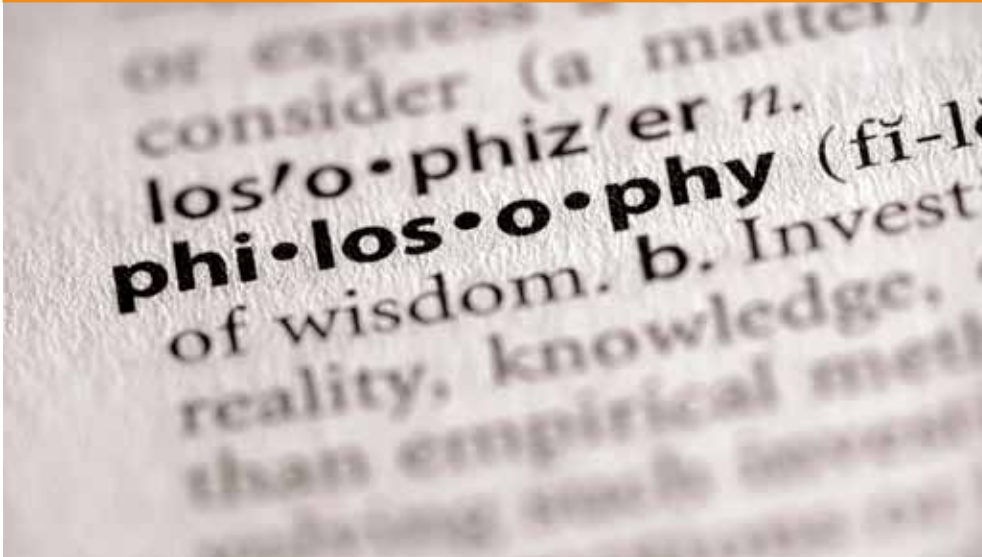


# PHILOSOPHY



Javier Gomez-Lavin didn't attend college right out of high school. He spent 18 months exploring other pursuits, such as managing rock bands (one opened for Band of Horses) and studying economics. He couldn't find his calling in those areas, but he did discover it at the College.

"I learned a lot in the music industry, but that scene really wasn't for me," Javier says. "However, I did meet a lot of people in that business, and I realized that what I'm actually interested in is the interaction between humans – exploring the question of why we do what we do. And philosophy allows me to look for answers."

Initially, Javier tried to sign up for a philosophy of language course. "That class was overbooked, but I emailed the professor and told him that his course sounded really interesting. I asked him to let me in, and his response was 'sure.' The experience in that class just opened the floodgates for me."

Since then, he's chosen to double major in psychology and philosophy, and minor in neuroscience. "A lot of my questions are in areas that aren't so easily categorized, but they can be explored through philosophy. When I combine that approach with the empirical, lab-based information I learn

in neuroscience and psychology, I can see it all start to come together for me."

Javier has found important mentors in the philosophy department. "I have a good rapport with one in particular who I see almost every day. Our conversations range from 1980s indie noise bands to philosophical debates. He's always very open, encouraging and helpful. For instance, I wanted to submit a paper to a conference, and he guided me through that. The paper was accepted, and with his help, later on I got a paper accepted for publication in the Duke University journal of philosophy."

So, where will all this lead? "Some people ask, 'what are you going to do with a philosophy major?' Well, you can do a lot of things. One friend will be going to law school because she's interested in mediation. Some other friends are headed to medical school. I plan to attend graduate school in a program that blends modern neuroscience and philosophy. For me, it's really exciting."

## COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

Philosophy is an exciting and challenging discipline because it focuses on some of the deepest and most difficult questions we face: Is there any objective standard of moral rightness? Does God exist? Do humans have free will? The methods philosophers use to tackle these questions – imaginative thought and rigorous analysis of arguments – help students to build skills that are essential to a liberal arts education. In addition, our faculty represents diverse interests, including the history of philosophy, existentialism, Asian philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, political philosophy, environmental philosophy and the philosophy of science.

### Facts

This major is important preparation for graduate school, and strong background for careers in law, public administration and education.

Regularly taught courses include "Ethics and Sports," "Nature, Technology and Society" and "Philosophy and Feminism."

Special topics courses include such titles as "Body, Mind and Spirit," "Philosophy and Animals," and "Philosophy of Race and Racism."

### Opportunities

Independent research is strongly encouraged and supported by the department.

Philosophy Club organizes speakers, receptions and social occasions that deepen knowledge.