



2024 Academic
Program Assessment
Report

Program current
assessment plan
here:

https://www.csupueblo.edu/assessment-and-student-learning/_doc/2022/2022-plans/philosophy-religious-studies

Program prior
assessment report
here:

https://www.csupueblo.edu/assessment-and-student-learning/_doc/2023/philosophy-relig-studies-assessment-report-2023.pdf

Report Completed By:	Ryan Strickler
Date Report Completed:	May 28, 2024
Faculty members involved in this Assessment:	Ryan Strickler

Please describe this year's assessment activities and follow-up for your program below. (Separate sheet for each undergraduate

Brief Statement of Program Mission and Goals:	Students in the Philosophy and Religious Studies program explore the methods, ideas, problems, and history of philosophy. They also interrogate beliefs, behaviors, structures, and historical impact of many of the world's past and present religions through a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Further, the minor trains students to think and write with rigor, clarity, and precision. Since these qualities are valuable in virtually any discipline, the minor supports a wide range of majors or career tracks, including history, politics, law, literature, the arts, the sciences, business, healthcare, and technology
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I. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in this cycle. Including

A. Your program SLOs are pasted here verbatim from your assessment plan. Please enter info in columns B-H only for those assessed during this annual cycle. (note that the SLO goals for the Chemistry program were originally pasted here)	B. When was this SLO last reported on prior to this cycle? (semester and year)	C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.	D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group(s) and the number of students or artifacts involved (N).	E. What is the expected proficiency level and how many or what proportion of students should be at that level?	F. What were the results of the assessment? (Include the proportion of students meeting proficiency.)	G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?	H. What changes/improvements to the program are planned based on this assessment?
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SLO1: Students will be able to recognize, analyze, and logically evaluate arguments encountered in sources ranging from philosophical, academic, and religious texts to the popular media	Spring 2022	Direct Measure: Rubric used to evaluate graduating student papers (see attached rubric; full essays available upon request); Indirect Measures: Class observation for PHIL 102 and PHIL 204 (see included notes), discussion with instructors, and syllabi analysis (syllabi available upon request)	We had seven students enrolled in the PHRS minor as of Spring 2024. From this group, four major writing assignments were collected from faculty that had taught them through the academic year (some students had completed their minor work before the academic year). Dr. Horrell's Ethics class (PHIL 102) had 23 students, and Dr. Sharp's Critical Reasoning class (PHIL 204) had 20 students	Direct Measure: 80% of students will be rated at "proficient" or better on indicators of SLOs, according to attached rubric. Indirect measures - teaching observations and syllabi review - will be assessed holistically	Direct Measure: All indicators of SLO 1 and 2, save for one, had 100% of students achieving "proficient" or better with their work. The only indicator that did not have this was "presence of philosophical ideas, methods or arguments," which had 75% of students achieving "proficient" or better. Indirect measures: see discussion in comments section	Overall, our courses do a great job introducing students to an array of philosophical arguments and religious/philosophical ideas (SLO1), encouraging them to logically evaluate said arguments and ideas (SLO1), as well as encouraging our students to construct their own well-reasoned arguments on philosophical topics (SLO2). The syllabi and teaching evaluations indicate that students encounter, and consider/discuss, sufficient detail on an array of philosophical and religious ideas across history and cultures. However, one criticism the writing sample analysis offers is that that detail perhaps could be better reflected in the written work students produce. The "presence of philosophical ideas" indicator, as well as a holistic assessment of the writing, reflects this. This is not a major criticism, and I'm not suggesting the writing is completely off the in this regard. But if there is an area of improvement that our assessment points to, it would be this.	The program coordinator will communicate the strengths and weaknesses of this assessment with instructors. We will discuss how writing assignments, as well as other assignments that are part of our courses, encourage substantive and detailed knowledge of major philosophical and religious ideas, as well as how they could do more and better. This is, of course, in addition to facilitating the ability to critique said ideas and develop original sound original arguments, which the assessment suggests our courses do quite well with.
SLO2: Students will be able to construct and present clear, well-reasoned defenses of theses both verbally and in writing.	Spring 2022	Direct Measure: Rubric used to evaluate graduating student papers (see attached rubric; full essays available upon request); Indirect Measures: Class observation for PHIL 201 and PHIL 204 (see included notes), discussion with instructors, and syllabi analysis (syllabi available upon request)	We had seven students enrolled in the PHRS minor as of Spring 2024. From this group, four major writing assignments were collected from faculty that had taught them through the academic year (some students had completed their minor work before the academic year). Dr. Horrell's Ethics class (PHIL 201) had 16 students, and Dr. Sharp's Critical Reasoning class (PHIL 204) had 20 students	Direct Measure: 80% of students will be rated at "proficient" or better on indicators of SLOs, according to attached rubric. Indirect measures - teaching observations and syllabi review - will be assessed holistically	See above	See above	See above

<p>Comments on part I:</p>	<p>I attended Dr. Sharp's Critical Reasoning (PHIL 204) class on 3/18, where he covered the distinction between direct and indirect refutation. I attended Dr. Horrell's Philosophical Literature class (PHIL 102) on 3/19, covering the debate over determinism and free will. Both professors do a remarkable job facilitating class discussion and critique of the ideas presented. In both classes, through question and answer, students are the ones talk as much, if not more so, than the professors. Dr. Sharp, for example, presented students with a stylized dialogue regarding a proposal concerning voting rights, and students took the lead in examining and critiquing the refutations present in said discussion. Dr. Horrell has students begin the class discussing the assign text in groups, without a prompt. Students critique and build argument around the text on their own (and they were almost ALL doing this in the session I saw). From there, Dr. Horrell leads students in a discussion of the details and reasoning of the assigned text, centered around 4-5 key questions he develops that anchor the discussion. Both recognizing and logically evaluating philosophical arguments (SLO1) and developing student's own argument (SLO2) were successfully on display in both class session. Both instructors relied on small group discussion in their classes as well, which I think is immensely valuable. After the class sessions, points of feedback I offered were to consider a) how students can effectively be rewarded for discussion participation (as I mentioned, most students were participating, but what about the students that don't?), and b) how to organize the small groups to facilitate exchange across different and diverse perspectives (rotate the composition of the groups periodically? Assign the groups purposively to ensure that different worldviews are in each group? Etc.). But broadly, I was impressed with the pedagogy of these two instructors, who teach the bulk of our RI courses.</p> <p>With regard to syllabi, Dr. Sharp, Dr. Horrell, and Mr. Atkins (who teaches courses through Extended Studies) all have syllabi that cover a wide array of secular and religious, historical and modern concepts, theories, and frameworks. The students are really working hard in these classes and reading a wide array of material. And the syllabi generally have an effective mix of substantive assessments (exams and quizzes) as well as more reflective, critical, and applied writing assignments. The instructors have taught these courses for a number of years, so the syllabi are pretty well-honed, with few changes semester to semester. As mentioned elsewhere in the assessment, the feedback I will provide based on the assessment is to have instructors consider a) how their writing assignments can potentially encourage more demonstration of substantive detail concerning the ideas and theories students critique (in addition to the exams and quizzes doing so), and b) strategies to reward effective class and group discussion participation in the course grade.</p> <p>The writing sample assessments, writing rubric, and notes from class visits can be found here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WcHYvNtA2ku4vnnLGcrHVuyz15O_Bdkd/view?usp=sharing</p>
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II. Closing the Loop. Describe at least one data-informed change to your

<p>A. What SLO(s) or other issues did you address in this cycle? Please include SLOs verbatim from the assessment plan, as above.</p>	<p>B. When was this SLO last assessed to generate the data which informed the change? Please indicate the semester and year.</p>	<p>C. What were the recommendations for change from the previous assessment column H and/or feedback?</p>	<p>D. How were the recommendations for change acted upon?</p>	<p>E. What were the results of the changes? If the changes were not effective, what are the next steps or the new recommendations?</p>

SLO3: Students will be able to recognize and assess the relevance of philosophical and religious ideas in the historical interplay of philosophy, religion, and culture.	Spring 2023	While the direct (essays) and indirect evidence (course evaluations and syllabi) suggested students are excelling with SLO3 and 4, I encouraged instructors to a) consider how they can more effectively assess for both substantive knowledge and critical thinking/application, b) consider consistently incorporating in-class student engagement as part of the final grade for their course, and c) consider incorporating more group work and other 'formal' peer-to-peer engagement in their course structure. I also noted a desire to expand the PHRS curriculum, to both attract students and cover a broader array of philosophical and religious ideas and concepts	The program assessment activities this year suggest that the instructors are incorporating more group work and formal peer to peer engagement in their classes (point c). We also have a new adjunct instructor that teaches upper-level religious studies courses periodically, and we are encouraging our minors to explore course options in other disciplines that cover philosophy and religious studies (and can thus count toward our minor). So our students are getting more option and can be exposed to a broader array of philosophical and religious ideas. Points A and B are still works in progress, though, as indicated in this year's report (and they are not challenges unique to the Philosophy and Religious Studies program)	I will continue to work closely with our faculty and they develop and revise their courses, material, and assessments. While I want to give instructors, as experts in their discipline, the freedom to approach their courses how they see fit, I will communicate these points of feedback, and in next year's assessment I will note specific changes that instructors have made.
SLO4: Students will be able to apply philosophical methods to conduct ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological analyses.	Spring 2023	See above	See above	See above

Comments on part II:	<p>I have revised our assessment process for next year. While class visits and syllabi review are valuable, and I will continue to do this as part of the close working relationship I have with our instructors, the feedback we got from last year's assessment suggest ways in which our process could be improved. In particular, one reviewer noted that writing samples and class visits, while valuable, only assess a handful of students and classes. Moving forward, we will be dropping the class visit and syllabi review components (again, I'll still do this, but they won't be part of the formal assessment). The assessment next year will consist of a) writing samples for minor students, b) analysis of data from course evaluations, and c) a survey of graduating senior who achieved a Philosophy and Religious Studies minor. In addition to being able to point to more concrete, quantifiable indicators of SLOs, these changes will be valuable in that they will provide a more systematic account of what our students are learning in ALL of our classes. And it should be easier to compile and produce the program assessment as well.</p>			
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