

DEPARTMENT FACT SHEET

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Department of Philosophy

Department Chair: Aaron Preston, Ph.D. Huegli Hall 226 | 219-464-5240 [Aaron Preston@valpo.edu](mailto:Aaron.Preston@valpo.edu)

Majors offered:  Philosophy, B.A.

Links to Web sites:  [Catalogs](#)  [Department of Philosophy](#) (department maintained)

VALPO PHILOSOPHY MAJORS explore and analyze the views and research methods of humanity's greatest thinkers, from both Western and non-Western traditions. In doing so, they come to understand how ideas about the meaning of human life, the sources of value, human freedom, the nature of knowledge, and so on, have shaped history and culture. They also become better able to recognize and grapple with the ideas that shape human life today, and to devise creative alternatives to them. Along the way, philosophy students develop an impressive mix of conceptual creativity and high-level critical thinking, writing and problem-solving skills - which is why Philosophy students regularly perform better than every other major on the verbal and analytical writing sections of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), and perform better than any other humanities major on the quantitative reasoning section. Philosophy majors are also among the highest-scoring groups of students on the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) and the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), regularly outscoring students from other majors that are often thought to be "the right majors" for people wanting

College of Arts & Sciences - Valparaiso University
to go into Law or Business. If you are interested in Philosophy but too concerned about career-preparation to put all of your eggs in the philosophical basket, why not consider Philosophy as a minor or a second major? We frequently have students combine their studies in Philosophy with studies in Theology, Business, History, Classics, Political Science, Psychology, English, and many others.

What Can You Do With a Philosophy Degree?

To teach philosophy usually requires an advanced degree in philosophy (M.A. or Ph.D.). But the general reasoning and communications skills that enable philosophy majors to do so well on standardized tests show that a bachelor's degree in Philosophy should provide sufficient skills for entry into any profession or service open to any liberal arts student. The training in language, argument, writing, persuasion, and search-for-evidence is relevant to almost any position in business, government, law, the ministry, communications, education, and research.

What Beyond-the-Classroom Opportunities Does Valpo Offer You in Philosophy?

Extracurricular Activities: Philosophy students can take part in Valpo's Philosophy Club or any of the more than 100 organizations on campus. Depending on student interest, we have also sometimes sponsored Ethics Bowl teams, which over the years have established an enviable record of achievement in national competitions.

Off-Campus Opportunities

Study Abroad: Students can take advantage of Valpo's 14 study abroad programs in countries such as Mexico, England, Spain, France, Greece, Germany, Namibia, China, or Japan. Students may also spend semesters in New York, Washington, D.C., and Chicago.

Notable Alumni:

Katie Dalzell (VU '04), Student, University of Virginia School of Law

Andrew Lauber (VU '04), Student, University of Tennessee Department of Philosophy

Steven Zittergruen (VU '02), Pastor, Swedesburg Evangelical Lutheran Church, Swedesburg, IA

Joseph Yarbrough (VU '02), Assistant Professor of Classics & Early Christian Literature, Ave Maria University (Ph.D. in Philosophy, Cornell University)

Shannon Bachman (VU '01), Officer, US Air Force

Gregory Karpenko (VU '95), Attorney, Fredrikson & Byron's Litigation Group, Minneapolis, MN; named a Rising Star in 2005 and 2006 by *Minnesota Law & Politics* magazine.

