



# Philosophy MA

**RYERSON  
UNIVERSITY**

School of Graduate Studies  
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# Philosophy MA

**Yeates** SCHOOL OF  
GRADUATE STUDIES

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**RYERSON  
UNIVERSITY**

Everyone Makes a Mark

# Philosophy

## MA

A rising centre of excellence in the North American philosophical community, Ryerson's Department of Philosophy offers an intense program leading to a master of arts (MA) degree in Philosophy. Located in the heart of Toronto's vibrant downtown, the program contributes to the thriving research culture in Canada's largest and most cosmopolitan city. Focused on core areas of philosophy, the program is designed for students who wish to broaden or deepen their undergraduate experience in philosophy and for students planning to pursue a PhD in Philosophy. Our innovative five-term program includes both a Major Research Paper stream and a Thesis stream.



## Program Objectives

By taking the master of arts degree in Philosophy, students will gain:

- Exposure to a wide array of philosophical topics. The program includes courses on the nature of the human self, mind and agency; the grounds of our moral and political obligations; the nature, value and limits of knowledge and belief; the value of aesthetic and religious claims and experiences; society's influence on our conceptions of ourselves and our world; and questions about the ultimate nature of reality.
- Experience with diverse philosophical approaches. Students will explore both recent works from the leading figures in contemporary analytic and continental philosophy as well as the foundations of current debates through close study of the most important philosophical texts of the past.
- Solid preparation for PhD study in Philosophy. By providing students with a broad exposure to the core traditions, eras and topics in philosophy – along with the opportunity to write a major research paper or thesis – the program will position students to gain entry to, and succeed in, top-ranked PhD programs in Canada and the United States.
- Valuable professional skills. The program aims to develop the analytical, communication, organization, study and research skills needed to succeed in the profession and in the workplace. Students will study these skills in the innovative Professional Seminar, practise them through teaching assistantships in critical thinking and moral philosophy and then sharpen them as they engage in research leading to a major research paper or a thesis.

# Faculty

The philosophy department at Ryerson has a record of excellence in teaching and research in both the analytic and continental traditions of philosophy. Its members have expertise in such areas as philosophy of religion; contemporary continental philosophy; philosophy of language, mind and metaphysics; phenomenology and existentialism; social, moral and political philosophy; philosophy of law and the environment; Canadian philosophy; aesthetics; and 19th-century continental philosophy.

The philosophy department runs a regular speaker series that has featured philosophers from across Canada, Britain and the United States, and has hosted international conferences on the work of key philosophers, including Gilbert Ryle, G.W.F. Hegel and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Through its engagement with Ryerson's Ethics Network, and through service with local community groups, the department is also committed to the relevance of philosophical reflection to broader social, cultural and political concerns.

The department cultivates a rich teaching environment with opportunities for graduate students to develop teaching skills through a combination of classroom experiences and teaching and research assistantships.

# Requirements & Curriculum

Students may follow either a Major Research Paper (MRP) stream or a Thesis stream.

| Stream                      | Term 1 (Fall)                     | Term 2 (Winter) | Term 3 (Spring/Summer)     | Term 4 (Fall)           | Term 5 (Winter) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Thesis</b>               | Professional Seminar, 2 electives | 3 electives     | MA research, Area readings | MA research             | Thesis          |
| <b>Major Research Paper</b> | Professional Seminar, 2 electives | 3 electives     | MA research, Area readings | MA research, 1 elective | MRP, 1 elective |

## Professional Seminar

In Term 1, students complete the Professional Seminar, a course designed to introduce students to the professional skills needed to succeed in the program and in the workplace.

## Area Readings

In Term 3, students complete area readings consisting of independent but guided research in a core area of philosophy.

## Master's Research

In Terms 3 and 4, students conduct independent philosophical research towards the completion of a thesis or major research paper in Term 5.

## Elective Courses\*

Students pursuing the Major Research Paper stream take seven electives, while those in the Thesis stream take five. Electives include:

- Epistemology
- Metaphysics
- Philosophy of Science
- Philosophy of Religion
- Philosophy of Language
- Philosophy of Mind
- Policy Ethics and Law
- Problems of the Self
- Moral Philosophy
- Aesthetics
- Social and Political Philosophy
- Feminist Philosophy
- Philosophy of Education
- Ancient Philosophy
- Topics in Early Modern Philosophy
- 19th Century Philosophy
- Philosophy of History
- Phenomenology and Existentialism
- Hermeneutics and Deconstruction
- Recent Continental Philosophy
- Topics in Philosophy
- Major Figures in Philosophy
- Independent Reading

# Admission

Admission requirements include the following:

- A four-year honours undergraduate degree in Philosophy (or a degree from an equivalent program) with a minimum of a B+ standing (or its equivalent) in the final half of the program.
- A letter indicating the applicant's interests in philosophy.
- Two letters of reference from former professors familiar with the applicant's work.
- A writing sample of 10 to 15 pages.
- Official transcripts for all relevant post-secondary education.

## English Language Proficiency Requirement

Applicants whose instruction during their undergraduate studies was in a language other than English are required to submit a test of English language proficiency. Applicants may demonstrate facility in English using one of the following methods:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
- Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB)

## Additional Information

For detailed program information, visit [www.ryerson.ca/graduate/philosophy](http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/philosophy).

## Program Contact Information

Please refer to the contact page on the website for phone information. Email: [philosophyma@ryerson.ca](mailto:philosophyma@ryerson.ca)

## Financial Support

Ryerson University provides financial support in the form of scholarships, awards and assistantships for as many full-time students as possible. Financial support is offered on a competitive basis, and the number of scholarships, awards and assistantships in any given year will vary. For more information on available funding, visit [www.ryerson.ca/graduate/funding](http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/funding).

## How to Apply

Online application instructions are available at [www.ryerson.ca/graduate/admissions](http://www.ryerson.ca/graduate/admissions).

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