

Philosophy Department Annual Report 2008-2009

College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences
California State University, East Bay

May 26, 2009

1. Brief Self-Study

The Philosophy Department has accomplished the following goals during the 2008-2009, many of which were reflected in Philosophy's 07-08 Annual Report: increasing the numbers of majors, increasing FTEs, and continuing well-attended student club meetings and activities, and curricular innovation. We have met all of these goals in the following ways:

- The Philosophy Department successfully filled their tenure-track position in Religious Studies, welcoming Assistant Professor Christopher Moreman in Fall '08.
- The number of Philosophy majors has increased from 35 to 42; and we remain at an official count of 10 minors.
- The Philosophy Departments FTEs have steadily increased in each quarter when compared to 07-08:

FTEs	07-08	08-09
Summer	79.70	85.87
Fall	168.80	174.93
Winter	181.6	187.47
Spring	192.00	212.80

- The Philosophy Department continues its participation in five Freshman Clusters.
- The Department has successfully proposed four new courses, PHIL 2003 *Introduction to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, PHIL 3430 *The Bible and Film*, PHIL 3431 *Cults and New Religious Movements*, PHIL/ ES 3721 *African American Philosophy*. We have two more proposals before the CLASS Curriculum Committee, PHIL 3404 *Mysticism* and PHIL 3432 *Monsters, Religion, and Horror*.
- Philosophy students and faculty have sustained the energy and enthusiasm for our student club, the Philosophy Society. We have sustained a pace of 3-5 meetings per quarter. These meetings have averaged about 30 people in attendance for each meeting. I think that we can make a case for being among the most successful academic clubs on campus.
- This Summer, we will publish a new edition of our on-line student journal, *Reflections*, showcasing our students' work. Students and faculty are currently working on this edition.
- This Spring, the department will award the second annual Prestigious Bassen Prize, an essay contest with a small scholarship award attached to the first and second place prizes.

Our future goals consist of:

- Continuing our success in the areas of increasing the numbers of majors, increasing FTEs, student activities, and curricular innovation.
- Revising the Philosophy Major, with special emphasis on revising the Religious Studies option and re-creating the Religious Studies minor.
- Creating a new course prefix for the Religious Studies option in the major.
- Hiring new tenure track faculty members in the areas of Philosophy of Science and in the History of Philosophy as soon as possible.

2. Summary of Assessment Results

The Philosophy Department Assessment Plan consists of four elements:

- 1) The Faculty Assessment of the Touchstone Course Experience (yearly)
- 2) The Faculty Assessment of the Capstone Experience (yearly)
- 3) Major/ Minor Focus Groups (bi-yearly)
- 4) Alumni Surveys (bi-yearly)

Assessment 08-09:

In addition to our annual narrative faculty assessments of the Touchstone and Capstone courses, this year we have completed our initial Alumni Survey, with results shared below. The Department of Philosophy sent out an online survey to their major alumni during the Winter 2009 quarter. The survey consisted of questions with a likert-type scale to measure the major alumni's experience with California State University, East Bay's Department of Philosophy. Below you will find the following questions and subset of questions which alumni were invited to answer.

To what extent has your philosophical Education at CSU East Bay contributed to the following abilities?

	Very Much		Somewhat		Not at All
Read and understand complex texts	70.6%	23.5%	5.9%	0%	0%
Analyze and evaluate arguments	88.2%	11.8%	0%	0%	0%
Create persuasive arguments	68.8%	31.3%	0%	0%	0%
Appreciate diverse intellectual perspectives	76.5%	17.6%	5.9%	0%	0%
Respond thoughtfully to ethical issues	64.7%	29.4%	5.9%	0%	0%
Write clearly and coherently	58.8%	29.4%	11.8%	0%	0%
Speak effectively in public	35.3%	29.4%	17.6%	17.6%	0%

To what extent has majoring in Philosophy contributed to your success in school, work, civic or personal life?

	Very Much		Somewhat		Not at All
Read and understand complex texts	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%
Analyze and evaluate arguments	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Create persuasive arguments	85.7%	14.2%	0%	0%	0%
Appreciate diverse intellectual perspectives	66.7%	33.3%	0%	0%	0%
Respond thoughtfully to ethical issues	64.3%	35.7%	0%	0%	0%
Write clearly and coherently	53.3%	46.7%	0%	0%	0%
Speak effectively in public	46.7%	20%	20%	13.3%	0%

Next year's assessment report will include the results of our faculty assessments of the Touchstone and Seminar courses, as well as conduct our Major/ Minor Focus Group in advance. These data will be included in the department's next annual report.

3. Statistics from Institutional Research for 2003-2008, Not Yet Available