PhD Program in Philosophy

Program Handbook

2026-2027

Department of Philosophy

Reference this handbook to learn about the unique policies, requirements, procedures, resources, and norms for graduate students in the Department of Philosophy.

Last updated: August 2026

Welcome Letter

Dear Graduate Students,

Welcome to the Philosophy Department! The Graduate Handbook serves as a guide to the regulations and procedures that govern degree requirements and financial aid. Please use it as your primary reference for navigating the various stages of PhD program in Philosophy.

If you have questions about your program, don't hesitate to ask your faculty advisor or Miriam Fagan (the Graduate Program Coordinator), Jesse Steinburg (Assistant to the Chair) or myself.

In addition, feel free to come to me with any questions or concerns that you might have. The Philosophy community is delighted that you are joining us. Faculty and staff are eager to support you in your graduate studies. We wish you the best in your intellectual and professional growth in the weeks and months to come.

Yours,
Farid Masrour

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Navigating Policy and Resources at UW-Madison

This handbook is one of many sources to consult as you become familiar with the policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms of graduate education at UW-Madison:

Graduate Guide
Graduate School AP&P
UW-Madison Policy Library
Graduate Student Life
Graduate School at UW-Madison

How to Use This Handbook

This handbook is primarily directed at graduate students at all stages in their PhD. We intend the handbook to serve as a stable, up-to-date reference guide that brings together information on the graduate program we provide in orientations, announcements, and by other means. Graduate students are not accountable for the information provided here, and it is not meant to replace asking your questions in person. We recommend reading over at least the table of contents when you begin the program, so that you have a sense for the topics it covers, as well as the Department and Program Overview and any other sections that seem immediately relevant.

The handbook may also be useful for prospective graduate students trying to figure out whether our program is right for them. Prospective graduate students should also consult graduate admissions information on the department website.

Finally, the handbook is a resource for faculty members, ensuring a common understanding of community norms, program requirements, and expectations for advising and mentoring relationships.

Who to Contact for Questions

We understand that the number of resources and policies relating to graduate students is overwhelming, and we encourage you to come directly to staff and faculty members for guidance on which policies apply to you and how they apply in your unique situation.

Several key positions in this department and on campus are ready to answer your questions. Below is a list of the key positions, the names of the people filling them, and some of the key topics and questions they can help you with.

Philosophy's Admin Team

Department Administrator – Wendy Crabb
General questions about anything related to UW-Madison and philosophy, including everything listed below for the philosophy admin team. Feel free to start with me, and if I don't know the answer, I will figure out who to ask.

Graduate Student Coordinator – Miriam Fagan
Program questions – deadlines, courses, timelines
Enrollment process questions
What do I need to do for my coursework, prelim, prospectus, MA, PhD and dissertation
Timelines and deadlines for coursework, prelim, prospectus, MA, PhD and dissertation

Payroll & Benefits – Alice Schneiderman
Payroll questions including how to enroll in direct deposit, how to use a timesheet, appointment letters, how to find your W2
Benefits enrollment questions. Open enrollment is Oct/Nov for the next calendar year.
Life events that impact benefits outside of open enrollment including getting married/divorced, turning 26, having a baby/adoption, losing current health coverage (CRITICAL timing – notify us within 30 days of the life event).
Leave questions including leave of absence, medical leave, and parental leave.

Financial Specialist – Charlene Sime
Expense reports – how to submit, documentation needed for policy compliance
Conference travel including hotel reservations and airline/bus tickets
Using your department funds
Supplies (paper, pens, blue books, name tents, chalk, etc.)

Undergraduate Program & Curriculum Coordinator – Will Hoffman
Curricular questions – What time/days am I teaching? Where is my room? Who am I working with (primary instructor or TA)?
Room reservation requests for alternative exams, course review, reading groups
Room change requests for courses (for example, if you need a more collaborative space or a different location). Caveat, these changes are not always possible.

Faculty Graduate Support Roles

Director of Graduate Studies
Our graduate program has one faculty member designated to direct its educational vision and structure. The current DGS is Farid Masrour, who holds regular office hours and is also available by appointment. He is the point person for the graduate program among the faculty, and he will be able to direct you to the correct person, if he is not able to answer your question.

Faculty Advisor
Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor in each graduate program in which they are enrolled. Your faculty advisor(s) will be a key source of guidance for your academic development. Further definition can be found here: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1232. Guidelines for finding, changing, and working with your advisor can be found in the Advising & Mentoring section below.

The name and contact information of your faculty advisor can be found on your Student Center on MyUW (my.wisc.edu) under “Academic Progress” and then “Advisors.”

Assistant to the Chair
The Assistant to the Chair serves on a number of department committees and performs an array of duties related to our graduate program. These include working on our

curriculum and course plans, reviewing teaching performance and assisting with graduate student training, graduate student appointments (including TA and lecturer positions), and a host of other things related to our department.

Department Chair
The department chair announces annual funding available for graduate student travel and approves the use of these funds throughout the year. They also determine and communicate annual funding for the Graduate Association of Philosophy, in consultation with the Department Administrator and Budget Committee (a faculty committee that is elected annually). You are also welcome to bring to the chair any ideas you have for improving the graduate program or the department culture. Finally, they play a role in the department's grievance process, which is outlined in detail here.

Graduate School Services
For general inquiries and graduate student services from the Graduate School, see the operations and front desk contact information on this contact page: grad.wisc.edu/contacts.

Department & Program Overview

The Department of Philosophy is a friendly community of philosophers who cover a wide range of sub-disciplines and topics within philosophy, and who come together through a shared love of philosophical discussion, inquiry, and teaching. Our faculty work on everything from philosophy of physics, AI ethics, and philosophy of education to the philosophy of math, Bayesian epistemology, and Aristotle's virtue ethics. One thing that unites us, faculty and graduate students alike, is our deep curiosity about philosophical questions in all these domains. The number and variety of active reading groups in the department at any time is testimony to the intellectual breadth and spirit of collaboration that animates our culture.

Department Events and Culture

Philosophy is fun! This was the motto proposed by Hank Southgate, our 2025 faculty keynote speaker for our annual Celebration of Graduates and Award Winners. While the line produced laughs, it perfectly captures the atmosphere we try to create in the philosophy department. We hope to create a culture in which people and ideas can feel welcome, and where no one takes themselves (or their ideas) too seriously.

In order to foster a philosophical community, **the department organizes 4-5 colloquium talks every semester**. These talks are an opportunity for graduate students to engage with some of the most exciting and influential philosophers working today, and to expose themselves to a broad range of fields and methodological approaches within philosophy. For those students interested in pursuing an academic job in philosophy, and who want to prepare for the all-important job talk, this is a great place to see for yourself what works (or doesn't work!) in a philosophy talk. We expect

graduate students to attend colloquia, unless they have a specific conflict, and also to attend a lunch or dinner with a visiting speaker at least once per year.

In addition, the department maintains the following schedule of annual community-building events:

Late August: To kick off the Fall semester, we gather for **Drinks on the Terrace**, which happens directly after the new graduate student orientation. This is an opportunity to enjoy the terrace in its full late-summer glory, meet the new cohort graduate students, and share stories of your summer adventures.

Last September: We continue the fun with **Fall Picnic**, scheduled in late September as we move from glorious late-summer to even more glorious early-fall. Locations vary, but parks and lakes feature heavily.

Early December: We come together again towards the close of Fall semester, with the descriptive and unobjectionably titled **Winter Celebration** event. This is a cozy lunch-time event, hosted in the department itself, which may feature anything from song and dance to cookie-decoration.

Early May: At the end of every year, we put on a **Celebration of Award Winners and Graduates**, to which we invite the whole department, philosophy majors, and family and friends of graduates and award winners. The speeches are terrific every year. You will be surprised by how moved you are!

Inclusive Excellence

Our department embraces the university's commitment to diversity and believes that philosophical inquiry is greatly enhanced within a diverse and inclusive community. Recruiting the highest-quality graduate students and faculty members requires that we seek out applicants from a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints. We strongly encourage women and racial and ethnic minorities to apply to our program and to explore the different Graduate School programs and funding, such as application fee waivers and Community of Graduate Research Scholars (CGRS).

Commented [LP1]: I believe this is now called Community of Graduate Research Scholars (CGRS) but we can also check this with Mel.

https://grad.wisc.edu/diversity

Our goal is to create a supportive climate in the department where all can flourish, whether in the seminar room, at department events, or in the daily interactions in our halls. Our faculty and graduate students meet regularly to discuss issues related to diversity and inclusiveness in the classroom and to share pedagogical techniques. This year, the Graduate Association of Philosophy (GAP) began hosting dinners with small groups of graduate students and faculty. These dinners focus on themes that can be difficult to discuss in a strictly academic setting. We are also committed to mentorship and value our role as a training program in helping to make the discipline of Philosophy a welcoming and respectful place.

If you have questions or concerns related to diversity, equity and inclusion, Farid Masrour (DGS) and the current graduate student representative for inclusive excellence would be excellent first contacts. If you have an idea for an event that would help foster a supportive and inclusive department community, please share your idea with the department chair.

Faculty and Graduate Student Department Governance

The department has faculty roles and standing faculty committees that oversee different aspects of department governance, including our academic programs, graduate admissions, teaching policies, faculty mentoring, search committees, and the department budget. The chair makes the committee assignments in consultation with faculty, and these are approved by the entire faculty at the first department meeting of the year. The chair posts the committee assignments in the department.

The faculty meet about once per month for department meetings, which are also attended by a graduate represented elected by the Graduate Association of Philosophy (GAP). The agenda and minutes of department meetings are posted on the bulletin board next to the mailboxes.

The Graduate Association of Philosophy has five elected positions, which are:

- Director of Professional Service
- Director of Teaching Development
- Director of Research Development
- Director of Professional Engagement
- Director of Inclusive Excellence

Commented [LP2]: I would recommend connecting with Mel about this committee

The current GAP representatives and descriptions of their roles are also posted in the department.

How to Get Involved

As a graduate student at UW-Madison, you have a multitude of opportunities to become involved on campus and in your academic discipline. This involvement often enhances your academic, professional, and personal growth through developing advanced leadership, communication, and collaboration skills. It also provides opportunity for professional networking.

In Our Discipline

Students are encouraged to use their travel funds to attend a professional philosophy conference as early as their first year in the program. The general requirement that you must be on the program in order to use department funds is waived for your first

professional conference. Take advantage of this opportunity to experience a conference firsthand, without the pressure of presenting. In addition to philosophy conferences, we encourage students to consider attending a conference dedicated to teaching at colleges and universities.

The largest general philosophy conference is the American Philosophical Association, which has three divisions: Eastern, Central and Pacific. The Central Division meets in Chicago every three years, making it highly accessible from Madison.

We also encourage participation in the Wisconsin Philosophical Association (WPA), which is another nearby opportunity.

In Our Program/Department

We strongly encourage graduate students to participate in department events, and to spend time on the 5th floor. Every graduate student will be offered a personal desk space in a shared office. We also encourage graduate students to spend time in the graduate lounge, computer room and library. The department also has a variety of other meeting spaces that can be reserved for reading groups, film viewings, or study spaces.

Ways to get involved include:

- Attend department events, such as colloquia and community-building events.
- Participate in activities organized by the Graduate Association of Philosophy.
    - **WIP-C**: A work-in progress group, where graduate students can get feedback on conference presentations or simply share work in progress. Meets 3-4 times per semester.
    - **DECE**: Meets regularly to discuss teaching-related topics; provides a supportive space for students to share problems in the classroom and get ideas to improve their teaching.
    - Weekly trivia nights
- Run for GAP position, which is an opportunity for leadership and other professional development. Contact current GAP officers for details about election process and time-commitment.
- Organize or attend one of the many reading groups going on in the department.

On Campus & In the Community

The Wisconsin Idea is the principle that education should influence and improve people's lives beyond the university classroom. For more than 100 years, this idea has guided the university's work.

You will find a list of ways to engage in campus and local community life at:

The Graduate School's Current Student Page
grad.wisc.edu/current-students

If you are a student actively involved in leadership and service activities, consider nominating yourself for membership in the following honor society:

Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society
grad.wisc.edu/diversity/bouchet

Getting Started as a Graduate Student

Welcome to the Department of Philosophy! This section guides you through important steps to take as you begin your journey as a graduate student at UW-Madison.

Students should familiarize themselves with the Academic Calendar and Enrollment Dates and Deadlines.

Enroll in fall semester courses: Incoming students are typically able to begin their fall semester enrollment around mid-June. Each student is assigned an enrollment date and time. You may enroll on or after your Appointment Time. Your enrollment date is found in your MyUW Student Center module.

- Prior to enrolling each semester, students are required to complete the Pre Enrollment Checklist.
- Students enroll in their courses using Course Search & Enroll.

Graduate School's Resources for New Graduate Students: Incoming students should review the Graduate School's New Student page where they will find helpful information for preparing for graduate school, including a New Graduate School Checklist. **Students should review and complete the New Graduate School Checklist.**

In addition to a checklist for all new graduate students, that webpage includes sections with additional steps to take if you are a new international student, student with a disability, student veteran, student with children, or student with funding.
The Graduate School hosts a **Welcome Week** for new graduate students, which includes the **New Graduate Student Welcome** event each year.

The New Graduate Student Welcome is an opportunity to hear from the Graduate School and campus leaders, get advice from a panel of current students about grad student life, learn about the many campus and community resources available to you, and meet other new graduate students from across campus.

College of Letters and Science: The College of Letters and Science holds a **New TA Training** that students are strongly encouraged to attend.

The Philosophy Department New Student Orientation and TA Training: The department holds its own orientation and TA training which is mandatory for all new

students. This orientation is held the Friday, prior to the start of the first day of fall semester classes.

The orientation will provide an overall introduction to the philosophy department and will focus on what is expected of you as a graduate student and TA. Discussion points will include keys to success in graduate school, advising, course planning, and department procedures. In addition, the orientation will include a TA training session, which is run by two current graduate students.

Students should also review and complete the Department of Philosophy's New Student Checklist:

Fall 2026 Department of Philosophy New Graduate Student Checklist

International students must check in with International Student Services (ISS) within 1-2 days of arrival. International students should review, **Becoming A Global Badger** for important resources and information.

_____ 1) **Arrive on campus no later than Tuesday, August 18th to complete your required I-9 (this is required by Federal Law)**. Come to the department office in 5185 Helen C. White Hall between 8:30 am-2:30 pm, Monday, August 17th or Tuesday, August 18th and bring your required documents. Schedule a time with Alice Schneiderman to complete your I-9.

_____ 2) Pick-up your UW ID card at Union South. Your Wiscard will allow you access to the library and it is needed to get your free bus pass.

a) Wiscard: https://wiscard.wisc.edu/
b) Bus Pass: https://www.asm.wisc.edu/resources/buspass/

_____ 3) Set-up direct deposit with Bursar and also with HR Payroll:

a) Bursar (tuition/scholarships) https://bursar.wisc.edu/refunds/erefund-direct-deposit
b) Payroll (TA paycheck) https://hr.wisc.edu/pay/direct-deposit/

_____ 4) Set up multi-factor authentication

_____ 5) Pick up your office keys**:** Wendy Crabb will be in touch about your office assignment after August 18. Please schedule a time to come to the department office to pick up your office and building keys with Wendy Crabb and Will Hoffman.

_____ 6) Review and complete the New Graduate School Checklist

_____ 7) Complete the required training: Graduate and Professional Students Preventing and Responding to Sexual and Relationship Violence.

_____ 8) Complete the required Cybersecurity Awareness Training.

_____ 9) Register and Attend the L&S New TA Training.

_____ 10) Attend the philosophy department's New Student Orientation and TA Training on Friday, August 28, 2026, from 11:30-4:15 pm.

Commented [JS3]: I don't know if this should really be included in the Handbook.

Commented [EF4R3]: I kind of like it. Seems appropriate for a getting started section.

Advising & Mentoring

Advising relationships are a central part of academia, important to both the experience and development of students and faculty members alike.

The Graduate School's definition of an advisor can be found here: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1232. Your advisor has two main roles: 1) To assist you in acquiring the highest possible level of knowledge and competence in the field, and 2) to chair the committee that will determine whether you have performed at an acceptable level in each of your degree milestones (see "Degree Requirements" section below for further information on building your committee). Other roles of your advisor may include tracking your progress in completing your degree (note: this may include use of the Graduate Student Tracking System at gsts.grad.wisc.edu), assisting with course selection and planning your academic path, and helping you identify possible research mentors, committee members, and research opportunities.
Both the student and advisor are responsible for making their expectations clear to each other. Be sure to discuss this with your advisor.

Finding & Selecting an Advisor

When you enter the program, you will be assigned to the DGS as a default advisor, and they will help you navigate your first and choose an advisor that matches your interests and needs. We understand that your interests may be in flux, so you always have the option of switching advisors at a later date.

Your advisor should be a faculty member in the program whose expertise and project/research interests match closely with those that you intend to acquire. To learn more about the faculty in your program, consider consulting the following sources:

- Courses and seminars you attend
- Faculty profiles on the department website
- Faculty publications
- Current advisees of your prospective advisor

Additionally, you may wish to have a discussion with a prospective advisor. Below are some questions to consider asking in this discussion, though it is not a complete list.

You should spend some time identifying what is most important to you in your graduate training and ask questions accordingly.

Questions to Ask of Prospective Advisors
Adapted from IPiB handbook

- What types of projects would you be excited to supervise?
- Would these projects expose me to a variety of different fields or approaches?
- In general, how available will you be to answer questions I might have?
- What is your philosophy regarding the amount of guidance the advisor should provide to a student during preparation of the prelim, prospectus, dissertation writing, etc.?
- What are your expectations for the amount of time I should spend each day/week on research?
- Do you encourage your students to attend seminars and reading groups, including those that may be outside of their narrow field of interest/research?
- Would you be able to recommend professional meetings where your students can interact with colleagues/researchers from other institutions?
- Do you include your graduate students in professional activities that will familiarize them with their field of interest/research, such as reviewing manuscripts and meeting with visiting speakers?
- How long do you think it should take me to get my degree?
- What are your former graduate students (if any) doing now?
- What is your general philosophy of graduate training and what goals do you have for your graduate students?

No faculty member is obligated to accept a student's request to serve as advisor, though invitations are often accepted unless the faculty member judges that a different advisor would serve your needs better.

Students should inform Miriam Fagan (graduate program coordinator) and Farid Masrour (DGS) when they have chosen a new advisor.

Changing Your Advisor

As the advisor-student relationship is one of mutual agreement, it may be terminated by either party. If you decide that you would prefer working with a different advisor, discuss this with your prospective advisor to seek the change.

Commented [LP5]: The Graduate School recently recommended that all programs publish a process for when an advisor drops a student. I have a few examples, and am planning to work on some general guidance this summer. Hoping you're willing to chat with me about it and be a bit of a test case.

If you change your advisor, you must notify your Graduate Program Coordinator and follow any related procedures.

Every graduate student must have an advisor or else they may be suspended from graduate study at UW-Madison by the Graduate School. Be sure to follow procedures to re-select a new advisor (described above) prior to finalizing the termination of your current advising relationship. You can confirm that the name of your advisor has been

updated in the official record by looking in your Student Center on MyUW (my.wisc.edu) under “Academic Progress” and then “Advisors.”

A Graduate Student Guide to Working with Faculty Advisors

Through this interactive, self-paced micro-course, graduate students learn about the characteristics of functional and dysfunctional relationships with faculty advisors, strategies for communicating effectively and aligning expectations, as well as program grievance processes and Hostile and Intimidating Behavior resources. Completion of the micro-course takes about 20 minutes and is optional but encouraged for all graduate students.

Mentoring Networks

In addition to a formal advisor, you are encouraged to develop a broad network of individuals who can provide academic and professional mentorship during and beyond your time as a graduate student.

Students can develop a mentoring network within the department by:

- Attending office hours for seminars and keeping in touch with instructor after the course.
- Attending department events.
- Attending a reading group (or organizing your own!).
- Spending time in the department, including your office and department lounge. This is a good way to develop mentoring relationships with other graduate students. Some of the most valuable mentoring you receive may be from more advanced graduate students.
- Treating TA assignments as opportunities to develop a mentoring relationship with your primary instructor. Take the opportunity to discuss pedagogy or shared philosophical interests.
- Setting up individual meetings with faculty in their offices to ask about their research or seek advice about a philosophical project.

Students can develop a mentoring network outside the department by:

- Attending a talk on campus outside the philosophy department, especially if you have interdisciplinary interests.
- Attending a philosophy conference or workshop.
- Offering to chair a session or provide comments on a paper at a conference or workshop.
- Presenting a poster or paper at a conference or workshop.
- Looking for opportunities to organize or co-organize a philosophy event.

- Explore public philosophy opportunities in Madison, building on the example and success of past graduate students.

Annual Written Feedback

You will be provided written feedback for each seminar you take and course you TA. This can be found in your box folder. In addition, every advisor will provide their advisee with feedback on their Planning-Reflection Exercise at the end of each academic year.

Commented [LP6]: This is an aside, but I am very interested to learn more about how the department facilitates this - do you give instructors templates for reviewing their TAs? Do you track this feedback?

Degree Requirements

MA Degree

Philosophy does not admit students directly into the MA program. However, PhD students can earn an MA on the way to completing their PhD. We are also able to award the MA to students who finish coursework and decide to leave the program before completing their PhD.

The official statement of all requirements can be found here. Please direct questions about degree requirements to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Summary of MA Requirements

1. **Credit Hours**: Complete at least 34 credit hours.
2. **Seminars**: Earn a B or better in 10 philosophy seminars at the 800-900 level.[1]
3. **701**: Complete 1 philosophy reading seminar (701).[2]
4. **Distribution Requirements**: Complete:
    a. **History**: Two Seminars (Any figure or period);
    b. **Value Theory**: One Seminar (Moral, Political, Legal, or Aesthetics)
    c. **Analytic**: One Seminar (Logic, Metaphysics, Epistemology, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Language, or Philosophy of Mind)
5. **Teaching Course**: Complete the Teaching Philosophy Course.
6. **Logic**: Complete the Logic Requirement (by the end of the 1st Year).

Doctoral Degree

[1] Please note:
(a) The Proseminar counts toward this requirement.
(b) Students may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to have 1 seminar from another department count toward this requirement.
(c) Students may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to have one 500-level course in Philosophy toward this requirement.
[2] Students may take another 800-900 level course in place of this requirement.

The official statement of all requirements can be found here. Please address questions about degree requirements to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Summary of PhD Requirements

1. **Seminars**: Earn a B or better in 10 philosophy seminars at the 800-900 level.[3]
2. **Proseminar**: Complete the Proseminar.
3. **Distribution Requirements**: Complete:
    a. **History**: Two Seminars (Any figure or period);
    b. **Value Theory**: One Seminar (Moral, Political, Legal, or Aesthetics)
    c. **Analytic**: One Seminar (Logic, Metaphysics, Epistemology, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Language, or Philosophy of Mind)
4. **701**: Satisfactorily complete 2 philosophy reading seminars (701).[4]
5. **Minor Field**: Complete the Minor Field Requirement.[5]
6. **Teaching Course**: Complete the Teaching Philosophy Course.
7. **Logic**: Complete the Logic Requirement (by the end of the 1st Year).
8. **Prelim**: Complete the Preliminary Exam Requirement (by the end of 3rd Year).
9. **Prospectus**: Complete the Prospectus Requirement (by the end of 4th Year).
10. **Thesis Defense**: Complete the Defense Requirements for the Dissertation.

Transfer Credits: Students may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to have prior graduate-level coursework from another university count toward these requirements. Typically, no more than two such courses may count toward these requirements.

Enrollment Requirements

For your reference, below are the Graduate School's policies related to course enrollment requirements and limitations. Miriam is a good first point of contact if you have questions about these policies.

Adding / Dropping Courses
grad.wisc.edu/documents/add-drop

Auditing Courses
policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1224

Canceling Enrollment

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[3] Please note:
(a) The Proseminar counts toward this requirement.
(b) Students may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to have 1 seminar from another department count toward this requirement.
(c) Students may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to have one 500-level course in Philosophy toward this requirement.
[4] Students may take another 800-900 level course in place of this requirement.
[5] We strongly recommend students to fulfill this requirement by Option B: The Distributed Minor.

grad.wisc.edu/documents/canceling-enrollment

Continuous Enrollment Requirement for Dissertators
policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1204

Enrollment Accountability
grad.wisc.edu/documents/enrollment-accountability

Minimum Enrollment Requirements
policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1208

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Your continuation as a graduate student at UW-Madison requires that you maintain satisfactory academic progress or successfully petition to the Graduate Studies Committee for an exception (see information about Academic Exceptions and Appeals here). Failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress can impact your academic standing (detailed below), financial aid (see this policy page: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1040), or funding. Our program has its own definition of satisfactory academic progress and related procedures that supplement Graduate School policy, as described in this section and in the Graduate Guide.

See below for information about the department's criteria for satisfactory progress and the procedure for probation and dismissal from the program. According to department procedures, formal dismissal is always preceded by a warning letter or probation period, during which the student has an opportunity to successfully meet the department's criteria for satisfactory progress.[6] If you have not received a warning letter or a probation letter, you are not in immediate jeopardy of being dismissed or losing funding. If you are unsure whether you are currently making satisfactory progress, speak to your advisor or the DGS right away.

Definition

Information about how the Graduate School determines satisfactory academic progress can be found at this policy page: policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1218. In addition to the Graduate School's monitoring of satisfactory academic progress, this program regularly reviews the satisfactory academic progress of its students.

Department of Philosophy - Criteria for Satisfactory Progress

In addition to the Graduate School requirements for minimum credit and minimal GPA, the philosophy department has criteria for satisfactory progress. Below are the

[6] The one exception is failing the preliminary exam for a second time, which results in immediate dismissal. In this case, the first failure provides the student with advance warning that they are in danger of being dismissed from the program.

department's criteria for satisfactory progress. Each criterion is followed by the timeline of the department's response. A general account of the steps leading to probation and dismissal are in the sections that follow.

1. Student has at the end of any academic year a cumulative GPA below 3.5 in philosophy graduate seminars (those numbered 800 and above).
    - Warning letter at end of year one, probation following Spring semester.

2. Student is in the opinion of the major professor and the department Chair not taking a sufficient course load in philosophy to indicate serious pursuit of a PhD. in philosophy, or
    - Warning letter, probation following semester.

3. Student has not attempted to complete the logic requirement by the end of the first year in residence and continued to attempt to complete the logic requirement in each subsequent semester until completing this requirement, or
    - Warning letter by end of first year, probation following Spring semester.

4. Student has not completed the logic requirement by the end of the second year in residence, or
    - Warning letter in January of second year, dismissed by the end of the summer.

5. Student has at the end of any academic year two or more incompletes that have been on the student's record for one semester or more, or
    - The Graduate School enforces a strict policy regarding incompletes. The Graduate School gives students 1 semester to resolve an incomplete. If you have not resolved an incomplete after one semester, you will not be able to enroll in the following semester. The department cannot fund a student who is not enrolled. Consult the Graduate Coordinator or the DGS for exact deadlines.

6. Student has not satisfied the history of philosophy requirement by the end of the third year of residence, or
    - Warning letter January of third year, probation following Fall semester.

7. Student has not become a dissertator by the end of the fourth year of residence, or
    - Warning letter in September of fifth year, probation following Spring.

8. Student has not passed the examination on the dissertation prospectus by (a) the end of the fourth year in residence or (b) within one year after passing the prelim, whichever is later.
    - Warning letter in September of fifth year, probation following Spring.

9. Student has not submitted a passing prelim by the end of the seventh semester.
    - Warning letter after first failure, dismissal after second failure.

Procedure for Probation

Stage 1: It's brought to the Graduate Studies Committee's attention that a student has not met a marker of satisfactory progress. (See the department's criteria for satisfactory progress here.)

Stage 2: The Graduate Studies Committees decides whether to issue a warning letter for probation. (This includes a fact-finding stage in where we investigate whether the initial red flag is less concerning with appropriate context.)

Stage 3: A warning letter is issued which outlines what steps the student must take to avoid probation and what date these steps must be successfully taken by.

Stage 4: A probation letter is issued notifying the student that they are on probation because they did not successfully take the necessary steps outlined in the warning letter by the predetermined date. This letter will outline what steps the student must take to avoid dismissal from the program and what dates these steps must be successfully taken by. At this point the student is considered not in good academic standing and their funding commitment will no longer necessarily be honored.

Stage 5: A dismissal letter is issued notifying the student that they are dismissed from the program because they did not successfully take the necessary steps outlined in the probation letter.

Students can appeal the decision of the Graduate Studies Committee at Stages 3, 4, and 5 with the Appeals Committee.

Commented [LP7]: I think it's worth pointing out that at this point the student is considered not in good academic standing and their funding commitment will no longer be honored.

Procedure for Dismissal

Stage 1: It's brought to the Graduate Studies Committee's attention that a student has not met a marker of satisfactory progress. (See the department's criteria for satisfactory progress here.)

Stage 2: The Graduate Studies Committees decides whether to issue a warning letter for dismissal. (This includes a fact-finding stage in where we investigate whether the initial red flag is less concerning with appropriate context.)

Stage 3: A warning letter is issued which outlines what steps the student must take to avoid probation and what date these steps must be successfully taken by.

Stage 4: A dismissal letter is issued notifying the student that they are dismissed from the program because they did not successfully take the necessary steps outlined in the warning letter.

Students can appeal the decision of the Graduate Studies Committee at Stages 3 and 4 with the Appeals Committee.

Consequences of Probation

When a student goes on probation, their funding guarantee is immediately revoked. A student on probation may still be offered a teaching position (TA or lecturer), if one is available. Students may also seek funding outside the department.

While on probation, a student is not eligible for appointment as a department PA, RA, or tutor position, nor will they be recommended by the department for a fellowship. Students on probation will also not be eligible for summer funding.

Academic Exception Petitions

Academic exceptions are considered on an individual case by case basis and should not be considered a precedent. Deviations from normal progress are highly discouraged, but the program recognizes that there are in some cases extenuating academic and personal circumstances.

Petitions for course exceptions/substitutions or exceptions to the Satisfactory Progress Expectations (academic or conduct) shall be directed to the Director of Graduate Studies along with the Graduate Studies Committee.

More generally, the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the student's advisor, may grant extensions to normal progress requirements for students who face circumstances as noted in university regulations, this includes childbirth, adoption, significant responsibilities with respect to elder or dependent care obligations, disability or chronic illness, or circumstances beyond one's personal control. Where warranted, the petition should provide good evidence of plans and ability to return to conformance with the standard and to acceptably complete the program.

Academic Appeals Process

Students may appeal decisions by the Graduate Studies Committee. The case would then go to the Appeals Committee, which includes the department chair (who chairs the committee) and two other senior faculty members. The purpose of the Appeals Committee is to provide an independent verdict on academic appeals, and so no faculty member will serve on both the Appeals Committee and the Graduate Studies

Commented [LP8]: This section does not actually describe a process. Who does the appeal need to be submitted to, by when, and what should it contain? Is this info somewhere else? Wherever the process is described in detail, the next step of appealing to L&S should also be mentioned https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/147805

Committee at the same time. Should the decision from our Appeals Committee be protested, students may appeal to L&S (see here: https://kb.wisc.edu/ls/147805)

If you have a non-academic grievance to report (for example, sexual harassment, workplace bullying, etc.), the department has separate grievance procedures, which are described below.

Personal Conduct Expectations

Professional Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards maintains detailed guidance on student rights and responsibilities related to learning in a community that is safe and fosters integrity and accountability. You are responsible for keeping aware of their policies and procedures, found at the following page: conduct.students.wisc.edu

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct is governed by state law, UW System Administration Code Chapter 14. For further information on this law, what constitutes academic misconduct, and procedures related to academic misconduct, see:

The Graduate School

Academic Policies & Procedures: Misconduct, Academic
grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-academic

Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards

Academic Misconduct Website
conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct

Academic Misconduct Flowchart
conduct.students.wisc.edu/documents/academic-misconduct-flow-chart

Non-Academic Misconduct

Non-academic misconduct is governed by state law, UW System Administration Code Chapters 17 and 18. For further information on these laws, what constitutes non-academic misconduct, and procedures related to non-academic misconduct, see:

The Graduate School

Academic Policies & Procedures: Misconduct, Non-Academic
grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-nonacademic

Office for Student Conduct and Community Standards

Non-Academic Misconduct Website
conduct.students.wisc.edu/nonacademic-misconduct

University of Wisconsin System (UWS)

Chapter 17: Student Non-Academic Disciplinary Procedures
docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/17

Chapter 18: Conduct on University Lands
docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/18

Research Misconduct

Graduate students are held to the same standards of responsible conduct of research as faculty and staff. Further information about these standards and related policies and procedures can be found at:

The Graduate School

Academic Policies & Procedures: Responsible Conduct of Research
grad.wisc.edu/documents/responsible-conduct-of-research

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education

Research Policies
research.wisc.edu/compliance-policy

Hostile and Intimidating Behavior (Bullying)

Hostile and intimidating behavior (HIB), sometimes referred to as "bullying," is prohibited by university policy applicable to faculty, academic staff, and university staff. For further definition, policy, and procedures related to HIB see: hr.wisc.edu/hib. Students who feel they have been subject to HIB are encouraged to review the informal and formal options on the "Addressing HIB" tab of this website.

Grievance Procedures[7]

[7] Students who wish to appeal a decision by the Graduate Studies Committee regarding their academic progress should refer to the separate appeals process described above.

Any student who feels unfairly treated or aggrieved by faculty, staff, or another student is encouraged to discuss their concern directly with the person responsible for the objectionable action. If the student is uncomfortable making direct contact with the individual(s) involved, they should consult their advisor or a member of the Graduate Studies Committee. The committee is comprised of the Director of Graduate Studies (who chairs the committee) and two other senior faculty members. A list of the current committee members is posted in the department on the bulletin board next to the mailboxes.

The Graduate Studies Committee's function is to provide a body in which graduate students may raise a concern about harassment or discrimination and seek counsel about resolving the matter informally and civilly. If a grievance concerns a faculty member presently on the Graduate Studies Committee, that faculty member will be recused.

The procedure is as follows:

- An individual may approach any member of the Committee to raise a concern about the instance of harassment or discrimination and consult on appropriate courses of action.
- An individual may at any time request that the Director of Graduate Studies, as chair of the committee, report a concern about an instance of harassment or discrimination to the entire Committee, in which case the Committee will provide counsel about resolving the matter through appropriate courses of action.
- At any time the graduate student may bring the concern to the attention of the appropriate higher administrative authority.

For information about the University's policies and resources, see the following links.

Discrimination
https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/discrimination/

Grievances and Appeals
https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/

Sexual Harassment
https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/harassment/

Incident Reporting (Hate, Bias, Sexual Assault, Hazing, Students of Concern, Bullying)

The Dean of Students Office maintains a portal to report incidents of hate, bias, sexual assault, hazing, dating/domestic violence, stalking, missing students, and students displaying other concerning behaviors at UW-Madison:

Dean of Students Incident Reporting
doso.students.wisc.edu/report-an-issue

As noted above in "Personal Conduct Expectations," students who feel they have been subject to hostile and/or intimidating behavior (i.e., bullying) are encouraged to review the informal and formal options for addressing this behavior (including filing complaints when desired) at:

Human Resources Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Website
hr.wisc.edu/hib

Funding, Employment, and Finances

"Funding" is a term used to describe university employment or support to cover some or all of your costs of graduate education. All philosophy graduate students have either five or six years of guaranteed funding, and the department is often able to offer teaching appointments to students who are beyond their funding guarantee. See the next section for more information on the funding guarantee.

Funding within our department typically comes in the form of teaching appointments, such as teaching assistantships or lectureships. Additional opportunities may include project assistantships, where you assist a faculty member with research or special projects. You might also receive a fellowship or scholarship—and these are sometimes awarded in addition to another appointment. Other paid positions within the department, such as grading for a course or assisting our administrative team with special projects, are also occasionally available. These roles are usually limited in hours and responsibilities, and they are typically supplemental to a primary teaching appointment.

The type of support you receive will likely change over the course of your graduate career. It is common for students to serve as teaching assistants during their first two years and transition into lecturing roles at some point in their third year. But the kind of appointment you have may vary from semester-to-semester. You may be a teaching assistant one semester, a lecturer the next, and then a project assistant the following semester. You might then return as a teaching assistant the semester after that. As you progress through the program and gain more experience, you will build a diverse teaching portfolio and be prepared to teach a wide variety of courses.

The department distributes application materials for teaching appointments to all graduate students a few months before each semester. All students are required complete and submit these applications, even if they are within the funding guarantee. Be sure to submit your application by the stated deadline—or indicate on the forms if

you do not wish to be considered for an appointment. The application will allow you to note any scheduling constraints (such as coursework that may conflict with certain appointments). We do our best to accommodate such requests. You'll also be able to rank your appointment preferences. While we strive to honor student preferences, the process of making appointments involves balancing multiple factors. These include: applicant preferences, seniority in the program, previous performance in teaching roles (based on supervisor reports and student evaluations), breadth and depth of past experience as a TA or lecturer (and here we think about this both retrospectively in terms of what one is well-prepared to teach given past experience, and prospectively in terms of what would be good for one to teach in order to develop as a teacher), and performance in related coursework. We also consider things like faculty preferences and needs, our needs to fill all of our available positions, etc. As you can imagine, these considerations sometimes conflict, and appointment decisions are rarely straightforward. Nevertheless, we are committed to making the process as fair and transparent as possible. If you have any questions about the appointment process, feel free to get in touch with the Assistant to the Chair.

Summer funding is addressed in your admissions Offer Letter. Most students receive support through scholarships/fellowships. You can also apply to be a lecturer for a summer course, as we typically offer a handful of online classes each summer. We also frequently have hourly positions for graders to assist with some of these classes. The lectureships and grader positions are almost always on top of the scholarship/fellowship support that students receive.

The Graduate School maintains policies related to graduate student funding/employment:

Maximum Levels of Appointments
grad.wisc.edu/documents/maximum-levels-of-appointments

Concurrent Appointments for Fellows/Trainees
grad.wisc.edu/documents/concurrent-appointments

Enrollment Requirements for Graduate Assistants
policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1208

Eligibility for Summer RA, TA, PA, and LSA Appointments
policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-5089

Guaranteed Commitment

Commented [LP9]: Please use the term "Funding Commitment" instead. I am supporting the Graduate School's attempts to use consistent language across campus.

We offer each graduate student a commitment of financial support while they work toward a doctorate in the Department of Philosophy. More information about this commitment is in your official admissions Offer Letter. The financial commitment will provide support for a period of six continuous academic years, and this support includes a stipend, eligibility for comprehensive health care coverage, and full remission of

resident or non-resident tuition. Students may still have to pay applicable fees, including segregated fees, each term.

In the College of Letters & Science, several types of support are available to fulfill this guarantee. As mentioned above, it might include a teaching assistantship, lectureship, project assistantship, fellowship, etc., and the type of position/funding a student has may vary from semester-to-semester. However, while under this commitment, each student in our department will be supported at least at the level of 50%. This includes international students. Note that current regulations prohibit international students from having more than a 50% appointment during any given term.

Our financial commitment is conditional upon making satisfactory academic progress and having satisfactory work performance. It is thus imperative that you stay on track with academic requirements and meet the expectations of your employment each semester. You will have an annual review with your academic advisor and receive regular feedback regarding your teaching and other work performance. (See the relevant sections above for information on satisfactory academic progress and work performance.)

When Your Past Your FundingCommitment

Campus-Wide and External Sources

To help you find resources to pay for costs related to graduate education, the Graduate School provides a comprehensive overview of the funding process on campus as well as descriptions of the types of funding available, sources of funding, minimum stipend rates and benefits, and links to applicable human resources policies (e.g. GAPP) at:

Graduate School: Funding and Financial Aid
grad.wisc.edu/funding

External Fellowship Database
grad.wisc.edu/funding/external-fellowship-database

UW-Madison Libraries Grants Information Collection
library.wisc.edu/memorial/collections/grants-information-collection

Additional Policies & Resources

Graduate School Policy: Residence for Tuition Purposes
grad.wisc.edu/documents/residence-for-tuition-purposes

Employee Disability Resources
employeedisabilities.wisc.edu

Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (GAPP)

hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp

Professional Development

When you participate in professional development, you build skills needed to succeed academically and thrive in your career. The following are professional development activities that we recommend for your consideration. Required professional development will be detailed in “Degree Requirements” above.

On Campus

The Graduate School develops and curates a wide variety of resources for professional development, including a tool to assess your skills, set goals, and create a plan with recommended activities on campus (e.g., the popular “Individual Development Plan” or IDP) as well as programming to help you explore careers, prepare for a job search, build your network and learn from alumni, manage projects, communicate about your research, and much more.

DiscoverPD helps master’s and doctoral students at UW-Madison advance their academic and professional goals with customized recommendations based on a skills self-assessment. The 400+ professional development recommendations available in the DiscoverPD database are available in a range of formats to best meet your diverse needs, including in-person, virtual, asynchronous, and synchronous opportunities. All of this can be found at:

Professional Development from the Graduate School
grad.wisc.edu/professional-development

The Graduate School communicates professional development opportunities through an e-newsletter, *GradConnections*, that all graduate students receive at their wisc.edu email. Graduate students in traditional graduate degree programs receive the newsletter weekly during the academic year and every other week in the summer. Graduate students in online degree programs receive the newsletter every other week during the academic year and monthly during the summer.

Commented [LP10]: You could consider adding a section on professional development related to teaching, referring to this TA Guide site https://ctlm.wisc.edu/taguide/ (which I helped the CTLM build) and my website https://teachlearn.ls.wisc.edu/tas/ (shameless plug)