

**Academic Program Assessment Plan:
Philosophy and Religious Studies (minor)**

**Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Colorado State University-Pueblo**

Plan revised by Ryan Strickler, Assistant Professor & Philosophy Coordinator (December 2021)
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The Relation of the Philosophy and Religious Studies Program to College Mission and Departmental Expectations

The Philosophy and Religious Studies Program advances the mission of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences mission to offer “students opportunities to become ethical, socially responsible, engaged learners who are prepared to assume leadership in a dynamic global context”¹. Furthermore, the Philosophy and Religious Studies Program advances the expectations of the Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy to develop “critical thinking, research skills, and oral and written communications, along with a deeper understanding and ability to operate within and between different cultures”¹. This is because the Philosophy and Religious Studies program, as quoted from the goals and outcomes below:

- “sharpen(s) students’ critical thinking skills;”
- helps students understand the “historical-cultural origins and contemporary applications” of major philosophical ideas and intellectual traditions;
- fosters “cross-cultural appreciation of the origins, practices, and societal impact” of major global religions, and;
- develops abilities to “recognize, analyze, and logically evaluate arguments” as well as “construct and present clear, well-reasoned defenses of theses both verbally and in writing.”

Philosophy and Religious Studies Program Description

Students in the Philosophy and Religious Studies program explore the methods, ideas, problems, and history of philosophy. They also interrogate beliefs, behaviors, structures, and historical impact of many of the world’s past and present religions through a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Further, the minor trains students to think and write with rigor, clarity, and precision. Since these qualities are valuable in virtually any discipline, the minor supports a wide range of majors or career tracks, including history, politics, law, literature, the arts, the sciences, business, healthcare, and technology.

Students can take one of two tracks. In the philosophy track, students study the great thinkers, from Plato to the present, across Western and non-Western intellectual traditions. The religion track has students understanding the tenets, history, and impact of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and other religions across cultures.

¹ 2021-2022 Academic Catalog

Philosophy and Religious Studies Program Goals

1. To provide general education and elective courses, as well as an academic minor in philosophy and religious studies;
2. To sharpen students' critical thinking skills and to develop the abilities to speak and write in a clear, analytical manner;
3. To develop students' understanding of philosophical methods and ideas, including their historical-cultural origins and contemporary applications;
4. To develop students' understanding and cross-cultural appreciation of the origins, practices, and societal impact of both religion as a construct and the world's many past and present religions;
5. To cultivate the habit of reflection that will allow students to apply their critical thinking skills in their personal and professional lives

Expected Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to recognize, analyze, and logically evaluate arguments encountered in sources ranging from philosophical, academic, and religious texts to the popular media (from goal 2, goal 3, goal 4, and goal 5);
2. Students will be able to construct and present clear, well-reasoned defenses of theses both verbally and in writing. (from goal 2, parts of goal 3, and goal 5)
3. Students will be able to recognize and assess the relevance of philosophical and religious ideas in the historical interplay of philosophy, religion, and culture. (from goals 3 and 4)
4. Students will be able to apply philosophical methods to conduct ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological analyses. (from goals 3 and 5)

Dissemination of Program Goals & Outcomes

To inform the public and the university community at large, written accounts of current program goals, expected student outcomes, and assessment activities are published in the Colorado State University-Pueblo Catalog.

The Philosophy and Religious Studies coordinator will provide program faculty with written copies of the goals, outcomes, and curriculum map.

Outcomes Assessment Activities

1. The coordinator of the Philosophy and Religious Studies Program maintains a writing portfolio for each student with a declared minor. Portfolios include at least one major paper from each student's course after the point they declare a minor. At the end of each academic year the portfolios of graduating students (or those completing the minor) are evaluated by the Philosophy and Religious Studies coordinator; other faculty from the Department of History, Political Science, Philosophy, and Geography may also be involved as necessary. These papers will be evaluated against the attached rubric, on the

cycle indicated by the attached Assessment Plan Summary. The most recent papers the students' produce will be given the most weight, but older papers may also be evaluated in order to assess all points of the rubric. At least 80% of students completing the minor should be proficient or better in each SLO, according to the rubric.

2. The program coordinator will observe at least one class session annually from each of the faculty in the Philosophy and Religious Studies program. In addition to providing feedback to the instructors, the coordinator will write a short report with each assessment detailing how observed instruction serves to achieve the student outcomes listed above, as well as where there are opportunities for improvement.
3. The program coordinator will review all syllabi utilized by instructors in the Philosophy and Religious Studies program. The coordinator will write a short report with each assessment discussing how material, activities, and evaluation detailed in the syllabi achieve expected student outcomes, as well as where there are areas for potential improvement.