



Program Assessment Report (PAR)

Comparative Religion (CR) Baccalaureate Degree

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ACADEMIC YEAR COVERED BY THIS REPORT: 2021-2022

I. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

2021-2022 is year two of the program's assessment cycle. The learning outcome for year one is: LO: Learning Outcome (YEAR 2 OUTCOME) Graduates will be able to effectively use evidence (source material) to support a thesis. The effective use of evidence includes the following elements: (1) Use of evidence that is relevant to the paper's argument (2) Proper identification and/or citation of primary and secondary sources (3) Appropriate assessment of the evidence cited

II. PROCEDURES USED FOR ASSESSMENT

A. Direct Assessment

At the beginning of the year, the chair of the assessment committee explained to the department the LO to be assessed in that year, and the measures that will be used. All three component departments (Religion, Philosophy, and Classics) participate jointly in the assessment of this LO in year one of the assessment process. To assess this learning outcome, we collected student artifacts. We collected a representative sampling of student papers from courses taught across all three component disciplines and at all levels of instruction. All the student papers from courses deemed by the instructors to have produced papers suitable for this assessment were collected on a departmental assessment page on PILOT. From this list of courses, eight were selected on the basis of number of papers produced, and in an attempt to represent a diversity of instructors, course levels, semesters taught, and at least one course from each component department: REL 3630 PHL 2050 PHL 3410 PHL 3990 REL 4300 CLS 1600 REL 3700 CLS 3300

B. Scoring of Student Work

We read 47 papers from 8 courses across our department deemed to have appropriately assessable artifacts. All three co-disciplines were represented, and we tried to use papers from both lower and upper-level courses. The papers were chosen and distributed at random to the readers (i.e., the program's assessment committee members), who assigned them a score of 1 to 4, with 1 = poor, 2 = emerging, 3 = good or developing, and 4 = developed or excellent, based on the degree to which the paper demonstrated the effective use of evidence to support a thesis, based on all 3 assessment criteria, as follows: The effective use of evidence includes the following elements: (1) Use of evidence that is relevant to the paper's argument (2) Proper identification and/or citation of primary and secondary sources (3) Appropriate assessment of the evidence cited

C. Indirect Assessment

Indirect assessment was not done for this academic year.

III. ASSESSMENT RESULTS/INFORMATION:

Measure: Does the paper effectively use evidence to support a thesis? Scores: • 1 (poor, none): 1 • 2 (weak): 6 (9%) • 3 (good/average): 15 (31%) • 4 (excellent): 25 (60%)

These findings indicate that students in the Departments of Religion, Philosophy, and Classics are learning to use evidence in their written work to support an argument. The percentage of papers found to contain properly cited and critically analyzed evidence at a level of at least 3 ("good/developing") was 91%. Only 1 paper received a score of "poor", while 60 % of papers received the highest possible score of "excellent".

Based on these ratings, the department is effectively teaching the academic methodology required for the study of religion (LOR1), while also effectively promoting an understanding of global diversity (LOR2).

IV. ACTIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

In Fall 2023 this report will be circulated to all program faculty, and the results will be discussed at a program committee meeting devoted to assessment. At this meeting we will discuss the following: • The findings of the 2021-2022 assessment report • Should any action be taken in response to these findings? What actions should be taken to improve student performance in relation to this LO? • The assessment process for 2023, the LO for year 3 of the assessment

cycle, the method of collecting artifacts

V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Additional documentation, when provided, is stored in the internal Academic Program Assessment of Student Learning SharePoint site.