

The Practical Value of Philosophy:

- **U.S. News & World Report (2020)** [“What Can You Do with a Philosophy Degree”](#) and (2024) [“What Can You Do with a Philosophy Degree”](#)

“Philosophy majors tend to outperform others on standardized tests such as the GRE, LSAT, and GMAT, according to score data released by testing agencies. A Wall Street Journal analysis of the long-term earning potential of people with various college majors revealed that philosophy majors tend to get raises and promotions more quickly than individuals with other majors, and a result of this rapid career progression is that philosophy majors' mid-career earnings are usually double the size of their starting salaries.”

“In addition, a statistical analysis conducted by FiveThirtyEight analytics company in 2015 revealed that, among bachelor's degree recipients with just a college degree, philosophy majors had the fourth-highest median annual salary – \$81,200 – with earnings that eclipsed that of majors that are often presumed to be more useful, such as business.”

- **Forbes (2017)** [“A Case for Majoring in Philosophy”](#)

“The surprisingly robust ROI [return on investment] for philosophy majors can be traced to its intellectual rigor. Philosophers are taught to seek out the pressure points in arguments and to reason for themselves. They dive into highly technical conversations, construct their own positions and arguments, and analyze relevant problems from multiple perspectives.”

“Beyond finances, the study of philosophy can also help students learn for themselves how they define the good life and how to go about living it.”

- **Times Higher Education (2019)** [“What Can You Do With A Philosophy Degree?”](#)

“The skills learned in a philosophy degree include clear and analytical thinking, persuasive writing and speaking, innovative questioning, and effective reasoning.”

These skills are highly transferable to a range of careers, such as teaching, PR, communications, publishing, HR, advertising, and many more.”

- **New York Times (2018)** [“A Wall Street Giant Makes a \\$75 Million Bet on Academic Philosophy”](#)

“Philosophy ... ‘has made a huge difference both to my life outside business, in terms of adding a great degree of richness and knowledge, and to the actual decisions I've made in investing.’”

- **Entrepreneur Magazine (2017)** [“5 Reasons Why Philosophy Majors Make Great Entrepreneurs”](#)

“When accomplished entrepreneurs like Reid Hoffman, Peter Thiel and Carly Fiorina credit their philosophy background for their success, you have to wonder if their on to something”

- **Harvard Business Review (2014)** [“How Philosophy Makes You A Better Leader”](#)

“Philosophical self-reflection is essential at inflection points in one’s career, when a leader faces a serious challenge, dilemma, or crisis. How can leaders benefit from this kind of self-reflection without necessarily entering into a formal engagement with a philosophical counselor? They first need to pause and contemplate their core values.”

- **Washington Post (2017)** [“For Philosophy Majors The Question After Graduation Is What Next?”](#)

“Supreme Court Justice Stephen G. Breyer majored in philosophy at Stanford University. So did Carly Fiorina before she became chief executive of Hewlett-Packard. As chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., Sheila Bair leaned on her philosophy degree from the University of Kansas to make crucial decisions during the financial crisis. NBC journalist Katy Tur said her background in philosophy helped her formulate probing questions of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump during the 2016 campaign.”

- **FiveThirtyEight (2015)** [“Philosophers Don’t Get Much Respect, but Their Earnings Don’t Suck”](#)

“But philosophy majors also have some of the highest scores in the LSAT and GMAT — the required tests for entry to law and business school respectively, according to figures from the Educational Testing Service (ETS). And when it comes to earnings for people who only have undergraduate degrees, philosophy majors have the fourth-highest median earnings, \$81,200 per year, out-ranking business and chemistry majors, according to the ETS. Bar none, philosophy majors have the highest salary growth trajectory from entry to mid-career.”

- **Salon (2013)** [“Be Employable, Study Philosophy”](#)

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

- **CNBC (2018)** [Mark Cuban says studying philosophy may soon be worth more than computer science – here’s why](#)

“‘I’m going to make a prediction,’ Cuban told AOL in 2017. In 10 years, a liberal arts degree in philosophy will be worth more than a traditional programming degree.’ ... He views previously lucrative jobs in industries like accounting and computer programming as subject to the powers of automation. To remain competitive, Cuban advises ditching degrees that teach specific skills or professions and opting for degrees that teach you to think in a big picture way, like philosophy.

Are You Considering Graduate School in Law, Business, Medicine or Any Other Field? Philosophy Majors Excel on All Standardized Tests!

A philosophy major provides excellent training for graduate studies in law, business, medicine and other fields. Statistics indicate that philosophy majors perform very well on standardized tests for many kinds of post-graduate study.

- The GRE: [Philosophy majors do better on the GRE than any other college major.](#)

"When students are compared by major on how far above average they do on the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), a standardized test used in many disciplines to assess applicants to graduate programs, philosophy majors come out on top, according to a new look at test score data over the past few years." (Daily Nous).

- GMAT (business school entry exam; typically MBAs): [Philosophy majors are fourth on GMAT exam scores](#), which is ahead of all business and professional majors. Philosophy ranks behind only physics, mathematics, and engineering majors.

Philosophy Degree and Lifetime Earnings

[A philosophy degree can add to your lifetime earnings compared to other humanities degrees!](#)

THE EXTRA EARNINGS THAT GRADUATES IN HUMANITIES MAJORS CAN EXPECT OVER THEIR LIFETIMES

Major	Early Career Salary	Mid Career Salary	Lifetime Earnings Gain
Art	\$36,100	\$57,100	\$315,500
Drama	\$35,600	\$56,300	\$302,400
English	\$38,700	\$65,200	\$444,700
French	\$40,900	\$66,700	\$470,900
History	\$39,700	\$71,000	\$537,800
Philosophy	\$41,700	\$78,300	\$658,900

From "Surprise: Humanities Degrees Provide Great Return on Investment" by Jeffrey Dorfman at Forbes.com, November 20, 2014, based on data from Payscale.com.



College of Humanities
and Social Sciences

