



SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY

Saint Louis University
Program Assessment Plan

Program (Major, Minor, Core): Philosophy Major

Department: Philosophy

College/School: College of Arts and Sciences

Person(s) Responsible for Implementing the Plan: Theodore Vitali (Chair) and Scott Ragland (Dept. Assessment Coordinator)

Date Submitted:

Program Learning Outcomes	Curriculum Mapping	Assessment Methods	Use of Assessment Data
<i>What do you expect all students who complete the program to know, or be able to do?</i>	<i>Where is the outcome learned/assessed (courses, internships, student teaching, clinical, etc.)?</i>	<i>How do students demonstrate their performance of the program learning outcomes? How does the program measure student performance? Distinguish your direct measures from indirect measures.</i>	<i>How does the program use assessment results to recognize success and "close the loop" to inform additional program improvement? How/when is this data shared, and with whom?</i>
1. Students will synthesize knowledge of two different periods of Western philosophy	All majors take Phil 4600, History of Modern Philosophy; the final exam for this course will include a question asking students to identify a modern philosopher who engages with the same topic or question as an ancient or medieval philosopher, and to then compare/contrast the positions of the two philosophers.	Assessed by Phil 4600 professor using "Historical Synthesis Rubric" (attached). Each dimension (accuracy of presentations of each philosopher and quality of comparative judgments) is scored as exceeding, meeting, or failing to meet expectations.	Student results are included in the annual OA report written by OA Coordinator. This is seen by the chair and associate dean and is also archived so that comparisons can be made year-to-year to observe trends in the results. Results will also be brought to a department meeting so that the faculty can discuss whether changes are needed to the program.

2. Students will correctly employ principles of logical reasoning in philosophical analysis.	Senior Capstone Project	Capstone Mentor completes “Senior Capstone Rubric” (attached) which scores students as exceeding, meeting, or failing to meet expectations for this learning outcome.	Same as above.
3. Students will analyze and defend a philosophical position on a philosophical problem.	Senior Capstone Project	Same as above.	Same as above.
4. Students will gather sources relevant to a philosophical problem.	Senior Capstone Project	Same as above.	Same as above.
5. Students will interpret sources relevant to a philosophical problem.	Senior Capstone Project	Same as above.	Same as above.
6. Students will synthesize sources relevant to a philosophical problem.	Senior Capstone Project	Same as above.	Same as above.

- 1. It is not recommended to try and assess (in depth) all of the program learning outcomes every semester. It is best practice to plan out when each outcome will be assessed and focus on 1 or 2 each semester/academic year. Describe the responsibilities, timeline, and the process for implementing this assessment plan.**

Because the assessment coordinator is the Phil 460 professor, he will be responsible to gather and assess artifacts for outcome #1 during the fall term of 2015. The OA coordinator will report on this in the May 2016 report.

In the spring term of 2017, each senior project mentor will be charged by the chair with completing the “Senior Capstone Rubric” and submitting it to the OA Coordinator. The OA coordinator will report on this exercises in the May 2017 report.

- 2. Please explain how these assessment efforts are coordinated with Madrid (courses and/or program)?** Coordination of these learning outcomes with Madrid is not required, because the Madrid campus does not offer a philosophy major; while courses are offered there than can be applied to the philosophy major here, none of those courses are points at which artifacts are gathered for this assessment program.

3. The program assessment plan should be developed and approved by all faculty in the department. In addition, the program assessment plan should be developed to include student input and external sources (e.g., national standards, advisory boards, employers, alumni, etc.). Describe the process through which your academic unit created this assessment plan. Include the following:

- a. Timeline regarding when or how often this plan will be reviewed and revised. (This could be aligned with program review.)

The plan will be reviewed annually by the OA coordinator. If coordinator would like to recommend changes to the program, these will be reported to the chair and discussed at a department meeting early the following year.

- b. How students were included in the process and/or how student input was gathered and incorporated into the assessment plan.

Students were not incorporated in the development of this plan. However, the OA coordinator would like to meet with students from the philosophy club (mostly majors) to discuss the program at some point during the spring term of 2016. If they recommend changes, these could end up as suggestions for revision in the May 2016 OA report.

- c. What external sources were consulted in the development of this assessment plan?

University of Portland Philosophy Learning Outcomes (<http://college.up.edu/philosophy/default.aspx?cid=6556&pid=2486>)

Pepperdine Philosophy and Religion Program Learning Outcomes (<http://seaver.pepperdine.edu/religion-philosophy/undergraduate/philosophy/learning-outcomes.htm>)

American University in Cairo Philosophy Assessment Plan

Saint Peter's University Philosophy Department Assessment Plan

Due to its similarity to our own institution, we modeled our plan closely on Saint Peter's.

- d. Assessment of the manageability of the plan in relation to departmental resources and personnel.

The time commitments involved for senior capstone faculty are very manageable. The major load falls on the OA coordinator and the chair, but should actually take less time on this plan than on our prior plan (which required OA coordinator to organize and attend several meetings per semester).

Historical Synthesis Rubric

Prompt Question:

*Choose one modern philosopher covered in our course whose position on some philosophical question is interestingly similar to, or different from, some ancient or medieval philosopher you have studied in another course. Describe the relevant aspects of both philosophers in order to compare and/or contrast their positions on the philosophical issue. What, if anything, does this comparison/contrast help you understand about the issue itself? NB: please identify the prior course in which you learned about the ancient or medieval philosopher. **An overall score of 6 points (2 per row) or more indicates student meets expectations.***

Learning Outcome	Fails to Meet Expectations (1pt)	Meets Expectations (2 pts)	Exceeds Expectations (3 pts)
Demonstrated Knowledge of Modern Philosophy	Student fails to portray the position of a modern philosopher, or significantly misrepresents the philosopher's position on the chosen topic.	Student's portrayal of the modern philosopher is accurate, demonstrating a level of knowledge commensurate with an upper-level undergraduate	Student's portrayal of the modern philosopher is not only accurate, but suggests an expert level knowledge normally possessed only by graduate students or professors.
Demonstrated Knowledge of Ancient or Medieval Philosophy	Student fails to portray the position of an ancient/medieval philosopher, or significantly misrepresents the philosopher's position on the chosen topic.	Student's portrayal of the ancient/medieval philosopher is accurate, demonstrating a level of knowledge commensurate with an upper-level undergraduate	Student's portrayal of the ancient/medieval philosopher is not only accurate, but suggests an expert level knowledge normally possessed only by graduate students or professors.
Demonstrates ability to synthesis knowledge across historical periods	Student fails to identify a clear topic for comparison/contrast, or misrepresents the relevant similarities and differences between the chosen philosophers.	Student clearly identifies a topic for comparison/contrast, accurately presenting relevant similarities and differences without too much irrelevant information being presented. Suggests a grasp of the philosophical issues commensurate to an advanced undergraduate.	None of the student's points are irrelevant to the comparison, and the discussion suggests a grasp of the philosophical issues commensurate with graduate or professional status.

Senior Capstone Rubric

Learning Outcome	Fails to Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
Student correctly employs principles of logical reasoning in philosophical analysis.	Student fails to identify fallacies in the reasoning of others discussed in the paper, or the student's own argumentation is logically flawed.	When needed, student makes the logical structure of arguments explicit in order to identify fallacies in the reasoning of others or to clarify the student's own reasoning. Student commits no fallacies.	Student consistently uses logical analysis to render other author's positions more clear than they did themselves, or demonstrates a grasp of logical principles exceeding those taught in introductory logic courses.
Student analyzes and defends a philosophical position on a philosophical problem.	Student fails to understand key aspects of chosen problem, or fails to articulate a clear position, or fails to consider or respond to relevant criticisms of the position.	Student clearly articulates a philosophical problem, takes a clear position on that problem, and defends own position against relevant and plausible lines of criticism.	Student's grasp of the problem, novelty of position, or depth of analysis and sophistication of argumentation are commensurate with graduate or professional status.
Student gathers sources relevant to a philosophical problem.	Student fails to include necessary sources for the topic or includes irrelevant sources.	Student includes all and only relevant primary and secondary sources, and accurately interprets those writings. The student's paper is a good snapshot of the current state of discussion.	Student includes groundbreaking research into primary sources or synthesizes information in novel ways that advance the current discussion of the topic.
Student interprets sources relevant to a philosophical problem.	Student significantly misinterprets sources	Student's interpretation of sources is accurate and plausible on all significant points.	Student offers a compelling interpretation of sources that is novel or groundbreaking in some way.
Student synthesizes sources relevant to a philosophical problem.	Student's synthesis misrepresents the current state of the debate on the topic or fails to adequately connect to the student's defense of own position.	Thesis presents an accurate, unified snapshot of the current state of discussion and the student's own argument clearly draws on or relates to this snapshot.	Thesis portrays the current state of discussion in a way that is not only accurate and unified, but also novel—opening up new possibilities for research or argument. The student's own position draws on this portrayal.

Department of Philosophy
Summary Timeline of Multi-Year Assessment Plan

N.B Assessment of Core Contribution can be conducted as needed on a timeline to be determined by the College of Arts and Sciences.

2015-16

Assessment of Major

Learning Goal:

- 1. Students will synthesize knowledge of two different periods of Western philosophy*

Assessment Methods: Exam question in Phil 460 and rubric.

Assessment of Thesis M.A.

NB: Non-thesis M.A. is for Philosophy and Letters students and is assessed by P&L

Learning Goals:

- 1. Students will analyze and defend a philosophical position on a philosophical problem.*
- 2. Students will gather sources relevant to a philosophical problem.*
- 3. Students will interpret sources relevant to a philosophical problem.*
- 4. Students will synthesize sources relevant to a philosophical problem.*

Assessment Method: Rubric applied to Master's Thesis by committee members.

Assessment of PhD

Learning Goals

- 1. Students will make a scholarly contribution to the field of philosophy.*

Assessment Method: Rubric Applied to Dissertation by committee members.

- 2. Graduate student teachers teach philosophy effectively.*

Assessment Method: Annual review of all 4th-Year Grad student teachers by faculty

2016-17

Assessment of Major

Learning Goals:

- 2. Students will correctly employ principles of logical reasoning in philosophical analysis.*
- 3. Students will analyze and defend a philosophical position on a philosophical problem.*
- 4. Students will gather sources relevant to a philosophical problem.*
- 5. Students will interpret sources relevant to a philosophical problem.*

6. Students will synthesize sources relevant to a philosophical problem.

Assessment Method: Capstone Papers and rubric.

Assessment of Thesis M.A.: Same as previous year

Assessment of PhD: Same as previous year

2017-18

Assessment of Minor

Learning Goal: *Students will articulate and evaluate a philosophical argument.*

Assessment Method: Identify students in their last class to complete minor. Have instructor apply rubric to a relevant assignment from the course.

Assessment of Thesis M.A.: Same as previous year

Assessment of PhD: Same as previous year