PhD in Applied Philosophy

The PhD Applied Philosophy is a new program at the University of Waterloo that brings together abstract theorizing and practical problems.

THE PROGRAM

Applied philosophy involves engaging with and reflecting on real, practical situations and problems. It requires bidirectional thinking: reflecting fruitfully both on how existing philosophical ideas and theories help us understand and solve practical problems, and also on how the details of actual cases lead us to reexamine and reformulate existing theories.

The PhD in Applied Philosophy requires the completion of course work, a prospectus and a dissertation project. Students complete an Applied Research Placement at a host organization (e.g., non-profit, hospital, business, government agency).

KEY FEATURES

» Coursework focused on engagement with practical problems

» Flexible assignments to learn various communication styles

» The Applied Research Placement, an eight-month activity combining scholarly work with a host organization

» Dissertation projects with non-traditional components, such as policy recommendations or articles for the popular press

» Training appropriate for academic and non-academic careers

FUNDING

All PhD students in the Department of Philosophy receive a standard annual funding package, which will continue during the placement. The department also has special funds available for extra expenses that may be incurred during the placement.

MITACS

The Department of Philosophy has formed a relationship with MITACS, a national non-profit research and training organization that facilitates graduate student internships. Students accepted for MITACS placements will receive special funding jointly through MITACS and their host organizations.

ADMISSIONS

Applications are due by February 1 for the 2017-18 school year. Admissions requirements are similar to those for traditional philosophy PhD programs, though we are open to candidates with a broader range of academic backgrounds.

In a recent internship at Philip Beesley Architects, Teresa Branch-Smith examined philosophical constructions of life and living as they apply to a cutting-edge technique called 'near-living' architecture. "Being in these spaces and working on these problems with the intention of communicating your experience is something you cannot read in a book. Having this experience will make me a more competitive candidate on the job market."

uwaterloo.ca/philosophy

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PILOT PROJECT

The Department of Philosophy is currently conducting a pilot project, in which three students will do Applied Research Placements. Their projects include:

» An investigation of how people with cognitive disabilities can contribute to decision-making about their care

» An evaluation of how non-profits working with vulnerable populations measure their own effectiveness

» A study of organizational ethics, focused on working relationships in large healthcare institutions

FACULTY RESEARCH

Our faculty engage in research on a wide range of applied and interdisciplinary topics, including:

» **Ethics, Justice and Social Policy**: distribution of global health resources, ethical issues in scientific and medical research, the ethics of sport, sexual objectification, just war theory, autonomy and disability.

» **Science and Society**: science policy, public understanding of science and technology, values in science, feminist philosophy of science, and the social structure of scientific communities.

» I**nterdisciplinary**: research intersections with neuroscience, psychology, computer science, physics, biology, sociology, environmental science, linguistics, international studies, and classics.

Greg Andres: Philosophy of Economics, Business Ethics

Gerry Callaghan: Early Modern Philosophy, Philosophy of Language

Shannon Dea: Early Modern Philosophy, Classic Pragmatism, Philosophy of Gender

David DeVidi: Logic, Philosophy of Mathematics, Metaphysics, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Disability

Mathieu Doucet: Ethics, Moral Psychology, Action Theory, Political Philosophy, Bioethics

Heather Douglas: Philosophy of Science, Values in Science, Science and Policy, Social Epistemology

Chris Eliasmith: Philosophy of Mind, Theoretical Neuroscience, Cognitive Science

Carla Fehr: Philosophy of Biology, Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science, Feminist Science Studies

Jacqueline Feke: Ancient Greek Science and Philosophy, History of Science, Philosophy of Science

Doreen Fraser: Philosophy of Physics, Philosophy of Science, History of Science

Katy Fulfer: Reproductive Ethics, Environmental and Animal Ethics, Transnational Feminisms, Hannah Arendt

Tim Kenyon: Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Language

Chris Lowry: Social and Political Philosophy, Bioethics, Moral Philosophy

Patricia Marino: Ethics, Epistemology, Philosophy of Sex and Love, Philosophy of Economics

Brian Orend: Ethics, Political Philosophy

Kathryn Plaisance: Philosophy of Human Behavioral Sciences, Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science, Socially Relevant Philosophy of Science, Interdisciplinary Collaboration

John Turri: Epistemology, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mind, Metaphysics, Ethics

Steve Weinstein: Philosophy of Science, Computation and Information

STUDENTS

"I am sincerely looking forward to my Applied Philosophy Placement at Providence Healthcare. I have been researching topics in bioethics for quite some time. This program will enable me to practice my philosophical skills and apply my research to the 'real world'. Being able to speak with healthcare professionals about working with persons who cannot make decisions for themselves is extremely relevant to caring for our aging population. I am confident that this placement will be an invaluable experience for my present research, alongside my future career goals."

Andria Bianchi, PhD Philosophy candidate

"The Philosophy Department at Waterloo prepared me for my current position as a practicing healthcare ethicist. While participating in clinical and organizational case consultations I utilize critical thinking, reasoning skills and ethical frameworks everyday to help staff, patients, families and physicians work through challenging ethical issues in healthcare. The Department of Philosophy helped to train me to have conversations aboutthe decision to withdraw life sustaining treatment, in a logical, principled and sensitive manner to improve the lives and quality of care of our patients."

Rosalind Abdool, PhD Philosophy 2015

For more information

Email: philosophy@uwaterloo.ca

uwaterloo.ca/philosophy
uwphilnews.wordpress.com

>> **Faculty of Arts** | 200 University Avenue West, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1

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