

2014 Philosophy Assessment meeting

1. We reviewed some potentially confusing changes in our curriculum:
 - We are renumbering Environmental Ethics to PHIL 3530, to align ourselves with other schools in Utah;
 - We are keeping Business Ethics as PHIL 3520, since it is still needed for courses offered through USU's business programs in China, and we might find the need to return to it someday;
 - Meanwhile, we have created a new course, PHIL 3580 ("Ethics and Economic Life") to better reflect what Kleiner and Holberg have been teaching under Business Ethics - this course will also register as DHA;
 - Again to align ourselves with other schools in the state, we are renumbering our PHIL 4610 (Social and Political Philosophy) to PHIL 3700 (Political Philosophy). [ADDENDUM: it turns out we can't use that number yet, since there was another course with that title that has been deleted, and the course needs to be "dead" for a certain number of years before the number can be used again. We will propose this change in 2015.]
2. We discussed the results of our annual paper exchange - again, we have a pretty strong consensus about what makes an "A" paper, a "B" paper, and so on. "Grade Fairy" and "Grade Troll" awards were again bestowed.
3. We discussed whether our current "Learning Objectives" really match the ideals we have for our program. The general sense is that they do, but they might be made a bit more extensive and explicit. This will be a topic for further discussion in the coming year.
4. Huenemann will be on sabbatical over calendar year 2015 (probably), so some adjustments to our course offerings will need to be made. Since "Epistemology" will not be offered in the spring, we may need to broaden the range of courses satisfying our "Metaphysics and Epistemology" requirement for the major. Also, we will likely need to find someone else (Sherlock?) to teach Early Modern in Fall 2015.
5. We also discussed students who are applying for graduate school in philosophy, and discussed what attitudes each of us has toward encouraging or discouraging graduate school in philosophy. It is wonderful to see students succeed, but the chances of success in a professional career are so abysmally low that conscience dictates brutal honesty with interested students.