Mission / Purpose

The Department of Philosophy supports The University of New Orleans' mission in three ways. First, by offering a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy, which may be completed in residence or online, where majors must demonstrate: (1) their understanding of key concepts, problems, ideas, and fundamental questions found in the core areas of the discipline; (2) their mastery of the critical thinking skills required to read texts, to recognize, reconstruct, and evaluate arguments correctly, and to defend their own claims both orally and through analytical writing; and (3) their ability to entertain criticism and to present opposing views sympathetically. Second, by offering courses that make the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to do philosophy both relevant and accessible to students taking philosophy to meet general education requirements in the humanities. Third, by sustaining an active program of philosophical research and creative projects; requiring appropriate professional standards of performance; and actively participating in service to the university, the profession, and the community.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Reading, analyzing and developing
Philosophy majors will be capable of reading both primary and secondary texts, analyzing the arguments contained in them correctly, and developing cogent philosophical arguments in defense of their own claims.

Related Measures

M 1: Juried review of analytical essay
Juried review of analytical essay submitted in capstone course.
Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target: 80% will score at 'satisfactory' or above on the rubrics.

Finding (2013-14) - Target: Met
In SPRING 2013, 9 majors attempted PHIL 3030 or PHIL 3001. 100% of these students received a satisfactory or above on the juried evaluation of their analytical essays. In FALL 2013, 2 majors attempted PHIL 3030 or PHIL 3001. 100% of these students received a satisfactory or above on the juried evaluation of their analytical essays. In SPRING 2014, 2 majors attempted PHIL 3001 and 5 majors attempted PHIL 3030. 100% of these students received a satisfactory or above on the juried evaluation of their analytical essays. A new assessment form was created and used this semester. This will result in the above target being modified for next year. That form is attached.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

3030/3001 essay
Criterion was achieved. Currently, the department has explicit, detailed guidelines on how the essay is to be written. However, the evaluation form in use to assess the essay needs to be rewritten so that it identifies specific categories of strengths and weaknesses of written essays in order to make the juried evaluation process more objective and less dependent on a letter grade

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Juried review of analytical essay | Outcome/Objective: Reading, analyzing and developing

Projected Completion Date: 11/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department chair.

M 2: Faculty assessed analytical essay
Faculty assessed analytical essay in 2000+ courses using departmental rubric.
Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target: 80% will score at 'satisfactory' or above on the rubrics.

Finding (2013-14) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
FALL 2013: The departmental rubric for assessing an analytical essay in any PHIL course other than 3030 or 3001 will be applied in SPRING 2014. In SPRING 2014, a new assessment form for the juried evaluation of 3001 and 3030 analytical essays was used. That form is attached. This spring, 2 students attempted 3001 and 5 students attempted 3030. 100% of students met the target. Although the new form is an improvement over the previous assessment form, it is not quite ready to be a template for the assessment of an analytical essay in any PHIL course.

Connected Document
3001/3030 Assessment Form
Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

**Analytical essay**
- Results can be interpreted but do not provide sufficient detail to inform a meaningful decision. The department needs to create a rubric for all faculty to use when assessing any text-based analytical essay required in any PHIL course. The department also needs to devise a way for the results of those assessments to be entered into a spreadsheet without requiring each faculty member to do this for each student in each course requiring this type of essay.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-14  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
- **Measure:** Faculty assessed analytical essay  
- **Outcome/Objective:** Reading, analyzing and developing

**Projected Completion Date:** 11/2014  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Department chair.

**SLO 2: Entertain criticism**
- Philosophy majors will demonstrate a willingness to entertain criticism, the ability to formulate and reply to reasoned objections, and the ability to present opposing views critically, yet sympathetically.

**Related Measures**

**M 3: Juried review of oral defense**
- Juried review of oral defense in capstone course.

**Source of Evidence:** Presentation, either individual or group

**Target:**  
80% will score at ‘satisfactory’ or above on the rubrics.

**Finding (2013-14) - Target: Met**
- In SPRING 2013, 9 majors attempted PHIL 3030 or PHIL 3001. 100% of these students received a satisfactory or above on the juried evaluation of their oral defenses. In FALL 2013, 2 majors attempted PHIL 3030 or PHIL 3001. 100% of these students received a satisfactory or above on the juried evaluation of their oral defenses. In SPRING 2014, 2 majors attempted PHIL 3001 and 5 majors attempted PHIL 3030. 100% of these students received a satisfactory or above on the juried evaluation of their analytical essays. A new assessment form was created and used this semester. This will result in the above target being modified for next year. That form is attached.

**Connected Document**  
[3001/3030 Assessment Form]

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

**Oral defense**
- Criterion was achieved. Currently, the department has explicit, detailed guidelines on how the essay is to be written, but nothing specifically about the oral defense. The department needs to create those guidelines, along with an assessment form that it identifies specific categories of strengths and weaknesses of oral defenses in order to make the juried evaluation process more objective and less dependent on a letter grade.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-14  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
- **Measure:** Juried review of oral defense  
- **Outcome/Objective:** Entertain criticism

**Projected Completion Date:** 11/2014  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Department Chair.

**M 4: Faculty assessed presentation**
- Faculty assessed presentation in a 3000+ course using departmental rubric.

**Source of Evidence:** Presentation, either individual or group

**Target:**  
80% will score at ‘satisfactory’ or above on the rubrics.

**Finding (2013-14) - Target: Partially Met**
- In FALL 2013, no PHIL course was taught that required this style of presentation. In SPRING 2014, one course was taught that required this style of presentation: PHIL 4250: Philosophy of Art. 12 students attempted the assignment. 91.6% of students (11/12) met the target. The target should be modified for next year to be specific about the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be measured. Also, the rubric used for this one class is not general enough to be used in any 3000+ course requiring a presentation.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

**oral presentation**
- No results. Currently, the department has guidelines on how such an oral presentation is to be written, but nothing specific with respect to strengths and weaknesses that will determine how such a defense will be evaluated. The department needs to create that instrument and for it to be used in every PHIL course requiring this style of presentation.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-14  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
- **Measure:** Faculty assessed presentation  
- **Outcome/Objective:** Entertain criticism
SLO 3: Understanding of key concepts
Philosophy majors will demonstrate a broad understanding of key concepts, problems, ideas, and fundamental questions found in the four core areas of the discipline: (1) Logic, (2) Value Theory, (3) History of Philosophy, and (4) Metaphysics & Epistemology.

Related Measures

M 6: Exit survey
Philosophy Exit Survey
Source of Evidence: Exit interviews with grads/program completers
Target: 80% of graduates will respond with at least 'agree' to the following item: "My PHIL courses gave me a broad understanding of key concepts, problems, ideas, and fundamental questions found in the four core areas of the philosophy discipline."

Connected Document
1080 Exit Survey Results

Finding (2013-14) - Target: Met
In SPRING 2013, 100% of 7 completers responded with at least 'agree' to the following item on the department exit survey: "My PHIL courses gave me a broad understanding of key concepts, problems, ideas, and fundamental questions found in the four core areas of the philosophy discipline." In FALL 2013, neither of 2 completers has submitted the department exit survey by 12/20/2013 deadline for inputting results. In SPRING 2014, all 6 completers for 2013-2014 were invited to complete the new Qualtrics Philosophy B.A. Exit Survey. The original target has become obsolete as the new survey breaks that general, all-encompassing statement into 15 specific questions focusing on knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The targets and measures for next year will need to be modified to reflect this. In any event, 4 of the 6 completers completed the exit survey. The results are attached. Responses exceeded the target.

Connected Document
1080 Exit Survey Results

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
Exit survey
Criterion was achieved. The department needs to deliver the survey in a way that allows a statistics report to be generated so it can be added as data for findings.

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Exit survey | Outcome/Objective: Understanding of key concepts

Projected Completion Date: 05/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department Chair.

SLO 4: Knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to do philosophy.
Non-majors taking philosophy to meet gen-ed requirements will recognize the importance of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to do philosophy.

Related Measures

M 7: Course evaluations
Course evaluations.
Source of Evidence: Student course evaluations on learning gains made
Target: 80% of non-majors enrolled in philosophy courses will say they would recommend the course to others.

Finding (2013-14) - Target: Partially Met
For SPRING 2013, out of 265 students, 78% responded with 'Strongly Agree' and 12% responded with 'Agree', for a combined total of 90%. Departments have not received FALL 2013 or SPRING 2014 course evaluations by 05/23/14, which is when this finding was to be entered.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
Course evaluations
Criterion was achieved. We feel that the criterion itself and the assessment tool are quite good, so the only thing we should consider is elevating the standard from 80% to say, 85%.

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Course evaluations | Outcome/Objective: Knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to do philosophy.

Projected Completion Date: 05/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department Chair.

Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)

3030/3001 essay
Criterion was achieved. Currently, the department has explicit, detailed guidelines on how the essay is to be written.
However, the evaluation form in use to assess the essay needs to be rewritten so that it identifies specific categories of strengths and weaknesses of written essays in order to make the juried evaluation process more objective and less dependent on a letter grade.

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Juried review of analytical essay | Outcome/Objective: Reading, analyzing and developing

Projected Completion Date: 11/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department chair.

Analytical essay

Results can be interpreted but do not provide sufficient detail to inform a meaningful decision. The department needs to create a rubric for all faculty to use when assessing any text-based analytical essay required in any PHIL course. The department also needs to devise a way for the results of those assessments to be entered into a spreadsheet without requiring each faculty member to do this for each student in each course requiring this type of essay.

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Faculty assessed analytical essay | Outcome/Objective: Reading, analyzing and developing

Projected Completion Date: 11/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department chair.

Course evaluations

Criterion was achieved. We feel that the criterion itself and the assessment tool are quite good, so the only thing we should consider is elevating the standard from 80% to say, 85%.

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Course evaluations | Outcome/Objective: Knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to do philosophy.

Projected Completion Date: 05/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department Chair.

Exit survey

Criterion was achieved. The department needs to deliver the survey in a way that allows a statistics report to be generated so it can be added as data for findings.

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Exit survey | Outcome/Objective: Understanding of key concepts

Projected Completion Date: 05/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department Chair.

Oral defense

Criterion was achieved. Currently, the department has explicit, detailed guidelines on how the essay is to be written, but nothing specifically about the oral defense. The department needs to create those guidelines, along with an assessment form that it identifies specific categories of strengths and weaknesses of oral defenses in order to make the juried evaluation process more objective and less dependent on a letter grade.

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Juried review of oral defense | Outcome/Objective: Entertain criticism

Projected Completion Date: 11/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department Chair.

oral presentation

No results. Currently, the department has guidelines on how such an oral presentation is to be written, but nothing specific with respect to strengths and weaknesses that will determine how such a defense will be evaluated. The department needs to create that instrument and for it to be used in every PHIL course requiring this style of presentation.

Established in Cycle: 2013-14
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Faculty assessed presentation | Outcome/Objective: Entertain criticism

Implementation Description: Department Chair.
Projected Completion Date: 11/2014