

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo Philosophy, BA

The 2019-2020 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for Philosophy, BA program concluded with a culmination meeting on April 9, 2021.

The following people attended the meeting: Carolyn Thomas (Provost), Mark Filowitz (AVP for Academic Programs and Enrollment, AVPAPE), Sheryl Fontaine (Dean, HSS), Jessica Stern (Associate Dean, HSS), Emily Lee (Chair), Matthew Calarco (Faculty), and Su Swarat (AVP for Institutional Effectiveness, AVPIE).

The Provost commended the program for using the PPR as an opportunity for reflection and planning. Specifically, she highlighted the following accomplishments:

- Supports excellence in scholarly and creative activity and external grant activity.
- Impressive job at educating inquisitive students with supreme critical-thinking skills.
- Recruits and retains a highly qualified faculty with diverse expertise.
- Level and quality of scholarly and grant activity higher than philosophy departments at comparable institutions.
- Tenured/tenure-track faculty members cover wide range of approaches and interests, which serves the students well.
- Faculty committed to providing a transformative learning experience to support student success
- Students value faculty highly for their teaching, accessibility, and mentoring.
- Department's annual colloquium integrates alumni and students, attracts excellent speakers and enhances the department's reputation.
- More successful at fundraising than many CSU philosophy departments.

Major recommendations and issues raised through the PPR process were discussed as follows:

1. Faculty teaching load:

- The external reviewers recommended that the department maintains the 3-3 teaching load.
- The Chair stated that the department has managed to maintain the 3-3 teaching load for several years. For new hires, the teaching load reduction in the first two years are supported by the Provost's Office. After that, the department determines the 3-3 load conditional upon the number of students each faculty member teaches.
- The Dean confirmed that the strategy is to teach the same number of students in less sections, i.e. teaching the number of students in four classes in three allows the department to maintain a 3-3 load.

2. Faculty service load:

- The external reviewers recommended the department to review service loads to ensure that the service requirements are shared equitably based on individual faculty's skills and interests.
- The Chair agreed that this is a problem to be addressed. She has started the effort to balance service load equitably, and will continue to seek a systematic way to do so.

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3. Inclusion of non-tenure track faculty:
 - The external reviewers recommended the department to include more ideas and perspectives of non-tenure track faculty.
 - The Chair confirmed that the department is cognizant of the impact of non-tenure track faculty on student recruitment and success, and reported that she has started to communicate and support more with them. The department is working to identify more systematic ways to engage non-tenure track faculty.
4. Department management:
 - The external reviewers encouraged the Chair to take visible, decisive role in identifying and addressing faculty concerns and complaints, and to connect regularly with chairs of other departments to share knowledge and exchange leadership strategies.
 - The concern about the practice of rotating the Chair position every 3 years was discussed. The Provost pointed out that under such circumstances, the transition needs to be smooth and the department needs to figure out how to ensure smooth transition. The Provost reiterated recommended the department to strengthen communication, and to become more intentional about the Chair's function.
5. Curriculum development:
 - The AVPAPE inquired about the department's plan regarding curriculum development, particularly in the areas of GE B5.
 - The Chair and the faculty acknowledged that the department is aware of the shortage of B5 courses, and the recent uptake in B5 offerings. The department curriculum committee is discussing the possibility of offering more courses in this area.
6. Student recruitment:
 - The Dean recommended the department to seek ways to increase the yield from admission to acceptance, and to strengthen outreach to recruit more double majors or minors.
 - The Provost acknowledged that it may be challenging to attract freshmen due to applicant's lack of awareness of the major, but encouraged the department to take a proactive approach to seek out more majors.
7. Student exit survey:
 - The external reviewers recommended the department to consider making student exit survey a degree requirement.
 - The Chair reported that the faculty are actively seeking to establish connections with recent alumni.
 - The AVPIE encouraged the department to take advantage of the university-wide undergraduate exit survey, as well as the Emsi alumni data dashboard, to gauge post-graduation student success.
8. Budget and resource distribution:

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- The Chair inquired about the availability of O&E budget, and raised the concern regarding the cost associated with infrastructure projects (e.g. painting, breakroom, space renovation).
- The Dean stated that the O&E was adjusted based on state and university funding, and acknowledged that the high cost associated with infrastructure projects needs to be addressed.
- The Provost concurred, and stated that she will work with the university to address this issue.

The Dean thanked the Chair and faculty for their hard work, their “teacher scholar” model, and their significant contribution to GE. The Chair stated that she will bring back the issues raised through the PPR process to the faculty, and to engage them in continued discussions to promote change. The Provost concluded the culmination meeting, and thanked the faculty for their excellent contribution to the university.