Philosophy

Overview
Major in philosophy and you explore 2,500 years of thought – starting with the ancient Greeks and Romans – and learn to make connections to such fields as law, gender, neuroscience, art and the environment. You are exposed to both continental and analytical traditions in philosophy, and you engage in a sustained way with the history of philosophy. In some courses, you spend a whole semester studying the work of a significant philosopher. Your professors are active scholars who have written and edited books on topics that include the philosophy of Hans Jonas, the philosophy of mind, German romanticism, the philosophy of paleontology, and God.

Research Opportunities
Outstanding students devote a year to an honors project. Recent topics ranged from the concept of nostalgia to the ethical and legal underpinnings of the International Criminal Court. Students have presented conference papers at places like SUNY Oneonta and Pacific University in Oregon. Funding is available for students to work with faculty on research. It’s unusual in our discipline, but professors have published with students and traveled with them to present co-authored papers at professional meetings.

Guest Lecturers
Our guest lecture series, “Pizza and Profundity,” brings both up-and-coming and established philosophers to our campus. Recent speakers have included Tamar Gendler, Elizabeth Harman and Sally Haslanger. After each lecture, students join the philosophy faculty in taking the speaker to a local restaurant, where the conversation continues.

Norah Hannel

Q: Why Connecticut College?
A: I fell for the diverse course selection. I liked the erudite and encouraging faculty, the engaging discussion-based classes, the nationally ranked top-10 career services office, and the honor code – it promised an atmosphere of warm-heartedness and respect.

Q: What has been your most challenging or rewarding class?
A: “Feminist Philosophy” with Professor Feldman uprooted my assumptions regarding not only feminism but also ethics, semantics, politics, culture and my own personal experiences.

Q: Did you study abroad?
A: I went to Paris. The chance to take philosophy classes at the Sorbonne – the stomping grounds of Jean-Luc Godard and Simone de Beauvoir – and wander aimlessly down little cobblestone tributaries of bakeries and flower shops was a dream.

Q: What role has the career development and internship program played in your experience at Conn?
A: It has enriched my understanding of the job-search process. My career advisers have been a guiding light in proposing possibilities for my future, and I know that I will consult them whenever I apply for jobs further down the road.
Faculty

Lindsay Crawford, C3
Postdoctoral Fellow
B.A., Mount Holyoke; Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley
Epistemology; ethics; metaethics; early modern philosophy

Simon D. Feldman,
Associate Professor of Philosophy; Chair of Philosophy Department
B.A., Ph.D., Brown University
Ethics; moral psychology; feminist philosophy; philosophy of law

Andrew Pessin,
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

Kristin Pfefferkorn,
Associate Professor of Philosophy
B.A., Hunter College; M.A., Ph.D., Yale University
Philosophy of art and architecture; philosophy of film; feminist philosophy; 19th- and 20th-century continental philosophy; German romanticism

Derek Turner,
Professor of Philosophy; Associate Director of the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment
B.A., American University; M.A., Ph.D., Vanderbilt University
Philosophy of science; philosophy of biology; environmental philosophy

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

Selected Courses

The Meaning of Life; God; History of Ancient Philosophy; History of Modern Philosophy; Existential Philosophy; American Philosophy; Heidegger; Philosophy and Film; Philosophy of Law; Philosophy of Race and Racism; Philosophy of Art; The Science and Ethics of Extinction; Happiness; The Philosophy of Perception; The Divided Self

About Connecticut College

Connecticut College educates students to put the liberal arts into action as citizens in a global society. A leader in the liberal arts since 1911, the College is home to nationally ranked programs for internships, community action, arts and technology, environmental studies and international studies. Our beautiful 750-acre arboretum campus is located in the historic New England seaport community of New London, Conn.