Program Objective (or Mission):  

Briefly state the broad purposes the program is aiming to achieve. This program is designed to:

This program explores the history of ideas, particularly those that have played a central role in shaping the modern world. The curriculum develops students’ capacity to question and debate the great intellectual traditions. The major in Philosophy introduces students to a wide variety of philosophical traditions, approaches, questions, and ways of thinking. Special emphasis is placed on ideas that have had the most impact on the shape and understanding of modern humanity. The program also emphasizes the history of philosophy and how the ideas that shape our understanding of who and what we are have developed within and between intellectual traditions. Our very sense of self, what we consider important, how we pursue knowledge and life, even our tastes and inclinations—all these are issues saturated with a rich heritage of ideas and conceptions that are studied in the field of philosophy. But philosophy does more: in studying our heritage (or rather, heritages), it seeks to address the need, even the responsibility, to challenge and rethink what is traditionally accepted to be true about who and what we are. The curriculum helps students develop tools for critical thinking, but its guiding purpose is to awaken an interest in and love for exploring and criticizing the intellectual traditions that form the basis of understanding modern humanity.

Learning Outcomes: 5-7 outcomes is ideal; please list no more than 10

Note: Objectives for a major cannot be the same as those for a minor.

By the successful completion of this program, a student should be able to demonstrate:

1. Students must demonstrate the capacity to comprehend and critically engage arguments in philosophical texts.

2. Students must demonstrate the capacity to formulate and systematically explore a philosophical thesis, whether orally or in writing.

3. Students must demonstrate an understanding of the basic methods of rigorous academic research in philosophy, involving the identification of relevant primary sources and the appropriate employment of secondary literature.

4. Students must demonstrate a basic grasp of the broad outlines of the history of philosophy (ancient and modern), as well as a familiarity with issues definitive to the key sub-fields of philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of mind, political philosophy, philosophy of science).