

## Assessment Plan

Name of Program: Philosophy  
Program Director: Candice Shelby  
Person Completing Assessment Plan: Candice Shelby  
Date: 1/26/09

### 1. Program's educational goals or objectives:

To provide majors with the critical thinking and writing skills, and with working knowledge of a variety of philosophical questions and positions, as well as a sensitivity to the nature and import of ethical and social issues facing them in the global workplace.

### 2. Student learning objectives: Describe the desired student learning outcomes in terms of knowledge objectives, skill objectives, and (if applicable) dispositional objectives.

Students will be assessed in both early and late stages in their degree programs, to determine their proficiency with respect to the following learning outcomes.

- a. To explain fundamental philosophical concepts
- b. To outline and criticize the positions of some of the most important figures in the history of philosophy.
- c. To identify and explain the import of at least some ethical and political issues.
- d. To employ philosophical methodologies.
- e. To write analytically and critically
- f. To engage in intellectual discussion and exchange.

### 3. Assessment methods or techniques: Put a check mark next to the measurement methods that will be used.

- Capstone courses
- Common multisectional course exams and/or specific questions
- Course-based exams or other assessment measures developed by faculty and/or specific questions
- Non-course-based exams developed by faculty and/or specific questions (e.g., exit exams, comprehensive exams)
- External reviewers
- Focus groups
- Internships—evaluations by supervisors
- Interviews with individual students
- Knowledge surveys
- National licensing exams
- Oral presentations
- Panel discussions
- Performances (e.g., in fine arts)
- Performance assessments
- Portfolios (paper)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Portfolios (electronic)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Poster presentations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Projects
- \_\_\_\_\_ Students' self-assessments
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standardized exams
- \_\_\_\_\_ Student advisory councils
- X  Surveys for seniors, graduates, employers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Videotapes of student presentations
- X  Written papers or reports
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other—explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other—explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other—explain: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Sampling: Describe the sampling methods to be used – i.e., from whom will the assessment data be collected?

a. In the academic year 2008/2009 a team of instructors will evaluate a random sample of student papers from several upper-level courses, in a summative measure of junior and senior-level students' mastery of outcomes c), d) and e). Also reviews of evaluations of student presentations will be carried out in order to assess student's mastery of outcome f).

b. In the academic year 2009/2010 a representative sample of exams from a number of introductory sections will be examined in the spring and fall to assess the student's level of mastery with regard to objectives a) and c)

c) In the academic year 2010/2011 a team of instructors will evaluate a representative sample of papers and exams from upper-division courses, to assess student mastery of outcomes b) and e).

d) In the academic year 2011/2012 we will focus on outcome d), as measured by assessment of representative exams from the newly-required PHIL3441, Symbolic Logic.

d). Every other year the Department will administer a survey to our graduating majors as a supplementary indirect evaluation of each of the summative measures.

5. Data collection methods: Describe how data will be collected, by whom, and when:

<u>Type of Data</u>	<u>To Be Collected By</u>	<u>When</u>
a. Student papers	Designated faculty members	End of each semester 2008/2009 and 2010/2011
b. Common exam questions	Designated faculty members	End of each semester 2009/2010
c. Logic exams	Designated faculty members	End of semester when course is offered

d. Student survey                      Designated faculty member      Every other Spring

6. Assessment scoring methods: Describe how the assessments will be scored (e.g., calculations of total scores on objective tests; determination of categorical scores via the use of a scoring rubric on open-ended tasks, etc.), by whom, and when:

<u>Type of Scoring</u>	<u>To Be Scored By</u>	<u>When</u>
a. Categorical scores using scoring rubric	Faculty Committee	End of semester
b. Categorical scores using scoring rubric	Faculty Committee	End of semester
c. Categorical scores	Faculty Committee	End of semester
d. Categorical scores	Faculty Committee	Every other year

7. Data interpretation plans: Describe what types of criteria will be used to interpret the data, and how data will be aggregated:

a) Relative criteria? (pre-post comparisons, analysis of growth or change, comparisons across groups)  
Students' abilities in introductory and developing courses will be compared with those of students in upper-division courses. Students at the end of their logic training will be compared on an absolute scale, and students will provide indirect evidence at the end of their undergraduate studies based on their own impressions of their learning

b) Absolute criteria? (comparison of results with an arbitrarily-set cut-off, e.g., 80% accuracy)  
Comparison of results will be calculated based on relevant specific rubrics.

c) How will the data be aggregated across students so that the program-level results are presented clearly?

The report will discuss:

- a. the degree of accomplishment in various areas, based on an agreed-upon rubric, which will be used in the construction of the curriculum
- b. the abilities of students in the logic class based on an assessment of their exam performance in the relevant course
- c. the quality of our program from the perspective of the students who have completed it

8. Use of information (the "feedback loop"): Describe how the information will be summarized and reported; to whom it will be reported; and how it will be used to make programmatic recommendations and decisions.

Previous assessments of student skills have already led to a revision of the major in light of the learning objectives that we have identified. We will make adjustments to curriculum in the future as indicated by future assessments. One way in which we will already be altering our curriculum is in adding a symbolic logic course to the list of requirements. Another is including common exam questions or pre- and post- tests in our introductory sections, to test for uniformity in course delivery.

9. Major responsibility for tasks: For steps 5-8, indicate who will take major responsibility for ensuring that the tasks are completed:

Data Collection: Department Chair through designated faculty members.  
Assessment Scoring: Faculty Committee.  
Data Interpretation: Department Chair through designated faculty members.  
Reporting and “closing the feedback loop”: Department Chair, in consultation with committee of the tenured and tenure-track faculty.

10. Assessment evaluation: Indicate how the assessment plan will be periodically reviewed by program faculty and, if necessary, revised.

Assessment evaluation is a continuous process. The faculty will meet every year to discuss the outcomes assessment plan, and make specific plans for future years, adjusting either curriculum or assessment means or both, as needed.