

FY2013 DEPARTMENTAL ANNUAL REPORT OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Department of Philosophy Fort Hays State University

I. DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

A. Departmental Mission and Vision Statements

The philosophy department revised our mission and vision statements last year.

MISSION STATEMENT: Through our teaching, scholarship and service activities the members of the philosophy department seek to serve our students, the university and regional community by training people to think well about fundamental questions that cannot be answered empirically.

VISION STATEMENT: Philosophy is the pursuit of a meaningful life through rational inquiry. To this end, philosophy students at Fort Hays State University are trained in logic and the dialectical skills of asking good questions, giving reasonable answers, identifying the strongest objections, and replying appropriately. While practicing these skills, students are trained to be civil (respectful of others), open-minded (willing to change views under the pressure of good reasoning), sincere (saying what one means and meaning what one says), and courageous (willing to work towards the truth in spite of contrary temptations and distractions). The goal is not merely to understand what a meaningful life is, but to live it. Philosophy students are encouraged to live a life in accordance with their considered values. Philosophy is a highly intellectual pursuit. All students majoring in philosophy are expected to achieve a working understanding of the central questions of metaphysics, epistemology, and value theory. It is, however, ultimately practical. The heart of a liberal education, philosophy draws together what the other disciplines have to offer, taking into account the thought of persons from a wide range of times and cultures, and asks: What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope?

B. Departmental Goals, Objectives, and Strategic Priorities

The department's recent strategic goals and priorities fall into three basic categories; on-campus major program adjustments and assessment; launching the virtual college philosophy major; supporting service courses for major programs across all three modalities. After two years of work revamping the on campus major program we are now shifting our focus towards course and program level assessment. The entire department met regularly over the course of the past year during our proseminar time to discuss and refine our assessment strategies. More information on these efforts are detailed in Section II.A of the report.

A second strategic goal for the department is the online major program. After much planning and work from the entire department we began admitting students to the virtual

college philosophy major program (VCPM) in September of 2012. In addition to ongoing VC course design, we also worked with CTELT to create an advertising plan that included both print and social media promotional campaigns. We combined these efforts with a suite of improvements to our digital presence, including improved web pages and the creation of multiple social media sites. Although there have been delays in finishing some of the core class sequence due to the CTELT VC course development embargo (which lasted from August 2012 to April 2013) we finished and offered PHIL340: Ethics and now have just two courses left to pass through the process. Faculty have been hard at work on these classes and are awaiting their chance to be put through the CTELT approval process. These varied efforts have paid off handsomely. The number of inquiries about the program has jumped dramatically. As of June we have a dozen purely virtual college majors and a handful of virtual college minors. This puts out total number of majors at 26. See Attachment E for more information on majors, distributions, etc.

The third strategic priority of the department is to support increasing growth for the University. We continue to provide a wide array of courses in all three modalities. Here are some examples; we teach two core courses in the MLS core program; various classes for the international degrees in LDRS and POLS; multiple general education courses for both domestic virtual and our on-campus students. This past year we also expanded this service role to include a cognate logic course for the Social Work program as well as two courses for the Global Business English major program at SIAS; PHIL100: General Logic and IDS401: Ethics in the Professions and Business. Along with the major anticipated growth in the China LDRS program for AY13-14, our work with the GLE significantly ramps up our service for the international wing of the University.

C. Department Productivity and Distinctive Accomplishments

The department continues its excellent work in teaching on campus, through the virtual college and via our international partnerships. Two faculty members were nominated for the Torch Award and one of them was the eventual winner. Other faculty members were named as Mortar Board Outstanding Teachers. Core faculty members generally teach more than seventy-five percent of their standard loads within the general education program. Our average SCH production remains among the highest in the university. The courses we teach for the university's general education program range from entry level philosophy courses like PHIL100: General Logic to upper-division integrative courses that feature a high level of interdisciplinary focus like IDS401: Ethics in the Professions and Business. We teach these and other courses for the general education program both on campus and through the virtual college.

The department taught roughly *eighty sections* in the past year through the Virtual College. The philosophy department continues its historical role as a key provider of various Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) classes at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Many of our VC courses are required classes, cognates or otherwise strongly recommended by various major programs. In addition, we are increasingly involved in teaching ethics and critical thinking courses in support of departments with major programs that offer degrees for our international partners. For example, we teach IDS401: Ethics in the Professions and Business for BA in LDRS program at SIAS University and PHIL 201: Political Philosophy for the BA in POLS program at Shenyang Normal.

The department continues to spend considerable time and effort into meeting increased calls for course quality, retention and program assessment. For example, we developed and piloted a new tiered writing system this past academic year. Its success had convinced us to require all on campus classes to incorporate the system this fall. More information can be found in the attached files. Finally, our participation in the Living and Learning Community initiative was a success. This coming year we will again offer our *Heart and Mind* LLC as well as partner with Economics for another interdisciplinary community.

II. DEPARTMENTAL PERFORMANCE METRICS

A. Department Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013
Freshmen [20 TH DAY FALL SEMESTER, HEADCOUNT]	0	1	1	1	0
Transfer Students [20 TH DAY FALL SEMESTER, HEADCOUNT]	0	0	0	2	1
Undergraduate (first majors/second majors) [20 TH DAY FALL SEMESTER, HEADCOUNT OF FIRST MAJORS, HEADCOUNT OF SECOND MAJORS]	7/4	7/3	8/5	9/0	8/1*
Major Retention [20 TH DAY FALL SEMESTER, PERCENT OF FR MAJORS RETURNING TO UNIVERSITY]			100%	100%	100%
Undergraduate Student Credit Hours [TOTAL UNDERGRAD SCH]	5317	5319	4532	5147	5314
Graduate Student Credit Hours [TOTAL GRAD SCH]	595	579	686	600	499
Tenured or Tenure-track Faculty (Headcount) [FTE OCCUPIED FROM POSITION CONTROL]	5	5	4	4	4
Non Tenure-Track Faculty (Headcount) [FTE OCCUPIED FROM POSITION CONTROL]	1.5	1	1	1	1
Undergraduate Degrees [UNDERGRAD DEGREES AWARDED]	5	0	5	1	4
* We have 14 on campus majors by our count with only one or two less than that last fall. As of June we have a dozen purely virtual college majors and a handful of virtual college minors. This puts out total number of majors at 26.					
Number of books, book chapters, and refereed articles published	2	1	5	4	0
Percent of faculty publishing refereed books, chapters, or articles	7	16	40	7	0
Number of non-refereed articles and presentations	8	2	7	3	1
Percent of faculty publishing non-refereed articles or presentations	38	40	30	7	20
Number of scholarly performances and other creative activities	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of faculty in scholarly performances or other	0	0	0	0	0

Key Performance Indicator	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013
creative activities					
Total number of external grant applications submitted/percent of faculty submitting	0	0	0	0	1 applic 20%
Total number of funded external grants/percent of faculty funded	0	0	0	0	1 funded for \$3500 /20%
Total number students successfully completing an undergraduate research/creative project	5	0	5	1	5
<p>Briefly note 2-3 improvements over the last year prompted from the above scholarly/creative activities indicators.</p> <p>It is unclear whether we should report adjunct faculty members' scholarly activity. The current figures reported here for 2013 do not list these accomplishments, though they are included in the bibliography Attachment C.</p> <p>Due to reworking our on-campus major program, pushing to go online with the major and reworking our assessment regime we have had little time for department research proseminars this past year. This likely contributed to the decline in our overall scholarly activity. In addition to Dr. Tostenson's APA presentation, another departmental bright spot was cosponsoring the Hunger Initiative program last year. This involved various elements, including consultation,, ethics presentations and helping with the Kansas Humanities Council grant which was funded in S13.</p> <p>[NOTE: Each department MUST report at least two direct measures of student learning outcomes and two indirect measures. Examples of direct measures include: first-time pass rate or average scores on standard exit exam, number of students successfully completing reviewed portfolios. Indirect measures would include student satisfaction, alumni and employer data, or any other perception based data.]</p>					
Direct Outcome 1 Philosophy Major Comprehensive Content Exam:				Exam Grade B or above: 1/1: 100%	Exam Grade B or above: 2/2: 100%
Direct Outcome 2 California Critical Thinking Skills Test: piloted in S12 PHIL100: General Logic Section.				CCTST Exam; Pretest: 19.09 Posttest: 21.04	NA*
Indirect Indicator 1 High quality senior thesis project, PHIL499	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%	PHIL499; Senior Thesis Grade B or above 1/1: 100%	PHIL499; Senior Thesis Grade B or above: 5/5: 100%
Indirect Indicator 2 Student Evaluations of Teaching, question: "I would recommend this instructor to other students."	TEVALs Q1 Summary: F08/4..23 S09/4.34	TEVALs Q1 Summary: F09/4.25 S10/4.05*	TEVALs Q1 Summary: F10/4.1 S11/4.1	Online Evals F11/4.11 S12/4.16	Online Evals F12/4.39 S13/4.14

Key Performance Indicator	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013
Dept senior students' Level of Academic Challenge [FHSU LAC SCORE, DEPT LAC SCORE]	54.65 70.27	N/A	56.4 59.63	56.2 60.12	N/A
Dept senior students' Active and Collaborative Learning [FHSU ACL SCORE, DEPT ACL SCORE]	45.34 50.79	N/A	43.9 42.86	44.5 42.86	N/A
Dept senior students' Student-Faculty Interaction [FHSU SFI SCORE, DEPT SFI SCORE, N, %]	45.34 60.00	N/A	38.5 38.89	38.4 53.33	N/A
Dept senior students' Enriching Educational Experiences [FHSU EEE SCORE, DEPT EEE SCORE, N, %]	34.72 40.21	N/A	32.9 29.76	32.7 37.23	N/A
Dept senior students' Supportive Campus Environment [FHSU SCE SCORE, DEPT SCE SCORE, N, %]	59.57 72.22	N/A	60.8 58.33	59.8 0.00	N/A
Number of NSSE participants [NUMBER OF DEPT SR STUDENTS, PERCENT]	3 25.0%	N/A	1 25.0%	1 25.00%	N/A
<p>Briefly note 2-3 improvements over the last year prompted from the above student learning/engagement indicators.</p> <p>* The CCTST scores from last year's pilot were somewhat meaningful but after much discussion it was decided that this test was simply too expensive to continue for its limited value. We paid almost \$1000.00 for the one section to take pre/posttests. Thus we then reviewed the Texas Critical Thinking Exams in the fall, which are also nationally normed and considerably cheaper. However, we could not reach consensus on their value for our students.</p> <p>In general, with our small number of majors and survey takers, it is hard to draw firm conclusions at the program level, e.g. in our NSSE scores, student evaluations, or in the number of majors who pass PHIL499. However, we believe that the overall assessment plan with is being developed will track our major students' progress more carefully and comprehensively. The major development on this is our tiered writing program, which will eventually be developed into a more comprehensive portfolio project for direct indicator number two. Please see Attachment D for more information on comprehensive exams and tiered writing assessments.</p> <p>[NOTE: Departments may pick up to three key performance indicators they currently measure but are not captured above. These measures could be used to track departmental results on specific yearly goals. Examples might include: number of SRPs attended, number of new freshmen contacted. (These will vary by department based on goals.)]</p>					
Outcome/Indicator 1 [SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE MEASURE 1]					
Outcome/Indicator 2 [SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2]					
Outcome/Indicator 3 [SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE MEASURE 3]					
<p>Briefly note 2-3 improvements over the last year prompted from the above indicators.</p>					

B. Department Quality Initiatives and Results

FY2013 Quality Initiatives	Results
Continue developing and initiating new assessment measures, in particular the program level measures.	<p>Responsible party is primarily the department chair. In particular, we will have to decide whether the CCTST is worth its considerable price as a nationally normed logic exam. We will begin implementing the three tier writing assignment, intellectual courage rubric, etc.</p> <p>U13: UPDATE: We piloted the CCTST but decided against using it going forward due to costs. We also piloted and revised our three tiered writing plan in several classes in S13 and are requiring it in all on campus classes in F13. Please see Attachment D later in this report. This will provide the framework for a major part of our program level assessment. In addition it is likely eventually to develop into a portfolio type assessment plan culminating in senior thesis, PHIL499. Our preparation and support for 499 has improved over the past two years.</p>
Implement new advertising and VC major program web presence.	<p>Responsible party is the department chair. There will be considerable work to assure symmetry and quality between the VC major program and the newly revised on campus major program.</p> <p>U13 UPDATE: We totally revised our website, including incorporating more video and streamlining access to information. We hired a consultant to implement a social media presence that would also link to our new webpage. We now have Facebook , Youtube sites that extend our reach. We also worked with CTELT to advertise the new online major program via both print and virtual outlets. For example, we ran two Facebook ad campaigns, for a month each, near registration times.</p>

FY2014 Quality Initiatives	Responsible Party, Resources, and Plan
Continue implementing, advertising the VC major program, including overall web presence.	Responsible party is the department chair. We have a second phase to improve the web site and continue advertising the VCPM for AY13-14. We need to consult the academic marketing specialist. However, we just found out that she is no longer working for FHSU.
The first two core major courses to be offered for the VCPM in hybrid form will occur this academic year. We will need to monitor closely their effectiveness for both on campus and VC majors.	Responsible party is the department chair, in conjunction with the instructors of these classes and in reflection with CTELT experts and the entire department.

C. Institutional Quality Results

FY2013 University Initiatives	Department Activities/Results
Align Programs and Services with North Central Kansas Technical College (NCKTC)	NA
Increase Enrollment	Our new VCPM has nearly doubled major enrollment in one year. In addition, we offered nearly eighty VC sections last year total. We are a part of increased enrollments with our China partners, particularly in the LDRS

	and the new Global Business English major program.
Improve Persistence and Retention	We have few, if any, first time freshmen. However, we are involved in the Living Learning Community initiative aimed at persistence. There is some initial evidence that our students at FHSU who join an LLC persist at a demonstrably higher rate than those who do not. Once students are philosophy majors they tend to be retained at high rates.
Improve Student Learning	See II.B FY2013 Quality Initiatives and Attachment D for more information on our tiered writing program and assessment measures.

FY2013 STRATEGY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

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

Current Strengths	Current Needs
<p>1. We have a relatively young faculty who are well qualified, productive scholars, talented teachers and very hard workers who put student success at the heart of everything they do. We are regularly at the very top of the list in terms of departmental SCH.</p> <p>2. We have a brand new major program approved in fall of 2011 which emphasizes our interdisciplinary strength, is streamlined and is tied directly to our evolving assessment program while remaining flexible to serve our students' needs.</p> <p>3. We have a new virtual college major program, which already has a dozen majors after less than a year. This program has the potential to radically alter our entire department.</p> <p>4. We have a relatively experienced department chair and a reliable pool of adjunct teachers .</p> <p>5. We continue to develop an innovative assessment regime alongside the new major .</p> <p>6. We are involved in two Living and Learning Communities which, though pilot programs have the potential to both serve the university's retention efforts and attract a younger audience for the philosophy major program.</p>	<p>1. In the short term, we will continue to require CTELT resources for things like designing and implementing course technology, etc. Most of the resources needed for creating the VCPM are already in place in the Virtual College and CTELT offices. However, faculty time is at a premium. Release time for faculty and/or for department chair would be helpful.</p> <p>2. Also, help with academic marketing and web development are university wide needs that we also require.</p> <p>3. Reliable, full-time teaching faculty for our ever increasing VC offerings. We offered nearly eighty VC sections last year.</p>
Future Opportunities	Future Threats
<p>1 We expect that the continuation of our philosophy Living and Learning Communities (LLC) will be of some benefit in increasing the number of majors and graduates in philosophy. We have committed to the "Heart and Mind" LLC as well as a new interdisciplinary</p>	<p>1. The continued success of the VCPM and LLC initiatives further complicate our already difficult staffing plans. Paired with anticipated growth in our China major program support roles, this is a serious problem. The department would thus greatly benefit</p>

<p>LLC with Economics for F13. Retention data will be important for the university.</p> <p>2. The primary opportunity for the department is centered on the virtual college philosophy major program (VCPM). The original 2010 development plan, which includes a course development schedule and an innovative hybrid model for core courses is available upon request. If the VC major program succeeds it has the potential to radically shift the long term outlook for the department.</p> <p>3. Potential new VC courses in religion could be very attractive to prospective majors. So far, approximately one third to one half of our new VC majors are coming to us with theological interests and/or backgrounds.</p>	<p>from additional full time teaching faculty to teach both courses in the on campus and VC environments. We have repeatedly requested such positions in the past through the strategic planning process and through informal channels.</p> <p>2. Attempting to implement the VC major program, implement a new assessment regime and continue to be productive and engaged teachers- scholars is a challenge for all members of our department. Burnout, reduced scholarship productivity and lower quality teaching are all potential threats.</p>
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B. Opportunities for Improvement

Opportunity for Improvement	Resources Required	Expected Result and Completion Date
Increasing web presence of department	More time for administrative assistant and CTELT experts to boost web software knowledge and implement a strategy to communicate with our various constituents. The university should hire web designers to help with some of these things. We are currently contracting out these services.	Ongoing
Alignment of virtual, international and on campus spheres	More time for chair and faculty to review existing courses, teachers, outcomes and assessments for program quality and consistency. Reassigned time and/or money to encourage faculty to be a part of this process. Perhaps dropping the required summer course for chairs and/or increasing on campus adjunct pool for reassigned time for faculty would be possible.	Ongoing

III. SUPPORTING MATERIALS**A. Department Degree Program Affinity Diagram(s)****B. Department Staffing Plan****C. Bibliography of Departmental Scholarly Activity****D. Department Program Assessment Results**

Comprehensive exams, tiered writing rubric finalized, etc.

E. Other Departmental Information

Additional data on numbers of majors, minors, etc.

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

April 1	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, SCH) delivered to Chairs. 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.