Part I: Assessment Plan

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Department of Philosophy

Philosophy
B.A./B.S.

September 1, 2022

Submitted to the University Assessment Panel by:

Jason Hanna, Chair
1. Introduction

Philosophy is the investigation of enduring and foundational questions about ourselves, the world, and society, such as: What is real? Does God exist? Is the mind separate from the body? Do we have free will? What is the difference between right and wrong? What is justice? The B.A./B.S. program in philosophy has focal strengths in the major subfields of analytic philosophy—including epistemology, ethics, metaphysics, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, philosophical logic, and political philosophy—as well as the history of philosophy. The program prepares graduates for diverse employment opportunities by cultivating critical thinking, writing, and communication skills transferable to a variety of careers. The program also prepares students for graduate study in philosophy and provides a strong foundation for further study in other fields (e.g., law school).

The B.A./B.S. assessment plan, detailed below, is a new assessment plan, implemented beginning in fall 2022. Since the previous assessment plan was filed in 2014, several changes have been made to the area requirements for the philosophy major. Previously, B.A./B.S. graduates were required complete two courses in the history of philosophy, one course in ethics or social/political philosophy, and one course in metaphysics or epistemology. Beginning with the 2022-2023 catalog, the history of philosophy area requirement has been reduced to one course, and the metaphysics and epistemology area requirement has been replaced by a two-course “core analytic” area requirement, which can be met by a range of courses in metaphysics, epistemology, and the related philosophies of science, language, and mind. The latter change reflects standard practice for baccalaureate programs in philosophy, most of which count courses in the philosophies of science, language, and mind toward the same area requirement as courses in metaphysics and epistemology. Other degree requirements remain unchanged, and thus the total number of courses required for the degree remains the same. The changes to the program give students greater flexibility in meeting degree requirements without compromising their preparation for careers or advanced study.

These programmatic changes required revisions to the assessment plan. The learning outcomes for the B.A./B.S. program, bolded in Section 2, below, have not significantly changed. Changes were made to the sub-outcomes, however. In particular, several of the sub-outcomes were broadened to more fully encompass core issues in philosophy. Most significantly, changes were made to the assessment process. Most of the sub-outcomes are now assessed in a wider range of courses. This change reflects the way in which philosophical problems cut across subfields of the discipline. It will also leave fewer gaps in data regarding student attainment of the sub-outcomes.
2. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

I. Graduates will be able to write a thesis-governed essay that is organized, clear, informed, and convincing.

II. Graduates will be able to effectively apply concepts and principles of deductive logic in reasoning.

III. Graduates will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the significant contributions that philosophers have made to our understanding of:

1. The ethical dimensions of human life and society,
2. The nature and limits of human knowledge, rationality, and discovery,
3. The nature of the world disclosed in scientific inquiry and in human experience,
### 3. Program-by-Baccalaureate Student Learning Outcomes Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>A. Global interconnections and interdependencies</th>
<th>B. Intercultural competencies</th>
<th>C. Analyze human life and natural world interconnections</th>
<th>D. Critical, creative, and independent thought</th>
<th>E. Communicate clearly and effectively</th>
<th>F. Collaborate with others</th>
<th>G. Quantitative and qualitative reasoning</th>
<th>H. Apply knowledge/skills creatively</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Write a thesis-governed essay that is organized, clear, informed, and convincing</td>
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<td>S</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>II. Effectively apply concepts and principles of deductive logic in reasoning</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S</td>
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<tr>
<td>III.1 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding ethical dimensions of life/society</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>III.2 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding nature and limits of knowledge, rationality, and discovery</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>III.3 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding nature of the world disclosed in scientific inquiry and human experience</td>
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<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Gauge whether each program outcome strongly supports (S), moderately supports (M), or doesn’t support (leave blank) each baccalaureate learning outcome.*
Philosophy B.A./B.S.

4. Curriculum Map

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>I. Write a thesis-governed essay that is organized, clear, informed, and convincing</th>
<th>II. Effectively apply concepts and principles of deductive logic in reasoning</th>
<th>III.1 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding the ethical dimensions of life and society</th>
<th>III.2 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding the nature and limits of human knowledge, rationality, and discovery</th>
<th>III.3 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding the nature of the world disclosed in scientific inquiry and human experience</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>PHIL 205</td>
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<td>PHIL 301</td>
<td>B, D</td>
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<td>PHIL 311</td>
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<td>PHIL 312</td>
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<td>PHIL 321</td>
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<td>PHIL 331</td>
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<td>PHIL 351</td>
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<td>PHIL 360</td>
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<td>PHIL 363</td>
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<td>PHIL 495</td>
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Note. Course supports the outcome at the B=beginning, D=developing, or P=proficient level.
5. Assessment Methods

EXPLANATION OF ASSESSMENT METHODS TABLE

For each of the assessment methods listed in the tables below, on each performance outcome listed in the column entitled “Description,” student performance is assigned one of the following three scores:

2 = Meets expectation for baccalaureate-level performance
1 = Partially meets expectation, but does not satisfy expectation for baccalaureate-level performance
0 = Does not meet expectation in any significant respect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Student-Level Achievement</th>
<th>Program-Level Target</th>
<th>When Data Will be Collected</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>SLOs Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Symbolic logic problems in PHIL 205                    | Students are assigned at least one set of logic problems testing their attainment of each of following sub-outcomes:  
1. Identify arguments and represent their premises and conclusions in standard form;  
2. Demonstrate knowledge of validity, soundness, consistency, logical equivalence, logical truth, and logical contingency;  
3. Symbolize the logical form of English sentences;  
4. Construct truth tables to analyze statements and arguments;  
5. Construct derivations to prove the validity of arguments;  
6. Construct counterexamples to prove the invalidity of arguments. | A student will receive a score of 2 (“Meets expectation for baccalaureate-level performance”) for each criterion on the rubric (Appendix A). | An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the six performance criteria. | Every semester | Instructor of PHIL 205 | II            |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Student-Level Achievement</th>
<th>Program-Level Target</th>
<th>When Data Will be Collected</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>SLOs Covered</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 321</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of: 1. Ancient theories of virtue ethics [III.1.a*] 2. Ancient theories of forms and substance [III.3.a] 3. The arguments for ancient skepticism [III.2.c] *Numbers in brackets indicate the programmatic learning outcome (see section 2, above) served by the course outcome</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the three performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix B).</td>
<td>An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the three performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 321 is offered (typically every other year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 321</td>
<td>III.1, III.2, III.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 322</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of: 1. Early modern theories of the sources and limits of human knowledge [III.2.a] 2. Early modern theories of the rationality of belief in God [III.2.b] 3. Early modern accounts of God [III.3.b] 4. Early modern theories of mind [III.3.a] 5. Early modern theories of free will [III.3.c]</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the five performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix C).</td>
<td>An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the five performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 322 is offered (typically every other year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 322</td>
<td>III.2, III.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Method</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>When Data Will be Collected</td>
<td>Person Responsible</td>
<td>SLOs Covered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 311</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of: 1. Theories of the nature and limits of human knowledge [III.2.a] 2. Theories of epistemic justification and rationality [III.2.b] 3. Arguments for skepticism about our knowledge of the world and responses to them [III.2.c]</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the three performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix D). An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the three performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 311 is offered (roughly every other year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 311</td>
<td>III.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 312</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of: 1. Theories of properties and substance [III.3.a] 2. Theories of the nature of persons and the self [III.3.c] 3. Theories of time or modality [III.3.d]</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the three performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix E). An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the three performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 312 is offered (roughly every other year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 312</td>
<td>III.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 331</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of: 1. Theories in the virtue ethics tradition [III.1.a] 2. Deontological ethical theories [III.1.b] 3. Consequentialist ethical theories [III.1.c] 4. Feminist criticisms of traditional approaches to ethics [III.1.d]</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the four performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix F). An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the four performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 331 is offered (typically every year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 331</td>
<td>III.1</td>
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<td>Assessment Method</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Student-Level Achievement</td>
<td>Program-Level Target</td>
<td>When Data Will be Collected</td>
<td>Person Responsible</td>
<td>SLOs Covered</td>
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<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 351</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of:</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the three performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix G).</td>
<td>An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the three performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 351 is offered (typically every other year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 351</td>
<td>III.1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Theories of justice focused on the status of individuals and individual rights. [III.1.b]</td>
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<td>2. Consequentialist theories of justice [III.1.c]</td>
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<td>3. Feminist criticisms of traditional theories of justice [III.1.d]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 360</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of:</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the four performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix H).</td>
<td>An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the four performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 360 is offered (typically every other year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 360</td>
<td>III.2, III.3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Theories of the nature and limits of scientific discovery and explanation [III.2.a]</td>
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<td>2. Theories of observation and evidence [III.2.b]</td>
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<td>3. Arguments for and against scientific realism [III.2.c]</td>
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<td>4. Theories of time [III.3.d]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 363</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of:</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the three performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix I).</td>
<td>An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the three performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 363 is offered (typically every other year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 363</td>
<td>III.2, III.3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. The mind/body problem and major approaches to it [III.3.a]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. The nature of consciousness and attempts to understand it from various theoretical perspectives [III.3.c]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Theories of psychological explanation [III.2.a]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Method</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Student-Level Achievement</td>
<td>Program-Level Target</td>
<td>When Data Will be Collected</td>
<td>Person Responsible</td>
<td>SLOs Covered</td>
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<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 370</td>
<td>Students complete writing assignments in which they demonstrate knowledge of: 1. Theories of the rationality of belief in the divine [III.2.b] 2. Contemporary and historical accounts of the divine [III.3.b]</td>
<td>A score of 2 (= “meets expectation”) on each of the two performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix J).</td>
<td>An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the two performance criteria.</td>
<td>Every time PHIL 370 is offered (typically every other year)</td>
<td>Instructor of PHIL 370</td>
<td>III.2, III.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capstone essay in PHIL 495</td>
<td>Graduates write a thesis-governed essay (of at least 3500 words) that: 1. Presents ideas and analysis in a well-structured format 2. Maintains clarity throughout 3. Demonstrates comprehension of relevant literature 4. Supports and defends the essay’s thesis</td>
<td>A student will receive a score of 8, 9, or 10 (all of which “meet expectation”) for each of the four performance criteria on the attached rubric (Appendix K).</td>
<td>An average score, among program graduates collectively, of 1.75 on each of the four performance criteria (where scores of 8/9/10=2, scores of 5/6/7=1, and scores of 1/2/3/4=0 on the department’s standard assessment scale).</td>
<td>Every semester</td>
<td>Instructors of PHIL 495</td>
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</table>

Note. a Student-level target is the score or performance an individual student must demonstrate to say the student met the student learning outcome.  
   b Program-level target is the percent of all students that must demonstrate they meet the student learning outcome.
# Philosophy B.A./B.S.

## ASSESSMENT METHODS-BY-OUTCOMES MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Program Student Learning Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I. Write a thesis-governed essay that is organized, clear, informed, and convincing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>II. Effectively apply concepts and principles of deductive logic in reasoning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>III.1 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding the ethical dimensions of human life and society</td>
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<td>III.2 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding the nature and limits of human knowledge, rationality, and discovery</td>
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<td>III.3 Demonstrate knowledge of contributions to understanding nature of the world disclosed in scientific inquiry and human experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logic problems in PHIL 205</td>
<td>S, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 321</td>
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<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 322</td>
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<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 311</td>
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<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 363</td>
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<td>Written exams and assignments in PHIL 370</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capstone essay in PHIL 495</td>
<td>S, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alumni survey</td>
<td>S, I</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** F=formative assessment, S=summative assessment, D=direct assessment, and I=indirect assessment.