

Colorado State University – Pueblo Academic Program Assessment Report for AY 2015-2016

Program: _____Philosophy (minor)_____

Date: __27 May 2016__

Completed by: _____John O'Connor_____

Assessment contributors (other faculty involved in this program's assessment): ____Andrew Corsa_____

Please describe the 2015-2016 assessment activities for the program in Part I. Use Column H to describe improvements planned for 2016-2017 based on the assessment process. In Part II, please describe activities engaged in during 2015-2016 designed to close-the-loop (improve the program) based on assessment activities and the information gathered in 2014-2015. Thank you.

I. Program student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessed in this cycle, processes, results, and recommendations.

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.	B. When was this SLO last assessed? Please indicate the 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.	E. What is the expected achievement level and how many or what proportion of students should be at it?	F. What were the results of the assessment?	G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?	H. What changes/improvements to the <u>program</u> are planned based on this assessment?
SLO #1. Students will be able to recognize, analyze, and logically evaluate arguments encountered in	SLO #1 was last assessed in spring 2015.	A rubric (attached) was used to evaluate writing samples from the history of philosophy courses and	The set of assessed students consists of the five seniors who completed the philosophy	Per the assessment plan, 80% of the students should perform at 'proficient' or better for these SLOs,	Five of the five students met the expectations and performed at 'proficient' or better for	<u>Strengths:</u> Student work continues to demonstrate a strong ability to reason and to explicate philosophical concepts and	Our class instruction and writing / draft evaluation will pay greater attention to argument pattern recognition, maintaining thesis consistency, and identification of unstated assumption.

sources ranging from philosophical and academic texts to the popular media		491 special topics courses.	minor this year. Writing samples were drawn from those students' portfolios.	as measured on the attached rubric. Given that five seniors completed the minor and therefore were assessed, at least four students would be expected to perform at 'proficient' or better.	SLO#1. Five of the five students met the expectations and performed at 'proficient' or better for SLO#2.	arguments <u>Weaknesses:</u> Although the cohort met our performance expectations, this year's assessment revealed a need to work more on argument pattern recognition, thesis consistency, and identification of assumptions. (These areas influence both SLOs under review.)	Specifically, PHIL 204: <i>Critical Reasoning</i> and PHIL 205: <i>Deductive Logic</i> already treat the formal aspects of these areas, so those courses will place a new emphasis on application to paper writing. In other courses, writing instruction and draft review will also pay close attention to these areas. We will experiment with requiring post-hoc outlining (where this is appropriate to the assignment).
SLO #2. Students will be able to construct and present clear, well-reasoned defenses of theses in writing.	Both verbal and written aspects of SLO 2 were last assessed in Spring 2014. Written was assessed in 2015. This year's assessment handles the written component only.						

Comments:

II. Follow-up (closing the loop) on results and activities from previous assessment cycles. In this section, please describe actions taken during this cycle that were based on, or implemented to address, the results of assessment from previous cycles.

A. What SLO(s) did you address? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.	B. When was this SLO last assessed? Please indicate the semester and year.	C. What were the recommendations for change from the previous assessment?	D. Were the recommendations for change acted upon? If not, why?	E. What were the results of the changes? If the changes were not effective, what are the next steps or the new recommendations?
SLO #2. Students will be able to construct and present clear, well-reasoned defenses of theses in writing.	SLO#2 was last assessed in spring 2015.	The previous assessment cycle revealed a need to focus on writing clarity. The recommendation was to change how student drafts are evaluated. Previously we emphasized ideas and arguments in evaluating rough drafts. The expectation was that critiquing writing quality earlier in the process should help.	Yes. The recommendations led to greater attention to writing clarity in draft review.	While draft review/critique clearly played a role in improving students' final work, we are unable to claim that the changes in draft review led to substantial improvements in overall student writing ability, as this year's cohort was already (largely) comprised of strong writers. We will continue with our approach to draft review, however, in anticipation that it will benefit students at earlier stages of the program.

Comments:

This year's rubric, as well as the plan's SLO assessment cycle, were revised in light of a blind peer-reviewer's concerns that SLOs and rubric categories were not clearly correlated.

Philosophy Minor
Colorado State University-Pueblo
Philosophical Writing Rubric

Intended learning outcomes assessed with this instrument:

- **SLO #1.** *Students will be able to recognize, analyze, and logically evaluate arguments encountered in sources ranging from philosophical and academic texts to the popular media.*
- **SLO #2.** *Students will be able to construct and present clear, well-reasoned defenses of theses in writing.*

Student work assessed: Papers from student portfolio.

	Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Not Present
Presence of thesis (SLO #2)	Thesis is <i>explicit, precise, and clear.</i>	Thesis is <i>explicit.</i>	Thesis is <i>implied</i> and/or <i>unsophisticated.</i>	
Presence of philosophical ideas, methods or arguments (SLO #1)	Philosophical ideas, methods or arguments are <i>explicit</i> ; their historical / cultural / philosophical <i>relevance is prominent.</i>	Historical / cultural / philosophical ideas, methods or arguments are <i>explicit.</i>	Historical / cultural / philosophical ideas, methods or arguments are <i>implied.</i>	
Treatment of philosophical ideas, methods or arguments (SLO #1)	Arguments are <i>relevant & well- explained / analyzed.</i>	<i>Mostly accurate</i> explanations or analyses of relevant arguments.	Explanations are <i>not usually accurate</i> , or the ideas, methods and arguments employed are <i>not usually relevant</i>	
Quality of reasoning (SLO #1, #2) [includes assessment of others' arguments as well as presentation of student's own].	Reasoning is <i>generally good</i> (i.e. strong or valid) and <i>well-explained.</i>	Reasoning is <i>generally good.</i>	Reasoning is <i>not generally good</i> (i.e. work is characterized by <i>weak</i> reasoning).	
Writing style & execution (SLO #2)	Clear, compelling, grammatically correct language; fluid, easy-to-follow organization of ideas	Consistently clear language; sequencing of ideas poses no barrier to communication	Sometimes vague, confusing or hard to follow	