

Department of Philosophy

Mission Statement

The Department of Philosophy (<https://www.apu.edu/theology/philosophy/>) equips and mentors students to become intellectual leaders in important debates about compelling philosophical issues that shape contemporary culture.

Education Goals

Our degree programs aim to achieve this mission by developing a community of scholars who are:

Intellectually Skilled: Excellent in critical reading, analytic reasoning, and persuasive argumentative writing.

Historically Informed: Cognizant of the classical philosophical theories and principles that have shaped contemporary debates about God, human nature, and the Good Life.

Pragmatically Oriented: Able to use this combination of intellectual skills and theoretical knowledge to influence contemporary cultural practices concerning religion, science, ethics, civil service, public policy, and the arts.

Distinctive Features

These education goals embody four characteristics of APU's Wesleyan Christian heritage:

Classical Christian Orientation: We draw upon the greatest aspects of the classical Christian philosophical traditions—Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant.

Sanctity of Mind: We believe that all people are called to love God with their minds by cultivating intellectual virtues so they can better understand God, human nature, and all of God's Creation.

Sanctity of Heart: We believe that all people are called to love God with their hearts by cultivating moral virtues so they can be better lovers of God and of their neighbors and better stewards of God's Creation.

Community-Oriented Service: We believe that all people are called to manifest their love of God and neighbor by putting these intellectual and moral virtues into practice, serving their ecclesial and civil communities.

Career Opportunities

By achieving these distinctive education goals, students set themselves up for success in graduate studies and/or careers in philosophy, theology, health care ethics, law, civil service, public policy, education, or ministry.

Extracurricular Activities

The Department of Philosophy offers a number of excellent extracurricular activities that complement its core curriculum. These activities provide students with opportunities not simply to *learn about* but to *begin participating in* important debates about compelling issues that shape contemporary culture.

Philosophy Club

The Philosophy Club meets every other week to discuss compelling philosophical issues in a diverse, friendly, and accessible environment. For more information about the club, contact the department.

Sophia Forum

Made possible by the generosity of an anonymous donor, the Sophia Forum promotes Christian philosophy at APU with an annual two-day series of lectures and small-group discussions led by a renowned Christian philosopher.

Past Sophia Forums have featured speakers from Oxford, Yale, Notre Dame, Saint Louis University, Fordham, and the University of Oklahoma.

Ethics Bowl

Sponsored by the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, the Ethics Bowl is a series of regional and national debates focusing on cases "covering a wide range of disciplines, including but not limited to, business, engineering, journalism, law, medicine, and social work." The purpose of the debates is to challenge students to "demonstrate their ability to (1) understand the facts of the case, (2) articulate the ethical principles involved in the case, (3) present an effective argument on how the case should be resolved, and (4) respond effectively to challenges put forth by the opposing team as well as the panel of expert judges."

APU began participating in the Ethics Bowl in 2010 and has been quite successful, consistently performing well at the California regional competition and, more recently, at the national competition.

Academic Conferences

The Department of Philosophy draws groups of scholars to campus for academic conferences at which they present their latest research on developments within their fields of expertise.

Past conferences hosted by the department include The Society of Christian Philosophers Pacific Regional Conference and the C.S. Lewis Conference.

Colloquia

The department also invites individual philosophers to campus to lecture and to meet with students to discuss contemporary research in the field.