**PROGRAM SUMMARY** :

As noted below, our sample was wide (relative to our numbers), but there was insufficient co-evaluation (overlap). Also, standards were applied more strictly by some faculty than by others. As a result, the overall outcomes were too high, producing a 100% success rate. Without the assessment outlier, the results would have been more reasonable. Accordingly, for next year we plan to tighten and standardize our criteria and evaluations, and also to consult more with one another and with students. The aim is to make outcomes more informative and useful.

Note: The dean’s office is concerned that all outcomes were identical to two decimal points. The program needs to be certain that each SLO is being assess separately, even if the artifacts are the same.

***Use this page to list learning outcomes, measurements, and summarize results for your program. Detailed information must be completed in the subsequent pages.***

**Student Learning Outcome 1:** Students will be able to effectively collect and analyze evidence in the discipline of Philosophy in support of a position.

**Instrument 1**

Direct: Analysis of senior theses and papers written in upper-level seminars.

**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 demonstrate effective written communication skills appropriate for the discipline of philosophy.

**Instrument 1**

Direct: Analysis of senior theses and papers written in upper-level seminars.

**Based on your results, highlight or circle whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.**

**Met**

**Not Met**

**Student Learning Outcome 3:** Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking skills in their written work.

**Instrument 1**

Direct: Analysis of senior theses and papers written in upper-level seminars.

**Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.**

**Met**

**Not Met**

**Assurance of Student Learning 2020-2021**

Potter College of Arts and Letters

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies

745 - Philosophy

Michael Seidler

90%

**100**

**Based on your results, highlight or circle whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.**

Analysis of senior theses and papers written in upper-level seminars.

Students will be able to effectively collect and analyze evidence in the discipline of Philosophy in support of a position.

Drawing from AAC&U VALUES rubric for *Inquiry and Analysis*, criteria for student success is capstone level (4) or upper milestone level

(3) with respect to topic selection, existing knowledge, research, and/or views, analysis, and conclusion.

**Not Met**

**Met**

Fourteen (14) papers from Spring 2021 were collected and offered for anonymous review by three faculty members. Papers were mostly senior seminar papers but also included several take-home essay exams completed by seniors (to balance instruments from each faculty member). There were four or five items from each of three faculty members’ classes, so there was a good spread. Since each faculty member selected four papers to review, and there were overlaps in (only) two cases, scores for ten students overall were tallied.

Given this spread, eight of the ten instruments had only one reader; two papers had two readers. In the latter case the scores were averaged (for each SLO, and also overall).

**Percent of Program Achieving Target**

**FOLLOW-UP**: Our main challenge will be to achieve more consistency in our collective evaluations. To this end, we will meet before papers are distributed for assessment, as well as afterward. At the start of each terms, we will also consult about the individual rubrics in order to insure they are understood by students in the same way. Moreover, we will review our instructions to students so that they follow the structural and argumentative guidelines more closely. Finally, since some topics this year were only loosely philosophical, we will consult more with one another to insure that student interests are balanced with philosophical standards.

**Analysis:**

The results showed consistency in the ratings of two faculty members, and a considerably higher rating by a third - across all three SLO categories. Thus, the average for SLO 1 was 3.0; the average for SLO 2 was 3.0; and the average for SLO 3 was 3.0. The overall average of the ten (of fourteen) submissions was 2.94 due to rounding off in some cases. This led to 100% success rates.

**Student Learning Outcome 1**

**Student Learning Outcome**

**Measurement Instrument 1**

**Criteria for Student Success**

**Program Success Target for this Measurement**

**Methods**

**NEXT ASSESSMENT CYCLE PLAN:** The Philosophy faculty will consult during early fall (2021) to review SLOs and also the instructions given to students who are writing theses next year. We will also agree on a procedure for consulting more frequently so that the theses experience is more standardized for all students. This will include a brief meeting of theses students with all Philosophy faculty at the start of both fall and spring terms. In terms of targets, we are lowering these to 80% because of our intent to make the assessments more rigorous next year.

**Rubric for Student Learning Outcome 1:** Students will be able to effectively collect and analyze evidence in the discipline of Philosophy in support of a position.

Capstone (4)

Upper Milestone (3)

Lower Milestone (2)

Benchmark (1)

Topic selection

Identifies a creative, focused, and manageable topic within the study of philosophy that addresses potentially significant aspects of the topic.

Identifies a focused and manageable/doable topic within the study of philosophy that appropriately addresses relevant aspects of the topic.

Identifies a topic within the study of philosophy that while manageable/doable, is too narrowly focused and leaves out relevant aspects of the topic.

Identifies a topic within the study of philosophy that is far too general and wide-ranging as to be manageable and doable.

Existing Knowledge, Research, and/or Views

Synthesizes in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches.

Presents in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches.

Presents information from relevant sources representing limited points of view/approaches.

Presents information from irrelevant sources representing limited points of view/approaches.

Analysis

Organizes and synthesizes evidence to reveal insightful patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus.

Organizes evidence to reveal important patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus.

Organizes evidence, but the organization is not effective in revealing important patterns, differences, or similarities.

Lists evidence, but it is not organized and/or is unrelated to focus.

Conclusion

States a conclusion that is a logical extrapolation from the inquiry findings.

The conclusion arises specifically from and responds specifically to the inquiry findings.

States a general conclusion that, because it is so general, also applies beyond the scope of the inquiry findings.

States an ambiguous, illogical, or unsupportable conclusion from inquiry findings.

**90%**

Fourteen (14) papers from Spring 2021 were collected and offered for anonymous review by three faculty members. Papers were mostly senior seminar papers but also included several take-home essay exams completed by seniors (to balance instruments from each faculty member). There were four or five items from each of three faculty members’ classes, so there was a good spread. Since each faculty member selected four papers to review, and there were overlaps in (only) two cases, scores for ten students overall were tallied.

**Student Learning**

**Outcome 2**

**Student Learning Outcome**

Students will be able to demonstrate effective written communication skills appropriate for the discipline of philosophy.

**Measurement Instrument 1**

Analysis of senior theses and papers written in upper-level seminars.

**Criteria for Student Success**

Drawing from AAC&U VALUES rubric for *Written Communication*, criteria for student success is capstone level (4) or upper milestone level (3) with respect to content development, sources and evidence, and control of syntax and mechanics.

**Program Success Target for this Measurement**

**Percent of Program Achieving Target**

**100**

**Methods**

**Based on your results, highlight or circle whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.**

**Met**

**Not Met**

**AnalysiS:** The results showed consistency in the ratings of two faculty members, and a considerably higher rating by the third - across all three SLO categories. Thus, the average for SLO 1 was 3.0; the average for SLO 2 was 3.0; and the average for SLO 3 was 3.0. The overall average of the ten (of fourteen) submissions was **2.94** due to rounding off in some cases. This led to 100% success rates.

**FOLLOW-UP:** Our main challenge will be to achieve more consistency in our collective evaluations. To this end, we will meet before papers are distributed for assessment, as well as afterward. At the start of each terms, we will also consult about the individual rubrics in order to insure they are understood by students in the same way. Moreover, we will review our instructions to students so that they follow the structural and argumentative guidelines more closely. Finally, since some topics this year were only loosely philosophical, we will consult more with one another to insure that student interests are balanced with philosophical standards

**NEXT ASSESSMENT CYCLE PLAN:** The Philosophy faculty will consult during early fall (2021) to review SLOs and also the instructions given to students who are writing theses next year. We will also agree on a procedure for consulting more frequently so that the theses experience is more standardized for all students. This will include a brief meeting   
of theses students with all Philosophy faculty at the start of both fall and spring terms. In terms of targets, we are lowering these to 80% because of our intent to make the assessments more rigorous next year.

**Rubric for Student Learning Outcome 2:** Students will be able to demonstrate effective written communication skills appropriate for the discipline of philosophy.

Capstone (4)

Upper Milestone (3)

Lower Milestone (2)

Benchmark (1)

Content Development

Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and this shapes the whole work.

Uses appropriate, relevent, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and this shapes the whole work.

Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.

Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.

Sources and Evidence

Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate to philosophy and genre of the writing.

Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within philosophy and genre of the writing.

Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for philosophy and genre of the writing.

Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.

Control of Syntax and Mechanics

Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.

Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The writing has few errors.

Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.

Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.

**100**

**90%**

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**Student Learning**

**Outcome 3**

**Student Learning Outcome**

Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking skills in their written work.

**Measurement Instrument 1**

Analysis of senior theses and papers written in upper-level seminars.

**Criteria for Student Success**

Drawing from AAC&U VALUES rubric for *Critical Thinking*, criteria for student success is capstone level (4) or upper milestone level (3) with respect to explanation of issues, evidence, student’s position, and conclusions and related outcomes.

**Program Success Target for this Measurement**

**Percent of Program Achieving Target**

**Methods**

**Based on your results, highlight or circle whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.**

**Met**

**Not Met**

**AnalysiS:**

The results showed consistency in the ratings of two faculty members, and a considerably higher rating by the third - across all three SLO categories. Thus, the average for SLO 1 was 3.0; the average for SLO 2 was 3.0; and the average for SLO 3 was 3.0. The overall average of the ten (of fourteen) submissions was **2.94** due to rounding off in some cases.

**FOLLOW-UP:** Our main challenge will be to achieve more consistency in our collective evaluations. To this end, we will meet before papers are distributed for assessment, as well as afterward. At the start of each terms, we will also consult about the individual rubrics in order to insure they are understood by students in the same way. Moreover, we will review our instructions to students so that they follow the structural and argumentative guidelines more closely. Finally, since some topics this year were only loosely philosophical, we will consult more with one another to insure that student interests are balanced with philosophical standards.

**NEXT ASSESSMENT CYCLE PLAN:** The Philosophy faculty will consult during early fall (2021) to review SLOs and also the instructions given to students who are writing theses next year. We will also agree on a procedure for consulting more frequently so that the theses experience is more standardized for all students. This will include a brief meeting   
of theses students with all Philosophy faculty at the start of both fall and spring terms. In terms of targets, we are lowering these to 80% because of our intent to make the assessments more rigorous next year.

**Rubric for Student Learning Outcome 3:** Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking skills in their written work.

Capstone (4)

Upper Milestone (3)

Lower Milestone (2)

Benchmark (1)

Explanation of issues

Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for understanding.

Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.

Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undertermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.

Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.

Evidence: Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion

Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis.

Information is taken from sources with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthysis.

Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.

Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation.

Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)

Specific position is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Other points of views are synthesized.

Specific position takes into account the complexity of an issue, acknowledging other points of view.

Specific position acknowledges different sides of an issue.

Specific position is stated, but simplistic and obvious.

Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)

Conclusions and related outcomes are logical and reflect student’s informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectivesd discussed in priority order.

Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly

Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.

Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.