Alabama Commission on Higher Education
Accessibility. Affordability. Coordination.

Proposal for a New Degree Program

I. Information and Rationale

A. Primary Contact Information

Institution: University of Alabama

Contact: André Denham

Title: Associate Dean, Graduate School

Email: adenham@ua.edu

Telephone: 205-348-1731

B. Program Information

Date of Proposal Submission: April 2024

Award Level: Master's Degree

Award Nomenclature (e.g., BS, MBA): M.A.

Field of Study/Program Title: Philosophy

CIP Code (6-digit): 38.0101

Proposed Delivery Method: Main Campus

C. Implementation Information

Proposed Program Implementation Date: 8/1/2025

Anticipated Date of Approval from Institutional Governing Board: 9/13/2024

Anticipated Date of ACHE Meeting to Vote on Proposal: 9/13/2024

SACSCOC Sub Change Requirement (Notification, Approval, or NA): Approval

Other Considerations for Timing and Approval (e.g., upcoming SACSCOC review):

D. Specific Rationale (Strengths) for the Program

List 3 – 5 strengths of the proposed program as specific rationale for recommending approval of this proposal.

1. The proposed program will build upon the current well-developed strengths of the Department of Philosophy B.A. Philosophy concentrations: Jurisprudence, Philosophy and Medicine, and Mind and Brain.

2. The proposed program will serve our students well in preparing them for their applications to, and success in, Law school, Medical school, or other Post-graduate study, as well as in their professional lives afterward. The integration of ethics and politics into the study of law and medicine in these concentrations can potentially also help our students if they eventually go into public and civic service.

3. Currently, there is no graduate program in Philosophy in the state of Alabama. This program will give Alabama's students an opportunity to pursue Philosophy graduate study in-state.

4. This program will provide the opportunity for research into philosophical issues related to the practices of law and medicine, and to engage the public in this research. Here the research would be part of the regular curriculum, papers written specifically for classes, as well as a Master's thesis for those on the thesis track. There has been, for instance, public debate about the proper role of policing, and policies related to public health.

List external entities (more may be added) that may have supplied letters of support attesting to the program's strengths and attach letters with the proposal at the end of this document. (external letters of support are not required, but encouraged)

Attached are letters in support of the proposed program from Dr. John Higgenbotham and Dr. Robert McKinney, in the UA College of Community Health Sciences, Dr. Alexa Tullett, Department of Psychology at UA, and Stephen Galoob, Professor at the University of Tulsa Law School.

In 2018-2019, the Philosophy Department underwent its 8-year performance review. The external examiners addressed the desirability of a Master's program in the department's specialized majors, and addressed this in their final report. They concluded:

"The Department is well positioned to move in the direction outlined above, especially given the two searches this year in Philosophy of Law and Medicine or Metaphysics. The Philosophy Faculty has an impressive track record of high-quality publications (see Research section below), entirely in line with the University's R1 mission. The Department, therefore, is in an excellent position to expand and build upon existing strengths. It therefore seems to us that this is a good time for the Department to give serious consideration and thought toward developing niche offerings at the graduate level, thus supporting Dean Messina's research-oriented vision for the College of Arts and Sciences."

II. Background with Context

A. Concise Program Description

a. Briefly describe the purpose of the proposed program.

The purpose of this program is to extend and expand the department's current (B.A.) concentrations to the graduate (M.A.) level: *Philosophy and Medicine, Jurisprudence* (Philosophy of Law), and *Mind and Brain*. This will be the only graduate philosophy program in the state of Alabama and will provide students at The University of Alabama and from the state of Alabama the opportunity for graduate study in philosophy. The concentrations in this M.A. program will also give students the opportunity to extend their philosophical studies related to Law, Medicine, or Mind/Brain to apply more successfully to and prepare for professional schools (Law and Medicine) and Ph.D. graduate schools (Philosophy, Psychology and the Neurosciences). This program will also help prepare students for their professional careers afterward in medicine, law, public service, and more, by helping them develop valuable general skills: analytic methods, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, argument building and information organization. It will support the University's *Mission* of advancing "the intellectual and social condition of the people of the state, the nation, and the world through the creation, translation, and dissemination of

knowledge with an emphasis on quality programs in the areas of teaching, research, and service," through its first two *Goals*: providing a premier graduate education with distinctive curricular goals; and increasing the University's productivity and innovation in research and scholarship that impact societal development.

b. Describe, if applicable, general opportunities for work-based and/or experiential learning within the proposed program.
N/A

c. Prove a brief statement regarding how the program's purpose is related to the mission and goals of the department, college, and University.

This program will support the College's *Mission* of advancing knowledge through research and scholarship, and providing a foundation in the liberal arts, that fosters creative and critical thinking, and through its strategic *Goals* of enriching graduate programs and providing stimulating learning communities. Philosophy is a core liberal art, and perhaps as much as any discipline fosters creative and critical thinking. This program will support the *Mission* of the Philosophy Department by "advancing the study of philosophy by conducting original philosophical research (for all students in the written classwork and particularly for those who choose the thesis option) and by providing students with the philosophical education necessary for them to develop a firm foundation in the liberal arts as well as strong ethical, creative and critical thinking skills." It will support the department's strategic goals of producing "high quality research that engages the philosophical community and wider culture," (through written classwork and the thesis option) and provides a "rigorous education" in "burgeoning areas of philosophical inquiry such as philosophy of law, philosophy of neuroscience and philosophy of medicine."

B. Student Learning Outcomes

List four (4) to seven (7) of the student learning outcomes of the program.

1. Evaluate competing conceptions about fundamental things and processes, such as health and disease, the nature of law and morality, and the mind and brain.

2. Evaluate the competing theoretical frameworks that govern our practices and inquiries, such as what we see in medicine, the law, and brain sciences.

3. Analyze and compare the different kinds of evidence employed to support empirical and theoretical claims, such as what we see in medical diagnoses and claims about effectiveness, legal claims and judgments, scientific claims, and hypotheses about mental and brain processes.

4. Analyze the ethical problems confronting us in our professional practices, such as what we see in the practice of medicine, the practice of law, and psychological investigation.

5. Analyze the political issues that arise, particularly relative to the institutions and authorities that govern our practices, such as what we see in medicine, law, and psychology.

C. Administration of the Program

Name of Dean and College: Joseph Messina

Name of Department/Division: Department of Philosophy

Name of Chairperson: Richard Richards

D. Similar Programs at Other Alabama Public Institutions

List programs at other Alabama public institutions of the same degree level and the same (or similar) CIP codes. If no similar programs exist within Alabama, list similar programs offered within the 16 SREB states. If the proposed program duplicates, closely resembles, or is similar to any other offerings in the state, provide justification for any potential duplication.

There are no other Philosophy (M.A.) programs in the state of Alabama.

Most flagship/research universities across the SREB region offer graduate programs in Philosophy. These programs are all more general or offer different concentrations than the ones that will be offered in the proposed Philosophy (M.A.) program at UA.

CIP Code	Degree Title	Institution with Similar Program	Justification for Duplication
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of South Carolina	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	Louisiana State University	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	Georgia State University	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of Georgia	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of Tennessee	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of South Florida	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	Florida State University	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of Florida	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of Kentucky	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	Texas A&M	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of North Texas	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.
38.0101	Philosophy MA	University of Texas at Austin	Not a duplication, doesn't have the same concentrations.

E. Relationship to Existing Programs within the Institution

1. Is the proposed program associated with any existing offerings within the institution, including options within current degree programs?   **Yes** ☒ **No** ☐

(Note: Most new programs have some relationship to existing offerings, *e.g.*, through shared courses or resources). If yes, complete the following table. If this is a graduate program, list any existing undergraduate programs which are directly or indirectly related. If this is a doctoral program, also list related master's programs.

Related Degree Program Level	Related Degree Program Title	Explanation of the Relationship Between the Programs
Bachelors	Philosophy	The Philosophy (M.A.) program will build on the existing courses in the Philosophy (B.A.) concentrations and the existing minors.

2. Will this program replace any existing programs or specializations, options, or concentrations? **Yes ☐ No ☒**

   If yes, please explain.

3. Will the program compete with any current internal offerings? **Yes ☐ No ☒**

   If yes, please explain.

   If applicable, attach a letter of support from the competing or overlapping department(s)

F. Collaboration

Have collaborations with other institutions or external entities been explored? **Yes ☐ No ☒**

If yes, provide a brief explanation indicating those collaboration plan(s) for the proposed program.

Have any collaborations within your institution been explored? **Yes ☐ No ☒**

If yes, provide a brief explanation indicating those collaboration plan(s) for the proposed program.

G. Specialized Accreditation

1. Will this program have any external accreditation requirements in addition to the institution's SACSCOC program requirements? **Yes ☐ No ☒**

   If yes, list the name(s) of the specialized accrediting organization(s) and the anticipated timeframe of the application process.

2. Does your institution intend to pursue any other non-required accrediting organizations for the program?* **Yes ☐ No ☒**

   If yes, list the name(s) of the organization(s) and the purpose of the pursuit.

If there are plans to pursue non-required external accreditation at a later date,
list the name(s) and why the institution is not pursuing them at this time.

Note: Check *No* to indicate that non-required external accreditation will not be pursued, which requires no explanation.

H. Admissions

Will this program have any additional admissions requirements beyond the institution's standard admissions process/policies for this degree level?   **Yes ☐ No ☒**

If yes, describe any other special admissions or curricular requirements, including
any prior education or work experience required for acceptance into the program.

I. Mode of Delivery

Provide the planned delivery format(s) (*i.e.*, in-person, online, hybrid) of the program as
defined in policy along with the planned location(s) at which the program will be delivered
(*i.e.*, on-campus and/or at specific off-campus instructional site(s)). Please also note whether
any program requirements can be completed through competency-based assessment.

Main campus (in-person). No program requirements can be completed through competency-
based assessment.

J. Projected Program Demand (Student Demand)

Briefly describe the primary method(s) used to determine the level of student demand for this
program using evidence, such as enrollments in related coursework at the institution, or a
survey of student interest conducted (indicate the survey instrument used), number and
percentage of respondents, and summary of results.

Enrollment in UA's Philosophy (B.A.) concentrations at any one time is substantial. Of the 70-
80 majors we have had in the Spring semester the last few years, 25-30 will typically be
enrolled in the *Jurisprudence* concentration, 6-10 in the *Philosophy and Medicine*
concentration, and 4-7 in the *Mind and Brain* concentration.

In Fall 2021 and Spring 2022, we surveyed majors in our undergraduate *Jurisprudence*
concentration. Out of **14** students who responded to the survey, **13** (93%) indicated they
would *definitely* be interested in enrolling in an unspecified Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law
Accelerated Master's Program (AMP), while **0** indicated they *might be* interested. Of these
majors, **6** (43%) indicated they would *definitely* be interested in enrolling in a 2-year
traditional Master's program, while **6** more (43%) indicated that they *might be* interested in
enrolling in a 2-year traditional Master's program. Aggregating these numbers, it seems that
13 out of 14 students who responded to the survey had some interest in an AMP in
Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law, and **12 out of 14** had at least some interest in a traditional
2-year Master's program.

At that time we also surveyed the student enrolled in the McCollough Pre-medical Institute to
gauge their interest. Of the **16** students who responded, **7** (44%) said they would *definitely*
be interested in enrolling in an AMP program for Medical Ethics/Philosophy of Medicine,
while **5** (31%) indicated they *might be* interested in such an AMP program. Of the
McCollough scholars, **2** (12%) said they would *definitely* be interested in a traditional 2-year
Master's program in Medical Ethics/Philosophy of Medicine, while **7** (44%) said they *might be*
interested. The interest for such a Master's program is slightly lower than with the

Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law Master's program, but it is still quite high, in that **12** of the **16** students (76%) who responded had at least some interest in an AMP program, and **9** out of **16** students (56%) had at least some interest in a 2-year traditional program in Medical Ethics/Philosophy of Medicine.

Also at that time, we surveyed all of our majors, and while there is possibly some overlap with the Jurisprudence and McCollough Scholars, there is some interest extended beyond these groups. Out of **25** students who responded, **14** (56%) said they were *definitely* interested, and **2** (8%) said they *might be* interested in an AMP program in Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law. Of these Philosophy majors, **10** (40%) said they were *definitely* interested, and **6** (24%) said they *might be* interested in a traditional 2-year Master's program in this concentration. And out of the **25** who responded, **8** (32%) said they were definitely interested, and **0** said they *might be* interested in an AMP in Medical Ethics/Philosophy of Medicine. And among these students, **5** (20%) said they would *definitely* be interested, and **2** (4%) said they *might be* interested in a traditional 2-year Master's program in Medical Ethics/Philosophy of Medicine. Aggregating these numbers, out of **25** who responded to the survey, **16** indicated at least some interest in a Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law AMP, and **16** indicated at least some interest in a traditional 2-year Master's program in that concentration. The interest was slightly lower, but still strong, in a Medical Ethics/Philosophy of Medicine program. Of the **25** students who responded, **8** indicated at least some interest in an AMP in this concentration, and **7** indicated at least some interest in a traditional 2-year Master's program.

Summary: These surveys of our students indicate that there is strong interest among our students for an Accelerated Master's Program in our concentrations, in particular the Jurisprudence/Philosophy of Law concentration, and slightly less but still strong interest in a 2-year traditional Master's Program. There might, of course, also be interest in among students working on other philosophy degrees.

III. Program Resource Requirements

A. Proposed Program Faculty*

Current Faculty and Faculty to Be Hired

Complete the following **New Academic Degree Proposal Faculty Roster** to provide a brief summary and qualifications of current faculty and potential new hires specific to the program.

*Note: Institutions must maintain and have current as well as additional faculty curriculum vitae available upon ACHE request for as long as the program is active, but CVs are **not** to be submitted with this proposal.

Current Faculty			
1	2	3	4
CURRENT FACULTY NAME (F, P)	*COURSES TAUGHT including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)
Luke Hunt (F)	PHL 341 Law and Morality (3) **S21, S23** PHL 442 Ticking Time Bombs: Phil. and Nat, Security (3) **F21, F22, F23** PHL 444 Constitutionalism and Democracy (3) **D** PHL 446 Legal and Philosophical Problems in Policing (3) **S23/D** PHL 440 Seminar on Law (3) **F20, F21**	PhD Philosophy, University of Virginia, JD University of Tennessee	Three books, 2 with Oxford University Press, and 1 with Routledge on the philosophy of policing
Adrian Erasmus (F)	PHL 486 Philosophy of Science (3) **F22, F23** PHL 489 Phil. of Medicine (3) **S23**	PhD History and Philosophy of Science, Cambridge University	Associate at Durham University's Centre for the Philosophy of Epidemiology, Medicine and Public Health
Torin Alter (F)	PHL 360 Philosophy of Mind (3) PHL 362 Mind, Language and Reality (3) **F20, F22**	PhD Philosophy, University of California, Los Angeles	Books with Oxford University Press on the consciousness and the Philosophy of Mind
Ted Poston (F)	PHL 390 Prob & Decision Theory (3) **F23**	PhD Philosophy, University of Missouri	Director of the McCollough Pre-medical Institute
Richard Richards (F)	PHL 387 Phil, and Evolution (3) **S22** PHL 426 The Science of Ethics (3) **F23** PHL 486 Philosophy of Science (3) **F20** PHL 489 Phi. of Medicine (3) **S21**	PhD Philosophy, Certificate in the Philosophy and History of Science, Johns Hopkins University	

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Current Faculty

1	2	3	4
CURRENT FACULTY NAME (F, P)	***COURSES TAUGHT** including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	**ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK** Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	**OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS** Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)
Ben Kozuch (F)	PHL 422 Neuroethics (3) **S21, S22, F22, S23** PHL 462 Neural Basis of Consciousness (3) **S20, F21, S23**	PhD Philosophy, University of Arizona	
Rekha Nath (F)	PHL 430 Phil. of Oppression (3) **S23** PHL 443 Philosophical Issues in International Law (3) **S20**	PhD Philosophy, University of Melbourne	
Holly Kantin (F)	PHL 423 Medical Ethics (3) **S21, S22, S23** PHL 488 Philosophy of Mental Health (3) **F18**	PhD Philosophy, University of Wisconsin, Madison	
Chase Wrenn (F)	PHL 370 Epistemology (3) **S21**	PhD Philosophy, Washington University	
Mark Pickering (F)	PHL 349 Legal Reasoning (3) **S20** PHL 440 Seminar on Law (3) **F22**	PhD Philosophy, Boston University, JD University of Chicago	
Jenn Gleason (F)	PHL 408 Phil Mental Health (3) **S22, S23**	PhD Philosophy, Ohio State University	Dissertation on Mental Disorders
Philosophy of Medicine/Medical Ethics (search is underway independent of approval of proposed program)	PHL 589 Phil Medicine PHL 523 Medical Ethics	PhD Philosophy	

Additional Faculty (To Be Hired)

1	2	3	4
FACULTY POSITION (F, P)	***COURSES TO BE TAUGHT** including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	**ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK** Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	**OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS** Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)

Current Faculty			
1	**2**	**3**	**4**
CURRENT FACULTY NAME (F, P)	***COURSES TAUGHT** including Term, Course Number, Course Title, & Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G, DU)	**ACADEMIC DEGREES and COURSEWORK** Relevant to Courses Taught, including Institution and Major; List Specific Graduate Coursework, if needed	**OTHER QUALIFICATIONS and COMMENTS** Related to Courses Taught and Modality(ies) (IP, OL, HY, OCIS)

Summary of Faculty Count		
Current Full-Time	12	**Additional Comments (*optional*):**
Current Part-Time		
Additional Full-Time	0	
Additional Part-Time		

Abbreviations: (FT, PT): Full-Time, Part-Time; (D, UN, UT, G, DU): Developmental, Undergraduate Nontransferable, Undergraduate Transferable, Graduate, Dual: High School Dual Enrollment

Course Modality: (IP, OL, HY, OCIS): In-Person, Online, Hybrid, Off-Campus Instructional Site

Courses Taught/To be Taught – For a substantive change prospectus/application, list the courses *to be taught*, not historical teaching assignments.

B. All Proposed Program Personnel

Provide all personnel counts for the proposed program.

Employment Status of Program Personnel		Personnel Information		
		Count from Proposed Program Department	Count from Other Departments	Subtotal of Personnel
Current	Full-Time Faculty	12		12
	Part-Time Faculty			
	Administration	1		1
	Support Staff	1		1
**New To Be Hired	Full-Time Faculty	0		0
	Part-Time Faculty			
	Administration			
	Support Staff			
			Personnel Total	**14**

Note: **Any new funds designated for compensation costs (Faculty (FT/PT), Administration, and/or Support Staff to be Hired) **should be included** in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file**. Current personnel salary/benefits (Faculty (FT/PT), Administration, and/or Support Staff) **should not be included** in the **Business Plan**.

Provide justification that the institution has proposed a sufficient number of faculty (full-time and part-time) for the proposed program to ensure curriculum and program quality, integrity, and review.

In the next few years, we are hoping to hire a Philosopher of Law who has a JD and experience in the practice of law. This hire would be independent of the development of a graduate program but would be expected to contribute to the development and success of the program. The Administrator of the program will be a current faculty member, most likely the chair. We have sufficient faculty for the program, with multiple faculty able to teach required courses. Adrian Erasmus and Richard Richards both teach Philosophy of Medicine (PHL 589) and Philosophy of Science (PHL 586), for the Philosophy, Medicine and Law specialization. Luke Hunt and Mark Pickering can both teach the required courses for the Law, Ethics and Society specialization. Torin Alter, Chase Wrenn and Ben Kozuch can each teach the required courses for the Mind/Brain specialization.

C. Equipment

Will any special equipment be needed specifically for this program?   Yes ☐ No ☒
If *yes*, list the special equipment. Special equipment cost should be included in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.**

D. Facilities

Will any new facilities be required specifically for the program?   Yes ☐ No ☒

If *yes*, list only **new** facilities. New facilities cost should be included in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.**

Will any renovations to any existing infrastructure be required specifically for the program?　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Yes ☐　No ☒

If *yes*, list the renovations. Renovation costs should be included in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.**

E. Assistantships/Fellowships

Will the institution offer any assistantships specifically for this program?　　Yes ☐　No ☒

If *yes*, how many assistantships will be offered?

The expenses associated with any *new* assistantships should be included in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.**

F. Library

Provide a brief summarization (one to two paragraphs) describing the current status of the library collections supporting the proposed program.

The University Libraries' current databases are sufficient for the proposed graduate program. We respond to articles and books, but we can access many papers and articles through PhilPapers, an online database, accessible from any internet connection. What we would be looking for in student Master's theses are mostly analytic skill, writing and originality. It is unlikely that the demands on the library resources would increase dramatically with the development of our Master's program.

Will additional library resources be required to support the program?　　Yes ☐　No ☒

If *yes*, briefly describe how any deficiencies will be remedied, and include the cost in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.**

G. Accreditation Expenses

Will the proposed program require accreditation expenses?　　Yes ☒　No ☐

If *yes*, briefly describe the estimated cost and funding source(s) and include cost in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.**

This new degree program will require SACSCOC approval, which entails the submission of a prospectus to SACSCOC for approval. SACSCOC charges $500 to review a prospectus.

H. Other Costs

Please explain any other costs to be incurred with program implementation, such as marketing or recruitment costs. Be sure to note these in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.**

I. **Revenues for Program Support**

Will the proposed program require budget reallocation?   Yes ☐ No ☒

If *yes*, briefly describe how any deficiencies will be remedied and include
the revenue in the **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.**

Will the proposed program require external funding (*e.g.*, Perkins,   Yes ☐ No ☒
Foundation, Federal Grants, Sponsored Research, etc.)?

If *yes*, list the sources of external funding and include the revenue in the
New Academic Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.

Please describe how you calculated the tuition revenue that appears in the **New Academic
Degree Program Business Plan Excel file.** Specifically, did you calculate using cost per credit
hour or per term? Did you factor in differences between resident and non-resident tuition rates?

We assumed that half of the tuition revenue would come from resident students and half from
non-residents students. This will understate the revenue if our graduate student population
reflects the current surplus of non-resident students over resident students in the
undergraduate population.

IV. **Employment Outcomes and Program Demand (Industry Need)**

A. **Standard Occupational Code System**

Using the federal Standard Occupational Code (SOC) System, indicate the top three
occupational codes related to post-graduation employment from the program. A full list
of SOCs can be found at https://www.onetcodeconnector.org/find/family/title#17.

A list of Alabama's *In-Demand Occupations* is available at
https://www.ache.edu/index.php/policy-guidance/.

List the SOC and description.

SOC 1 (Required) - 23-0000 Legal Occupations
SOC 2 (Required) – 29-000 Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations
SOC 3 (Required) – 19-000 Physical and Social Sciences Occupations

Briefly describe how the program fulfills a specific industry or employment need for the
State of Alabama. As appropriate, discuss alignment with Alabama's Statewide or Regional
Lists of In-Demand Occupations (https://www.ache.edu/index.php/policy-guidance/) or with
emerging industries as identified by Innovate Alabama or the Economic Development
Partnership of Alabama (EDPA).

The skills and knowledge gained from the study of philosophy are general and applicable to
many vocations that rely on critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, argument
building, analysis, information organization, and more. Some of those receiving a graduate
degree in philosophy end up teaching at the university level. But there are many non-
academic careers for those with a degree in Philosophy. *The American Philosophical*

Association has identified some of the broad domains in which philosophy graduates find careers: business, computers, technology, consulting, government, insurance, marketing, media, law, medicine, publishing, real estate, religious ministry, sales, and technical writing.[1]

B. Employment Preparation

Describe how the proposed program prepares graduates to seek employment in the occupations (SOC codes) identified. Be specific in how the proposed program is related to the SOC codes listed above.

The value of a philosophical education extends beyond the legal, medical and social science related professions represented by these three codes. Ethical questions, for instance, arise all the time in business, government, and life in general, as do questions about how we conceptualize things, what we know and how we know it.

The program will prepare graduates for their application to Law School, Medical School, and Ph.D. programs. Philosophy majors, along with economics majors, have tended to get the highest average scores on the LSAT, and have some of the highest acceptance rates.[2] Humanities majors in general, and Philosophy majors in particular have tended toward some of the highest acceptance rates into medical school.[3] And while the data have not become widely available, there is also some reason to believe that the study of philosophy helps on the Critical Analysis and Reasoning section of the MCAT.[4] More generally, both law and medicine benefit from the analytic abilities, critical thinking and written communication skills developed and polished in philosophy classes, as recognized by the American Medical Association.[5] Moreover, philosophy majors do extremely well on the GRE, scoring the highest overall, the highest on the Verbal and Analytic Writing sections, and the highest of all the humanities majors on the quantitative section.[6] While the precise causal relationship between the disciplinary study and test score cannot be conclusively established, the fact that philosophy classes focus on analytic skills, critical thinking and written communication suggests that the study of philosophy contributes positively to the testing and application success to any postgraduate studies that value these things.

This program will also prepare graduates in the related professions not just through the development of the skills that are useful to testing and admissions, but to the real-life problems and questions they might encounter, in particular the conceptual foundations, theoretical frameworks, and theories of evidence in law and medicine, as well as the ethical and political issues that are ubiquitous in these professions, as well as in business, politics and life in general.

[1] https://www.apaonline.org/page/nonacademic

[2] https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/data_on_profession/Philosophy_LSAT_Stats_2023.pdf.

[3] https://mededits.com/medical-school-admissions/statistics/acceptance-rates/, https://www.fredonia.edu/sites/default/files/section/academics/college-liberal-arts-sciences/philosophy/Philosophy%20Gets%20you%20into%20Med%20School.pdf

[4] https://mcatmastery.net/mcat/success-stories/nontrad-philosophy-major-to-99th-percentile-score/

[5] https://www.ama-assn.org/medical-students/preparing-medical-school/15-skills-medical-schools-expect-students-day-one

[6] https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.apaonline.org/resource/resmgr/data_on_profession/Philosophy_GRE_Stats_2023.pdf

C. Professional Licensure/Certification

Please explain if professional licensure or industry certification is required for graduates of the proposed program to gain entry-level employment in the occupations selected. Be sure to note which organization(s) grants licensure or certification.

N/A

D. Additional Education/Training

Please explain whether further education/training is required for graduates of the proposed program to gain entry-level employment in the occupations selected.

Practice in the legal or medical professions requires a degree from a law or medical school respectively. This program is intended in part to prepare students for this post-graduate education. But there are many professions that would find the training in the program useful for the general skills and knowledge it provides, from business, to government, publishing, marketing, real estate and more. Those who work in business for instance, might benefit from an education in ethics. And those who work in government might benefit from an understanding of the debates in medical epistemology (about "evidence based medicine," p-hacking and consensus conferences, for instance), or theories of legal justification and interpretation. In these professions, further education or training might not be necessary beyond the M.A. proposed here.

V. Curriculum Information for Proposed Degree Program

A. Program Completion Requirements: Enter the credit hour value for all applicable components (enter N/A if not applicable).

Curriculum Overview of Proposed Program	
Credit hours required in **general education**	N/A
Credit hours required in **program courses**	6
Credit hours in **program electives/concentrations/tracks**	9
Credit hours in **free electives**	9-15
Credit hours in **required research/thesis**	0-6
Total Credit Hours Required for Completion	**30**

Note: The above credit hours **MUST** match the credit hours in the *Curriculum Components of Proposed Program* table in Section V.G.

B. Maximum number of credits that can be transferred in from another institution and applied to the program: 12 credit hours

C. Intended program duration in semesters for full-time students: 4 semesters

Intended program duration in semesters for part-time students: Part-time students will be able to complete the program in approximately 5-10 semesters depending on the number of credit hours the student takes per semester.

D. Does the program require students to demonstrate industry-validated skills, specifically through an embedded industry-recognized certification, structured [work-based learning](#) with an employer partner, or alignment with nationally recognized industry standards? **Yes ☐ No ☒**

If yes, explain how these components fit with the required coursework.

E. Does the program include any concentrations? **Yes ☒ No ☐**

If yes, provide an overview and identify these courses in the *Electives/Concentrations/Tracks* section in the Curriculum Components of Proposed Program Table in Section V.G.

The proposed Philosophy (M.A.) program will have three concentrations: *Philosophy, Medicine and Ethics*; *Law, Ethics and Society*, and *Mind and Brain.* These concentrations will build upon our current undergraduate (B.A.) specializations in Philosophy and Medicine, Jurisprudence, and Mind and Brain. These concentrations will prepare students for Medical school, Law school and medical and law related professions.

F. Please provide all course information as indicated in the following table. Indicate new courses with "Y" in the associated column. If the course includes a required work-based learning component, such as an internship or practicum course, please indicate with a "Y" in the WBL column.

Program Name:	Philosophy			
Program Level:	Masters			
Curriculum Components of Proposed Program				
Course Number	**Course Title**	**Credit Hours**	**New? (Y)**	**WBL? (Y)**
General Education Courses *(Undergraduate Only)*				
Program Courses				
PHL 5XXX	Proseminar	3	Y	
PHL 5XX	Capstone	3	Y	
	Total Program Hours	6		
Program Electives/Concentrations/Tracks				
Philosophy, Medicine and Ethics Concentration				
PHL 589	Philosophy of Medicine	3		
PHL 523	Advanced Seminar in Medical Ethics	3		
Concentration Specific Electives. (select one)				
PHL 586	Philosophy of Science	3		
PHL 522	Neuroethics	3		
PHL 587	Philosophy and Evolution	3		
PHL 588	Philosophy of Mental Health	3		
	Total Hours	9		
Law, Ethics, and Society Concentration				
PHL 5XX	Nature and Elements of Law	3	Y	
PHL 544	Constitutionalism and Democracy	3		

Concentration Specific Electives. (select one)				
PHL 541	Law and Morality	3		
PHL 542	Ticking Time Bombs: Phil. Nat. Sec.	3		
PHL 543	Phil. Issues in International Law	3		
PHL 546	Leg. and Phil. Prob. in Policing	3		
	Total Hours	9		
Mind and Brain Concentration				
PHL 562	Neural Basis of Consciousness	3		
PHL 5XX	Mind, Language and Reality	3		
Concentration Specific Electives. (select one)				
PHL 522	Neuroethics	3		
PHL 560	Philosophy of Mind	3		
PHL 566	Metaphysics	3		
PHL 586	Philosophy of Science	3		
	Total Hours	9		
Common Electives				
PHL 522	Neuroethics	3		
PHL 523	Advanced Seminar in Medical Ethics	3		
PHL 526	The Science of Ethics	3		
PHL 530	Philosophy of Oppression	3		
PHL 540	Seminar on Law	3		
PHL 541	Law and Morality	3		
PHL 542	T. Time Bombs: Phil. Nat. Sec.	3		
PHL 543	Phil Issues in International Law	3		
PHL 544	Constitut. and Democracy	3	Y	
PHL 5XX	Nature and Elements of Law	3	Y	
PHL 548	Philosophy of Law	3		
PHL 546	Leg. and Phil. Prob. in Polic.	3		
PHL 560	Philosophy of Mind	3		
PHL 562	Neural Basis of Consciousness	3		
PHL 566	Metaphysics	3		
PHL 586	Philosophy of Science	3		
PHL 587	Philosophy and Evolution	3		
PHL 588	Philosophy of Mental Health	3		
	Total Hours Program Electives/Concentrations	18-24		
Research/Thesis				
PHL 5XX	Thesis	0-6		
	*Total Credit Hours Required for Completion	**30**		

*Note: The total credit hours should equal the total credit hours in the Curriculum Overview table (V.B, p. 9).

The courses indicated above as new courses (with a Y in the "New?" column) are those that we do not currently offer as upper-level courses. The rest are currently offered to our undergraduates but would require additional requirements to qualify at the graduate level.

New Academic Degree Program Summary/Business Plan

Use the Excel form from ACHE's Academic Program webpage located at https://www.ache.edu/index.php/forms/, named **New Academic Degree Program Business Plan**, to complete the New Academic Program Degree Proposal.

Instructions and definitions are provided in the Excel file. **The New Academic Degree Program Business Plan should be uploaded as an Excel file (.xlsx) in the Academic Program Review (APR) Portal.**

NEW ACADEMIC DEGREE PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUMMARY

University of Alabama

Philosophy   Select Level: Master's

ESTIMATED *NEW* EXPENSES TO IMPLEMENT PROPOSED PROGRAM

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	TOTAL
FACULTY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
STAFF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EQUIPMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FACILITIES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LIBRARY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ASSISTANTSHIPS								0
OTHER	500							500
TOTAL	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	500

NEW REVENUES AVAILABLE FOR PROGRAM SUPPORT

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	TOTAL
REALLOCATIONS								0
EXTRAMURAL								0
TUITION	108500	217000	217000	238700	260400	271250	282100	1594950
TOTAL	108500	217000	217000	238700	260400	271250	282100	1594950

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Note: "New Enrollment Headcount" is defined as unduplicated counts across years.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	AVERAGE
FULL-TIME HEADCOUNT	Year 1 - No data reporting required	10	10	12	12	13	14	11.83333333
PART-TIME HEADCOUNT	Year 1 - No data reporting required	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL HEADCOUNT	Year 1 - No data reporting required	10	10	12	12	13	14	11.83333333
NEW ENROLLMENT HEADCOUNT	Year 1 - No data reporting required	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

DEGREE COMPLETION PROJECTIONS

Note: Do not count Lead "0"s and Lead 0 years in computing the average annual degree completions.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	AVERAGE
DEGREE COMPLETION PROJECTIONS	Year 1 - No data reporting required	4	4	4	5	6	6	4

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

<u>**Resolution**</u>

Granting Initial Approval of and Permission to Submit to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) a Proposal for a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Philosophy (CIP Code 38.0101) in the Department of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees approved the Notification of Intent to Submit a Proposal (NISP) for the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Philosophy on February 2, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Philosophy currently offers a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in Philosophy with a collection of courses in philosophical issues related to the conception, theories and practices of medicine, law, and the study of the mind and brain; and

WHEREAS, continued postgraduate study in these areas will help prepare students for study in Medical School, Law School, and Ph.D., programs in philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Philosophy will provide philosophical training in these areas to prepare students for professional practice in medical and law related professions; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Master of Arts (M.A.) in Philosophy will be the only graduate level philosophy program in the state of Alabama; and

WHEREAS, this program builds on the widely recognized skills and expertise of the current faculty in the Department of Philosophy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT BE RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama that it grants initial approval of and permission to submit to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) a Proposal for a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Philosophy (CIP code 38.0101) in the Department of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences at The University of Alabama.

February 21, 2024

Chancellor Finis E. St. John IV
The University of Alabama System
500 University Boulevard East
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

Dear Chancellor St. John:

I am pleased to endorse the recommendation from Executive Vice President and Provost James Dalton and Deans Susan Carvalho of the Graduate School and Joseph Messina of the College of Arts and Sciences in recommending for approval the attached proposal for a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Philosophy. This program will address issues relevant to various disciplines through the philosophical study of problems and questions in law, medicine, medical ethics, and more. The proposed Philosophy (M.A.) will include concentrations in *Philosophy, Medicine and Ethics, Law, Ethics and Society,* and *Mind and Brain.*

If you approve of this proposal, I would appreciate you forwarding this request to the Board of Trustees for their approval.

Sincerely,

Stuart R. Bell
President

Enclosures

c: Executive Vice President and Provost James Dalton
      Dean Susan Carvalho
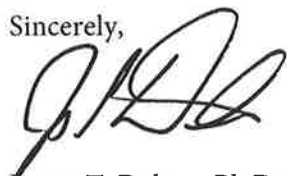   Dean Joseph Messina

February 21, 2024

President Stuart R. Bell
The University of Alabama
203 Rose Administration Building
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Dear President Bell:

I join Deans Susan Carvalho of the Graduate School and Joseph Messina of the College of Arts and Sciences in recommending for approval the attached proposal for a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Philosophy. This program will address issues relevant to various disciplines through the philosophical study of problems and questions in law, medicine, medical ethics, and more. The proposed Philosophy (M.A.) will include concentrations in *Philosophy, Medicine and Ethics; Law, Ethics and Society;* and *Mind and Brain.*

If you approve of this proposal, I would appreciate you forwarding this request to the Chancellor at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

James T. Dalton, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President and Provost

Enclosures

c: Dean Susan Carvalho
     Dean Joseph Messina

February 20, 2024

Provost James Dalton
The University of Alabama
Office for Academic Affairs
254 Rose Administration Building
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Dear Provost Dalton:

I join Dean Joesph Messina in recommending the approval of the attached Proposal for a M.A. Degree in Philosophy (CIP: 38.0101) offered through the College of Arts and Sciences. This proposed graduate degree program meets specific needs, and the proposed program will attract new graduate enrollments.

The proposal was recommended for approval by the Graduate Council of The University of Alabama at its meeting on November 1, 2023. We ask for timely handling of this item so that it may be considered at the April 2024 Board of Trustees meeting before being submitted to ACHE and the Alabama Council of Graduate Deans for comment by other institutions in the State.

If you approve of this proposal, please forward this request to President Bell at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Dr. Susan Carvalho
Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

cc.:   Dr. Andre Denham, Associate Dean, Graduate School

May 8, 2023

Dr. Jim Dalton
Executive vice President and Provost Office of Academic Affairs
Box 870114
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Dear Dr. Dalton:

As Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, I am very pleased to provide this letter in support of a new Master's program in the Department of Philosophy. I believe this program will enhance the education mission of The University of Alabama, support the needs and interests of our students, and provide a benefit to the state as a whole.

The action has been carefully considered and recommended by the chair and faculty of the department, as is made evident by the materials included in this proposal. It has my strong support as well.

The Department of Philosophy currently offers a BA degree in Philosophy with specializations in Jurisprudence, Mind- Brain, and Philosophy and Medicine.

Currently, there is no Master's program in Philosophy in the state of Alabama. Alabama students interested in graduate level studies leave the state to pursue their studies, and often do not return. The state of Alabama would benefit from this program's graduates, as they would serve the state as employees, educators, and experts in the field.

This new Master's program will offer the only graduate degree in Philosophy in the University of Alabama System and the state of Alabama. It will serve our students, our communities, and the state, while it also will enhance the prestige and research capacities of the department and college. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Joseph P. Messina, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor

American Studies | Anthropology | Art and Art History | Biological Sciences | Chemistry and Biochemistry | Communicative Disorders
Criminology and Criminal Justice | English | Gender and Race Studies | Geography Geological Sciences | History | Mathematics
Modern Languages and Classics | Museums | Music | New College | Philosophy | Physics and Astronomy | Political Sciences |
Psychology | Religious Studies | Theatre and Dance

Philosophy Masters Program

John Higginbotham <jhigginb@ua.edu>
Thu 9/14/2023 10:23 AM
To:Adrian Erasmus <aderasmus@ua.edu>

Dear Adrian

I write in strong support of your new specialized Masters program concerning the Philosophy of Medicine and Medical Ethics. This program should allow its students to explore issues in theory, research, and practice within the field of health sciences. As I have learned, this will contribute to the topics of epistemology, metaphysics, and medical ethics or bioethics. As has been explained to me, the philosophy of medicine serves as a foundation for many debates within bioethics; it analyzes fundamental components of the practice of medicine that frequently arise in bioethics such as concepts of disease; it has made important contributions to the general philosophy of science, and to understandings of explanation, causation, and experimentation as well as debates over applications of scientific knowledge. However from my vantage point, the philosophy of medicine has contributed to discussions on methods and goals within both health research and practice in the medical and health sciences. I believe that this training you propose will prepare students for medical school, for the practice of medicine and for moving all of health and health care forward.

I would welcome an opportunity to help integrate your program with our work both in health and health care research and in training medical students, family medicine residents, and practicing physicians.

Regards,

John C. Higginbotham, PhD, MPH,
Professor, The University of Alabama, College of Community Health Sciences/The University of Alabama School of Medicine
Founding Director, The Institute for Rural Health Research and The National Center on Forensics

February 15, 2024

Dear Professor Richards:

I write in support of the proposal for a M.A. concentration in Law, Ethics, and Society at the University of Alabama. Although I am not familiar with the specific details of this proposal, I can speak to the need for the type of training for legal academics and for philosophers. I can also speak personally to how such varied training has benefitted me as a scholar, since my graduate education was in a program that seems to match the parameters of the proposed concentration.

First, an MA concentration in Law, Ethics, and Society would be tremendously valuable for training legal academics. In the past 10 years, there has been a burgeoning interest in the topic of policing among legal scholars interested in criminal law. Many of the scholars participating in this work have policy experience, for example as prosecutors or as attorneys for the Department of Justice. Scholarship in this field very often raises deep philosophical issues, such as the nature of legal authority or the ways that coercion could be justified or legitimated. Yet, in my experience, many of the legal scholars who raise these profound questions do not have the analytic tools to answer them (or, more charitably, to see how these questions connect with longstanding debates about justice and the state). The kind of training would be provided under the proposed concentration would be excellent at filling this gap, especially if it built on the existing expertise among your department. I could easily see such a concentration making Alabama Philosophy a destination for aspiring legal scholars who seek to develop analytic tools for pursuing profound questions related to criminal law and policing. Indeed, I can think of at least three people who are on or approaching the legal academic job market to whom I would recommend such a program if it existed.

Second, such an MA concentration would be valuable for philosophers. Many subfields within the ambit of "value theory" (in particular, political philosophy and normative ethics) involve close discussion of political institutions. In these subfields, specialized training on how political institutions function would greatly increase the quality of the discourse. A good example of such a subfield is the study of policing. For many years, the philosophical discussion of policing was mainly a topic in applied ethics. In recent years, several scholars (including Luke Hunt in your department) have sought to analyze problems of policing as a topic in political philosophy. This project requires attention to fine-grained details about the regimes for regulating police. In the United States, at least, many of the rules governing police are established through the Fourth Amendment to the Federal Constitution. Scholars (such as Hunt) who understand how the law governing police works are in much better

position to analyze the fundamental normative issues at play, to appreciate why pathologies are entrenched, and to understand the space for reform.

Third, I can say that my interdisciplinary training in law and philosophy has been extremely valuable for my scholarship. I obtained my Ph.D. from the Jurisprudence and Social Policy program at U.C. Berkeley, an interdisciplinary program that provides students with exposure to a variety of disciplinary perspectives in a way that (I imagine) would parallel the proposed MA program. Every philosophical or theoretical paper that I have written has been informed by the multidisciplinary environment that I encountered at JSP. I was trained to understand the importance and limits of legal rules in assessing how institutions function. I was also trained to imagine how a single project could be conceptualized in a variety of ways (for example, empirically, normatively, or doctrinally). This training has made me a better legal theorist by demanding my sensitivity law in action.

Sincerely,

Stephen Galoob
Professor of Law

September 14, 2023

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to convey my support for Department of Philosophy in their efforts to start a graduate program at the University of Alabama. I am currently an Associate Professor in the Social Psychology Concentration of the Department of Psychology, and in my 11 years at UA I have consistently felt that my own work has benefited from the work of philosophers. I expect that, if the Department of Philosophy is successful in its efforts, their graduate program and ours would find many opportunities for collaboration and interdisciplinary growth.

Broadly, an understanding of the philosophy of science is critical to doing thoughtful and informed psychological research. For instance, philosophers have identified limitations of the scientific method – including the idea that successful prediction don't always correspond to correct theories, or that there are often unacknowledged assumptions underlying study design – that must be recognized if psychologists are to draw justifiable conclusions based on their data. Moreover, feminist philosophers have raised significant challenges to the idea of scientific objectivity, pushing psychological scientists (among others) to grapple with ways that our knowledge may reflect a limited range of perspectives and approaches.

At a more specific level, my own thinking and research has been enriched by professional relationships with members of the Department of Philosophy. Over the years I have had countless conversations with faculty – including Benjamin Kozuch, Torin Alter, Seth Bordner, Rekha Nath, and Adam Arico – that have allowed me to approach my own work with a richer understanding of topics like consciousness, neuroscience, bias, and epistemology. Many of these people have attended my summer reading group, aimed primarily at expanding the horizons of psychology graduate students and faculty, usually in philosophical directions.

Overall, I believe that the Department of Psychology would benefit greatly from the addition of a graduate program in Philosophy. I am hopeful that such a development could lead to productive collaborations, pedagogical opportunities, and stronger interdisciplinarity within the College of Arts and Sciences.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Alexa Tullett, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Psychology
University of Alabama

Robert E. McKinney, Jr., Ph.D., LICSW-S
850 Peter Bryce Boulevard
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Re: Philosophy & Medicine

Adrian Erasmus
Department of Philosophy
McCollough Institute for Pre-Medical Scholars
University of Alabama

2023-09-14

Dr. Erasmus,

 I am writing you and the Department of Philosophy at The University of Alabama to offer
my unequivocal support of your efforts to launch a specialized master's degree in Philosophy
of Medicine and Medical Ethics. It is my opinion that a program of this type can set future
physicians on a path toward being an empathetic, compassionate, and ethical healthcare
provider in a way the few, if any, other degree programs can.

The practice of medicine requires more than the knowledge of the biomechanical aspects of
human existence – much more. In fact, many years of research on health and healthcare
suggest that all of the elements that make up what we would consider to be direct medical
care – physicians, nurses, receptionists, lab technicians, etc. – only serve to mitigate
approximately 20 to 30 percent of the changeable factors that lead to premature death. The
remaining 70 to 80 percent may be accounted for by what have become known as the social
determinants of health (SDOH). Those factors are the conditions in which people are born,
live, work, play, and age. Factors like poverty, discrimination, sexism, interpersonal violence,
and inequity have generally a more significant effect on health and mental health then
internal, organic processes do. A background in the humanities, and specifically philosophy,
can equip future physicians with the intellectual skills to consider the ethical implications of
policy decisions that directly influence many of these aspects of American life.

Further, a specific focus on medical ethics will prepare physicians to work with patients who
are facing issues that present thorny ethical questions. Our public discourse is flooded with
information and misinformation about abortion and reproductive rights, gender and gender
identity, sexual orientation, end-of-life decisions, and others. These complex and important
matters are often made in a complicated tangle of social, familial, and legal pressures that
seem disconnected from the human factors. Although training in medical ethics cannot be
said to give anyone definitive answers to complicated questions in these areas, it can gird

them with a strong foundation to have those critical conversations and offer medical advice that is based in sound ethical theory and with a caring, compassionate approach.

Finally, the development of a graduate program like this on our campus might afford future interprofessional learning opportunities for a variety of learners. At the College of Community Health Sciences, we have clinical learners in our building from medicine (medical students and residents), social work, pharmacy, psychology, nursing, and even law. This has resulted in a robust clinical learning environment that provides trainees from myriad disciplines with insight into perspectives beyond those of their own. This prepares them for work with colleagues who will have professional goals that are different than their own, but that may still be toward the common best interests of shared patients. The possibility of adding learners from a medical ethics program is an exciting idea that can only enhance the training experiences that we already offer.

In sum, it is my opinion that a degree program like the one that you and your colleagues are currently proposing will be a tremendous benefit to our shared trainees across campus and to the residents of our community for whom we provide care. I wholeheartedly support this project and look forward to working with the faculty and students associated with it.

I remain,

Bob McKinney, Ph.D., LICSW-S, PIP, C-IAYT
Associate Professor of Behavioral Medicine
Director, University Medical Center Department of Social Services
Pronouns: he/his/him

College of Community Health Sciences
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Health and
Department of Family, Internal, & Rural Medicine

The University of Alabama
850 Peter Bryce Boulevard
Box 870326
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
Phone 205-348-7181 | Fax 205-348-4915
rmckinney@ua.edu | http://cchs.ua.edu

Board Rule 502
New Program Proposal Supplement

In addition to the items ACHE has requested for program proposals, please include the following additional items when developing and submitting academic program proposals to the System Office and the Board of Trustees for approval.

Institution:

- UA

Program Identification

Program Name:	Philosophy
Degree Nomenclature:	M.A.
Date of NPP Submission:	NISP 2/2/2024

Code

2-digit CIP Code:	38 PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES
4-digit CIP Code:	38 PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES ~ 38.01 Philosophy
6-digit CIP Code:	38 PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES ~ 38.01 Philosophy ~ 38.0101 Philosophy

4. Executive Summary (not to exceed two pages)

Over the last decade, the Department of Philosophy has been developing its three specialized concentrations within the existing Philosophy (B.A.) program in Philosophy and Medicine, Jurisprudence, Mind and Brain, through faculty hires and curriculum development. The purpose of these concentrations is to provide our students with an education that will help them succeed in their post-graduate studies, particularly in Law and Medical school, and give them the resources to address philosophical questions later in their professional lives. The proposed Philosophy (M.A.) will build on

these specializations with three concentrations: Philosophy, Medicine and Ethics; Law, Ethics and Society; and Mind and Brain.

The value of the Philosophy (M.A.) with three concentrations will be found first in the preparation it provides students who will be advancing to Medical or Law school. Most obviously it will better situate them for application to these schools, by distinguishing them from students who have just a typical undergraduate education. It will also prepare them for the many philosophical issues they will encounter in Medical or Law school, and later in the medical and legal professions. Third, this program will be the first graduate program of any kind in Philosophy in the state of Alabama, and the proposed program can provide the opportunity for the pursuit of graduate work in Philosophy for those students in the state who would like to continue their studies after their undergraduate education. Fourth, it would contribute to the University's missions of providing an excellent education to students and advancing research.

Finally, these programs will provide value at a broader societal level, by preparing citizens to better address important philosophical questions and problems. Relative to Medicine, for instance, there are philosophical questions about the nature and quality of evidence for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. Evidence-based medicine advocates a hierarchy that prioritizes randomized control trials over observational trials, expert judgment, and causal reasoning. Physicians and medical professionals must understand the strengths and weaknesses of each. There are other philosophical questions about public health policy, as we have seen in the recent debates about the COVID shutdowns and vaccine mandates. Ethical questions have long been debated in medicine, about death and dying, reproduction, mental health, and more. In the law, we have seen recent philosophical debates about the nature and role of policing, as well as longstanding debates about the nature and functions of law, constitutionalism, and morality and the law. And in the professions related to psychology and neuroscience, there have been debates about the nature of mind and consciousness, and their relation to the brain and its processes. Currently, there are philosophical concerns about the nature, and proper roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The graduates of the proposed Philosophy (M.A.) program will be better prepared to address these philosophical questions and more, by learning about the many philosophical answers to these questions, and by learning methods of critical analysis to better explore possible stances.

This will be a 30-hour graduate program, with a thesis option, where students will begin in the first year with an introductory course to the

program, the Proseminar, and turn to a narrow focus on foundational courses, the second year will be an exploration into broader but still related topics, and a capstone course where students will lead discussions, present their research, and engage in critical discussions with fellow graduate students.

5. Steps taken to determine if other UA System institutions might be interested in collaborating in the program.

There is no current plan to collaborate with other UA System institutions. We are open to conversations on future prospects that would benefit both institutions.

6. Summary of other campus comments, internal to the UA System or external (if any), regarding your plans for developing this program. Please include substantive feedback from the pre-proposal process.

None of the chairs of the philosophy departments contacted in the state expressed reservations about our proposed graduate program (M.A.) in Philosophy. This is unsurprising since there are no other graduate programs in Philosophy in the state of Alabama. The chair of the Philosophy Department at UAB, David Chan, indicated that they were considering a graduate program in Medical Ethics, but had not formally proposed one. He, along with Dr. Jones at UAH and Dr. Watkins at Auburn University, have expressed tentative support for collaboration with the UA Philosophy Department in providing graduate education opportunities in Philosophy.

7. Describe the process that will be used by your institution for routine internal and/or external program review.

All departments at The University of Alabama undergo academic program review (APR) approximately every eight years. The APR process includes a departmental self-study, an on-site visit by a review team with internal and external members, and a department-created strategic action plan informed by the review team's recommendations.

8. Describe the process that will be used in assessing program outcomes (to include student learning outcomes).

All academic programs are required to submit annual assessment reports that includes student learning outcomes, measures to collect data, analysis of data, and plans for the use of data for continuous improvement.

Students completing the Philosophy (M.A.) program will be able to:

1. Evaluate competing conceptions about fundamental things and processes, such as health and disease, the nature of law and morality, and the mind and brain.

2. Evaluate the competing theoretical frameworks that govern our practices and inquiries, such as what we see in medicine, the law, and brain sciences.

3. Analyze and compare the different kinds of evidence employed to support empirical and theoretical claims, such as what we see in medical diagnoses and claims about effectiveness, legal claims and judgments, scientific claims, and hypotheses about mental and brain processes.

4. Analyze the ethical problems confronting us in our professional practices.

9. Other pertinent information, if any.