El Camino College
Department of Philosophy Program Review
Self Study

Academic Year 2005 – 2006

Philosophy Department Self-Study Team

Elizabeth Shadish, Chair
Robert Pielke
Joan Thureson

Gloria Miranda, Dean, Behavioral and Social Sciences

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I. Overview

A. Description of Program

The Philosophy Department provides general education courses to ECC students. We are one of a few community college Philosophy departments which are able to offer a full variety of transferable course options to students. This variety, which includes a full-year history sequence as well as foundations in logic and in the mains areas of philosophy, enables students to meet their needs to make a successful transition to the upper-division level. All our courses also meet the requirements of obtaining the A.A. degree.

B. Status of Previous Recommendations

In our Unit Planning Guide of 1998, a number of goals were identified for review, improvement and expansion of the program. To date, all course outlines of record have been updated, which leaves us free to pursue a continuing concern with adding courses that will enhance our program's appeal and usefulness to students. This may be difficult unless the staffing concerns we expressed are addressed. Through retirements, we will soon be facing a critical shortage of full-time faculty which, of course, also affects the ranges of expertise the department can offer both generally and in the form of substantial and transferable new courses. The department does remain "cutting edge" as far as exploring and implementing multiple means of course delivery (including various uses of technology).

II. Program Statistics

A. Demand: FTES by Course/Program

Instructions: Analyze the **FTES by Course/Program** using 1st census data and answer the following questions. At a minimum, your analysis must include a 3-year cycle comparing like semesters.

Course (standard class size)	Fall 2002 (# of sections)	Fall 2003 (# of sections)	Fall 2004 (# of sections)
On-Campus classes			
Philosophy 2 (45)	35.2 (8)	29.48 (6)	30.76 (6)
Philosophy 3 (45)	15.1 (4)	23.63 (5)	21.88 (5)
Philosophy 5 (26)	9.1 (4)	10.31 (4)	7.12 (3)
Philosophy 7 (45)	7.1 (2)	10.15 (2)	14.08 (3)
Philosophy 8 (45)	16.8 (4)	16.68 (4)	14.76 (8)
Philosophy 10 (45)	3.6 (1)	4.73 (1)	3.65 (1)
Philosophy 23 (45; honors)	3.4 (1)	3.08 (1)	2.76 (1)
Campus Total:	**90.3 (24)**	**98.5 (23)**	**95.1 (27)**
Online classes (# of sections)			
Philosophy 2 (1)	5.10 (1)	4.99 (1)	4.35 (1)
Philosophy 5 (1)	n/a	n/a	3.08 (1)
Philosophy 8 (1)	6.0 (1)	n/a	5.42 (1)
Online Total:	**11.10 (2)**	**4.99 (1)**	**12.85 (3)**
Philosophy Totals:	**101.4 (26)**	**103.49 (24)**	**107.95 (30)**

1. Given the data, can you recognize any trends in course demand in any of the Program's courses?

   In this three-year study, from Fall 2002 through Fall 2004, FTEs have been relatively stable in a positive direction and, barring the addition of some new courses, this trend is likely to continue in the future. Core philosophy courses such as *Critical Thinking* and *Introduction to Philosophy* help students develop such abilities as clear communication, critical assessment of information, and so forth. These are all necessary skills in our "information age." Our courses are designed to develop these skills as part of the very process of learning and doing philosophy.

2. What are you doing to respond to trends?

   In one sense, no special course of action is necessary if we wish to maintain the program in its current for and level of student use. However, the teaching and learning of rigorous, abstract and complex philosophical material is always a challenge in the community college context. This challenge can be discouraging to students, as can their realization when working with philosophical material that success in a philosophy class involves more than simply sharing of personal opinions. Both full-time and adjunct faculty maintain open lines of communication concerning how to deal with these issues. Some are also designing web enhancements for their campus classes that focus on these and other departmental concerns.

3. Should a recommendation be written addressing the data?   _____ Yes   __X__ No

B. Offerings: Fill Rate*

Instructions: Review and analyze the **fill rate data** (including the fill rate per course for both day and evening), provided by Institutional Research for this program for a three year cycle and answer the following questions:

Average fill rate of courses in program: How does this program compare to:

	Fall 2002 (# of sections)	Fall 2003 (# of sections)	Fall 2004 (# of sections)
Day classes			
Philosophy 2	101.1 (6)	125.1 (4)	127 (4)
Philosophy 3	89 (3)	118 (3)	113.3 (4)
Philosophy 5	88.9 (3)	104.6 (3)	100.3 (2)
Philosophy 7	75.6 (1)	122.3 (1)	117.9 (1)
Philosophy 8	89.6 (3)	98.2 (3)	85.6 (3)
Philosophy 10	80 (1)	112.1 (1)	86.6 (1)
Philosophy 23	113.3 (1)	109.6 (1)	98.2 (1)
Evening Classes			
Philosophy 2	87.8 (2)	99.5 (2)	110.8 (2)
Philosophy 5	111.5 (1)	109 (1)	91.5 (1)
Philosophy 7	82.2 (1)	118.4 (1)	98.2 (1)
Philosophy 8	104.4 (1)	100.7 (1)	93.2 (1)

Online Classes			
Philosophy 2	113.3 (1)	104.4 (1)	91.1 (1)
Philosophy 5	n/a	n/a	111.5 (1)
Philosophy 8	133.3 (1)	n/a	11.3. (1)

1. Given the data, is the program in a growth mode? _____ Yes __X__ No
   With the exception of our reasoning courses (Critical Thinking and Logic), our core philosophy classes (2, 3 and 7) have experienced a slow but steady growth, in particular through a spurt of growth in 2003.

2. What adjustments are indicated?
   While the data above show that the program is quite stable, there is certainly room to grow the program through the addition of new courses.

3. Should a recommendation be written that addresses the data? __X__ Yes ____ No
   New courses should be added to meet anticipated and expressed student interest in different applications of philosophical thinking.

   * Percent of fill of each classes at census.

C. Scheduling: Student Satisfaction with Scheduling

Instructions: Complete the chart below. Indicate the time when sections of courses in the program are currently scheduled to start. Analyze the data provided by Institutional Research on student satisfaction with scheduling in the program and answer the questions.

Course	During the early morning before 10 am	During the late am/early pm 10am –1:55 pm	During the late afternoon 2 pm -4:25 pm	During the evening 4:30 & later	During the weekend	During the summer	Via Telecourse	Via Online
Phil 2	9:30 am	10:30 am 11:15 am	2:00 pm	6:00 pm 6:30 pm				
Phil 3	9:30 am	11:15 am 12:00 pm	2:00 pm	6:00 pm				
Phil 5	9:30 am	1:00 pm		6:30 pm				
Phil 7	9:15 am		2:00 pm	6:00 pm				
Phil 8	7:45 am	11:15 am 1:00 pm		6:30 pm				
Phil 10	9:15 am							
Phil 23	7:45 am							

1. What (if anything) is indicated by the student satisfaction with scheduling?
   Students strongly prefer a two-day-a-week class schedule over a MWF schedule. They also expressed interest in more online class offerings.

2. Are there time periods of high student demand which are not being addressed? ___ Yes _X_ No
   How could such demand be addressed?

3. Should a recommendation be written addressing this area?   _____ Yes   ___X__ No

D. Retention and Success

1. Retention

Instructions: Review and analyze the data on **retention (course completion with a grade other than W)** over a three-year cycle comparing day to evening classes, term to term (e.g. fall to spring, spring to summer, etc.), and course levels.

1. Given the data, what trends are observed?
   In the Spring of 2003, the retention rate ranges from a low of 59.6% (*History of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*) to a high of 80.9% (*Philosophy of Religion*). Spring 2004 showed an improvement of retention, from a low of 67.4% (*Critical Thinking and Discourse*) to a high of 84.6% (*Ethics, Law and Society*, and Honors class). Generally, however, the retention rate is stable across both the departmental data as a whole and the retention rate for specific courses.

2. Should a recommendation be written addressing the data? ___X__ Yes   _____ No
   Since improved retention is always desirable, the department should explore ways to "hybridize" or "web enhance" their courses.

2. Success Rate

Instructions: Review and analyze the data on **success rate (students who earned a grade of A,B,C, or Credit)** over a three-year cycle comparing day to evening classes, term to term (e.g. fall to spring, spring to summer, etc.), and course levels and answer the following questions:

1. What trends are observed?
Students have inadequate preparation in English language and communication skills, as well as inadequate study habits and techniques.

2. Should a recommendation be written addressing the data? __X___ Yes   _____ No
Supplemental instruction has proven successful in other areas, and should be tried in our department.

III. Curriculum

A. Course and Content

1. Courses Not Offered

Instructions: Indicate the total number of courses in the program and list all courses in the program which are in the catalog but have not been offered in the last three years. Refer to this list to answer the following questions:

TOTAL PHILOSOPHY COURSES	CALIFORNIA ARTICULATION NUMBER	COURSES IN THE CATALOG	NOT OFFERED IN LAST 3 YEARS
Phil 2: Intro to Philosophy	CAN Phil 2	X	
Phil 3 : Ethics & Society	CAN Phil 4	X	
Phil 5: Critical Thinking & Disc		X	
Phil 7: Philosophy of Religion		X	
Phil 8: Intro to Logic	CAN Phil 6	X	
Phil 10: Hist of Anc & Medieval	CAN Phil 8	X	
Phil 11: Hist of Mod & Contemp		X	
Phil 23: Ethics Law & Society		X	
Phil 50: Special Topics		X	X
Phil 99abc: Independent Study		X	X

1. Given the data, are there courses that should be inactivated? _____ Yes   ___X___ No

2. If there are courses not offered in the last three years that you do not wish to inactivate, what reasons are there to keep them active?

   Philosophy 50 and 99 are specialized courses, not intended to be available regularly but as the need arises.

3. Should a recommendation be written addressing the data?   _____ Yes   ___X___ No

2. Course Revisions and Additions

Instructions: Utilize the Course Review Chart from the Curriculum Office to answer the following:

1. Are there course outlines that should be revised?   _____ Yes   ___X__No
   We have completed Title V updates in the recent past on all department courses.

2. Are there courses inconsistent with current practice in the field? ___ Yes   __X__ No

3. Should new courses to be added to the program? __X__ Yes   _____ No

a. Only four of the offerings in philosophy [2, 3, 8 and 5] are currently available as online offerings. Consideration should be given to making all except 50 and 99 available as well.

b. Consideration should be given to the development of new courses. These might include *Philosophy of American Culture* [A philosophical examination of the various cultural forces involved in the on-going creation of American culture] and/or *Gender Studies* or *Feminist Theory*.

c. A *World Religions* course would be especially appealing to our students and would help prepare them for the more rigorous Philosophy of Religion course should they choose to take the latter as well.

d. Consideration should also be given to developing a new course on Islamic studies. The Fall 2006 semester-long visit by an Islamic scholar from Pakistan could help jump-start this course development.

4. Are adjustments necessary to the conditions of enrollment (Prerequisite, Corequisite, Recommended Preparation, and Enrollment Limitations) for a specific course to increase student success?
   ____ Yes   __X__ No   ___ Uncertain

   Currently only one non-specialized course has a prerequisite [Phil 5: English 1A with at least a "C" grade. All of the others have a "recommended preparation: eligibility for English 1A."

5. If the program offers a degree and/or certificate, list them and indicate when the requirements were last reviewed?

   An A.A. in Philosophy is offered and was most recently reviewed in 2004

6. Are these degree and/or certificate requirements inconsistent with current practice?
   ___ Yes   __X__ No

7. Is there a need to create or delete a degree and/or certificate?   ____ Yes   __X__ No

8. Should any recommendations be written that address the above responses?
   ___ Yes   __X___ No

B. Articulation

Instructions: Using the California Articulation Number (CAN) Guide, answer the following questions:

1. Should any of your courses not currently included in the CAN Guide be articulated?

   Consideration should be given to including all of the remaining non-specialized courses into the CAN catalog.

3. What problems, if any, are there in articulating courses?

None.

4. Should a recommendation be written addressing above responses? _____ Yes __X__ No

C. Instruction and Assessment

1. Learning Methods

1. What learning methods are incorporated inside and outside the classroom in the program to promote student success?

    In the classroom, a variety of approaches are utilized, including lectures, group discussions, films, videos, computerized instructional programs, Internet resources and collaborative learning projects among others.

2. Should a recommendation be written addressing above response? __X__ Yes _____ No

    In collaboration with the Academic Senate, explorations should be made concerning the use "hybrid" courses in addition to the existing traditional campus-based, instructional television and online courses.

2. Assessment

1. How do you evaluate the extent to which the learning objectives, skills, and competencies are being met?

    A. Courses

        The usual means are utilized such as grade distribution, retention rates, student surveys, and faculty self evaluations. Occasionally standardized testing is used – usually in the form of computerized exercised programs utilized throughout the country. Future semester should include the use of non-graded "exit exams," closely aligned with the Course Objectives in the Course Outline of Record, to assess the learning process.

    B. Program

        Very few students major in philosophy, but those who do have transferred to four year colleges, universities and professional schools and have done quite well. The evidence, however is anecdotal.

2. How do you use the results of the above evaluation to improve student learning and the quality of the program?

Both faculty self-evaluation and student surveys are taken quite seriously to determine how the students feel about their classes and the extent to which they are satisfied with their experiences in philosophy courses. Modifications and adjustments are always being made in the light of this material.

3. Should a recommendation be written addressing this area?   _____ Yes   __X__ No

IV. Program Requirements
A. Instructional Support

1. Identify key instructional support areas used by the program.

Libraries & Programs:

E	Library	O	Special Resource Center	O	Basic Skills Study Center	O	Library Orientation
O	Music Library	?	Puente Program	M	Honors Transfer Program		Other (Please list.)
M	Learning Resource Center Media Materials Collection	?	Assessment/Testing Office	M	Counseling		
?	EOP&S/CalWORKS	O	Transfer Center	R	First Year Experience		
?	Learning Communities	?	Project Success				

Computer Labs & Tutoring:

E	LMTC Computer Commons	M	SRC High Technology Center	M	Other Computer Lab: Please list.	O	Writing Center
R	CAI MAC Lab	M	Writing Lab			O	LRC Tutorial Program
M	CAI Windows Lab	R	Math & Science Lab			R	Math Tutoring
M	TOP Lab	R	Keyboarding Center			R	SRC Tutorial Program
R	Hawthorne BTC					R	EOP&S Tutoring
R	Inglewood Center						

Faculty Support Services:

O	Graphic Arts	E	Copy Center	E	Distance Education		Other (Please list.)
M	Media Services AV Production	E	Tech Services Help Desk	R	Teleconferences		
R	Media Services AV Equipment Distribution	E	Support Staff	O	Webconferences		
R	ECC Vehicles	E	ECC hosted Websites	M	Staff Development		
E	ECC E-mail						

2. Do you have some instructional support needs that are not being met?   __X__ Yes   ____ No
   It is becoming increasingly desirable to have a dedicated computer classroom available to the faculty in philosophy. (This is not equivalent to a "computer lab," since the computers in the classroom would

be utilized as a medium in classroom instruction – not as workstations operated individually outside of classes.) It is also increasingly desirable to have "smart classroom" available for faculty use.

3. Should a recommendation be written to address your needs? ____ Yes   __X__ No
    Many such recommendations have already been written.

B. Facilities and Equipment

1.   Does the program make effective use of its facilities and equipment?   **Explain.**
     Yes. Classrooms and offices are utilized at full capacity.

2. Are adequate facilities, equipment and supplies available for the program? ____ Yes __X__ No
    As mentioned above (IV, A, 2), there is a need for smart classrooms, as more and more classes – both traditional and hybrid – take advantage of the Internet and other technological aids to instruction.

3. Are the facilities and equipment adequately maintained? ____ Yes __X__ No
    It is well-known that the Social Sciences building is quite old and run-down, but it is adequately maintained for its age.

4. Should a recommendation be written addressing the data?   _____ Yes   __X__ No

C. Staffing

Instructions: Analyze the data on **FTEF, adjunct FTEF, and the FT/PT ratio** for the most recent fall semester and answer the following questions:

FTEF (full-time equivalent faculty): # ____2.5_____

Number of full-time FTEF: #___3_____   **Number of adjunct FTEF**: # ___6_____

FT/PT load ratio: ___.3367_____

1. How do the program numbers compare to a like semester (Fall to Fall) three years ago or the previous program review?
    There were 4 FTEF at that time.

2. What do the program data indicate? Comment on any trends or unusual data.
    There is a very desperate need for at least one and ideally two new FT Faculty.

3. How does the FT/PT ratio benefit or harm the program?
    The imbalance between FT and PT faculty is a serious problem. Some of the PT faculty are performing services that rightfully should be undertaken by FT faculty in order to accomplish the necessities of the program. It is also difficult to maintain a dynamic program of studies with so few FT faculty responsible for course creation in multiple philosophical sub-disciplines.

4. Do you have a faculty mentoring program? _____ Yes   __X__ No

5. How does the faculty maintain currency in their field?
    They attend conferences in their areas of specialization and participate in various Staff Development activities. They also engage in individual research and one performed "pro bono" work at both Georgetown University and at the VA Wadsworth Medical Center, both in Washington D.C.

6. Fill in the faculty status data below and answer the questions that follow.

Name	Reassigned time (how much in %)	Currently on leave (check)	Retired in last 2 years (check)	FT hired last 3 years (check)	Anticipated to retire in next 3 years (check)
R. Pielke					X
E. Shadish	20%				
J. Thureson					X

6a. How does this data impact the program?
    See #2 and #3 above.

6b. Will this data affect the program in the future?
    See #2 and #3 above.

7. From this information, can you identify present and future staffing needs? __X__ Yes ____ No
    See #2 and #3 above.

8. What is the department doing to address any future staffing needs?
    See #2 and #3 above.

9. Should a recommendation be written addressing the data?   __X__ Yes   ____ No
    The Division Dean is well aware of this need, and will be submitting requests for new FT Faculty upon the full retirement of two current FT departmental faculty.

D. Planning

1. Do the program faculty and other personnel have a clear idea of what is happening in the program, where it is headed, what external changes are affecting it, and what changes need to be made in order to enable the program to adapt and continue to be successful?
Yes, as a very small department, our communication is extensive.

2. What data, not currently provided, would be needed in order to improve planning for the development of the program?

It would be helpful to see what kind of philosophy courses would be of interest to AA/AS students in general. It might be foolish to develop new courses (as suggested in III, A, 2 above) without first ascertaining if there is an "audience" for them. We are confident, by the way, that a *World Religions* course would be very popular.

3. What major external changes or trends do you expect to be of particular relevance to your discipline in the next five years?
Given the situation in the Near East and elsewhere in the world, Islamic studies can be expected to become a matter of considerable interest in American colleges and universities. Philosophical implications of various advances in technology and science (in particular in the medical and biological fields) may also be of interest to our students.

4. What will the implications of these changes or trends be for the program and how will the program need to respond?
  1. We should consider, while maintaining the integrity of our current curriculum, developing new courses and adapting present courses to reflect our globalized world.
  2. We should continue to take full advantage of the range of technology that could be utilized to increase student learning, success and retention.

5. Based upon the information above, how would you like the program to evolve within the next five years?
See #4 above.

6. Should a recommendation be written addressing the data?   _____ Yes __X__ No

V. Conclusion

1. Prioritized Recommendations

    1. As soon as feasible, place requests for replacement FT faculty
    2. Add at least two new courses to our department curriculum (World Religions and one more of our choosing)
    3. Incorporate technological enhancements, including use of the Internet where feasible, into present traditional courses.
    4. Pursue and establish a "supplemental instruction" program for our courses.
    5. Explore hybrid courses

2. Major Needs

    1. Staffing, with attention to needed specializations
    2. Infusion in curriculum of content and approaches that would internationalize our current courses
    3. Technological upgrades, including:
        a. the building of one or more smart classrooms for use by the department and, of course, the Division as a whole
        b. increased institutional support, especially with regard to human resources/technicians focused on the "academic side of the house," for our uses of educational technolog

3. Strategies

    1. We will explore course offerings relevant to our needs at other colleges and universities.
    2. We will open dialogue with our transfer institutions to assess matriculation issues in relation to our proposed new courses
    3. We will survey students in existing courses to assess their interests and priorities.