Letter from a former Philosophy Student

To Prospective Students of Philosophy,

I hope that you choose to complete the philosophy program. The value of that training is tremendous. As a philosophy graduate, I would like to share some observations with you. (This letter is biased toward a career in corporate America.)

First, let me start with a brief history. I earned a BA in philosophy in 1994, an MS in information systems in May 1998, and I will complete the MBA program in May, 1999; all at UTA. I worked in a scuba retail environment for seven years prior to my new career in information systems. Since September 1997, I have worked as a database consultant for a systems integration company. Philosophy is a discipline that complements virtually any professional career path. You are trained to read critically, extract and analyze arguments from text and discourse, define and clarify, understand and criticize, develop solutions, and clearly articulate your thoughts. These skills are of tremendous value; crucial to your professional success.

Q: What are you going to do with a philosophy degree? (A question I have been asked too many times!)
A: Anything you want.

Again, a philosophical education will help you develop important skills. However, you must complement this education with specialized skills (i.e., accounting, information systems, management, etc.). Many employers expect you to start producing with little or no training. I short, I have found that specialized skills and/or experience help me get an interview, then my qualities as a philosopher help distinguish me from my competition.

I found my job in one week (I think it was lucky timing). After taking the database design class and three programming classes, I sent out my resume and quickly received a call from my future employer. The interview was short because my experience was thin (all academic!). My future employer recognized my aptitude and qualities developed in part as a philosophy student. (Incidentally, I am the first person with a philosophy degree he ever hired.) Now I am trusted on high visibility projects. My training in information systems helps me understand the technology and business environment, and philosophy helps me reduce problems/challenges into atomic units and develop solutions.

Good Luck!
Grant T. Hunking

P.S. Remember this, anyone who fails to recognize the value of your philosophical education has no idea what it is. Sometimes we must reach out and educate the less fortunate.