

Philosophy Department Updated Report on the Academic Program Review 2010

The following is an updated report to Academic Affairs on the Philosophy Department's progress toward meeting the recommendations included in the University's Academic Program Review Report of 2010. Subsequent to accepting this update, it is the department's hope that full approval will replace the provisional approval received in 2010, allowing us more time to implement our recent developments before the next ordinary program review in 2016.

As the focus of the Committee's recommendation was on the improvement of our existing assessment program, this will serve as the focus of the current update, however several additional recommendations will be addressed where appropriate. Where specific documents are referenced, links to them have been included. Where these documents are not available online, these are attached.

Updates Pertaining to Faculty

Recommendation # 1: The Department should institute a stronger mentoring system for junior faculty, particularly in the areas of RTP expectations and course evaluations.

Response: The department fully recognizes the need for a more structured mentoring system, in addition to the informal mentoring provided by the department chair and other senior faculty. We were finally able to conduct a search this year for a new faculty position to begin in Fall 2013. In the interim we have instituted the following mentoring processes:

1. A formal meeting in the week before semester begins focused on teaching. At this meeting, faculty are invited to bring forward problems or challenges they have faced in their teaching, successful measures to address past challenges, sample assignments and rubrics, revised syllabi, student centered guides for writing or reading or note taking, demonstrations of implementing some pedagogical tool in SacCT or alternatives, etc. The idea here is to generate a departmental sense of "best practices" in teaching. All instructional faculty are invited, new lecturers are especially encouraged, and while we cannot remunerate people for their extra-curricular attendance, we do support attendance with lunch and snacks. These meetings have led to several shared innovations, one of which is now a central element of the department's assessment program – the Philosophical Analysis (more below).
2. For new hires, the department will implement a series of meetings to take place monthly over the first year with two key members of the department – the department chair, and the most recently tenured faculty member. The idea here is that the chair can

provide mentoring from the broader perspective of the department, college and university as a whole. This perspective is also longer-termed as the mentoring relationship develops with the intention of building a relationship with a colleague, over the length of her or his membership in the department. The most recently tenured faculty can offer the perspective of someone most recently through the RTP process, and of someone who is now better positioned to take on more of the governance responsibilities we expect of all our colleagues. Here the aim would be, in part, to explore institutional expectations and opportunities, but also to give a collegial grounding to the new hire and to inspire bonding, trust and a basis for shared interests and values into the future.

Recommendation # 2: To the extent possible, the Department should look for ways of meaningfully including lecturers in program and Department activities.

Response: This continues to be a challenge with so many of our lecturers also working on other campuses and with there being no possibility for direct remuneration of their contribution to the department. However, the new department chair has implemented the following, as of Fall/12. Notifications of department meetings are sent to the entire department including lecturer faculty, though there is no obligation for them to attend. Where matters of policy affect their work environment or interests, such as the implementation of online student evaluation process, the lecturers were invited to the department meeting at which the issue is discussed, were encouraged to speak freely to contribute to the deliberation, and were invited to vote on the policy. The voting followed the process stipulated in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and was extended for a week to allow those lecturers not usually on campus daily to have the opportunity to vote. Similarly, with the department's implementation of the new Default Course Material Policy increasing affordability and accessibility to course material, the department was particularly alive to the disproportionate impact of this policy on lecturers and invited suggestions from all instructional faculty on identifying textbooks for default consideration. There was considerable and widespread response and engagement on the issue by all faculty including lecturers. This was heartening to see. Several of those texts suggested by our lecturer faculty have been selected as default texts.

Further, faculty are always regularly invited to attend guest speaker sessions and to participate in the identification of guest speakers for our speaker series. Over the past several years, lecturer faculty have given presentations to the Nammour Symposium, an annual two-day spring philosophy symposium on issues of popular interest. Last year and this year, several lecturers have also been invited and have given talks to the Philosophy Club.

Finally, we were able to bring in several new young lecturers this spring. The department chair, in consultation with members of our curriculum committee, engaged these young instructors to

ensure they were familiar with our course requirements, expectations, and student interests. The chair has implemented a mandatory syllabus review requirement for AY lecturers, to ensure that any omissions or problems are caught before semester and instruction begins.

Recommendation # 10: The department should seek permission to hire a full-time faculty member in the area of applied ethics as soon as circumstances permit.

Response: The department was authorized to conduct a tenure track search late in the fall semester, 2012. We had an outstanding pool from which we were able to offer an assistant professor position to our first choice candidate, which was accepted. We look forward with great anticipation to the contribution this will make to stabilizing our ethics program and building on our existing programmatic strengths.

Update Pertaining to Student Advising

Recommendation # 3: The Philosophy Department should review advising practices with the goal of bringing majors (and minors) into the advising process earlier in their academic program.

Response: For the past several years, the department chair has engaged students early, from orientation onward. The new chair is continuing this practice of advising from the first encounter with the student. A regular advisor is assigned immediately upon declaration of the major and minor. At the start of each semester, the Advisement Committee Chair, currently Russell DiSilvestro holds a Majors/Minors meeting at which procedural and curricular matters are discussed, as well as stimulating social engagement between the students and the faculty. Since Prof DiSilvestro's assumption of this committee chair, he has worked diligently with the faculty to improve advising. The department has revamped its website to make it more user-friendly and to include more advising material for students and faculty advisors to consult during the advising session, as well as anytime a question arises. This can be found under the guidance tab on the department website, here <http://www.csus.edu/phil/>. This material includes newly developed Roadmaps through the different concentrations of the major from the point of view of transfer students and of native students. Each encourages a 2 year or 4 year path, respectively. The department is also working with the degree evaluations to develop an online graduation application for our major and concentrations. We hope to have this ready for implementation in Fall/13.

Updates Pertaining to the Ethics Center

Recommendation # 6: The Philosophy Department should clarify and strengthen links between activities undertaken by the Center for Practical and Professional Ethics and its curriculum for the Philosophy major and minor. The Department should specifically seek out ways by which the Center's activities may be used to enrich the major curriculum.

Recommendation # 7: The Philosophy Department should explore the possibility of establishing an internship program for undergraduate majors, possibly in connection with Center for Practical and Professional Ethics.

Recommendation # 11: The Department and the Dean of the College should work together to find a way by which support for the Center for Practical and Applied Ethics can be made available in the form of additional assigned time.

Response to #6, #7, #11: Progress with regard to these three insightful and valued recommendations has not been as consistent and successful as the department would like, not least of which due to fiscal challenges at all levels of the university and the difficulty of obtaining external funding. The new Center Director, Russell DiSilvestro has been working with the new department Chair, Christina Bellon (former Center Director), on establishing connections with other grants and funding courses in the university, including the possibility of developing continuing education workshops with the College of Continuing Education. We are also working with the Dean of Arts and Letters to find ways to provide more adequate and consistent funding for the Ethics Center.

Progress in these regards has also been hampered by the loss, in 2010, of one of our then newly hired Ethics faculty to a position closer to family and with more desirable research opportunity. With a reduction in Ethics faculty, through this loss and through a recent FERP of one of our senior faculty, it has been difficult to generate the critical mass needed to more fully develop the curricular and programmatic promise of the Ethics Center. However, as of Fall/13, we will have an additional Ethics Faculty on staff full-time, tenure track, with considerable experience and promise of making a significant contribution to the Ethics Center.

Updates Pertaining to Curriculum

Recommendation # 8: The Philosophy Department not pursue the possibility of establishing a M.A. degree program in Philosophy at this time.

Response: While this was disappointing for several faculty to hear, there was widespread enthusiastic agreement to shift our focus and effort at improving the program away from the creation of an MA program toward the improvement of the quality and rigor of the undergraduate program. Since the program review was completed, we have developed an Honors Concentration which includes as minimum GPA of 3.5 to enter and which must be sustained through to graduation. The program includes an additional 9 units of 100 and above PHIL course work as well as the writing of an honors thesis under the direct supervision of one of the faculty members in the department. We have successfully graduated six Honors Concentration students thus far and are actively recruiting students into the program. See the

application form linked from the department website here

<http://www.csus.edu/phil/Programs/Concentrations/Honors.html>.

Recommendation # 4: The Philosophy Department should address the tension between major and service course goals (esp. in G.E.) for those course offerings that fulfill both functions.

Recommendation # 5: The Philosophy Department should give serious consideration to developing upper-division counterparts to PHIL 25 and PHIL 27, primarily intended for majors, to ensure that major preparation in these areas is of sufficient rigor.

Response to #4 and #5: Since this most recent program review, and largely in response to it, we have undertaken a significant revision of the major program and the concentrations. The result has been to establish a common core experience for all philosophy majors, comprised of 7 courses for a total of 19 units of the usual 39-41units for the major/concentrations.

In addition to our existing courses – PHIL 60 Deductive Logic, 180 Knowledge and Understanding, and 181 Metaphysics – this common core experience was expanded to include the newly developed upper division two semester history sequence, PHIL127 History of Ancient Philosophy, and PHIL128 History of Modern Philosophy, which together serve as the needed preparation for the subsequent required courses in all three programs. These courses replaced the role of the lower division PHIL 25 and 27, which were included in the GE curriculum and regarding which there were always cross-purposes and resulting curricular confusion. The new upper division courses are not included in. This has gone a long way toward stabilizing the course content with a focus on the needs of our majors. Since Fall 2011, we have been able to teach these courses in their intended sequence with PHIL 127 taught in the fall semester and PHIL 128 taught in the spring semester. Since then we have eliminated PHIL 25 and 27 from our course offerings. These lower division history courses were replaced in the GE and in the lower division course options with PHIL 26 History of Philosophy.

The department agreed that, since our programmatic focus is on ethics, all our programs should include a required ethics component. The two core ethics courses identified are PHIL112 History of Ethics, and PHIL 152 Recent Ethical Theory. Both were required courses only in the Ethics, Politics and Law Concentration, but now students in all our major programs must include one or the other of these core ethics courses in their studies. These two courses are comparable in that they both emphasize theoretical concerns, one from an historical perspective, the other from the perspective of the 20th Century forward. They differ, however, in that PHIL 112 is a GE and Writing Intensive course, while PHIL 152 is designed for majors only. Many of our majors are taking both courses even if not required to do so, for the value of the course content and for the common experience with their fellow majors.

Two other curricular expansions are enveloped into the common core course curriculum – PHIL 61 Inductive Logic, and PHIL 189 Senior Seminar. The former is a newly designed lower division course which is required, along with PHIL60, in the Logic and Philosophy of Science Concentration. The other two major programs have PHIL61 as an optional pairing with PHIL60, students must take one or the other. The department is deliberating the possibility of requiring both 60 and 61 in the Ethics, Politics and Law Concentration, as well. Hopefully, a decision will be reached this year for implementation next year.

PHIL 189 is a one unit course for majors only, and is designed as a capstone experience. Students take it in their graduating semester, and are required to work with a faculty member to submit a senior essay (often this is a substantially revised essay from a previous course). This essay, along with additional written coursework, replaces the program assessment function of the senior essay submitted in the graduating semester (see below under assessment). This course also requires students to take a sit down final exam in which they are given a published article in any area of philosophy and are required to write a philosophical analysis of it. The exam is timed for two hours. The format of the philosophical analysis is the same as that to which students are exposed in several of the other core courses in the major (see more under assessment). At the end of semester, the students in this course complete an online program review survey which is strictly for programmatic review purposes (see below under assessment), designed for program assessment purposes, but also as an opportunity for students to reflect critically on their experience in the program. The questions are designed to maximize the information we can glean from our graduating majors to provide feedback and guidance regarding the curriculum, the quality of the curriculum, the quality of their experience with faculty, and their perceived value of the education we have provided.

As these curricular changes have taken hold, and as our students' catalogue rights allow, we hope to have the vast majority of majors operating under the new program within the next two years (by AY 2014-15).

Redesigned Common Core Coursework

Lower Division

PHIL 60 Deductive Logic

PHIL 61 Inductive Logic (new course)

Upper Division

PHIL 127 History of Ancient Philosophy (new course)

PHIL 128 History of Modern Philosophy (new course)

PHIL 112 History of Ethics

PHIL 152 Recent Ethical Theory

PHIL 180 Knowledge and Understanding

PHIL 181 Metaphysics

PHIL 189 Senior Seminar (new course)

Updates Pertaining to Assessment

Recommendation # 9: It is imperative that the Philosophy Department work with the university assessment coordinator to develop and implement a workable student learning outcomes assessment plan that satisfies both University and WASC requirements, which include:

1. Identification of a measurable set of student learning outcomes;
2. Methods (including direct measures) for assessing those outcomes;
3. Demonstrated mechanism for using the assessment results in programmatic planning.

Response: Among the most significant developments in the years since this program review are the strides the department has made to put into place the kinds of instruments and tools which will afford us much better means of assessing our program. As described above, the principal innovation here is our development of a senior capstone course. The remainder of this response will detail each of the assessment instruments and tools, explaining how they fit together to provide a complete program assessment. The final portion of this response will identify a 3 year plan for step-wise implementation.

To begin, the following program assessment instruments are retained from the previous efforts at program assessment.

Syllabus Checklist (Retained, minor Revision)

All instructional faculty must complete the syllabus checklist at the beginning of each semester. This serves two purposes: to remind faculty of the requirements for information included in syllabi for different courses and purposes; and, affords the department the ability to follow up with faculty who are not meeting the minimum requirements for syllabus and course content. This form is available on the department website here

<http://www.csus.edu/phil/Forms/SyllabusChecklistSpring2013.pdf>.

Faculty Visitation Evaluation Form (Retained, Substantially Revised, First Use Fall/12)

All instructional faculty are evaluated by class peer visitation each semester according to the department's ARTP policy (available here http://www.csus.edu/phil/Forms/ARTP%20Policy_Revisions_Approved%20Complete.pdf). This evaluation consists of a peer visiting a class to observe instructional methods. It has been expanded, effective Fall/12, to include not merely a visitation of the class, which provides, at best a snapshot of the instructor's in-class instructional skill, but neglects so much that is relevant to assessing instructional quality. The evaluation was expanded to include a review of the syllabi for the selected course, but also for all courses taught by the instructor in the

semester, assessment of the course text and assignments, assessment of the online teaching support components of the course as well. In short, this assessment tool has been dramatically reformed so as to bring a more comprehensive review of each instructor's course – how it is taught, at what level of difficulty, with what sort of course assessment tools, and in light of what set of learning outcomes. The form used for these evaluations, along with the rubric for use in assessment, is found on the department's Website here [Faculty Evaluation Form](#).

Program Values Rubric (New, First Use in Spring 2012)

Over the fall and winter of 2011-12, the department developed a Program Values Rubric (Rubric), modeled on those developed by AAC&U. The Rubric was developed by refining several of the AAC&U rubrics, including critical thinking, ethical reasoning, inquiry and analysis, and these were adapted to suit the focus and goals we have established for our program. The university's development and adoption of the Baccalaureate Learning Goals for the institution inspired a similar undertaking on our part. It is available from the department website at: <http://www.csus.edu/phil/Guidance/Philosophy%20Program%20Value%20Rubric.pdf>.

This Rubric was designed to serve as the principal tool for program assessment going forward and is the focal point of the department's recent efforts at refining our program assessment plan. It identifies learning goals relevant to the philosophical core of the major and the two concentrations, as well as those specific to the two concentrations. The associated learning outcomes are then cashed out qualitatively for three levels of proficiency. Ideally, students who are new to philosophy will develop proficiency at the novice level after the first year of instruction. Majors are expected to achieve full proficiency in each area of the core and in their respective concentrations as well, by the time they graduate. Minors are expected to develop competence in each of the areas of the philosophy core.

The rubric serves as the tool against which the two principal instruments of assessment are evaluated: the Philosophical Analysis and the Senior Essay. Each spring, a group of 3-5 faculty will request instructors to provide an anonymized and random sample of at least ten Philosophical Analyses submitted by majors during the spring semester. These Philosophical Analyses will be "scored" against the Rubric and assessed according to the level of the course within the major. If the course is a core course for one of the concentrations, then those Analyses will be assessed against the relevant portion of the Rubric. This will allow the concentrations to be assessed along with the general major. The same will be done with all the Philosophical Analyses written in both the prior fall and that spring semester written by seniors in the capstone course (PHIL 189).

Philosophical Analysis (New, First Implemented Spring 2013)

The Philosophical Analysis (PA) is a writing instrument developed by one of our faculty for use in several of his upper division philosophical courses. The structure is transparent, straightforward, but rigorous and highly structured. Once the department had developed the Program Values Rubric, we searched for a suitable means for assessing the program using the Rubric. This assignment seemed perfectly suited to the task and has been voluntarily adopted by several additional faculty in the department. The department is confident that sufficient instructional faculty will adopt the PA for use in their courses, as among the various assignments given for course assessment purposes, such that each of the core courses in the major will be assessable each academic year. The department has not agreed to mandate the use of the PA in all courses, and has not as yet found the need to do so. We are exploring various possibilities here, including the possible creation of a lower-division course in which students develop familiarity and competence with this format to enhance its utility as a mechanism for establishing a baseline for measuring students' total improvement over the program.

The Philosophical Analysis format can be found on the department's website here:

<http://www.csus.edu/phil/Guidance/How%20to%20Write%20an%20Analysis.htm>

The PA is a writing assignment written in response to an assigned published article – typically a contemporary article written by a well-known scholar in the field. The specific article assigned, and for which students construct a PA, varies with the course, instructor, and sub-field of philosophy. Students are required to provide an introductory paragraph with thesis statement, an explication or exegesis of the argument, and a critical assessment of the argument offered in the article. Students have a choice of only three critical positions – agreement with the author, in which the critique contributes to the strengths already evidenced in the article; disagreement, in which the critique contains counter-arguments or develops robust objections to the argument in the article; non-commitment, in which the critique identifies the balance of strengths and weaknesses or lack of sufficient evidence to make a determination (students' ignorance of the issue is not a justification for not taking a position, that ignorance is expected to be eliminated through research and consultation with peers and the instructor).

Courses Using the Philosophical Analysis

Fall/12

PHIL 122 Political Philosophy – Required in EPL Concentration

PHIL 189 Senior Seminar – Required Core in all programs

Spring/13

PHIL 128 History of Modern Philosophy – Required Core in all programs
PHIL 180 Knowledge and Understanding – Required Core in all programs
PHIL 181 Metaphysics – Required Core in all programs
PHIL 152 Recent Ethical Theory – Required in EPL Concentration
PHIL 153 Philosophy of Mind – Required in LPS Concentration
PHIL 189 Senior Seminar – Required Core in all programs

Fall/13

PHIL 127 History of Ancient Philosophy – Required Core in all programs
PHIL 180 Knowledge and Understanding – Required Core in all programs
PHIL 192N Seminar in Naturalism – all program require a 190/192
PHIL 117 Existentialism – Elective for all programs
PHIL 189 Senior Seminar – Required Core in all programs

Spring/14

PHIL 128 History of Modern Philosophy – Required Core in all programs
PHIL 180 Knowledge and Understanding – Required Core in all programs
PHIL 181 Metaphysics – Required Core in all programs
PHIL 152 Recent Ethical Theory – Required in EPL Concentration
PHIL 153 Philosophy of Mind – Required in LPS Concentration
PHIL 189 Senior Seminar – Required Core in all programs

Senior Philosophical Essay (Substantially Revised, First Implemented Fall 2012)

The Senior Philosophical Essay was a part of the old assessment program, which required majors to submit their best essay to the department at the beginning of their final semester. The department agreed that this was difficult to enforce, since it was not tied to any course requirements and compliance was not tied to any consequences for students. The quality of the submissions was also spotty and did not reliably reflect what the students' best efforts. It was agreed that this needed to be replaced with a more rigorous system for both the students and the department. The department crafted the senior seminar capstone course, largely in response to the failure of the old system.

The principal undertaking during the senior seminar is typically the substantive revision of an essay either written for a previous philosophy course with an eye toward the student producing, under the guidance of a faculty mentor, a demonstration of their philosophical acumen. As such, the senior philosophical essay has become an opportunity for our graduating majors to work with a faculty member of their choice (with the agreement of the faculty), on a topic of their interest, to develop a sustained comprehensive argument regarding a philosophical problem in the topic area. This allows students to refine their skills at creative and

critical analysis, sustained inquiry, analytic problem solving, conceptual analysis, and perhaps less philosophically specific, their skills at writing, revision, literature research and review, and self-critique. The senior essay is assessed using the Rubric and the expectation is that they will indicate the students have developed a high degree of proficiency in these skills across the depth and breadth of their major, as these are not the kind of skills that can be developed in one semester, but require sustained effort and practice.

Exit Survey (New, First Implemented Fall 2012)

Developed over Fall/12, and first implemented in the PHIL 189 senior capstone course in Fall/12, this exit survey is designed to provide student feedback on several aspects of the program, including everything from course availability to quality of instruction, and from what brought them to philosophy as a major to their assessment of the value the program provided to their overall education. All students enrolled in PHIL 189 in each semester will complete the survey. Each academic year, the Assessment Committee will review the results of the surveys and include the analysis in our annual assessment report. The results will also be shared with the department curriculum committee where appropriate to jointly work on areas of improvement.

The exit survey is available here

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?rm=full&formkey=dFRDSzIYVmhmdDg1S0hqb2FHUVFfeEE6MQ#gid=0>

Assessment Survey (New, First Implemented Fall 2011)

This is a supplemental assessment survey is attached to the principal student course and instructor evaluation form and distributed to all students in all philosophy courses for which student evaluations are collected. Initially, it was implemented in Fall/11 in courses which were using online student evaluations. Effective spring/13, the department has instituted a requirement that student evaluations be conducted online. Hence, beginning Spring/13, all philosophy courses for which student evaluations are collected will also be assessed according to the assessment survey. This is a ten question multiple choice and short answer assessment of the course which, the department believes, gives perspective on the reliability of the instructor's assessment methods. See attached document.

Alumni Survey (In Development)

During Fall/13, the department proposes to develop an alumni survey. In large part, we have been on hold with this until we are able to collect data from the graduating seniors' exist survey (first implemented in Fall/12) in order to see what sorts of questions might bring the most useful information for programmatic assessment purposes. The plan is to refine the survey for implementation in the Spring/14.

Assessment Plan for Implementation (Revised, Starting Spring 2013)

1. This Spring semester, the Assessment Committee will assemble three to five faculty who will assess **ten anonymized, randomly selected Philosophical Analyses** submitted by majors from each of the following classes:
 - a. Both the Fall/12 and Spr/13 sections of the **capstone course (189)**. These will be assessed against the Program Values Rubric. Ideally, these graduating majors will indicate proficient achievement of the Philosophy Core learning goals.
 - b. **PHIL 180**, which is in the newly created core coursework and is typically taken by majors in their junior and senior years. These will be assessed against the Program Values Rubric for the Philosophy Core learning goals. The expectation is that these students will reveal proficiency in the range from competent to proficient.
 - c. **PHIL 152**, which is an ethics course in the newly created core coursework and is required in the Ethics Politics and Law Concentration. It is typically taken by majors in their junior and senior year. Though students in the major and LPS concentrations may take this course as one of two ethics courses required, it will be used to assess the EPL concentration by narrowing the selection of sample PAs to those submitted by EPL majors. The committee will assess these Analyses using the Program Values Rubric. Ideally, students will indicate achievement of the Concentration Specific learning goals in the range between competent and proficient.
 - d. **PHIL 153**, which is a required course in the Logic and Philosophy of Science concentration. It is typically taken by majors in their junior or senior year. Though students in the major and EPS concentrations may take this course as one of four LPS courses required, it will be used to assess the LPS concentration by narrowing the selection of sample PAs to those submitted by LPS majors. The committee will assess these PAs using the Program Values Rubric. Ideally, students will indicate achievement of the Concentration Specific learning goals in the range between competent and proficient.

2. This spring semester, the assessment committee will **review a sample of ten senior essays, submitted in 189 during the 2012-13 academic year**. A sample of ten essays will be assessed against the Program Values Rubric for proficiency in the Philosophy Core.

The purpose of assessing the senior essays in addition to the PA from the same students is to allow for the possibility that students may reveal different abilities in a studied and revised essay, which requires a sustained, independent argument, developed on a specific topic through a series of revisions under faculty guidance, than is apparent through a highly structured and timed assignment as the PA in this class. The latter tests a student's ability to demonstrate

philosophical acumen in regard to providing a structured critical analysis of an article, which they must read and comprehend in the scope of the timed exam. Although philosophical acumen and reflection is not typically associated with rapidity, the department still regards the ability to apply the skills learned under a time constraint as a measure of the degree to which they have been acquired and effectively internalized. This should be an indication that the students have been cultivated and have internalized the philosophical core over the length and breadth of their time in the program. The senior essay, it is the department's belief, will reveal the degree to which our majors have acquired the skills of patient deliberation, collaborative editing (with their faculty mentor), and creative inquiry in the development and support an argument on a topic of their choice. This will demonstrate the degree to which the program has been successful in fostering the kind of creative and critical inquiry that sustains a lifelong philosophical orientation.

3. This spring semester, the Assessment Committee will collect and review the results of the **graduating seniors' exit survey**. This exit survey was finalized and implemented in the Fall/12. Patterns in student responses, especially to key questions, will be examined for feedback on the program to be used to assess whether the program is succeeding from the students point of view. Crucial will be indicators that students perceive the program to be value-adding to their lives. Where problems, limitations or weaknesses in the program are revealed, the Assessment Committee will join with the Curriculum Committee to determine whether and what actions might be taken to improve the program.
4. This spring will make the first semester for which we will be able to **collect data from the Assessment Survey for a subset of philosophy courses on a three year rotation**. Over the summer, the Assessment Committee will review the results of this assessment instrument to ensure that courses are being taught with the same eye toward quality and reliability. Any patterns found in the results which are indicative of a problem with the reliability of student assessment in courses will be brought to the curriculum committee for consultation and further action.
5. Early Fall/13 the department will hold a meeting specifically devoted to reviewing the assessment report for AY 2012-13. The department has committed to holding such an annual assessment meeting to ensure everyone in the department is aware of the results of the report from the previous year's program assessment and to determine when and where improvement can be made. All members of the department will be encouraged to participate and contribute, as all are stake-holders in the quality of the program and in assessing our good works.