

**Department of Philosophy
University of Nevada, Reno
Graduate Program Handbook**

This handbook provides guidance to graduate students and faculty as students advance through the M.A. program. It provides the necessary information for graduate students to understand the requirements, expectations, and opportunities in the Department of Philosophy and the Graduate School. This handbook replicates information in the most current University General Course Catalog, which can be found at <http://catalog.unr.edu>

Students are responsible for ensuring that they meet the requirements for the M.A. degree as set forth in this handbook and the General Course Catalog, that the completion of each formal requirement is recorded properly, and that their Graduate School files are complete and up-to-date. Faculty members, however, are willing to assist whenever a graduate student feels there is some uncertainty or problem.

Graduate students, which in the judgment of the faculty assure high standards of philosophical training. Second, to assure fairness in the treatment of graduate students by applying common and unambiguous standards to all.

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1. Program Description

The M.A. program in Philosophy at the University of Nevada, Reno is designed for students who intend to apply to Ph.D. programs in philosophy, who intend to teach philosophy at the community-college level, who seek a philosophy degree for the grounding it provides for other areas of study (e.g., law, science, practical ethics, theology), or who wish to acquire a deeper understanding of philosophical traditions and contemporary developments.

Students who complete the M.A. program in Philosophy will become more knowledgeable about ongoing discussions in the discipline as well as historical contexts for these discussions. Students will develop their critical and creative intellectual capacities through reading, writing, and discussion. They will be able to interpret philosophical texts and write their own philosophical texts.

The Graduate Program Director is Dr. Benjamin Young, who can be reached at benjaminyoung@unr.edu The Administrative Assistant for the Department of Philosophy is Eric Ríos, who can be reached at erios@unr.edu

2. Degree Requirements

The Department of Philosophy offers two M.A. degrees: a general M.A. in Philosophy and a M.A. in Philosophy with a specialization in Ethics, Law, and Politics. All students, regardless of their degree track and plan within the degree program, must complete a minimum of 18 credits in 700-

Students who pursue the M.A. in philosophy with a specialization in Ethics, Law, and Politics have two options for their studies:

Plan A: Thesis required

30 credits of graduate-level courses are required to graduate
6 of these credits must be PHIL 797 (Thesis)

Plan B: Thesis not required

33 credits of graduate-level courses are required to graduate
Students must have a passing grade in 1-3 credits of PHIL 796 (Professional Paper)
Please note that PHIL 796 does not count towards the 33 credits required for the degree

Graduate students who are pursuing the Ethics, Law, and Politics specialization may take up to six (6) credits outside of the Department of Philosophy in areas relevant to ethics, law, and politics. Departmental approval from the Graduate Program Coordinator is required for all non-philosophy credits that are to be counted toward the degree.

GPA Requirements:

All graduate students, whether they are pursuing the general M.A. in Philosophy or the M.A. in Philosophy with a specialization in Ethics, Law, and Politics, must maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 . If their GPA drops below 3.0 they are either placed on probation or dismissed. Undergraduate courses will not count towards graduate GPA.

Students whose cumulative graduate GPA is .1 to .6 points below that needed for a 3.0 GPA are put on probation. Students are placed on academic probation for one semester. If they fail to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 by the end of one semester, they are dismissed from their graduate program. Thesis, dissertation, S/U graded credits, and transfer credits have no impact

Students whose cumulative graduate GPA is .7 or more grade points below that needed for a 3.0 GPA are dismissed. Dismissed students are no longer in a graduate program but may take graduate-level courses as a Grad Special. Students wishing to complete their degree must obtain approval to take graduate-level courses, raise their graduate GPA to at least 3.0 and then re-apply to a graduate program. Any courses taken to raise their GPA will be included in the graduate special and transfer credit limitation, which is nine (9) credits for m

3. 700-level Courses

All graduate students in the Department of Philosophy must complete a minimum of 18 credits in 700-level courses. Three of the 700-

At the beginning of the semester in which the student intends to graduate, the graduate student should submit the Graduate Application form. This form can be found at <http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms-and-deadlines/graduation-application>

Near the end of the semester in which the student intends to graduate, the graduate student should submit the Notice of Completion form. This form can be found at <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/notice-of-completion-master-degree.pdf>

Graduate students should complete the Exit Survey immediately before or after they graduate. This survey can be found at <http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms/exit-survey>

All forms associated with the Graduate School can be located at <http://www.unr.edu/grad/forms>

6. Advisory-Examining Committee and Program of Study

When students are admitted into the M.A. degree program, they should look to the Graduate Program Coordinator for advice on course selection during their first semester. Graduate students should gain familiarity with the other members of the faculty over the course of their first and second semesters.

Students should choose an advisor and complete and submit the Declaration of Advisor/Major Advisor/Committee Chair form. The most important factors that a student should look for in a potential faculty advisor are shared philosophical research interests and complementary working styles. The Declaration of Advisor/Major Advisor/Committee Chair form is the initial agreement between a student and the faculty member who will serve as their advisor and their advisory-examining committee chair. All graduate students must choose an advisor, regardless of whether they are pursuing the thesis option or the professional paper option. This form can be found at <http://www.unr.edu/Documents/graduate-school/Declaration%20of%20Advisor%20rev2.pdf>

When a student enters the M.A. degree program, the student should complete and submit the Program of Study form. The Program of Study form is an official agreement between the student and the Department of Philosophy. Every student must submit this form for graduation review. The form lists all courses required for degree completion, establishes the advisory committee with the Graduate School, and the form is evaluated in accordance with department and university policies.

The advisor serves as the committee chair. All advisory committee members must be Graduate Faculty members. Graduate Faculty are a specific subset of all university faculty. Students can check which faculty members are Graduate Faculty at <http://www.unr.edu/grad/graduate-faculty> program that is outside of the Department of Philosophy. This faculty member serves as the Graduate School Representative. Students who do not know a faculty member from outside the Department of Philosophy to ask to serve in this role should consult the Graduate Program Coordinator for advice. Formal approval of all student advisory committees is made by the Dean of the Graduate School.

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unity for a graduate student to conduct philosophical research and to develop an original philosophical argument. Graduate students who intend to complete the thesis option should identify their research interests and ask a faculty member who shares their research interests to serve as their advisor and advisory-examining committee chair by the end of their second semester in the degree program. This information should be recorded on the Advisor/Committee Chair form.

Students who are pursuing the thesis option must enroll in PHIL 797 (Thesis) for at least 6 credits over the course of their last two semesters in the degree program. The student should set deadlines for receiving draft material. Soon after beginning work on the thesis, the student should write a brief prospectus in which the student describes the main argument that he or she will develop in the thesis. The prospectus must include references to relevant philosophical scholarship. The prospectus must be approximately three chapters and be no fewer than 50 double-spaced pages in length.

Master's Thesis Deadlines:

The student

must submit the prospectus no later than eight (8) weeks before the student intends to graduate. The faculty member will read

Professional Paper Defense:

The graduate student will present the professional paper at a department colloquium. The student will read or talk through the paper in approximately 20-30 minutes, and then answer questions from faculty members and other members of the audience, including fellow graduate students.

A departmental committee will be charged with assessing the professional quality of the paper. Each faculty member who serves on this committee will attend the colloquium and assess the

an average of a B- in order to pass the course with the grade of Satisfactory. The committee will take into account the responsiveness of the student to feedback solicited in the course of the production of the paper, and any relevant collateral evidence (e.g., multiple drafts). The faculty advisor is responsible for recording

9. Graduation Policies and Deadlines

Graduate students should be familiar with the policies and deadlines for graduation, which can be located at

Graduate students should also submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA),

13. Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) represents all graduate students and promotes the welfare and interests of the graduate students at the University of Nevada, Reno. The GSA works closely with appropriate university administrative offices, including the Graduate School and Student Services and reports to the President of the University. Graduate Students who are presenting their research at a conference can apply to the GSA Travel Awards program. Additional information about the GSA can be found at <http://www.unr.edu/gsa>

14. Departmental Citizenship

At the graduate level, students (whatever their future plans) are in the process of becoming junior members of an academic profession, and they are expected not only to demonstrate a serious commitment to their field of study but also to be engaged citizens of their department. When visiting speakers give colloquium talks, for instance, it is expected that graduate students will make conscientious efforts to attend these events. Or in courses where both undergraduate and graduate students are registered, or in which separate sessions for graduate students are made available, it is similarly expected that graduate students will take some responsibility for the shaping of discussions or presentations. The contributions of graduate students to the intellectual life of the department are not merely welcome but vital. Students who are accepted into the