

# **PHILOSOPHY, COSMOLOGY, and CONSCIOUSNESS: FAQ**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What can I do with a PCC degree?**

Prospective students often ask "What can I do" with a degree from PCC. For those seeking a career in academia, the same question can be asked of any interdisciplinary degree and probably any degree in a single discipline. The only disciplines for which this concern does not arise with some urgency are those professional trainings such as medicine, law, engineering, finance, etc. PCC graduates compete for a very small number of academic employment opportunities. This is the bad news. The good news is that there are hardly any M.A. or Ph.D. students with the distinctive interdisciplinary competencies made possible by the PCC curriculum. Students graduating with an M.A. or Ph.D. in standard disciplines such as history, literature, philosophy, etc, do have more clearly identifiable and numerically greater number of opportunities but such students are competing against an army of applicants. Furthermore, as our society discovers the limitations of single discipline education and the inherently multidisciplinary character of the intractable problems facing us at the present time, the interdisciplinary degree earned in PCC is rapidly becoming more valuable. While the program does not have a list of internships or employment opportunities waiting for our graduates, our graduates have an education which makes them attractive in many new and exciting employment opportunities. Good news, bad news again: the job tracks are not well trod, but the new paths are very numerous and amenable to the kind of creativity that characterizes the PCC program.

For those seeking employment outside of the academic arena, the PCC program can prepare graduates for a number of possible vocations or deepen one's relationship with a current career. PCC alumni are engaged in a wide array of fields including cutting-edge social and environmental advocacy in the non-profit sector; primary and secondary education; sustainable business and social entrepreneurship; counseling and alternative healing modalities; and local politics. Again, the gravity and complexity of the myriad crises facing the world in the present moment call for integral approaches to heal ourselves and our institutions, and create new ways forward. The tools to do this are at hand in the PCC curriculum and community.

### **Can I get a PCC degree from a distance?**

The PCC program is residential at this time and most likely for the near future. Students and faculty place a high value on the in-person classroom experience as well as the many co-curricular activities offered each semester. While there are a few intensive-style courses and fewer online courses which can permit a student to complete some of the requirements from a distance, a student in either the M.A. or Ph.D. programs would need to live in the Bay Area for at least one year in order to satisfy the curriculum requirements. Once Ph.D. students have completed their coursework, they may choose to complete the degree from a distance.

### **In order to apply for the Ph.D. program is it okay to have come from a different academic background?**

While a background in philosophy and religion is recommended for applicants, students would not necessarily be precluded from admission should their degree be in a different field. However, those admitted into the doctoral concentration who do not have an M.A. from CIIS in Philosophy, Cosmology,

and Consciousness may be required to complete up to an additional 18 units of course work (minus equivalencies) from the core section of the M.A. curriculum.

**How many years is the Ph.D. program?**

Full-time study requires at least 2 years of coursework, 1-2 semesters for comprehensive exams, and at least 1 year for the dissertation phase. The typical time to completion is between 5 to 7 years.

**How is the program organized? How many classes does a full-time or part-time student have to take? What is the work load like? Do most students work and study?**

Full-time students take three courses per semester; part-time students must take two courses in order to qualify for financial aid. On average, students are in class 6-9 hours per week, with an additional 15-20 hours of study time. Most students do work at least part-time while they are in school, both on- and off-campus.

**Are there scholarship or fellowship options?**

We do not offer fellowships, but we do have a number of partial tuition scholarships available to new and continuing students. For more information, please visit the Financial Aid page on [www.ciis.edu](http://www.ciis.edu).

**Is CIIS accredited?**

Yes, CIIS is accredited by WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges).