

FY2011 DEPARTMENTAL ANNUAL REPORT OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Department of Philosophy Fort Hays State University

I. DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

A. Departmental Mission and Vision Statements

Time, space, and cosmos, the mind, moral ideals, religion, political aspirations, education, professional obligations, love, death, the law, sports, mystical experience, art and creativity, logic, mathematics, freedom, and the meaning of life – philosophy is no less than the pursuit of a deep and systematic understanding of everything. It is the central academic discipline, drawing together questions and knowledge from all the other disciplines and attempting to integrate them with personal experience so that one achieves a greater understanding of oneself and one's place in the order of reality. The Department of Philosophy offers major, minor, and certificate programs at the undergraduate level and four courses that may be taken by graduate students who are seeking advanced degrees in other areas. Courses in philosophy at every level are especially well suited to developing excellence in critical thinking and analysis, a good grasp of intellectual history, tolerance, objectivity, intellectual curiosity, clear and logical expression of ideas in speech and writing, and the habit of thinking things through for oneself. After college, philosophy majors typically continue their education in graduate school where they earn the professional credentials to pursue vocations in fields such as law, medicine, business, information technology, ministry, and education. Even with just an undergraduate degree in philosophy, students are attractive to employers, especially to employers looking for adaptability, good thinking and writing skills, and the ability to work with people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Philosophy majors become particularly adept at examining information and coming to good judgments based on information. Recent graduates of the FHSU major program in philosophy have taken up professions as diverse as teacher, businessman, philosophical counselor, lawyer, minister, doctor, museum educator, data specialist, designer of legal software, tennis pro, and rodeo cowboy.

The mission of the Department of Philosophy is to create the opportunity for student development of the philosopher's knowledge and wisdom, skills and abilities, and attitudes and values.

B. Departmental Goals, Objectives, and Strategic Priorities

Our *meta-goal* is to produce graduates who are:

Knowledgeable – They know of past and continuing achievements of philosophical inquiry;

Logical – They reason in a logical, clear, analytical, and organized fashion;

Intellectually civilized – They will counteract intellectual provincialism in both of its two main forms, namely, narrow vocationalism and an uncritical assumption of the limitations of one’s time and place;

Reflective – They will subject assumptions and behavior – their own and others’ – to evaluation and appropriate improvement;

Wise – They will understand reality and act in a way appropriate to that understanding.

The list of *specific goals and expected learning outcomes* that follows resulted from departmental discussion and reflection upon both the nature of philosophy and the ideal characteristics of our graduates. The philosophy program is aimed at enabling students to acquire three different types of attributes: knowledge or other cognitive states, skills or abilities, and attitudes or values. These different classes of attributes are reflected in our goals. The first goal focuses on the development of knowledge of the major figures, strands, and eras of philosophy. The second goal focuses on the development and use of skills characteristic of philosophy and intellectual inquiry more generally. The third goal returns to the knowledge category, and it directs our attention toward some of the traditional topics of philosophy. Our fourth and last goal is aimed at encouraging within the student some valued attitudes.

Goal 1 – To acquire knowledge of the development of metaphysics, value theory, epistemology, and logic. The learner can (1) explain the features, strengths, and weaknesses of a variety of philosophical systems: those of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant, and Wittgenstein; (2) identify the primary questions and responses to those questions in metaphysics, value theory, epistemology, and logic; (3) identify the primary questions, responses, and figures of four different periods in philosophical history: the ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary.

Goal 2 – To recognize and employ logical techniques. The learner (1) analyzes the reasoning of himself or another; (2) identifies the type of inductive or deductive reasoning; (3) displays the structure of the reasoning in a manner understandable to a non-professional; (4) evaluates the validity of the reasoning.

Goal 3 – To recognize alternative conceptions of man, God, and the universe and the possible relations among them. The learner is able to explain and evaluate (1) the four major arguments for the existence of God, the ontological, the cosmological, the teleological, and the moral arguments; (2) the major argument contesting the existence of God, namely, the problem of evil; (3) four different theories of the nature and proper conduct of human life; (4) four different theories of the ultimate nature of the physical universe; (5) three different theories of the worth or value of the physical universe.

Goal 4 – To employ their knowledge of different value systems in coming to individual conclusions and in applying these conclusions to their thought. These program goals are not just means of securing, but also important constituents of, the goals of the university as a whole.

C. Department Productivity and Distinctive Accomplishments

1. The department is finishing up a major transition period in terms of personnel following the phased retirements of Dr. Steve Tramel and Dr. Rich Huguen. We hired a new tenure track faculty member in July 2010, Dr. David Tostenson, after a summer search prompted by Steve Tramel’s decision to end his phased retirement agreement a year early. About this same time

we also lost one very productive and experienced adjunct faculty member who took a tenure track job elsewhere. After some consultation, we were able to either reassign or replace those VC sections with a combination of two new promising adjuncts, both with ties to FHSU. Lastly, we have worked closely with Dr. Art Morin this past year and a half to transition administrative responsibility for various components of the MLS core from philosophy to the MLS office. For more information on historical frequency and distributions of our on-line courses see Table H of Attachment E. For a closer look at how the on-campus changes will affect future teaching assignments, please see Table G of Attachment E. Overall, we are now a relatively young and vibrant department in terms of personnel, one that is poised for a long haul of service to the university.

2. The department finished up a two year project to revise and streamline the on campus major program. Though the changes are not official yet, they were unanimously approved by the department and done in consultation with the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. We submitted the requisite forms to the administration and faculty senate in May 2011. We anticipate formal approval early in the 2011-12 academic year. A twenty page memorandum describing and documenting these program changes is attached to this report as "DAR2011attachment E" in section IV, supporting materials.

3. The department spent considerable time and effort into meeting increased calls for course quality and program assessment. For example, we created a set of best practices for developing and teaching philosophy courses through the Virtual College. This document is attached as "DARattachmentF" in section IV, supporting materials. We also came up with a plan to improve and add various assessment measures, including a proposal for a vastly revised affinity diagram. Though much of this work is still in development at this point in time, we believe that these changes, in conjunction with the revised major program, will serve our students and faculty well for many years to come. For drafts of revised department goals see "DARattachmentG." Finally, the department spent substantial time in the spring in responding to the administration's call for new proposals in light of recent changes in KBOR standards for program review. More information about the various proposals we discussed, including CriTIK: Critical Thinking and Integrative Knowledge Program, are available upon request.

4. Throughout these many changes the department continues its excellent work in teaching, both on campus and through the domestic and international wings of the Virtual College. For example, we taught roughly fifty sections in the past year through the Virtual College and a full complement of on campus courses. We graduated six majors spring and continue our work on establishing an on-line major program. Our annual SCH and total number of VC sections dipped slightly, in part due to fluctuations in our China partnerships and changes in the MLS administrative structure. However, these markers remain very high overall and are a testament to our dedicated faculty.

II. DEPARTMENTAL PERFORMANCE METRICS

A. Department Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011
Freshmen [20 TH DAY FALL SEMESTER, HEADCOUNT]	2	0	0	1	1
Transfer Students [20 TH DAY FALL SEMESTER, HEADCOUNT]	0	0	0	0	0
Undergraduate (first majors/second majors) [20 TH DAY FALL SEMESTER, HEADCOUNT OF FIRST MAJORS, HEADCOUNT OF SECOND MAJORS]	18/4	9/5	7/4	7/3	8/5
Major Retention [20 TH DAY FALL SEMESTER, PERCENT OF MAJORS RETURNING]	93.33%	44.44%	25.00%	57.14%	57.14%
Undergraduate Student Credit Hours [TOTAL UNDERGRAD SCH]	5446	4955	5317	5319	4532**
Graduate Student Credit Hours [TOTAL GRAD SCH]	797	891	595	579	686
Tenured or Tenure-track Faculty (Headcount) [FTE OCCUPIED FROM POSITION CONTROL]	4	5	5	5	4
Non Tenure-Track Faculty (Headcount) [FTE OCCUPIED FROM POSITION CONTROL]	1	1	1.5	1	1
Other Faculty (Headcount/Sections Taught) [OTHER FACULTY AT 4 SECTIONS = 1 FTE FORMULA; INCLUDE NUMBER OF FTE AND SECTIONS TAUGHT]	5.0 12/46	4.25 10/34	5.75 8/49	6.5 9/54	5.0 8/40
Undergraduate Degrees [UNDERGRAD DEGREES AWARDED]	9	3	5	0	5
<p>We had eight adjunct faculty members teaching for the department, covering over forty sections of virtual college classes. This amounts to an equivalent of five additional full time faculty members. Our efforts to attract students to FHSU (and philosophy) through our annual Philosophy High School workshops continue to evolve. We have seen some uptick in interest through these programs and graduated a philosophy major who matriculated up through participation in these types of programs.</p> <p>** By our count, this SCH number is 4-500 hours short. One explanation might be that credits from PHIL201 and IDS401 sections taught for China partners by faculty in POLS and COMM may have been ascribed to other departments. Decision on allocating these credits by Asst. Provost is pending.</p>					
Number of books, book chapters, and refereed articles published [TOTAL NUMBER PUBLISHED]	7	3	2	1	5
Percent of faculty publishing refereed books, chapters, or articles [PERCENT OF FACULTY PUBLISHING FOR FY2011 (FACULTY PUBLISHING/TOTAL FACULTY)]	20	16	7	16	40
Number of non-refereed articles and presentations	3	3	8	2	7

Key Performance Indicator	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011
[TOTAL NUMBER COMPLETED]					
Percent of faculty publishing non-refereed articles or presentations [PERCENT OF FACULTY COMPLETING (FACULTY PUBLISHING/TOTAL FACULTY)]	20	30	38	40	30
Number of scholarly performances and other creative activities [TOTAL NUMBER OF CREATIVE PERFORMANCES]	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of faculty in scholarly performances or other creative activities [PERCENT OF FACULTY IN CREATIVE SCHOLARSHIP (FACULTY PERFORMING CREATIVE ACTIVITY/ TOTAL FACULTY)]	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of external grant applications submitted/percent of faculty submitting [TOTAL NUMBER OF EXTERNAL GRANT APPLICATIONS/PERCENT FUNDED]	1/25	1/25	0	0	0
Total number of funded external grants/percent of faculty funded [DOLLAR AMOUNT OF EXTERNAL GRANT APPLICATIONS, PERCENT OF FACULTY FUNDED]	0	1/25	0	0	0
The department's scholarly activity was among the most productive in recent memory. We had one new book published, one book revised and self-published, along with several book chapters and numerous journal articles and presentations at refereed journals or conferences. The percentages listed above combine both on campus full time faculty with FTE positions for adjuncts, giving the department an equivalent of 10 full time teaching positions.					
Direct Outcome 1 [SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOME MEASURE]	PHIL499; Senior Thesis Grade B or above 7/8: 78%	PHIL499; Senior Thesis Grade B or above 3/5: 60%	PHIL499; Senior Thesis Grade B or above 3 /4: 75%	PHIL499; Senior Thesis Grade B or above N/A	PHIL499; Senior Thesis Grade B or above 5/6: 83%
Direct Outcome 2 [SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOME MEASURE]		High Quality Senior Portfolio (incomplete)	High Quality Senior Portfolio (incomplete)	High Quality Senior Portfolio N/A	
Indirect Indicator 1 [SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOME INDICATOR]		TEVALs Q1 Dept. Summary: F07/4.25 S08/4.30	TEVALs Q1 Dept. Summary: F08/4..23 S09/4.34	TEVALs Q1 Dept. Summary: F09/4.25 S10/4.05*	TEVALs Q1 Dept. Summary: F10/4.1 S11/4.1

Key Performance Indicator	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011
Indirect Indicator 2 [SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOME INDICATOR]	Senior Survey & Interview				
Dept senior students' Level of Academic Challenge [FHSU LAC SCORE, DEPT LAC SCORE]	54.15 64.11	53.87 58.39	54.65 70.27	n/a	56.4 59.63
Dept senior students' Active and Collaborative Learning [FHSU ACL SCORE, DEPT ACL SCORE]	44.61 49.21	45.85 54.76	45.34 50.79	n/a	43.9 42.86
Dept senior students' Student-Faculty Interaction [FHSU SFI SCORE, DEPT SFI SCORE, N, %]	44.19 60.00	44.73 53.33	45.34 60.00	n/a	38.5 38.89
Dept senior students' Enriching Educational Experiences [FHSU EEE SCORE, DEPT EEE SCORE, N, %]	33.44 22.49	34.09 56.35	34.72 40.21	n/a	32.9 29.76
Dept senior students' Supportive Campus Environment [FHSU SCE SCORE, DEPT SCE SCORE, N, %]	59.06 64.81	57.30 61.11	59.57 72.22	n/a	60.8 58.33
Number of NSSE participants [NUMBER OF DEPT SR STUDENTS, PERCENT]	3 33%	2 16.7%	3 25.0%	n/a	1 25.0%
The department drafted a subcommittee in S2011 comprised of on campus and off campus faculty to create a Virtual College best practices rubric for those faculty and adjuncts teaching in the virtual college. This was unanimously approved by the department in March and forwarded to the administration for approval. In addition, the department revised the grading rubric for PHIL499: Senior Thesis. Copies of both these documents are attached as Attachments F and G. In addition, the department conducted informal reviews for two newly revised VC courses, IDS802 and PHIL120, which we hope will add to the value of those courses.					
Outcome/Indicator 1 [SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE MEASURE 1]					
Outcome/Indicator 2 [SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2]					
Outcome/Indicator 3 [SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE MEASURE 3]					
*The new electronic student evaluations of teaching implemented in S2010 have new questions. The measure closest to our old measure is "Would you recommend this professor?" The results listed here are for that new question.					

C. Department Quality Initiatives and Results

FY2011 Quality Initiatives	Results
We are reworking our major program, with an eye towards systematically improving our assessment measures starting with a revised affinity diagram. The results of this work are to be finalized and changes made to the	Department chair is responsible party. Depending on specific decisions about assessment, different outcomes might be measured. In general, we plan to keep the PHIL499 as a central measure, and any other changes to the major program and its assessment procedures would improve the students' performance in that capstone class.

major program in 2011.	
Review newly revised VC courses with a quality committee.	Responsible party is the department chair. In order to maintain high quality in our VC courses with so many new and revised courses coming on line, we will have a committee comprised of the department chair, the creator of the course and one full time faculty member or experienced adjunct who has taught the course recently. The committee will meet to review the course after it has been taught one or two semesters to ensure quality and consistency in these courses.

FY2012 Quality Initiatives	Responsible Party, Resources, and Plan
Complete and implement the new proposed on-campus major program. . We anticipate approval early in the 2011-12 academic year. For more information see "PhilosophyDAR2011attachment E" in section IV, supporting materials.	Responsible party is primarily the department chair.
Begin implementing new assessment measures	Responsible party is primarily the department chair. In addition to revising the PHIL499 rubric, we also had a department retreat to discuss the creation of new assessment measures, especially in light of our revised major program. Copies of draft documents for affinity diagram revisions, content exams, etc. are available on request. Each faculty member will develop and/or improve at least one specific assessment piece over the summer. We will begin implementing these in the coming year, including a writing rubric and course level content exams.

D. Institutional Quality Results

FY2011 University Initiatives	Department Activities/Results
Increase access and retention for Hispanic students	
Increase the quantity and quality of K-12 teachers educated	
Improve undergraduate students' foundational skills	Philosophy, by its nature, involves intensive work in both critical thinking and writing skills. Our majors excel in such skills as suggested in the NSSE scores listed above. Our department regularly offers multiple sections of PHIL100: General Logic, both on campus and now in VC sections. We also integrate these skills in most of our other classes and are working on developing or adopting a critical thinking rubric for program and/or course assessment. We have been involved in the writing across the curriculum initiative. We continue to employ and improve our capstone course PHIL499: Senior Thesis, which includes a research paper and public defense. Finally, Dr. Murphy presented a paper entitled, "Critical Thinking in the Multicultural Classroom," at the National Association for Multicultural Education meeting in Kansas City, MO.
Enhance physical wellness of	

students, faculty, and staff	
Internationalize the campus and curriculum	<p>The philosophy department continues to be heavily involved in our international partnerships, including providing IDS401:Ethics in the Professions & Business hybrid class for Tak Ming, and SNU. We are also involved in teaching for the Political Science and Leadership degree programs in China. In addition, we developed a new VC class, PHIL201: Political Philosophy, for the BA program in political management at SNU. We also regularly teach on campus courses like PHIL160: Philosophy of Eastern Religions as well as an on campus section of IDS801/802 for Chinese graduate students studying at FHSU. In past years we also co-developed Introduction to Islam and hosted a Fulbright Scholar visit. We proposed a new course in World Religions soon as a part of our reworked major program. The course has been proposed and sent to the Faculty Senate. A copy of that proposal, including mock syllabus, is available as Attachment H. Finally, the department has published various research pieces that touch on internationalization. For example, Dr. Rice’s book “Human Rights, East and West” delves into these issues as does Dr. Murphy’s recent presentation “Cultural Differences in Cognition and their Relevance to Teaching Critical Thinking,” at the American Association of Philosophy Teachers’ Midwest Workshop on Teaching and Learning, Muncie, Inn</p>

FY2011 STRATEGY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

A. Departmental Reflection of Strengths, Needs, Opportunities, and Threats

Current Strengths	Current Needs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Faculty: both on campus and adjunct faculty work extremely hard. They are committed to their roles as teachers, servants and scholars. 2) Strong major program: we graduated 19 students over the past three, and averaged 20 majors over the past several years, roughly triple the number of majors in 2002. 3) Administrative Support: our assistant consistently does an excellent job administering the many aspects of our Virtual, International and MLS courses with all of our faculty (in addition to the usual departmental responsibilities). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Tenure-track for the MLS core position 2) Full-time year around position for International Partnerships 3) Continuing to build in assessment at all levels
Future Opportunities	Future Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) We have the opportunity to create a major in philosophy available entirely on-line. 2) We have the opportunity to re-invigorate and continue to help build a solid philosophy program by helping revise the major program. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A problem of inadequate support: efforts to replace reliance on adjuncts with staffing by full-time, tenure track faculty members seem never to go anywhere in the end. This is especially problematic in staffing classes for our International partners. 2) Lack of administrative time to ensure quality of VC classes, oversee VC class revisions or new

	courses and handle problems with our international offerings.
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B. Opportunities for Improvement

Opportunity for Improvement	Resources Required	Expected Result and Completion Date
Continue creating new courses, eventually resulting in an online major program.	For each created course, the standard Virtual College pay for creating a new on-line course, and a substantial commitment of time by faculty to create these needed courses for us.	An on-line major program that will serve many people well. Completion date is S2013, the tentative timetable and more information on the plan created in S10 is available in Table I, Attachment E below.
Add two, full-time, tenure-track faculty members to teach sections of IDS 400 and IDS 401, where we continue to see high demand, on-campus and virtually, domestic and internationally. This would also free up time for faculty to develop virtual classes in load.	The allocation of two, full-time, tenure-track positions at the Assistant Professor level, and the appropriate financial resources to fund these positions.	Dependably solid, long-term, stability in the teaching of IDS 400 and IDS 401 from faculty members who will contribute as well to departmental service, strategic planning, and scholarly development.

III. SUPPORTING MATERIALS

A. Department Degree Program Affinity Diagram(s)

See attachment A.

B. Department Staffing Plan

See attachment B.

C. Bibliography of Departmental Scholarly Activity

See attachment C.

D. Department Program Assessment Results

Copies of all assessment documents like the PHIL499: Senior Thesis evaluation rubric and exit surveys for graduating seniors are available upon request. Also see attachment G below.

E. Other Departmental Information

Attachments: E: On campus major program change proposal

F: Virtual College Best Practices

G: Drafts of new goals and PHIL499 Grading Rubric

H: World Religions New Course Approval

General Parameters

1. No more than 20 pages, excluding appendix information.
2. Report submitted electronically to Dean, Assistant Provost for Quality Management, and Provost.
3. Note deadlines attached below.

Annual Timeline for Department Annual Report

March 1	Draft template distributed to Deans.
April 15	Final template and Directions distributed to Department Chairs. Selected enrollment data (fall 20 th day counts) distributed to Chairs and Deans in the departmental template.
June 1	Student system information (graduates, NSSE) delivered to Chairs.
June 1	Final cutoff date for elements to be considered in the Department's Annual Report.
June 30	Complete Department Annual Report due to Deans, Assistant Provost for Quality Management, and Provost. Submit electronically.
August 15	Completed College Annual Report due to Assistant Provost for Quality Management and Provost.