



ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT

College	CLASS
Department	Philosophy
Program	BA Philosophy
Reporting for Academic Year	2016-2017
Last 5-Year Review	2013
Next 5-Year Review	2019-2020
Department Chair	Christopher Moreman
Date Submitted	Oct. 20, 2017

**I. SELF-STUDY** *(suggested length of 1-3 pages)*

**A. Five-Year Review Planning Goals**

Below are listed the planning goals established by the department in our last 5-year review. Discussion of these goals is reserved for the following section on progress towards completion.

Curricular:

- i) The department intends to move forward with previous plans to have the department’s offerings in Religious Studies adequately recognized.
  - a. The department intends to re-institute two options, one in Philosophy and another in Religious Studies.
  - b. The department also intends to re-introduce the Minor in Religious Studies.
- ii) Revise curriculum to eliminate redundant courses.
- iii) Explore online offerings, including the newly introduced opportunity to allow students to take the Critical Thinking required course online. It is planned that both on-the-ground and online sections will be offered in future in order to allow students the greatest flexibility in fulfilling their A3 Critical Thinking requirement.
- iv) Continue to offer sections of the Critical Thinking course for Concord as needed, with the possibility that an online section might bring students across campuses together in the same online environment.
- v) Maintain commitments to GE both in the distinctive Freshman Clusters and Upper Division Humanities.
  - a. In order to mitigate the impact of the low-capped cluster courses, the department will explore alternative possibilities for scheduling and enrollment caps
- vi) Maintain new programmatic learning outcomes and assess as required.

Students:

- i) Increase majors or maintain about 30-40 majors per year.
  - a. Remain engaged in recruitment activities
- ii) Maintain contact with alumni and connection to current Majors.

Faculty:

- i) Increase number of Tenure Track faculty with expertise in the areas of Philosophy of Science, History of Philosophy, and Philosophy of Mind in order to adequately handle the heavy load of service required.
- ii) Maintain the integrity of the department and program.

Other Resources:

- i) Improve department facilities and resources
  - a. Increase staffing center staff from 1 to 2 individuals
  - b. Formation of School of Humanities
  - c. Need for new office equipment, especially photocopiers and fax machines
  - d. Improve library databases in the area of Religious Studies
  - e. Increase conference travel funding
  - f. Move to completely online student evaluations to lower staffing burden

**B. Progress Toward Five-Year Review Planning Goals**

Below, I have used highlighting to flag progress in specific areas, with bullet points explaining below each goal. Green highlights indicate a goal that has been met. Yellow highlights indicate areas where work continues, and Red highlights indicate where the department has abandoned a goal or has been prevented from achieving a goal.

Curricular:

- i) The department intends to move forward with previous plans to have the department's offerings in Religious Studies adequately recognized.
  - a. Semester conversion has allowed the opportunity to institute two Concentrations – one in Philosophy and one in Religious Studies
  - b. The department name will be changed to the department of Philosophy and Religious Studies
  - c. Moreman received a \$100,000 NEH grant to form an interdisciplinary faculty seminar to develop a new Minor in Religious Studies.
- ii) Revise curriculum to eliminate redundant courses
  - a. Curriculum fully revised through conversion
- iii) Explore online offerings, including the newly introduced opportunity to allow students to take the Critical Thinking required course online. It is planned that both on-the-ground and online sections will be offered in future in order to allow students the greatest flexibility in fulfilling their A3 Critical Thinking requirement.
  - a. Faculty experimented with online sections of PHIL 1000 and determined that this course could not be offered effectively online to our student population. In-person meetings are required to effectively reach A3 outcomes with this student population.
- iv) Continue to offer sections of the Critical Thinking course for Concord as needed, with the possibility that an online section might bring students across campuses together in the same online environment.
  - a. Concord continues to be served annually
  - b. As indicated above, the department has abandoned online efforts in relation to A3.
- v) Maintain commitments to GE both in the distinctive Freshman Clusters and Upper Division Humanities.
  - a. Department will remain heavily involved in GE through conversion.
    - i. NUMBER of clusters

- ii. Almost all upper division and all lower division PHIL courses meet a GE requirement
- iii. NUMBER of overlays
- b. Conversion presents opportunity to revise enrollment caps. This issue remains under consideration as new GE rules have instituted even lower caps, which is subject to further debate.
- vi) **Maintain new programmatic learning outcomes and assess as required.**
  - a. Only minor revisions were needed in conversion
  - b. Course-specific LOs were created for every course

Students:

- i) **Increase majors or maintain about 30-40 majors per year.**
  - a. Level of majors remains stable, currently at 33
  - b. Department remains active in recruitment initiatives, including Al Fresco, Welcome Day, and the chair attended a special summer meeting with university recruiters to assist in recruitment of CLASS majors
- ii) **Maintain contact with alumni and connection to current Majors.**
  - a. Philosophy Society remains active
  - b. Assessment of lifelong learning PLO provides regular contact with alumni through a survey.

Faculty:

- i) **Increase number of Tenure Track faculty with expertise in the areas of Philosophy of Science, History of Philosophy, and Philosophy of Mind in order to adequately handle the heavy load of service required.**
  - a. The department successfully hired on new tenure-track faculty member in the area of Philosophy of Science as part of the Affinity Program
  - b. The department has seen its FERP faculty separate from the university
  - c. Jen Eagan, the department's most senior faculty member, continues to serve as CFA President and so is unable to contribute to the department in terms of teaching and service.
  - d. The department continues to seek one additional tenure track hire in the History of Philosophy with a Generalist approach.
- ii) **Maintain the integrity of the department and program**
  - a. The department avoided a forced merger by successfully joining a new School of Global Humanities and Cultural Studies

Other Resources:

- i) **Improve department facilities and resources**
  - a. The department moved into the new SF building, with significantly improved facilities
  - b. The department now shares a Staffing Center with two other units, and has two full-time staff members
  - c. The department successfully joined a School of Global Humanities and Cultural Studies
  - d. New photocopiers were installed in the new building
  - e. The library liaison continues to petition for increased resources in Religious Studies
  - f. Travel funding has remained stable, but remain inadequate for international travel
  - g. The department has moved to completely online student evaluations.

### C. Program Changes and Needs

**Overview:** Our department has made significant changes to the curriculum and Major requirements with semester conversion in mind. Our task was somewhat lessened by the fact that we had already devised new Program Learning Outcomes which we have mapped to the ILOs and tied to assessment.

In terms of SB1440, we continue to offer a program that is suited to transfer students, and one that is possible to complete in two years if transfer students have completed lower-division GE requirements. Our involvement with the Freshman Learning Communities offers a pathway for non-transfer students as well.

Our number of Majors has remained steady with signs of small increase over time. Philosophy is normally a program that attracts less than average numbers of Majors due to a number of factors including the limited exposure most students get to the subject before reaching university. Our department's offerings in Religious Studies have also been stifled by lack of exposure, a problem being rectified with conversion. We have offset our relatively low Major numbers by offering a high number of GE course, both upper and lower division, and our overall SFR is among the best in CLASS.

Our graduation rates remain strong, especially for transfer students, who make up the majority of our Majors (the two-year rate is 80% and the 4-year is 100% among this population).

Our largest challenge is our regular faculty to lecturer ratio, which places an overwhelming amount of our course offerings with lecturer faculty while overburdening our regular faculty with a service load that is unsustainable. We recently had a FERPer separate from the university, further burdening our unit. As noted in our previous two 5-year reviews, our department is in desperate need of more TT faculty.

Those elements of our department's goals that are within our power are largely attained or being attained.

**Curriculum:** The key changes that have been made for conversion include the following:

We have aimed to maintain a similarly heavy involvement in the Freshman Learning Communities, with 8 clusters accepted to begin F18 (as opposed to the 6 clusters that we are in under quarters currently). We have striven to create new clusters that will energize freshman students, and provide a useful and attractive introduction to issues in Philosophy and other subjects. Exposure to the subject remains our primary means of attracting new Majors. We added two Concentrations – one in Philosophy and a new one in Religious Studies. Students have had the opportunity to take courses in Religious Studies within our department for many years, but conversion has offered us the opportunity to make these courses clearly distinguishable from other Philosophy courses. Students will now take a BA in Philosophy with a Concentration in one of these two areas.

Reflecting the Religious Studies aspects that have been a part of our department for many years, we have also obtained permission to change the department's name to reflect its offerings, becoming the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies in F18. The new visibility of the Religious Studies component of our programming is likely to attract more students; over the past decade, many students have expressed surprise at discovering that we offered Religious Studies courses.

After discussions with the Health Sciences program, we also plan to expand our offerings in Bioethics in order to help meet the demand for this course among Health Science Majors.

**Students:** Philosophy traditionally attracts lower-than-average numbers of Majors across the country, and our department is no different in this regard. We have maintained a steady number of Majors over the years, with a 14% increase since 2012 (from 29 in 2012 to 33 in

2016), and we expect this number to continue to remain stable. The increased visibility of Religious Studies may help to increase Majors specifically interested in this area of our curriculum.

Our overall enrollments have risen from 590 students in 2012 to 937 in 2016, an increase of 58.8%. We have been successful in increasing overall enrollment in our courses through GE offerings. Almost all of our courses meet a GE requirement, be they A3, C2, or C4. With conversion, we will include two Majors-only courses in the core and the expected low enrollment for these courses will be offset by increased enrollment in C2 and A3.

Our graduation rates are strong. The department largely serves transfer students, and our 4-year graduation rate for transfer students is 100%, with an 80% 2-year graduation rate. Our 6-year graduation rate for incoming freshman is 75%.

The diversity of our Majors is impressive, as indicated in the attached spreadsheet. Particularly refreshing is the relatively high number of female students (42.4%) in what has been a traditionally male dominated field.

**Faculty:** We currently have 3.8 regular faculty. Of these, only 2 are teaching full loads with reductions for the chair and 1 member completely absent due to CFA responsibilities. Our FERP faculty separated from the university at the end of Spring 17.

In a typical quarter, regular faculty teach a total of 8 sections, whereas lecturers teach a combined average of 18 sections. In 2012, lecturers accounted for more than half of the departments FTES (54.7%), but this number has increased drastically to the point where in 2016 lecturers account for more than two-thirds (68%) of the departments FTES! This ratio is expected to worsen under semesters.

With the current slate of regular faculty, the department is not able to meet important service commitments, especially in terms of RTP, faculty governance, and student recruitment. Our last two 5-year reviews both indicated a strong need for additional TT faculty, with our most recent indicating a need (echoed by the external reviewer) for at least 2 or 3 additional hires. Since then, we have made 1 hire while we have lost 1 faculty to retirement.

In addition to our desperate need for regular faculty currently, we are also looking into collaboration with the Health Sciences department to assist in offering a core course in Bioethics. To meet this need, we will also need a specialist in the area as well.

**Staff:** Our department shares a staffing center with the departments of History and Modern Languages & Literatures. We have not seen a decline in service from our staff since moving to such a sharing situation several years ago, but we do have concerns about the staff involved becoming overburdened.

**Resources:** We made a successful move into the new SF building. While the offices here are smaller than those in our previous home, MI, the condition of the facilities and office equipment is substantially improved.

S&S funding remains sufficient to fund our department's needs. Philosophy is not an expensive department with few special equipment needs.

**Assessment:** The department continues to conduct annual assessments of our PLOs, the most recent being summarized below. The assessment of PLOs provides the department with the annual opportunity to consider the value of our chosen outcomes with an eye to adapting and adjusting those outcomes as needed over time. Since we developed the new PLOs, we are now completing the cycle of PLOs and are thus far satisfied that the outcomes match our curricular expectations and the needs of our students.

## II. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT (suggested length of 1-2 pages)

### A. Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

1. write clear, academically rigorous, argumentative essays. (ILO 1, 2, & 6)
2. read complex texts, create original arguments, analyze the arguments of others, and express these criticisms orally and in writing. (ILO 1, 2, 4, & 6)
3. demonstrate knowledge of philosophical and/or religious traditions, their relevant concepts, theories, methods, and historical contexts. (ILO 6)
4. develop their capacities for ethical decision making, Socratic humility, openness to the ideas of others, reflective self-awareness, and a life-long curiosity about big questions. (ILO 1, 2, 3, 5, & 6)
5. cultivate an appreciation for a diversity of ideas and values across time and for human difference in areas such as: religion, culture, ethnicity, race, class, sexuality, and gender. (ILO 3, 4, 5, & 6)

### B. Program Learning Outcome(S) Assessed

5. cultivate an appreciation for a diversity of ideas and values across time and for human difference in areas such as: religion, culture, ethnicity, race, class, sexuality, and gender.

We have reviewed the PLOs one at a time in an annual rotation. PLO #5 was previously assessed in 2011-2012 by Jennifer Eagan. At that time, she conducted student interviews with Philosophy Majors and, with Barbara Hall, had them produce a video blog describing the ways in which they felt our program helped them to achieve this PLO through an understanding of diversity. The conclusion at that time was that the program was effectively delivering on this PLO.

### C. Summary of Assessment Process

**Instrument(s):** It has been deemed that conducting interviews of current Majors is not an effective measure of this PLO since the students remain in the midst of the program, and surveying alumni is untenable given the high incidence of failure to respond or inability to contact students. As such, a new assessment tool is required. In this instance, a review of course outlines has been undertaken in order to determine the extent to which student assignments aim to cultivate an appreciation for diversity in such areas as religion, culture, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and gender.

**Sampling Procedure:** Course outlines from all PHIL courses offered to Majors in the calendar year 2017 were reviewed to determine 1) relevance of material to the PLO; 2) number of assignments aimed at the PLO. A list was constructed of assignments from relevant courses, which was anonymized and sent to faculty. Faculty then evaluated the various types of assignment for effectiveness.

**Sample Characteristics:** 9 course outlines (2 freshman clusters, 1 lower division GE, & 6

upper division GE).

**Data Collection:** Christopher Moreman collected and reviewed all outlines, and made a list of relevant courses and applicable assignments. Regular faculty were then asked to review the selected assignments from the relevant courses and assess their merit for achieving the PLO.

**Data Analysis:** See below

#### D. Summary of Assessment Results

*Summarize your assessment results briefly using the following sub-headings.*

**Main Findings:** Of 9 relevant courses, 4 include a strong focus on race (3515: Race & Social Justice; 3721: African-American Philosophy; 3510: Human Rights; & 1103: Viewing Diversity), 4 focus on gender (3721: African-American Philosophy; 3720: Feminist Philosophy; 3510: Human Rights; & 1103: Viewing Diversity), and 4 on religious diversity (3404: Mysticism; 3403: Religions of the East; 2003: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; & 1401: World Religions). Two thirds of these courses are upper division, and the lower division courses cover all relevant areas. Content in all of these courses is considered strong, is relevant to both the Major and to the specific PLO being currently assessed, and is up to date.

Course assignments include: Final exam (8 courses); Midterm exam (6); Participation (5); Short papers on assigned topics (4); Reflection papers (2); In-class quizzes (2); Group quizzes (1); Short paper, topic chose by student (1); Research paper, topic chosen by student (1); Online discussion board (1); Group presentation, topic chosen by students (1); Response to reading paper (1). By far the most common tool for student evaluation used in these courses is the midterm & final exam. Such tools are particularly useful in assessing content retention and understanding. Likewise, quizzes, whether done individually or in groups, is useful to measure retention and understanding, and to encourage keeping up to date with readings. Care must be taken in order to use such tools to measure the “cultivation of appreciation.” In-class discussion is a core component of Philosophy & Religious Studies courses, and a grade for Participation is common, along with specific assignments that highlight group activities, online discussion, and in-class presentations. Longer writing assignments offer more opportunity to explore specific questions in more detail, and it is likely here that the cultivation of appreciation might most easily be inculcated. A minority of course outlines (3) include detailed information on the specifics for written assignments, with the rest indicating that more information will be offered in class. Those courses that describe details include such features as encouraging self-reflection, exposure to new situations (i.e. visiting a temple, walking a spiritual labyrinth), or conducting further research into a topic of interest to the student beyond the limits of the classroom material. While such exercises appear well-designed to encourage an appreciation of diversity by extending the students in self-reflexive ways outside of their own familiarities, it is likely that the writing assignments that are not described in detail in course outlines will also offer topics that are similarly effective, but without the details we cannot know.

**Recommendations for Program Improvement:** No change in course content is required. All

of these courses clearly approach the subject of diversity in terms especially of race, gender, and religion in ways that are current and relevant.

Course assignments might be better explained on course outlines both to facilitate student success and to make further assessment of these assignments more simple. Faculty will further reflect on the assignments offered in these (and other) classes with an eye to ensuring that their in-class requirements also “cultivate an appreciation” for diversity beyond simply measuring content retention and understanding.

**Next Step(s) for Closing the Loop:** With new course content being required to adapt quarter-system courses to semesters, there is ample opportunity for further considerations of course assignments. It is expected that the results of such further consideration will appear in new, semester-based course outlines that might include more detailed descriptions of assignments that will be more readily assessed to show that the assignments directly encourage the specific PLO of cultivating an appreciation for diversity especially in terms of race, gender, and religion.

**Other Reflections:** It is often expected that discussion of ideas and arguments in class, which is a core aspect of Philosophy and Religious Studies education, in itself cultivates exactly the appreciation desired. Without assignments to measure the level of such appreciation, though, it is difficult to assess the extent to which such in-class activity is actually encouraging the effect desired.

#### **E. Assessment Plans for Next Year**

Since this year marks our reaching the end of another cycle of assessment for our PLOs, we will return to the beginning of the list again next year with an assessment of our PLO #1 – write clear, academically rigorous, argumentative essays. This PLO was assessed by a review of Major essays by the regular faculty, scored against a rubric specifically designed for this assessment. Since we will be leaving our final year of quarters, we will use the Major essays that are submitted to our annual Bassen Prize, awarded to the best essay in philosophy, as a pool for assessment.

Philosophy Majors submit what they consider to be their best work with one essay being selected as the winner of the scholarship. As a pool, these should represent the best writing by our Majors at graduation.



### III. DISCUSSION OF PROGRAM DATA & RESOURCE REQUESTS

#### A. Discussion of Trends & Reflections

##### **Notable Trends:**

The ratio between regular faculty and lecturers is heavily skewed towards lecturers. This trend has worsened considerably since 2012, and gets even worse with the recent separation of a FERP faculty member. Lecturer faculty represented 36.3% of Philosophy's FTEF in 2012, and 57.5% in 2016, an increase of 58.4%. We are in desperate need of additional regular faculty.

Student enrollments in PHIL courses have increased year over year since 2012. The increase, measured in 2016, has been 58.8% additional students since 2012. SFR and Average enrollments remain steady at about 31 each. Number of sections offered has increased by 50% since 2012.

Graduation rates remain high, especially among the primary population of Philosophy Majors (transfer students). In this category, 4-year graduation rate is 100%, 2-year rate is 80%. Among the smaller freshman population, the 6-year graduation rate is 75%.

##### **Reflections on Trends and Program Statistics:**

*On the Lecturer/regular faculty ratio:* As the department has served increasing numbers of students, we have hired additional lecturers. Lecturer faculty are fantastic teachers, but their contracts do not include other crucial elements of university life and student success. The department is heavily involved in GE and the Freshman Learning Communities. Looking toward semesters, we are committed to 8 different clusters. Clusters are intended to help new students gain their feet in university, and often require additional support beyond the confines of the classroom. Lecturer faculty, though, outside of office hours, have no other contractual commitment to service. Moreover, students in clusters who might wish to continue their students with a particular instructor will often never have that opportunity when their first exposure to the subject is with a lecturer. Regular faculty are required to aid such students in terms of setting a stable path forward as well as nurturing environment as they enter the university. This skew between regular and contingent faculty is also strongly felt in terms of service needs. With so few regular faculty, we are already experiencing problems filling department level committees and meeting various university commitments, including, most alarmingly, recruitment events like Preview Days and AI fresco. Lecturers have no contractual obligation to assist with these important events.

*On enrollment increases:* Philosophy has added higher and higher numbers of students to meet important demands from GE. We are heavily involved in the Freshman Learning Communities, and we remain the provider of the required A3 Critical Thinking course. Additionally, almost all of our courses meet the C4 GE requirement such that our courses are normally enrolled with more non-Majors than Majors. As such, we can truly be said to be serving the entire university. This diversity of students from all Majors deserves instruction from committed regular faculty who have the time and resources to offer extra attention and advising beyond that which lecturers are capable and contractually obligated.

*On SFR and average enrollment:* This number would be higher except for the low caps enforced on the Freshman Learning Communities (30 students per quarter), in which Philosophy is heavily committed. We are also heavily involved in GE, which also has an

enrollment cap of 35 (set to be reduced to 30 under semesters). We use what limited avenues we have available (in lower-division, non-cluster GE) to maintain higher enrollments. Even with the caps, though, our number of sections has increased to meet expanding student demand. Unfortunately, all of these extra sections have been met with the hiring of contingent faculty where regular faculty would help to provide stability to students, to advise additional students, and to conduct additional collaborations with other departments.

Ultimately, we are offering courses to higher and higher numbers of students from across all Majors, while we have not been any additional Tenure-Track faculty members to offer these students the level of educational support that they deserve. Our program is strong, our faculty are committed to our students and to the university, but need more regular faculty to replace contingent lecturers.

## B. Request for Resources *(suggested length of 1 page)*

### 1. Request for Tenure-Track Hires

We desperately need additional Tenure-Track faculty. Our last 5-year report recommended the addition of no less than 3 new lines. Since then, we have added 1 and had an additional separation, so we are no further ahead than we were 5 years ago. **We are requesting 2 tenure-track lines at the rank of Assistant Professor immediately.**

The department is heavily weighted towards lecturer instruction. Regular faculty offer increased stability to students in terms of consistency of courses and additional teaching and advising in specialist areas. Regular faculty also enrich the department, the university, and the courses being offered through their research. Lastly, lecturer faculty are not contractually obligated to perform any service, and the low number of regular faculty in our department is making it difficult for us to meet service needs within the department and for the university.

**We require a regular faculty member in the History of Philosophy** with a Generalist background. This faculty member would add stability to the core courses in Ancient and Modern Philosophy and would be able to teach additional courses as needed. We offer two courses in the History of Philosophy, which are currently staffed by different lecturers from one quarter to the next. These courses are core to the Major and crucial to students going on to graduate work. These are also foundational courses for the study of philosophy and so require a regular faculty member to provide that grounding for our students and others interested in the subject. This faculty member would further be able to work collaboratively with faculty members in other departments, including History, to produce such results as new Freshman Learning Communities and potential research collaborations.

**We require a regular faculty member in Bioethics.** This is a crucially important area of Ethics, and one with which we aim to collaborate with Health Sciences to offer core courses to their students in this area. We offer a course in Bioethics. This course will be a core requirement for Health Science Majors, of which there are many (1400). To serve these students, the department will require a specialist in the area not only to teach the course but to advise that number of students in this specific area. Bioethics is a critically important field that informs nursing, medicine, pharma, as well as the increasingly important realm of death, dying, and hospice. This faculty member would be expected to work collaboratively with faculty in Health Sciences not only with this particular course, but to advise students in the area and to conduct collaborative research and substantial outreach to the community at large. We attach a letter of support for this request from the department of Health Sciences.

With only 3.8 regular faculty by head count, a number which drops to 3 when considering the absence of this member for duties as CFA president, we have the lowest number of regular

faculty in any department in the university. While we have the lowest number of faculty, we do NOT have the lowest number of Majors, nor do we have the lowest rate of enrollment. We are teaching more students with less regular faculty than other departments. Our department is serving a high number of students and we require a commensurate level of regular faculty in order to serve these students effectively. The low number of regular faculty is also having a negative impact on our ability to meet university service needs. We are never able to fill out a departmental RTP committee with even a majority of Philosophy faculty on it. This year, we have begun to find it impossible to participate in a number of university events that are important for recruitment; Preview Days and Al fresco are two recent examples of events that were missed due to a lack of available regular faculty.

## *2. Request for Other Resources*

We have no other resource needs. Office space for new Tenure-Track faculty is available as such are currently occupied by lecturers who will be either replaced or moved into other available shared office space in either MI or SF.