Department of Philosophy
Michigan State University
http://www.msu.edu/unit/phl/

Graduate Student Handbook

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Overview of
The Philosophy Department and The Graduate Programs

The Philosophy Department's combination of a strong disciplinary core, outstanding strength in philosophical issues in medicine and health care, commitment to social and political philosophy, and cross-college interdisciplinary connections is making this one of the most distinctive and most interesting philosophy departments in the country, one in which scholars with solid disciplinary knowledge and training make contributions to the discipline and address pressing public issues.

The Department

The philosophy department faculty as a whole engages in research and scholarship over most of the range of periods, problems, key figures and schools of thought that are typically researched and taught in philosophy departments at comparable Association of American Universities (AAU)[1] and Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC)[2] institutions. The sub-disciplines of the history of philosophy, metaphysics and epistemology, philosophy of science, logic, philosophy of language, value theory, and continental philosophy are well-represented and dissertations in almost any area of Western philosophy can be more than competently directed.

The department has outstanding strength in philosophical issues in medicine and health care, commitment to social and political philosophy, and cross-college interdisciplinary connections that are making it one of the most distinctive and most interesting philosophy departments in the country, one in which scholars with solid disciplinary knowledge and training make contributions to the discipline and address pressing public issues.

There are 18 tenure-stream faculty with appointments in the philosophy department and 5 more faculty members who are philosophers whose appointments are in other units. All of these people are engaged in various ways with graduate students in the department and can serve on our students' doctoral guidance committees.

The graduate student population varies from year to year, but is generally around 30-35.

The philosophy department is housed in The College of Arts and Letters. In this handbook, the terms 'the college' or 'college' reference The College of Arts and Letters unless otherwise indicated.

Graduate Programs

The Department of Philosophy offers two graduate programs. The Ph.D. program is a 5-6 year program designed for students entering with a B.A. with a major in philosophy, and accommodating those entering with an M.A. in philosophy. The master's program is available to those with less academic preparation in the discipline or who want a terminal

[1] Association of American Universities. http://www.aau.edu/index.cfm

[2] An academic consortium of twelve major teaching and research universities in the Midwest. http://www.cic.uiuc.edu/about.shtml

master's degree. Those who earn the master's degree can then apply for admission to the Ph.D. program. In both programs there are broad distribution requirements to provide candidates with a solid grounding in most areas within the discipline. In the phase of the thesis or dissertation candidates may specialize in such areas as medical ethics and philosophy of health care, philosophy of biology, social and political philosophy, feminist philosophy, African-American philosophy, continental philosophy and ancient philosophy, and well as in the traditional sub-disciplines such as metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, philosophy of language.

We believe that when philosophers engage in interdisciplinary and/or extra-academic projects, they must bring to those venues a strong disciplinary background and training in order to make a distinctive contribution. In support of this, our programs include a solid disciplinary core and our graduate student population includes students working only or primarily in core disciplinary areas.

> The collective practice of philosophy at MSU is producing a union of the disciplinary mainstream, practical engagement of philosophy and practice-driven theory.

Interdisciplinary Study

We encourage doctoral students with interests in such areas as the biological sciences, health care, feminist studies, ancient studies, critical theory, cognitive science, and linguistics, to take a limited number of courses outside the department as part of their Ph.D. program. The doctoral program includes the option of an interdisciplinary minor field where up to six credits in other departments can be counted toward the coursework credit requirement. The department also provides opportunities for course work for graduate students in other departments.

The department participates in several interdisciplinary graduate programs:

- Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior
- Gender, Justice, and Environmental Change
- Cognitive Science
- Environmental Science and Policy
- African American and African Studies
- Ethics and Development

Completing an interdisciplinary graduate specialization typically requires the student to take credits in other departments, over and above the credit requirement for the philosophy M.A. or Ph.D.

Department faculty are also involved in developing graduate interdisciplinary specializations in: Women and Gender Studies; Peace and Justice Studies; Cognitive Science and Bioethics. We anticipate participation in the new programs in Environmental Studies and in Livelihood and Landscape Change in Global Perspective. The department is affiliated with the Doctor of Philosophy degree program in ecology, evolutionary biology and behavior. For information about a Doctor of Philosophy degree program that involves ecology, evolutionary biology and behavior and a major in the Department of Philosophy, refer to the statement on the doctoral program in ecology, evolutionary biology and behavior in the *College of Natural Science* section of the *Academic Programs* book (http://www.reg.msu.edu/UCC/AcademicPrograms.asp)

The Philosophy Department at Michigan State is positioned at the intersection of the primary social and scientific issues of the early 21st century: health, biotechnology, environment, development, democracy, the distribution of knowledge and power, and struggles against systematic forms of oppression and exploitation.

Goals of the Graduate Program

The academic programs and other department activities are designed to educate and prepare students to function productively as professional philosophers and teachers of philosophy at the college and university level and, as appropriate to their ambitions, in other professional venues related to their disciplinary or interdisciplinary specializations. Students are expected to be developing, to a professional level, the following capacities and competences:

- to read philosophical texts both canonical and current, closely and accurately, with mastery of distinctive terminology and recognizing distinctive kinds of argumentation;
- to discern and articulate philosophical issues and questions that arise in or are pertinent to those texts;
- to engage skillfully in philosophical conversation, comment and critique;
- to make a substantial contribution of their own to the discourses within the discipline (and as appropriate to the student's interests, across disciplines) both within the student's area of specialization and over a range both historical and topical that is considerably wider than that area;
- to write philosophical essays that clearly articulate views, positions and arguments in the literature and clearly articulate the author's own views, positions and arguments; effectively to present philosophical positions, doctrines and arguments orally;
- to craft syllabi and present philosophical ideas and arguments to students of philosophy and other non-professional audiences in ways that successfully inform, engage and cultivate philosophical skills;
- to function effectively in academic and professional settings as colleagues and as members both of the intellectual community and the institutional unit (department, program, college, etc.).

When graduate student work and progress are evaluated by faculty members, it is with respect to these capacities and competencies and the progress in developing them, that the judgments are made.

Achieving the Goals
Graduate students develop the skills and capacities of professional philosophers by active engagement in six domains:

1 *philosophy courses and seminars*
- The courses and seminars are offered routinely in the fall and spring semesters. Course descriptions are published in advance of the opening of the enrollment period for each semester.

2 *colloquia and other presentations such as faculty works-in-progress, dissertation defenses, talks by candidates for faculty positions, and the graduate students' speaker series*
- Colloquia and other presentations of philosophical work usually take place on Friday afternoons between 3 and 5 p.m., and are advertised on bulletin boards and by e-mail in the department. Graduate students should bracket this time in their own schedules and expect to attend events or meetings on many Fridays during fall and spring semesters.

3 *ad hoc discussions and informal study or reading groups*
- Informal discussions or reading groups are formed by anyone in the department who wishes to form them; graduate students should take the initiative to create groups that will engage them and promote their own interests.

4 *teaching philosophy courses, as an assistant or instructor*
- The doctoral program includes a required seminar in teaching philosophy, and the development of a teaching portfolio; all doctoral students are given some opportunity for mentored teaching experience at some time during their programs. From time to time there are meetings or workshops to discuss teaching issues, often initiated by teaching assistants. Teaching assistants should be alert to their own needs for such workshops or discussions and initiate them as appropriate.
- Students entering their first semester of teaching at MSU are required to attend the university's teaching assistant orientation. PHL 801, a seminar in teaching philosophy, is a required elements of the doctoral program.
- Students' development of a Teaching portfolio is a requirement of the doctoral program.

5 *departmental planning and governance*
- There are voting graduate student representatives on the department's Committee of the Whole, Advisory Policy Committee, Graduate Committee and Academic Environment Committee; the representatives are elected by the graduate students in a process of their own devising. Philosophy department graduate students are also eligible to serve as graduate student representatives on the College Graduate Committee (College of Arts and Letters) and on the University Graduate Committee (The Graduate School). The latter are appointed by the Council of Graduate Students. (See Appendix I for a sketch of relevant governance structures and committees.)

6 *informal social interaction and conversation with and faculty and among graduate students*

- There are opportunities for informal conversations at seminar meetings and at most department events such as colloquia and other presentations of papers or talks. After colloquia there usually is a reception, to which graduate students are always welcome. The new graduate student orientation generally includes a department social event and there is an annual fall department party. Many faculty members and many graduate students are in their offices a good deal of the time and generally can be engaged (as their time allows) for any interesting philosophical conversation. Graduate students should take advantage of these opportunities to enrich their pre-professional experience.

Students should be active at least to some degree in all six of these areas of opportunity for engagement and development of intellectual and collegial experience.

Extra-departmental activities supporting philosophical and professional development
There are many professional philosophy associations and societies—local, regional, national and international—with foci on various areas of interest within philosophy. Affiliation with such organizations provides contacts, education, stimulation and intellectual community that can be enormously supportive of one's professional development, both before and after getting the advanced degree. The primary national professional association for philosophy is the American Philosophical Association. http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/ The APA has a student membership that is not very expensive, and on its site is a quite comprehensive directory of other philosophical societies and associations. These groups hold meetings/conferences, publish journals and proceedings, have web-based communications, and operate listserves. To keep informed of opportunities for submissions of papers for conferences, graduate students should identify the groups that interest them and get on their mailing lists or listserves. Advice about what groups are most congenial to their interests can be gotten by talking with faculty and other graduate students who share those interests.

Modest support for travel expenses for presenting at conferences is available through the college and the graduate school. The form for applying is at:

http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/forms/travel.pdf

Submit the request to the Associate Chair of the department.

II. The Master's Program

The M.A. in philosophy at MSU is a two-year program that can serve as a terminal degree for those who want to pursue graduate work in the discipline of philosophy but do not aspire to a Ph.D. in philosophy. This would most often be the case for people whose professional aspirations are in some other field such as a health care field, library science, law or politics, environmental science, cognitive science, etc. The M.A. is also an appropriate entry into graduate study in philosophy for those who have an interest in continuing to the Ph.D., but do not have adequate undergraduate preparation in the discipline to enter a doctoral program. Such students may apply for admission to the doctoral program upon completing their M.A.

Interdisciplinary Study
Master's students may complete any of the master's level graduate interdisciplinary specializations (some of which have their own admissions processes and standards), but courses/seminars outside the philosophy department do not count toward the credit requirements or area distribution requirements for the philosophy M.A. Completing an interdisciplinary graduate specialization while completing the master's degree may delay completion of the degree. Given appropriate planning and lead time, and the permission of the Associate Chair and the Chair, this can be accommodated; see below, "Satisfactory Progress to the Degree and Eligibility for Financial Support."

2.1. *Admission to the MA program*
Applicants for admission are required to submit a transcript of all previous undergraduate and graduate work, three letters of recommendation, a Statement of Purpose, and at least one example of the applicant's writing in Philosophy.

The minimal admission requirements for the master's program are:

a. The Bachelor's degree or its equivalent.
b. A grade point average of at least 3.0 for the last two years of undergraduate work.
c. At least 15 semester credits in philosophy (this requirement may be waived for applicants with outstanding records in other disciplines).
d. For international students, a minimum score of 273 on the TOEFL exam.

2.2. *The Requirements for the Master of Arts Degree*

2.2.1. *Students in the master's program may elect to follow Plan A or Plan B.*

Plan A (Thesis)	**Plan B (Paper)**
▪ 30 semester credits in PHL courses at the 400-level or higher*	▪ 30 semester credits in PHL courses at the 400-level or higher*
▫ covering 4 areas Logic and Philosophy of Science Metaphysics and Epistemology Value Theory History of Philosophy ▫ minimum of 16 cr. at the 800-level *including*: - PHL 800 *and* - a minimum of 3 seminars - min. of 3 courses in the thesis area (approved by the Assoc. Chair) **- 4-8 cr. of PHL 899 (thesis research)** ▫ maximum of 8 cr. of PHL 890 (indepen. study)	▫ covering 4 areas Logic and Philosophy of Science Metaphysics and Epistemology Value Theory History of Philosophy ▫ minimum of 16 cr. at the 800-level *including*: - PHL 800 *and* - a minimum of 3 seminars - min. of 3 courses in the thesis area (approved by the Assoc. Chair) ▫ maximum of 8 cr. of PHL 890 (indepen .study) (PHL 899 credits do not count toward the 30 credits for the Plan B master's)
▪ Complete an acceptable **thesis** and defend in public oral examination	▪ Complete a philosophy **paper** worthy of public presentation and present it
▪ Meet department logic requirement	▪ Meet department logic requirement
▪ Fulfill general university and college requirements for the M.A. degree**	▪ Fulfill general university and college requirements for the M.A. degree**

* *Transfer of credit*: A maximum of 9 semester credits in graduate level courses and in which at least a 3.0 was earned may be transferred from other accredited graduate programs. To transfer credits the student should petition the Associate Chair of the department, providing full details of the credits in question, including an account of the material covered in the courses, texts used, etc. Normally, the Associate Chair will recommend to the department that the credits be transferred only when the course work in question appears comparable to work taken by graduate students in this department. No credits that counted toward a student's undergraduate degree can be transferred for graduate credit.

***Residence*: The University requires that a minimum of nine credits for the M.A. degree be taken on campus. In practice, however, master's candidates in philosophy should expect to take all 30 required credits (except transfer credits) on campus.

X Things that do **not** count toward the 30 credits:

Foreign language courses
Credits taken to fulfill the logic requirement
Non PHL courses
Credits for courses or seminars for which the student has earned a grade of less than 3.0.

2.2.1.1. *The master's thesis*
A *master's thesis* is more synoptic than a usual seminar paper, usually building on more than one piece of earlier work and more extensive research. It is usually about 50-75 pages long. The oral defense of the thesis is similar to a dissertation defense in that research has been done and a wider knowledge of the subject area is expected and may be explored, than is usual in seminar or conference presentations of philosophy papers.

The thesis developed with a thesis advisor who is a faculty member of the philosophy department, and examined and judged by a committee of the advisor and two more regular faculty members, at least one of whom is in the philosophy department. The participation of faculty from other units must be approved by the Associate Chairperson.

The approved master's thesis is submitted to the graduate school. There are very specific requirements for its formatting and printing, and other details the student is responsible for attending to. For full information about this, go to:
http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/graduation.htm

2.2.1.2 *The master's paper*
A *master's paper* is (usually) developed out of a seminar paper that is already written, or some other similarly contained project or idea. It is usually about 20-40 pp. The presentation is like giving a paper at a colloquium, with questions and comments focused fairly narrowly just on the paper topic. The paper is developed with an advisor (a faculty member of the philosophy department), and is judged by a committee of the advisor and two more regular faculty members, at least one of whom is in the philosophy department. The participation of faculty from other units must be approved by the Associate Chairperson

2.2.1.3. *Choosing which plan to follow*
The plans are so similar that it is not necessary to decide which plan to pursue until entering the second year. The decision can be discussed with the academic advisor (usually that is the Associate Chair) and the faculty member who is likely to be the thesis advisor or the MA paper advisor. Some considerations:

(1) On Plan A the students takes 4-8 credits of thesis research (PHL 899), and therefore takes fewer credits of courses of seminars. For students with relatively less academic preparation in the discipline prior to entering the program, it may better serve the student to take all 30 credits as courses/seminars, to complete and solidify the grounding in the discipline.

(2) Writing a thesis requires having at the outset a thesis-sized project one actually wants to do. Some students do have such a project in mind as they enter the second year of the program, and some do not. At this stage of one's development as a philosopher, one may have a wide ranging curiosity and a number of interests, and may not have formed up a single fairly well-defined project. If that is the case, such a student should not try to force a thesis topic to come in to being; they can opt for Plan B and continue taking seminars that interest them.

2.2.2. *The public presentation or defense*
The date, time and location of the presentation or defense must be set with the department secretary three weeks in advance. Thesis or paper committee members must have the complete manuscript of the thesis or paper at least three weeks in advance of the public presentation or defense. The event will be announced within the department, and the

event is public. All members of the department, faculty and students, are invited, as is the general public.

At the conclusion of the presentation or defense, members of the committee evaluating the paper/thesis each records a judgment, based on the paper/thesis and the presentation/defense, of the student's ability to successfully complete a Ph.D. and makes a recommendation for or against the department's admitting the student to the Ph.D. program. Admissions to the Ph.D. program are conditional on positive recommendations.

The university requires that the student be enrolled for at least one credit in the semester in which they present the M.A. paper or defend the M.A. thesis.

2.2.3. *The department logic requirement*

The department logic requirement must be satisfied by the end of the second semester in the master's program. It can met by examination. The examination is offered in the week before classes start in each of fall and spring semester. The examination is diagnostic; it cannot be re-taken. If the requirement is not met by examination, it is met by the student taking PHL 490 Independent Study in symbolic logic, earning at least a 3.0. This is a 3 cr. course in which the student attends PHL 330 (Formal Reasoning I) and does all the work required for PHL 330. Credits earned in this Independent Study do not count toward the master's degree. See the department web site for more information about the logic placement examination.

A student who plans to take the logic exam should notify the Associate Chair of that plan at least three weeks before the beginning of the semester.

2.3. *Completing and graduating*

When the student is approaching completion of the degree requirements, s/he has to *apply to graduate*. For all the steps involved in graduating, find information at: http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/graduation.htm

When the thesis or paper has been approved and defended/presented, and all other requirements for the degree have been satisfied, the members of the committee sign appropriate papers and the department approves granting the degree.

2.3.1. *Time limit*

The College of Arts and Letters time limit for completing master's degrees is six years, measured from the beginning of the earliest semester in which a course being counted toward the degree was taken. (This can be important in relation to transfer credits, since such credits will have been taken before the student started this program, and the dates those transferred courses began will start the "clock" of this time limit.)

2.4. *Making Satisfactory Progress Toward the Degree*

Students are expected to complete the master's program in two years (four semesters, not counting summer). They are eligible for funding in the form of teaching or research assistantship for four semesters while pursuing the M.A.

(*Eligibility* for funding is not a guarantee of funding. M.A. students who are offered funding will never receive assurances in advance of more than four semesters funding. All "promises" or "assurances" of financial aid beyond a current semester's contract are conditional on the individual's continuing satisfactory academic and teaching performance and on the availability of funds in the university.)

Milestones in the MA Program

1 in **orientation week**
- meet with Associate Chair, plan courses

2 by end of the **2nd semester**
- complete logic requirement

3 by end of the **3rd semester**
- MA thesis/paper advisor identified
- topic and bibliography for theses/paper approved

4 by middle of the **4th semester**
- a draft of the paper/thesis is complete

5 by end of the **4th semester**
- course work completed
- MA thesis/paper finished and presented, and judged acceptable by the committee

In general, a student is making satisfactory progress toward the degree if s/he is
(1) accumulating credits and satisfying the distribution requirements at a pace that accords with the plan of completing the degree in four semesters (excluding summer),
(2) keeping pace with the MA Milestones,
(3) maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better, and
(4) does not have grades below 3.0 in more than 6 credits
(5) does not have more than 8 credits of outstanding Incomplete or Deferred grades (excluding PHL 899). [“Postponed grades:” http://www.reg.msu.edu/read/UCC/Updated/postponement.pdf]

All financial aid promises beyond a current semester’s contract are contingent on “the student’s making satisfactory progress to the degree.” If there are sound programmatic reasons to adjust the pace of satisfaction of credit and distribution requirements and/or the Milestones for a particular student’s progress, this can be negotiated and approved by the Associate Chair, given that the need is foreseen and addressed by the end of the 3rd semester. (For example, a student simultaneously completing the philosophy M.A and an interdisciplinary specialization or a degree in another program might negotiate an individualized schedule of milestones.)

If a student's GPA falls below 3.0 at the close of a given semester, they will have the subsequently enrolled semester (not including summer) to bring it back to 3.0 or above, before being counted as "not making satisfactory progress." [See II.5. "Advising."]

2.5. *Advising*
The Associate Chairperson will serve as the adviser for each master's student, except those who specifically request some other faculty member for an adviser. Each master's student is expected to consult with the adviser each semester. Each year (normally, in spring semester) each master's student's adviser (in most cases that is the associate chair) will evaluate that student's progress toward the M.A. degree; this meeting is scheduled *on the initiative of the student*. If the adviser thinks the student's progress unsatisfactory the adviser will take the case to the faculty members of the Graduate Committee, where the official evaluation will be determined. If the adviser thinks the student's progress is satisfactory, the Graduate Committee need not be consulted. In either case, the evaluation shall be mailed to the student as well as presented to the student at an annual conference requested by the student. A copy of the evaluation shall also be placed in the student's evaluation file. This evaluation will be completed and filed by two weeks after the end of spring semester. [Files and portfolios (except for the teaching portfolio, which is a Ph.D. project) for master's students are the same as those for doctoral students. For their descriptions and locations, see Section 3.7. Students can add comments to the file, addressing any evaluations they have received, by delivering the comment to the department secretary for inclusion in the file. All evaluation files are accessible to the student; see Section 2.6.]

2.6. *Student files and records*
2.6.1. *Academic portfolio*
Contains the materials (some of them confidential) from the student's admissions file, transcript records, the student's curriculum vita (submitted annually in fall semester by the student), copies of official communications between the student and the department, copies of communications pertaining to the student between the department and other units such as the college or the graduate school. Except for materials from the application file, most of this material duplicates material that goes also directly into the hands of the student. Documentation of any determination by the faculty members of the graduate committee of satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress to the degree are included in this file. This portfolio is accessed by the student (not to be removed from the department office) only under special arrangements that secure the confidential materials in it.

The updated vita is requested of the students annually. It is the student's responsibility to provide it.

The student may add comments to this file.

2.6.2. *Evaluations file*
Contains the faculty evaluations done every semester by instructors of their teaching assistants and by instructors of students in their classes/seminars, and by supervisors of research assistants. Copies of annual evaluation letters to the student from the guidance committee chair are also in this file. Kept by the department secretary, this file is accessible to the student (upon timely request and the reasonable convenience of the office staff). It may not be removed from the department office.

The student may add comments to this file.

2.6.3. *Teaching file and teaching portfolio*
The teaching file contains
• the student course evaluations for the graduate student's TA performance either in courses where they assisted, or courses for which they served as the instructor
• the evaluations of their teaching performance by the supervising instructor or faculty teaching mentor for those courses
All of these materials are accessible to the student.

2.6.4. *Personnel file*
This is the personnel file required by the GEU contract [http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/geu/agree.pdf] for all teaching assistants. It contains copies of the student's teaching assistantship employment contracts, and copies of faculty evaluations of teaching performance.

2.7. *Academic performance and evaluation*
See Section IV, Academic Performance and Evaluation

III. The Doctoral Program

Introduction
The Ph.D. program is a five- or six-year program designed for students entering with a B.A. with a major in philosophy, and accommodating those entering with an M.A. in philosophy or a related field that includes significant philosophical content (such as some master's programs in bioethics).

The department is closely affiliated with the Center for Ethics and Humanities in the Life Sciences, and the four philosophers located in the Center teach in the department, including graduate seminars, and are available to serve on philosophy doctoral guidance committees.

Interdisciplinary Study
Doctoral students may complete any of the graduate interdisciplinary specializations (some of which have their own admissions processes and standards). Completing an interdisciplinary graduate specialization while completing the doctoral degree may affect the time it takes to complete the doctoral degree and will in most cases require taking non-PHL credits that do not count toward the philosophy credit requirement. The Ph.D. program includes the requirement of a minor field, and one option is that the minor field can be interdisciplinary. If the student adopts that option, the two non-PHL courses/seminars that are part of the minor are counted toward the total required course/seminar credits.

The doctoral guidance committee [3.5., below] must have four members who are philosophy faculty, but others can be added who are from other departments, with the approval of the Associate Chair and the four members who are philosophy faculty.

3.1. *Admission to the Ph.D. program*
The minimal admission requirements for the doctoral program are:

a. A Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in philosophy. (Applicants with other undergraduate academic qualification may be admitted provisionally or admitted to the M.A. program. Applicants with master's degrees not in philosophy may be admitted provisionally or admitted to the M.A. program.)
b. A grade point average well above 3.0 for the last two years of undergraduate work and/or previous graduate work.
c. Sufficient previous academic preparation in the discipline of philosophy to indicate that the student is adequately prepared for advanced training in the field.

These are minimal requirements and satisfaction of them does not assure an applicant admission to the program, as the number of students admitted depends on the number of places open in the graduate program at the time. Applications for admission are judged by the department admissions committee, which determines admission on the basis of all of the submitted materials.

3.1.1. *Procedures for external applicants*
For details of the standard application procedures and requirements, see the philosophy department web site, the Graduate Programs page.

3.1.2. *Procedures for MSU master's students*
Students who are candidates for the M.A. degree in philosophy from Michigan State University must apply to the department for admission to the doctoral program. (They do not need to submit the on-line admission form or pay the admission fee.) These internal applicants should supply the Admissions Committee with three new letters of recommendation, a statement of purpose, and a philosophical writing sample. (Deliver these documents to the department secretary.) The deadline for these internal applications is January 15, and offers of admission will be made no later than March 31. Offers of admission will be contingent on *both* the successful completion of the master's program and the expressed assessment of the master's examining committee of the applicant's ability to complete the doctoral program successfully. [Cf., Section 2.2.2.]

3.2. *The Requirements for the Ph.D. degree*
The Ph.D. is regarded by the department as a professional degree. The candidate is expected not only to satisfy the formal requirements but to demonstrate capacity for high level independent research and teaching, and to achieve a professional level of the capacities enumerated on pages 7-8 in the "Overview of the Philosophy Department." Satisfaction of the formal requirements is seen as a means, though not alone a sufficient means, to those ends.

Ph.D. Program Requirements
▪ a minimum of 45 credits* in PHL courses at the 400-level or higher (not including PHL 999 research credits), distributed as follows:
▫ PHL 800—Proseminar and PHL 801—Teaching Philosophy
▫ a minimum of 33 must be graduate seminars (not including PHL 801)
▫ at least two courses/seminars in each of 4 areas** Logic and Philosophy of Science (includes Philosophy of Language) Metaphysics and Epistemology Value Theory (includes Social and Political) History of Philosophy
▫ PHL seminars (other than 801) include: • one in the field of the dissertation • one in the minor field • two in areas *other than* the dissertation or minor field
▫ A minor field: 9 credits completed by the end of the 6th semester ▫ a minor field within philosophy, distinct from the field of the dissertation OR an interdisciplinary minor field consisting of a PHL course/seminar and two courses/seminars in one or two other disciplines
▪ Pass the Comprehensive Examination
▪ Complete an approved dissertation prospectus or topic statement
▪ Complete, defend and submit to the graduate school an approved dissertation
▪ Meet the department logic requirement
▪ Meet the foreign language requirement
▪ Develop a teaching portfolio
▪ a minimum of 24 (maximum of 75) credits of PHL 999
▪ Satisfy the general requirements of the university and college for the Ph.D. degree (The university requires one year of residence (2 consecutive semesters and 6 credits); normally students spend three or more years in residence.)

X Things that do **not** count toward the 45 credits:

Foreign language courses
Credits taken to fulfill the logic requirement
Non-PHL courses/seminars (*exception*: up to 6 non-PHL credits can be counted toward the 45 credits if they are part of an interdisciplinary minor field)
Credits for courses or seminars for which the student has earned a grade of less than 3.0.

* Students who enter the doctoral program with an M.A. in Philosophy may have up to 21 credits waived upon recommendation of their guidance committee; of the remaining 24, a minimum of 18 must be seminars (excluding PHL 801). Students entering with other master's degrees (not in philosophy) may have up to 15 credits waived, and of the remaining 30, a minimum of 24 must be at the 800-level (excluding PHL 801). These waiver rules set *maxima*; the guidance committee may waive fewer credits, depending on the student's prior preparation in the discipline.

** For all students entering the program from the B.A., the guidance committee, in the first semester, reviews the student's previous academic preparation and files a "Distribution Requirement Report" in which it may waive a maximum of 3 credits in each of 2 areas, or 6 credits in one area, citing upper division courses on the previous transcript. Students who previously completed an M.A. in Philosophy may have up to 3 credits in each of 4 areas waived. These rules set *maxima*; committees may waive fewer or none, depending on the student's prior academic experience and achievement.

3.2.1. *The Comprehensive Examination*

The comprehensive examination is taken after the course/credit, language and logic requirements are met. Taking the comprehensive when any of these requirements are still outstanding requires explicit approval of the guidance committee and the Associate Chair. See Appendices I and II for the guidelines and policies that define and govern the comprehensive examination.

The university requires that the student be enrolled for at least one credit in the semester in which they take the comprehensive examination.

3.2.2. *The Dissertation Prospectus or Topic Statement*

The magnitude and format of this element of the program, and the timing, whether it is done and approved before or after the comprehensive examination, is decided by the doctoral guidance committee in consultation with the student. See Appendix IV for the guidelines that define and govern the prospectus or topic statement.

3.2.3. *The Dissertation*

The dissertation is a polished book-length monograph that, in the best professional judgment of the examining committee, makes a contribution to the discipline, and in the case of interdisciplinary projects also to other scholarly discourses.

3.2.4. *The Dissertation Defense*

The date, time and location of the dissertation defense must be set with the department secretary at least three weeks in advance. Dissertation committee members must have the complete manuscript of the dissertation at least three weeks in advance of the defense. The event will be announced within the department, and the event is public. All members of the department, faculty and students, are invited, as is the general public.

It is not required that there be a faculty member from outside the philosophy department invited to be one of the defense examiners, but the department approved a resolution to the effect that it is desirable. If such an external examiner is engaged, that person must receive the complete manuscript at least three weeks in advance of the defense. Meeting these requirements of advance notice is the joint responsibility of the candidate and the guidance committee chair. The external examiner will read and critique the dissertation, participate in the oral defense, and submit a report to the chair of the philosophy department.

The university requires that the student be enrolled for at least one credit in the semester in which the defense takes place.

3.2.5. *The department logic requirement*

The department logic requirement must be satisfied by the end of the second semester in the doctoral program. It can be met by examination. The examination is offered in the week before classes start in each of fall and spring semester. This exam is diagnostic; it cannot be re-taken. If the requirement is not met by examination, it is met by the student taking PHL 490 Independent Study in symbolic logic, earning at least a 3.0. This is a 3 cr. course in which the student attends PHL 330 (Formal Reasoning I) and does all the work required for PHL 330. Credits earned in this Independent Study do not count toward the Ph.D. degree. See the department web site for more information about the logic placement examination.

A student who plans to take the logic exam should notify the Associate Chair of that plan at least three weeks before the beginning of the semester.

(Students who have completed the M.A. in this department have already satisfied this requirement.)

3.2.6. *The foreign language requirement*

The student must demonstrate reading competence in a language other than English in which there is substantial literature for research and which is germane to the student's field. This is demonstrated by qualifying to enter third year (undergraduate) level courses in the language (passing the second-year sequence or by examination) or by passing the graduate reading course offered by the relevant department at MSU Students whose first language is other than English may count that language as their foreign language if it meets these criteria; they must secure confirmation of their college-level competence from a qualified faculty member of MSU. There may not be faculty members qualified to confirm language competence in every language.

The university provides two ways such graduate language requirements can be fulfilled and certified on a student's transcript. One is passing a test according to a procedure approved by the Graduate School. (Some of the language departments regularly administer placement tests; contact the relevant department to inquire about this.) The other is to pass the officially designated university graduate reading course. The department also accepts as fulfilling its requirement two years of course work in the basic language sequence at MSU when taken during one's graduate career. While such course work fulfills the requirement, the official certification by the university will not appear on one's transcript. See "Guidelines for Certification of Foreign Language Proficiency for Graduate Students in the College of Arts and Letters" (http://www.cal.msu.edu/grad/FLGuidelines2.html)

3.2.7. *Teaching and the teaching portfolio*

The philosophy department is committed to trying to ensure that every doctoral student has at least one mentored teaching experience. [See Appendix "Guidelines for Mentoring Graduate Students as Teachers."] With this experience, their participation in PHL 801, "Seminar in Teaching Philosophy," and the help and advice of their Primary Faculty Mentor (PFM) [see 3.5.4], the student devises a teaching project and writes up a report and reflective essay on it and compiles a teaching portfolio that includes at least: a statement of teaching philosophy; description of teaching experience; account of activities to improve teaching; the teaching project reflection essay; and representative

student evaluations of the graduate student's teaching. The teaching portfolio should be completed by the end of the student's 6th semester (excluding summers). Its completion is certified, to the Associate Chair, by the chair of the student's guidance committee See 3.5.4. for the students responsibilities in relation to the PFM's mentoring of teaching.

Teaching projects are devised by the graduate student, with PFM consultation, and tailored to her/his interests and concerns. The following examples of teaching projects by no means exhaust the possibilities:

development of a course syllabus (especially in an area other that the student's main area of specialization)…better yet, developing it and then teaching it

designing a version of a traditional course differently for a specific audience, e.g., medical Ethics for nurses, Introduction to Philosophy for business majors

undertaking to learn to use, and using, some educational technology, perhaps using it in a novel way

comparing and contrasting two different ways of teaching the same thing, e.g., teaching basics of ethical theory using standard textbook material, and using discussions of fiction, with some form of test done that enables you to qualitatively compare the two outcomes

devising and perfecting a way to teach some particular text that has proven problematic in the classroom, e.g., Frye's essay, "Oppression," taught in IAH 201

developing and putting into practice a "service learning" component for a course

teaching philosophy in some pre-college or community setting

3.3. *Completing and graduating*

When approaching completion of the degree requirements, the student has to *apply to graduate*. For all the steps involved in graduating, and the many regulations pertaining to submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School, find information at:
http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/graduation.htm
When the dissertation has been defended and approved, and all other requirements for the degree have been satisfied, the members of the committee sign appropriate papers and the department approves granting the degree.

3.3.1. *Time limits*

- The university time limit for passing the comprehensive examination is five years.
- The university time limit for completing the Ph.D. is eight years.

Both of these spans are measured from the beginning of the earliest semester in which a course being counted toward the degree was taken. (This can be important in relation to transfer credits, since such credits will have been taken before the student started this program, and the dates those transferred courses began will start the "clock" of this time limit.)

Extensions of these limits can be granted only by the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Letters on recommendation of the Department of Philosophy.

3.4. *Making Satisfactory Progress toward the Degree*

3.4.1. *Criteria*

In general, a student is making satisfactory progress toward the degree if s/he
(1) is accumulating credits and satisfying the distribution requirements at a pace that accords with the goal of completing the course/seminar requirements in seven semesters (excluding summer),
(2) is keeping pace with the Ph.D. Milestones (either the 5-year scheme or the 6-year scheme)
(3) is maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better (excluding PHL 999 credits),
(4) does not have more than 8 credits of outstanding Incomplete or Deferred grades (excluding PHL 999) [“Postponed grades:” http://www.reg.msu.edu/read/UCC/Updated/postponement.pdf]
(5) does not have grades below 3.0 in more than 6 credits.

If there are sound programmatic reasons to adjust the pace of satisfaction of credit and distribution requirements and/or to individualize Milestones for a particular student’s progress, this can be negotiated with the guidance committee and approved by the Associate Chair, given that the need is foreseen and addressed in a timely manner (i.e., not after the fact). (For example, a student simultaneously completing the philosophy degree and an interdisciplinary specialization or a degree in another program might negotiate an individualized schedule of milestones.) Records of such approved adjustments will be filed in the student’s academic portfolio.

3.4.2. *Ph.D. Milestones*

Standard Ph.D. Milestones (5 years to the degree)

1	**1st semester**:	guidance committee formed, sets up program, registers requirement waivers (if any)
2	end of **2nd semester**:	University Guidance Committee Report is filed
3	end of **2nd semeste**r:	fulfilled logic requirement
4	end of **5th semester**:	completed required coursework fulfilled language requirement guidance committee recommends continuance guidance committee composition reviewed/revised first meetings for the comprehensive examination
5	end of **7th semester**:	passed comprehensive examination, and has an approved Prospectus or Topic Statement
6	end of **9th semester**	teaching portfolio finished
7	end of **10th semester**:	dissertation completed and defended

Six-year Ph.D. Milestones (6 years to the degree)

1	**1st semester**:	guidance committee formed, sets up program, registers requirement waivers (if any)
2	end of **2nd semester**:	University Guidance Committee Report is filed
3	end of **2nd semester**:	fulfilled logic requirement
4	end of **7th semester**:	completed required coursework fulfilled language requirement guidance committee recommends continuance guidance committee composition reviewed/revised first meetings for the comprehensive examination
5	end of **9th semester**:	passed comprehensive examination, and has an approved Prospectus or Topic Statement
6	end of **11th semester**	teaching portfolio finished
7	end of **12th semester**:	dissertation completed and defended

3.4.3. *Monitoring progress*

The student has the first responsibility for monitoring their own progress and being aware of whether they are moving through the program appropriately. The student is also responsible for seeking the advice of the Associate Chair and/or the chair of their guidance committee, to assess their progress and to correct any deficiencies.

3.4.4. *Determination of unsatisfactory progress*
If in the judgment of the student's guidance committee a student, as of the close of a given semester, is not making satisfactory progress toward the degree the committee chair will notify the student in writing and will take the case to the faculty members of the Graduate Committee, where the official determination will be made. If the deficiency can be corrected (e.g., the GPA brought up or DEF grades revised), the student will have the subsequently enrolled semester (not including summer) to correct it, before being designated as "not making satisfactory progress."

(There are situations in which a student's deficiencies in progress toward the degree are due to extenuating circumstances which would justify exceptions to the rules governing satisfactory progress. *The student is responsible* for making such circumstances known to the Associate Chair and the guidance committee chair with as much lead time as possible.)

A student who is not making satisfactory progress after a semester in which a deficiency was to be removed loses eligibility for financial aid (assistantships, fellowships or project pay). A student who is not making satisfactory progress toward the degree at the end of the 7th semester in the program can be refused permission to continue in the program.

(Continuing satisfactory progress is marked in the guidance committee's annual evaluation. See section 3.5.3.2.)

3.4.5. *Continuing in the program beyond the coursework phase*
Minimally meeting the formal criteria for "making satisfactory progress to the degree" is **not** alone **sufficient** for continuance. There is a substantial difference between ability minimally to succeed in courses and seminars and ability to do the sustained original research and writing involved in doing a dissertation.

In the latter half of the last semester in which the student is doing courses/seminars, the guidance committee meets and makes a recommendation, based on the material in the student's files and portfolios [3.7, below], as to the student's continuance in the doctoral program. If in the best professional judgment of the guidance committee members the student has not demonstrated capability of writing an acceptable dissertation, (i) the guidance committee recommends to the faculty members of the department graduate committee that the student not be allowed to continue in the doctoral program, (ii) the student is notified in writing of this recommendation, and (iii) faculty members of the department graduate committee review the portfolios and files, the guidance committee's recommendation, and any other material the graduate committee faculty consider relevant, and make a recommendation to the department chair. If the guidance committee judges that the student qualifies to continue in the program, the committee chair places a letter to that effect in the student's academic portfolio, with a copy mailed to the student, and no other action is required.

(Like all academic evaluations, this determination can be appealed. See Section 7.3.)

3.5. *Advising and mentoring*

> Advising and mentoring are part of professional training. Doctoral students, as mature pre-professionals, are responsible for recognizing their needs and taking initiative in accessing the relevant resources of the philosophy department and its faculty. Students are co-equally responsible with their advisors for the awareness, initiative, planning and cooperation necessary to the fulfillment of the mentoring and advising functions.

3.5.1. *Forming the doctoral guidance committee*

Each graduate student admitted to the doctoral program has the responsibility to form a guidance committee with the approval and the assistance of the Associate Chair. The committee is to be formed by the end of the second semester. The student is advised during the new student orientation as to which faculty members share their areas of interest and who might be a suitable committee chair for that individual. The faculty member who becomes chair of the student's committee then functions as the student's primary academic advisor. The other committee members are also available for advising and mentoring.

3.5.2. *Membership of the guidance committee*

The guidance committee is composed of four regular faculty members of the philosophy department (inclusive of philosophy faculty members of the Center for Ethics and Humanities in the Life Sciences). Other faculty members with Ph.D. in philosophy may serve as guidance committee members, as well. Additional members who are regular faculty members in other disciplines or departments may serve on the guidance committee as well, as may be appropriate especially for students with significant interdisciplinary involvement. The members of the committee will be selected initially with the advice of the Associate Chair.

Changing the composition of the committee (initiated by the student or a committee member) requires the approval of all of the committee members and the department chair. It is accomplished by filing a new University Guidance Committee Report. Students should seek advice in this matter (and facilitation or negotiation, if that is necessary) from the Associate Chair and/or the Chair.

If a committee member leaves the university, s/he should be replaced on the committee and a new guidance committee report filed. If the chair of the committee, functioning as the dissertation director, leaves the university the situation is addressed in consultation with the committee chair, the student and the Associate Chair of the department, and depending on the details of the situation (e.g., the probable length of time to completion and the long-distance availability of the dissertation director) the situation will be resolved as far as possible in the best interest of the student's timely completion of the dissertation. The department will not assume any of the financial costs of travel, communications, or compensation for the departed faculty member's time/work that might be involved in the solution.

3.5.3. *Responsibilities of the guidance committee*
3.5.3.1. The committee is responsible for composing (in consultation with the student) and submitting the UNIVERSITY GUIDANCE COMMITTEE REPORT (which states the courses the student must take to complete the degree, the foreign language that will fulfill the language requirement, the dissertation topic, the area of the comprehensive examination, and the minor field), and for ensuring that the overall academic program set forth in the Report fulfills the formal program requirements and provides adequate preparation for the dissertation and adequate breadth across the four areas of philosophy.
The Report form is on the web at: http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/forms/rogc.pdf
The department chair approves the guidance committee report, and thereby also the composition of the guidance committee.

3.5.3.2. The guidance committee will meet annually (usually in spring semester) to evaluate student progress and the content and breadth of the student's program based upon the student's files and portfolios. Then, based upon this annual evaluation, the guidance committee chair will provide a written evaluation to the student, signed by all of the members of the guidance committee. A copy of this is placed in the student's evaluations file. The committee chair will meet with the student each semester and at other times as needed to advise and mentor the student. *The student is responsible co-equally with the committee chair* for initiating required and/or needed or desired meetings.

3.5.3.3. The guidance committee monitors the student's progress toward the Ph.D. degree and judges the student's competence to proceed after the coursework phase to the dissertation phase[cf., 3.4.4.]. If it determines that the student is able, a memo to this effect is sent to the student, with a copy in the student's evaluations file, no other action is taken and the student proceeds in the program. If the committee thinks the student is not capable of completing the degree, it recommends discontinuance, and the faculty members of the department graduate committee review the situation and determine whether the student will be permitted to continue or not. A record of its finding is placed in the student's academic portfolio.

3.5.3.4. The guidance committee plans and designs (in consultation with the student), composes, administers and evaluates the student's written comprehensive examination. The Guidance Committee determines the requirements for the examination being passed, and whether they have been met. It is responsible for the administration of the examination in accord with the comprehensive examination policies and guidelines in Appendices II and III.

3.5.3.5. The chair of the guidance committee, in the post-coursework phase of the student's program, is the dissertation director. The dissertation director is responsible for mentoring the student in the dissertation research and writing.

3.5.4. *Primary Faculty Mentor*
Each graduate student is appointed a Primary Faculty Mentor (PFM) when she or he begins the program. Either the student or the mentor can ask the Associate Chair to change this assignment; the pairing should be comfortable for both parties. The PFM has primary responsibility for the student's development as a teacher of philosophy. At the end of the student's program, the PFM is the person who is acquainted in detail and

longitudinally with the student's teaching, and writes the letter for the placement dossier which focuses primarily on teaching. *The PFM's responsibilities are:*

- periodically observe recitation sections and lectures, and discuss them with the student afterwards
- meet with the student once each semester in order to discuss teaching in general
- meet with the student to help them formulate a teaching project
- mentor the student's teaching project and the student's report and reflection on it
- work with the student to develop a teaching portfolio
- approve the teaching portfolio

The graduate student's responsibilities are:

- attend meetings scheduled by the PFM to discuss teaching and the teaching project
- observe PFM in lectures, discussions, and seminars
- design and carry out a teaching project, with the assistance of the PFM
- complete the teaching project, and a report and reflection essay on it, by the end of the 7th semester of the doctoral program
- compile a teaching portfolio

3.5.5. *Resources*

The following documents have been produced by university-level committees. They are generic, not specific to the philosophy department or the College of Arts and Letters, but may be useful to those involved in the philosophy graduate program.

Research mentoring Task Force Report (see in particular its "Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activity"): http://grad.msu.edu/all/ris04activities.pdf

Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Research Mentoring: http://grad.msu.edu/all/riso4relations.pdf

3.6. *Placement*

The department appoints a faculty member to serve as the Placement Director. This person advises and assists students in their preparation for and participation in the process of finding professional employment upon completion of the Ph.D., a process that should begin before students plan their curricula or choose courses. Many of the decisions students make casually as they proceed through the graduate program have important effects on their later ability to find positions that suit them. The Placement Director maintains a *Placement and Professional Development* site on the campus ANGEL network <http://angel.msu.edu> that all graduate students can access for information, links, and advice; or can join to receive notice of new postings and jobs that may not appear in the APA's *Jobs for Philosophers*. Other information is available from the APA Committee on Academic Career Opportunities and Placement <http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/governance/committees/Placement%20Brochure.pdf>. The department's Placement Director stays abreast of current placement expectations and practices in major research universities and shares it with the department; checks *curriculum vitae* and other placement materials; arranges mock interviews, job talk practice-runs, information sessions, and workshops for students at various stages in their graduate careers; and attends most of the APA meetings where interviews are held. When students apply for positions, the department sends the job dossier, including

confidential letters of recommendation, to potential employers as requested, if the requests are timely and do not exceed the limit on the number of dossiers any one individual can request in any one job search. (See Appendix VI, "Job Application Dossier Policies and Procedures.") Beyond copying and mailing the dossier, the department assumes none of the expenses of the job search, but the Placement Director continues to advise and assist MSU graduates in the years after they leave the university, and the department continues to send confidential letters and transcripts without charge to the student, even after the lifetime total of dossiers has been spent. It is common for students to take fellowships and one-year positions for a few years before finding tenure-system or other academic employment that satisfies them permanently.

3.7. *Student files and records*

3.7.1. *Academic portfolio*

Contains the materials (some of them confidential) from the student's admissions file, transcript records, the student's curriculum vita, copies of official communications between the student and the department, copies of communications pertaining to the student between the department and other units such as the college or the graduate school. Except for the application file, most of this material duplicates what goes also directly into the hands of the student. Documentation of any determination by the faculty members of the graduate committee of satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress to the degree are included in this file. This portfolio is accessed by the student (not to be removed from the department office) only under special arrangements that secure the confidential materials in it.

The updated vita is requested of the students annually. It is the student's responsibility to provide it.

The student may add comments to this file.

3.7.2. *Evaluations file*

Contains the faculty evaluations done every semester by instructors of their teaching assistants and by instructors of students in their classes/seminars, and by supervisors of research assistants. Copies of annual evaluation letters to the student from the guidance committee chair are also in this file. Kept by the department secretary, this file is accessible to the student (upon timely request and the reasonable convenience of the office staff). It may not be removed from the department office.

The student may add comments to this file.

3.7.3. *Teaching file and teaching portfolio*

The teaching file contains the following.

• the student course evaluations for the graduate student's TA performance either in courses where they assisted, or courses for which they served as the instructor
• the evaluations of their teaching performance by the supervising instructor or faculty teaching mentor for those courses
• the course syllabi the student composed for courses in which they were the instructor
• the course syllabus the student composed when taking PHL 801
• student's write-up of the teaching project
• student's statement of teaching philosophy

Selected materials from the teaching file are used to build the teaching portfolio, which is a required element of the Ph.D. program and is sent as appropriate with the job dossier to

prospective employers. The teaching portfolio is composed with the advice of the Primary Faculty Mentor. [Cf., 3.2.3.]
All of these materials are accessible to the student.

3.7.4. *Personnel file*
This is the personnel file required by the GEU contract [http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/geu/agree.pdf]for all teaching assistants. It contains copies of the student's teaching assistantship employment contracts and copies of faculty evaluations of teaching performance.

IV. Academic performance and evaluation

At both the master's level and the doctoral level, student performance is evaluated in terms of their developing, to a professional level, the following capacities:

- to do close and accurate critical reading of philosophical texts, both canonical and current, with mastery of the distinctive terminology and recognizing the distinctive kinds of argumentation;
- to discern and articulate philosophical issues and questions that arise in or are pertinent to those texts;
- to engage skillfully in philosophical conversation, comment and critique;
- to enter into and make a substantial contribution to the discourses within the discipline, over a range both historical and topical, that is considerably wider than the student's own primary area of specialization (and for some students, depending on their areas of specialization, extending to relevant interdisciplinary discourses);
- to write philosophical essays that clearly articulate views, positions and arguments in the literature relevant to the topic at hand, and clearly articulate the author's own views, positions and arguments as they are related to extant texts and ongoing conversations in the discipline;
- to orally present philosophical positions, doctrines, arguments effectively, both those of others and those they are themselves developing.

4.1. *Evaluations* (*files* and *portfolios* explained in Section 2.6 (M.A.) and Section 3.7.(Ph.D.))

• Students receive grades on the university's 4-point scale for all completed courses/seminars including PHL 490 and PHL 890 (independent study)
• A "Report on Graduate Student Performance" for each student is submitted each semester by the instructors of courses/seminars in which the student has enrolled. These reports are placed in the students' evaluations files.
• Annual evaluations by the student's academic advisor (M.A. students) or the guidance committee (Ph.D. students) are filed in the student's evaluations file.
• Student course evaluations for sections the graduate student assisted in or instructed are in the teaching file.
• Copies of faculty evaluations of teaching assistants' performances are in the evaluations file, the teaching file, and the personnel file.

• Ph.D. students are evaluated at the end of the coursework phase of the program to determine whether they may continue in the program.

- The student files and portfolios are kept by the department secretary. They are accessible to the student (upon timely request and the reasonable convenience of the office staff). They may not be removed from the department office.

- The student may add comments to any of these files.

4.2. *Satisfactory progress toward the degree*
The M.A. and Ph.D. sections of this handbook include subsections that define "satisfactory progress to the degree," and explain how and by whom evaluations of this are made, and the consequences of the determination that a student is not making satisfactory progress to the degree.

4.3. *Summation of criteria for being ineligible for financial aid*
(1) grade point average for all graduate work has fallen below 3.5, and remains below 3.5 after the student has had a semester to remedy this.
(2) the determination by the faculty members of the department graduate committee that the student is not making satisfactory progress toward the degree.
(3) for financial aid in the form of graduate assistantships: the student's having held graduate assistantships administered by the philosophy department for 12 semesters, excluding summers.

4.4. *Summation of conditions for dismissals due to academic deficiencies:*
- grade point average for all graduate work has fallen below 3.0, and remains below 3.0 after the student has had a semester to remedy this
- more than 6 semester credits below 3.0 (excepting credits taken in fulfillment of the logic requirement)
- *for M.A. students*: failing to complete all degree requirements within the college time limit of 6 years (dating from the beginning of the first semester in which credits toward the degree are earned);
  for Ph.D. students: failing to pass the comprehensive examination on two attempts or failing to pass it within the university time limit of 5 years , or failing to complete all degree requirements within 8 years (in both cases, dating from the beginning of the first semester in which credits toward the degree are earned).
- failure to make satisfactory progress toward the degree as defined in Sections 2.4. and 3.4., as determined by the faculty members of the department graduate committee, after a semester allowed for correcting remediable deficiencies

4.5. *Appeal*
Academic evaluations can be appealed. See Section 7.3.

V. Graduate Students as Graduate Assistants

5.1. *General conditions*

• The Graduate School brochure stating university definitions, requirements and specifications regarding graduate assistantships is at:
http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/all/gradasst.pdf

• Teaching assistants at MSU are unionized. The union contract is at
http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/geu/agree.pdf

• Teaching assistants are bound by the obligations laid out in "The Code of Teaching Responsibility," insofar as they apply to the aspects of course instruction and management that fall within the assistant's duties.
http://www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/Documents/Faculty/Handbooks/Faculty/Instruction/v-codeofteaching.htm

• All department commitments to assistantship appointments are conditional on availability of funds in the university. Assistantship *contracts* are in every case for just one semester. In no case is reappointment to a succeeding semester a contractual obligation. Academic year assistantship offers are, like multi-year recruitment or retention packages, conditional on the assistant's adequate performance of the duties and on availability of funds in the university.

• Students should review all relevant documents before accepting an assistantship and agreeing to serve as a teaching assistant.

5.2. *Eligibility for assistantships assigned by the philosophy department.*
(1) Assistantship eligibility requires a 3.5 G.P.A
(2) Eligibility depends in every case upon the student's making satisfactory progress toward the degree and satisfactory performance in assistantships already held.
(3) One has four semesters of assistantship eligibility as an M.A. student.
(4) Ph.D. students entering the program directly from the B.A. have twelve semesters (excluding summer) of assistantship eligibility
(5) Ph.D. students entering the program with an M.A. in philosophy (granted by MSU or another institutions) have eight semesters (excluding summers) of assistantship eligibility.
(6) Ph.D. students entering with other prior preparation that justified waiver of some of the required course/seminar credits have semesters of assistantship eligibility accordingly prorated by their guidance committees and the time of determining the credit waiver.

Assistantships *assigned by other units*, inside or outside the College of Arts and Letters, do not count against these limits.

Summer assistantships do not count in these eligibility limits.

5.3. *Teaching assistant training*
The university provides a variety of trainings for teaching assistants. Everyone entering their first semester of service as a teaching assistant at MSU is required to attend the university teaching seminar. See: http://tap.msu.edu/ (click on *Orientation).* The department provides supervision and mentoring, on-going, by the instructors whom assistants are assisting, and occasional teaching workshops.

5.4. *Assignment of assistantships*
5.4.1. Graduate assistantships (teaching assistantships and research assistantships) are offered to newly admitted students on the basis of their academic record and prior teaching or research experience as documented in their admissions files, as part of the department's active recruitment of able students. Prospective students may be offered a multi-year package of assistantships, though all such offers are conditional on the availability of funds in the university and on the student's continued satisfactory performance both academically and in the duties associated with the assistantship.

5.4.2. Currently enrolled students who do not have a department assistantship commitment are offered the opportunity, each spring semester, to apply for assistantships for the upcoming year. The faculty members of the department graduate committee assess the applicants' academic teaching/research preparation or performance and their progress toward the degree as documented by their transcript and the contents of their files and portfolios, and compose a ranked list of the applicants. They may also take into account department staffing needs. This list may or may not be organized according to different sorts of assistantship, depending on the pool of candidates and the range of resources available for a given academic year. Each student is informed of her/his own place in the ranking, but the whole ranked list is confidential. Available assistantships are allocated in the order of the ranked list.

5.4.3. Because graduate assistantships have a professional development purpose as well as an employee dimension, both teaching and research assistantships may be offered to individuals who lack specific prior experience related to the course or area of research, so long as the student's prior record gives promise of their ability to develop the needed skills and knowledge on the job.

5.4.4. In some instances graduate students are assigned to serve as the instructor of a course rather than as an assistant to an instructor. In such cases (including teaching in the summer sessions) the student is required to engage a faculty member as their mentor for that course and to consult with that mentor about course materials and aims, problems and techniques of teaching, and grading and to meet at the end of the semester to discuss its strengths and weaknesses and the student course evaluations.

In making the determination that a student will be given such an assignment, certain things will be taken in to account such as whether the student has an M.A. or equivalent philosophy credits, whether the student has passed the comprehensive examination, whether the student has assisted in the course, whether the student has taken courses in the area in question, and if so, what the performance was, whether the course to be taught is in the area of the dissertation or the minor field, and overall progress toward the degree.

Graduate assistants shall not be given the responsibility of teaching a course at the 400 level or above (exceptions may be made for students who have a doctoral degree but in another discipline); and a student may not receive graduate credit in a course taught by a graduate assistant without the special permission of the Associate Chairperson.

5.5. *Evaluations of teaching*
At the end of each term, graduate assistants are evaluated by those whom they have assisted. When a graduate student serves as the instructor of a course, the teaching mentor for that course evaluates their work. These evaluations remain on active file in the

student's teaching portfolio and evaluations file until the student leaves the program, at which time they become the student's property. The student may choose to allow the file to remain available to the department for future reference, evaluations and recommendations. At the end of each semester in which the student has been an assistant, s/he will be given copies of these evaluations. These evaluations will be considered if an assistant applies for a renewal of the assistantship. The student can add to the file her/his own comments on any of these evaluations

5.6. *Work loads*

Work loads for assistants, stated in weekly averages, are 10 hours for ¼-time assistants and 20 hours for ½-time assistants. (In stating the hours in weekly averages, it is understood that an assistant may be required to work more hours in some weeks of the semester, e.g., at exam grading time, than in others, but the assistant's total work load should not exceed an amount equal to 10 and 20 hours peer week for ¼-time and ½-time assistants, respectively). Included in the determination of assistants' work load are the following: time required for attendance at the lectures of the course s/he assists in; time required for preparing the materials for that course (and for leading discussion sections); time required for holding office hours; time in discussion sections and review sessions; and time required for grading examinations and term papers.

At the beginning of each semester instructors supervising assistants are to meet with those assistants and together they are to work out the assistant's work loads. They fill out and sign a department form, "Estimate of Amount & Distribution of Assistantship Work," and return that to the department's student records secretary. That form contains a statement further articulating the relevant work-load policies.

5.7. *Compensation and benefits*

Stipends paid assistants by the department are those specified by the university; most stipends are at or near the minimum, in order to enlarge the number awarded. Stipends for research assistantship differ according to the level of graduate study. Those with a bachelor's degree or its equivalent are at Level I; those with an M.A. degree and/or one year's prior relevant experience are at Level II. Stipends for teaching assistants differ according to the number of semesters of prior relevant teaching experience and/or on full support fellowship. See the Graduate Employees Union contract for definitions of the of the stipend levels. http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/geu/agree.pdf . The dollar value of assistantship stipends changes from year to year. All assistantships include a tuition waiver for up to 9 credits/semester, waiver of registration fees, and health insurance. For information on the health insurance, go to:
http://www.hr.msu.edu/NR/rdonlyres/0179E8F9-8599-426E-96B7-8B3E8D98D800/0/PlanHighlightsGA.pdf
Graduate assistants are exempt from paying Social Security Taxes on their stipends, and have priority for University Married Housing. For other information about benefits, go to:
http://www.hr.msu.edu/CMShrsite/Templates/ContentPage.aspx?NRMODE=Published&NRORIGINALURL=%2fHRsite%2fHiringPostings%2fStudents%2fGradAsst%2ffaq%2ehtm&NRNODEGUID=%7b2C13475E-1771-4962-9629-BFA7248BD442%7d&NRCACHEHINT=NoModifyGuest#level

5.8. *Summer teaching assignments*
Graduate students who have four or more semesters' relevant teaching experience are eligible for summer teaching assignments. For some of the courses, the student may be appointed either as a teaching assistant or as an assistant instructor; for others they may only be appointed as an assistant instructor. An information sheet explaining the complications of summer appointments accompanies the invitation to apply, which is sent to all eligible graduate students.

Applications from students who already have had department-assigned summer teaching positions for two summers are initially set aside in the assignment process, giving preference to those who have not yet had two summer assignments
Criteria for summer assignments differ from those for regular assistantships in that the department seeks to appoint those most experienced and well-prepared in the areas covered by the courses, rather than construing the positions as opportunities to learn that material or to learn how to teach.

5.9. *Leaves*
• A student who has committed funding for a specified period of time may take a semester without assistantship, upon appropriate notice. Funding would be lost for the semester the person is not on assistantship, but the person would be reinstated upon their return. The funding commitment normally would not be extended beyond the originally specified period of time. Although the funding commitment ends at the specified time, the number of semesters for which a student is eligible for aid will not be affected by the leave-taking.
• Students interested in the C.I.C. Visiting Scholars Program or other opportunities for study elsewhere should talk to the Associate Chairperson about the consequences for their funding.[3]
• For leaves other than medical leaves, someone giving up an appointment for the Fall semester must assert definitely that they are leaving for the Fall only or that they are leaving for the year. A student choosing to decline an assistantship in order to take a leave should give notice of the leave as soon as possible and at least by July 1 for the Fall semester and by November 15 for the Spring semester. Declining an appointment only for the Fall semester does not affect spring semester funding, except in cases in which the assignment requires a year-long commitment.

5.10. *Grievances*
Grievances by an assistant shall be heard by the department's Graduate Student Hearing Committee. Grievances against an assistant shall be heard by the department's Graduate Student Hearing Committee, if the complaint is made by a faculty member or another graduate student, and by the department's Undergraduate Hearing Committee, if the complaint is made by an undergraduate. See Section VII for more information about conflict resolution.

VI. Professional Development and Department Life

[3] See Section X, "Publications to Consult," Committee on Institutional Cooperation, Traveling Scholars Program, for information on this quite interesting option.

6.1. *Professional Development.* There are not formal program requirements pertaining to participation in professional organizations and societies or participation in conferences. However, students need to be building their professional skills and their vitae.

Graduate students should seek out (on the internet and from faculty and peers) the professional associations and societies that match their interests, and should place themselves appropriately (listserves, society membership, etc.) to be informed of conferences, calls for papers for conferences and anthologies, and so on.

Department, college and graduate school funds are available to contribute to travel expenses for participation in conferences where the student is on a peer-reviewed conference program. The application originates in the department; request the form from the graduate secretary or get it on line at
http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/forms/travel.pdf

There is an annual competition, in the College of Arts and Letters, for *Merit Fellowships* and *Dissertation Completion Fellowships.* Not only is it an honor and an advantage to secure such fellowships, the preparation of proposals, to be submitted to the department for nomination for the fellowships is valuable exercise, a useful part of professional development. Therefore, students should submit such proposals at least once, but possibly several times, during their careers in the program.

6.2. *Participation in department affairs*

A major difference between undergraduate education and graduate education lies in the student's involvement in the intellectual and institutional life of the department in which s/he is studying.

Graduate education in philosophy involves both the development of disciplinary skills and knowledge, and development of the social and professional orientations and skills of a faculty member in a college or university philosophy department. Both of these aspects of the graduate career require the student's engagement in more than courses and seminars and individual research activities.

Students should attend, engage, and participate in the full range of departmental activities, including

- *colloquia and other presentations such as faculty works-in-progress, dissertation defenses, talks by candidates for faculty positions, and the graduate students' speaker series*
- *ad hoc discussions and informal study or reading groups*
- *departmental planning and governance*
- *informal social interaction and conversation with and faculty and among graduate students*

This dimension of department life is not and cannot be codified and calibrated, but since an academic department is a community as well as an institutional unit, students' participation inevitably affects their relationships and the benefits deriving from them. To get the most out of their graduate career, philosophically and professionally, and to achieve recognition as a developing academic professional, students need to make some participation in department life a normal part of their own lives.

VII. Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution

7.1. The philosophy department is a community of scholars with a history and tradition of amicable relations and respectful discourse. All members of the department are expected to contribute constructively to maintaining that environment. The department's criteria of acceptable professional behavior are those stated in university policy documents.

See: Spartan Life http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife

In particular, please refer to:

General Student Regulations. http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/reg3.htm

"Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities," pp. 62-74 of *Spartan Life,* http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/gradrights.htm

7.2. With respect to consensual amorous or sexual relationships between persons where one has instructional or supervisory responsibility with respect to the other, see *Spartan Life* pp. 95-96.

7.3. *Grievance and conflict resolution procedures*
The university has established a judicial structure and process for hearing and adjudicating alleged violations of recognized graduate student rights (*Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities*, Article 5), and allegations of student misconduct. In instances of perceived violation of rights or misconduct, graduate students may consult with the Associate Chair or the Chair of the department for advice and support in reaching a resolution informally and/or in invoking the formal procedures. The student also can informally contact and consult with the University Ombudsman, Professor Stan Soffin, 353-8830 for assistance in understanding a situation, their rights and those of others, and the judicial processes available to them.

Disputes or allegations are (in most cases) first addressed directly by the parties, with each other. If such conversation does not issue in a resolution, the matter is taken to the Associate Chair or the Chair, who will undertake informal mediation; if a resolution is not achieved informally, the department graduate student grievance procedure is invoked.

Graduate students are guaranteed the right to have any grievance they have against the department heard by a department hearing committee, which includes graduate students among its members, in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws of the Department of Philosophy. Students also have the right to appeal a decision of the departmental hearing committee to the College Judiciary and the University Judiciary, in accordance with the provision of the *Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities.*

VIII. Integrity in Research and Creative Activity

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonest can result in a penalty grade on the assignment, a 0.0 in the course/seminar, or the student's dismissal from the program. Graduate students are responsible for knowing the university rules pertaining to plagiarism and other forms of cheating, and for educating themselves about what actions and practices constitute plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty such as getting unauthorized help from others (or giving it) in writing papers or writing the comprehensive examination.

For university rules and regulation, students should consult and acquaint themselves with the following:

1. *General Student Regulations*, Section 1.00
   http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/reg3.htm

2. *Integrity of Scholarship and Grades* (All-University Policy):
   http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/rule32.htm

3. *Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities*, Article 5 (pp. 62-74)
   http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/gradrights.htm

4. *Responsible Conduct of Research*
   http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/all/respconduct.htm

Note that findings of academic dishonesty can be appealed. The rules governing appeal are in the above-referenced documents.

To educate themselves as to exactly what actions and practices constitute plagiarism and other forms of inappropriate uses of sources, students may locate many excellent web sites such as the following:

http://www.georgetown.edu/honor/plagiarism.html#didit
http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/plagiar.htm

Students are responsible for seeking advice from faculty members in any instance where they are in doubt as to the permissibility of any use of sources or any help or cooperation in doing any work assigned for courses/seminars, writing comprehensive examinations, or carrying out research.

IX. Publications to Consult

MSU Academic Programs
http://www.reg.msu.edu/ucc/AcademicPrograms.asp

The MSU Description of Courses
http://ntweb1.ais.msu.edu/j4100/scripts/CatalogSearch.asp

Spartan Life - Student Handbook (a compendium of rules and policies, rights and responsibilities pertaining to all aspects of both undergraduate and graduate student lives and careers in the institution)
http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm

Graduate School's main page of information and links for current graduate students. Includes everything you need to know. A good page to bookmark, and to visit often enough to be familiar with it as a resource.
http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/current.htm#diss

The College of Arts and Letters: Information for Graduate Students
http://www.cal.msu.edu/portals/Graduate.htm

The College of Arts and Letters: Graduate Funding
http://www.cal.msu.edu/portals/GraduateFunding.htm

The College of Arts and Letters: Interdisciplinary Programs and Specializations
http://www.cal.msu.edu/interdisciplinary/

MSU Graduate Assistants – Information, Regulations, FAQs
http://www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/HiringPostings/Students/GradAsst/

Graduate School: Graduate Assistant Brochure
http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/all/gradasst.pdf

Council of Graduate Students (COGS)
http://www.msu.edu/~cogs/

Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities
This is in the *Spartan Life - Student Handbook (*pp. 62-74)
http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm

Formatting Guide: Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations
http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/format.htm

Code of Teaching Responsibility
http://www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/Documents/Faculty/Handbooks/Faculty/Instruction/v-codeofteaching.htm

Committee on Institutional Cooperation, Traveling Scholars Program
http://www.cic.uiuc.edu/programs/TravelingScholars/index.shtml
MSU's Liaison officer: Tony Nunez; nunez@msu.edu

Appendix I

Philosophy Department Governance Structure

1. Standing Committees

There are five standing committees:

1. *Advisory Policy Committee (APC)*
   This is an executive committee that usually meets once a week during fall and spring semesters. It advises the department chair in all matters of policy, curriculum, personnel. According to the department bylaws, many of the official actions of the department, require at some point action of the Advisory Policy Committee. Members of the committee: three elected faculty members, **one graduate student appointed by the graduate students**, one undergraduate student appointed by the undergraduate philosophy club, and three ex officio: the department chair, associate chair, and director or undergraduate studies.
2. *Graduate Committee*
   This committee considers and makes recommendations (to the APC) on all matters of policy and other issues that pertain to the graduate program and graduate student affairs. It is chaired by the Associate Chair of the department and there are two other faculty members appointed to it. The department chair is a member *ex officio*. **There are four graduate student members appointed by the graduate students.**
3. *Academic Environment Committee*
   This committee organizes the annual department colloquium series and the social events related to that, the faculty work-in-progress series and other such programs. It attends to the department library. Insofar as the physical environment needs attention in order to enhance the academic environment, this committee attends to that. There are three faculty members appointed to this committee, **one graduate student member appointed by the graduate students,** and one undergraduate student member appointed by the undergraduate philosophy club.
4. *Promotion, Tenure and Retention Committee*
   This is the elected faculty committee that makes recommendations pertaining to annual faculty evaluations and merit raises and faculty promotion and tenure matters. There are no students on this committee.
5. *The Committee of the Whole*
   All faculty tenured in the philosophy department are members of the Committee of the Whole. In addition its members include **two graduate students appointed by the graduate students**, and two undergraduate students appointed by the undergraduate philosophy club.

2. Graduate students appoint from among themselves

2 individuals to serve as Graduate Student Spokespersons

1 computer lab coordinator

A representative to the Council for Graduate Students (COGS) and an alternate

A Graduate Employees Union Steward (or two co-stewards)

Appendix II

Guidelines for Mentoring Graduate Students as Teachers

(from the Philosophy Department's Advising Handbook)

The Philosophy Department is strongly committed to teaching philosophy, including fostering a productive and cooperative mentoring relationship between faculty and graduate teaching assistants on several levels. In most cases, this relationship will begin in the 1st semester of the master's program since almost all of our graduate students receiving funding work as teaching assistants in that 1st semester. Most of our full-time students in recent years have worked as teaching assistants for at least four years, and many for five or six years.

Philosophy graduate teaching assistants have a wide variety of teaching duties, ranging from grading and holding office hours to leading recitation sections and lecturing. Many also have the opportunity as doctoral students to teach their own courses during Summer sessions, and there are special guidelines the Department has published for these Summer courses. All doctoral students are required to take PHL 801 Teaching Philosophy.

In order to assist faculty and graduate students in realizing a productive and cooperative mentoring relationship, the Department has agreed on the following guidelines and responsibilities. There are three levels of relationships within which mentoring should occur: (I) between individual faculty teaching courses and the teaching assistants assigned to them for that course, (II) between individual faculty and individual graduate students working with them to develop their teaching skills over a longer period of time, and (III) between the Associate Chair and graduate students.

I. Instructor of Record and Teaching Assistant

For each graduate student who serves as a teaching assistant (TA) in courses in the Department of Philosophy or in "B" courses administered by CISAH and taught by Philosophy Department Faculty there is an instructor of record (IR) who has the responsibility to mentor that TA.

A. <u>The responsibilities of the IR are:</u>

- As soon as TA assignments have been made by the Department, provide TA's with a preliminary course description or draft syllabus that outlines the structure of the course.
- Order desk copies of required texts and course packs, and make sure that TA's receive these desk copies far enough in advance so that TA's can begin to prepare for the course adequately.
- Meet with TA's before the semester begins to go over the final syllabus.
- Meet with TA's no later than the end of the first week of the course to complete and sign the Department form specifying TA teaching responsibilities and the times allotted to carry out each responsibility ("Estimate of Amount & Distribution of Assistantship Work").

- Meet with TA's on a regular basis to review how the course is going in lecture and in section, discuss assignments, grading standards and procedures, uses of educational technology, and any problems that have arisen.
- For those TA's with the responsibility to run recitation sections, observe each TA at least once during the semester and meet with each TA individually after each observation to discuss the IR's notes and suggestions. In courses where the IR and TA('s) are holding recitation sections at the same time, other arrangements such as videotaping should be made. IR's and TA's should discuss in advance the logistics of these observations to make them most productive, and unannounced observations by IR's may be appropriate in some cases.
- For those TA's who are offered an opportunity to lecture to the class as a whole and accept the offer, provide adequate notice of the date of the lecture, discuss in advance with the TA the content of the lecture, observe the lecture (if possible), and discuss the lecture afterwards with the TA.
- Meet with TA's to discuss and record final course grades.
- Complete the Department form for the evaluation of TA's. These evaluations will be used as part of the record when the Graduate Committee annually ranks graduate students for teaching assistantship funding for the following year.

B. <u>The responsibilities of the TA are:</u>

- Prepare for the course before the semester begins using the material that the IR has provided.
- Meet all obligations specified in the written agreement with the IR, including performance of regular duties such as holding office hours, leading discussions, grading, attendance at lectures, regular weekly meetings, and other special meetings to discuss the course.
- If there are recitation sections or review sections, discuss plans for these sections with the IR in advance.
- If the TA wishes to post material relevant to the course on a homepage or on the homepage for the course, discuss these plans with the IR in advance.

II. Primary Faculty Mentor and Graduate Student

Each graduate student (GS) will have a primary faculty mentor (PFM) who will work with the GS for the duration of the student's program(s). The PFM will serve two functions: 1) to work closely with individual students to improve their teaching skills and 2) to advise individual students on how to compose a teaching portfolio and other related material for the job market.

The Associate Chair will assign each graduate student to a PFM. The goal is that faculty will share the responsibilities of mentoring graduate students as teaching assistants and future faculty members as equitably as possible.

New master's students will be assigned a PFM by the Associate Chair at the beginning of their 1st semester. Then, if they are admitted to the doctoral program, these students can request to be reassigned to another PFM. New doctoral students who have not completed their master's degree at MSU will be assigned a PFM by the Associate Chair. At the end of the 2nd semester of the 1st year, the Associate Chair will automatically review this

assignment in case there is any need to make changes, but students can request such a review at any time. For doctoral students, it is preferable for the PFM to be someone other than the student's guidance committee chair, but students may request that it is the same person.

Graduate students who are either not working as TA's at all or who are not working as TA's in PHL or CISAH "B" courses at MSU still will be assigned a PFM. The relationship between these students and their PFM will vary in duration, intensity, and content depending upon the GS's particular situation and activities. For example, the GS may be invited to give a guest lecture for the PFM, consult with the PFM in the construction of a course syllabus, or make a short presentation to a class on a subject of special interest to the GS. The PFM can also keep these students informed about workshops on teaching that are available and literature on teaching philosophy. The two should work together to construct the student's teaching portfolio based upon the student's experiences as a TA elsewhere and these other possible activities.

A. <u>The responsibilities of the PFM are:</u>

- Periodically observe recitation sections and lectures, and discuss them with the GS afterwards. The procedures for these observations should be agreed to in advance by the GS and the PFM.
- Meet with the GS once each semester in order to discuss teaching in general.
- Meet with the GS to jointly formulate a teaching project for the GS, such as the development of a course syllabus, a cooperative learning project for a course, or the capability to use educational technology in teaching.. This project can be coordinated with work done in the required PHL 801 Teaching Philosophy seminar taken at the end of the 1st year of the doctoral program.
- Evaluate the GS's teaching project and the GS's report and reflection on it. Evaluations of these particular projects and comments based on periodic observations of teaching should be formative, not summative. That is, they should be designed to reinforce areas of strength and identify ways in which progress can be made. They will not be included in the student's record available to the Graduate Committee for annually ranking graduate students for teaching assistantship funding for the following year. However, a summative evaluation of the GS's strengths and weaknesses as a philosophy teacher written by the PFM should be included in the confidential letters of recommendation sent out by the Department when the official dossier is sent out to potential employers.
- Work with the GS to develop a Teaching Portfolio

B. <u>The responsibilities of the GS are:</u>

- Attend meetings scheduled by the PFM to discuss teaching and the teaching project.
- Observe PFM or other faculty in lectures, discussions, and seminars.
- Write and submit to the Associate Chair a short teaching project proposal, with the assistance of the PFM, and signed by the GS and PFM no later than the end of the 2nd semester of the 1st year of the doctoral program.
- Complete the teaching project, report, and reflection essay by the end of the 2nd semester of the 2nd year of the doctoral program.

- Compile a Teaching Portfolio. At a minimum this should include a statement of teaching philosophy, description of teaching experience, activities to improve teaching, the teaching project reflection essay, PFM's commentary on teaching project and essay, and student evaluations.

III. Associate Chair

In addition to the Associate Chair's (AC) normal advising responsibilities and work as an Instructor of Record and Primary Faculty Mentor for some students, the AC also has special responsibilities for overseeing and coordinating mentoring in the graduate programs.

The special mentoring responsibilities of the Associate Chair are:

- Review the workload agreements between IR's and TA's at the beginning of each semester.
- Review student evaluations of TA's at the end of each semester.
- Review IR's evaluations of TA's at the end of each semester.
- Invite TA's to discuss their experiences as TA's, either on an individual basis or in informal discussion groups.
- Assign GS's to PFM's on an equitable basis.
- Notify PFM's and GS's of teaching workshop opportunities and other events related to teaching.
- Develop and distribute material on mentoring specific to Philosophy courses. These should include

    a. information on best practices for classroom observations
    b. descriptions of possible teaching projects
    c. examples of student teaching portfolios
    d. examples of faculty teaching portfolios that include mentoring

- When necessary, coordinate GS's teaching project among participating faculty members.

Appendix III

Department of Philosophy
Comprehensive Examination Process Overview

I. Prelude
II. Calendar
III. Topics addressed during the process

I. Prelude to the Process

Review of Guidance Committee membership and Guidance Committee report contents. Just prior to the point at which the Guidance Committee begins to work with the student on the comprehensive examination project, there should be a review of the membership of the Guidance Committee and the content of the Guidance Committee Report, and either or both should be changed at this time if that would be appropriate in relation to the student's philosophical interests and progress through the program. In most cases, this review would take place informally in the latter part of the student's 4th semester in the Ph.D. program (usually, Spring Semester of the second year).

II. Calendar

1. *Initiation of Process*

- The comprehensive examination is taken in the student's third year in the Ph.D. program.
- Conversations about the comprehensive examination, involving the student, the committee chair and committee members, normally should begin in the Spring or Summer at the end of the student's two years of course work.
- The student should initiate the process, communicating with the chair of their Guidance Committee.

2. Conversations and meetings leading up to a memo to the student from the Committee chair, detailing the format and timing of the student's comprehensive examination. [See "Topics," below, for the range of things covered by these meetings and the memo.]

> **(1)** Normally, there would be a meeting of the Guidance Committee ***without the student*** very early in the process, in which the committee members discuss and come to consensus about what their expectations and concerns are for this individual student at this stage in the student's program, and how they see the comprehensive process moving this particular student toward active engagement in writing the dissertation–what they think the student's needs are, what they want the student to accomplish and to demonstrate through the examination. They should also discuss how they will respond if some part or parts of the examination are unsatisfactory, whether they would be open to calling for a rewrite of part of the exam, and if so, how they would want that handled. They should also agree on an approximate time-frame for their meetings with the student and their evaluation of the exam.
>
> **(2)** Normally there will be a number of conversations ***involving the student*** and committee members (and at least one face-to-face meetings of the student and the whole committee) leading up to the Guidance Committee's comprehensive examination memo to the student.

(3) The Guidance Committee's **comprehensive examination memo to the student**. As a result of the preceding conversations and meetings (and usually about 3-4 months before the examination due date), the Guidance Committee composes a memo to the student that is conveyed to the student by the Chair of the Committee. The memo specifies the reading list, the format of the examination, the time-table and deadline of its completion, and other aspects of the exam that have been discussed, including whether any re-writing of unsatisfactory parts of the examination might be permitted (and if so, what the time-table and process of that would be). A copy of this memo is given to the Associate Chair.

3. *The comprehensive examination*.

The Guidance Committee composes the examination and whatever instructions come with it, and makes it available to the student at the time agreed upon. The student writes the exam and hands it in by the due date and time. The Guidance Committee evaluates the exam. If the Committee calls for any rewriting, it conveys critique and suggestions to the student in a single memo, and evaluates the rewrite in relation to what is given in that memo.

4. *Outcomes*.

Finally, after its last evaluation, the Guidance Committee declares the examination a "Fail," "Pass," or "Pass with Distinction."

(Students who fail their first examination can take another examination within a year. See the "Comprehensive Examination Guidelines.")

III. Topics to address in the meetings and the Committee's memo to the student.

Recommended "usual practices" (and in some cases, policies) regarding these topics are in the "Comprehensive Examination Guidelines."

- the Guidance Committee's expectations and concerns for this individual student at this stage in the student's program, and how it sees the comprehensive process in this particular case moving the student toward active engagement in writing the dissertation–what the committee thinks that student's needs are, what they want the student to accomplish and to demonstrate through the examination

- the format of comprehensive examination and its time-frame, the date the examination is to be given to the student, and its due-date

- the reading list for the comprehensive, developed collaboratively starting with a list provided by the student

- the kind and scope of the dissertation prospectus or topic statement and the timing of work on it, in relation to the timing of the comprehensive
- the relationship between the comprehensive exam reading list and the bibliography that accompanies the dissertation prospectus or topic statement
- expectations about the student's input to the content of the questions or the assigned topic
- whether, and if so, when the student can put questions of clarification about the exam, after it has been set, to the Chair or members of the Guidance Committee (the "Guidelines" suggest there would normally be such an opportunity)
- whether the student is permitted (or not) or expected to draw on texts and reference books and/or consultation/assistance from others, while working on the examination
- whether, in case one or more part(s) of the examination is found unsatisfactory, the Guidance Committee will contemplate calling for rewriting, and if so, what the time-table and process would be for that.

Appendix IV

Comprehensive Examination Guidelines

A "comprehensive examination" is mandated by the university as part of any Ph.D. program, and "at least one component of the comprehensive examinations must be written..." [p. 65 of Academic Programs]. In the philosophy department Ph.D. program, this requirement is met by "the comprehensive examination."

The individual student's Guidance Committee designs, composes, administers and evaluates the written comprehensive examination for that student. The Guidance Committee determines the requirements for the examination being passed, and whether they have been met.

These policies and guidelines were composed through discussions and consultations with graduate students and faculty and were endorsed by the department as practices will that contribute to the comprehensive process being fair, fruitful and expeditious.

General adherence to the guidelines and policies is desirable because it will generate across the individually-tailored examinations a degree of predictability and similarity that tends to ensure fairness and mitigate anxiety. If complying with these guidelines and policies would impose undue hardship or unfair burden on an individual student, modification may be negotiated. (In the case of proposed deviations from policies, negotiations must involved the Director of Graduate Studies.)

1. Aims of the examination.

The comprehensive examination should be designed with a view to the contribution it can make, in the preparation and the writing, to the student's transition to direct engagement in researching and writing the dissertation. The examination process, from the composition of the reading list to the completion of the writing, will in most cases be linked with the process of defining the dissertation topic and project and its location in the discipline. The student's preparations for the comprehensive examination should serve to unify and consolidate their general intellectual/philosophical preparation for writing their dissertations. The student's satisfactory completion of the examination should give both the student and the guidance committee grounded confidence in the student's readiness to write the dissertation.

- It should enable the student to demonstrate their critical competence over a range of traditional and contemporary texts that constitute the background and context of the individual's dissertation.

- It should enable the student to demonstrate mastery of disciplinary skills of exposition, analysis, critique and argument, and of relevant terminologies, at a level appropriate for someone beginning to write a dissertation in Philosophy.

- The exposition and critique should demonstrate the student's capacity for creative/constructive engagement with texts and philosophical positions, to a degree that supports confidence in the student's readiness to make some original contributions in the dissertation.

- The comprehensive examination should not be oriented to filling any gap in the student's general preparation in philosophy. If the guidance committee perceives some gap or weakness in overall breadth or philosophical literacy or skills, these should be addressed through recommending additional course work or independent study.

2. When.

In most cases, the candidate will have completed the course work required by the Guidance Committee Report by the end of the 5th or the 6th semester in the Ph.D. program, and will begin planning and preparing for the comprehensive at approximately that time. The general presumption is that the candidate takes this exam within the year after they complete the course work. The Guidance Committee Reports should normally indicate that the Comprehensive Examination will be completed by the end of the 6th or the 7th semester.

The Ph.D. program also requires an approved dissertation prospectus or topic statement. This is to be done by the end of the 4th year of the student's program, and normally the work on it will be coordinated with the written examination project. The dissertation prospectus or topic statement is independent of certification of completion of the comprehensive examination. [See the statement on "Dissertation Prospectus or Topic Statement."]

3. What

The range of the examination is set by a reading list initially proposed by the student, developed with the Guidance Committee, and approved by the Guidance Committee. The reading list includes traditional and contemporary texts that are representative of and/or canonical to the background and context of the individual's dissertation and includes some texts to which the dissertation presumably will directly refer. The list would normally include more material than a student can master in a few months of focused preparation for this examination; it would be presumed that some of the materials on the list were mastered previously through courses, seminars and independent study. (The comp reading list normally would differ from the bibliography attached to the dissertation prospectus or topic statement. The latter might, e.g., contain materials the student has not yet studied.)

The student will usually offer some suggestions to the guidance committee about the content of the questions or topics set in the examination. The questions/topics of the exam will be determined by the Guidance Committee (not just the Chair of the committee).

The written comprehensive examination has a format determined by the Guidance Committee, in consultation with the student. It might, for instance, be one of the following types:

(1) a sit-down examination taken without access to books and notes on a single date, normally a 6-hour examination (two 3-hour sessions with a lunch break);

(2) a take-home written exam offering a number of questions from which the student chooses an assigned number, taken in a set period of time (7-14 days would be usual);

(3) an essay, which might be a critical survey of the literature covered by the reading list, with a focus on some particular topic(s) or thread(s) within it. The student will be given a title or topic, suggestions or instructions, a length and a firm due-date. This would normally be a 10- to 12-week project.

The candidate and the Guidance Committee may formulate some alternative to these three types of examinations if some alternative would better meet the student's needs or promote the student's advancement to writing the dissertation.

Amongst the alternatives would be the addition of an oral component to the exam. If this is done, then the details of this oral component (such as how one's performance on the orals figure into whether one passes the comps as a whole) would have to be made very clear and explicit in the comp memo.

An alternative should not place substantially greater or smaller demands on the student that the usual examinations do.

4. Evaluation

Exams will be read and evaluated by standards congruent with the formats chosen. For example:

Exams of type (2) will be read and evaluated with the understanding that the answers are not polished essays but something closer to a somewhat edited and revised first draft written without much time to track down and document detailed references or to revise its overall organization for the best possible flow or argument.

Exams of type (3) will be read and evaluated with the understanding that the writer had time to review the relevant texts, locate the document suitable references, and revise the essay until it is well-organized and well-written. These essays should be near the quality of work–in writing and in quality of critical, philosophical exposition–that is ready for public presentation.

5. Consultation and Assistance with writing the examination.

Upon receiving the examination questions or topic/assignment the student should read it carefully and within a preset period of time may ask the chair of the committee for clarification of the meaning or intent of the questions(s)/topic.

The student should not have the help of others in writing or editing the examination essay(s).

6. Outcomes of the examination.

The final outcome of the examination is simply "Fail," "Pass" or "Pass with Distinction".

As a result of consultations involving the student and the Guidance Committee (concluding about 3 months before the examination due date), there will be a memo composed and approved by the committee and conveyed by the chair of the committee to the student (with a copy to the Director of Graduate Studies) that specifies various parameters of the examination (its format, scope, time-line, etc.). This memo is to include a section on "outcomes" that informs the student of the consequences of some or all of the examination being evaluated as unsatisfactory or "not passing." This would address the matter of whether the student might have an opportunity to rewrite a portion of the exam that was found unsatisfactory, and if so, in what time frame, with what consultation with the committee, etc.

These consequences (including rewrites, if any would be permitted) should be such that there will be closure (a definitive "Pass" or "Fail") within a well defined frame of time and processes. Normally, the Guidance Committee will evaluate the examination or any rewritten portion within two weeks of its being handed in.

Department policies on failure of comprehensive examinations:

1. The Guidance Committee determines the requirements for the examination being passed, and whether they have been met.

2. The final outcome of the examination process is simply "Fail," "Pass" or "Pass with Distinction."

3. If any essay or section of the examination is judged not of "passing" quality, the examination may be Failed. Department guidelines and policies do not require committees to admit of rewrites. That is within the discretion of the Guidance Committee.

4. If any rewriting is required, the examination will not be counted as "failed" or as "passed" before the rewrite has been handed in and evaluated. The examination has the same status it had during the period in which it was originally being written.

5. If a rewrite is required, the rewrite should be done as soon as possible and with a firm deadline set in consultation with the student.

6. Not handing in the examination or rewritten portions (if there is rewriting called for) by the due date/time would be (except in extreme extenuating circumstances) failure of the examination.

7. If rewriting is required and the first rewrite is unsatisfactory, there will not be further rounds of revision; the examination will be failed.

8. If a student fails a comprehensive examination, they may elect to take another examination within a year. The second examination can be of a different format and can cover a different reading list.

9. A student who fails twice will not continue in the program.

If any rewriting is permitted or required:

- If any rewriting is undertaken, critical comments on the original essay(s) and directions for the rewrite should be in a single memo approved by the committee and conveyed by the chair of the committee. Rewrites should be judged in relation to the critique and requirements given in that memo. Standards of evaluation will be the same as those applied to the initial examination.

- If rewriting is called for, it will address the same question(s)/topic(s) as were set in the initial examination. The rewriting process will not involve the committee's revising the initial assignment.

7. Committee meetings after the comps

1. If there is not an oral component to the comp, there is an expectation that there will be a face-to-face meeting of the student and committee after the

comprehensive exams, to have an extensive discussion of how, in light of what has been written in those comps, the student will move toward writing the dissertation. There is some flexibility in how this is done: it could take place after a prospectus has been presented, or it could take place somewhat earlier and be a more informal discussion of the student's project.

2. Note that the requirement for regular meetings (that one meet with one's guidance committee once a year) continues to apply in the post-comp period of one's graduate work.

8. Enrollment.

During the semester in which the written comprehensive examination is taken, the student will enroll for any course or seminar that is on the Guidance Committee report but not yet completed, or some other course or seminar that enhances the student's preparation for writing the dissertation, and may enroll for either PHL 890 or PHL 999 credits, as appropriate. PHL 890 is for an independent study course with a definite syllabus of study and work submitted that can be the basis of a grade given at the end of the semester. PHL 999 is for dissertation research (and a Deferred grade is given, to be converted when the dissertation is defended and approved). The Guidance Committee in consultation with the student should determine appropriate enrollment according to what type of work the student needs to be doing: to fill in gaps in their preparation, or to become more expert is some area, or to begin dissertation research, etc.

9. Conflict resolution.

See Section VII of the Graduate Handbook for guidance in matters relating to conflicts or disagreements or grievances arising in connection with any of these procedures, their interpretation, execution or progress, or the evaluations involved.

Appendix V

Guidelines for the Ph.D. Dissertation Prospectus or Topic Statement

- The only requirement for a student's being certified to the Graduate School as having "passed the comprehensive examination" will be the student's passing the comprehensive examination as described in the previous two appendices. The prospectus or topic statement is detached from that official action.

- The comprehensive examination and the prospectus or topic statement are, each and together, to be such as to contribute to the student's transition to actively writing the dissertation.

- There are a variety of ways of, a variety of strategies for, approaching the project of writing a dissertation in philosophy. For instance, some students would profit from putting a lot of work in to writing a very fully developed prospectus that projects quite definitive chapters and chapter outlines, and then expanding it into

a dissertation. Some students might prosper working in a way that permits a more organic development of philosophical investigation from an initial articulation of a hunch and a set of related questions that takes only a few pages to set out clearly. And some faculty members are comfortable mentoring students through projects closer to one end of this spectrum, some are comfortable mentoring projects closer to the other end of this spectrum. The rubric "prospectus or topic statement" signals and permits such variety.

- Whatever the format of the prospectus or topic statement, it would normally be at least 4,000 words, plus a bibliography. Many would be considerably longer than that. Whatever its format, style and length, it must be such as to be usefully referenced later as a statement of what was initially proposed, so that changes of direction in the work can meaningfully be tracked from it, and so that if there are changes of committee membership, those coming on to the committee can look to it as a clear point of reference.

- The bibliography may be of a sort that complements the style and strategy of dissertation writing that is signaled by the style and make-up of the prospectus or topic statement. For instance, in relation to a briefer and more speculative topic statement completed and approved earlier in the development of the project, the bibliography might include more items that the student has not yet studied and not yet determined to be work that will be referenced in the dissertation; the bibliography for a more developed and definitely structured prospectus might be very close to exactly what will be the bibliography of referenced works of the dissertation.

- The type and dimensions of the required prospectus or topic statement is to be discussed by the committee and the student in conjunction with the plans for the comprehensive examination. At or near the beginning of the semester in which the written comprehensive is to be taken, the requirements set up for the prospectus or topic statement and the schedule for its completion and submission should be decided in consultation with the student and communicated to the student in a memo from the chair of the committee. The committee can require the prospectus or topic statement be done and approved either before the written comprehensive examination or after it, depending on its understanding of the role of this work in relation to the comprehensive and to the transition to actively writing the dissertation. **A copy of the memo is given to the Associate Chair**.

- According to the rules of the Ph.D. program, the prospectus or topic statement is to be completed and approved by the end of the 9th semester (students aiming to complete the program in five years need to have it completed and approved by the end of the 7th semester). In situations where a very fully developed prospectus is required by the committee, completing this may take more time (and presumably also the final writing stage would be shorter). Therefore, in some cases the student may be permitted a later completion date for the prospectus. Also, if the guidance committee has required more course work in the student's program than can be completed in the standard period of course work that may be cause for moving the deadline for completion and approval of the prospectus. If the guidance

committee sets a due date later than the end of the 9th semester, it should so inform the Associate Chair, with a note as to the rationale.

- The schedule and description/format of the required prospectus or topic statement should be filed with the Associate Chair, and copies held by the student and all guidance committee members.

- **The approved prospectus or topic statement is to be filed with the associate chair**, and will be posted on the limited-access department web site along with comprehensive exams.

Appendix VI

Job Application Dossier
Policies and Procedures

- The complete set of dossier materials must be reviewed and approved by the Associate Chair before being sent out by the office staff. Please allow sufficient time prior to deadlines to allow for the possibility of revision. After approval a copy of the complete set of dossier materials is to remain on file in the department office. Any substitutions to the originally approved set of materials must be approved by the Associate Chair.

- The department will be responsible for the photocopying and sending out of *no more than **15 dossiers** in a given year and a career total of **30**.*

- Dossiers will be sent out no later than 3 full working days from the time of the student request. The request must include complete addresses for the employers to which the dossiers are to be sent. It is the student's responsibility to plan ahead for deadlines. *Material will only be sent 1st class mail picked up from the mail room in South Kedzie.* Any other form of delivery is the student's responsibility.

- After the student has used up her or his allotment of dossiers, the department will send out copies of letters of recommendation on file no later than 1 full working day after the student's request to send the letters.

<u>Sequence for mailing</u>:

Cover sheet
Vitae
Letters of Recommendation
Writing Samples
Transcripts
Teaching Evaluations