



Date: March 27, 2008
From: Michael Mahoney, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs
To: Benjamin Bowser, Interim Dean, CLASS
Jennifer Eagan, Chair, Philosophy
Subject: MOU Meeting – B.A. in Philosophy

On March 20, 2008, I met with Benjamin Bowser, Interim Dean, CLASS; Janet Patterson, Associate Dean, CLASS; Jennifer Eagan, Chair, Philosophy; Aline Soules, Chair, CAPR; and Carl Bellone, AVP Academic Programs and Graduate Studies to discuss the Program Review for the B.A. in Philosophy and to develop an MOU as required by CAPR 9.

The Department of Philosophy has experienced several faculty changes in the last few years. Two faculty members recently left which made it difficult for the department to function. However, the department recently hired a new faculty member and in the past week hired a professor to teach religious studies (this professor will start in Fall 2008). The Department is asking for two tenure track positions during the 2008/09 recruitment cycle—one in the Philosophy of Science and Ethics and a generalist to teach the History of Philosophy. The Department uses many lecturers and could not function without the incredible job that they do.

The Department benefits greatly from an excellent office staff.

Although the Philosophy Department is small, it plays a big role in General Education. The Department is in three G.E. Clusters and takes the lead role in offering courses to fulfill the Critical Thinking requirement.

The Department has paired down the minors as recommended by the outside reviewer in order to not so thinly stretch their resources. Minors in Cognitive Philosophy and Religious Studies were dropped.

The program has four options which are popular with students. The most popular is Law, Human Rights, and Social Justice. The program is looking forward to the arrival of the new professor in Religious Studies who is expected to breathe new life into that option.

As part of its five year plan, the Department of Philosophy has revised the major, added new courses and streamlined others all actions recommended by the outside reviewer.

In the spring, the Department will do a formal alumni survey as part of its assessment plan. The other assessment activities will continue as planned.

CAPR praised the restructuring of the program to appeal to a wider range of students, encouraged the program to continue efforts to maintain and expand growth as appropriate, supported continued development of regular program assessment, encouraged efforts to diversity the students and the faculty, supported the program's efforts in General Education, and recommended the addition of another tenure track position to help build a diverse cohort of junior faculty.

The results of the MOU meeting are as follows:

1. The Department will continue with its assessment efforts which concentrate on a touchstone course and a capstone course. Faculty members assess the learning outcomes of incoming majors in the touchstone course and later compare them with the level of learning outcomes in the capstone course.
2. The Department is encouraged to request additional tenure track positions to help build a diverse cohort of junior faculty.

AVP Carl Bellone and I sincerely appreciate the significant work that the Department of Philosophy and its chair continue to do with their four major options and with the vital general education courses and freshman clusters. We'd also like to thank the CAPR members for their time and informative report.

cc: Janet Patterson
Carl Bellone
Aline Soules
Hank Reichman