Program (Major, Minor, Core): Ph.D.
Department: Theological Studies
College/School: Arts & Sciences
Person(s) Responsible for Implementing the Plan: Peter Martens (Dept Chair), David Meconi (Ph.D. Director), Ph.D. Committee
Date Submitted: 11/15/2015

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<th>Program Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Curriculum Mapping</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
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<td>What do you expect all students who complete the program to know, or be able to do?</td>
<td>Where is the outcome learned/assessed (courses, internships, student teaching, clinical, etc.)?</td>
<td>How do students demonstrate their performance of the program learning outcomes? How does the program measure student performance? Distinguish your direct measures from indirect measures.</td>
<td>How does the program use assessment results to recognize success and &quot;close the loop&quot; to inform additional program improvement? How/when is this data shared, and with whom?</td>
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<td>1. All Ph.D. students will display theological knowledge of the major figures, movements and themes throughout the history of Christianity.</td>
<td>Students undertake two years of coursework centered around general surveys covering the history of theology (THEO 6020: Survey of Early Christianity, THEO 6030: Survey of Medieval Christianity, &amp; THEO 6040: Modern Christianity</td>
<td>Students demonstrate their knowledge in four ways: (1) through coursework and the inevitable preparation of written work as well as orally leading class discussions, (2) through two comprehensive exams, and (3) through the writing and</td>
<td>Individual faculty members track student progress in their courses, and faculty committees assess students’ performance on the comprehensive exams by use of a rubric measuring both their intellectual competency as well as their ability to express</td>
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Survey) as well as various seminars of their own choosing which continue to stress the organic and ongoing nature of Christianity.

Third-year students are required to take THEO 6210: Dissertation Prospectus, a seminar that prepares students to write the prospectus. Students must then defend their prospectus before a faculty committee in order to remain in the program; their defense is evaluated with a departmental rubric. Finally, the dissertation is assessed at the defense.

Students are assessed through grading of their prospectus seminar work as well as at various times of their prospectus writing and, finally, at the oral prospectus defense itself. To assess the first, the syllabus and course expectations are used; to assess the latter a departmental rubric is employed. Also, a departmental rubric is used to evaluate the dissertation defense.

The successful public dissertation defense—as determined by a majority of the dissertation board—and final submission of the dissertation signal the student’s status as an expert in the field. The Ph.D. director collects the completed rubrics from the defenses. After monitoring the rubrics for patterns of strengths to be celebrated and weaknesses to be addressed, the Ph.D. director disseminates all noteworthy feedback to the graduate faculty.
3. All Ph.D. students will possess a dual competency, enabling them to teach both a general introductory course in theology and a more specific course in their area of specialty; in both courses, students will employ appropriate pedagogical methodology. Ph.D. students are required to attend a series of teaching workshops offered by the department. Students also are given multiple opportunities to lead discussion sections and to be the lead instructor at the 1000- and 2000-levels. Students are also encouraged to draw on the many resources of the CTTL. In addition to indirect measures like student course evaluations, the Ph.D. Director directly observes the teaching of each student and provides feedback in a one-on-one meeting. The Ph.D. Director uses a rubric that assesses course content, presentation skills, and ability to facilitate class discussion on the undergraduate level. The Department Chair monitors the teaching evaluations of the students and meets with the Ph.D. Director, allowing students to progress to teaching 2000-level courses only after success at the 1000-level.

4. All Ph.D. students will assemble dossiers of job application materials, as part of their preparation to apply for and interview for full-time teaching positions. Students are required to attend workshops by the departmental Career Advancement Committee, in addition to presentations by SLU’s Career Center. Students must submit a professional CV and sample cover letter to the Career Advancement Committee. Students may also work with the CTTL to produce a teaching dossier. The departmental Career Advancement Committee will evaluate the students’ application materials, offering detailed feedback on each student’s materials. Ultimately, placements are used as a measure of student achievement of all four Program Learning Outcomes; the Ph.D. director tracks placements. Each May, the Career Advancement Committee will work with the Ph.D. Director to submit a report to the Assessment Committee, in order to celebrate student successes, and to propose any necessary adjustments in programming in response to student and faculty concerns.

1. It is not recommended to try and assess (in depth) all of the program learning outcomes every semester. It is best practice to plan out when each outcome will be assessed and focus on 1 or 2 each semester/academic year. Describe the responsibilities, timeline, and the process for implementing this assessment plan.

The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences expects annual assessment reports on July 1 of each year. Working backward from that date each year, we propose the following timeline:
• Spring 2016: Daniel Smith and David Meconi will work with the University Assessment Coordinator to finalize the PhD Assessment Plan; the Department Chair will establish the DTS Assessment Committee (AC)

• AY 2016/17: We will focus on assessing Program Learning Outcome #4. In the fall, the Department Chair will form a Career Advancement committee; in addition to its responsibilities for developing/overseeing relevant programming for Ph.D. students, this committee will also submit a report in May 2016 to the AC, consisting of both a summary of outcomes for students graduating in this academic year and a summary of any proposed changes in programming for AY 2017/18.

• AY 2017/18: The Ph.D. Director, Ph.D. Studies Committee, and AC will address Program Learning Outcome #1, in order to examine & evaluate our students’ coursework requirements.

• AY2018/19: The Department Chair, Ph.D. Director, Ph.D. Studies Committee, and AC will address Program Learning Outcome #2, in order to see how our support of dissertating students in the third year (and beyond) can be enhanced, especially weighing the competing demands of third-year coursework, teaching responsibilities, and dissertation research/writing.

• AY2019/20: The Department Chair, Ph.D. Director, and AC will address Program Learning Outcome #3, as we discern how best to form future educators through the various resources and programs already in place in this department and on campus.

The AC will update the Ph.D. Assessment Plan as needed and send updated versions to both the Dean’s office and to the University Assessment Coordinator.

2. Please explain how these assessment efforts are coordinated with Madrid (courses and/or program)?

The Madrid program has no connection with our Ph.D. program.

3. The program assessment plan should be developed and approved by all faculty in the department. In addition, the program assessment plan should be developed to include student input and external sources (e.g., national standards, advisory boards, employers, alumni, etc.). Describe the process through which your academic unit created this assessment plan. Include the following:

   a. Timeline regarding when or how often this plan will be reviewed and revised. (This could be aligned with program review.)

   We will review the revise this plan on an ongoing basis. When we reach the end of an assessment cycle in 2020, the Assessment Committee will oversee a formal review of the plan, either in May 2020 or August 2020.
b. How students were included in the process and/or how student input was gathered and incorporated into the assessment plan.

A complete draft of this plan was shared with K. J. Drake, the doctoral student representative, and his comments have been incorporated into this assessment plan. Furthermore, all stages of assessment will include the doctoral student representative and through the ongoing assessment, doctoral students will provide input. This plan also takes into account student concerns about career preparation (addressed in Program Learning Outcome #4, which is being prioritized for assessment next year).

c. What external sources were consulted in the development of this assessment plan?

In addition to consulting with the University Assessment Coordinator, we also consulted the Union Theological Seminary (New York) Assessment Plans.

d. Assessment of the manageability of the plan in relation to departmental resources and personnel

The Department intends to dedicate the three program directors (undergraduate, MA, and PhD) to the AC and to appoint a chair to coordinate the assessment effort as her or his only departmental service responsibility. That program chair will hold the position for a four-year cycle. At the end of the year, the AC will meet with the chair to evaluate the manageability of both the AC and the plan in relation to departmental resources and personnel.