

Philosophy, PhD

Program Description

The Ph.D. program in Philosophy provides high quality instruction in the discipline of philosophy; we are committed to producing excellent scholars, effective pedagogues, and good citizens of the profession. Our program has a particular emphasis on cross-disciplinary research and as a consequence, innovative approaches to philosophical thinking. Our students graduate well-prepared to make a contribution to ongoing dialogues in important philosophical topics and across multiple philosophical traditions.

Outcome 1 – Oral Communication

All PhD students will apply the skills they have learned to write a research paper for oral presentation in the Department's Colloquium series of professional quality: (1) The philosophical problem was clearly described, the thesis was relevant, plausible, novel, and supported by valid arguments, (2) Presentation was clear and able to be seen and heard, and (3) Questions were invited, understood, and well answered. Additionally, the comments and questions from the audience will be subsequently used well to develop the graduate student and advance the project.

Measure – Presentation

Data Collection: The student's presentation of the paper at a department colloquium, will be evaluated by faculty members in attendance as "not meeting expectations," "meeting expectations," or "exceeding expectations."

Methodology or data analysis strategy: The data will be collected on a secure google doc to be amalgamated on a spreadsheet to determine if the standard is met and shared with the associate department head and the program assessment committee to determine what changes, if any, should be proposed to the faculty for adoption. [See rubric under *Supporting Documentation*.]

Target

75% of PhD recipients will give an oral presentation of a professional paper to the Department in their fourth year that is rated by the department faculty in attendance as higher than 2.0 (meets expectations) on the attached presentation rubric.

Finding: Met

80% of students had an average score of 2.0 or higher on the rubric, which is 5% above the target.

Use of Results

The rubric for presentations has four measures. The average determines the presentation score for each presentation. The average score met our target. However, the measure for "content" was above 2.0 for only 40% of presentations. So, the content of student presentations needs improvement. In particular, original content needed further development and refinement. Accordingly, the Graduate Program Advisory Committee has been charged to develop a proto-seminar for all students to take in their third or fourth year that will be for the purpose of developing each student's best original work further and putting it into a presentation for our department colloquium and a paper for submission to an academic journal. This may require moving which year in the program the colloquium takes place.

GPAC is charged to design the course in 22-23, so that it may be implemented in 23-24.

Status Update on a Previous Action

In 21-22 we instigated a process to ensure that fourth year PhD students gave a department colloquium. At the beginning of the academic year, we scheduled the talks for late in the Spring. Part of this process was encouraging our students to approach the presentation as a positive learning opportunity, which they did. We were surprised that this would be required but discovered that we were changing our student's mindset with this change. So far, we have seen a good result. We met our PLO target. However, comparative assessment data is not really available, because our assessment system (i.e., the rubric) is new. That said, it was obvious that the talks excited the students giving them and attending them. We expect this to continue. It has also revealed an avenue of further improvement (the proto-seminar) discussed above.

Supporting Documentation

Ph.D. Student Presentation Performance Rubric

	Content	Presentation	Questions	Revision
Exceeds Expectations = 3	The philosophical problem was clearly described, the thesis was relevant, plausible and novel, supported by valid arguments, and particularly compelling.	Presentation was clear, able to be seen and heard, and particularly engaging.	Questions were invited, understood, and answered in a way that was particularly engaging.	The comments and questions from the audience were subsequently used well to advance the project to make it significantly more compelling.
Meets Expectations = 2	The philosophical problem was clearly described, the thesis was relevant, plausible, novel, and supported by valid arguments.	Presentation was clear and able to be seen and heard.	Questions were invited, understood, and well answered.	The comments and questions from the audience were subsequently used well to advance the project.
Below Expectations = 1	The philosophical problem was not clearly described, or the thesis was not relevant, plausible, novel, or supported by valid arguments.	Presentation was not both clear and able to be seen and heard.	Questions were not invited, understood, and well answered.	The comments and questions from the audience were not subsequently used well to advance the project.