Assurance of Student Learning 2018-2019	
Potter College of Arts and Letters	Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies
769 - Religious Studies	

Student Learning Outcome 1: Students will be able to construct and effectively write a thesis for a research paper and defend that thesis through the use of relevant literature and resources.			
Instrument 1	Direct: Analysis of Senior Seminar papers		
Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.		**Met**	**Not Met**
Student Learning Outcome 2: Students will be able to locate the relevant literature or resources for research paper.			
Instrument 1	Direct: Analysis of Senior Seminar papers		
Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.		**Met**	**Not Met**
Student Learning Outcome 3: Students will be able to utilize relevant literature or resources to defend research paper thesis.			
Instrument 1	Direct: Analysis of Senior Seminar papers		
Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.		**Met**	**Not Met**

Program Summary

Overall, the results from this assessment indicate that our learning outcomes do not accurately reflect what we intend students to learn in our program and that our assessment process does not adequately assess what percentage of students are meeting the learning outcomes as stated or meeting learning outcomes that are intended.

We have taken several steps to address this:

1. We have modified stated student learning outcomes so that each outcome can be assessed with one Leap VALUE rubric rather than with several.
2. We have modified stated student learning outcomes so that the outcomes are distinct from each other.
3. We have modified stated student learning outcomes so that the outcomes include only one outcome instead of several wrapped into one.
4. We have decided to assess a higher quantity of artifacts for direct assessments so that the "percentage of program achieving target" in our assessment more accurately reflects the actual percentage of the program achieving target.
5. We have added one additional form of direct assessment and one form of indirect assessment per learning outcome so that our assessment more accurately captures the fullness of student learning and does not rely on only one measurement instrument.

Outcomes from the changes we have made:
- The "percentage of program achieving target" reported in the assessment for each measurement in the assessment will more accurately the actual percent of program achieving target.
- The "percentage of program achieving target" will be at least 90%.
- The learning outcomes we are tracking will more accurately reflect what we want students in our program to learn.
- Our assessment methods will more accurately assess if students in our program are learning the things we want students to learn.

Student Learning Outcome 1		
Student Learning Outcome	Students will be able to construct and effectively write a thesis for a research paper and defend thesis through the use of relevant literature and resources.	
Measurement Instrument 1	Direct: Analysis of Senior Seminar Papers	
Criteria for Student Success	Drawing from AAC&U VALUES rubrics for information literacy, inquiry and analysis, and written communication, criteria for student success is as follows (modified rubric attached): 1. Critical Thinking Leap VALUE Rubric: On *Student's Position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)*, students should score at Capstone or Upper Milestone level. 2. Information Literacy VALUE Rubric: On *Evaluate information and Its Sources Critically*, students should score at Capstone or Upper Milestone level 3. Written Communication Leap VALUE Rubric: On *Sources and Evidence*, students should score at Capstone or Upper Milestone level.	

Program Success Target for this Measurement	90%	**Percent of Program Achieving Target**	75%

Methods	Direct: Artifacts from the senior seminar capstone course final paper were collected from all students in the course ($N = 8$) and all identifiers removed. We then randomly selected 50% of those papers to assess. The papers were split among two full-time faculty so that each paper was read twice by two different reviewers. In the event there was a notable difference in the score between the two faculty members, a third faculty member read it and the score was average between the three readers. The rubric used for scoring was drawn from the Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, and Written Communication Leap VALUE Rubrics from AAC&U.		

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.	**Met**	<mark>**Not Met**</mark>

Actions (Describe the decision-making process and actions planned for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.)

Our primary concerns were not with student learning, per se, but with the way the learning outcomes, including this learning outcome #1, were stated and the process for assessing if learning outcomes, including this learning outcome #1, were met.

The student learning outcomes, as written, overlapped with each other and were repetitive. Additionally several outcomes, including this learning outcome #1, while written as a single outcome, were actually several outcomes wrapped up into one. Thus we have worked to clarify/differentiate outcomes so that they reflect what we intend student to learn.

Further, given the process we designed for this assessment, if only one paper (of the four randomly selected papers assessed for this outcome) did not meet the outcome, then it meant that we did not meet our "program success target" for that measurement. This does not adequately convey the actual percentage of program was achieving the target.

Below are the ways we have addressed the challenges to outcomes and the process of assessing said outcomes.

- We have modified student learning outcome, including this outcome #1, so that each outcome can be assessed with one Leap VALUE rubric rather than with several.
- We have modified student learning outcomes, including this outcome #1, so that the outcomes are distinct from each other.
- We have modified student learning outcomes, including this outcome #1, so that the outcomes include only one outcome instead of several wrapped into one.
- We have decided to assess a higher quantity of artifacts for direct assessments so that the "percentage of program achieving target" in our assessment more accurately reflects the actual percentage of the program achieving target.
- We have added one additional form of direct assessment and one form of indirect assessment so that our assessment more accurately captures the fullness of student learning and does not rely on only one measurement instrument.

Follow-Up (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.)

In the 2019-20 academic year:

- The "percentage of program achieving target" reported in the assessment for each measurement in the assessment will more accurately the actual percent of program achieving target.
- The "percentage of program achieving target" will be at least 90%.
- The learning outcomes we are tracking will more accurately reflect what we want students in our program to learn.
- Our assessment methods will more accurately assess if students in our program are learning the things we want students to learn.

Rubric for Student Learning Outcome #1

	Capstone (4)	Upper Milestone (3)	Lower Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)
Student's Thesis	Thesis is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Other points of views are synthesized.	Thesis takes into account the complexity of an issue, acknowledging other points of view.	Thesis acknowledges different sides of an issue	Thesis is stated, but simplistic and obvious.
Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically	Chooses a variety of information sources appropriate to religious studies and the thesis. Selects sources after considering the importance of relevance to research questions, authority, audience, and bias or point of view.	Chooses a variety of information sources appropriate to the religious studies and the thesis. Select sources using multiple criteria such as relevance to the research question, audience, and authority.	Choses a variety of information sources. Selects sources using basic criteria such as relevant to the research question.	Chooses a few information sources. Selects sources using limited criteria such as relevance to the research question.

Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates consistent use of relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in writing.
Uses Information to Accomplish a Specific Purpose (defend thesis)	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from sources to defend thesis with clarity and depth	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from sources to defend thesis.	Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the thesis is not adequately defended.	Communicates information from sources. The information is fragmented and/or used inappropriately so that the thesis is not adequately defended.

Student Learning Outcome 2	
Student Learning Outcome	Students will be able to locate the relevant literature or resources for research paper.
Measurement Instrument 1	Direct: Analysis of Senior Seminar Papers
Criteria for Student Success	Drawing from AAC&U VALUES rubrics for information literacy, inquiry and analysis, and written communication, criteria for student success is as follows (modified rubric attached): 1. Information Literacy VALUE Rubric: On *Access the needed* Information, students should score at Capstone or Upper Milestone level 2. Written Communication Leap VALUE Rubric: On *Sources and Evidence*, students should score at Capstone or Upper Milestone level.

Program Success Target for this Measurement	90%	**Percent of Program Achieving Target**	100%

Methods	Direct: Artifacts from the senior seminar capstone course final paper were collected from all students in the course ($N = 8$) and all identifiers removed. We then randomly selected 50% of those papers to assess. The papers were split among two full-time faculty so that each paper was read twice by two different reviewers. In the event there was a notable difference in the score between the two faculty members, a third faculty member read it and the score was average between the three readers. The rubric used for scoring was drawn from the Information Literacy and Written Communication Leap VALUE Rubrics from AAC&U.

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.	**Met**	Not Met

Actions (Describe the decision-making process and actions planned for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.)

Our primary concerns were not with student learning, per se, but with the way the learning outcomes, including this learning outcome #2, were stated and the process for assessing if learning outcomes, including this learning outcome #2, were met.

The student learning outcomes, as written, overlapped with each other and were repetitive. Additionally this outcome (outcome #2) was not worded in a way that allowed a reliable assessment of student learning based on the measurement instruments we established. Essentially, it is somewhat difficult to accurately assess students' ability to locate relevant literature based on the measurement instruments we established. Thus, we have worked to clarify/differentiate outcomes that reflect what we intend student to learn and have adjusted measurement instruments so that we can more reliability assess student learning.

Further, given the process we designed for this assessment, if only one paper (of the four randomly selected papers assessed for this outcome) did not meet the outcome, then it meant that we did not meet our "program success target" for that measurement. Likewise, if all papers assessed met the program success target for this measurement, it appears that we have 100% of students in the program achieving the garget. We believe that this does not adequately convey the actual percentage of program was achieving the target.

Below are the ways we have addressed the challenges to outcomes and the process of assessing said outcomes.

- We have modified student learning outcome, including this outcome #2, so that each outcome can be assessed with one Leap VALUE rubric rather than with several.
- We have modified student learning outcomes, including this outcome #2, so that the outcomes are distinct from each other.
- We have modified student learning outcomes, including this outcome #2, so that the outcomes are able to be measured by the instruments that we have available and plan to use.
- We have decided to assess a higher quantity of artifacts for direct assessments so that the "percentage of program achieving target" in our assessment more accurately reflects the actual percentage of the program achieving target.
- We have added one additional form of direct assessment and one form of indirect assessment so that our assessment more accurately captures the fullness of student learning and does not rely on only one measurement instrument.

Follow-Up

In the 2019-20 academic year:

- The "percentage of program achieving target" reported in the assessment for each measurement in the assessment will more accurately the actual percent of program achieving target.
- The "percentage of program achieving target" will be at least 90%.
- The learning outcomes we are tracking will more accurately reflect what we want students in our program to learn.
- Our assessment methods will more accurately assess if students in our program are learning the things we want students to learn.

Rubric for Student Learning Outcome #2

	Capstone (4)	Upper Milestone (3)	Lower Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)
Access the Needed Information	Accesses information using effective, well-designed search strategies and most appropriate information sources.	Access information using a variety of search strategies and some relevant information sources. Demonstrates ability to refine search.	Access information using simple search strategies, retries information from limited and similar sources.	Accesses information randomly, retrieves information that lacks relevance and quality.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates consistent use of relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in writing.

Student Learning Outcome 3	
Student Learning Outcome	Students will be able to utilize relevant literature or resources to defend research paper thesis.
Measurement Instrument 1	Analysis of Senior Seminar Papers
Criteria for Student Success	Drawing from AAC&U VALUES rubrics for information literacy, inquiry and analysis, and written communication, criteria for student success is as follows (modified rubric attached): 1. Information Literacy VALUE Rubric: On *Evaluate information and Its Sources Critically* and *Uses Information to Accomplish a Specific Purpose (defend thesis)*, students should score at Capstone or Upper Milestone level 2. Written Communication Leap VALUE Rubric: On *Sources and Evidence*, students should score at Capstone or Upper Milestone level.

Program Success Target for this Measurement	90%	**Percent of Program Achieving Target**	75%

Methods	Direct: Artifacts from the senior seminar capstone course final paper were collected from all students in the course ($N = 8$) and all identifiers removed. We then randomly selected 50% of those papers to assess. The papers were split among two full-time faculty so that each paper was read twice by two different reviewers. In the event there was a notable difference in the score between the two faculty members, a third faculty member read it and the score was average between the three readers. The rubric used for scoring was drawn from the Information Literacy, and Written Communication Leap VALUE Rubrics from AAC&U.

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.	**Met**	<mark>**Not Met**</mark>

Actions (Describe the decision-making process and actions planned for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.)

Our primary concerns were not with student learning, per se, but with the way the learning outcomes, including this learning outcome #3, were stated and the process for assessing if learning outcomes, including this learning outcome #3, were met.

The student learning outcomes, as written, overlapped with each other and were repetitive. Thus we have worked to clarify/differentiate outcomes that reflect what we intend student to learn.

Further, given the process we designed for this assessment, if only one paper (of the four randomly selected papers assessed for this outcome) did not meet the outcome, then it meant that we did not meet our "program success target" for that measurement. Likewise, if all papers assessed met the program success target for this measurement, it appears that we have 100% of students in the program achieving the garget. This does not adequately convey the actual percentage of program was achieving the target.

Below are the ways we have addressed the challenges to outcomes and the process of assessing said outcomes.

- We have modified student learning outcome, including this outcome #3, so that each outcome can be assessed with one Leap VALUE rubric rather than with several.
- We have modified student learning outcomes, including this outcome #3, so that the outcomes are distinct from each other.
- We have modified student learning outcomes, including this outcome #3, so that the outcomes include only one outcome instead of several wrapped into one.
- We have decided to assess a higher quantity of artifacts for direct assessments so that the "percentage of program achieving target" in our assessment more accurately reflects the actual percentage of the program achieving target.
- We have added one additional form of direct assessment and one form of indirect assessment so that our assessment more accurately captures the fullness of student learning and does not rely on only one measurement instrument.

Follow-Up

In the 2019-20 academic year:

- The "percentage of program achieving target" reported in the assessment for each measurement in the assessment will more accurately the actual percent of program achieving target.
- The "percentage of program achieving target" will be at least 90%.
- The learning outcomes we are tracking will more accurately reflect what we want students in our program to learn.
- Our assessment methods will more accurately assess if students in our program are learning the things we want students to learn.

Rubric for Student Learning Outcome #3

	Capstone (4)	Upper Milestone (3)	Lower Milestone (2)	Benchmark (1)
Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically	Chooses a variety of information sources appropriate to religious studies and the thesis. Selects sources after considering the importance of relevance to research questions, authority, audience, and bias or point of view.	Chooses a variety of information sources appropriate to the religious studies and the thesis. Select sources using multiple criteria such as relevance to the research question, audience, and authority.	Choses a variety of information sources. Selects sources using basic criteria such as relevant to the research question.	Chooses a few information sources. Selects sources using limited criteria such as relevance to the research question.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates consistent use of relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for religious studies research papers.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in writing.

Uses Information to Accomplish a Specific Purpose (defend thesis)	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from sources to defend thesis with clarity and depth	Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from sources to defend thesis.	Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the thesis is not adequately defended.	Communicates information from sources. The information is fragmented and/or used inappropriately so that the thesis is not adequately defended.