THE PROGRAM

At Gonzaga, undergraduate students are invited to enter the philosophic quest through four programs of study: the University Core Curriculum, a minor, a major, and the Kossel concentration. Gonzaga philosophy courses also serve as components of interdisciplinary concentrations in Catholic studies, environmental studies, and women’s studies. Gonzaga philosophy courses are also offered in the Gonzaga-in-Florence study abroad program, and internships in health care ethics are available to advanced students. With more than 20 full-time members and many part-time members, the Philosophy Department at Gonzaga University is among the largest in the western United States.

THE CORE

Because the sustained study of philosophy is at the very heart of any education that is Jesuit, Catholic, and humanistic, all Gonzaga University students complete this four-course philosophy sequence.

Critical Thinking: As the philosophical component of the Gonzaga Thought and Expression Block, this course is an introduction to the basic tools and skills of thinking and reasoning.

Philosophy of Human Nature: This course initiates students into the study of the human condition, the meaning and value of human life, and the human relationship to ultimate reality.

Ethics: An upper-division course that studies the goals of human life and the norms of moral behavior. It also seeks to apply those goals and norms to specific moral problems.

Advanced Study in Philosophy: All Gonzaga students must complete at least one course of their choosing at the 400-level. These courses typically build on the skills and materials studied in the first three courses. Examples of advanced courses include Business Ethics, Existentialism, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of C.S. Lewis, and Chinese Philosophy.

THE PASSION

Wonder. Experiencing this feeling is how most people first enter the world of philosophy, the passionate quest for understanding. Gonzaga is a Jesuit, Catholic, and humanistic university. The study of philosophy has been at the heart of all three of these educational pillars—the heart of humanistic education since the time of Plato, of Catholic education since the time of Augustine, and of Jesuit education since the time of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Indeed, St. Aloysius Gonzaga himself was a philosophy student at a Jesuit university at the time of his death.

“Philosophia” is a Greek word meaning “love of wisdom.” Such a love pursues, with great zeal, the fundamental and the transcendent questions of human life. Philosophy seeks, ultimately, to unify human understanding in a universal or integrative vision of all reality.

THE MINOR

A minor offers students the opportunity to deepen their philosophical interests after completing the Core Curriculum requirements. The minor program features flexibility, since students are permitted to choose any three advanced (400-level) courses. The Philosophy minor is 20 credits, and 11 of those are already satisfied through the completion of the University Core Curriculum. The Philosophy department offers a large number of advanced (400-level) courses to choose from. These include courses on philosophical issues that arise within a particular profession, such as Health Care Ethics, Business Ethics, and Philosophy of Law. Other 400-level courses are devoted to various philosophical questions, figures, or historical movements, such as Happiness, Philosophy of Technology, Faith & Reason, Existentialism, and Chinese Philosophy.

THE MAJOR

Upon completing the first three courses of the Core sequence (Critical Thinking, Philosophy of Human Nature, and Ethics), students may enroll in the Philosophy major program, which has three distinctive features.

Collegial Bookend Seminars: Majors take the proseminar as they begin their work on the major and a senior seminar as they finish it. The proseminar introduces majors to the principal topics in philosophy and emphasizes practice in philosophical writing. The senior
seminar focuses on topics in metaphysics and epistemology; it also emphasizes philosophical writing.

**History of Philosophy Sequence:** Majors complete a four-course sequence on the history of philosophy, including ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy.

**Flexible Elective Courses:** Majors also complete four advanced (400-level) courses in areas of their choosing. This enables advanced students the opportunity to customize their major in Philosophy.

**THE KOSSEL CONCENTRATION**

The Kossel concentration is named after Clifford Kossel, S.J., who taught Thomistic philosophy at Gonzaga for many years. It is designed for all students who seek a Philosophy major that emphasizes Catholic thought. In addition to the Collegial Bookend Seminars and the History of Philosophy Sequence of the Philosophy major, the Kossel concentration program includes the following:

**Area Courses:** Kossel students take three courses in traditional areas of Catholic philosophy: Christian Metaphysics, Theory of Knowledge, and either Faith and Reason or Philosophy of God.

**Supporting Elective Course:** Kossel students complete an additional advanced elective course of their choosing.

**Additional Religion Study:** Kossel students complete at least one course on Catholicism beyond the three Religious Studies courses required by the University Core Curriculum.

**Latin Study:** Kossel students complete at least one full year of Latin language.

*For more information about the Philosophy Department and its courses, please visit www.gonzaga.edu/philosophy or consult the Gonzaga course catalogue at www.gonzaga.edu/catalogues.*

**OUTCOMES**

With its focus on central and fundamental questions about reality, truth, and meaning, philosophy is at the heart of the academic life. Philosophical reasoning and familiarity with philosophical concepts and argumentation are therefore central components of intellectual formation. Philosophy hones analytical and communication skills by requiring students to discuss and write about complex ideas. Consequently, students with demanding professional career plans or a broad interest in the humanities will find the study of philosophy invaluable. A degree in and/or a strong knowledge of philosophy can be valuable when applying to a variety of professional schools that actively look for liberal arts majors, as well as for positions where employers value critical thinking, analytical reflection, and a strong understanding of human morality and values. Philosophy majors routinely outperform other undergraduate majors on the standardized entrance tests for graduate programs in the humanities, business, and the sciences.

Recent Gonzaga Philosophy graduates have attended the following graduate programs in philosophy:

- Boston College
- Georgetown University
- Purdue University
- Arizona State University
- University of Notre Dame
- Loyola University Chicago
- Marquette University

Gonzaga students majoring in philosophy also often pursue graduate studies in law, medicine, public administration, business, and the social sciences.

Some recent fields of employment for Philosophy graduates have included:

- Computer Networking
- Education (many levels)
- Health Care Administration
- Politics/Government Work
- Publishing
THE PEOPLE

A Sample of Faculty Published Works and Accomplishments:

Mark Alfino

Kirk Besmer

David Calhoun


Brian Clayton & Richard McClelland

Brian Henning


Thomas Jeannot

Michael Tkacz


Ellen Maccarone

Erik Schmidt

Rose Mary Vollbrecht

*See back page for a full list of faculty members.*
Faculty Contacts and Specialties:

Mark Alfino | Ph.D., University of Texas, Austin | philosophy of language and literature, 20th Century philosophy, philosophical approaches to poverty studies, business ethics, and organizational ethics | alfino@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Kirk Besmer | Ph.D., University of Notre Dame | phenomenology, existentialism, and the philosophy of technology | besmer@gonzaga.edu

Dan Bradley | Ph.D., National University of Ireland | phenomenology of religion including Continental thinkers and the neo-Platonic mystical tradition | bradleyd@gonzaga.edu

David Calhoun | Ph.D., Northwestern University | ancient philosophy, existentialism, philosophy of human nature, and Christianity and science | calhoun@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Jay Ciaffa | Ph.D., Tulane University | Dept. Chair | health care ethics, African philosophy, African-American philosophy, and 20th Century German philosophy | ciaffa@gonzaga.edu

Tim Clancy, S.J. | Ph.D., Loyola University Chicago | hermeneutics, communitarian political philosophy, and 19th Century romanticism and idealism | clancy@gonzaga.edu

Brian Clayton | Ph.D., University of Notre Dame | political philosophy, the philosophy of science, and contemporary philosophy | clayton@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Theodore Di Maria, Jr. | Ph.D., Marquette University | modern philosophy, existentialism, and ethics | dimaria@gonzaga.edu

Brian Henning | Ph.D., Fordham University | the interconnection among ethics, metaphysics, and aesthetics | henning@gonzaga.edu

Thomas Jeannot | Ph.D., Saint Louis University | ethics, Marxism and critical theory, classical American philosophy, and hermeneutics | jeannot@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Douglas Kries | Ph.D., Boston College | ancient philosophy, natural law, classical French liberalism | kries@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Charles Lassiter | Ph.D., Fordham University | philosophy of mind and philosophy of language | lassiter@gonzaga.edu

Danielle Layne | Ph.D., Katholieke Universiteit Leuven | Ancient Philosophy including Platonism and the Hellenistic schools | layne@gonzaga.edu

Quanhua Liu | Ph.D., Duke University | modern and Chinese philosophy | liu@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Ellen Maccarone | Ph.D., University of Florida | business ethics, feminist ethics, and normative ethics | maccarone@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Wayne Pomerleau | Ph.D., Northwestern University | modern philosophy, philosophy of human nature, and the philosophy of religion | pomerleau@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Thomas Rukavina | Ph.D., Indiana University | Professor Emeritus | existentialism, ethics, and modern philosophy | rukavina@gonzaga.edu

William Ryan, S.J. | Ph.D., University of Louvain | Associate Professor Emeritus | phenomenology, epistemology, and the philosophy of history | ryan@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Erik Schmidt | Ph.D., Syracuse University | moral psychology, practical reason, and the philosophy of art | schmidt@calvin.gonzaga.edu

Michael Tkac | Ph.D., Catholic University of America | medieval philosophy, the philosophy of science, ancient philosophy, and logic | tkacz@gonzaga.edu

Bernard Tyrrell, S.J. | Ph.D., Fordham University | Professor Emeritus | metaphysics and the philosophy of emotion | btyrrell@gonzaga.edu

Rose Mary Volbrecht | Ph.D., University of Notre Dame | health care ethics, feminist ethics, and organizational ethics | volbrecht@gonzaga.edu

John Wagner | Ph.D., Catholic University of America | medieval philosophy, metaphysics, the philosophy of evil, the philosophy of sport, and the philosophy of education | wagner@calvin.gonzaga.edu