



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN WHITEWATER

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

PHILOSOPHY MINOR

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Philosophy Program is to provide students the opportunity to critically examine fundamental questions and issues concerning the nature of knowledge and reality, art, society, identity, morality and the good life, and methods of correct reasoning, as well as courses that survey these issues within the history of western philosophy. The philosophy minor is designed to complement any major field of study that demands higher order thinking skills, including the ability to understand and assess complex and competing points of view.

Philosophy is a basic field of inquiry that is neither part of nor reducible to any other discipline. As a discipline central to a liberal arts education, philosophy seeks to develop students' skills and knowledge, preparing them for life as a whole. To this end, it fosters critical, analytical, and creative thinking skills that are relevant to any subject matter.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are statements of what a student will know or be able to do when they have completed a program. They represent the knowledge and skills a program has determined are most important for students to gain from that program. The most useful SLOs are specific and measurable so the program can accurately assess the degree to which students have achieved each outcome, and they align with college and institution mission and values. Data on achievement of SLOs is used to make improvements in the program and increase student success.

Students who graduate from UW-Whitewater with a minor in Philosophy will meet the following student learning outcomes:

Subject Matter:

- Differentiate between the major fields of the discipline of philosophy (ethics, logic, epistemology, metaphysics) and some of the subfields (social philosophy, aesthetics, applied ethics, Existentialism, feminist philosophy).
- Explain the central features of the philosophies of some of the major figures in the history of philosophy (e.g., Plato, Descartes, Kant, Wittgenstein).
- Articulate basic concepts of logic (e.g., argument, conclusion, fallacy, inference, premise, proposition, soundness, validity).

Cognitive Development:

- Critically appraise philosophical arguments and theories.
- Describe and apply different ethical theories (Utilitarianism, Kantian deontology, virtue theories).
- Develop an informed view on philosophical issues.

Skills:

- Apply basic methods and techniques of reasoning and argumentation.
- Develop philosophical arguments.
- Analyze philosophical texts.
- Write philosophical arguments clearly.