

Philosophy *Rocks* the Graduate Record Exam! (1)

Did you know...

Students declaring an intention to go to graduate school in Philosophy score higher on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) than all but four other major fields (out of fifty recorded by the Educational Testing Service, which runs the Graduate Record Exam)? The only fields that score higher mean scores on the combined Verbal, Quantitative, and Analytical sections of the GRE are (in rank order) Physics and Astronomy, Mathematical Sciences, Materials Engineering, and Chemical Engineering.

Philosophy students score higher than *every other* major in the Humanities and Arts, higher than *every* major in the Social Sciences, higher than *every* major in the Life Sciences, higher than *every* major in Education, higher than *every* major in Business, and higher than *every* major listed under "Other Fields." In fact, Philosophy students score higher than four out of the six majors listed in Physical Sciences, and five out of the seven listed in Engineering.

Students declaring an intention to go to graduate school in Philosophy have the *highest* mean scores on the Verbal section of the GRE than *any other major* in any of the fields listed (mean score: 589). English majors also score well on this section (mean score: 561), but not as good as Philosophy majors do! Honorable mention goes to History majors in this category (mean score: 546). Philosophy majors simply *blew away* other popular majors in this area (compare Foreign Languages at 526, Political Science at 517, Religion and Theory at 516, Sociology at 479, and Psychology at 479). Not surprisingly, dead last in this category were Accounting majors, who got a dismal mean of 408 in Verbal. The best score outside of the Humanities and Arts in this category was Physics, with a Verbal mean of 545.

Students declaring an intention to go to graduate school in Philosophy get the *third highest* mean scores of any major on the Analytical section of the GRE (mean: 625). The only higher majors in this area were Physics and Astronomy (mean: 646) and Mathematical Sciences (mean: 635). Philosophy majors scored better in this area than *every* major in the life Sciences, Engineering, Social Sciences, Education, Business, and "Other Fields," as well as every other major in the Humanities.

Students declaring an intention to go to graduate school in Philosophy score *much higher* in the Quantitative section of the GRE than any of the other Humanities. Compare the mean scores of Philosophy students in Quantitative (593) with English (524) or History (532), for example, who are the next best two in the Humanities in this area. Not surprisingly, majors in the Physical Sciences and Engineering do better in this area than Philosophy students do. But Philosophy students do better here than *every* major in the Life Sciences, Education, and "Other Fields," and all but one of the majors in Social Science (Economics students do well here, with mean scores of 660 in this area), and all but the Banking and Finance students in the Business area (whose majors get a mean score of 606 in Quantitative). Compare Philosophy students' mean score in Quantitative

of 593 with Accounting majors, who get a mean of 513 in this area. Aren't they supposed to know math?

Thinking of going into Law? Compare the GRE mean scores with other popular pre-Law majors: Philosophy (overall mean: 1807), Political Science (overall mean: 1641), Communications (overall mean: 1505), Public Administration (overall mean: 1450). Now, which looks to you to be the best training for pre-Law? None of these majors did better than Philosophy students on *any* of the three sections of the GRE.

Want a major that will prepare you very broadly for whatever kind of challenge you might face later in life? All things considered, averaging the rank order in each of the areas of the GRE, Philosophy does better than *any other major* of the fifty listed. Tell *that* to your Mom and Dad, when they ask what good a philosophy major is!

1 Source: *Guide to the Graduate Record Examination Program 1996-1997*, Education Testing Service.