



University of California, Santa Barbara
Program Learning Outcomes

B.A. in Philosophy

Students graduating with a B.A. in Philosophy should be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to follow the principles of sound informal reasoning (i.e., reasoning as it occurs in prose contexts) in writing, and an ability to critically apply those principles when reading philosophical texts.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the basics of symbolic logic, including the ability to formalize arguments and evaluate their validity using one or more formal techniques (such as applying systems of logically valid inference rules, or determining validity using the method of truth tables).
- Analyze complex and difficult philosophical texts, and identify such texts' principal arguments and premises.
- Appraise arguments presented in philosophical texts, identify relevant objections to an argument, and offer a reasoned evaluation of their force.
- Relate the motivations for and problems that beset a range of significant philosophical positions and theories, state such a position clearly and accurately, and evaluate the force of considerations and arguments for and against it.

In addition, students in the Core Philosophy Track should be able to:

- Describe the major movements in the history of philosophy in either the ancient or the modern period (or both), and possess a deeper and more detailed understanding of the work of at least three historically important philosophers.
- Describe the major topics and problems in at least three of the areas that stand at the center of contemporary philosophical inquiry in the analytic tradition, including metaphysics, theory of knowledge, philosophy of mind, ethics, the philosophy of language, and the philosophy of science.

While students in the Ethics and Public Policy Track should be able to:

- Describe the major topics and problems in ethics, and in at least one of the other areas that are regarded by the analytic tradition as lying at the center of contemporary philosophical thought, including metaphysics, the theory of knowledge, philosophy of mind, the philosophy of language, and the philosophy of science.

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Program Learning Outcomes, continued

- Describe the major topics and problems in at least four distinct areas of practical or applied philosophy, including the philosophy of the social sciences, political philosophy, theories of justice, social philosophy, the philosophy of international relations, the history of political thought, moral psychology, normative ethics, meta-ethics, the philosophy of law, and the philosophy of punishment and responsibility.