posting, contact the registrar at Enrollment Services. For graduation ceremonies, contact the Office of Graduate Studies or the Graduate Center. **Current** or **former** students/alumni can contact the Office of Student Records for transcripts.