

# Philosophy

*Though it has ancient roots, the area of philosophy has enduring relevancy for our lives today. It involves the search for truth and insights into our world and ourselves—what is and what should be. The study of philosophy provides a unique vision for understanding human nature, social relations and questions that have challenged human beings through the ages.*

## Contact us

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 Visit the Philosophy Department  
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 For general information about  
 St. Ambrose or how to apply:  
 Admissions Office  
 563/333-6300 or 800/383-2627  
 email: [admit@sau.edu](mailto:admit@sau.edu)  
[www.sau.edu](http://www.sau.edu)

## Degrees offered and required credit hours

St. Ambrose offers a major in Philosophy as either a first or second major and a choice of three minors (Philosophy, Applied Ethics, or History of Philosophy). Students majoring in Philosophy take at least 11 courses (a minimum of 33 credit hours) in the field, including upper-level course work in ethics and the history of philosophy, and a senior capstone seminar. Elective options include directed readings and special seminars.

A second major or a minor in Philosophy is very obtainable by many St. Ambrose students and can provide an extra dimension of understanding and versatility in pursuing a career or post-graduate studies. A second major in Philosophy can be earned by taking nine courses (27 credit hours).

A Philosophy minor can be earned by taking five courses (15 credit hours). All St. Ambrose graduates can apply up to three philosophy courses toward satisfying general education requirements, but with a little planning a minor in Philosophy can be completed with only two additional courses. There are three different tracks for those wishing to pursue a minor.

See our course catalog at [www.sau.edu/catalog](http://www.sau.edu/catalog) for a full description of required and elective courses.

## Program highlights and courses

The Philosophy Department is dedicated to engaging students, regardless of major, in this exciting study of wisdom and meaning. A range of courses help students develop an appreciation for critical thinking and to understand basic questions and traditions. Through free and open inquiry, students learn to hold a fundamental respect for the dignity and freedom of humanity and regard for the importance of social issues, so that ultimately they become active contributors in creating a just society.

## What can you do with a Philosophy degree?

While the study of philosophy has its own inherent value for learning how to live a meaningful and wonderful life, it also can help prepare you for meaningful career opportunities. Students interested in post-graduate philosophy studies, leading to a research or teaching career in higher education, will be well served by the quality of faculty and classes at St. Ambrose. While such career opportunities are competitive, in recent years St. Ambrose philosophy majors have been accepted into graduate programs at the University of Iowa, Marquette University, University of Notre Dame, University of Louvain, Washington University, Georgetown University, and the University of Tennessee.

A major in Philosophy is excellent preparation and background for students intending to pursue a legal career. With a pre-professional degree in Philosophy, students heading to law school will have gained training that will give them an advantage in their advanced legal studies. In fact, in recent years Philosophy majors nationally have placed second best on the LSAT and do better in gaining admissions to graduate programs than Science, Economics and Political Science majors.

Many of today's top employers seek graduates with an understanding of the complex ethical dimensions of their profession. The Philosophy Department has developed courses

in conjunction with other departments—such as business ethics, bio-medical ethics, and environmental ethics—that are especially relevant to the decision-makers and problem-solvers who deal with these issues.

## About the faculty

**Rev. William Dawson** PhD, Professor

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Areas of scholarly interest: ethics, peace studies and philosophies of life. Fr. Dawson received his PhD from the University of Notre Dame. He has taught at St. Ambrose since 1961.

**Paul Jacobson** PhD, Professor and Department Chair

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Areas of scholarly interest: language and expression, modern philosophy, existentialism and phenomenology. Prof. Jacobson earned his PhD at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh. He has taught at St. Ambrose since 1977.

**Joseph McCaffrey** PhD, Professor

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Areas of scholarly interest: ethics, applied ethics, ancient philosophy, and medieval/renaissance philosophy. Prof. McCaffrey received his PhD from St. Thomas Aquinas “Angelicum,” Rome. He has taught at St. Ambrose since 1964.

**Rev. Brian Miclot** PhD, Associate Professor

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Areas of scholarly interest: aesthetics, ethics, philosophy and religion, metaphysics, post-modern philosophy, and recent continental philosophy. Fr. Miclot received his PhD from the University of Notre Dame. He has taught at St. Ambrose since 1993.

**Randy Richards** PhD, Professor

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Areas of scholarly interest: business ethics, social and political philosophy, Asian philosophy, Nietzsche, and feminism. Prof. Richards earned his PhD at the University of Iowa. He has taught at St. Ambrose since 1993.

**Andrew Swift** PhD, Professor

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Areas of scholarly interest: logic, ethics, bio-medical ethics, and social/political philosophy. Prof. Swift received his PhD from Ohio State University. He has taught at St. Ambrose since 1990.