Philosophy CAREER GUIDE

What to do with a degree in ... PHILOSOPHY

If you are questioning your career options or what others like you are doing with their degree this guide is a good place to start. It will provide you with industry specific information on careers, schools, associations, labour market information, and more.

Career & Leadership Development Centre
dal.ca/cldc
Overview of Major and Job Options

Philosophy is an academic discipline that encourages deep thought about large existential questions. It pushes us to view the world and ourselves through a different lens. Philosophy students, in particular, develop analytic and reasoning abilities they can use to approach profound issues affecting the world around them. [Dalhousie Phil. Dept.]

Though a degree in philosophy does not explicitly lead to employment within the field of philosophy, it does prepare an individual for careers that require purposeful thinking and reflection. Philosophy degrees provide students with a variety of useful intellectual skills and other general transferable skills that are marketable for many jobs. These skills include:

- Critical thinking
- Analytic Ability
- Written/Verbal Communication
- Cultural sensitivity
- Working ethically
- Research
- Problem solving
- Critical reading
- Meeting deadlines

A degree in philosophy does not prepare you for one single career path, instead it can take you in many different directions. The career options available to you will likely depend on what transferable skills you have developed both inside and outside of your education, and your career interests and goals. When considering where to start keep in mind your concentration (Feminist Theory, Ethics, etc.), any significant projects you were involved in, internships, personal strengths, past employment, and other background information that may guide you.

Though you can end up in a variety of jobs with this degree the skills you have developed may make you competitive in the following areas:

- Editor
- Journalist
- Archivist
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Grant Writer
- NGO Coordinator
- Civil Servant
- Human Resources
- Research Assistant
- Clergy
- Author
- Ethics Researcher
- Police Officer
- Administrative Assistant
- Copywriter

If you want a career in Philosophy a Bachelors degree is usually not enough. You will have to go deeper into your reading, writing, and studying. Many philosophy graduates seek additional education after their degree. By doing so they can either go further towards pursuing philosophy or better target a specific area of employment that pairs well with their degree. Whether you seek a graduate degree, undergraduate degree or certificate program additional education can open up a variety of other options. Here are some opportunities available to a philosophy graduate who has completed additional training:

- Professor
- Researcher
- Counsellor
- Teacher
- Programmer
- Lawyer
- Librarian
- Therapist
- Diplomat
- Executive Director
- Police Officer
- Chaplain

With the many directions a philosophy graduate can take, it can be hard to know where to start when looking for a career. It would be of value to try out as many different jobs, positions, and experiences to help discover what you are good at and enjoy. Use this knowledge to help point you in the right direction when looking for a career.
Developing your skills, experience and network

Opportunities in Your Program

- Directed Study - Explore an individual interest by designing a specialized class with an instructor.
- Get Published - Covus is an undergraduate philosophy journal that is published by Dalhousie students and accepts student submissions.
- Network - The Philosophy Department holds a colloquium every Friday afternoon to provide the opportunity to develop and present work, and engage in discussion.

Opportunities at School

Involvement in extra curricular activities will make you more competitive in your job hunt. It will also give you the chance to focus on any specialties you are interested in. There are many different avenues you can pursue to help you develop these experiences. Consider joining a program like DALConnects or a Dalhousie society like the ones listed below:

- Undergraduate Philosophy Student Society
- Dalhousie Philosophy Graduate Student Society
- Undergraduate Philosophy Journal
- Dalhousie Arts and Social Sciences Society

The Dalhousie Co-curricular record (CCR) is a great way to track your extra-curricular involvement and display it for employers. Visit dal.ca/ccr to learn more.

Summer Jobs and Volunteer Work

Summer jobs and volunteer work are another great way to develop experience. They also give you the chance to develop specialties and discover what you like in a job and what you dislike. Even if your summer job doesn’t directly relate to your field you can focus on building transferable skills. Check out these great resources:

- Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP)
  A program that provides post-secondary students with experience related to their field of study.
- Talent Egg
  This website provides postings for internships, co-ops, volunteer opportunities and entry level jobs.
- Volunteer Halifax
  A posting board where non-profits in Halifax post their volunteer opportunities and positions.
- Fusion Halifax
  A resource linking local organizations with young people.

Professional Associations & Conferences

Professional associations and conferences are a great way to meet, learn from and network with professionals in your field of interest. This is especially true for graduate students.

If you are an undergraduate keep your eyes open for any undergraduate conferences around Halifax. The larger conferences can be intimidating. Below is a sample listing of professional associations and conferences that may be worth examining.

- The Atlantic Region Philosophers Association  [https://atlanticphilosophers.wordpress.com/](https://atlanticphilosophers.wordpress.com/)
Dalhousie University

Undergraduate Program
The Dalhousie Department of Philosophy fosters an active and engaged intellectual community both in and out of the classroom. Students develop creative thinking, careful reasoning, and lucid writing skills. You will learn to think deeply, systematically, rigorously, and productively about profound issues in life that affect us all.

Dalhousie’s philosophy program specializes in the analytic philosophical tradition and offers opportunities to explore a variety of fields including: Ethics and Meta-ethics, Bioethics, Epistemology, Feminist Theory, Philosophy of Mind and Language, Logic, and Philosophy of Science.

The programs develop independent thinking, and encourage students to become more thoughtful, tolerant citizens while preparing them for any career.

[Dalhousie Department of Philosophy webpage]

Graduate Program
Dalhousie’s graduate program is small, selective and successful. There are typically six to ten MA students and four to six PhD students. Graduate students receive individual attention, and courses of study can be developed to suit individual interests. The atmosphere is friendly, stimulating and supportive, and there is a great deal of faculty/student interaction.

[ Dalhousie Department of Philosophy webpage]

Average Program Length
MA - 13 months
PhD - five and a half years

Entrance Requirements
Admission to the graduate program is competitive. Dalhousie admits those applicants who appear to be the most likely to succeed the program. This is generally determined by your grades and your background in philosophy. To be considered for any of our graduate degree programmes, candidates should have at least an A- average in the most recent ten full credits of their academic career. [Dalhousie Department of Philosophy webpage]
There are many other established philosophy programs in Canada and abroad. A great resource for examining post-secondary programs is Career Cruising. Career Cruising can be accessed through your Dalhousie MyCareer profile or by visiting the Career & Leadership Development Centre. Below are some notable philosophy programs as identified by 2013-2014 QS world University Rankings:

**University of Toronto #15**

Location: Toronto, Ontario
BA, MA, PhD Philosophy
Subject areas: history of philosophy, ancient and medieval philosophy, ethics, philosophy of science, and philosophy of mind

**University of Western Ontario #51-100**

Location: London, Ontario
BA, MA, PhD
Subject areas: epistemology, metaphysics, logic, ethics, philosophy of biology, decision theory, and biomedical ethics

**McGill University #35**

Location: Montreal, Quebec
BA, MA, PhD Philosophy
Subject areas: ancient Philosophy, early modern philosophy, Kant and post-Kantian German philosophy, philosophy of mind, aesthetics, moral and political philosophy and more.

**McMaster University**

Location: Hamilton, Ontario
BSc, MSc, PhD
Subject areas: continental and analytical perspectives, legal and political philosophy, ethics, epistemology and metaphysics, and history of philosophy

**Queen's University #51-100**

Location: Kingston, Ontario
BA, MA, PhD
Subject areas: political philosophy, ethics, bioethics, feminism, contemporary metaphysics and epistemology, philosophy of language, philosophy of science and the history of philosophy

**University of British Columbia**

Location: Vancouver, British Columbia
BA, MA, PhD Philosophy
Subject areas: analytic philosophy, philosophy of mind, history and philosophy of science, value theory, and history of philosophy
Labour Market Information

Given the broad array of directions you can take a philosophy degree it is difficult to choose a specific sector to analyze the job outlook. So to begin it is important to first identify the sectors that philosophy students work in. Looking at LinkedIn statistics on Dalhousie alumni it appears that most alumni end up in the following fields:

- Education
- Legal
- Media and communication
- Entrepreneurship
- Research
- Consulting
- Community and social services
- Operations
- Arts and design
- Sales
- Information Technology
- Healthcare services

Projections

The following Labour Market Information (LMI) was taken from jobbank.gc.ca. It represents the 2013-2015 projection period. For more LMI on other jobs within your field click on 'Explore Careers'. If you search by occupations or education program then click on outlook for specific LMI.

Good Outlook ★★★
(3 out of 3 stars)

The best outlooks for occupations for individuals with a philosophy degree are in the health sector, sales or IT. In the health sector jobs such as LPNs, RPNs, and patient service associates are given a good outlook. In the IT sector jobs such as software tester, and systems tester are given a good outlook while network technicians and support technicians are given a fair outlook. Sales positions with a good outlook include retail salesperson, sales clerk, wholesale trade representative, and retail trade supervisors.

Fair Outlook ★★★
(2 out of 3 stars)

Education, social services and legal fields have fair outlooks within Nova Scotia. Education related career paths include college instructors, education counsellors, education policy researchers and consultants. Career paths for individuals who are looking to assist people through government and social services include social workers, probation officers, family and marriage counsellors, and social policy researchers. For legal careers jobs include lawyers, paralegals, legal assistants, legal advisers, and barristers.

Limited Outlook ★★
(1 out of 3 stars)

For fields with a limited outlook the arts and culture occupations within Nova Scotia do not have a great projection. Jobs include conservators, curators, journalists, and editors.

Out of the possible occupations a philosophy graduate could pursue, additional jobs with a limited outlook in Nova Scotia include: government program officers, and secondary school teachers.
Online

MyCareer - https://mycareer.dal.ca/
A resource for Dalhousie students to connect with jobs, employers and career related events on campus.

TalentEgg - tallentegg.ca
A great website to find internships, student jobs, and entry level positions. You can also find great advice and career guides. In addition to this, TalentEgg has challenges to help young people build transferable skills.

Tiger Society - https://tigersociety.dsu.ca/
This site lists all Dalhousie Societies and information about them. You can register to join a society through this site.

Career Beacon - careerbeacon.com
Provides job listings and corporate profiles with a strong presence in Nova Scotia and other Maritime Provinces. It can be a great resource for identifying what jobs are in your field and what skills employers are looking for.

Career Cruising - careercruising.com (log on available through MyCareer)
A comprehensive website that provides information to help you make informed choices about your career path.

Employment and Social Development Canada - National Occupational Classification
Contains occupational information and is used to find jobs that exist within Canada's labour market.

Print

The Canadian Student & Grad Job Search Directry. Senor Media inc.
* Located within the Dalhousie Career & Leadership Development Centre

What Color is your Parachute: A practical manual for job-hunters and career-changers (2014)
* Located within the Dalhousie Career & Leadership Development Centre


Other

Career Counselling - Dalhousie - Student Union Building 4th Floor
This free service is a confidential and collaborative process in which you work with a career counsellor who assists you in your educational and career decision-making

Career & Leadership Development Centre - Dalhousie - Student Union Building 4th Floor
This resource centre can provide you with all the career tools and resources you need. Drop in for assistance with resumes, cover letters, interviewing and more.

DALconnects - Leadership Program - dal.ca/dalconnects
This program will connect you with leadership opportunities and workshops.
Research Ethics Board Coordinator
Research Ethics Office (REO)

Position: Full Time  -  Salary: $55,000 to $70,000  -  Hours: 35

The Research Ethics Board (REB) Coordinator provides significant content and process expertise to support preparation, submission, review and on-going administration of human research ethics applications. This role supports and advises researchers and their staff on the preparation of ethics applications and amendments, which includes informed consent processes, participant recruitment, assessment of potential risks and mechanisms for reducing risks. The duties of this position are diverse and complex and significant independent work and decision-making is required. The REB Coordinator must be able to maintain an in-depth understanding of various local, national and international guidelines and regulations which provide the framework for his/her critical thinking and decision making.

Duties

- Receives and processes ethics applications, amendments and renewals for both full board and delegated review
- Provides applicants information and advice as necessary
- Assists researchers to improve their applications
- Makes preliminary determination of application risk level and initiates review processes accordingly
- Ensures that performance targets for the REB are met
- Delivers training and education in human research ethics
- Provides REB Committee support, including: acting as a resource person, establishing and maintaining meeting schedule, preparing and distributing agenda, ensuring quorum is met for each meeting, and preparing and analyzing REB activity reports

Qualifications & Skills

- The ideal candidate will have an undergraduate degree; graduate degree preferred. Formal post-secondary education in a related field (e.g., philosophy or ethics) would be considered an asset.
- Three years of relevant job experience
- Strong writing skills will be critical in this role
- Knowledge of University policy and procedures, the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans and related policies, regulations and legislation
- Demonstrated ability to consistently and effectively apply high level critical thinking, decision-making and communication skills in a high volume, fast-paced environment
- Well developed administrative and office skills, including knowledge of Microsoft Office, Internet applications and related applications
- Experience dealing with sensitive/confidential material
- The incumbent must also have the ability to deal with a high volume of communications and interactions, and handle complicated situations tactfully.

Make sure you tailor your resume to the position by examining the responsibilities and matching your experiences with them. By examining job ads you can identify skills/experience gaps you should develop throughout school.

Skills you can hone while volunteering or by doing an internship
- Experiences that can be developed by joining a Dalhousie Society
- May want to focus attention on any major written work you have put together inside or outside school
- You may want to list a class that you developed these skills in
- Skills you will have developed throughout your education and can further develop at a summer job
- Experience can be developed through volunteer work.
For more information, comments, or questions please contact:

Shane LeBlanc, Coordinator, Career Programming

shane.leblanc@dal.ca