

PRE-MED & PHILOSOPHY

Are you pre-med, or otherwise headed for a career in health care, and interested in Philosophy? Here are some things to consider:

Do what you love!

As the Mallory-Wilson Center for Health Care Education suggests, you will be best served if you “pursue a major that interests you and where you can excel”, as professional schools do not give preference for admission based on any specific major (1). Medical schools and health care professions want applicants with a **broad base of knowledge** and strong backgrounds in **critical thinking, analytical reading and writing skills, and social and ethical concerns**.

Philosophy and the MCAT

On average, humanities majors do better on the MCAT than science majors:

MCAT 2018-2019 DATA (2)	BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES	HUMANITIES
Applicant Scores:	505.5	507.6
Matriculant scores:	511.0	512.1
Matriculation Rate:	40.22%	47.19%

Effective since 2015, the MCAT has been redesigned to emphasize a broader knowledge base and a deeper skill set, including (3):

- **Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior**
- **Critical Analysis and Reasoning Skills**

The study of Philosophy trains students in the fundamental methods of critical thinking, analysis, logic and reasoning, lucid argumentation and clear writing. Many of our core courses are pertinent to the expanded sections of the MCAT, and to the distinctive challenges of a career in health care. See reverse for a list of pertinent courses.

The questions that have no easy answers

Someday, when you graduate medical school, you will be practicing in your chosen field. At that time, how will you handle all of the questions that don't have easy answers? What will you do when there's no clear diagnosis, no test to run? How will you handle interactions with patients? What will your approach be to end of life issues? Our educational mission in the Philosophy Department is to equip our students with the tools of our discipline, empowering them to live as engaged philosophers, so that they will be better able to confront the many questions and challenges in life that have no easy answers.

The Department of Philosophy offers a Major, and Ethics Minor, and Thematic Sequences in Ethics and Reasoning. We also offer a course in Medical Ethics. See the flipside of this flyer for details.

1. <http://www.cas.miamioh.edu/mwche/advising/> (April 2013)
2. American Association of Medical Colleges, Table 18, “MCAT and GPAs for Applicants and Matriculants to U.S. Medical Schools by Primary Undergraduate Major, 2019.” <https://www.aamc.org/system/files/reports/1/factstablea17.pdf> (October 2019)
3. <https://www.aamc.org/students/aspiring/basics/280598/mcat-prep.html> (April 2013)

Where should I start?

The truth is, any philosophy course will work your analytical, reasoning, and critical thinking skills. Feel free to choose the according topics that interest you most! Here's some basic information to get you started:

- **Medical Ethics (PHL 365)**
 - This course is an advanced introduction to some of the major moral issues in health care. No pre-requisites. CAS-B. Offered annually.
- **Confronting Death (PHL 360A)**
 - This course is semester-long confrontation with death and dying. The course begins with current medical or scientific definitions of death and then turns to consider the metaphysics of death, various conceptions of death and dying held in different religious traditions, the activities surrounding death and the treatment of the dead, and some of the psychological aspects of death and dying. No prerequisites. CAS-B. Offered annually.
- **Ethics, Social, and Political Philosophy (CAS-B):**
 - **Introduction to Ethics (PHL 131)** An introduction to ethical theory and its application to moral issues relating to human conduct, social institutions and political systems. Fulfills MPF Humanities (IIB) requirement (3 credit hours). Offered every semester.
 - **Society and the Individual (PHL 103)** A study of the relationship between human beings and the societies in which they live, and of the implications different perspectives on this relationship have for a view of social justice. Fulfills MPF Humanities (IIB) requirement (3 credit hours). Offered every semester.
 - **Theories of Human Nature (PHL 105)** What does it mean to be human, and how do changing conceptions of human nature change our views of how we ought to live, of what values we ought to hold, and what we can know? The course considers various conceptions of the person in light of these questions. Fulfills MPF Humanities (IIB) requirement (3 credit hours). Offered every semester.
 - **Science and Culture (PHL 205)** A historical introduction to the influence of modern science on Euro-American culture. Offered annually.

With the exception of PHL 205, all of the above courses count towards the **Ethics Minor**. PHL 131, PHL 360A, and PHL 375 also count towards the **Ethics Thematic Sequence**.

- **Logic and Reasoning Courses (CAS-E):**
 - **Formal Logic (PHL 273)** Survey of elementary logical systems: Aristotelian, Boolean, sentential, quantified. Also fulfills MPF Humanities (IIB) requirement (4 credit hours). Offered Fall 2015.
 - **Symbolic Logic (PHL 373)** Study of standard notation, principles of inference, formal systems, methods of proof. Chief attention given to first-order predicate logic. Some focus placed on the philosophy of logic. Offered Spring 2016.

PHL 263, PHL 273, and PHL 373 count towards the **Reasoning Thematic Sequence**.

Dr. Facundo Alonso is the dedicated advisor in the Philosophy Department for students interested in pre-med and Philosophy. Feel free to contact him at any time for an advising appointment, or with any questions about the major, minor, or thematic sequences:

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