

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
REPORT TO THE RIVERSIDE DIVISION
MAY 26, 2020**

To be adopted:

Proposed Changes to PHILOSOPHY major

PRESENT:

PROPOSED:

HONORS PROGRAM

The undergraduate track for Distinction in Philosophy is designed to give qualified upper division students the opportunity to do additional upper division work in Philosophy in a seminar format beyond what is required for the major. It will give students the opportunity and the training to do independent research in Philosophy.

Each Philosophy major in the track for Distinction in Philosophy will be assigned a faculty mentor upon entering the program. Faculty are encouraged to provide more challenging assignments to the Honors students in their upper-division classes (such as term papers, revision of a paper in response to feedback, etc.).

Philosophy students who successfully complete this program are awarded and have posted on their transcript the designation Distinction in Philosophy.

Complete details and an application form are available from the Philosophy Student Affairs Officer.

Prerequisites for the track for Distinction in Philosophy

1. Submission of an application during the last quarter of the sophomore year or during the junior year (no later than the last quarter of the junior year).
2. Completion of 90 units (junior standing).
3. Completion of PHIL 7, PHIL 8, PHIL 100/101, and 2 upper-division courses in Philosophy. Students are encouraged to take the 2 courses in the PHIL 30 series (see below) as early in their major as possible.

4. Cumulative GPA of 3.5 in Philosophy

These pre-requisites can be waived by permission of the Department under exceptional circumstances. Inquiries may be directed to the Philosophy Student Affairs Officer.

Requirements for the track for Distinction in Philosophy

This track adds some requirements to the Philosophy major:

1. 64 units in Philosophy, of which 48 units must be upper division. (The major requires 56 units, of which 36 units must be upper division.)
2. 2 courses in the PHIL 30 series. (These courses count toward the 64 units and the three courses in the History of Philosophy.)
3. 2 quarters of either PHIL 193 OR PHIL 193 and PHIL 195 (8 units total). Students in the University Honors Program may substitute 4 units of HNPG 199H for 4 units of Phil 195. (These courses count towards the 64 units. With Department approval, PHIL 193 and PHIL 195 may be applied toward the History of Philosophy, Metaphysics/Epistemology/Philosophy of Language, or Moral/Political Philosophy requirements.)
4. To receive Distinction in Philosophy, students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 in Philosophy upon completion of the program.

Justification for adding a track for Distinction in Philosophy:

The Philosophy Department wishes to add a track for Distinction in Philosophy to our undergraduate major. We have many excellent majors, and we believe that this track will enhance the academic experience of our more motivated majors. We find that several of our majors express interest in graduate study in Philosophy at some point, but often they do not have a clear idea of what advanced study in Philosophy involves and they are not well prepared for advanced study. For example, our current curriculum does not provide many opportunities to write terms papers or do independent research. A track for Distinction in Philosophy will serve these students by encouraging them to take more upper division courses, including multiple offerings of our Senior Seminar (PHIL 193), and by creating a special community within the Philosophy major. However, the aim of this track is not simply to prepare talented majors with an interest in graduate study – it will provide a better undergraduate experience for any serious, academically inclined major and will enhance the quality of our major as a whole.

The track for Distinction in Philosophy would add certain requirements beyond the normal requirements for the major. First, the Philosophy major currently requires 56 units of course work, of which at least 36 must be upper division. This proposed track would require 64 units of course work, of which at least 48 units must be upper division. Thus it requires 3 additional upper division courses and will allow students to count one less lower division course toward the major. Second, it is designed to encourage students to take 2 courses in our History of Philosophy survey series (the Philosophy 30 series) early in the major, by making these courses pre-requisites for admission into this track. The courses in this series aim to give students an understanding of the main currents in different periods of the history of philosophy. This is good preparation for doing upper division work, either in the history of philosophy or in contemporary philosophy, and the earlier in the major students take such courses the better. Third, this track will make use of Philosophy 193: Senior Seminar – a small (15 student) course that allows undergraduates to do advanced work in a seminar and discussion-based format. This track will require students to take either two offerings of Philosophy 193 (on different topics) – or one offering of Philosophy 193 and Philosophy 195: Senior Thesis. Students will also have the option of taking 2 quarters of Philosophy 193 followed by 1-3 units of Philosophy 195, which they use to develop a paper either from Philosophy 193 or an upper division course into a more substantial term paper.

Approvals:

Approved by the faculty of the Department of Philosophy:

June 17, 2019

Approved by the Executive Committee of the College of Humanities, Arts,
& Social Sciences:

October 2, 2019

Approved by the Committee on Educational Policy:

March 6, 2020