



ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT

College	CLASS
Department	Philosophy & Religious Studies
Program	BA Philosophy
Reporting for Academic Year	2017-2018
Last 5-Year Review	2013
Next 5-Year Review	2019-2020
Department Chair	Christopher Moreman
Date Submitted	Dec. 18, 2018

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 has been 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.
 - i. The new Minor in Religious Studies is currently moving through the approval process
- ii) Revise curriculum to eliminate redundant courses
 - a. Curriculum fully revised through conversion
 - i. Entering semesters has presented new challenges and opportunities, which will be addressed by further refinement of curriculum.
- 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. A lecturer faculty has developed online courses covering three GE areas: A3, C2, and C4. Working with the office for online curriculum development, Dr. Ferrarello will develop and revise these courses to meet accepted standards and Quality Matters.
 - b. Online versions of PHIL 100 (A3) and 312 (C4) have been approved through the curriculog process, with 100 & 312 being offered in Spring 2019.
- iv) Continue to offer sections of the Critical Thinking course for Concord as needed.
 - a. Concord has indicated that they will no longer require a dedicated section of PHIL 100 to be offered at their campus going forward on semesters.

v) **Maintain commitments to GE both in the distinctive Freshman Clusters and Upper Division Humanities.**

- a. Department remains heavily involved in GE through conversion.
 - i. Though the department had committed to being involved in 8 different cluster communities, the GE office has decided to abandon the program going forward on semesters.
 - ii. Almost all upper division and all lower division PHIL courses meet a GE requirement
 - iii. Several of our courses meet each of the three overlays.

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, averaging 31 over the last five years, with a high of 38 in 2016, and a low of 24 in 2017.
- b. Department remains active in recruitment initiatives, including Al Fresco, Welcome Day, and the chair attended a special summer (2017) meeting with university recruiters to assist in recruitment of CLASS majors.
- c. The department has increased spending on advertising in the student newspaper.

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 in 2015.
- b. The department has seen its FERP faculty separate from the university as of 2017.
- 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 an additional tenure track hire in the History of Philosophy with a Generalist approach.
- e. With changes to the requirements of the Health Sciences Major, there is an increased demand for offerings in Bioethics, and as of 2017-2018, the department has sought permission to hire a tenure-track faculty member in the area, with the support of the Health Sciences department.
- f. Though the CLASS Council of Chairs in 2017-2018 voted PHIL's two tenure-track requests as the 4th and 6th highest priorities of the College, the Dean re-prioritized the list and we were once again passed over for a position.

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
- g. The department has moved to completely online student evaluations.
- h. Department was awarded \$20,000 for maintaining very high graduation rates.

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. With the abandonment of the Freshman Learning Communities announced by GE, the department will seek to develop new lower-division offerings as possible. We will require further advising from GE to ascertain the needs of incoming students for lower-division GE.

Our number of Majors has remained steady 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 highest in CLASS (30.7 in 2017).

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). For our graduation efforts, PHIL was awarded \$20,000 for use in 2018-2019.

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. 76% of PHIL sections are currently taught by contingent/lecturer faculty, a number that far exceeds the university's target.

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:

Exposure to the subject remains our primary means of attracting new Majors. We had aimed to maintain a heavy involvement in the Freshman Learning Communities, with 8 clusters accepted to begin F18 (as opposed to the 6 clusters that we had under quarters). We strove to create new clusters that would energize freshman students, and provide a useful and attractive introduction to issues in Philosophy and other subjects. With the announced abandonment of the FLC program by GE, the department will have to increase our focus on

lower-division C2 courses as our best means of introducing new students to the subject. We do offer a significant number of sections of A3, but this is essentially a methods course that does not serve to introduce students to the topics of Philosophy and Religious Studies.

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 changed 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. Being a new requirement for their program, there is now a recognized need for a dedicated faculty member to handle this substantive number of students. We hope to add a new tenure-track faculty member in the area who would be able to serve as a liaison between our departments and manage the large number of sections for conformity.

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, 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 167 FTES in 2013 to 254 FTES in 2017, an increase of 52.1%. 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 have included two Majors-only courses in the core and the expected low enrollment for these courses is being offset by increased enrollment in C2 and A3. With the experience of a year of semesters now underway, we anticipate eliminating one of these two low-enrolled Major courses.

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. Particularly refreshing is the relatively high number of female students (approx.. 40%) in what has been a traditionally male dominated field.

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

In 2012, lecturers accounted for more than half of the departments FTES (54.7%), but this number has increased drastically from year to year to the point where in 2018 lecturers account for more than three-quarters (76%) of the departments FTES! This ratio is unsustainable and far exceeds the university's target of 50%.

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. The lack of tenure-track faculty is the single biggest difficulty for our department.

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. In fact, we have witnessed an increased workload for staff as we have moved to semesters and will monitor this moving forward.

Resources: 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

1. write clear, academically rigorous, argumentative essays.

We have reviewed the PLOs one at a time in an annual rotation. PLO #1 was previously assessed in 2013 by Jen Eagan. The conclusion at that time was that the program was effectively delivering on this PLO.

C. Summary of Assessment Process

Instrument(s): Using a collection of essays submitted by PHIL Majors to the annual essay prize, members of the department graded the essays against a rubric specifically intended to gauge the strength of argumentative essays.

Sampling Procedure: Essays submitted to the annual essay prize in Philosophy were used as the sample, being submitted by PHIL Majors who are mainly seniors, and who are expected to submit their best work for consideration.

Sample Characteristics: The sample set consisted of 9 essays, all of which were PHIL Majors, and 7 of which were submitted by Seniors.

Data Collection: A rubric was shared with faculty, as were the set of 9 essays. The essays were anonymized ahead of evaluation. Moreman collected the graded rubrics from the other faculty involved (a total of 3 faculty members completed the assessment).

Data Analysis: See below

D. Summary of Assessment Results

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

Main Findings: 1) Faculty assessments were largely in agreement from essay to essay, indicating a coherence of understanding the grading criteria among faculty; 2) The 7 essays submitted by Seniors were vastly superior to those submitted by non-Seniors, indicating the success of the program in developing the PLO in question over time; 3) 5 of the 7 essays were ranked as very strong, whereas 2 had some serious deficiencies, indicating A) that the program is largely successful in developing the PLO among its Majors, but that B) more work must be done to ensure that ALL Majors develop the same level of PLO mastery.

Next Step(s) for Closing the Loop: The department will meet to discuss the findings and to discuss potential ideas for working to ensure that ALL Majors develop the same level of mastery in writing argumentative essays. One possibility that has been discussed is the use of the new Philosophy & Religious Studies seminar course for development of this particular skill. When this PLO is again assessed in future, a comparison of essays produced in the seminar might be usefully compared with those submitted for the annual essay prize.

Other Reflections: Some criticisms of the rubric were raised by the faculty participating in the assessment. The results still showed a strong degree of coherence in the use of the rubric, but further discussion of the rubric will be forthcoming, with potential refinements to come for the next assessment of this PLO.

D. Assessment Plans for Next Year

The department is due to conduct a five-year review in 2019-2020 and in so doing will conduct a full review of all assessments done since our previous five-year review.

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. The worsening was noted in last year's report, but has worsened yet again since then (moving from about 60% to 76%!). We are in desperate need of additional regular faculty. Adding two new tenure-track faculty will stabilize the department.

Student enrollments in PHIL courses have increased year over year since 2012. FTES has risen from 167 in 2013 to 254 in 2017, an increase of 52.1%. This number is rising yet again with the implementation of semesters. SFR and number of Majors remain steady at about 31 each.

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. Lecturer faculty, though, outside of office hours, have no other contractual commitment to service. The department is heavily involved in GE, especially in areas A3, C2, and C4. The field relies on student exposure to the subject matter to recruit new Majors, but students who might wish to continue their studies 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 creating a 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.

The department has been very successful in achieving high graduation rates, but the increased reliance on contingent faculty over regular faculty is bound to have a detrimental effect here as students have a less stable faculty to turn to for advising and mentorship.

On enrollment increases: Philosophy & Religious Studies has added higher and higher numbers of students. We have done this by raising caps on those courses that we can, while remaining committed to several GE areas that have reduced enrollment caps (such as C4 and the Freshman Learning Communities). 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: With an SFR of 30.7 in 2017, we maintain one of the highest ratios in our college, and our number of students could be higher but for the enforcement of low enrollment caps in C4 (and, until now, on the Freshman Learning Communities). 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 we 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 6 years ago. **We are requesting 2 tenure-track lines at the rank of Assistant Professor immediately.**

The department is heavily weighted towards lecturer instruction; in 2018-2019, lecturers are teaching 76% of our department's offerings (59 of 78 sections). 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. 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 AI fresco are two recent examples of events that were missed due to a lack of available regular faculty.

IF we are granted only 1 Tenure-Track faculty position, we would endeavor to fill it with an individual conversant in BOTH the History of Philosophy and Bioethics, but this is not an ideal situation.

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.