

Graduate Program Milestones:

The job market in philosophy is very competitive. Our placement success stories suggest that it takes several publications, exceptional and independent teaching experience, and ongoing professional engagement to be competitive on the job market. To help you build the kind of CV you need, we created a list of milestones you should aim to achieve each year. We've divided the list into research, teaching, and professional engagement.

For many of the items listed here, for example preparing and submitting a paper for publication, or selecting conferences to submit to, we don't expect that you already know how to do this. Ask members of the faculty to give you advice on how to best achieve those milestones.

While you are going through the program, it is very important that you don't neglect your physical and mental health.

Year	Research	Mentored Teaching	Professional Engagement
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coursework as laid out in the program requirements. - Start working on at least one paper that can become a QP. Seek feedback from peers and faculty members to help with the process. - Submit your work to conferences, with the aim of doing at least one conference presentation a year. You might not get a paper accepted in your first year, but you should definitely start trying. (2) - Try out working with different faculty members with the goal of narrowing in on potential advisors. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend philosophy events in the area, ask questions in colloquia Q&A. (1) - Be a good departmental citizen and help out when you're needed, for example with committee work or organizing events such as the prospectives' visit. - Join professional organizations, and if you can afford it, go to conferences. If you want to save money, joining professional listserves is often FREE, and may give you access to the same information as membership (e.g., newsletters, job and conference announcements, etc.). Especially seek out lists in your area of expertise. E.g., PSA, ISHPSSB, PhilJobs, HOPOS, the APA, and SW Early Modern Association, etc.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coursework as laid out in the program requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Before MTEing for the first time (usually in August), attend the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See year 1. - Take advantage of summer seminars or other

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start working on an additional paper that will be your second QP. Aim to have two polished papers that are suitable for conference presentations or even publication by the end of your second year. - Submit your work to conferences, with the aim of doing at least one conference presentation a year. (2) - Try out working with different faculty members with the goal of narrowing in on a potential advisor. 	<p>mandatory Graduate School orientation for beginning MTEs, and also the mandatory departmental MTE orientation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and take advantage of opportunities to enhance your profile as a teacher. For example, start working towards the Teaching Citation, find opportunities to give guest lectures in courses in which you MTE. - Have a faculty member observe your teaching (this is standardly done when you're MTEing). This has two functions: getting suggestions for improvement, and enabling faculty to write a teaching recommendation letter for you. - Ensure that your students are filling out your teaching evaluations (this should be done by the professor if you're MTEing). 	<p>opportunities to meet colleagues and learn philosophy through e.g., NSF and/or National Humanities Council sponsored seminars.</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coursework as laid out in the program requirements. - Develop a dissertation proposal. - Prepare papers for publication, send them out to journals (in consultation with faculty). - Keep presenting at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue MTEing. See year 2. - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See year 1 & 2. - See if there are any awards/grants/fellowships that you could benefit from and apply for them. (3) - Identify people outside of Wash U whose work is relevant to your dissertation and establish professional connections with them. (5)

	<p>conferences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare a third QP if required. - Defend your dissertation proposal by the end of the year. 		
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defend your dissertation proposal before the end of the fall semester at the very latest. - Work on your dissertation. - Prepare papers for publication, send them out to journals (in consultation with faculty). - Keep presenting at conferences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See year 2. - Possibly teach a summer class. 	- See years 1, 2 & 3.
5/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on your dissertation. - Prepare papers for publication, send them out to journals (in consultation with faculty). - Keep presenting at conferences. - In the summer before you go on the market, prepare and polish your application materials. (6) - Send your materials to your letter writers. Give them 4-6 weeks to get their letters ready. Usually, the earliest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See year 2. - Possibly teach a summer class. 	- See years 1, 2 & 3.

<p>application deadlines are in mid-September.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send out applications. - Practice your interview skills, prepare answers to most common questions. - Practice your job talk. - Give a colloquium talk at Wash U. 		
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(1) All graduate students are required to attend the colloquium talks at Wash U. We also encourage students to take advantage of philosophy events at SLU and UMSL, especially when they are in the students' areas of interest. A joint event calendar is here:

<https://sites.google.com/site/stlouisphilosophy/>

For better or worse, contributing effectively to discussions is a valued skill in philosophy. Moreover, asking questions and participating in discussion is a way of productively engaging with other philosophers. We encourage students to practice their skills as interlocutors by asking questions in colloquium talks, actively participating in seminars, and giving presentations/responding to people in Q&A. We recognize that these ways of interacting don't feel natural and comfortable to everyone. In fact, some studies report that fear of public speaking is the most common fear among American adults. We encourage students to seek out the support they need in order to make progress in these areas.

(2) In order to present at conferences, students must submit papers or abstracts, which will usually undergo a process of blind review. Presentations can be anywhere between 20 and 60 minutes, and usually include a question and answer period, and sometimes a commentator. Calls for submissions can be found on philevents.org.

We can group conferences roughly into the following categories:

Graduate conferences

- graduate conferences on specialized topics
- graduate conferences on general topics
- more and less selective graduate conferences (as a rule of thumb, the higher ranked the PhD program that is running the conference, the more selective the conference. The most selective grad conferences have acceptance rates below 10%.)

Professional Conferences

- regional conferences (general or special topics)
- national and international conferences (general or special topics)
- small workshop-style conferences
- large conferences with multiple talks running at once
- more and less selective conferences

(For example, APAs tend to accept around 20% of submissions. The St. Louis Annual Conference on Reasons has an acceptance rate below 10%. Other conferences might accept 50% of submissions or more. Acceptance at PSA is roughly 25%, ISHPSSB accepts about 80% of submissions. If you are not sure whether a conference is selective, ask for advice.)

Practicing your presentation skills and getting feedback on your work is good, but people will be generally more impressed by seeing professional rather than graduate conferences, and more rather than less selective conferences on your CV. In order to get good feedback on your work and get in touch with people in your area, it is often more helpful to present at specialized conferences, although very large general conferences such as APA meetings are good as well.

We recommend that you start making a list of recurring conferences that interest you, so you can put them on your calendar and make sure you have submissions ready when the deadlines come up. Take advantage of conferences that offer graduate students travel stipends, such as the APA. The department also offers some resources to fund conference travel.

Another good way to start interacting with philosophers in your area is as a commentator. If you get a chance to comment on someone's paper at a prestigious conference in your area, you should take advantage of this opportunity. Again, the better the conference, the better the opportunity. For example, the APA lets you sign up as a commentator, and you may get an invitation based on entering the pool of volunteers. Chairing a session at a conference is another way of doing a valuable service to the profession and becoming part of the philosophical community. Volunteer to chair when opportunities present themselves, especially in and near St. Louis.

(3) Some information about grants you can apply for can be found here (these lists are likely not complete, do your own research):

<https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/#search/philosophy>

<http://www.apaonline.org/?page=grantsandfellowships>

Ask faculty members for help with writing grant applications.

(4) Students who apply for jobs should have several recommendation letters. They should ideally have 2-3 letters from Wash U professors about their research, a separate teaching letter, and one or more letters from professors who are not at Wash U. If a student's research topic engages a lot with another discipline, the student should seek out a recommendation letter from a specialist in that discipline.

(6) Students should expect to devote a lot of time to developing their application materials and writing sample during the summer before they go on the job market. If a student plans to use an unpublished paper as their writing sample, they should expect to start polishing the paper starting in May to have a great draft ready by August/September. Other documents the students should be working on: CV, dissertation abstract, research statement, teaching statement, sample syllabi. The faculty can provide you with comments on drafts and sample documents.

Your CV when you apply:

A student who meets all of these goals will have slowly built up a competitive CV by the time they go on the job market. Their CV will include:

- A specification of the student's area(s) of specialization (the area(s) of their dissertation research, usually 1-3)
- A specification of the student's areas of competence (3-4 areas in which the student is competent to teach undergraduate classes. This competence should be substantiated by other entries on the CV, such as coursework, conference presentations, readings groups, and so on)
- Ideally several papers that are published in good journals, plus a list of works in progress
- Conference activity: at least 5 or 6 presentations of the student's work at conferences, and possibly participation as a commentator.
- Possibly awards, grants, and/or fellowships
- The person's teaching experience, which ideally includes classes the student has taught as the main instructor.
- Possibly additional activities, such as participation in reading groups, help with conference organization, service on academic committees
- A list of references. (3-5 research letters plus one teaching letter. Ideally, one or two of the research letters come from professors who are not at Wash U. A letter from someone in another discipline can be extremely helpful for students whose work is interdisciplinary.)

Students are asked to keep track of their efforts to meet these milestones, as well as their work towards meeting the program requirements. They will be asked to submit an annual report of their activities in each area (research, teaching, professional activities), which also outlines their goals for the next year, and to what extent past goals were accomplished. This report will enter into the

annual graduate review meeting. Alongside with this, students should start keeping an academic CV and continuously updating it as they progress through the program.