



# CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

## Philosophy

### Sarah Barr '09

#### Philosophy



**Q: How did you decide to major in philosophy?**

A: I came to Connecticut College to be an English major, but I took a philosophy class as a freshman and fell in love with it. With philosophy, I can extend my critical thinking in ways I never imagined. It forced me to think about things so differently. That's a quality I would like to have for the rest of my life.

**Q: What were your favorite classes?**

A: "Philosophy of Law" reinforced my desire to go to law school one day. I also loved "Existentialism" so much so that I wrote a thesis based on it, on the heavy burden of freedom of choice.

**Q: What did you like most about the major?**

A: I enjoyed the interdisciplinary aspect of the major, which helped us link so many other fields to what we talked about in class. What is great about philosophy is that it relates to everything. Everyone, whether they know it or not, takes part in this great philosophical endeavor. It was an integral part of my personal growth at Connecticut College. It opened my eyes to a world I didn't know was there.

**Q: Did you study abroad?**

A: I chose to spend a semester abroad studying in Greece, where everything in philosophy began.

### Overview

For many years, the Connecticut College philosophy department was home to one of America's preeminent philosophers, Susanne Langer. Today, the department is known for its breadth of course offerings, which cover the history of philosophy from ancient times through contemporary philosophy, as well as both the continental and analytic traditions in philosophy. You will also have interdisciplinary courses that cut across boundaries into the arts, biology, environmental studies, neuroscience and more. As a philosophy major, you will develop the intellectual skills to tackle the most daunting and profound questions. You will learn to think and write clearly, deeply, abstractly, methodically and critically. Our majors have gone on to graduate and professional school in fields such as law, public policy and even cognitive science. Others are pursuing careers in business, journalism, secondary education and many other fields. Even more important, the study of philosophy develops you as a human being and so prepares you to think about — and ultimately to lead — the richest and deepest sort of life.

### Research Opportunities

You'll participate in provocative discussions both inside and outside the classroom and conduct research within courses, in individual studies with professors, or as part of a yearlong senior honors thesis. Recent thesis topics have included the concept of a hero in science fiction, ethical issues involved in stem cell research and the 17th-century philosopher René Descartes' views on the extent of God's power. Faculty will encourage you to participate in philosophy conferences and work with you to polish your papers for submission. In recent years, our majors have presented their work at conferences at SUNY Oneonta, the University of Memphis and Pacific University in Oregon, among others. You'll also have numerous study abroad opportunities, including programs at world-class universities in Germany, England, Scotland, France, Australia, Nepal and Tibet.

### Guest Lecturers

Each year, we offer a number of special lectures, conferences and activities. Our guest lecture series, "Pizza & Profundity," brings both up-and-coming and established philosophers to our campus, such as Alan Hazlett (Fordham University), Tamar Gendler (Yale University) and Karsten Harries (Yale University). After the event, several students typically join the philosophy faculty in taking the speaker out to a local restaurant, where the conversation continues.

## Faculty

**Simon Feldman**, *Assistant Professor of Philosophy*  
A.B., Ph.D., Brown University  
Ethics; meta-ethics; philosophy of law;  
feminist philosophy

**Andrew Pessin**, *Associate Professor of Philosophy*  
B.A., Yale University; M.A., Ph.D.,  
Columbia University  
Early modern philosophy;  
metaphysics; philosophy of mind;  
philosophy of language; philosophy  
of religion; medieval philosophy

**Kristin Pfefferkorn**, *Associate Professor of Philosophy*  
B.A., Hunter College; M.A., M.Phil.,  
Ph.D., Yale University

Philosophy of art and architecture;  
philosophy of film; feminist  
philosophy; 19th- and 20th-century  
continental philosophy; German  
romanticism

**Derek D. Turner**, *Associate Professor of Philosophy; Chair of Philosophy Department*  
B.A., American University; M.A.,  
Ph.D., Vanderbilt University  
Philosophy of science; philosophy of  
biology; environmental philosophy;  
bioethics

**Lawrence A. Vogel**, *Professor of Philosophy*  
B.A., Vassar College; M.A., M.Phil.,  
Ph.D., Yale University  
Ethics; applied ethics; phenomenology  
and existentialism

## Selected Courses

Law and Morality; History of Ancient Philosophy; Existential Philosophy;  
Confucian Traditions; Feminist Philosophy; The Philosophy of Science; The  
Philosophy of Perception; Thinking Philosophically About the Environment;  
Moral Disagreement and Moral Truth; Free Will and Moral Responsibility;  
Contemporary Political Philosophy; Tragedy and Philosophy; Metaphysics;  
Epistemology; Darwin and the Impact of Evolutionary Thought; Philosophy Of  
Literature; Heidegger's Being and Time and its Critics

## About Connecticut College

Connecticut College is a highly selective residential liberal arts college with 1,900 students from all over the country and the world. The academic program offers more than 47 majors in the arts, sciences, social sciences and humanities as well as innovative interdisciplinary programs. Students engage with dedicated faculty and each other to create a vibrant social, cultural and intellectual community in which learning is valued for its own sake — and individuals' diverse perspectives enrich the experience of all.

## What can you do with a major in philosophy?

### Melkon Khosrovian '91

Owner and founder of Modern Spirits, a Los Angeles-based company that produces artisan vodkas.

### John Symons '94

Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Earned a Ph.D. in philosophy at Boston University.

### Lauren Hartzell '03

Ph.D. candidate in philosophy at Stanford University, writing her dissertation on climate change.

### Beth Landes '04

Associate manager of the Government Transformation Team at Partnership for Public Service, a Washington, D.C., nonprofit.

### Casey Johnson '07

Working for AmeriCorps in the Philadelphia area and applying to graduate school in philosophy, specifically metaphysics and epistemology.

For more information, visit  
[www.conncoll.edu/academics/](http://www.conncoll.edu/academics/)