

Why Study

"It's the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it."

Aristotle [Metaphysics]

A Philosophy Major leads to careers in ...

LAW!

MEDICINE!

BUSINESS!

ACADEMIA!

and MANY other possibilities!

Famous Philosophy Majors

Martin Luther King
Civil Rights Leader



Angela Davis
Activist



Stephen Breyer
Supreme Court Justice



Stewart Butterfield
Cofounder of Flickr



Carly Fiorina
Former CEO of HP



Sheila Bair
Former FDIC Chair



Lana Del Rey
Singer/songwriter



Kumail Nanjiani
Comedian/Actor



Juan Williams
Journalist



George Soros
Investor/Philanthropist



Susan Sontag
Writer/MacArthur Fellow



Emmanuel Macron
French President



IF NOT FOR:

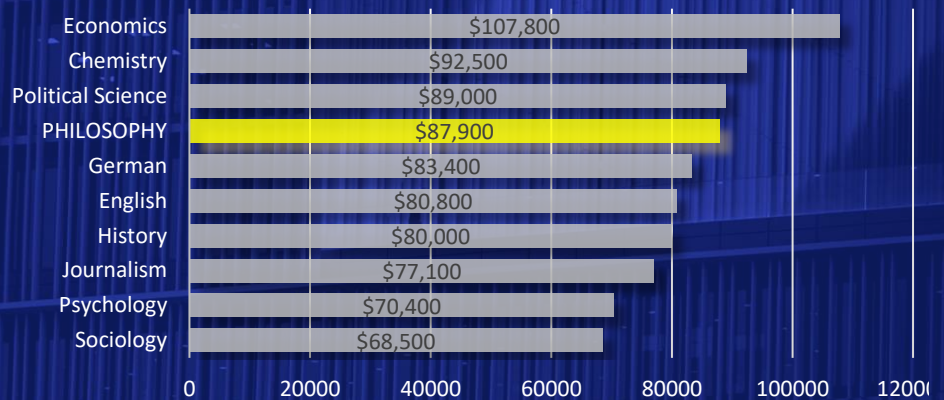
- those valuable analytical & critical skills
- the ability to question & think for yourself
- an understanding of the history & nature of human thought
- knowledge of the meaning of life



FOR THE MONEY?

MEDIAN MID-CAREER SALARY

(10+ YEARS WORK EXPERIENCE)



PAYSCALE.COM, COLLEGE SALARY REPORT, 2019 UPDATE

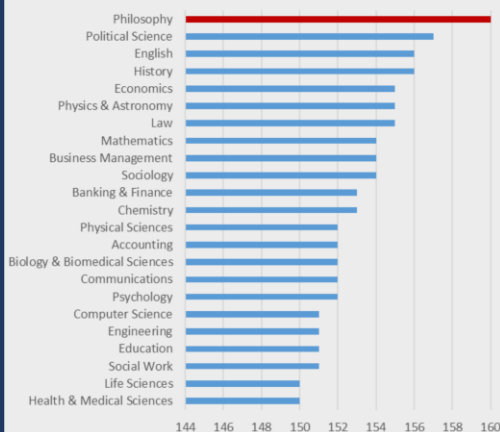
“The discipline teaches you how to think clearly, a gift that can be applied to just about any line of work”

Shannon Tyee, *Salon* 2013

GRAD SCHOOL?

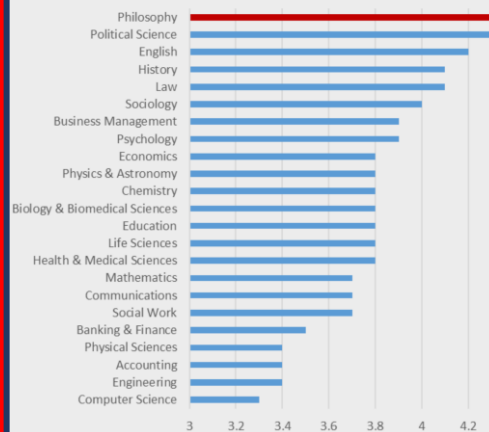
GRE Score - Verbal Reasoning

Data from ETS.org, graph by Brad Seaman



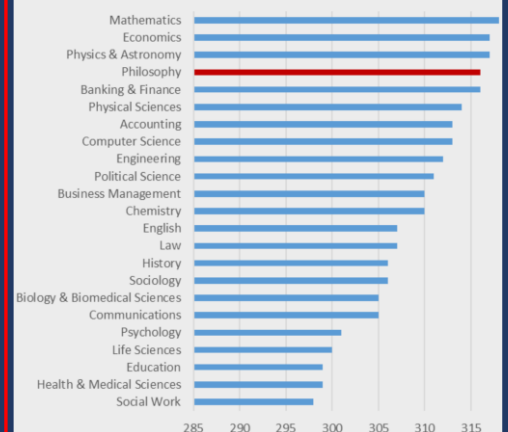
GRE Score - Writing

Data from ETS.org, graph by Brad Seaman



GRE Score - Composite

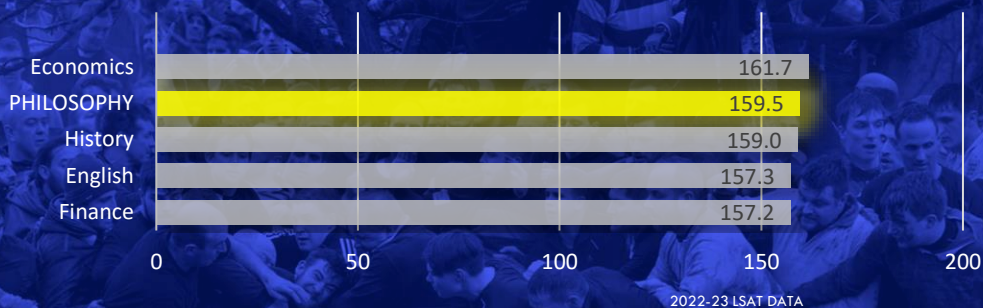
Data from ETS.org, graph by Brad Seaman



FOR LAW SCHOOL?

LSAT TOP FIVE SCORING MAJORS

(AMONG MAJORS GRANTED TO MORE THAN 1000 STUDENTS)



I use my philosophy degree every day. I'm a litigator. I make arguments for my clients in court. ... But perhaps more important than learning to construct an argument is learning to take one apart ... That's much harder to learn, and for me, that's what a philosophy degree is all about.

SMU alum Chris Schwegmann, '97 (Partner, Lynn Tilotson Pinker Cox)

I frequently tell people the most practical learning I had in preparation for a legal career both as a lawyer and judge were the philosophy courses I took at SMU... I think it is cliché to say majors such as philosophy have no practical application in the "real world" but I could not disagree more.

SMU alum Hon. Charles Montemayor, '88 (Judge, Bexar County)

Majoring in philosophy at SMU was a great choice for me for many reasons.... I don't think the type of thinking and problem-solving I learned from being a Philosophy major, though intangible, could be gained from any other discipline.

SMU alum Whitney Ehlin, '08 (Associate Lawyer, Bickel & Brewer)

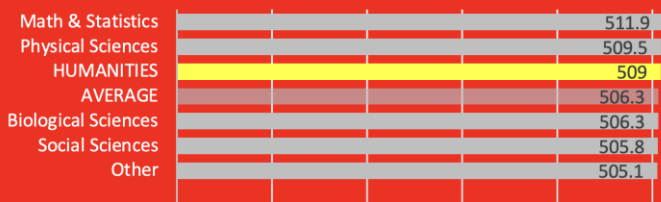
[In my career] I [have] utilize(d) the ways of thinking, writing and arguing that I learned as a Philosophy major. Ironically, all of the prosecutors in my Court were Philosophy majors at different institutions! I have no doubt that our degrees prepared us to be effective advocates.

SMU alum Rebekah J. Bailey, '05 (Assist. D.A., Dallas County)

MED SCHOOL?

MCAT SCORES 2023

(BY AREA OF STUDY)



from: <http://www.aamc.org>

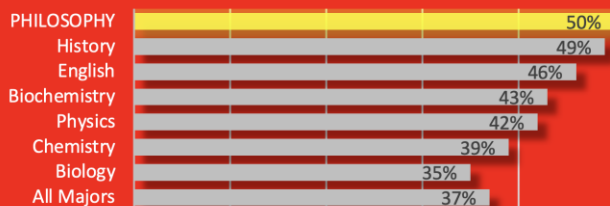
I have always found my studies in philosophy extremely important throughout my career in medical research... my philosophy studies taught me how to think critically and particularly how to analyze a philosophical paradox, which I find commonly in medical research as well as in public health policy.

SMU alum

Robert Haley, '67 (Chief Epidemiology Division, UT Southwestern)

MED SCHOOL ACCEPTANCE RATES

(BY UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR - 1998)



from: <http://www.aamc.org>

I think that studying Philosophy uniquely prepared me for this career both in practice and in research because it cultivated an ability to dissect ideas and models of thinking.

SMU alum

Patrick McCaffrey, '09 (Physician, Pathology Resident, Massachusetts General)

BUSINESS?

Graduate Management Admissions Test

(by intended undergraduate major, 2014)

Physics	608
Mathematics	606
Engineering	596
PHILOSOPHY	588
Economics	586
Computer Science	580
Chemistry	572
History	571
Government	570
Biology	569

<http://GMAC.com/market-intelligence-and-research/research-library/gmat-test-take-data.aspx>

I've always felt my philosophy degree from SMU was one of the building blocks for how I think, and how I guide my business.

SMU alum

Ryan Rubin, '06 (NFL Contract Advisor)

I double majored. ... Throughout my career, it has always been my PR background that would get me the job interview, but my critical thinking skills from philosophy that would get me the job.

SMU alum

Richard Franco, '92 (Head of Member Engagement, Liquidnet)

Understanding taxes hinges on recognizing patterns of symmetry, and their absence. That appreciation for symmetry was something I first discovered through SMU's philosophy department. One of my professors once said, "For virtually every argument, there exists an opposing position." Wrestling with philosophical concepts, informed by many sides of debate helped me develop clearer, more confident answers and stand out from my colleagues - rather than defaulting to 'it depends'.

SMU alum

Patrick Norwood, '16 (Senior Tax & Trusts Attorney)

I work in real estate and mortgage financing and I value my Philosophy degree over my Business degree for a variety of reasons. The best reason is that it taught me how to approach and analyze problems more broadly than using just numbers.

SMU alum

David Blewett, '89 (Principal, Tower Resources)

For information about **majoring & minoring** in Philosophy:

<https://www.smu.edu/dedman/academics/departments/philosophy/undergraduate>

For information about Philosophy **courses**:

<https://www.smu.edu/dedman/academics/departments/philosophy/undergraduate/courses>

Or contact our friendly & helpful **advisors**:

• Cognitive Science Minor:

Prof. Justin Fisher

[\[fisher@smu.edu\]](mailto:fisher@smu.edu)

• Ethics Minor:

Prof. Luke Robinson

[\[lrobinson@smu.edu\]](mailto:lrobinson@smu.edu)