History of Philosophies, East and West (HPEW)

Chairpersons of the Participating Departments

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Degree Awarded

MA in History of Philosophies, East and West

Website

www.stonybrook.edu/hpew

History of Philosophies, East and West (HPEW)

The HPEW curriculum includes courses on Islamic philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, Chinese philosophy, Japanese philosophy, Hindu philosophy, ancient Greek philosophy, as well as medieval and modern western philosophy. The systematic areas covered from historical perspectives are ethics, political philosophy, metaphysics, cosmology, psychology, aesthetics, theology and theories of knowledge. The program’s courses and seminars on eastern thought include treatments of its western interpretations, and vice versa. Teaching is based on primary texts, with selective use of secondary sources. Special emphasis is put on the understanding of native terms and concepts from the original languages of the works read. (Languages may include German, French, Italian, Greek, Latin, Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. Achieving reading competency in one or more of these languages is strongly encouraged.) This program is one of the few in the western world allowing students to earn a philosophy graduate degree while pursuing coursework in both eastern and western thought. Because of its distinctive character, it aims to attract students with a comparative perspective who wish to deepen their understanding of the history of philosophy under the guidance of internationally renowned scholars of modern, medieval, and classical philosophical traditions.

Program Administration and Advising

The administration of this joint MA program is carried out by HPEW’s program director in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee (GPC). The GPC consists of HPEW core faculty (see below) and one graduate student representative. Academic advising is carried out primarily by the core faculty, who also meet regularly to evaluate all individual students’ progress toward graduation.

Students must fulfill most degree requirements by taking HPEW’s regularly scheduled graduate courses and seminars. Any student who takes the MA thesis option (6 credits) will request the formation of a faculty committee for the thesis project. This committee consists of the thesis advisor and one other faculty member.

Admissions

• At the program level, decisions on admission are made by the faculty members of the HPEW Graduate Program Committee. Admission requirements are as follows:
  • Bachelor’s degree (Some knowledge of the history of philosophies, East and/or West, is highly desirable but not required.)
  • Two official transcripts of undergraduate record and of any work completed at the graduate level
  • Letters of recommendation from three previous or current instructors
  • Writing sample (This may be a paper written for a previous course.)
  • Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores*
  • TOEFL scores for applicants whose native languages are not English**
  • Acceptance by HPEW and the Graduate School

* HPEW’s Graduate Program Committee may request that the GRE requirement be waived for qualified applicants.

**HPEW adheres to Graduate School standards setting the acceptable score on the TOEFL test for international students at 550 and above, or a minimum score on the Internet-based TOEFL (IBT) of 90 with a minimum score on each subsection of 22 respectively.

Application dossiers, including cover letter, recommendations and writing sample, should be submitted electronically through the Graduate School’s admissions website. Official transcripts should be sent to: HPEW Program Director, Department of Philosophy, Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, New York, 11794.

www.stonybrook.edu/hpew

Financial support
At this point in time, no financial support in the form of fellowship funding or tuition scholarships is available. It should be noted, however, that tuition and fees (set by the State University of New York) may be quite considerably below those of comparable MA programs. For current tuition and fee schedules, please consult the Stony Brook University website.

Facilities

In addition to the broad array of scholarly resources offered by Stony Brook University’s Melville Library, the following specialized libraries and collections are open to HPEW students:

- The Stony Brook Philosophy Department’s Solzberg Library (218 Harriman Hall)
- The Center for India Studies Library (Melville E5350)
- The Ino Collection of Japanese and Chinese literature, (Melville Library)
- The Korean Studies Collection (Melville Library)

HPEW students are also strongly urged to take advantage of some of the world’s premier research and professional networking organizations for philosophy, which are based in the New York area. Organizations particularly relevant to HPEW students and faculty are the following:

- New York German Idealism Workshop
- New York City Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy
- New York/New Jersey Research Group in Early Modern Philosophy
- Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy
- Ancient Philosophy Society
- Society for the Study of Islamic Philosophy and Science
- Columbia University Society for Comparative Philosophy

Requirements for the M.S. Degree

The 30-credit HPEW curriculum can be completed in one year. But it is recommended that full-time students complete the HPEW program as follows:

- Year one: 24 credits (four 3-credit courses per semester)
- Year two: (two 3-credit courses in the semester of full-time enrollment)

It is also possible to enroll in HPEW on a part-time basis (i.e., by taking fewer than 12 credit hours per semester).

Program Requirements

Students will choose a concentration in either eastern or western philosophy. The relevant distribution requirements are these:

- 6 credits earned in the program’s foundational survey courses on eastern philosophy
- 6 credits earned in the program’s foundational survey courses on western philosophy
- 3 credits earned in a seminar outside the declared concentration (in eastern or in western philosophy)
- EITHER 9 credits earned in seminars in the declared concentration plus 6 credits of thesis research OR, if the MA thesis option is not chosen, 15 credits in the declared concentration, 6 of which may be earned in a graduate-level language course relevant to the chosen concentration.

HPEW Core Faculty


Associated Faculty

Alan Kim, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy. Ph.D., 2001, McGill University. German and ancient Greek philosophy; phenomenology; neo-Kantianism; Plato. http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/philosophy/people/faculty_pages/kim.html

Andrew Platt, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy. Ph.D., 2010, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. History of 17th and 18th century philosophy; social-political philosophy; philosophy of religion. http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/philosophy/people/faculty_pages/platt.html

NOTE: The course descriptions for this program can be found in the corresponding program PDF or at COURSE SEARCH.