



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH
VICE PROVOST FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Memorandum of Understanding
Department of Philosophy
College of Liberal Arts
March 2019 (for 2017 review)

This Memorandum of Understanding outlines the consensus reached by the Department of Philosophy, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Division of Academic Affairs, based on the recently conducted program review. It describes the goals to be achieved, and the actions to be undertaken by all parties to this MOU to achieve these goals during the next program review cycle. Progress toward goals is to be addressed in the annual report.

The Department of Philosophy offers a BA and an MA in Philosophy. The Department also has an 18-unit minor in Philosophy. It has neither developed nor discontinued any programs since the last review period. The Department of Philosophy completed its previous program review in 2008 with a final MOU issued in 2009. In the period since the previous review, the department has acted on some action items agreed to in the 2009 MOU by: 1) developing specific learning outcomes for the BA and MA programs, and 2) implementing advising and new courses to improve the quality of the graduate program. The Department has partially met its assessment goals set forth in the MOU.

A number of strengths were identified in the program review reports.

- External reviewers and UPRC members emphasized the high-quality of the Department Chair and Faculty, particularly in regards to research and scholarship. It was also noted that many members of the Department are working to improve the pedagogical practices in the classroom by developing more active learning techniques.
- The MA in Philosophy was commended as a high-quality graduate program, improved by the addition of a Proseminar class since the last MOU. The BA in Philosophy was also noted to have a strong curriculum, and inclusion of non-Western philosophies in addition to Western was highlighted. The Department offers courses to meet the needs of the GE Foundation Critical Analysis requirement (Category A3), and they also offer GE courses in Category C2b.
- The headcount for Philosophy majors has remained stable over time and the headcount for minors has recently increased. The 4-year graduation rates have fluctuated over time, with most recent data for the cohort entering in 2010 at 25%. In Dec 2016 the Department added a portfolio option to the MA degree in an attempt to improve graduate retention and graduation rates.

Areas of Concern and Opportunities for Development were noted in the reports.

- The primary issue identified in the program review was the change in the GE

requirements to allow courses outside the Department of Philosophy to be approved for teaching the A3 GE Category. This has led to a significant decrease in the FTES for the Department. This may lead to fewer students taking Philosophy in the explorations stages of GE, thus potentially leading to fewer majors.

- Although the quality of the MA in Philosophy was highly complimented, it was recognized that this is a small program requiring a significant number of resources. The program averages between 5-10 newly enrolled students per year, with an overall program headcount ranging between 14-21 students.
- The lack of a comprehensive assessment plan was also identified as a significant issue. Although assessment in the Department has improved, there does not seem to be an organized plan for assessment of all PLO's and using assessment results to close the loop with further program modification and/or development.
- While the Program Learning Outcomes are thorough, they are not written in active measurable language.

It is therefore agreed that:

1. The Department will develop and implement a continuous program of assessment of institutional, programmatic, and student learning outcomes across the curriculum. This includes General Education offerings, the Bachelor's program, and the Master's Program. This assessment should also include a revised comprehensive curriculum map, and a substantive assessment plan detailing "closing the loop" strategies.
2. The Department will provide an annual update (due June 1) on progress made towards the actions agreed to in this MOU to the CLA dean, the Vice Provost for Academic Programs, and the Director of Program Review and Assessment. Assessment for student and program learning outcomes will be completed for both the BA and the MA in programs. The review cycle will be from 2016-2023. A comprehensive self-study will be due June 2023 for 2023-2024 Academic Year external review/UPRC report process.
3. The Department will work with the College on Strategic Enrollment Management plan.
4. The Department will continually develop and implement the marketing plan for the MA program that was begun in 2017.
5. The Department will formulate and communicate a strong mission for the Department to increase awareness and understanding of the program, and to help to stabilize enrollments. In addition, Program Learning Outcomes will be written in active, measurable language with greater distinction between Undergraduate and Graduate Outcomes.
6. The College will work with the Department to consider a cohort model for the MA program, allowing for courses to be offered more infrequently, and increase the robustness of the program.
7. The College will work with the Department to establish a tenure-track hiring plan based on the needs of the undergraduate and graduate students that the Department serves. A hire specializing in pre-law may be considered to bolster this previously strong

emphasis.

8. The College and the Department will explore funding via grants and other external means to support graduate students with stipends and assistantships

This MOU has been read and approved by:

Department of Philosophy Chair:  Date: 3/28/19
Nellie Wieland

College of Liberal Arts Dean:  Date: 3/28/19
David Wallace

Vice Provost Academic Programs:  Date: 3-20-19
Jody Cormack