Department of Philosophy

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What is Philosophy?

The word "philosophy" originates from the Greek word "philosophia", which literally means "love of wisdom". However, a mere etymological fact does not tell us much about what philosophy really is. What is wisdom? In what manner should we love it? If you are asking this sort of question, then you are already doing philosophy. Philosophy involves reflection on itself: it investigates its own identity as well as varieties of other topics. In the history of philosophy, these subjects have been developed into sophisticated and subtle branches such as epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, metaphysics, ethics, political philosophy, aesthetics, meta-ethics, philosophy of science, philosophy of action, etc. Whichever subfield of philosophy you are engaging in, what is most crucial in doing philosophy is to ask a question in a proper and fundamental way. Doing philosophy enables us to acquire a matured understanding of the fundamental aspects of things. We must distinguish between learning the thoughts of great philosophers, which is essential for practicing philosophy, and doing philosophy itself, that is philosophizing. What you can learn in the department of philosophy is to maintain a balance between these two and thereby to hone your skill to philosophize based on the questions asked by great philosophers and the answers they proposed. Philosophy education is not for learning known truths but for developing the skills to test them at a fundamental level. You are strongly encouraged to push your intelligence to the limit by engaging in fierce and in-depth debates.

Philosophy at Kyung Hee

The Department of Philosophy was founded in 1979, under the name of National Ethics. The name was changed to Department of Philosophy in 1987. The department currently has 7 faculty members, roughly 160 undergraduate students, and about 10 graduate students.

The Department offers programs of study leading to the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Arts, and Bachelor of Arts. The programs emphasize metaphysics, ethics, phenomenology, Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. The undergraduate program emphasizes training for the fundamentals of scholarly research and teaching. The great advantage of the Department of Philosophy is that it offers academic excellence on a personal scale. Although the Department is relatively small, intellectual life within the Department can be both intimate and challenging. At the same time, it is possible – and in fact quite common – for students to reach out to other disciplines for scholarly growth. Seminars and colloquia on various issues and topics are scheduled regularly, consisting of talks by visiting and resident philosophers and other humanists. The Department awards various types of fellowships and scholarships to help students meet the cost of education. These awards are intended to further the recipients' education and recipients are expected to devote full time to their studies and to any required research and training.

Degree Requirements

To receive the Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy, a student must:

1) Complete the required units as follows.
   a) Students who major in philosophy are required to:
      • complete a minimum of 130 credit units
      • satisfy a minimum of 70 units of Major Courses for philosophy as follows:
       - complete 6 units of Basic Major Courses for philosophy
       - complete 6 units of Mandatory Major Courses for philosophy
       - complete 58 units of Elective Major Courses for philosophy
   b) Students who minor in philosophy are required to:
      • complete a minimum of 130 credit units
      • satisfy a minimum of 21 units of Major Courses for philosophy
       - complete 21 units of Elective Major Courses for philosophy
   c) Students who double major in philosophy are required to:
      • complete a minimum of 130 credit units
      • satisfy a minimum of 42 units of Major Courses for philosophy as follows:
       - complete 6 units of Basic Major Courses for philosophy
       - complete 6 units of Mandatory Courses for philosophy
       - complete 30 units of Elective Courses for philosophy
2) submit a graduation thesis for approval.

Courses

Year 1

Complete 2 basic major courses, Base of Eastern Philosophy, and Base of Western Philosophy and 1 obligatory course, Logic and Thinking.

Year 2, 3, 4

Complete 1 mandatory course, Story and Philosophy, and * Elective courses of philosophy (* elective courses required for a multiple major, but none required for a minor), related to Metaphysics, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Social Philosophy, Aesthetics, German Philosophy, French Philosophy, Philosophy of Science, Analytical Philosophy, Greek Philosophy, Teaching Methodology for Discourse, and other realms.

Careers and Graduate Destinations

There are many routes for graduates of our department. Many students choose to enter the education field as instructors in middle or high schools. Others occupy philosophy-related realms, such as communication areas and publishing circles. Most students get jobs in companies of various fields and have active careers. Some graduates go on to the next stage of education and pursue master's or Ph.D. degrees of philosophy at various universities. Other students choose another field of graduate course, such as sociology, politics, theology, economics, and literature. Our department offers students a strong program of developing requisite abilities such as critical thinking, language ability, and personality, to become an excellent agent in society.

Faculty

Jung-Sik Choi, Ph.D. Paris 4(Paris-Sorbonne), 1992, Professor, Greek and French Philosophy, jschoi@khu.ac.kr
In-Cheol Park, Ph.D. University of Wuppertal, 2000, Professor, German Philosophy, heimwelt@khu.ac.kr
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