

UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
UNIVERSITY PROGRAM REVIEW (UPR)
REPORT ON: PHILOSOPHY
UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS
 January 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Review Preparation

In preparing this document, the Program Development Committee reviewed the following: Philosophy's Self-Study (SS) (October 2014), the report of the external reviewers (ER) (March 2015), the response from the Head (April 2015), and the response from the Dean (July 2015) to the above material. The external reviewers were: Dr. Amy Mullin, Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto, Dr. David Ingram, Department of Philosophy, Loyola University (Chicago), and, Dr. Gordon Drake, Department of Physics, University of Windsor.

Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

At the undergraduate level, the Department offers a Bachelor of Arts (General) in Philosophy and a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Philosophy. Students also have the option of combining their Honours Philosophy major with a major from another discipline.

The Department offers a Minor in Philosophy, as well as Major and Minor Concentrations for the Bachelor of Arts and Science.

At the graduate level, the Department offers a Master of Arts in Philosophy.

Enrolments

Undergraduate

	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
Full-Time	41.8	36	32	34	24.5
Part-Time	12.5	9.5	13.5	7.5	11.5

Graduate

	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
MA Full-Time	12	8	6	10	9
MA Part-Time	0	0	0	0	0

Human Resources

Faculty/Instructors

Tenure/tenure-track faculty	8 (including Head)
Sessional Lecturers (continuous 8 month positions)	4
Faculty members involved in graduate program delivery	8

Full-time Staff

Secretaries	2
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FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT (with Implementation Plan)

Significant Strengths of the Programs

As noted by the external reviewers, “the undergraduate and graduate programs are academically rigorous and they offer ample opportunities to apply teaching and research to real world problems.” (ER, p. 1) “The curriculum reflects the current state of the discipline in exemplary fashion. It offers a wide range of courses in all major subfields of philosophy and, what is unusual for the discipline, spans both European and Anglo-American traditions.” (ER, p. 3)

“The opportunities for graduate students and some undergraduate students to become involved with faculty research projects and the Centre for Research on Reasoning, Argumentation and Rhetoric (CRRAR) increase research intensiveness, and the annual philosophy undergraduate and graduate conferences are very significant means of supporting research intensiveness and a rich learning experience. The annual conferences are [...] distinctive and valuable” (ER, p 2) and “a very significant and growing strength of the undergraduate and graduate programs.” (ER, p.8)

Opportunities for Program Improvement/Enhancements

The department should continue to review its curriculum on a regular basis, as it has done in the past, to ensure needed changes are made in a timely way. Areas of improvement include establishing supports and mentorship programs to enhance student retention, particularly from year one to year two, creating a sense of cohort for each year (in part by discouraging upper-level majors from enrolling in first year or second year courses where upper-level courses are available), providing greater flexibility in fourth-year course offerings, and increasing or pursuing new recruitment initiatives for the undergraduate and Masters programs (SS, pp.117-119, ER pp. 8, 9-10) Further opportunities for program improvements are captured in the recommendations listed below.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommendations (in priority order)

(Final recommendations arrived at by the Program Development Committee, following a review and assessment of the External Reviewers report, the Head’s response and the Dean’s response.)

Recommendation 1: As it conducts its undergraduate curriculum review, that the Department consider:

- a. combining multiple sections of classes into a larger class in order to offer more diverse course offerings, contingent upon being able to provide small group experiences within the larger class, and
- b. combining geographically and historically-based fourth-year courses.
- c. introducing more topically themed fourth year offerings.
- d. combining current offerings in Ethics and packaging them into an Ethics minor.

Agents: Department Head, AAU Council

Completion by: Fall 2019

Recommendation 2: That the Department submit learning outcomes and assessment methods for each of its **graduate** courses that clearly correspond to the University's stated "Characteristics of a University of Windsor Graduate". *[PDC notes that learning outcomes for its undergraduate and graduate programs, and undergraduate courses are provided in the Self Study pp.21-36]*

Agents: Department Council, Head, CTL, Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning

Completion by: Fall 2017

Recommendation 3: That the Department:

- a. collect data, through exit surveys and other tools, to determine the factors behind attrition rates, and
- b. increase its retention efforts, with a focus on retention from first to second year by, for example, making opportunities for first year students to form a cohort with exposure to faculty research, upper year course offerings, upper year student mentors, and graduate students

Agents: Department Head, Institutional Analysis (as appropriate)

Completion by: Fall 2019

Recommendation 4: That the Department increase enrolment into its undergraduate programs, using appropriate and successful recruitment and retention activities. *[PDC notes with concern the continued decline in undergraduate enrolments and the significant decline over last year's enrolment numbers. PDC cautions that continued drops in enrolments will bring the area close to the enrolment threshold for the deletion of programs under the Senate Policy on Course and Program Changes, and urges the Philosophy Department to focus its efforts on recruitment and retention in the undergraduate program.]*

Agents: Department Head, AAU faculty members

Completion by: Fall 2019

Recommendation 5: That the Department improve recruitment and marketing for the Masters program by:

- a. focusing on institutions with faculty who have recommended Windsor MA program in the past, and programs that have some strength in critical theory and argumentation theory,
- b. making better use of library provided web resources (electronic links to faculty research, to proceedings of graduate conference, to graduate theses, to electronic copies of faculty books) for recruitment purposes and to enhance exposure of undergraduate and graduate students to research, and
- c. celebrating the strengths of the graduate program.

Agents: Department Head, AAU faculty members

Completion by: Fall 2019

Recommendation 6: That the Department, working with the Dean, submit a request to the Space Planning Committee for space for graduate students and assistants and for space to relocate CRRAR nearer to the Philosophy Department. In the interim, that the Department make more efficient use of existing space by coordinating office hours for teaching assistants and graduate assistants, booking shared History/Philosophy seminar room space when not otherwise in use, and providing access to offices used to house journals.

Agents: Department Head, Dean of FAHSS

Completion by: Annual Review