

**Academic Program Assessment Plan:  
Philosophy (minor)**

**Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Colorado State University-Pueblo**

Plan developed by John K. O'Connor, Assistant Professor & Philosophy Coordinator (November 2011)

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**The Relation of the Philosophy Program to College Mission and Departmental Expectations<sup>1</sup>**

The Philosophy Program advances the mission of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences “to help students develop [1] critical thinking skills, [2] aesthetic awareness, and [3] ethical perspectives, [4] to provide them with the tools and expertise necessary to function as responsible citizens and professionals and [5] to engage in intellectual and artistic pursuits.”

Furthermore, the Philosophy Program advances the expectations of the Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy by providing a domain “of study both for students who desire knowledge for personal enrichment and for students who desire to apply knowledge toward career objectives.” Philosophy minors are expected “to develop and refine knowledge of other cultures and the historical and political development of the modern world ... to engage in methodical research ... to prepare rationally cogent papers ... [and] to understand political theories, historical movements, and the interconnections between each” as these are evident in the history of western philosophy.

**Philosophy Program Description**

In addition to exploring the methods, ideas, problems, and history of philosophy, the minor in philosophy trains students to think 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. Philosophy and its sub-discipline of ethics pair particularly well with history, politics, law, literature, the arts, the sciences, business, healthcare, and technology.

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<sup>1</sup> CHASS mission and departmental expectations from the 2011-12 CSU-Pueblo catalog.

### **Philosophy Program Goals**

1. To provide individual courses as well as an academic minor in philosophy;
2. To sharpen students' critical thinking skills and to develop the abilities to speak and write in a clear, analytical manner (This goal advances CHASS mission items labeled 1, 4 & 5 above);
3. To develop students' understanding of philosophical methods and ideas, including their historical-cultural origins and contemporary applications (This goal advances CHASS mission items labeled 3, 4 & 5 above);
4. To cultivate the habit of reflection that will allow students to apply their critical and philosophical skills in their personal and professional lives (This goal advances CHASS mission items labeled 4 & 5 above).

### **Expected Student Learning Outcomes**

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. (from goal 2, parts of goal 3, and goal 4)
2. Students will be able to construct and present clear, well-reasoned defenses of theses both verbally and in writing. (from goal 2, parts of goal 3, and goal 4)
3. Students will be able to recognize and assess the relevance of philosophical ideas and methods in the historical interplay of philosophy and culture. (from goals 3 and 4)
4. Students will be able to apply philosophical methods to conduct ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological analyses. (from goals 3 and 4)

### **Relation of Curriculum to Expected Student Outcomes**

(See attached curriculum map.)

### **Dissemination of Program Goals & Outcomes**

To inform the public and the university community at large, written accounts of current program goals, expected student outcomes, and assessment activities are published in the Colorado State University-Pueblo Catalog.

The Philosophy coordinator will provide program faculty with written copies of the goals, outcomes, and curriculum map.

### **Outcomes Assessment Activities**

The coordinator of the Philosophy Program maintains a portfolio for each student with a declared minor in philosophy. Portfolios include a student's major papers written for the History of Philosophy Seminar cycle, transcripts, and other pertinent information. Student portfolios, in conjunction with indirect measures such as the results from the annual survey of minors, form the basis for evaluating expected outcomes.

At the end of each academic year the portfolios of graduating students (or those completing the minor) are evaluated by a team of reviewers to determine if the program is meeting its goals. The review team includes the Philosophy coordinator and at least one other full-time, ranked faculty member from the Department of History, Political Science and Philosophy. After independently evaluating each portfolio against a rubric, the team members meet to discuss the results. (When practical and desirable--e.g. when the evaluations diverge widely--a third faculty member will be added to the review team. ) Also at that time, instructional methods, course-, and program-level curriculum are reviewed to evaluate alignment of individual course goals, content, and instructional methods with the overall program goals and outcomes. If necessary an action plan for improvement will be designed and implemented. The program coordinator then submits a report of the assessment findings, as well as any related action plans, to the chair of the Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy, as well as the Assistant Provost for Assessment and Student Learning. The Philosophy Program coordinator holds primary responsibility for ongoing program assessment activities as well as for revision of the plan itself.

The first round of portfolio evaluations will occur in the Spring of 2012, by which time a rubric with concrete performance criteria will be developed for the expected outcomes under evaluation. At least 80% of students completing the minor should be proficient or better in each SLO.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	<b>Philosophy Program SLOs</b>	Philosophy 102: Phil. Lit.	Philosophy 201: Classics in Ethics	Philosophy 204: Critical Reasoning	Philosophy 205: Deductive Logic	Philosophy 293: Hist. Seminar I	Philosophy 393: Hist. Seminar II	Philosophy 494: Hist. Seminar III
2	Students will be able to recognize, analyze, and logically evaluate arguments encountered in sources ranging from philosophical and academic texts to the popular media.	I	E	E	E	E	E	E
3	Students will be able to construct and present clear, well-reasoned defenses of theses both verbally and in writing.	I	E	E	E	E	E	E
4	Students will be able to recognize and assess the relevance of philosophical ideas and methods in the historical interplay of philosophy and culture.	I	E			E	E	E
5	Students will be able to apply philosophical methods to conduct ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological analyses.	I	E	I	I	E	E	E
6								
7	<b>GenEd SLOs</b>							
8	Students will use the English language to communicate with clarity, coherence and persuasiveness, demonstrating critical analysis, logic, precision and rhetorical awareness. <b>(Communication)</b>	I	E	E	E	E	E	E
9	Students will identify, analyze and evaluate arguments and sources of information to make informed and logical judgments, to arrive at reasoned and meaningful arguments and positions, and to formulate and apply ideas to new contexts. <b>(Critical Thinking)</b>	I	E	E	E	E	E	E
10	Students will articulate the nature of a multicultural society and recognize the role of aesthetic awareness, foreign language skills, cultural and social perspectives or human and institutional systems of the past and present. <b>(Diversity and Social Responsibility)</b>					I	I	I
11	Students will clarify and evaluate their own values and ethical conduct and analyze the values and ethical conduct of others. <b>(Personal Values and Ethics)</b>	I	E			E	E	E
12	Students will apply numeric, symbolic and geometric skills to formulate and solve quantitative problems. <b>(Quantitative Reasoning)</b>							
13	Students will apply the scientific method, laboratory techniques, mathematical principles and/or experimental design. <b>(Scientific Reasoning)</b>							
14	Students will identify and evaluate wellness principles, including mental, emotional and physical health, needed to make informed choices. <b>(Wellness and Well-being)</b>							
15								
16	<b>Key:</b> I = relevant skills and content are introduced and handled at an introductory to intermediate level; performance expectations vary accordingly. E = relevant skills and content may be introduced briefly, however course emphasis is on working at an intermediate to advanced level; performance expectations vary accordingly. <b>Grey cell</b> = related SLO doesn't apply <i>in principle</i> because the course is not GenEd.							