Who Can I Work with in Philosophy M.A. Studies at Gonzaga?

Mark R. Alfino (Ph.D. University of Texas at Austin): 20th-Century Philosophy, Philosophy of Law, Philosophy of Language and Literature, Business Ethics, Organizational Ethics.
Recent Graduate Seminar: Hellenistic Philosophy.

Kirk Besmer (Ph.D. University of Notre Dame): Continental Philosophy (Phenomenology and Existentialism), Philosophy of Technology.
Recent Graduate Seminar: Phenomenology.

Daniel Bradley (Ph.D. National University of Ireland): Phenomenology of Religion, Continental Philosophy, Hermeneutics.


Recent Graduate Seminar: Aristotle’s First Philosophy in the Metaphysics.

Recent Graduate Seminar: Taylor’s Sources of the Self.


Recent Graduate Seminar: Kant’s First Critique.


Recent Graduate Seminar: Logic and Cognition.

Thomas Jeannot (Ph.D. St. Louis University): Marxism, Hermeneutics, Ethics, Classical American Philosophy.
Recent Graduate Seminar: Hegel.

Recent Graduate Seminar: Augustine.

Recent Graduate Seminar: Skepticism / Antiskepticism.

Recent Graduate Seminar: Theories of Justice.

Richard McClelland (Ph.D. Cambridge University): Philosophy of Mind, Moral Psychology, Recent Graduate Seminar: Empathy, Biology, and Philosophy of Mind.

Recent Graduate Seminar: German Idealism.

Erik Schmidt (Ph.D. Syracuse University): Moral Psychology, Practical Reason, Philosophy of Art.
Recent Graduate Seminar: Moral Psychology.

Michael Tkacz (Ph.D. Catholic University of America): Ancient and Medieval Philosophy, Natural Philosophy, Metaphysics, Neo-Thomism.

Rose Mary Volbrecht, J.S. (Ph.D. University of Notre Dame): Ethics, Feminist Ethics, Health Care Ethics.
Recent Graduate Seminar: Contemporary Virtue Ethics Theories.

John V. Wagner (Ph.D. Catholic University of America): Medieval Philosophy, Metaphysics, Chinese Philosophy.
Recent Graduate Seminar: Thomistic Metaphysics.

John V. Wagner (Ph.D. Catholic University of America): Hellenistic Philosophy, Political Philosophy (e.g., history of philosophy and philosophical problems, continental philosophy and analytic philosophy).

What Opportunities Does Gonzaga Offer Philosophy M.A. Students?

- Graduate Assistantships (up to 9 credit hours coursework and research on a wide range of topics across many standard divisions (e.g., history of philosophy and philosophical problems, continental philosophy and analytic philosophy)
- Competitively awarded summer Graduate Assistantships (one 6 credits and one 3 credits) provide financial support for summer coursework and research / administrative experience
- Two competitively awarded annual graduate scholarships
- Coursework and research on a wide range of topics across many standard divisions (e.g., history of philosophy and philosophical problems, continental philosophy and analytic philosophy)
- Annual spring Graduate Philosophy Conference provides an outlet for original scholarly work by students, allows students to experience an academic conference, and gives students administrative experience through the planning and execution of the conference
- Robust philosophy undergraduate core curriculum allows many recent philosophy M.A. graduates opportunity to gain teaching experience on an adjunct basis

“My reason for seeking an M.A. in philosophy at Gonzaga was to become familiar with the ideas that have shaped our world and in doing so gain the credentials necessary to secure admission to a Ph.D. program. Gonzaga helped me meet both goals.”

– Mark Mitchell, Ph.D.
Chairman and Associate Professor of Government, Patrick Henry College
M.A. in Philosophy, Gonzaga University (1998)
Ph.D. in Government, Georgetown University (2001)
Why Study Philosophy at the M.A. Level?

- explore at a deep level the central philosophical questions of the history of philosophy concerning reality, knowledge, and the good
- improve skills of critical reading, argumentation, writing, and logic
- develop understanding of philosophical literature and concepts for application to a variety of career and vocational paths: teaching, law, theology, religious work, corporate work, technology, and medical and professional ethics
- build or strengthen a foundation for Ph.D. studies in philosophy
- prepare and train to teach philosophy at the community college or introductory university level

Why Study M.A.-Level Philosophy at Gonzaga?

- individually oriented program dedicated to providing students with a strong degree useful for continuing their studies in philosophy, teaching, or enhancing studies or careers in philosophy-related fields
- large faculty, all with Ph.D. degrees, with specialties in a diverse range of philosophical fields
- philosophical study in the Jesuit, Catholic and humanist tradition emphasizes history of philosophy, social and applied ethics
- seminars offered in fall and spring semesters allow students to explore a variety of topics in significant depth in conversation with a peer cohort
- strong slate of regularly offered courses on history of philosophy and applied philosophical topics
- access to faculty for independent-study coursework and informal mentoring
- strong philosophy holdings in Gonzaga’s Foley Library, including one of the best history of philosophy collections in the Northwest, and extensive electronic resource access to scholarly materials for on-site thesis research

What Do Graduates of Gonzaga’s Philosophy M.A. Program Do?

Most students who complete the Gonzaga Philosophy M.A. degree plan to pursue a Ph.D. in philosophy or a related discipline, to teach philosophy at the community college / introductory college level, or to apply philosophical skills or concepts to non-academic careers. Since 1999:

- 40% of graduates have been placed in Ph.D. programs at institutions such as Arizona State University, Loyola University Chicago, Marquette University, Purdue University, University of St. Thomas (Houston), Southern Illinois University, and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium); of this group, over half have at this point completed Ph.D.s, and teach at institutions such as St. Edwards University and Hope College
- 26% have used the philosophy M.A. degree as a credential for teaching at institutions such as Spokane Falls Community College, Santa Clara University, Eastern Washington University, Gonzaga University, West Point, and the Air Force Academy

- 34% have pursued careers other than philosophy or the academy, and have used their philosophical education in fields such as law, theology and religion, and business

-- Britni Weaver
Instructor (tenured) and Department Chair, Spokane Falls Community College
M.A. in Philosophy, Gonzaga University (2003)

“I am a full-time tenured faculty member at a community college currently chairing my department, but my Gonzaga education provided more than just preparation for a career in philosophy. The experience also opened my mind to the endless and rewarding possibilities of knowledge.”

-- Stephen C. Dilley
Assistant Professor of Philosophy, St. Edwards University
M.A. in Philosophy, Gonzaga University (2002)
Ph.D. in Philosophy, Arizona State University (2007)

“My experience as a graduate student in the Gonzaga University philosophy department was very positive. The department does a particularly fine job of giving individualized attention to the graduate students. Other strengths include the quality of instruction, breadth of specializations, deep knowledge of the history of philosophy, and rigor of the comprehensive exams and thesis requirement.”

-- Stephen C. Dilley
Assistant Professor of Philosophy, St. Edwards University
M.A. in Philosophy, Gonzaga University (2002)
Ph.D. in Philosophy, Arizona State University (2007)