

**Undergraduate Assessment of Student Learning Report  
Report for Calendar Year: 2024**

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**A. Program Information**

Department: Philosophy

Program: Philosophy

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Program assessment website:

[http://www.k-state.edu/philos/future\\_students/assessment.html](http://www.k-state.edu/philos/future_students/assessment.html)

**B. Outcome Reporting**

**Include the following information for each outcome assessed this year:**

**Student Learning Outcome**

We assessed all five of our five SLOs in Calendar year 2024 (S23-F24):

SLO 1: Students should be able to analyze philosophical arguments using informal methods to differentiate valid arguments, invalid arguments, and arguments that, while valid, rely on contentious premises.

SLO 2: Students should be able to use semantic methods to assess the validity of arguments in sentential logic, and should be able to construct derivations in first order logic.

SLO 3: Students should be able to compose extended philosophical essays in clear prose that meet professional ethical standards of charity, open-mindedness, avoidance of ad hominem attacks, and proper citation of others' ideas.

SLO 4: Students should be able to describe and apply a range of important philosophical theories in epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, social and political philosophy and decision theory.

SLO 5: Students should be able to verbally debate philosophical theories, defending and critiquing alternatives in a manner that meets professional ethical standards of charity, open-mindedness, avoidance of ad hominem attacks, and proper credit given to others' ideas.

**Assessment Method(s)**

Describe the assessment tools, measures, instruments, and/or forms of evidence utilized to demonstrate students' achievement of the learning outcomes. Provide information on who is assessed (what course(s) and students) and expected levels of student performance (minimum expected level, proficient level, etc.).

A total of 94 student-assessments were conducted over 5 SLOs.

SLO 1 was assessed by direct measures using multiple instruments in four classes (Philo 305, Philo 326, Philo 330 and Philo 346). A total of 56 students were assessed; in total assessments employed 13 instruments, all direct.

SLO 2 was assessed in two classes (Philo 305 and Philo 320). A total of 16 students were assessed using 7 direct instruments.

SLO 3 was assessed by direct measures in four classes (Philo 326, Philo 330, Philo 335 and Philo 346). A total of 40 students were assessed using 14 direct instruments.

SLO 4 was assessed in four classes (Philo 326, Philo 330, Philo 335 and Philo 346). A total of 40 students were assessed, using 14 instruments, all direct.

SLO 5 was assessed in one class (Philo 326). 2 students were assessed, all by direct observation of class discussion.

Philo 320, 330, 335 and 346 are all required core courses for majors. Philo 326 is an elective course populated by majors fulfilling elective requirements within the major.

We have Program and Class specific objectives. We aim to ensure that our students have mastered the

skills relevant to each SLO, and that as many as possible show truly excellent abilities. We judge a student to have mastered an SLO if his or her average score across all measures of the skills associated with the SLO is at least 75%; we judge the student to have demonstrated excellence if that average is at least 90%. Class Specific Objectives: we aim for each class to contribute to student success, and judge this by class-specific performance on relevant SLOs. Specifically, we want a) the mean score over all measures of an SLO, in each class, to be at least 75%, and b) we desire that 90% of the students in a class demonstrate mastery of the SLOs measured in that class. Program Specific Objectives: for each SLO, we want mean student performance to be at least 75%, with at least 90% of our students exhibiting mastery and 30% of our students exhibiting excellence. Examples of direct measures can be found at [https://www.k-state.edu/philos/documents/assessment\\_documents/SLO%20Instruments%20for%20Philosophy%20Assessment.pdf](https://www.k-state.edu/philos/documents/assessment_documents/SLO%20Instruments%20for%20Philosophy%20Assessment.pdf)

## Results Calendar Year 2024

**Table 1: Average of Student Performance by Class and SLO**

| Classes | SLO |     |     |     |     |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|         | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   |
| 305     | 95% | 95% |     |     |     |
| 320     |     | 88% |     |     |     |
| 326     | 95% |     | 94% | 91% | 88% |
| 330     | 90% |     | 94% | 94% |     |
| 335     |     |     | 85% | 83% |     |
| 346     | 89% |     | 95% | 92% |     |

**Table 2: Class Performance by Achievement (Excellence) and SLO**

| Classes | SLO  |     |      |     |      |
|---------|------|-----|------|-----|------|
|         | 1    | 2   | 3    | 4   | 5    |
| 305     | 79%  | 84% |      |     |      |
| 320     |      | 88% |      |     |      |
| 326     | 100% |     | 100% | 50% | 100% |
| 330     | 75%  |     | 75%  | 83% |      |
| 335     |      |     | 33%  | 33% |      |
| 346     | 64%  |     | 82%  | 67% |      |

**Table 2: Class Performance by Achievement (Mastery) and SLO**

| Classes | SLO  |      |      |      |      |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|
|         | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| 305     | 95%  | 95%  |      |      |      |
| 320     |      | 100% |      |      |      |
| 326     | 100% |      | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 330     | 75%  |      | 100% |      | 92%  |
| 335     |      |      | 100% | 100% |      |
| 346     | 91%  |      | 100% | 100% |      |

| Program Performance | SLO 1 | SLO 2 | SLO 3 | SLO 4 | SLO 5 |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Grand Average       | 92%   | 93%   | 93%   | 92%   | 88%   |
| Excellence          | 75%   | 69%   | 75%   | 76%   | 50%   |
| Mastery             | 86%   | 96%   | 100%  | 95%   | 100%  |

**Class Specific Objectives:** We note that all sections met benchmark goals with respect to overall average and mastery, excepting Philo 330 with 75% mastery for SLO1. We strongly suspect this results from the use of 3 rather than 4 or 5 instruments to assess this SLO in Philo 330 (we note first that the rate results from 5 students missing just one question, and second that those students demonstrated mastery of SLOs 3 and 4, assessed respectively with four and five instruments).

**Year-on-year comparison for class specific objectives:** We note that scores for SLO 4 in Philo 335 are now above benchmark, while as noted above scores for Philo 330 missed benchmark this assessment period.

**Program Specific Objectives:** All benchmark program goals were successfully achieved, excepting mastery of SLO 1, at 86%. This result is due entirely to failure to meet benchmark mastery levels in Philo 330, which, as we suggest above, is likely do to the use of three rather than four or five instruments to assess SLO 1 in that class.

**Year-on-year comparison for program specific objectives:** Year-on-year comparisons with respect indicate that wherever possible, and especially in Philo 330, SLOs should be assessed with four or more instruments. That said, attention to instructional methods in Philo 330, especially with reference to SLO 1, is in order.

## C. Program Self Review

### **Faculty Review of Annual Assessment Data and Process**

As noted above, attention to levels of mastery in Philo 330 with regard to SLO 1 is indicated, though the failure to meet benchmark is more likely do to the use of too few instruments in assessing that SLO in Philo 330. Greater effort will be devoted to the use of more instruments for assessing SLOs.

### **Program Improvements**

Performance in Philo 335 (SLO 4) has improved.

### **Future Plans**

We will assess Philo 330 again in Spring of 2025, and the program as a whole in at the end of Fall, 2024.

### **Summary of this Report**

In calendar year 2024 the Philosophy Department succeeded in all Program Objectives but one and in all but one course objective. We believe sampling error, arising from too few instruments used to assess the relevant SLO in one class, accounts for the single failure to reach benchmark levels of mastery. We will both increase the number of instruments to assess this SLO, and also review pedagogy related to SLO 1 in the relevant class, Philo 330. Changes undertaken as a result of the last round of assessment have resulted in improved scores for SLO 4 in Philo 335.