

Why Philosophy?

Because it asks *ultimate questions*.
Because it explores how to live a *good life*. Because it takes seriously the questions that arise in life and tries to answer them. Because it *exposes and questions* assumptions. Because it helps you *find your own answers* and your own standards for answers. Because it calls on both your *creativity* and your *rigor*.

Because it uses all

your

and

everything

know,

and

history



interests

you

from art
literature,

and social

science, to

mathematics and natural science.

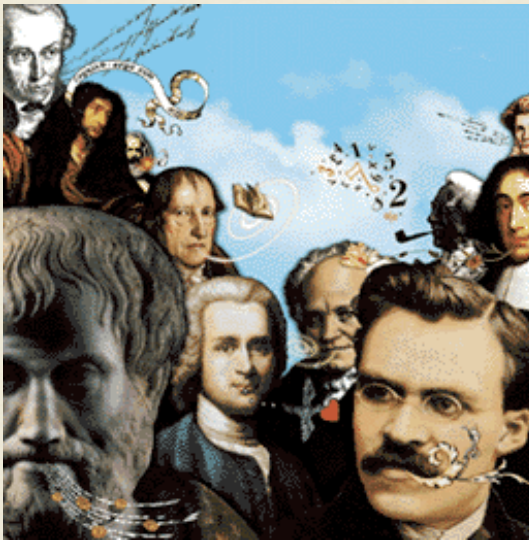
Because it makes you *articulate in speaking and writing, clear in thinking and reasoning*, and able to *draw connections*

among ideas of all kinds. Because you

have decisions to make, evidence to weigh, opinions to assess, mysteries to contemplate, a world to understand, *a*

life to live.

Text on this brochure adapted from Earlham College Philosophy department material and material from the Australasian Association of Philosophy.



Join a motley crew!



The **Honi Haber Memorial Library** in the UCD Philosophy Department: the site of many memorable lectures and seminars in advanced philosophy.

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WILL YOUR PHILOSOPHY DEGREE GET YOU A JOB?

STUDYING PHILOSOPHY AS PART OF A
NON-ACADEMIC CAREER



SELLING A PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

Philosophy graduates should not expect potential employers to automatically recognize their skills. In a recent study, graduates who reported that philosophy helped them get a job were those who reported they actively sold their skills to prospective employers:

"The employer found it initially hard to understand the relevance of philosophy to the job but after explanation was impressed with the skills I could bring."

Thus the critical issue for philosophy graduates is how to market their skills to potential employers. The following points should be kept in mind when applying for non-academic jobs after completing a philosophy degree.

- Thoroughly *research the job* you're applying for, in order to see whether and how your skills make you a suitable applicant.
- Philosophy's benefits can frequently be *tied to the selection criteria* that are addressed in a job application. Skills specified as essential or desirable in selection criteria are often the generic ones that a philosophy graduate will have. Many jobs want candidates to *demonstrate critical, analytical, and communication skills*. Tying your philosophy degree into the selection criteria will alert prospective employers to the benefit of your studies before the interview stage is even reached.
- *Many employers may actually be interested in your study of philosophy*. Don't be embarrassed about your studies: take this as an opportunity to promote the skills you have acquired.
- In an interview, inform a potential employer of the benefits of a philosophy degree, but *don't be defensive or aggressive* about it. Remember that interviewers will be concerned about your ability to get along with others in a workplace.
- An employer may be prepared to provide you with on the job training, to fill any skills gaps. Remember that philosophy gives you skills which enable you to *learn quickly within new fields*.
- Your *breadth of vision* may well be of value to any potential employer who is concerned about your ability to adapt to a new working environment or unfamiliar field of knowledge, and even your ability to deal with diverse people.

PHILOSOPHY AND SKILLS

Unlike medicine, law or veterinary science, philosophy is not a vocational degree it does not provide automatic entry into specific professions in the non-academic workforce. But your philosophy degree can still be of great benefit when joining the workforce. Studying philosophy will have provided you with an advanced level of generic skills that are immensely useful in a wide range of jobs, in such diverse fields as Journalism and Media, Government and Public Administration, Computing, Law, Education and Research.

EVALUATING ARGUMENTS

Philosophy teaches you to be able to distinguish between good arguments and bad arguments, irrespective of their subject matter, and thus to be able to make informed decisions and recommendations on contentious issues.

CLARITY OF THOUGHT

Philosophy helps you to separate distinct issues, consider them independently and think out the consequences of positions on them. This makes the philosophy graduate an effective learner; you will have the general skills for thinking about problems and tasks, and framing and evaluating solutions.

ADVANCED COMMUNICATION

Philosophy graduates have had to meet very exacting requirements in communicating their ideas, both in written and oral form. You will have learnt how to frame, express and convey ideas, your own and other people's, in a clear and convincing way.

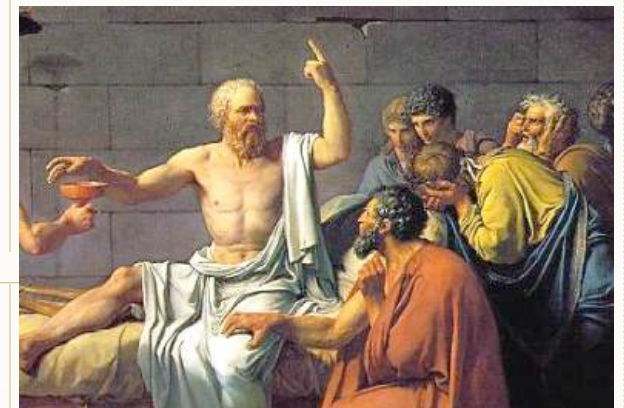
BREADTH OF VISION

Philosophy graduates are accustomed to being exposed to new and confronting ideas, and have an appreciation of the value of different perspectives on life, society and knowledge.

Although you will have gained these skills and attributes from studying the works of philosophers, they have a general application outside philosophy as well. For example, many of the principles of argument analysis are universal - what characterizes a successful argument in philosophy can be much the same as what characterizes a successful argument in fields such as politics, public policy or education. Further, the study of philosophy requires the processing of difficult texts, and of information that initially may seem obscure, so that you become experienced at gaining insight into unfamiliar subject matter.



Thought from many ages, cultures, and perspectives.



Socrates about to graduate (with honors) in philosophy.