



**Program (Name of Program):** PHILOSOPHY

**Assessed by:** Shawn Floyd

**Date (Date/Cycle of Assessment):** 2015-2016

**Mission Statement:**

Malone's philosophy program aims to help students think critically and write clearly about life's most enduring questions, many of which concern God, morality, knowledge, and human nature. The program's courses also aim to provide students with a broad understanding of philosophy's history that is nested in, but not exclusive to, the Western philosophical tradition. The philosophy program aims to encourage a love for truth, help students to clarify and rigorously examine their cherished beliefs, and promote a distinctively Christian understanding of the world and human life.

**Program Goals:**

- Provide students with a sound understanding of the Western philosophical tradition.
- Equip students with the ability to use logic and critical thinking when assessing a range of philosophical topics.
- Help students reflect on how Christian faith and philosophical reflection are compatible sources of knowledge and wisdom.

Program Intended Learning Outcomes (PILO)	Means of Program Assessment & Criteria for Success	Summary of Data Collected	Use of Results
<p><b>A. Demonstrate through writing a sound understanding of key figures and texts in the Western philosophical tradition.</b></p>	<p>1. A paper from one course in the historical sequence. This paper will be placed in the student’s portfolio. The paper should be well written, cogently reasoned, and display a sound understanding of the paper’s subject matter and relevant philosophical texts.</p> <p>Evaluators will use the following rubric when assigning a final rating (which consists of an average of two separate scores) <u>to this and all other items contained in the portfolio</u> (call this the "Portfolio Rubric"):</p> <p>Score #1: this score reflects the degree to which the student employs his/her arguments or analysis of arguments in a clear, cogent, and refined way.</p> <p>Targets: If the paper is primarily argumentative, then the paper must (1) present a cogent argument -- the argument lacks clear logical flaws and does not leave major assumptions unsupported; (2) consider, and adequately respond to, any obvious objection. If the paper is primarily explanatory and not argumentative, then the paper must present the relevant views in a clear manner – one that maintains the consistency of the views.</p> <p>Score:</p> <p>1 – paper fails at one of the above criteria 2 – paper meets both of the above criteria</p>	<p>We had three graduating seniors this year. Their writing samples for this category were varied in quality. But for assessment purposes, all papers met the relevant criteria and were assigned a score of “2.”</p>	<p>We will continue to review our efforts to prepare students for major writing projects, since they constitute the bulk of a student's grade in upper level courses.</p>

	<p>3 – paper meets and exceeds each of the above criteria (for example, the paper exceeds these criteria if it offers a particularly novel argument).</p> <p>Score #2: this score reflects the degree to which the student’s paper is well-written and displays a cogent understanding of a specific philosophical topic and the available positions regarding that topic.</p> <p>Targets: (1) The paper must contain no major grammatical/spelling errors; (2) the paper contains a clear thesis statement; (3) the paper is clearly organized (e.g. it is clear when the paper is presenting its main argument versus presenting a potential objection to its argument); (3) the paper contains the necessary bibliographic information; (4) the paper correctly explains all relevant philosophical positions.</p> <p>Score:</p> <p>1-Either fails any one of conditions 1-3 or either ignores a relevant position or the explanation of one of the positions is unclear or is mistaken.</p> <p>2-Meets all four criteria – may contain minor grammatical errors ( a minor grammatical error is one that does not hinder the reader’s comprehension).</p> <p>3-Exceeds the criteria (for example, a paper exceeds the criteria if it is completely free of any grammatical error or if it manages to creatively, but clearly, express it main point)</p> <p>Criterion for success (applies to all portfolio items). Using this evaluative rubric, we expect at least 70% of students to achieve a certain a mark of 2 or better.</p>		
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	<p>2. Comprehensive Exam</p> <p>The Philosophy faculty shall comprise a list of 10-12 questions along with a required reading list for each question (Philosophy faculty may decide to formulate different lists for different students). Students enrolled in PHIL 4xx will receive the list of questions and reading list at the beginning of the term. At the end of the term the Philosophy faculty will select three questions from the initial list. At least one question must address an historical topic and at least one question must address issues concerning the relationship of faith and reason. Those three questions will comprise the comprehensive exam.</p> <p>Targets: The essay must show that the student has a comprehensive understanding of the relevant issue/figure/topic. That is, s/he understands not only the relevant concepts, arguments, or views expressed by a particular philosopher, s/he also understands the relevant counterarguments, distinctions, texts, and (if applicable) different variations of those concepts/arguments as expressed through the history of philosophy. Where applicable, the essay also exhibits adeptness at employing philosophical reflection to address and illuminate subjects that are germane to the Christian faith.</p> <p>Score:</p> <p>1—Fail                  2—Conditional Pass (the answer does not meet acceptable standards and the student must revise his/her answer)</p>	<p>NO DATA. Due to institutional cost containment efforts, this measure and the course associated with it have been eliminated. We will be revising our assessment strategies in light of both course eliminations and the loss of full time faculty.</p>	<p>See previous column.</p>
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	<p>Pass—Answer meets standards                  Pass with Distinction—Answer exceeds standards</p> <p>After the Comprehensive Exams have been graded (but before the start of the next academic term) the Philosophy faculty will meet to discuss results and examine any long standing trends.</p> <p>Criterion for success: Using the above evaluative rubric, we expect at least 70% of students to achieve a certain a mark of “pass” or better. This criterion applies to each question appearing on the exam.</p>		
B. Demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate arguments using both informal and formal logic.	1. Assessment measure embedded in PHIL 211 (Introduction to Modern Logic). This assignment will be placed in the student’s portfolio. Evaluators will use the Portfolio Rubric (see B.1.) when rating this item.	We don't have any data for graduating majors. The faculty member who taught this course and managed this part of our assessment is no longer with us, and he and left no information for assessing how students were doing on this metric.	The limited data we have from our graduating seniors (i.e., their final course grade in logic) suggests that they did “passable” work. We are revising our assessment plan and have yet to determine how we will gauge this particular metric.
	2. One paper from one of the topical courses. This paper will be placed in the student’s portfolio. Evaluators will use the Portfolio Rubric (see B.1.) when rating this item.	Our graduating seniors' papers varied in quality. But for assessment purposes all papers received a score of “2.” On the whole, the students evaluated during this cycle didn’t “shine” as previous classes had.	This area of assessment needs constant monitoring. Even students who write and read well may not always know how to sustain an argument or employ logical reasoning when appraising the ideas or claims of others. This is an additional yet crucially important skill that needs development, beginning with introductory courses. Still, explicit directives about writing argumentative papers will be

			helpful.
C. Demonstrate a sound grasp of a philosophical topic and an ability to assess various positions regarding that topic.	1. One paper from one of the topical courses. This paper will be placed in the student's portfolio. Evaluators will use the Portfolio Rubric (see B.1.) when rating this item.	The previous summary applies here.	The previous summary applies here.

<p><b>D. Demonstrate an ability to think and reflect carefully on the relationship between faith and reason.</b></p>	<p>1. Assessment measure embedded in PHIL 343 (Philosophy of Religion) or PHIL 252 (Medieval Philosophy). This assignment will be placed in the student's portfolio.</p>	<p>All work submitted for this component meet the criteria of the portfolio rubric.</p> <p>The courses we teach virtually guarantee that the papers students submit will address faith-related content in some way. Past papers did not always fit this outcome. But assessment revision will likely require us to gather more work from students to ensure we have the data required for assessing all component areas.</p>	<p>As we indicated in a previous assessment report, our courses invariably address faith-related matters. But assessment plan revision will require some adjustments to ensure each student has at least one writing sample that addresses faith-related matters.</p>
	<p>2. Comprehensive Exam. Evaluators will use the Comprehensive Exam Rubric (see B.2.) when rating this item.</p>	<p>NO DATA. Due to the cost containment efforts, this measure and the course to which it was connected have been eliminated. We will be revising our assessment strategies in light of both course eliminations and the loss of full time faculty.</p>	<p>See previous column.</p>