

Philosophy assessment meeting, April 7, 2010

1. The meeting of the philosophy faculty was called to order at 1:30 p.m. Charlie Huenemann and Richard Sherlock were present, and Gordon Steinhoff's absence (due to sabbatical) was excused.
2. First, the faculty discussed essays that had been pulled from upper-division Philosophy courses, and graded according to the program's assessment measures. The faculty were duly pleased to discover their assessments of the essays were in very close agreement. The faculty also shared several of the strategies they have been using to encourage better essays.
3. The faculty then discussed whether we should consider establishing a Philosophy "pre-major," as has been established in History and Journalism. The consensus was that, at this time, the program should remain broadly open to a wide variety of students at different points in their undergraduate careers: we need more majors, and we need to be flexible in our offerings, due to our diminished faculty ranks.
4. We suggested establishing a "Philosophy Seminar" course that would be open only to majors and minors, or perhaps to students who had completed at least three courses in Philosophy. This would allow for a more intensive Philosophy course, and could serve as a kind of capstone course. Huenemann will submit a course proposal.
5. We reviewed our current course catalog, and determined several courses should be deleted from our curriculum: 3160 (Contemporary Philosophy), 3800 (Philosophy in Literature), 4420 (Philosophy of Language), 4540 (Human Values and Information Technology), 5200 (Symbolic Logic), 5510 (Ethics and the Environment), 5600 (Legal Ethics), 6420 (Philosophy of Language), 6530 (Ethics and Biotechnology), and 6540 (Human Values and Information Technology).

ADDENDUM: Gordon suggested (after reviewing these minutes) we do not delete 4420, but put it on hold, in case we get the chance to offer it in the future. This advice will be followed.

6. Several other courses can remain on our books, but be placed "on hold" or "in limbo" until we have the faculty to teach them: 3180 (Contemporary European Philosophy), 3730 (Philosophy of the New Testament), 3750 (Religion and Science in the Modern World), 3810 (Aesthetics), 4320 (History of Scientific Thought), 4500 (Contemporary Ethical Theory), 4600 (Philosophy of Law), 4610 (Social and Political Philosophy).

7. There was discussion of recent alumni (where they are, what they are doing, etc).

8. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15, amidst great revelry and self-congratulation.

Respectfully submitted, Charlie Huenemann.