Department/Program 2012-2016 Assessment Plan

Department: Philosophy

Directions: For each department/program student learning outcome, the department will provide an assessment plan, giving detailed information on where in the curriculum each outcome will be assessed (multiple courses required), exactly what assignments/tasks will be evaluated as the source of assessment data in each course, how degree of success will be determined, and designating the semester(s) in which the assessments will be done. A complete plan will assess all outcomes within three years. Enter this information in the table below.

Outcome assessed: SLO #1 Students will be able to identify premises, conclusions, and unstated assumptions; analyze the structure of complex arguments, avoid logical fallacies; recognize and construct deductively valid arguments.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Courses providing assessment data</th>
<th>Specific Assignment/Task Evaluated</th>
<th>Assigned Benchmarks or Criteria of success (% meeting and exceeding criterion)</th>
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<tr>
<td>PHL 202</td>
<td>•One or more exam(s), which may be supplemented by team-written assignments, in which students demonstrate their ability to recognize the main functions of language, to distinguish arguments from non-arguments and premises from conclusions, and to recognize common informal fallacies, and <em>either:</em> •One or more exam(s), which may be supplemented by team-written assignments, in which students demonstrate their skills in classical logic, by demonstrating the ability to analyze and assess immediate inferences, to recognize propositions in standard form, to translate propositions in ordinary language into standard form, to use the square of opposition, to determine the validity or invalidity of basic immediate inferences, to identify the formal properties of syllogistic</td>
<td>At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam(s); at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.</td>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
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At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam(s); at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.
reasoning, to analyze and assess syllogistic reasoning, to recognize common variants of syllogistic reasoning in natural languages, and to evaluate these variants by means of the concepts, techniques and skills acquired for recognizing and analyzing syllogistic reasoning

*or* (inclusive “or”)

- one or more exam(s), which may be supplemented by team-written assignments, in which students demonstrate their skills in basic modern logic, by recognizing the core concepts and techniques of symbolic logic, including truth functional connectives (negation, conjunction, disjunction, material implication, material equivalence), tautology and contradiction, and by using truth-tables to explicate these concepts and to apply them to the analysis and evaluation of arguments structured within the conventions of symbolic logic

| PHL 205 | • An exam in which students place in standard argument form, simple and complex natural-language arguments presented in paragraph form  
• An exam in which students | At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better. | Spring 2016 |

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.
translate natural-language arguments into sentential logic

- An exam in which students translate natural-language arguments into predicate logic
- One or more exam(s) in which students use the methods of formal logic (e.g., constructing truth-tables, interpretations, and derivations) to test arguments for truth-functional and quantificational validity

of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on each of these exams; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

**Outcome assessed:** SLO #2 Students will be able explain the main philosophical theories and methods of the Ancient and of the Modern philosophers.

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| PHL 304                          | • A mid-term exam that requires explaining the main theories and methods of the Ancient philosophers (e.g., the Presocratic philosophers and Plato)
  • An essay assignment on a selected Ancient philosopher (e.g., Plato, Aristotle, Lucretius)
  • A final exam that requires identifying and explaining the significance of key terms and primary texts of at least one of the following Ancient philosophers or groups of Ancient philosophers: the Presocratics, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics and Epicureans | At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.
  At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this essay; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.
  At least 60% of the students will earn a grade no lower than B- on this exam; at least 20% will earn a B or better. | Fall 2013 |
PHL 305

- An essay exam that requires explaining the main methods, arguments, and theories of Descartes
- An essay exam that requires explaining the main theories, methods, and arguments of a selected Modern philosopher(s) (e.g., Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, and/or Berkeley)
- A final essay that requires explaining the main theories, methods, and arguments on a selected modern philosopher(s) (e.g., Hume, Kant)

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

Outcome assessed: SLO#3. Students will be able to compare and contrast ethical theories such as psychological egoism, ethical egoism, ethical relativism, utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and virtue ethics.

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<td>PHL 102</td>
<td>• An essay exam that requires evaluating practical ethical issues (e.g. abortion, euthanasia, poverty) in light of major ethical theories (e.g. ethical egoism, ethical relativism, subjectivism, deontology)</td>
<td>At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.</td>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
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<td>• An essay exam that requires comparing and contrasting major ethical theories (e.g. deontology, utilitarianism, feminist ethics)</td>
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<td>PHL 345</td>
<td>• An essay exam that requires comparing and contrasting psychological egoism, ethical egoism, and ethical relativism</td>
<td>At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.</td>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
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<td>• An essay assignment that requires</td>
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comparing and contrasting utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and virtue ethics

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

**Outcome assessed:** SLO #4 Students will be able to analyze at least three of the following issues in metaphysics: the existence and nature of God, change and permanence, the nature of time, the status of universals, idealism and realism, the mind-body problem, the problem of personal identity, the problem of freedom and determinism, necessity and possibility.

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<td>PHL 333</td>
<td>• An essay exam that requires analyzing selected issues in metaphysics (e.g., the existence and nature of God, change and permanence, the nature of time, the status of universals) • An essay assignment that requires analyzing selected issues in metaphysics, and defending a thesis on that issue</td>
<td>At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.</td>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
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**Outcome assessed:** SLO #5 Students will be able to explicate at least two of the following problems in the theory of knowledge: perception and the external world, defining propositional knowledge, defining a priori knowledge, the structure of epistemic justification, the problem of induction, and the problem of other minds.

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<td>PHL 323</td>
<td>• An essay exam that requires explicating selected issues in the theory of knowledge (e.g., perception and the external world, defining propositional knowledge, defining a priori knowledge)</td>
<td>At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.</td>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
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• An essay assignment that requires explicating an issue in the theory of knowledge, and defending a thesis on that issue

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

**Outcome assessed:** SLO #6 Students will be able to summarize and comment on major issues in at least three of the following sub-fields of philosophy: philosophy of religion, philosophy of science, medical ethics, political philosophy, philosophy of love, feminist philosophy, business ethics, philosophy of mind

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| PHL 334                         | • An essay assignment that requires summarizing and commenting on an issue in the philosophy of love (e.g., romantic love, self-love, friendship, objectum sexuality)  
• An mid-term exam that requires summarizing and commenting on issues in the philosophy of love  
• A final exam that requires summarizing and commenting on issues in the philosophy of love. | At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this essay assignment; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.  
At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.  
At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better. | Fall 2015 |
| PHL 320                         | • An essay assignment that requires summarizing and commenting on an issue in the philosophy of science (e.g., the structure of scientific explanation, the raven paradox, the problem of grue, the scientific realism/anti-realism debate, inter-theory reductionism)  
• An essay exam that requires summarizing and commenting on important aspects of logical | At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this essay assignment at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.  
At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better. | Fall 2015 |
positivism

- An essay exam that requires summarizing and commenting on the work of Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn.
- A final exam that requires summarizing and commenting on issues in the philosophy of science

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

PHL 352

- An essay assignment that requires summarizing and commenting on an issue in the philosophy of mind (e.g., Cartesian dualism, emergentism, the mind/brain identity thesis, eliminative materialism, functionalism, intentionality, consciousness, qualia, personal identity)
- An essay exam that requires summarizing and commenting on dualism (e.g., Cartesian dualism, emergentism)
- An essay exam that requires summarizing and commenting on materialist theories of mind (e.g., mind/brain identity thesis, eliminative materialism, functionalism)
- A final exam that requires summarizing and commenting on issues in the philosophy of mind.

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this essay assignment; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

At least 20% of the students will earn a grade of B+ or better on this exam; at least 60% will earn a C+ or better.

Outcome assessed: SLO #7: Students will be able to write a well informed, well reasoned, clear, well organized, and properly documented philosophical essay.
Explanatory note on the assigned benchmarks or criteria of success: whatever percentage of the students earn an A or an A- on an assessed exam or assignment will be regarded as having exceeded the criterion of success for that exam or assignment; whatever percentage of the students earn between a B+ and a C+ on an assessed exam or assignment will be regarded as having met the criterion of success for that exam or assignment; whatever
percentage of the students earn between a C and a C- on an assessed exam or assignment will be regarded as having **approached** the criterion of success for that exam or assignment, and whatever percentage of the students earn less than a C- on an assessed exam or assignment will be regarded as having **not met** the criterion of success for that exam or assignment.