MASTER OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY
Master of Arts in Philosophy

Program

The Master of Arts in philosophy at The American University in Cairo gives students a unique opportunity to focus on both Islamic and European philosophy in the heart of cultural and geographical crossroads where these traditions meet. Graduate students are able to explore one of the world’s oldest and most fascinating cities while simultaneously examining a broad spectrum of philosophical traditions — Eastern and Western, Christian and Islamic. Students interested in Islamic philosophy are able to pursue Arabic-language classes as part of the program requirements, while students with an interest in contemporary European philosophy are taught by a team of internationally recognized specialists. All students receive a high-quality, liberal arts education and emerge from the program with in-depth knowledge of the discipline. The program prepares students to embark upon doctoral research in philosophy and provides them with an advanced understanding of the intellectual and historical roots of the contemporary world.
Faculty and Research

Faculty members in the Department of Philosophy are leading scholars in their fields. Recognized for their contributions, many have received national and international awards, while others have been recognized by AUC through the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award and the Excellence in Research and Creative Endeavors Award. In addition, AUC philosophy professors have been invited as visiting lecturers in Europe, the United States and South America.

Research Interests

Alessandro Topa, visiting assistant professor; PhD, Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-University
- Theory of Categories
- Classical Greek Philosophy
- Philosophy of Language
- German Idealism
- Philosophy of Media
- American Pragmatism

Catarina Belo, associate professor; DPhil, University of Oxford
- Islamic Philosophy and Theology
- Medieval Philosophy
- Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion

Ernest Wolf-Gazo, professor; PhD, Bonn University
- 20th-Century German Philosophy
- Max Weber and the Social Sciences
- Philosophical Anthropology
- Alfred North Whitehead
- Philosophy of History
Gavin Rae, assistant professor; PhD, University of Warwick

- German Idealism (especially Hegel)
- Existentialism
- Phenomenology
- 20th-Century French Philosophy

Graham Harman, distinguished university professor; PhD, DePaul University

- Object-oriented Philosophy
- Actor-Network Theory
- Metaphysics
- Phenomenology

Matthew Crippen, visiting assistant professor; PhD, York University

- American Philosophy
- History and Philosophy of Science
- Existentialism and Phenomenology
- Ancient Greek Philosophy
- Aesthetics and Philosophy of Film
- History of late 19th & 20th-Century Philosophy

Nathaniel Bowditch, associate professor and dean of HUSS; PhD, Johns Hopkins University

- Ethics
- History of Ethics
- Moral Psychology

Rashmika Pandya, assistant professor; PhD, McMaster University

- Phenomenology
- Continental Philosophy
- Ethics
Richard Fincham, assistant professor; PhD, University of Warwick
• Kant and 19th-Century German Philosophy
• Influence of Humean Skepticism on Early German Idealism

Robert Switzer, associate professor and dean of undergraduate studies; PhD, Pennsylvania State University
• 19th and 20th-Century Philosophy, Phenomenology
• Aesthetics, Philosophy of Music
• Ethics

Steffen Stelzer, professor and chair; PhD, Free University of Berlin
• Metaphysics, Eastern and Western
• Rationality and Revelation
• Ethics of Knowledge

Surti Singh, assistant professor; PhD, DePaul University
• 20th-Century Continental Philosophy
• Social and Political Philosophy
• Aesthetics
• Feminist Theory
Research Facilities

The AUC Library contains an outstanding holding of more than 10,000 books and approximately 10,000 e-books on philosophy, with an emphasis on classical German philosophy and contemporary French philosophy, as well as medieval Islamic philosophy and theology. The books are available in their original languages and in translation. In addition, the electronic library offers access to a large variety of databases, providing resources and information that complement the library's physical collection. Periodical subscriptions also offer more than 668,000 journal articles and 32,000 book reviews, while document delivery services provide access to a wide array of resources from other libraries around the world.

Course work

A minimum of 24 credit hours are required for the Master of Arts in philosophy. Eight courses must be taken, of which at least six must be 5000-level philosophy courses. Students are required to follow the philosophy graduate core, a series of advanced 5000-level seminars that are open only to master's students. Two such 5000-level seminars are taught each semester. The department also offers a series of electives, a select number of undergraduate courses that may also be taken at the 5000 level.

Required Core Courses:
PHIL 5201/500 - Classical Western Philosophy (3 cr.)
PHIL 5202/501 - Advanced Seminar in Islamic Philosophy (3 cr.)
PHIL 5203/504 - Kant and Idealism (3 cr.)
PHIL 5204/505 - Advanced Seminar in Phenomenology (3 cr.)

Electives:
PHIL 5111/502 - Metaphysics (3 cr.)
PHIL 5199/503 - Selected Topics in Philosophy (3 cr.)
PHIL 5112/510 - Advanced Seminar in Aesthetics (3 cr.)
PHIL 5113/517 - Current Trends in Philosophy (3 cr.)
PHIL 5114/518 - Philosophical Masterpieces (3 cr.)
PHIL 5115/520 - Philosophical Figures (3 cr.)
PHIL 5116/530 - Advanced Ethics (3 cr.)
PHIL 5117/560 - Philosophy of Language and Communication (3 cr.)
PHIL 5118/562 - Formal and Mathematical Logic (3 cr.)
PHIL 5119/558 - Advanced Seminar in Political Philosophy (3 cr.)
PHIL 5299/599 - Research Guidance and Thesis
Thesis

Before commencing work on the thesis, students are required to write a thesis proposal. The department conceives of the thesis as a research paper of approximately 15,000 words in length, which should demonstrate the student's ability to conduct research and write critically and pointedly about a given subject. There is also a final defense of the finished thesis.

The philosophy graduate program director organizes a series of noncredit seminars at the beginning of every academic year. All graduate students are expected to attend these seminars in order to ensure that they possess the research and academic writing skills required for tackling the thesis (PHIL 5299). This training is reinforced by the department's graduate core courses, in which students are required to locate and engage with relevant secondary literature, and write papers on these topics in a professional manner.

Career Opportunities

This program prepares students for careers in which critical and analytical skills are valued, as well as provide them with the necessary foundation to pursue a doctoral degree.
Testimonials

“This is a program that would contribute much to learning in Cairo and would also be of major importance for AUC as it continues to interact with fellow local institutions and to form a diverse student body from Egypt and abroad.”
• Charles E. Butterworth, emeritus professor of political philosophy, University of Maryland

"Faculty members come from diverse backgrounds and have the capacity to staff an efficient and unique MA program.”
• Don Ihde, distinguished professor of philosophy, Stony Brook University

"The research and publications indicate a highly productive international faculty body.”
• Professor Marion Smiley, professor of ethics, Brandeis University

“I am confident that the proposed program will appeal to many students from Egypt, other Arab countries, Europe and North America. Considering the strength of the teaching staff and having seen the proposed outline of courses, I have no doubt that this program will offer students an excellent learning experience and will quickly gain an international reputation.”
• Ayman Shihadeh, senior lecturer in medieval intellectual history, Faculty of Language and Cultures, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

“I am thrilled at the opportunity to study philosophy through an MA program from AUC.”
• Khadeega Gafar, researcher, Dominican Institute for Oriental Studies; MA candidate in philosophy, Cairo University

“I strongly believe I would benefit from an MA in Islamic philosophy from AUC.”
• Relwan Onikoyi, UNC Chapel Hill alumnus, BA in philosophy

“Had there been a philosophy MA program at AUC when I finished my BA, I definitely would have applied.”
• Mina Wardakhan, AUC alumnus; graduate student in philosophy at the University of Dundee, Scotland
Admission Requirements

The Master of Arts in philosophy is aimed at any bachelor’s degree holder with a background in the study of philosophy.

The MA requires a standard AUC application for graduate studies (including the required English-language test scores). In addition, applicants must submit a writing sample of at least 1,000 words, demonstrating critical thinking.

Funding Opportunities

The University offers a number of competitive fellowships for graduate studies, in addition to graduate merit fellowships and the work-study program.

For more information on faculty, research, courses descriptions and applications, visit the Department of Philosophy website: www.aucgypt.edu/huss/phil.
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