**2009 Philosophy Report**

**Step1: Department/Program Mission (Any updates due September 15, 2009)**

Historically, philosophy is at the center of the liberal arts tradition.  The very concept of an Academy that combines the freedom to inquire with the responsibility to clarify and solve social problems is the invention of classical Greek philosophers.  By subject matter, philosophy is one of the humanities in that philosophy critically examines the concepts and basic assumptions we have developed to help us understand the world and human relationships.  But philosophy retains a methodological kinship with the sciences, whose methods developed out of general philosophical inquiry.  Critical thinking is the hallmark of philosophy courses that bring clarity, precision, and logically rigorous argument to controversial questions about what is real, knowable, and valuable.  The development of this critical perspective, an appreciation of inquiry and the values that underlie it, is the heart of philosophy.

Our philosophy courses cultivate an analysis of arguments, clear and precise expression of one's views - particularly in writing - and the ability to comprehend complex thought systems.  But our students find their philosophy background particularly useful in professions ranging from law, public policy, and business to environmental studies, medicine, and neuroscience.  The critical skills and sense of intellectual heritage that follow the study of philosophy are not only useful in finding a job, but they foster maturity of judgment, personal growth and lifelong learning.

**Step 2: List goals/outcomes (Any updates due September 15, 2009)**

**Overarching Objective:**

To enable our students to develop critical thinking skills in order to understand and respond effectively to complex issues and situations in life, as well as to develop a sense of their intellectual heritage.

**Specific Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to analyze the complexity of an issue by identifying possible multiple viewpoints inherent in the issue.

2. Students will be able to construct arguments inherent in each of these viewpoints - i.e., identify implicit or explicit premises and generate conclusions from these premises.

3. Students will be able to assess the intellectual weight of these viewpoints by examining the validity and soundness of their inherent arguments, along with other merits vs demerits of these viewpoints.

4. Students will be able to clearly and precisely express their views in writing.

5. Students will be able to gain familiarity with major philosophers and their contributions to the field.

**Step 3: Identify program components (Any updates due September 15, 2009)**

Philosophy majors are required to take a minimum of 8 units in philosophy.  At least 3 of these must be at the 300- or 400- level. Courses required for the major must be taken for a numerical grade and cannot be taken credit/no credit.  Directed studies may be counted only by permission of the department.

Philosophy minors are required to take 5 units in philosophy, at least 2 of which must be taken at the 300- or 400- level.

All our philosophy courses fulfill our departmental mission.  Our students are able to meet their learning goals through our courses in the following ways:

Introduction to Philosophy (Phil 101): Introduces learning outcomes 1,2,3,4,5

Logic and Critical Reasoning (Phil 107): Emphasizes learning outcomes 2,3; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Ethics (Phil 201): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Social Philosophy (Phil 202): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Contemporary Moral Problems (Phil 206): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Ancient Philosophy (Phil 211): Emphasizes learning outcomes 2,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Modern Philosophy (Phil 212): Emphasizes learning outcomes 2,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Twentieth Century Philosophy (Phil 214): Emphasizes learning outcomes 2,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Philosophy and History of Science (Phil 220): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,2,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Philosophy of Mind (Phil 289): Emphasizes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcomes 2,4

Environmental Ethics (Phil 301):  Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Leadership Ethics (Phil 302): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Business Ethics (Phil 303): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Ethics and Public Policy (Phil 304): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Neuroscience and Ethics (Phil 306): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Symbolic Logic (Phil 307): Emphasizes learning outcomes 2,3

Epistemology (Phil 315): Emphasizes learning outcomes 2,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Philosophical Issues in the Law (Phil 335): Emphasizes learning outcomes 1,3,5; Demonstrates learning outcome 4

Readings/Seminars in Philosophy (Phil 381/382 and 401/402): Emphasize learning outcomes 1,2,3,4,5

**Step 4: Select methods/data sources and instruments (Any updates due September 15, 2009)**

Each year, for the past few years the Philosophy Department has used student portfolios of our graduating seniors to collect evidence of student achievement related to the above-mentioned learning objectives.  These student portfolios provide data from two different sources: (1) our assessment instrument; (2) the student's analytical essay.

The assessment instrument uses procedures such as (1)problem analysis to measure whether our students have developed the skills necessary to conduct a logical analysis; (2) assessment questions to measure whether our students have developed a sense of intellectual heritage, including familiarity with major philosophers and their contributions to the field; and (3) self-assessment questions to measure whether our students have developed the ability to conduct logical analysis, conceptual analysis, and philosophical research with confidence.

The portfolio analytical essay is used to measure our student's ability to conduct research in the field - i.e., to approach problems philosophically and conduct philosophical analysis in research papers.

The Philosophy department's Assessment rotation will be as follows:

In the **Year 2009-2010,** we will gather evidence of student achievement (from our graduating seniors) from our assessment instrument (i.e. one or more components of the assessment instrument, depending upon which learning outcomes are being measured in which courses) and the analytical essay in the following courses:

*Fall 2009:* We will gather information from our graduating seniors  in Introduction to Philosophy (Phil 101), Logic and Critical Reasoning (Phil 107), Contemporary Moral Problems (Phil 206), History and Philosophy of Science (Phil 220); Bio-Medical Ethics (Phil 308), and Philosophical Issues in the Law (Phil 335) related to learning outcomes specified in Step 2.

*Spring 2010:* We will gather information from our seniors in Introduction to Philosophy (Phil 101), Aristotle (Seminar), Social Philosophy (Phil 202), Leadership Ethics (Phil 302), Environmental Ethics (Phil 301), Leadership Ethics (Phil 302), and Epistemology (Phil 315) related to learning outcomes specified in Step 2.

In the **Year 2010-2011**, we will keep better track of our graduates and gather evidence of our effectiveness via their post-graduate performance.  We hope to have the Office of Career Development regularly share information with the department about where our graduates go after the first 6 months.  This gives us a way of verifying where our graduates go and gives us valuable information for follow-up emails.  We plan to devise a brief questionnaire that addresses the long-term value of our program.

In the **Year 2011-2012**, we will once again gather evidence of student achievement from our graduating seniors in philosophy courses which will be offered in that academic year.

In the **Year 2012-2013**, we will keep track of our graduates via their post-graduate performance (as specified in relation to Year 2010-11).

And so on....