SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY.

Program-Level Assessment: Annual Report

Program Name (no acronyms): Philosophy for Ministry   Department: Philosophy & Letters

Degree or Certificate Level: Certificate   College/School: Philosophy & Letters

Date (Month/Year): September 2021   Assessment Contact: Randall S. Rosenberg, Ph.D.

In what year was the data upon which this report is based collected? 2020-2021

In what year was the program's assessment plan most recently reviewed/updated? 2020

1. **Student Learning Outcomes**
   Which of the program's student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle? (Please list the full, complete learning outcome statements and not just numbers, e.g., Outcomes 1 and 2.)

   Outcome 2

2. **Assessment Methods: Artifacts of Student Learning**
   Which artifacts of student learning were used to determine if students achieved the outcome(s)? Please describe and identify the course(s) in which these artifacts were collected. Clarify if any such courses were offered a) online, b) at the Madrid campus, or c) at any other off-campus location.

   The artifacts of student learning used to determine the achievement of outcomes were the Capstone Papers produced at the culmination of the following two-semester sequence: Fall PLJ 4900.04: Integration Seminar: Capstone Preparation and Spring PLJ 4960: Capstone Project.

3. **Assessment Methods: Evaluation Process**
   What process was used to evaluate the artifacts of student learning, and by whom? Please identify the tools(s) (e.g., a rubric) used in the process and **include them in/with this report document** (do not just refer to the assessment plan).

   Two rubrics were used to evaluate the Capstone Papers. The instructor of both PLJ 4900.04 and PLJ 4960.01 completed the rubrics (see attached Appendix I).

   In my capacity as Dean, I also conducted conversations with capstone students.

4. **Data/Results**
   What were the results of the assessment of the learning outcome(s)? Please be specific. Does achievement differ by teaching modality (e.g., online vs. face-to-face) or on-ground location (e.g., STL campus, Madrid campus, other off-campus site)?

   The instructor graded the two students as "exceeding expectations" in both of the following categories: (1) developing a set of philosophical positions across four areas of philosophy most relevant to their capstone project, and (2) applying their philosophical views to a specific challenge that arises in some context of ministry.

[ ]

5. Findings: Interpretations & Conclusions

What have you learned from these results? What does the data tell you?

Since this is a relatively new capstone process, it is evident that students are integrating well their philosophical studies and their ministerial experience. The two-semester capstone sequence provides the time and space for successfully producing a solid final product. Although the instructor's ratings of student projects were extremely high, my own conversations with students in my capacity as Dean revealed deficiencies in class structure and clarification of student expectations. The various elements of the capstone project were not clearly communicated by the instructor at the beginning of each semester, leaving the students to find this information elsewhere. While the quality of the papers were often high, my conversations with students revealed the need to communicate more explicitly with the course instructor about program expectations, and encouraging the instructor to share these expectations in a timely manner with students. This communication would enhance the student learning experience.

6. Closing the Loop: Dissemination and Use of <u>Current</u> Assessment Findings

A. When and how did your program faculty share and discuss these results and findings from this cycle of assessment?

The College has no full-time faculty, so the results are not discussed with a faculty body. Rather, the results inform review of the syllabus and communication of possible changes to the Capstone instructor for the following year.

B. How specifically have you decided to use these findings to improve teaching and learning in your program? For example, perhaps you've initiated one or more of the following:

Changes to the Curriculum or Pedagogies	• Course content	• Course sequence
	• Teaching techniques	• New courses
	• Improvements in technology	• Deletion of courses
	• Prerequisites	• Changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings

Changes to the Assessment Plan	• Student learning outcomes	• Evaluation tools (e.g., rubrics)
	• Artifacts of student learning	• Data collection methods
	• Evaluation process	• Frequency of data collection

Please describe the actions you are taking as a result of these findings.

The Outcome 2 findings did indicate the need for an instructor change. A different instructor is teaching the two-course sequence in AY 2021-22. The findings also reinforced the need for explicit communication between the dean and the course instructor, which has taken place.

If no changes are being made, please explain why.

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7. Closing the Loop: Review of <u>Previous</u> Assessment Findings and Changes

A. What is at least one change your program has implemented in recent years as a result of assessment data?

As stated in a previous assessment report, the Capstone Preparation course—offered in the Fall semester before the final Capstone Project course—was initially piloted as a one-credit course in 2016. In response to student feedback and evaluation of papers, this course was changed to a two-credit course, and course expectations were clarified.

B. How has this change/have these changes been assessed?

The changes were assessed in the 2018 report on the assessment of Outcome 2, which was based on analysis of final papers for Capstone Preparation course.

C. What were the findings of the assessment?

The assessment findings indicated that those changes contributed to greatly improved papers for that course.

D. How do you plan to (continue to) use this information moving forward?

The 2021-22 assessment data described and analyzed in this report confirms that student capstone papers have improved in quality. The deficiencies described above reinforce the need to communicate course expectations to instructors for the sake of syllabus development.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any assessment tools (e.g., rubrics) with this report as separate attachments or copied and pasted into this Word document. Please do not just refer to the assessment plan; the report should serve as a stand-alone document.

APPENDIX I: KNOWLEDGE OF REVELANT RESOURCES IN PHILOSOPHY AND OTHER DISCIPLINES FOR UNDERSTANDING AND ANALYZING SOURCES CONTEXTS OF MINISTRY

Rubric for Outcome 2, Direct Method: The instructor of the Capstone course will assess the student's ability to identify relevant resources in philosophy and other disciplines for understanding and analyzing a context of Catholic ministry, by assessing the final capstone paper with the rubric below:

Assessment Mapping #1: Students developed a set of philosophical positions across four areas of philosophy most relevant to their capstone project. Please check one option below for each student.

Fails to Meet Expectations	Student failed to develop a set of philosophical positions across four areas of philosophy.
Meets Expectations	Student developed, in a satisfactory manner, a set of philosophical positions across four areas of philosophy.
Exceeds Expectations	Student developed, in an advanced manner, a set of philosophical positions across four areas of philosophy, displaying a mastery beyond course expectations.

Assessment Mapping #2: Students applied their philosophical views to a specific challenge that arises in some context of ministry

Fails to Meet Expectations	Student failed to apply their philosophical views to a specific challenge that arose in some context of ministry.
Meets Expectations	Student applied their philosophical views to a specific challenge that arose in some context of ministry in a satisfactory manner.
Exceeds Expectations	Student applied their philosophical views to a specific challenge that arose in some context of ministry in an advanced manner, displaying an integration that exceeds course expectations.