

# Ohlone College

## Program Review Report

- **Program Description and Scope:**

- *Program Review Title:* Philosophy
- *Academic year:* 2015/2016
- *Review Type:* Instructional Disciplines
- *Program/Departments:* Philosophy (15004)
- *Authority Code:* 45-Dean, Arts and Social Sciences
- *External Regulations:* Yes\_ No X
- *Provide a brief narrative that describes the instructional program/discipline:*

The philosophy program at Ohlone College is, by large, a traditional philosophy and religious studies program that offers students exposure to new ideas, cultures, value systems, and the means to critique and analyze them. Two courses History of Ancient and History of Modern philosophy, for example, offers students the opportunity to question basic truths as what reality is, how we experience the world, and struggle with enduring questions such as “Do we have free will?” and “What is virtue?” In taking philosophy courses, students broaden their knowledge culturally, as well as intellectually. The courses on religion offer valuable insight on students’ own religious beliefs, as well as other religions such as Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism, all of which lay the ground work for the diversity of cultures and values that exist today.

- **College Mission:**

- *Mission Statement:*

Ohlone College responds to the educational needs of our diverse community and economy by offering high quality instruction supporting basic skills, career development, university transfer, and personal enrichment and by awarding associate degrees and certificates to eligible students in an innovative, multicultural environment where successful learning and achievement are highly valued, supported, and continually assessed.
- *Program Relation to College Mission:*
  - University Transfer
- *State Your Program Mission/Purpose:*

The philosophy program overall, currently has a dual vision, unified by a common singular value. Firstly, it envisions to create well-educated persons, with the understanding that being well-educated does not mean a person who has accumulated an impressive amount of facts, but rather one who is curious and engaged with the world around him or her, and seeks to broaden his or her understanding through proper reasoning. The traditional philosophy courses such as History of Ancient Philosophy, History of Modern Philosophy, Practical Reasoning, Logic, and Ethics share this vision. The second vision is to broaden

the cultural experience of students through an examination of one of the most culture-defining institutions in society, religion. Such examinations will lead to a broadening of cultural understanding, cultural growth, and foster an appreciation for the differences that cultures have. The courses Understanding the Old Testament, Understanding the New Testament, Introduction to Asian Religions, Introduction to Western Religions, and Introduction to Islam share in this vision.

- *Briefly Describe Program Accomplishments:*

In the Spring of 2014 the philosophy program successfully applied to a ADT transfer degree.

I am also aware of at least three students from Ohlone who have either enrolled or have completed a BA, MA, or Ph.D. program in philosophy at various universities in California within the past year.

- **Achievement and Resource Data Analysis:**

1. *Research Questions:*

1. Course enrollments have declined by almost 40% in the past three years. Is there something that could be done to recapture some of that enrollment?
2. The department success rate is below the college minimum standard of 69.1%, and much of that appears to be due to withdrawal rates of near 25%. The entry level PHIL-100 course is especially low in its success rate. It may be the nature of the discipline, but despite that, are there changes or innovations that might reduce withdrawals and improve success?
3. African American and Hispanic success rates are disproportionately impacted. Hispanics, especially, constitute a significantly large (11.6%) portion of enrollments. Are there any interventions that can appropriately be employed to assist adversely effected groups?

- **Resource Assessment Summary:**

1. *Academic Year:* 2013-14
2. *Activity Center Fund 10 Budget Allocation:* \$149756.00
3. *FTES:* Fall: 42 Spring: 47 Summer: 0
4. *WSCH/FTEF:* Fall: 680 Spring: 690 Summer: 0
5. *Course Sections Offered:* Fall: 10 Spring: 11 Summer: 0
6. *Sections Taught FT Faculty:* Fall: 5 Spring: 5 Summer: 0
7. *Sections Taught PT Faculty:* Fall: 5 Spring: 6 Summer: 0

- **Human Resources:**

1. *# of FT Faculty:* 1

2. # of PT Faculty: 2
  3. # of Classified Staff: 0
  4. # of Administrators: 0
  5. % Faculty release/reassigned time: 0%
  6. Technology:
  7. Physical Resources:
    - General Classrooms
    - Tutoring/Learning Center
- **Program Analysis PSLOs - Student Learning:**  
 (Key: I-Introduced, P-Practiced with Feedback, M-Demonstrated at the Mastery Level)

1. *PSLO Matrix:*

Course	PSLO-1	PSLO-2	PSLO-3	PSLO-4
PHIL 100	I	I	I	I
PHIL 101	M	M	P	M
PHIL 102	M	M	P	M
PHIL 104	I	P	M	I
PHIL 106	I	M	M	M
PHIL 107	I	M	M	P
PHIL 109A	P	P	M	M
PHIL 109B	P	P	M	M
PHIL 110	P	P	M	M
PHIL 112	P	P	M	M
PHIL 114	P	P	M	M
PHIL 116	P	M	M	M
PHIL 118	M	M	M	M

2. *Please Indicate the PSLO(s) which you are reporting on:*
  - Understand some of the diverse assumptions and values that shape our experience and/or attitude of the world.
  - Understand and communicate abstract ideas.
  - Distinguish different areas of philosophy and philosophical methodology
  - Develop critical thinking skills necessary to critically assess real world issues, and the various perspectives on them.
3. *Analyze and summarize your assessment findings â?? What in the data jumped out?*

Student success and retention rates are lower than I would like to see in some courses (specifically phil 100, 101, 102, 107).

I believe that the cause of this may be:

1. Low basic skills are hampering students from being able to effectively communicate philosophical ideas. Philosophy demands students to utilize precision in their reasoning much like math requires precision in reasoning. Unlike math this precision in reasoning is not something that is easily systematized. Without a strong grasp in basic skills (writing ability) students will not be able to communicate complex philosophical ideas.

2. Unlike many other disciplines, students often do not know what philosophy is before they take their first philosophy course. Students often have expectations that the course will be easy, that any answer can be correct, and that the course will be easy. Since student expectations of the course don't match the courses' expectations of the student, students often drop.

4. *Give examples of assessments used for your PSLO analysis:*

Achievement and resource data.

5. *Describe input from Program Advisory Committee (if applicable):*

6. *Comments:*

1. Course enrollments have declined by almost 40% in the past three years. Is there something that could be done to recapture some of that enrollment?

Enrollment trends are difficult to predict. I believe that a combination of factors including adjuncts coming and leaving may be contributing to lower enrollments. Additionally, students failing to succeed in Phil 100 may be impacting other course enrollment.

2. The department success rate is below the college minimum standard of 69.1%, and much of that appears to be due to withdrawal rates of near 25%. The entry level PHIL-100 course is especially low in its success rate. It may be the nature of the discipline, but despite that, are there changes or innovations that might reduce withdrawals and improve success?

The PIO for this program review is an attempt to remedy this concern, as well as question 1.

3. African American and Hispanic success rates are disproportionately impacted. Hispanics, especially, constitute a significantly large (11.6%) portion of enrollments. Are there any interventions that can appropriately be employed to

assist adversely affected groups?

Adversely affected groups often have lower basic skills abilities. Philosophy is a discipline that demands high degree of critical thinking and language mastery skills. Student groups with lower basic skills abilities will have a harder time in this discipline. That said, I hope that minor changes in the way test materials are worded (short answers will be called short essays), and the addition of an embedded tutor in phil 100, will assist students in improving their success rates, including student groups who are disproportionately impacted.

- **Program Improvement Objectives**

1. *Based on the program data analysis and PSLO analysis, identify your Program Improvement Objective(s): What are you going to do? Why are you going to do it?*

To increase enrollments and increase student success rates, I will be putting at least one, possibly two courses on-line. Often philosophy 101 and 102 (Ancient philosophy and Modern philosophy) are offered at night. I believe that this might be limiting enrollments to many students, but also making it available to a different set of students.

*Notes (optional): Please include any notes related to your PIO. (2500 Character limit)*

*Program PIO will address the following:*

- Student Learning & Achievement
- Success Rates

*How will you assess the effectiveness of your PIO:*

Examining enrollment rates at the beginning of the on-line course, and comparing it to historical enrollments of the course when it was offered at night. At the end of the course, I'll examine student success rates and compare it to the historical student success rates of the same course offered at night in the past. If the data is available, I'll also examine the kinds of students that are enrolling in the course and see if a wider set of students (age and ethnicity) are enrolling in the course.

**PIO Action Plan:**

*How will you accomplish this?*

Currently none of the courses have been submitted to the distance education committee for approval for on-line status. This semester (fall 2014) I have begun the process of putting phil 101 (ancient philosophy) on-line with the hopes of having an on-line version of the course available in the fall of 2015. I also hope to have clearance from the distance education committee for phil 102 (modern philosophy) to be put on-line for the Fall of 2015 as well. In the spring and summer of 2015 I plan on building the courses that get approved for distance ed and modifying the curriculum so that it better fits the distance education model. Seeing that I have not taught on-line before, I will also try to get some training or mentoring from other faculty members that are familiar with distance ed.

*What is your timeline?*

(Fall 2014) Submit approvals for phil 101 and phil 102 to the distance education committee. (Spring 2015-Summer 2015) Build and alter curriculum to make it suitable for distance education. Also undergo training for distance education. (Fall 2015 possibly spring 2016) Offer Phil 101 or phil 102 or both on-line. (Spring 2016-Fall 2016) Evaluate the enrollment and student success of the course on-line compared to historical numbers of enrollments and student success of the course off-line.

*Who is going to do this?*

Wayne Yuen will be the only person who will be placing phil 101 and phil 102 on-line. Adjunct courses will be strictly face to face.

*PIO Status:*

- In-Progress

*Closing the loop - Describe the results of your PIO implementation or completion:*

Student retention has not increased. Most students dropped the online course early into the semester, after seeing the work expected of them. That said, it was the first time that the phil 101 course had been full to capacity in a long time. I'm considering changes to the structure of the course which I will implement in my phil 102 class in spring 2016.

*Conclusion: Complete if PIO has been completed*

PIO not achieved - did not work - start new PIO cycle

*Fiscal Resources Status:*

- No fiscal resources needed.

**PIO Resources:**

- Resource: People Time  
Description: Faculty time

2. *Based on the program data analysis and PSLO analysis, identify your Program Improvement Objective(s): What are you going to do? Why are you going to do it?*

I want to improve student learning in Phil 100 (intro to philosophy). Improving student learning, will improve student success and retention, which in turn will hopefully increase student enrollment in other philosophy courses. In Spring 2014, I'll be teaching two sections of Intro.

*Notes (optional): Please include any notes related to your PIO. (2500 Character limit)*

*Program PIO will address the following:*

- Student Learning & Achievement
- Course Retention
- Success Rates
- Increase Program Enrollments

*How will you assess the effectiveness of your PIO:*

Effectives will be determined by comparing the course to the control course that I will be teaching. Student retention will be evaluated by comparing the percentage of students withdrawing between the two courses. Student success will be evaluated by comparing the percentage of students earning a C or better

between the two courses. Student learning will be evaluated only indirectly by evaluating success rates. The longer term goal of increasing program enrollments can only be evaluated after implementing and evaluating the success of the embedded tutor.

**PIO Action Plan:**

*How will you accomplish this?*

This semester (Fall 2014) I will begin the process of finding and securing an embedded tutor for phil 100 in the Spring. I've already contacted Mary Fontanilla to begin the process of getting an embedded tutor (10/23/14) At the end of the semester, I'll poll the section that had the embedded tutor to determine how many students made use of the tutor, and how helpful they thought the tutor was. I'll also compare exam grades, paper grades and overall grades to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the two courses.

*What is your timeline?*

Fall 2014 (now) - end of Spring 2014

*Who is going to do this?*

I will be the only faculty member doing this experiment.

*PIO Status:*

- In-Progress

*Closing the loop - Describe the results of your PIO implementation or completion:*

Student retention has not increased. Most students dropped the online course early into the semester, after seeing the work expected of them. That said, it was the first time that the phil 101 course had been full to capacity in a long time. I'm considering changes to the structure of the course which I will implement in my phil 102 class in spring 2016.

*Conclusion: Complete if PIO has been completed*

PIO not achieved - did not work - start new PIO cycle

*Fiscal Resources Status:*

- Tutor \$?

**PIO Resources:**

- Resource: People Time  
Description: Faculty time

3. *Based on the program data analysis and PSLO analysis, identify your Program Improvement Objective(s): What are you going to do? Why are you going to do it?*

Removing SLOs from phil 107 to help increase retention and student success rates, as well as bring the course more in line with other critical thinking courses at ohlone, CSU and UC.

*Notes (optional): Please include any notes related to your PIO. (2500 Character limit)*

*Program PIO will address the following:*

- Course Retention
- Success Rates
- Student Learning & Achievement

*How will you assess the effectiveness of your PIO:*

I will compare the success rates and retention rates of students before and after the SLO change.

**PIO Action Plan:**

*How will you accomplish this?*

A modification in the course SLOs will require approval from the curriculum committee. I will submit a modification of the course this semester(Fall 2014)

and implement the changes immediately in the course.

*What is your timeline?*

Fall 2014 - SLO modification will be submitted to curriculum committee. When the approval takes place, changes to the course will be implemented immediately.

*Who is going to do this?*

Wayne Yuen

*PIO Status:*

- New
- Completed

*Closing the loop - Describe the results of your PIO implementation or completion:*

Student retention has not increased. Most students dropped the online course early into the semester, after seeing the work expected of them. That said, it was the first time that the phil 101 course had been full to capacity in a long time. I'm considering changes to the structure of the course which I will implement in my phil 102 class in spring 2016.

*Conclusion: Complete if PIO has been completed*

PIO achieved - worked

*Fiscal Resources Status:*

- No fiscal resources requested.

**PIO Resources:**

- Resource: People Time  
Description: Faculty time

**Attached Files:**

- [Course Assessment in a Box Phil 1071.docx](#)