

Program Review Year 2008 – 2009

Name of Program:

Liberal Arts: Philosophy Option

Program Review Team Members

Name

Title

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DATE: March 27, 2009

SECTION SIX: SUMMARY

I. CONCLUSIONS: PROGRAM STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

A. List and describe the program's major strengths, based on information obtained in the Program Review. Cite evidence for each identified strength.

AREA OF STRENGTH	EVIDENCE
Graduation and transfer rates	The Liberal Arts: Philosophy Option program has strong graduation/transfer rates when compared with the College average. All philosophy courses of the program transfer to four year colleges.
Faculty credentials	Dedicated faculty, committed to teaching. See Chart 6.
Comprehensive content of courses	Within the limited number of courses in the program, many philosophical topics are presented to students.
Clear learning objectives that are assessable	See attached Outcomes and Curriculum map
Strong Distance Learning offerings	PHI 101, PHI 110, PHI 121, and REL 101 are offered online.

B. List and describe the program's weaknesses or areas in which improvement is desirable, based on information obtained in the Program Review. Cite evidence for each identified weakness or area for improvement.

WEAKNESS OR AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT	EVIDENCE
Heavy dependence on non-full-time faculty	See Chart 5 (C) & (D) below.
Low number of upper level courses available.	Only three upper level courses are offered regularly.
Lack of data on success of students in four year colleges	A problem shared with all transfers and graduates of the College, since there are few opportunities to follow up with transfer students
Lack of communication between philosophy instructors	There are no separate meetings of those faculty who teach philosophy exclusively. Thus, no shared teaching methodology or curriculum for the same courses.
Availability of non-full-time faculty for consultation	Only full-time faculty are obliged to advise and hold office hours.
Low minority enrollment	While many minority students take philosophy courses, there is not sufficient diversity in the program.
Low number of upper level philosophy courses	There are only three regularly taught upper-level philosophy courses.
Need for additional full-time faculty	See Chart 5
Need for full Smartboard rooms	Classroom equipment needs to stay abreast of contemporary expectations.

Dissemination of program information	Course descriptions need to be updated to include non-technical language. Additional full-time faculty would help to communicate mission of program in advising.
Lack of budget	See page 16.
Lack of advisory board	See page 17.

II. ACTION PLAN

For each identified weakness or area in which improvement is desirable, submit an Action Plan. (When designing the Action Plan, a suggested plan would include the elements of Process Management using a Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle.) (Note: Add as many of the following tables as necessary.)

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Dependence on non-full-time faculty	Hire additional full-time faculty member	Dean Sue Grolnic	N/A	
<p>Analysis:</p> <p>The current economic climate is not conducive to the hiring of an additional full-time faculty member. The availability of part-time faculty provides the appearance of flexibility and adaptability to seasonal fluctuations in course enrollment. Nonetheless, as in all disciplines, students are not well served by the growing dependence on part-time faculty to teach courses.</p>				

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Low number of upper level courses offered	Consult with advisory group on most desirable courses to offer	Meredith Gunning, Program Coordinator	AY 09-10	

Analysis:

The program will be strengthened with the possibility of additional upper level courses. However, the sole full-time faculty member cannot teach all upper level courses and provide the gateway to increasing the number of students in the program. An addition full-time faculty member would help to distribute this burden. It is recommended to drop PHI 102 (Issues in Philosophy) and develop a course on political philosophy. This approach to philosophy is proving very successful in the Learning Community in Spring 2009. Given the significant numbers of students in the nursing program, it would also be desirable to develop a course in Health Care Ethics that would become a requirement for nursing students.

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Lack of formal communication between philosophy instructors	Meet at least once a semester	Meredith Gunning, Program Coordinator	Fall 09	

Analysis:

One possible solution is for part-time instructors to share office space with the full-time faculty member. In this way the office conditions of the full-time faculty would be improved, and there would be greater opportunity for collaboration with part-time faculty.

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Low enrollment of minorities	Offer more courses in Lawrence	Dean Sue Grolnic	Ongoing	
	Draw on research of Prof. Jorge Santiago on minority enrollment	Program Coordinator	Fall 2009	
	Work more closely with Developmental faculty to assure students transition successfully to credit courses	Program Coordinator	ongoing	

Analysis:

With a higher percentage of minority students in the Lawrence campus, a greater availability of philosophy courses there may result in a more representative balance within the program.

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Lack of data on preparedness/success of students in four year colleges	Must be tackled as a college-wide problem	Senior administrators	Ongoing	Anecdotal evidence suggests very great success of many transfer students.

Analysis:

This is a college-wide weakness. Strategies must be developed to track students as they graduate or transfer to four year colleges. Nevertheless, one of the missions and believed successes of the college is to prepare students for further education in four year colleges.

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Poor dissemination of program information	Refine course descriptions and develop website to highlight offerings.	Meredith Gunning, Program Coordinator	Fall 09	

Analysis:

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Lack of advisory board	Convene program review team as Advisory Board	Meredith Gunning, Program Coordinator	Spring '10	

Analysis:

The expertise of the advisory board should not be lost. Remain in informal contact with members as an advisory board. Develop deeper contact with faculty at area colleges and invite appropriate candidate to serve on advisory board. Invite alumni of program to serve.

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Lack of budget	Request funding to develop resources	Dean Sue Grolnic	Spring '09	

Analysis:

Liberal Arts: Philosophy Option operates within department of History, Government, Political Science, Philosophy, and Economics. Nevertheless there are specific needs of the philosophy program, such as resources to develop brochures and a website.

Problem	Improvement Activity	Person Responsible	Date of Activity	Findings
Need for full Smartboard teaching rooms	Purchase Smart technology	Dean Sue Grolnic	Ongoing	

Analysis:

In the current economic climate there may not be adequate resources to improve the Smart technology in all teaching rooms. However, effort must still be made to improve the sound quality in every room.

III. RESOURCES REQUESTED

Complete the following chart, including quotes from vendors, diagrams for requested space, and draft postings as appropriate. (Note: Add rows, increase row height, etc., as needed.)

1. EQUIPMENT				
Item	Justification	Vendor (include contact information)	Cost	Date Needed
2 computers	The computer equipment for the full-time faculty is somewhat outdated for rapid access to the internet and especially for timely refresh of online course discussion boards	Dell computers	\$2500	Sept 2009
2. PERSONNEL				
Position (identify as faculty, staff, etc.)	Justification	Credentials/area of content expertise related to curriculum	Salary	Date Needed
Full-time faculty	In order to strengthen the program it is essential to have an extra full-time faculty member to teach a share of 100 level courses and feed the growth of students for upper level courses	Ph. D. in Philosophy or World Religions	\$55,000 including benefits	Sept '10

3. SPACE				
Type of space requested	Justification	Description (include square feet, construction requirements, e.g., plumbing, electricity, data ports)	Cost	Date Needed
1 office	As the personnel grows it would be optimal to have full-time faculty share their office with adjuncts of philosophy. This would increase discourse and understanding between faculty teaching the same courses.	14*14. Internet link essential		Sept '10