**Annual Departmental Assessment Report**

**Department or Program: PHILOSOPHY Graduate Programs**

**Academic Year of Report: 2020-2021**

**Department Contact Person for Assessment: Scott L. Pratt, Director of Graduate Studies**

**Section 1: Learning Objectives Assessed for this Report**

For each major in the department, list the learning objectives that were assessed during this period.

If modifications to the graduate degree requirements are approved, the following objectives will also be modified to reflect the requirements.

**Philosophy PhD**

1. Knowledge of basic and advanced logical theory. Demonstrated by completing the Logic Requirement.
2. Knowledge of one foreign language at a second year level, ability to translate, demonstrated by meeting language requirement.
3. Basic knowledge of the general issues and methods in the profession, demonstrated by taking two courses in each philosophical tradition:
   1. American
   2. Continental
   3. Analytic
   4. Feminism
4. Basic Knowledge of four historical periods in Western philosophy, demonstrated by completing one course in each of the four periods.
   1. Ancient
   2. Modern
   3. 19th Century
   4. 20th century
5. Ability to complete a history paper at a professional/publishable level, demonstrated by completing paper requirement and passing a final meeting with two advisors.
6. Ability to carry out research in the area of dissertation concentration, demonstrated by a Literature Review.
7. Ability to develop a Ph.D. research project, demonstrated by written prospectus and defense.
8. Ability to carry on and complete the writing of a professional level scholarly dissertation, demonstrated by dissertation completion and passing dissertation defense.
9. A sense for diversity both in teaching and in the development of scholarship. Met by the work through the program and by a one required course from ARNL, Asian, Race, Native American, and Latin American philosophy.

Teaching Objectives for GEs

1. Ability to lead discussion sections and assist large courses, demonstrated during the first two years of GE work
2. Ability to develop one’s own course, demonstrated by developing a course
3. Knowledge of pedagogical issues and theories relevant to the field, demonstrated by taking the teaching seminar
4. Ability to teach one’s own course, demonstrated by teaching courses and evaluation
5. Ability to mentor students and develop sense of their needs, met through office hours and course teaching
6. Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusiveness, demonstrated by the course work, teaching reviews, and participation in departmental activities.

**Philosophy MA**

M.A. may be done with a written Thesis or by course work alone. The marked sections (\*) do not apply to the latter.

1. Knowledge of one foreign language at a second year level, ability to translate, demonstrated by meeting language requirement
2. Basic knowledge of the general issues and methods in the profession, demonstrated by taking two course requirement in each tradition:
   1. American
   2. Continental
   3. Analytic
   4. Feminism
3. Basic Knowledge of Three historical periods in Western philosophy, demonstrated by completing one course in one of the four
   1. Ancient
   2. Modern
   3. 19th Century
   4. 20th century
4. \* Ability to carry research in the area of M.A. thesis concentration, demonstrated by MA thesis development.
5. \* Ability to carry on and complete the writing of a scholarly thesis, demonstrated by M.A. Thesis completion and passing defense.
6. A sense for diversity both in teaching and in the development of scholarship. Met by the work through the program and by a one required course from ARNL, Asian, Race, Native American, and Latin American philosophy.

**Section 2: Assessment Activities**

For each learning outcome, describe what information was collected, how it was analyzed and discussed, and the conclusions that were drawn from the analysis. In the narrative, reference all relevant means of collecting information about learning goals, including direct measures (e.g. assessment of student assignments), indirect measures (e.g. overall grade patterns in a particular course, student reflections on learning, SERU data), and qualitative information (e.g. faculty observations, student input). While the choice of which assessments are most meaningful is up to the department, a mix of direct and indirect measures is requested.

Assessment of each learning objective is connected to a requirement in the degree program. Students who are determined to meet the learning objective pass the associated requirement.

**Section 3: Actions Taken Based on Assessment Analysis**

For each learning goal assessed for each major, describe any actions taken as a result of assessment information, or plans to take action during the next academic year. Describe how the actions or action plans are meant to address the issues arrived at through the assessment activities in Section 2.

1. While we believe that successful work in courses offered to meet learning objectives include sufficient assessment (students who receive passing grades have demonstrated that they have met the learning objectives), we also believe that courses need to be more transparent in how the students meet the objectives in a given course. This can be addressed by asking faculty to connect their courses to each program-level learning objective in course specific learning objectives. This applies to PhD objectives 1, 3, and 4 and MA objectives 2 and 3.
2. We believe that our students are remarkably successful in meeting the learning objectives associated with the history paper, literature review, and dissertation process (PhD objectives 5, 6, 7 and 8). Since these objectives relate directly to producing high-quality research in the field, an additional assessment activity might be to systematically record and report graduate student research productivity in the form of conference presentations, papers submitted for review, and publications. Such activities are not expected of Master’s students so this assessment would not apply to the MA objectives.
3. Apart from the completion of an ARNL course (see above), we do not currently assess whether or how students achieve the learning objectives related to diversity and inclusion in scholarship (PhD objective 9 and MA objective 6).
4. The department does not systematically assess PhD student teaching except informally through the student experience survey. The department should consider establishing an assessment of the teaching objectives.

**Section 4: Other Efforts to Improve the Student Educational Experience**

Briefly describe other continuous improvement efforts that are not directly related to the learning goals above. In other words, what activity has the department engaged in to improve the student educational experience? This might include changes such as curriculum revisions, new advising approaches, revised or new co-curricular activities, etc. Describe the rationale for the change(s) and any outcomes resulting from the change(s).

The department completed a review of our graduate degree requirements and, in light of our discussions, proposed to modify the requirements by adjusting some of the course requirements and reducing the total number of required courses. This change in requirements also led to the need to propose new courses (five this year).

Despite the expectation that faculty were relieved of non-essential service this year, we nevertheless worked on changing the program and courses offered in the department. We avoided new initiatives, however, and were very surprised by the request to complete this assessment report. While there is no doubt that it is important to develop and report on assessment activities, it seems apparent that this effort is not essential service. We are disappointed that the administration making this request did not respect their own directive regarding service or the faculty who have sacrificed much time and effort to ensure the success of their students and research in this difficult year. We hope that the administration will do better in the future.

**Section 5: Plans for Next Year**

Briefly describe tentative assessment plans for the next academic year. Which goals will be assessed and how? What actions will be taken as a result of this years’ analysis of assessment information? What other plans does the department have to improve the student educational experience? What are the budgetary implications of any proposed actions? How will those be addressed?

1. Learning objectives will be revised to fit the modified degree requirements that should be approved this term.
2. In response to Section 3 (1) above, the Graduate Studies Committee will consider establishing a process for adding specific learning objectives to courses that are intended to meet program learning objectives (PhD and MA objectives 1, 3, and 4).
3. In response to Section 3 (2) above, the Director of Graduate Studies will establish an annual report on graduate student research.
4. In response to Section 3 (3) above, the Graduate Studies Committee will work to develop a means of assessing student success at meeting the diversity expectations in their scholarship.
5. In response to Section 3 (4) above, the Graduate Studies Committee will develop and propose to the faculty Committee of the Whole a teaching assessment process that will assist students in meeting the teaching objectives and will require regular reporting by faculty who supervise graduate student teachers.

Prepared by Scott L. Pratt

Professor of Philosophy

Director of Graduate Students

May 21, 2021