Philosophy programs teach ideas and their logical structure, including arguments and investigations about abstract and real phenomena. Philosophical thinking springs from many dimensions of human experience – curiosity and wonder about nature and the purpose of life, a desire for justice, attentiveness to beauty, and inquisitiveness of human beings everywhere about their own nature and the nature of things outside them. Philosophy aims to teach us the best ways to think about fundamental human questions that occur to almost everyone from time to time, and how we might answer them. Students in a Philosophy program will learn about logic, ethics, aesthetics, symbolism, and the history of philosophy, and applications to the theoretical foundations and methods of other disciplines. Philosophy students read about the thoughts and theories of past philosophers and develop analytical and organizational skills to come to conclusions of their own. They must also be able to state their positions clearly, succinctly, and with conviction to their professors and peers.

Programs at Montana State University examine the history of philosophy as well as innovations and issues in contemporary philosophy. Classes are offered from the introductory level to upper-division courses in ethics, theory of knowledge, the nature of consciousness, philosophy of science, Asian philosophy, social and political philosophy, philosophy of film, other animals, aesthetics, philosophy of religion, logic, metaphysics, and the history of philosophy. Students will experience a wide range of courses that explore these topics by studying philosophical problems through the writings of important philosophers of the past and present. Emphasis is placed on understanding different solutions to these problems and on analyzing and evaluating them. Philosophy develops skills that are broadly applicable in human life and become particularly useful in professions such as law, government, business, and other fields.

Characteristics associated with success include analytical and organizational skills, logical thinking, a strong sense of curiosity and imagination, and an ability to communicate clearly and with conviction.

You should:

- Have above average oral and written communication skills
- Be able to think critically and logically
- Be interested in understanding human issues such as birth, growth, love, forgiveness, faith, and death
- Have good analytical and organizational skills
- An ability to develop creative solutions to unique situations
- Have a strong sense of curiosity about different cultures (past and present)
- Have a lively imagination
- Be able to communicate clearly and with conviction
- Have sound judgment and decision making skills
- Have complex problem solving skills

Occupations in this field require ability to: be flexible, analytical and organized with the capacity for intellectual growth.

Related occupations include:

- Archaeologist
- Anthropologist
- Lawyer
- College/University Faculty
- Minister/Priest/Rabbi
- Political Scientist
- Writer/Editor
- Mediator
- Book editor
- Director of Marketing
- Museum administrator
- Legislative Assistant
- Job analyst
- Public relations manager
**MSU graduates (Bachelor’s degree) were hired in the following selected fields**: 

- Political Advisor – U.S. Public Interest Research Group
- Research Assistant- Georgetown University
- Data Entry- Express Personnel
- English Teacher- USA Pedigico
- Manager- Montana Ale Works
- Peace Corp Volunteer- Peace Corps
- Volunteer- Montana Conservation Corps
- Carpentry- Design Wood Works Inc.
- Sales and Marketing Manager- Lattice Materials
- Administrator- Montana State Financial Aid
- Trainer/Instructor- Corner Gait Ranch
- Marketing and Sales Director- Elliott’s of Montana

**Salary averages of survey respondents (# of respondents in parentheses)**:

- 2010: MT: $22,000 (1)  Out of State: $15,000 (1)
- 2009: MT: Insufficient Data*  Out of State: Insufficient Data*
- 2008: MT: Insufficient Data*  Out of State: $24,960 (1)
- 2007: MT: $62,400 (1)  Out of State: $43,075 (2)

**Graduates from this program entered programs of further education at these institutions**:

- Montana State University
- Chiropractic School
- Catholic University Columbus

**Other Sources of Information**:

- American Academy of Religion: www.aarweb.org
- American Philosophical Association: www.apaonline.org
- National Endowment for the Humanities: www.neh.gov
- Philosophy of Science Association: www.philsoci.org
- Department of History & Philosophy - Montana State University: www.montana.edu/history

*Insufficient Data*: Each year the Career, Internship & Student Employment Services Office at Montana State University conducts a survey to determine placement rates and salary survey information from recent MSU graduates. Graduates were requested to participate in the survey to provide relevant information regarding the transition from college to career/graduate school. At times, there are limited or no respondents. Statistics, therefore, are not always based upon the response of the total sample group and are sometimes listed as “Insufficient Data”.

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2Montana State University Department of History & Philosophy
3Montana State University Career & Internship Services
Number of graduates/number of respondents: 2007: 12/3; 2008: 5/1; 2009: 11/0; 2010: 5/2