REGULATIONS CONCERNING ADMISSION AND ADVANCED DEGREES IN THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PHILOSOPHY

General regulations concerning admission and advanced degrees in the Graduate College of the University of Illinois are set forth in A Handbook for Graduate Students and Advisers which, along with other information and forms, can be accessed at http://www.grad.uiuc.edu. Graduate students in philosophy are expected to be familiar with these, as well as with the special regulations set forth below.

The regulations set forth here apply to all students entering the Graduate Program in Philosophy beginning with the fall term of 2004. Students already in the Program at this time have the option of completing their work according to the regulations in effect before this date or transferring to the current ones.

ENTRANCE QUALIFICATIONS

Grade-point Average: A normal condition of admission is an undergraduate grade-point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in the last 60 semester hours of work (or its equivalent).

Preparatory Work: Each student should have had (1) a course in symbolic logic, and (2) general courses in the history of ancient and early modern philosophy (dealing with the main figures in each period), and should also have done some course work in such central areas of philosophical inquiry as ethics and the theory of knowledge. Students entering the doctoral program with deficiencies in either or both of the first two areas indicated will be required to remedy them by taking Philosophy 202 (Symbolic Logic), Philosophy 203 (Ancient Philosophy), and/or Philosophy 206 (Early Modern Philosophy), depending upon their particular deficiencies. These courses do not carry graduate credit, and will not be counted toward the satisfaction of course and hour requirements in our graduate programs; and students taking them to remedy deficiencies must receive grades of B or higher in them. Entering students in the doctoral program who have not previously done course work in ethics and/or theory of knowledge will be expected to take Philosophy 421 (Ethical Theories) and/or Philosophy 430 (Theory of Knowledge) early in their graduate studies.

Letters of Recommendation: All applications for admission must be supported by at least three letters of recommendation. The letters should be from persons qualified to comment on the candidate’s aptitude for graduate study in philosophy. Candidates are asked to have the letters sent directly to the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid of the Department of Philosophy.
**Graduate Record Examination:** All applicants for admission are expected to take the General Aptitude (Verbal, Quantitative, and Analytical) portion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and to have their scores sent to the Department. GRE scores are an important part of a complete application, but they are not strictly required. An applicant who is unable or unwilling to take the GRE should contact the Chair of the Department to explain why.

**Sample of Written Work:** All applicants are required to submit a sample of their written work (preferably in philosophy) along with their applications for admission. This might be either a part of their undergraduate (or Master’s) thesis, a term paper, or some other comparable piece of work giving evidence of their abilities.

**Test of English as a Foreign Language:** Applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit TOEFL (or comparable) scores as a necessary part of a complete application. In general, such applicants will not be admitted if their scores are below 600. (The Graduate College minimum is 520; but we have decided that the nature of graduate work in our program requires a higher level of competence in the English language.) In special cases, applicants with scores below 600 may be admitted; but any such applicant will only be admitted on Limited Status, and will be required to take the English as a Second Language (ESL) placement examination upon arrival, and to take the appropriate ESL language courses in the first semester(s) of residence. Such entering graduate students will be removed from Limited Status and allowed to continue in the graduate program only upon the satisfactory completion of these courses (or upon retaking TOEFL examination and receiving a score of at least 600).

Satisfaction of these conditions does not guarantee admission. Only a limited number of qualified applicants will be admitted.

**CREDIT FOR GRADUATE COURSEWORK DONE AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS**

Students who enter the philosophy Ph.D. program after having already earned an M.A. in philosophy from another institution may petition for a transfer of up to 32 hours of credit (the equivalent of 8 of our graduate courses) toward the Ph.D., reducing the number of hours of credit needed to be admitted to Stage III of the PhD program accordingly. Transfers of credit of more than 12 hours (3 graduate courses) will affect financial aid standing. (See the section on “Continuation of Financial Aid” below.)

Students who enter the Ph.D. program without having already earned an M.A. in philosophy from another institution can petition for a transfer of credit. Normally, no more than 8 hours of transfer credit (2 graduate courses) will be allowed toward the Master’s degree. In no case will a student who has not earned an M.A. in philosophy from another institution be allowed more than 12 hours of transfer credit (equivalent to 3 graduate courses at UIUC) toward the Ph.D. Such transfers of credit will have no impact on continuation of financial aid.
Whether or not a student has earned an M.A. in philosophy from another institution, he/she must petition the department if he/she wishes to have some of his or her previous coursework count toward the Ph.D. degree. Such petitions may be made after one semester of residence. The petitioner should attach to his/her petition a statement summarizing the content of the courses, including texts and readings, number of class hours per week, and final grade. If a student is judged, on the basis of his/her work here, to need more credit hours in our program than he/she would be required to take if the petition were granted, his/her petition may be denied, in whole or in part, or the decision may be postponed.

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

Students may earn an M.A. degree in philosophy by completing one full year of residence studying philosophy at this University; accumulating 32 hours of graduate credit (8 graduate courses), at least 24 of which are earned in regularly scheduled classes and seminars, and at least 12 of which are at the 500-level (in accordance with Graduate College regulations); submitting a substantial essay; and passing an oral examination on this essay conducted by a committee appointed by the Chair of the Department. The M.A. degree earned in this way is normally a terminal degree.

Students in the Ph.D. program who are admitted to the Second Stage will have the substantial essay requirement waived. Upon completing one full year of residence studying philosophy and accumulating 32 hours of credit (8 graduate courses), at least 24 of which are earned in regularly scheduled classes and seminars, and at least 12 of which are earned at the 500-level, and being officially admitted to the Second Stage, they will automatically receive the M.A. degree.

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY: THE THREE STAGES OF THE PROGRAM

The Graduate College Handbook distinguishes the following three Stages in the program for the Ph.D.:

The First Stage is completed when a student has earned 32 hours of graduate credit (8 graduate courses) and has been formally admitted to the Second Stage by the Department.

The Second Stage is completed when a student has earned 32 additional hours of graduate credit (8 additional graduate courses), has fulfilled any extra-departmental minor course requirements (see below), has satisfied the Course Distribution, Language, and Symbolic Logic requirements, and has passed the Preliminary Examination. (The Philosophy Department requires that Language and Symbolic Logic requirements be satisfied before they will certify to the Graduate College that a student has passed the Preliminary Examination.)
The Third Stage is devoted to research and seminars (32 additional hours--8 additional graduate courses), the preparation of a dissertation, and the final (Doctoral Oral) examination.

For each stage of the program, the Department reserves the right to require that a student earn additional hours of graduate credit beyond the minimum requirements listed here.

**GRADUATE ADVISERS**

Throughout the work for the Ph.D. -- in selecting courses, preparing for the Preliminary Examination, choosing a dissertation topic and writing the dissertation -- a student is under the direction of a graduate adviser. Normally the adviser is a member of the graduate faculty chosen by the student, subject to the agreement of the faculty member and the approval of the Department’s Director of Graduate Studies. The Director of Graduate Studies serves as temporary adviser to new students until regular advisers can be selected.

As a student’s work progresses it will sometimes be the case that a change of adviser is desirable. Such changes can be made with the aid and approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

Regulations of the Graduate College require that the work of each student in the Third Stage of the program be under the direction of a member of the faculty authorized by the College to direct doctoral dissertations. Upon entering this Stage of the program the first task of the student is to secure the agreement of an adviser authorized for this purpose. Registration for further work in the program is not permitted until this has been done.

**EXTRA-DEPARTMENTAL MINORS**

Beyond demonstrating competence in the areas covered by the Preliminary Examination, the candidate is not required to have a minor field of study either within or without the Department. However, where a student’s advanced study of philosophy would be strengthened by the inclusion of work in a related field, the student may be advised or permitted to offer work outside the Department in partial satisfaction of the course requirements for the Doctor’s degree. The amount of such work is limited to 8 hours (2 graduate courses), unless the student wishes to work to count as an extra-departmental minor. Then the minimum work accepted is 8 hours (2 graduate courses), and the maximum is 16 (4 graduate courses). Within these limitations, the specific amount and nature of work required for an extra-departmental minor will be determined by the department or division concerned, subject to the approval of the student’s Department Advisor and of the Director of Graduate Studies.

**Adviser in Extra-Departmental Minor:** To ensure proper cohesion and purpose in minor work, each candidate offering a minor must secure a member of the graduate faculty in the chosen field to supervise the student’s work and, at its completion, to certify to the Philosophy Department that the requirements for a minor in that field have
been satisfied. A student wishing to offer an extra-departmental minor is normally expected to choose the minor field and secure an adviser in that field by the time the student completes the First Stage.

ADMISSION TO THE SECOND STAGE

On or before the completion of the First Stage of work in the program, the student’s qualifications for further work are examined. Recommendations on this matter are made to the Department by a Qualifying Committee appointed each year by the Chair. When a student has completed 32 hours of work (8 graduate courses), or has been in residence three semesters, whichever comes first, the student’s adviser prepares for the Committee a report on the student’s progress to date. On the basis of this report and other available evidence the Committee makes a recommendation to the Department on the question of whether the student should be continued and advanced in the program. The Department may, if it wishes, set an examination, or require that the student complete certain special work, before a final decision is made.

As stated above, students who are formally advanced to the Second Stage of the Ph.D. program are automatically qualified for the M.A. in Philosophy upon earning 32 hours of graduate credit (8 graduate courses), at least 24 of which are earned in regular scheduled classes and seminars, and at least 12 of which are earned at the 500-level.

The qualifications of transfer students who wish to enter the program in the Second Stage are passed upon by the Committee and on Admission and Financial Aid, subject to review by the Qualifying Committee and confirmation by the Department in the manner described above. This will normally occur during the second semester of study in the program.

THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

The following schedule and procedures for the Preliminary Examination are designed to help students choose a thesis topic, compile a bibliography of writings relevant to that topic, and formulate a fruitful dissertation proposal. The purpose of the Preliminary Examination itself (described in item 5 below) is to test the quality and promise of the student’s proposed dissertation project, to evaluate the quality of the student’s preliminary work on this project, and to determine whether the student is competent to carry out the planned research.

For the purposes of this prelim schedule, a Ph.D. student’s second year in the Ph.D. program is defined as the first academic year in which the student is enrolled in graduate philosophy courses at UIUC and has previously either (a) earned at least 20 hours of graduate credit in philosophy at UIUC or (b) entered the Ph.D. program with an M.A. in philosophy. The student’s third year in the program is defined as the first academic year in which the student is enrolled in graduate philosophy courses at UIUC and has completed his or her second year in the program.
1. By the end of his or her second year in the Ph.D. program, a Ph.D. student will choose an area of specialization and find a member of the regular philosophy faculty who is willing to serve as his or her Prelim Adviser. The Prelim Adviser will help the student formulate a thesis topic and compile a bibliography of writings relevant to that topic.

2. By the end of the Fall semester of the student’s third year in the Ph.D. program, the student and his or her Prelim Adviser will find three additional faculty members (at least two of which must be in the Philosophy Department) who are willing to serve on the student’s Prelim Committee, and begin working with these additional faculty members on various aspects of his or her Dissertation Proposal. In accordance with Graduate College regulations, the Philosophy Department will recommend to the Graduate College that the Prelim Adviser, together with these three additional faculty members serve as the student’s Prelim Committee.

3. No later than three weeks before the end of the Spring semester of the student’s third year in the Ph.D. program, the student must submit a Dissertation Proposal that includes (a) a sketch of the dissertation project – the topic of the dissertation and envisaged themes, arguments, and conclusions insofar as these are known, (b) a substantial discussion of at least one of the themes or arguments of the dissertation project, (c) a discussion of the relevant philosophical literature and the relation of the proposed dissertation project to this literature, and (d) a selected but comprehensive bibliography of the relevant literature. The proposal must be at least 4500 words long (roughly 15 double-spaced pages) and no more than 9000 words long (roughly 30 double-spaced pages), not including the bibliography. It is expected that the student will work closely with his or her Adviser and other members of his or her Prelim Committee during Fall and the early parts of the Spring semester of the third year, so that by the time the Dissertation Proposal is submitted, the student will have discussed it with all members of his or her Prelim Committee.

4. A Ph.D. student who does not find a Prelim Adviser, form a Prelim Committee, or submit a Dissertation Proposal in accordance with the schedule above will not be making normal progress towards the Ph.D. degree. The consequences of failure to comply with the schedule will be determined on a case-by-case basis, and may include loss of departmental financial support.

5. Once the Dissertation Proposal is submitted, the Prelim Adviser will schedule a two hour period during which all four members of the Prelim Committee will together conduct an oral examination on all components (a)-(d) of the student’s Dissertation Proposal. This will be the Prelim Examination, the purpose of which is to test the quality and promise of the student’s proposed dissertation project, to evaluate the quality of the student’s preliminary work on this project, and to determine whether the student is competent to carry out the planned research. The committee will not focus exclusively on parts (a) and (b) of the Dissertation Proposal, but will also ask questions about parts (c) and (d), including more general questions about philosophical issues that are fundamental to the proposed thesis and questions that test familiarity with basic literature in the field.
6. In accordance with the policies of the Graduate College (See A Handbook for Graduate Students and Advisees, Part VII, section 7), decisions of the Prelim Committee must be unanimous. If the student does not pass the Prelim Examination, the student’s Prelim Committee may either (a) adjourn with its decision deferred for a period of time not exceeding six months, or (b) record a failure and grant the student another opportunity to take the examination after completing additional coursework, independent study, or research, or (c) record a failure that is final.

COURSE DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT

Of the 64 hours of graduate course work (16 graduate courses) which must be earned for a student to be advanced to the Third Stage of the Ph.D. program, 8 hours must be earned in courses in the history of philosophy, 8 hours in courses in the areas of ethics and value theory (including social and political philosophy and aesthetics), and 8 hours in courses in the areas of metaphysics and epistemology (including philosophy of mind, language, and science).

At least 48 (12 graduate courses) of the 64 hours must be earned in regularly scheduled advanced 400-level courses and graduate seminars (500-level), and at least 20 (5 graduate courses) of the 64 hours must be earned in graduate seminars. A maximum of 16 (4 graduate courses) of these 64 hours (and any number of the additional 32 hours required for the Ph.D.) may be earned in independent study courses.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Students in the Ph.D. program must also satisfy a Language Requirement. This requirement may be satisfied through the demonstration of competence in any one of the following four languages: French, German, Latin, and Greek. In the case of French this may be done by passing FR 501 with a grade of B or better or by passing an examination administered by the Department of French. In the case of German this may be done by passing GER 501 with a grade of B or better or by passing an examination administered by the Department of German. In the case of Latin this may be done by passing one of the following courses with a grade of B or better: LAT 301, LAT 302, LAT 491, or LAT 502. In the case of Greek the requirement may be satisfied by passing GRK 401 or GRK 491 with a grade of B or better. Students who wish to demonstrate competence by examination in Latin or Greek should contact the Director of Graduate Studies.

To substitute a language other than one of the basic four, students must first obtain approval of their adviser and of the Chair of the Department. Such approval normally will be granted only where the language is relevant to the student’s work in philosophy.

Students should satisfy the Language Requirement no later than the beginning of the fourth year in the Ph.D. Program.

The Language Requirement sets a minimum standard for knowledge of a foreign language. A higher level of proficiency in one or more languages is necessary to do
serious research in some areas of philosophy. Each student should consult with his or her adviser about the language skills that are needed for successful research in the area(s) in which they student intends to specialize.

SYMBOLIC LOGIC REQUIREMENT

Students in the Ph.D. Program must also satisfy a Symbolic Logic requirement. This requirement may be satisfied by passing with a grade of B or better in an appropriate course in symbolic logic (e.g., Philosophy 453 or 454) or by passing a proficiency examination in the same subject. Students will not be considered to have satisfied the Preliminary Examination requirement until they have satisfied this requirement.

INDIVIDUAL STUDY

Of the 64 hours which must be earned in order to be admitted to the Third Stage of the Ph.D. program, at least 48 of these hours must be earned in regularly scheduled classes and seminars. A maximum of 16 of the 64 hours, and any number of the additional 32 hours required for the Ph.D., may be earned in independent study courses.

THIRD STAGE OF THE PH.D. PROGRAM

Upon earning 64 hours of credit, passing the Preliminary Examination, and completing the Course Distribution, Language, and Symbolic Logic requirements, the student is admitted to the Third Stage, which is the dissertation-writing stage of the Ph.D. program. Students should begin the Third Stage no later than the beginning of their seventh semester of graduate study in philosophy.

When the requirements for entering the Third Stage have been substantially completed by the student, the Chair of the Department will appoint a Doctoral Committee in consultation with the student and the Director of Graduate Studies. It is the responsibility of the Doctoral Committee to ensure that the student has a specialist’s knowledge of the general area in which the student’s dissertation topic falls, and to supervise the student’s preparation of the dissertation. The Doctoral Committee will hold the Initial Meeting with the student within 30 days of its appointment to discuss with the student the plans for the dissertation. The student will be expected at this meeting to present his or her thesis proposal and bibliography, updated and revised in light of comments the student received at his or her prelim exam and in subsequent consultations with his or her advisers.

Within one semester of the Initial Meeting, there will be a formal Progress Meeting of student and Doctoral Committee to discuss the student’s work. At a reasonable time prior to the Progress Meeting, the student is expected to give each member of the committee a draft of a substantial portion (at least one chapter) of the thesis.
Immediately following the Initial Meeting and the Progress Meeting, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the Doctoral Committee to make a brief written report of the student’s progress to the Director of Graduate Studies. These reports will become a part of the student’s permanent file. The student and Doctoral Committee may elect to hold additional meetings. In addition, students should seek the advice of their advisers and doctoral committees at every stage of the work on the dissertation.

The final Doctoral Oral Examination will be held upon completion of the dissertation to determine whether the student shall be certified to the Graduate College for the award of the Ph.D.

THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

The doctoral dissertation in philosophy is an extended piece of written work that demonstrates the student’s ability to do independent research and to contribute to the discussions of philosophers. The dissertation should show that the student has a specialist’s knowledge of a topic of significance to philosophy and the ability to say something about the topic of importance to other specialists in the same area.

Dissertations are generally from 150 to 250 pages in length, but a shorter or a longer work might in some cases be appropriate. A dissertation is usually either an extended discussion of a topic in the form of a book or monograph or a collection of essays related to one another in some way. Other forms might be appropriate in particular cases. It is the responsibility of the student’s Doctoral Committee to decide what sort of a work will satisfy the requirement described above. Students should seek the advice of their advisers and doctoral committees at every stage of the work on the dissertation.

NORMAL PROGRESS TOWARD THE DEGREE

The criteria of normal progress toward the Ph.D. are the following:

A. The student should maintain a grade-point average of 3.0 (This average is the same as the grade-point average required for the Ph.D.)

B. The student should find a Prelim Adviser, form a Prelim Committee, and submit a Dissertation Proposal in accordance with the schedule outlined above. (See above under THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION.)

C. By the end of six semesters, the student should have satisfied the Language Requirement and the Symbolic Logic Requirement.

D. By the end of seven semesters, the student should have completed all requirements for admission to the Third Stage of the Ph.D. Program.

E. Students in the Third Stage should meet with their Doctoral Committee at the times prescribed. (See above under THIRD STAGE OF THE PH.D. PROGRAM.)
These criteria apply to students who did not enter the program with an M.A. in philosophy from another institution, and who have fewer than two deficiencies. Students who enter the program with an MA in philosophy should subtract two semesters in C and D above. For students with two or more deficiencies, one semester should be added to each reference to a given number of semesters in C and D above. For students with two or more deficiencies, one semester should be added to each reference to a given number of semesters in B and C above.

INCOMPLETE WORK

The Department expects all work assigned in courses to be completed in the term in which it has been assigned. Deferred grades are given only in the thesis courses (Philosophy 590 and 599). Excused grades may be granted at the discretion of the instructor when unusual circumstances warrant granting the student the privilege of completing the work after the close of the term. In no circumstance may a student take an excused grade from a visiting instructor who will not be teaching in the department in the following semester. Students with excused grades in more than 8 hours of work (2 graduate courses) will not be permitted to register for further work.

COLLOQUIA

The Philosophy Colloquium meets frequently throughout the year for the presentation and discussion of papers presented by selected speakers, including members of the Department, visitors from outside the university, and others. The Colloquium is an important part of the graduate program in philosophy, and students are urged and expected to attend. Graduate students working on their dissertations will be encouraged to present some of their work to the Colloquium.

SCHOLASTIC REQUIREMENT FOR DEGREE CERTIFICATION

A minimum grade-point average of 3.0 is required for a student in philosophy to be certified to the Graduate College as eligible to receive an advanced degree.

PASS-FAIL OPTION

Graduate students in philosophy are not permitted to take courses under the Pass-Fail option to satisfy the credit requirements for advanced degrees.

CONTINUATION OF FINANCIAL AID

The Department will review each year the performance in the program of each eligible student in order to determine whether support should be continued for that student. In order to be eligible for continued financial support, a graduate student must be in good standing in the Graduate College, and must be making normal progress towards the Ph.D. degree. Teaching assistants further must show through their work in the program that
they are capable of satisfactorily performing the duties of a teaching assistant, and must have a satisfactory record of performance of these duties.

The maximum period for which a graduate student can expect to receive financial aid for the Department is five years. A student who starts the Ph.D. program with an M.A. in philosophy from another institution, and who successfully petitions the department to have more than 12 hours (equivalent to 3 of our graduate credit courses) count toward the Ph.D. degree, can expect to receive financial aid from the Department for four years. (Exceptions may be made in the cases of students pursuing several advanced degrees – e.g., in philosophy and in law or medicine – conjointly.) This applies to all kinds of aid awarded by the Department (including fellowships and tuition-and-fee-waivers.)

Once a student has begun to receive financial aid from the Department, the Department will endeavor to maintain aid for the full period indicated (unless this assurance is expressly qualified or withheld when the offer of financial aid is made), as long as the student is making normal progress toward a degree. However, in view of budgetary uncertainties, the Department cannot guarantee continuance of financial aid for any specific period of time to all students who are deemed deserving of continued support.

In some cases, financial aid may be continued beyond the fifth year. This will be done only as budgetary conditions and the overall needs of our graduate program permit, and only as the needs of our undergraduate instructional program may warrant. Particular consideration will be given to the teaching ability of those who may be considered for appointment beyond the fifth year.

Students who receive fellowships or assistantships from sources other than those administered by the department, enabling them to pursue their studies for one or more semesters unsupported by departmentally administered funds, will normally be permitted to preserve their eligibility for support from departmental funds undiminished. Should they receive more than four semesters of such external support, their eligibility for departmental support will normally be reduced by one semester for each additional semester, beyond the fourth, during which they receive external support; thus someone receiving a three-year non-departmental fellowship would have four years remaining of departmental support. Exceptions will require departmental approval.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

If a graduate student has a grievance with respect to either academic work or assistantship duties, the student and the instructor or supervisor involved should meet and make every attempt to resolve the difficulty.

If they are unable to solve the problem, the following alternatives are available. Matters relating to academic work should be discussed with the student’s adviser and/or the Director of Graduate Studies. Matters relating to assistantship duties should be brought to the attention of the Departmental Chair or Vice-Chair.
If neither of these alternatives leads to a satisfactory solution, an appeal can be made to the Departmental Grievance Committee, which shall be the Graduate Affairs Committee minus the Department Chair. (The Departmental Grievance Committee shall elect its own Chair. The Grievance Committee shall elect two alternate members, one graduate student and one faculty member, at the beginning of the academic year to serve should any regular member be an interested party in a grievance.) A letter outlining the problem should be addressed to the Chair of the Committee, with copies going to all members of the Committee. The Committee shall meet promptly and in confidence to consider the case and report in recommendation without delay in writing to the student filing the grievance and to the Executive Committee of the Department.

If all the above efforts fail, a final appeal can be made to the Grievance Committee of the Graduate College.

Revised 5/07