Master of Arts in Philosophy
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
2014-2015

1. **Who can apply?** Students who will have completed their undergraduate requirements during the fall semester of an academic year may apply for admission in the spring semester of that same academic year. Students who will have completed their undergraduate requirements prior to the fall semester of a given academic year may apply for admission in the fall semester. Admission determinations will be based on undergraduate grade point average, undergraduate coursework, letters of recommendation, and written work that demonstrates a philosophical proficiency as well as the ability to achieve the objectives of the applicant’s proposed graduate study.

2. **What are the admission requirements?** To qualify for unconditional admission, applicants must satisfy University-wide and College-wide graduate admission requirements, and be recommended for admission by the Department’s Graduate Admissions Committee. In addition to submitting all University required application materials (e.g., application form, official transcripts, GRE scores), applicants must include: 1) a 500-word statement describing the applicant’s commitment to pursuing the MA in Philosophy, and how the MA in Philosophy will advance the applicant’s personal and professional goals, and 2) two letters of recommendation, which specifically address your academic qualifications and potential for graduate study. Finally, we **strongly recommend** including a writing sample that demonstrates your philosophical writing ability.

3. **When can I apply?** Now! Additionally, we encourage students who plan on applying to a.) fill out the Free Application For Student Aid (FAFSA) immediately, prior to application to graduate school; b.) identify the required forms you will need for the UTSA Graduate School application (including transcripts, etc); c.) complete the required forms, but do not yet submit them; d.) check back frequently with the Philosophy faculty—we will post immediately upon hearing that we can officially review your application.

4. **How do I apply?** All students must complete the UTSA Graduate School’s Admission Application and forms. For more information on applying to UTSA, please visit http://graduateschool.utsa.edu/graduate-admissions/category/how-to-apply/.

5. **What is the application deadline?** The application deadline for matriculating in the spring semester is November 1. The application deadline for matriculating in the fall semester is July 1.
6. I tried to enroll through ASAP but it wouldn’t let me because of a “level restriction”. What does that mean? You have not yet been admitted into the Graduate School, or (for seniors who will be taking a course for graduate credit) the approval from the instructing faculty member.

7. I didn’t major in philosophy—can I still get accepted into the program? Applicants who unconditionally meet the admissions requirements to the University may apply for admission into the Program. We want you to succeed, so students who have a background in Philosophy may be naturally better prepared for the coursework. Of course, the Graduate Admissions Committee will consider the totality of the applicant’s academic portfolio when making admissions decisions.

8. Can current undergraduates at UTSA take the graduate courses listed on ASAP? Students who have earned senior status by credit hours may take up to six graduate credit hours in Philosophy, with approval of the instructing faculty member and the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR). Note: students cannot earn both undergraduate and graduate credit for the same course, so if a student matriculates in the graduate section of a course, those hours cannot count toward the fulfillment of the undergraduate degree. Once the student enrolls in the graduate program in Philosophy, the credits will count toward the fulfillment of the MA.

9. Will there be required courses? Yes. All MA students in Philosophy will be required to take a graduate level Logic course (PHI 5003 or PHI 5013) and PHI 5033 Philosophical Writing and Research. Students should take these courses as soon as they can once they begin the program.

10. Can I take graduate courses outside of Philosophy? Our MA requirements allow you to take up to six graduate credit hours in disciplines outside of Philosophy. Note: Some disciplines require the approval of the instructing faculty member prior to registration. Our faculty has agreements in place with a number of other departments, but check with the GAR to see if you will need permission.

11. How many hours should I take a semester? Full time graduate level work is much more intense than at the undergraduate level. For that reason, a student is considered “full-time” when they take no fewer than nine semester hours. We strongly encourage students not to exceed 12 semester hours of graduate work per full semester.

12. Will I have to write a thesis? No. We strongly recommend all students who plan on pursuing the PhD in philosophy to write the MA thesis, but our Program also offers an Internship Project track for students who would like to complete the MA without writing the MA thesis.

13. Will there be comprehensive exams? Yes. All graduate students at UTSA must complete comprehensive exams. Philosophy graduate students will take one comprehensive exam. They will choose to write their exam on one area of philosophy, taken from a list of several options. The options typically include metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, ancient philosophy, modern philosophy, and 20th century philosophy. In order to take comprehensive exams, students must have completed 18 hours of graduate-level work in philosophy, including the required courses, graduate level Logic (PHI 5003 or PHI 5013) and PHI 5033 Philosophical Writing and Research.
14. **Will there be financial aid offered?** Yes. Philosophy MA students will compete for Research and Teaching Assistantships. For more information, see the Philosophy Graduate Handbook, or the Graduate School’s Financial Aid information (http://graduateschool.utsa.edu/funding/). Note that all students who receive financial aid must be full time, and be in good academic standing.

15. **I still have questions!** If you still have questions, feel free to contact us! The Graduate Advisor of Record is Joshua Thurow (email to: joshua.thurow@utsa.edu).