

This form covers Philosophy of the Person only. Program Directors for PULSE and Perspectives assess their respective Core offerings.

1)

(What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect students completing its Core courses to have acquired?)

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The Philosophy core teaches critical and analytical skills so that students develop an intellectual and moral framework for considering questions of ultimate value and significance, challenging them to translate philosophical principles into guides for life. All Core offerings in Philosophy bring students to reflect critically on the kinds of claims made in different disciplines.

Students completing the Philosophy core will be able to

Understand the historical origins of values and principles that ground and are questioned in contemporary culture

Reflect on their individual, social, and religious identities and relationships

Examine their values in light of their reflection on philosophical views

Develop the ability to analyze arguments in order to create a moral framework for considering questions of ultimate value

Consider the nature of notions like reason, evidence, belief, and certainty such that they are able to think critically about the kinds of claims made in different disciplines from the natural sciences to theology

Critically engage with contemporary problems and questions using the tools of philosophical reflection and argument

2)

(Where are the department's expected learning outcomes for its Core courses accessible: on the web, in the catalog, or in your department handouts?)

Expected learning outcomes for Core courses in Philosophy are published on the 'Philosophy Core' section of our departmental website. They are included on faculty syllabi for Core courses, as well.

3)

(What evidence and analytical approaches do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes have been achieved more or less well?)

Indirect Assessment:

In Fall 2017, the Director of Undergraduate Studies developed a five-year plan for assessing Philosophy of the Person on the dimensions articulated in the Core Renewal Initiative's Goals and Principles of the Renewed Core.

Each year, a set of three questions targeting specific Goals and Principles of the Renewed Core will be included on Student Course Evaluation Surveys for all sections of Philosophy of the Person. The Undergraduate Committee will review the results of the surveys, assess whether our Core offering of Phil Person is meeting the goals of the Renewed Core at BC, and make recommendations as needed. At the end of year five, we will have examined in detail the effectiveness of Philosophy of the Person in meeting each of the Goals and Principles of the Renewed Core. Identifying areas for continued improvement during the next five years will lay the foundation for a new set of Indirect Assessment strategies to be developed.

Supplemental questions to be included on Student Evaluations of Philosophy of the Person in AY2017-2018 were designed to assess Course Characteristics F1, F2, F4 (Foundational Content). Results indicate that students

Syllabi for the course are collected at the beginning of each semester, and the syllabi of new-hires and new Graduate Teaching Fellows are reviewed for consistency with our learning objectives. In addition, every three years, the Undergraduate Committee collects and reviews samples of student work. Collection of assignments is underway, and the next review will commence in Fall 2019.

In an effort to introduce more consistency across sections of Philosophy of the Person, the DUS is developing a Teaching Handbook for Philosophy of the Person, which includes expectations for student assessments, sample assignments, learning activities and other pedagogical techniques. Sample assignments and activities are explicitly tied to the formal learning outcomes for the Philosophy core.

- 4) (Who in the department is responsible for interpreting the data and making recommendations for curriculum or assignment changes if appropriate? When does this occur?)

The Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), along with the Undergraduate Committee, has primary responsibility for both direct and indirect assessments of Philosophy of the Person, and for designing/implementing all program modifications. The DUS reports to and is advised by the department faculty regarding undergraduate issues, curriculum and program modifications.

- 5) (What were the major assessment findings? Have there been any recent changes to your curriculum or program? How did the assessment data contribute to those changes?)

In AY2017-2018 supplemental questions on Student Course Evaluations of Philosophy of the Person aimed to assess Core Course Characteristics (Foundational Content) as articulated in the Core Renewal Initiative's 'Toward a Renewed Core'. The student response rate was high (85.2%), and the majority of students strongly agreed that Philosophy of the Person is achieving Core goals F1 (4.5/5), F2 (4.49/5) and F4 (4.48/5). No changes to the Foundational aspect Philosophy of the Person were made on the basis of the results.

While students gave a strongly positive assessment of Philosophy of the Person in their remarks, many expressed a desire for greater inclusion of texts by women and people of color. In response to this feedback, and in keeping with BC's goal of inclusive excellence, the Undergraduate Committee revised the list of recommended texts for Philosophy of the Person. Texts by women and people of color were added to the recommended curriculum, and 'diversity text' requirement was added, such that all sections of Philosophy of the Person must now include at least one text from the 'diversity' list.

The Undergraduate Committee worked with the Graduate Committee to ensure that our Graduate Teaching Fellows are trained to teach the texts recommended for Philosophy of the Person. The reading list for Graduate Student Comprehensive Examinations was brought in alignment with the new list of recommended readings for Philosophy of the Person. We also launched a Diversity Reading Group focusing on approaches to teaching texts from the new 'diversity' list.

Philosophy of the Person is taught primarily by Graduate Teaching Fellows, and part-time faculty. For this reason, the DUS aims to introduce more structure – and more accountability – to our Philosophy of the Person courses by way of the introduction of a Teaching Handbook that will include a revised curriculum, explicit expectations for student assessments, and sample assignments and classroom activities. This project is underway.

6

and external review.)

(Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study

Our last external review took place in 2009-2010.