Assessment of Student Learning in the Philosophy Major
Academic Year 2015-2016
Formal Report (Due July 1, 2016)

***This version does <u>not</u> include student names and is intended for public use.

(1) The Centrality of Teaching to Student Learning

The single most important factor impacting the quality of a student's educational experience is the quality of the teaching she receives. The dynamic interaction between faculty and students forms the crucible of student learning. Appropriately, teaching is the top value at Millikin University. In all of its official documents, Millikin University explicitly affirms the special significance and special importance of teaching. For example, while faculty members seeking tenure must demonstrate at least *competent* scholarship and at least *competent* service, they must demonstrate at least **excellent** teaching. Philosophy faculty members wholeheartedly affirm this prioritization of teaching and what it implies about the mission and values of the institution. Indeed, philosophy faculty members aspire to provide the kind of teaching that *exceeds* what is expected at Millikin University. *Policies and Procedures* and the various division unit plans all identify "**extraordinary**" as the highest rating for teaching. We believe the evidence demonstrates that the Philosophy Department provides extraordinary teaching to Millikin students.

<u>Extraordinary Teaching</u>

The Philosophy Department at Millikin University is unrivaled in terms of objective measures of teaching quality. <u>Each</u> member of the Philosophy Department has received the highest university-wide award for teaching excellence – the **Teaching Excellence Award**. This award is given to faculty members who have made a distinctive difference in classroom teaching, campus leadership, pioneering teaching methodology, creative course development, and instructional support. In addition, <u>each</u> member of the Philosophy Department has received the **Alpha Lambda Delta Teacher of the Year Award**. Given by the freshmen-sophomore honor society, this award is given to faculty members based on their ability to teach, knowledge of the subject matter, ability to present material in a clear and understandable fashion, ability to motivate students to self-discovery in learning, and for the care and concern shown to students in and out of the classroom. Finally, <u>each</u> member of the Philosophy Department has received the **James Millikin Scholar Educator of the Year Award**. Chosen by seniors in the honors program, the award recognizes the faculty member who has made the greatest impact upon them as honors scholars, who demonstrated outstanding teaching skills,

and who showed a respect and appreciation for student learning both in and out of the classroom.

Student evaluations of philosophy faculty consistently place the Philosophy Department among the highest (if not *the* highest) of any department on campus. We take student evaluations seriously. As graduate students and over the course of our time teaching, we have heard some professors seek to dismiss or to minimize the significance of student evaluations. We could not disagree more strongly with this dismissive attitude toward student evaluations, an attitude we view as defensive and self-protective. Teaching is essentially a *relational* activity, not a private exercise. While certainly not the only evidentiary basis from which to assess teaching quality, SIR data do provide us with crucial indicators regarding the health of the teaching relationship. First, SIR data provide us with a clear sense of the extent to which students are engaged in the learning experience, a necessary condition for successful teaching. Second, SIR data provide us with a clear sense of the extent to which professors are able to communicate clearly and effectively with their students. If students are going to grasp the material and begin the process of digesting it and making it their own, professors must be able to communicate clearly with students and in ways students can understand. Finally, SIR data provide us with a clear sense of the extent to which our students are able to affirm the value of their own learning experiences. All of these – student engagement, clarity of communication, and student affirmation of the value of their learning experiences – are crucial elements in successful teaching. SIR data provide us with credible objective evidence regarding our ability as teachers to approach teaching excellence in these areas.

SIR data from the past three semesters for which data are available are provided below. The first number represents philosophy faculty **averages** across **all** courses taught by all three faculty members. These results are both ***exceptional*** and ***typical***. The second number in parentheses represents university-wide faculty averages.

Philosophy Department Summary Student Instructional Reports
(Most Recent Three Semesters)

Semester	Course Organization and Planning	Communication	Overall
Fall 2015	4.78 (4.40)	4.91 (4.46)	4.83 (4.31)
Spring 2015	4.62 (4.38)	4.73 (4.46)	4.67 (4.32)
Fall 2014	4.85 (4.35)	4.82 (4.41)	4.80 (4.27)

We believe teaching excellence requires intensive *engagement* with our students. Accordingly, absent unusual circumstances (e.g., sabbatical leaves, Griswold Professorship, etc.), each of our faculty members teaches full-time (3-4 courses per semester, sometimes more) and teaches across the entire spectrum of course offerings

– from introductory level courses to upper level courses to senior seminars. Additionally, each of our faculty members utilizes a pedagogical method that emphasizes student engagement with primary source materials. We do this primarily by means of a discussion-driven classroom experience in conjunction with multiple formal writing assignments designed to emphasize both critical analysis and critical evaluation of the subject-matter under consideration. Students are required to think for themselves and our collective goal is to facilitate intellectual autonomy and responsibility.

(2) Goals. State the purpose or mission of your major.

The purpose of the Philosophy Major is stated in three Philosophy Department goals:

- Department Goal 1: Students will be able to express in oral and written form their understanding of major concepts and intellectual traditions within the field of philosophy.
- Department Goal 2: Students will demonstrate their ability to utilize the principles of critical thinking and formal logic in order to produce a sound and valid argument, or to evaluate the soundness and validity of the arguments of others.
- Department Goal 3: Students will demonstrate their ability to complete research on a philosophy-related topic, analyze objectively the results of their research, and present arguments to support their point of view.

These Philosophy Department learning goals represent our allegiance to Millikin University's commitment to an educational experience that "integrates theory and practice." Because this claim is ripe for misunderstanding, it merits considerable commentary.

Philosophical Activity as Practical

Our Department is committed to an understanding of philosophy as a reflective, critical, evaluative, and **practical** exercise. Philosophy is often characterized as purely theoretical, purely speculative – having no practical relevance. We contend that this is a serious mischaracterization of philosophical study. Instead, philosophical study is a kind of *activity*, a kind of *doing*. Moreover, we believe this activity is practical in the most important sense: as an activity that facilitates the development and growth of crucial intellectual skills. Among these skills are the ability to comprehend difficult readings, the ability to follow and assess the soundness of arguments and lines of reasoning, and the ability to formulate and to present clearly both creative criticisms as well as creative solutions to philosophical puzzles – puzzles that often require students to wrestle with ambiguity and think from different perspectives and points of view. Through the study and practice of philosophy, students develop their analytical and critical reading and reasoning skills, their research skills, their ethical reasoning skills, and their writing and

oral communication skills. These skills are always already practical. In *any* field of inquiry or profession – indeed, in life generally – students will have to problem solve, think critically, assess arguments or strategies, communicate clearly, spot unspoken assumptions, evaluate ideas or positions, engage in value judgments, etc. Since doing philosophy encourages the development and growth of the skills that are essential to doing any of these things *well*, philosophical study is inherently practical. As the Times of London noted (August 15, 1998), "Their [philosophy graduates'] employability, at 98.9%, is impressive by any standard…Philosophy is, in commercial jargon, the ultimate 'transferable work skill'". This remains true today.

The Philosophy Department vigorously opposes any understanding of "theory-practice" that would co-opt "practice" for things like labs, practica, internships, or other vocational experiences *and limit the meaning of that concept to those sorts of activities only*. If the term "practice" is defined in that way, then philosophy does not do anything practical…and we are proud to admit that fact, for we can do nothing else so long as we remain true to our discipline! We have absolutely no idea what a "philosophy internship" or "philosophy practicum" or "philosophy lab" would even be. While some of our courses include readings that address "practical" or "applied issues," often under the label of "applied ethics" (e.g., lying, abortion, capital punishment, stem cell research, etc.), what this amounts to is simply bringing critical thinking skills to bear on concrete issues. We certainly are not going to have capital punishment labs or an abortion practicum! More importantly, we find the impulse to define "practice" in a limited and territorial fashion to be a misguided and dangerous understanding of practice and, by implication, of philosophy, and, by further implication, liberal education in general.

In philosophy, our emphasis on the development and growth of skill sets is an emphasis on *how* to think well, not an emphasis on *what* to think. Again, this focus is perfectly consistent with Millikin's mission to "deliver on the promise of education" through the three prepares. In terms of professional success and post-graduate employment, the vast bulk of knowing what to do is learned on site; you learn "on the job." The skill sets we aim to develop are skill sets that will allow students to do what they do in their jobs *well*. And this applies to any and all jobs.

Millikin began with an allegiance to philosophy as a discipline and that allegiance continues. When the MPSL plan was developed, the Philosophy Department faculty suggested that the central questions we ask each day in class, "Who am I?", "How can I know?" and "What should I do?" are primary questions each student needs to engage. The faculty embraced this idea, and these three questions continue to form the heart of our general education program. Again, when we laid the groundwork for a major overhaul of the general education program in 2007, the Philosophy Department faculty proposed that along with writing and reflection, ethical reasoning be made one of the central "skill threads" developed in the University Studies program. The "practice" of delivering the University educational curriculum that we now aim to assess cannot take

place without philosophical activity. Again, the practical relevance of philosophical activity could not be clearer.

Philosophy services Millikin University's core goals and values. Close examination of the Millikin curriculum and its stated mission goals confirms that philosophy is essential to the ability of Millikin University to deliver on "the promise of education." This mission has three core elements.

The first core element of Millikin's mission is "**to prepare students for professional success**." If philosophy is the "ultimate transferable work skill," then we prepare students for work in a variety of fields. Instead of preparing students for their first job, we prepare them for a lifetime of success—no matter how often they change their careers – something the empirical evidence suggests they will do quite frequently over the course of their lifetimes.

The second core element of Millikin's mission is "**to prepare students for democratic citizenship in a global environment**." Our focus on philosophy of law, political philosophy, and normative-value questions in general reveals our belief in and commitment to the Jeffersonian model of liberal education. In order to engage meaningfully in democratic citizenship, citizens must be able to ask the following kinds of questions and be able to assess critically the answers that might be provided to them: What makes for a *good* society? What are the *legitimate* functions of the state? How *should* we resolve conflicts between the common good and individual rights? Might we have a *moral* obligation to challenge the laws and policies of our own country? These are philosophical questions; not questions of the nuts and bolts of how our government runs, but questions about our goals and duties. Confronting and wrestling with these questions prepare students for democratic citizenship.

The third core element of Millikin's mission is "**to prepare students for a personal life of meaning and value**." Clearly this is exactly what philosophy does. That Millikin's mission includes this goal along with the first distinguishes us from a technical institution. We are not a glorified community college willing to train students for the first job they will get, and leaving them in a lurch when they struggle to understand death, or agonize over ethical decisions, or confront those whose ideas seem foreign or dangerous because they are new. Millikin University wants its students to be whole: life-long learners who will not shy away from the ambiguities and puzzles that make life richer and more human. Philosophy is the department that makes confronting these issues its life's work.

Philosophical study, then, is exemplary of Millikin's promise to prepare students for professional success, prepare them for democratic citizenship, and prepare them for a life of personal value and meaning. The Philosophy Department learning goals, then, match well with Millikin's University-wide learning goals:

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- University Goal 1: Millikin students will prepare for professional success.
- University Goal 2: Millikin students will actively engage in the responsibilities of citizenship in their communities.
- University Goal 3: Millikin students will discover and develop a personal life of meaning and value.

The accompanying table shows how Philosophy Department goals relate to University-wide goals:

Philosophy Department Learning Goal	**Corresponding Millikin University Learning Goal Number(s)**
1. Students will be able to express in oral and written form their understanding of major concepts and intellectual traditions within the field of philosophy.	1, 2, 3
2. Students will demonstrate their ability to utilize the principles of critical thinking and formal logic in order to produce a sound and valid argument, or to evaluate the soundness and validity of the arguments of others.	1, 2, 3
3. Students will demonstrate their ability to complete research on a philosophy-related topic, analyze objectively the results of their research, and present arguments to support their point of view in a variety of venues, including an individually directed senior capstone thesis in philosophy.	1, 2, 3

In sum, so long as we reject any hidebound understanding of "practice," philosophical study reveals itself to be inherently practical. The skill sets it develops and the issues it engages facilitate professional success, democratic citizenship, and the development of a personal life of value and meaning. It seems to us that the daily *practice* of delivering on the promise of education should be the goal of every department and program at Millikin University. This, we do.

Given our emphasis on skill set development, it is no accident that philosophical study is excellent preparation for law school. Accordingly, our Department has developed a "pre-law track" for those of our majors who are interested in law school. It is extremely important to emphasize that gaining admission to law school is not a function of gaining substantive content knowledge as an undergraduate. This is vividly illustrated by pointing out the fact that the undergraduate major with the *highest acceptance rate* to

ABA approved law schools is physics. Law schools require no specific undergraduate curriculum, no specific undergraduate major, and no specific undergraduate plan of study for admission. Law schools select students on the basis of evidence that they can "think like a lawyer." Philosophy prepares students to think in this way. In fact, a recent study by the American Bar Association shows that, after physics, the major with the highest acceptance rate to law school is **PHILOSOPHY**.

While our primary emphasis is on content neutral skill set development, we do not want to short-change the substantive content of philosophical writings. We develop the above mentioned skill sets by reading and discussing topics and issues central to the human condition. For example:

- Who am I? How can I know? What should I do? The Millikin core questions are essentially philosophical questions!
- Does God exist? If God exists, how is that fact consistent with the existence of evil in the world?
- Do human beings possess free will? Or is human behavior and action causally determined?
- What is the relation between mental states (mind, consciousness) and brain states (body)?
- What justification is there for the state? How should finite and scare resources be distributed within society?
- Are there universal moral principles? Or are all moral principles relative either to cultures or individuals?
- What does it mean to judge a work of art beautiful? Is beauty really in the eye of the beholder?

The description of the philosophy program that appears in the Millikin Bulletin is crafted to emphasize the relevance of philosophical study to students with diverse interests and goals. According to the 2015-16 *Millikin University Bulletin,*

> The Philosophy Major is designed to meet the requirements of four classes of students: (a) those who have no professional interest in philosophy but who wish to approach a liberal education through the discipline of philosophy; (b) those who want a composite or interdepartmental major in philosophy and the natural sciences, behavioral sciences, humanities, or fine arts; (c) those who want an intensive study of philosophy preparatory to graduate study in some other field, e.g., law, theology, medicine, or education; (d) those who are professionally interested in philosophy and who plan to do graduate work in the field and then to teach or write.

Philosophy offers three tracks within the major: "traditional," "ethics," and "pre-law."

While some of our majors go on to pursue graduate study in philosophy and aspire eventually to teach, most of our majors go on to pursue other careers and educational objectives. Accordingly, the successful student graduating from the philosophy major might be preparing for a career as a natural scientist, a behavioral scientist, an attorney, a theologian, a physician, an educator, or a writer, or might go into some field more generally related to the humanities or the liberal arts. Whatever the case, he or she will be well prepared as a result of the habits of mind acquired in the process of completing the Philosophy Major.

There are no guidelines provided by the American Philosophical Association for undergraduate study.

(3) Snapshot. Provide a brief overview of your current situation.

Philosophy Faculty

The Philosophy Department has three full-time faculty members. Each faculty member has a Ph.D. in philosophy and teaches full-time in the Department.

- **Dr. Robert Money**, Professor of Philosophy and Chair of the Department, holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Iowa (with a specialization in ethics and ethical theory), a J.D. from Emory University School of Law, and a B.A. in Philosophy and Political Science from Furman University. His teaching and research interests include ethics and ethical theory, political philosophy, history of philosophy, philosophy of law, philosophy of religion, and the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. Dr. Money serves as Director of the Pre-Law Program and faculty director of moot court. Dr. Money has published papers in *Religion and Education* as well as *The Emory University International Law Review*. Dr. Money came to Millikin in 1999.

- **Dr. Eric Roark**, Associate Professor of Philosophy, holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Missouri (with a specialization in political philosophy), a M.A. in Philosophy from the University of Missouri, a M.S. in Sociology from Iowa State University, and a B.A. in Political Science from Iowa State University. His teaching and research interests include social and political philosophy (especially left-libertarianism), applied ethics, history of philosophy, and epistemology. Dr. Roark has published papers in the *Journal of Libertarian Studies* as well as *Philosophy and Theology*. Dr. Roark also has a recent book, *Removing the Commons*, which deals directly with issues of political theory and global politics. Dr. Roark came to Millikin in 2008.

- **Dr. Michael Hartsock**, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Missouri (with a specialization in metaphysics and philosophy of science), a M.A. in Philosophy from the University of Missouri, and a B.A. in Biology and Ethics from Central Methodist University. His teaching and

research interests include the philosophy of science and metaphysics (especially causation), logic, history of philosophy, epistemology, and philosophy of mind. Dr. Hartsock serves as faculty adviser to the Philosophy Club and Phi Sigma Tau, the international honors society in philosophy. Dr. Hartsock also directs our ethics bowl program. This past spring (2016), Dr. Hartsock was appointed Director of the Honors Program. Dr. Hartsock came to Millikin in 2010.

A Vibrant Major

The philosophy program at Millikin is vibrant and strong. We typically have between twenty and thirty students pursuing a major and/or minor in philosophy – nearly all of them attracted to the program by a combination of the exceptional teaching and the interesting subject matter they encounter in our courses. Our size permits us to work extensively with our students and provides many opportunities for individualized growth and mentoring. To that end, we have designed our curriculum to provide students with various options – or "tracks" – by which to complete the major. The traditional philosophy track prepares those students intending to pursue graduate study in philosophy and/or other areas of study at the graduate level.[1] The pre-law track is designed for those students interested in using philosophy as preparation for law school.[2] Finally, the ethics track emphasizes normative reasoning in the context of ethical theory, applied ethics (e.g., bioethics, environmental ethics, etc.) and political philosophy. We have worked to fit our curriculum to the needs and interests of our students. In addition, because we only require 30 credits to complete the major, many of our students are able to double major or pursue minors in other fields of study. Indeed, we encourage our students to pursue a broad liberal education.

As of the spring 2016 semester, the Philosophy Department had approximately 16 students pursuing a major, and a number of students pursuing a minor. The department has grown considerably over the past decade. When Dr. Money started at Millikin (fall 1999), there were two majors and two or three minors. The degree to which we have grown over the past decade is clearly visible to see and has been acknowledged by administration. For example, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences recently sent A&S Department Chairs a document reviewing numbers of majors over the past decade and he explicitly noted the growth of philosophy. He wrote:

> As you prepare annual assessment reports (due July 1) I want to provide you with some data about majors in your programs. Attached is a chart

[1] We are pleased to note that 2014 Millikin graduate and philosophy major Emma Prendergast will be pursuing a Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Wisconsin Madison, starting fall 2014. The philosophy program at Wisconsin is a "top tier" program nationally. Emma was awarded a highly competitive fellowship for the first year, guaranteed financial support for six years, and was one of fifty-one students across the country to receive a $5000 Phi Kappa Phi fellowship in support of graduate study.

[2] The philosophy program has a strong tradition of sending philosophy graduates to nationally ranked law schools. More information on this is provided below.

from Institutional Research based on annual fall census counts. This chart provides trend information from 2001 to Fall 2012. Here's a couple of trends & talking points I've noticed…(3) Seven majors are at the record high numbers: biology allied health, history, human services, **philosophy**, physics, sociology, and organizational leadership. (4) Four majors have had significant increases: human services, **philosophy**, sociology, organizational leadership…

This recognized and celebrated growth in philosophy is all the more impressive given that few students come to Millikin (or any college) as announced philosophy majors.

Service to Students and Programs Across the University

The Philosophy Department's range of contributions across campus is truly exceptional. In addition to delivering a top quality philosophy major and minor to our students, the Department makes contributions that impact the University at large. These include but are not limited to the following.[3]

- **University Studies (General Education)**

The theoretical design of the University Studies curriculum is intentionally interdisciplinary. The University Studies program does not necessitate that any specific element be delivered exclusively by any single department. Put another way, the program does not establish a "one to one" correspondence between program elements and specific departments. Instead, the program is anchored around a commitment to the development of important skills (e.g., writing, reflection, ethical reasoning), exposure to diverse ways of knowing (humanist, natural and social scientific, quantitative, artistic, etc.), and the expansion of student horizons (from self/local in the first year, to national in the second year, to global in the third year). Given this design, the ability to teach in the program is conditioned only by the ability of the faculty member to design courses that deliver the learning goals that are definitive of the particular curricular element and the will to participate. The Philosophy Department is unsurpassed in its ability to make significant contributions to the general education of our students and its willingness to do so – a willingness that we view as part of what it means to be committed to Millikin University and her students. To date, we have made contributions to the following elements of the University Studies program:

  - IN140, University Seminar
  - IN183, Honors University Seminar
  - IN250, United States Cultural Studies
  - IN251, United States Structural Studies
  - IN350, Global Issues

[3] While most of our contributions are in the form of traditional semester-long courses, our faculty members also teach courses in the PACE and immersion formats.

- ICS, International Cultures and Structures
- QR, Quantitative Reasoning

➢ College of Arts and Sciences

In addition to the many contributions we make to the delivery of the University Studies program, we also make key contributions to the delivery of the "historical studies" requirement of the College of Arts and Sciences. All courses in our "history of philosophy" sequence as well as select other courses contribute to the delivery of this important College requirement.

➢ The Honors Program

The Philosophy Department is among the strongest supporters of the Honors Program. We deliver all of the required sections of IN183, Honors University Seminar each fall semester to all incoming first-year honors students. In addition, we regularly deliver sections of IN203, Honors Seminar in Humanities, to second semester first-year and second year honors students. Finally, we regularly supervise students in the completion of their James Millikin Scholar Research Projects. Our involvement with and commitment to the Honors Program and our honors students are unsurpassed on campus. Dr. Hartsock's appointment in spring 2016 as Director of the Honors Program further solidifies our commitment to the Honors Program.

➢ MBA and Undergraduate Business Programs

Dr. Roark delivers a designated section of PH215, Business Ethics for the Tabor School of Business each fall semester. This is a crucial contribution as the State of Illinois now requires that all individuals wishing to sit for the CPA exam must have business ethics on their undergraduate transcript. In addition to delivering ethics courses for the undergraduate business program, Dr. Roark also delivers business ethics for the MBA program each spring semester – MBA510, Personal Values and Business Ethics.

➢ Pre-Law

At Millikin University, our pre-law program is not a program of academic study. Students do not major or minor in pre-law. This is because law schools do not favor that approach. Instead, law schools want undergraduates to major and minor in "traditional" undergraduate academic programs. While law schools require a B.A. or B.S. degree, they do not require any particular undergraduate major or undergraduate program of study. Accordingly, pre-law students may choose to major in any discipline.

While it is true that students interested in attending law school can choose any undergraduate major, it is also true that all undergraduate majors are not equal in terms of their ability to prepare students for the rigors of law school. It is essential to

understand that the preparation needed for law school must focus on the development of essential critical thinking skills that enable the student to "think like a lawyer," and not the memorization of facts and information. Given the central importance of critical thinking skills for the study of law, any student interested in attending law school and entering the legal profession would do well to complete a philosophy major at Millikin University. There is no better major for students interested in preparing for law school than philosophy.[4] This is true for many reasons. Here we note five.

First, the academic credentials and backgrounds of the faculty members in our department give us the expertise necessary to prepare students for law school. Philosophy faculty teach in ways that are specifically designed to develop the critical reading, writing, and reasoning skills essential to the study and practice of law. In addition, we teach the kind of courses that prepare students to "think like a lawyer." Courses such as Introduction to Logic, Ethical Theory and Moral Issues, Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Law, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court, and others are precisely the kind of courses that prepare students for the rigors of law school. In addition, the Philosophy Department is the only department with a full-time faculty member who has been to law school, earned a law degree, and passed a state bar exam. When we give students advice about law school, we speak from *experience*.

Second, the best preparation for law school demands that students take challenging courses taught by outstanding and demanding teachers. As emphasized above, the Philosophy Department at Millikin University is unrivaled in terms of objective measures of teaching quality. Whether we look at honors and awards for teaching or student evaluations of the teaching we provide, there simply is no stronger teaching department at Millikin University than the Philosophy Department.

Third**,** the philosophy curriculum has been intentionally designed to meet the needs of students interested in law. Our philosophy program emphasizes analytical reading and critical reasoning skills. These skills are *precisely* the skills required for success in the study and the practice of law. In addition, our assignments require students to engage in analysis and critical evaluation of ideas; in particular, our written assignments typically require students to present a thesis and defend it with argument. This is the form that much legal reasoning takes. Finally, we have a specific "pre-law track" within the major that is tailored even more specifically to meet the needs of our pre-law students. The track emphasizes courses in critical thinking and logic, ethical and political philosophy, and jurisprudence and law.

Fourth, we have intentionally kept the requirements for the major to a minimum. Only 30 credits are required to complete the philosophy major. This allows students to acquire curricular breadth in their undergraduate curriculum. The value of pursuing a

[4] We are not alone in making this claim. For example, please see: https://ethics.tamucc.edu/program/burgess-jackson-advice-for-prospective-law-students?destination=node%2F44

broad liberal arts education is supported and celebrated by the Millikin University Philosophy Department and is looked upon very favorably by law schools.

Finally, as part of the course PH366, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court, the Philosophy Department provides students with the opportunity to participate in moot court. Dr. Money has been directing our moot court program since 2005. As detailed below, the success we have enjoyed has been exceptional and sustained over time. Students who participate in moot court draw on while developing even further many of the key skills that are emphasized in our philosophy curriculum as well as our wider University Studies curriculum: critical-analytical reading, critical-ethical reasoning, oral communication, and collaborative learning, among others. Moot court is an experiential and collaborative learning experience in which students are taught the essential elements of appellate legal reasoning by an appropriately credentialed faculty member and eventually perform their learning before third party stakeholders (e.g., legal professionals, pre-law faculty advisers, law students, etc.). It is a paradigmatic example of performance learning at Millikin University.

- **Moot Court**

Each year, we participate in a state-wide competition held as part of the Model Illinois Government simulation in Springfield, Illinois. At the competition, students work in two-person teams to deliver persuasive legal arguments before a panel of justices. At the competition, each team has 30 minutes to present arguments. While team members can divide up the presentation of arguments as they see fit, competition rules require that each team member speak for at least 10 minutes. During the presentation of the oral arguments, justices – a combination of legal professionals from central Illinois, law school students, and college students who have had prior experience participating as attorneys in the competition – ask questions and offer rejoinders to the arguments made by the students. After a round of argument concludes, a formal rubric is utilized to assess student performance in five main categories: knowledge of the case, organization and reasoning, courtroom manner, forensic skills, and responding to questions. Over the past ten years, Millikin students have performed exceptionally well. The team and individual awards speak for themselves:

  - Team First Place Finishes (8): 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
  - Team Second Place Finishes (6): 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014, **2016**
  - Team Third Place Finishes (7): 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015
  - Team Fourth Place Finishes (3): 2012, 2013, 2015
  - Individual Award for Most Outstanding Attorney (5): 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, **2016 (Novice Award)**
  - Individual Award for Runner Up Most Outstanding Attorney (3): 2011, 2012, 2013

The success of our students – as judged by external evaluators, including legal practitioners and law school students – is clear evidence of the high quality of our program.

It is worth noting that the success enjoyed by our moot court students extends well beyond Model Illinois Government and Millikin. For a school our size, our placement record into nationally ranked law schools is impressive. Over the past ten years, a number of students who have participated in our moot court program have been accepted into **nationally** ranked "top 100" law schools. Importantly, all of these students earned substantial scholarship support to attend these high quality institutions. These schools, their national rank, and the students who attended include:[5]

- University of Virginia: ranked **#8**
- Northwestern University: ranked **#12**
- Vanderbilt University: ranked **#16**
- Washington University: ranked **#18**
- University of Iowa: ranked **#20**
- Emory University: ranked **#22 (tied)**
- University of Minnesota: ranked **#22 (tied)**
- University of Wisconsin: ranked **#33**
- University of Airizon: ranked **#40 (tied)**
- University of Colorado Boulder: ranked **#40 (tied)**
- University of Illinois: ranked **#40 (tied)**
- St. Louis University: **#82**

Worthy of special note this year, philosophy major and Millikin graduate Haley Carr (class of 2012) will be attending the University of Arizona College of Law starting August 2016 on a full scholarship. She was also selected to interview for and was accepted into their Distinguished Scholars program, which functions as an honors college within the law school. Perks of the program include sitting in on weekly faculty meetings, special networking events, and receiving first choice in fellowships as the university offers undergraduate legal studies degrees. It is a fantastic opportunity, and Haley is excited to see where law school takes her.

Haley reflected on the value of her experience in the philosophy program at Millikin. She writes, "I wanted to extend a thank you to all three of you for being amazing professors and mentors. I talked a lot about my philosophy degree in my personal statement, mostly about how it changed the way I look at the world, and I think it was part of the reason I was an attractive candidate for Arizona. They flat out told me they wanted more philosophy majors in their program. I even got into a discussion about Lockean property theory in one of my interviews so that was an exciting moment for me! Again, thank you all for your help over the years."

[5] 2017 ranking information from: http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-law-schools/law-rankings

We are delighted to celebrate the continued success of our philosophy graduates like Haley!

Ethics Bowl

The philosophy program provides philosophy majors as well as Millikin students more generally with the opportunity to engage in high intensity and high quality performance learning in the form of ethics bowl. Students wishing to participate must enroll in PH370, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl. This course is an experiential and collaborative learning experience in which students are taught the essential elements of ethical reasoning by an appropriately credentialed faculty member and eventually perform their learning before third party stakeholders (e.g., professionals from a variety of applied fields, academics, government and non-profit organizational leaders, etc.). It is a paradigmatic example of performance learning at Millikin University. Dr. Hartsock teaches the course every fall semester.

The following description taken from the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (IEB) website enables one to see several points of intersection between the IEB competition and our institutional commitment to the value of performance learning.[6]

> The Intercollegiate Ethics Bowls (IEB) is a team competition that combines the excitement and fun of a competitive tournament with an innovative approach to education in practical and professional ethics for undergraduate students. Recognized widely by educators, the IEB has received special commendation for excellence and innovation from the American Philosophical Association, and received the 2006 American Philosophical Association/Philosophy Documentation Center's 2006 prize for Excellence and Innovation in Philosophy Programs. The format, rules, and procedures of the IEB all have been developed to model widely acknowledged best methods of reasoning in practical and professional ethics.

In the IEB, each team receives in advance of the competition a set of cases which raise issues in practical and professional ethics. Each team prepares an analysis of each case. At the competition, a moderator poses questions, based on a case taken from that set, to teams of three to five students. Questions may concern ethical problems on wide ranging topics, such as the educational classroom (e.g., cheating), personal relationships (e.g., dating or friendship), professional ethics (e.g., engineering, law, medicine), or social and political ethics (e.g., free speech, gun control, etc.) A panel of judges may probe the teams for further justifications and evaluates answers. Rating criteria are intelligibility, focus on ethically relevant considerations, avoidance of ethical irrelevance, and deliberative thoughtfulness.

[6] The website is http://appe.indiana.edu/ethics-bowl/intercollegiate-ethics-bowl-competitions/

Phi Sigma Tau

The Department has completed its process of securing a formal philosophy club on campus. Dr. Hartsock has taken leadership of this initiative and has led us to a Phi Sigma Tau membership on campus. We hope that a formal club and honors society will provide our majors and other students with an interest in philosophy to bond and reinforce our philosophy community. We hope this will be another avenue by which to reinforce our growth.

Recent Review of and Revisions to Curriculum

In 2008, the Philosophy Department expanded to two faculty members to three faculty members. Then, in 2010, we replaced a long-tenured Professor (Dr. Jacobs) with a new Assistant Professor (Dr. Hartsock). The changes provided the occasion to engage in a series of long-overdue revisions to our curriculum. Our revisions ensure that our curriculum is aligned with the teaching interests and abilities of the philosophy faculty. Significant changes were made over the course of two rounds of changes.

During the first round of changes (2010), we created an "ethics minor" within our program. As part of this new program, we offer three additional courses under the broad category of "applied ethics." These courses include PH215, Business Ethics; PH217, Bioethics; and PH219, Environmental Ethics. We have intentionally designed two of these "applied ethics" courses to connect to other major academic units. PH215, Business Ethics, connects to Tabor; PH217, Bioethics, connects to the pre-med, medical technology, and nursing programs. The ethics minor also coheres with and reinforces the recently revised University Studies program, which emphasizes three skill sets over the course of the sequential elements: reflection, writing, and *ethical reasoning*. Every course that we offer in the area of value theory generally, including the applied ethics courses, engage students in all three of these skills. The learning goals of the ethics minor program are as follows:

> 1. Students will use ethical reasoning to analyze and reflect on issues that impact their personal lives as well as their local, national, and/or global communities; and
>
> 2. Students will be able to express in written form their understanding of major ethical concepts and theories and demonstrate competency in the application of those concepts and theories to specific topics (business, medicine, environment, politics, etc.).

We believe it to be self-evident that ethical reasoning and reflection on ethical issues and topics are indispensible for the kind of intellectual and personal growth our students need if they are to find professional success, participate meaningfully in

democratic citizenship in a global environment, and create and discover a personal life of meaning and value. Hence, the ethics minor coheres well with the stated goals of Millikin University – indeed, it flows from it.

The second round of changes (2012) was enacted to align better our curriculum with the best practices of quality undergraduate programs across the country in terms of curricular structure. Four main changes were made. First, we incorporated PH211 Ethical Theory and Moral Issues into the core requirements for the major. This ensures that every philosophy major have a basic introduction to ethics. While almost all majors were receiving this exposure as a matter of practice, this change requires that the exposure be guaranteed to all majors. Second, we reformed our history of philosophy sequence, providing the courses with appropriate names and reducing the history requirement by one course. The reduction was made in order to set the stage for our third major change: the creation of a "metaphysics/epistemology" requirement. Each major must now take one course in metaphysics or epistemology, and we have created two new courses to deliver this requirement: PH312, Minds and Persons and PH313, Ways of Knowing. Fourth, we enacted a revision that essentially resulted in a combination of the old PH400 Senior Thesis course with the old PH381 Seminar in Philosophy course. We now have a single course, PH400, Seminar in Philosophy. Our majors produce their "senior theses" (i.e., a major research paper engaging in argument-based thesis defense) within the context of the newly created (modified) course. We did this to provide better guidance to students as they work to produce this major paper and to ensure that this essential capstone teaching was appropriately counted as part of faculty workload.

With the addition of Dr. Hartsock, we are also offering more courses that will intersect with topics and issues in the natural sciences. Dr. Hartsock's area of expertise, philosophy and history of science, permits the Department to forge additional connections to programs in the natural and social sciences. These links have been forged by way of formal philosophy course offerings (e.g., PH223, History and Philosophy of Science; PH360/IN350, Human Nature) as well as by way of offering electives and interdepartmental courses focusing on philosophical content that intersects with the natural sciences.

A third round of curricular revisions and reforms were submitted and approved spring 2016. In essence, these curricular changes reconfigure the "core" and provide additional flexibility for students and faculty regarding upper level electives.

The total number of credit hours required for the major, the tracks, and the minors all remains the same: 30 credits for the major (and tracks within the major), 18 credits for the minors.

We have four specific proposals related to courses. These are presented and described below, including commentary that helps to contextualize these proposals in the large reconfiguration project.

Proposal #1: Changing PH213, Critical Thinking: Logic title and numbering to PH113, Introduction to Logic

The name change aligns the course with best practices in philosophy curricula.

The number change indicates that this course will serve as our basic introductory course for the major with the key responsibility of introducing students to one major content areas in philosophy (logic) and several of the most important key **skills** in philosophical inquiry (logical reasoning, argument construction, argument evaluations, valid forms of inference, common fallacies in reasoning, etc.).

As explained below, this course will operate in conjunction with our other core requirements to ensure that all philosophy majors receive a solid foundation in philosophy – both in terms of skills and content. (See other proposals for additional details.)

This course will continue to fulfill the quantitative reasoning requirement within the University Studies Program for appropriately qualified students.

An added benefit of this proposal is that our logic course will now be numerically aligned with the logic courses that students might complete elsewhere and seek to transfer into Millikin. Most logic courses taken elsewhere will be at the 100 level and these will no longer need to transfer in as equivalent to our (old) 200-level logic course.

There will be no changes to substantive content.

Proposal #2: Elimination of PH110, Basic Philosophical Problems

This ill-named course attempted to serve as a single location for introducing students to the major content areas in philosophy. We have found this approach provides students with too narrow an introduction and results in an underdeveloped introduction to philosophical inquiry. We are reconfiguring the core to address these problems.

Proposal #3: Creation of PH210, Freedom and the Self

This course is, in part, a replacement for the eliminated PH110, Basic Philosophical Problems. However, it is also part of our larger effort to reconfigure the core in a way that provides students with a broader and more in-depth introduction to key content areas in philosophy, while providing them with increased flexibility in terms of upper level content area course selection.

Proposal #4: Change of PH311, Metaethics title and content to PH311, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl

Metaethics is a specialized area of philosophical investigation. The course was created by Dr. Money when he came to Millikin in 1999. Dr. Money's interest in teaching this material is preserved by way of PH400. If he chooses, he is able to teach metaethical content as the focus of PH400. He can also build certain elements of metaethics into PH211, Ethical Theory and Moral Issues and PH302, Contemporary Philosophy.

We propose to revise this course and utilize it as the location in our curriculum for delivery of a third Performance Learning opportunity in the form of Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl. Much like Dr. Money has done with Moot Court - building it intentionally into the curriculum through PH366, Appellate Legal Reasoning: Moot Court – Dr. Hartsock has built another Performance Learning opportunity intentionally into the curriculum with this course. We formalize his efforts with this proposal.

The Philosophy Department rotates or modifies the content of its upper-level seminars on an ongoing basis. The Department also makes some modifications in its normal courses, rotating content in and out. Doing so allows philosophy faculty to keep courses fresh and exciting for the students, and helps to keep faculty interest and enthusiasm high. For example, Dr. Money had taught the PH400 Seminar in Philosophy course on Nietzsche, on personal identity, on the intelligent design-evolution controversy, and as a course on ethical naturalism. The title of the course is the same, but it is a new course nonetheless. This type of "internal evolution" takes place frequently within the Department.

A number of changes have occurred in the philosophy curriculum in the last several years. The Department regularly meets to review its curriculum and identify ways in which it can be improved. As a result of our careful review and revisions, our program is now organized as follows.

The course offerings listed in the Bulletin for philosophy will be as follows (with faculty member most likely to teach the course identified):

PH113, Introduction to Logic (Hartsock)
PH210, Freedom and the Self (Money, Roark)
PH211, Ethical Theory and Moral Issues (Money, Roark)
PH214, Philosophy of Religion (Money, Roark)
PH215, Business Ethics (Roark)
PH217, Bioethics (Roark)
PH219, Environmental Ethics (Roark)
PH223, Scientific Revolutions (Hartsock)
PH300, Ancient Philosophy (Hartsock)
PH301, Modern Philosophy (Hartsock, Money)
PH302, Contemporary Philosophy (Hartsock, Money)
PH305, Philosophy of Law (Money)
PH310, Political Philosophy (Money, Roark)

PH311, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl (Hartsock)
PH312, Minds and Persons (Hartsock, Money)
PH313, Ways of Knowing (Hartsock, Roark)
PH366, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court (Money)
PH391, 392, 393, 394, Independent Study in Philosophy (variable)
PH400, Seminar in Philosophy (Hartsock, Money, Roark)

The philosophy major, minors, and tracks will be reconfigured and appear in the Bulletin as follows:

Major in Philosophy
A major consists of a minimum of 30 credits and leads to the B.A. degree. At least 12 credits must be at the 300 level or higher. The requirements of the philosophy major are as follows:

"Philosophy Core" (15 credits)

Two Courses (Required) (6 credits):
- PH113, Introduction to Logic
- PH400, Seminar in Philosophy

Two of the Following Survey Courses (6 credits):
- PH210, Freedom and the Self
- PH214, Philosophy of Religion
- PH223, History and Philosophy of Science

One of the Following Courses in Ethics (3 credits):
- PH211, Ethical Theory and Moral Issues
- PH215, Business Ethics
- PH217, Bioethics
- PH219, Environmental Ethics
- PH311, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl

"Philosophy Electives" (15 credits)
- Five electives in philosophy

Ethics Track within the Philosophy Major
The ethics track consists of a minimum of 30 credits and leads to the B.A. degree. At least 12 credits must be at the 300 level or higher. The requirements of the ethics track in the philosophy major are as follows:

Six Core Courses (required) (18 credits):
- PH113, Introduction to Logic
- PH211, Ethical Theory and Moral Issues

- PH215, Business Ethics
- PH217, Bioethics
- PH219, Environmental Ethics
- PH400, Seminar in Philosophy

One of the Following Survey Courses (3 credits):
- PH210, Freedom and the Self
- PH214, Philosophy of Religion
- PH223, History and Philosophy of Science

One of the Following Courses (3 credits):
- PH305, Philosophy of Law
- PH310, Political Philosophy
- PH311, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl

Any two additional 300-level philosophy courses (6 credits).

Pre-law Track within the Philosophy Major

The pre-law track consists of a minimum of 30 credits and leads to the B.A. degree. At least 12 credits must be at the 300 level or higher. The requirements of the pre-law track in the philosophy major are as follows:

Six Core Courses (required) (18 credits):
- PH113, Introduction to Logic
- PH211, Ethical Theory and Moral Issues
- PH305, Philosophy of Law
- PH310, Political Philosophy
- PH366, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court
- PH400, Seminar in Philosophy

One of the Following Survey Courses (3 credits):
- PH210, Freedom and the Self
- PH214, Philosophy of Religion
- PH223, History and Philosophy of Science

Any three additional philosophy courses, PO234 Civil Liberties, or PO330 Constitutional Law (9 credits).

Philosophy Minor

A student seeking a philosophy minor is required to complete 18 credits. At least 9 credits must be at the 300 level or higher. The requirements of the philosophy minor are as follows:

One Core Course (3 credits):

- PH113, Introduction to Logic

One of the Following Survey Courses (3 credits):
- PH210, Freedom and the Self
- PH214, Philosophy of Religion
- PH223, History and Philosophy of Science

Four additional philosophy courses, three of which must be at the 300 level or higher (12 credits).

Ethics Minor
A student seeking an ethics minor is required to complete 18 credits. At least 9 credits must be at the 300 level or higher. The requirements of the ethics minor are as follows:

One Core Course (Required) (3 credits):
- PH211, Ethical Theory and Moral Issues

Two of the following courses in applied ethics (6 credits):
- PH215, Business Ethics
- PH217, Bioethics
- PH219, Environmental Ethics

Nine credits from among the following courses:
- Any additional applied ethics course offered by the Philosophy Department (i.e., PH215, PH217, PH219)
- PH300, Ancient Philosophy
- PH305, Philosophy of Law
- PH310, Political Philosophy
- PH311, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl
- PH366, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court
- PH400, Seminar in Philosophy (if content appropriate and with approval of the Chair)
- Any one course outside the Philosophy Department focusing on ethics, including: CO107, Argument and Social Issues; CO308, Communication Ethics and Freedom of Expression; SO325, Social Work Ethics; BI414, The Human Side of Medicine; or another course in ethics outside the Department and approved by the Chair of the Philosophy Department.

(4) The Learning Story. Explain the typical learning experience provided through your major. How do students learn or encounter experiences leading to fulfilling your learning outcome goals?

It is important to emphasize that we do not require that our majors complete the Philosophy Major by following a formal and rigid sequential curricular structural plan. While there are required courses within the major, these courses (with one exception) need not be taken in a specific sequential order. Given the context within which the Philosophy Department operates, the demand for that kind of "structural plan" is unrealistic. More importantly, given the nature of philosophical activity and philosophical teaching, the demand for a structural plan is ***inappropriate***. What this shows is that assessment efforts cannot demand a "one size fits all" approach. Assessment demands must respect disciplinary autonomy, as well as the practical realities of "the situation on the ground." Assessment of philosophy may be a worthy goal, but it must be assessment of *philosophy*. Respect for disciplinary autonomy comes first and assessment tools must be constructed that respect that autonomy. Indeed, it is only when this is the case that it becomes realistic to expect faculty members to take ownership of assessment practices; after all, we are professors of philosophy, not professors of assessment! The following makes clear why the demand for a "structural plan" in the Philosophy Major is both impractical and inappropriate.

A structural plan in philosophy is impractical. Students rarely come to Millikin as declared philosophy majors, since few have even heard of this discipline in high school. Philosophy is a paradigmatic "discovery major." Students switch to or add philosophy as a major, often during their second or even third year at Millikin, because they recognize the quality of the teaching provided by our faculty, the way philosophical study develops the skill sets essential to any quality educational experience, and because of the power of the questions philosophy forces students to ask and wrestle with, questions that form the heart of a life of meaning and value—one part of Millikin's stated mission "to deliver on the promise of education."[7]

In light of the peculiar nature of our discipline and the nature of "recruitment" to our major, we cannot insist on a rigid formal sequential curricular pathway for our majors. We might prefer our majors start with PH113 (Logic), then move on to PH211 (Ethics) and some combination of PH210, PH214, and PH223, then complete several 300 level electives, and then finally take PH400 (Seminar in Philosophy). This preference or ideal, however, is completely unrealistic. The only situation in which we could realistically expect its implementation would be with those very few incoming freshmen students who declare philosophy as a major during summer orientation and registration. Even with these students, however, we would be limited by the small size of our Department and our faculty's commitment to making substantial contributions to other portions of the university curriculum (e.g., University Studies, the honors program, etc.). In light of

[7] During the 2005-2006 academic year, one senior student declared a major in philosophy *during his senior year*! He had to take courses in the summer in order to complete the major. It is wildly implausible to suppose that he could complete the major by following some structural plan of study. Yet, the fact remains that he was an outstanding student, who produced high quality exemplary work. An electronic copy of his senior thesis is posted on our website (Jordan Snow).

these realities on the ground, we simply could not guarantee that the needed courses would be offered with the degree of regularity that would make it possible to implement a rigid formal sequential curricular pathway. So, this kind of "stepping stone" curricular plan is impractical for us to implement.

Fortunately, implementation of a curricular structural plan is also unnecessary. Many of our courses involve a mix of students, both majors and non-majors. Teaching a group of students who are from various backgrounds is always a challenge. However, students who are good at reading, writing, and thinking can succeed in philosophy courses at the upper division level, even if they've never had a philosophy course before. (The same principle underlies the institution's commitment to the viability of IN250 and IN350 courses.) In physics or French it is highly unlikely that a student beginning the major or a student from another discipline could enter an upper level course and succeed. However, in philosophy, first year undergraduate students in PH110 Basic Philosophical Problems and graduate students in graduate school seminars read many of the same texts, e.g., Plato's *Republic*, Descartes' *Meditations*, etc. We regularly have students from history, English, or music who do as well as or better than philosophy majors in the same courses. This somewhat peculiar feature of philosophical inquiry and activity explains (and completely justifies) why we do not insist on a formal rigid sequential curricular pathway for our majors. High quality intellectual engagement with philosophical issues and philosophical texts does not require that we follow a stepping stone model.

The only exception to our curricular flexibility is the philosophy capstone course: PH400 Seminar in Philosophy. That course can only be taken during the junior or senior years. In that course, the philosophy faculty member teaching the course identifies a topic or philosopher of interest and designs a seminar course based on the graduate school model to explore the topic/philosopher. A major research paper is required of each student. (This paper is the equivalent of the prior senior thesis.) Faculty work one-on-one with each of our junior and/or senior majors and help them produce some of the best work of their career at Millikin. Given the role of this course, we insist that this particular course come near the end of the student's undergraduate philosophical exploration. We want our students to have exposure to a wide range of philosophical issues, topics, and texts before they write their thesis.

To summarize, philosophy majors do not fulfill a formal sequential curricular plan because such a plan is both impractical for us to implement and unnecessary given the nature of philosophical study.

Students in the Philosophy Major learn to think critically. All members of the Philosophy Department have been recognized as outstanding teachers. Indeed, as documented above, all three faculty members have been recognized and honored with multiple teaching awards. The department prides itself on exceptional undergraduate teaching. Students respond to their philosophy education for three key reasons: (1) philosophy

faculty are passionate about the subject matter that they teach, and that passion is contagious; (2) philosophy faculty are rigorous in their expectations, and establish high expectations for their students, encouraging the students to have high expectations for themselves; and (3) philosophy faculty employ an intense, discussion-driven format in which students are engaged, challenged on many of their core beliefs and assumptions, and encouraged to take charge of their own education and their own thinking.

All philosophy faculty employ written forms of evaluation, including in-class essay examinations, take-home essay exams, and papers.

The learning experience provided through the Philosophy Major is strongly interactive in nature. For example, Dr. Roark utilizes a case-study approach in many of his applied ethics courses. Under this pedagogical strategy, students are responsible for presenting analysis and engaging in normative reasoning regarding the case study, with class debate and interaction intentionally woven into the experience. Similarly, Dr. Money has students engage in the oral delivery of legal arguments in his Appellate Legal Reasoning course. These arguments are delivered to the class, with Dr. Money and the other students roll playing as justices – peppering the students with questions, etc.

Similarly, all philosophy faculty employ written assignments as the primary basis for assessing student learning. Faculty also make extensive use of e-mail communication and the Moodle forum feature to extend class discussions after class, eliciting sophisticated discussion from undergraduates and extending their philosophy education into the world beyond the classroom.

Students are expected to read challenging texts, and philosophy faculty use those texts, and subsequent discussions of those texts, to help students spot the assumptions behind arguments – especially the unstated assumptions that inform a particular outlook or worldview. The philosophy curriculum is unlike nearly every other in that the texts for freshman students are the same as those for seniors, and indeed for graduate students. Freshmen may read fewer pages than seniors, but the difficulty is in the texts themselves; there are no "beginner" philosophy texts, *per se.*

The Philosophy Department uses all primary texts. These texts raise challenging questions related to Millikin's core questions: Who am I? How can I know? What should I do? These are essentially philosophical questions, and every philosophy course addresses at least one of them. Students can take away varying levels of understanding, but all are called upon to work with the most profound philosophical writing available, so that from the beginning they can be thinking in the deepest way they can.

As noted above, the fact that philosophy texts lend themselves to different levels of interpretation and understanding allows philosophy faculty to engage students who may be along a varying continuum of intellectual abilities, including non-majors and majors

alike. The discussion driven format of philosophy courses exploits the varying degrees of student intellectual abilities for collective benefit – often more advanced students expose less advanced students to central issues and ideas in a way that can be easily understood by the less advanced student. Class discussion is not simply vertical (between students and teacher), but quite often horizontal as well (between students). Some of our most effective learning takes the horizontal form.

The key experiences in the philosophy curriculum, along with encounters with challenging texts (as mentioned above), include intensive engagement with philosophy professors, engagement with fellow students, reflection and digestion of ideas, and presentation of the students' own ideas in written form. The overall learning experience in the Philosophy Major, then, is one of intellectual engagement (with a great deal of one-on-one engagement outside of class as well), in which students are challenged to think critically about core beliefs and assumptions, and are expected to be able to present critical and creative ideas regarding those core beliefs and assumptions in oral and, especially, written form.

The Department is committed to facilitating students' understanding of philosophical issues and problems in their historical context, and our core is intentionally structured so as to include both historical and contemporary readings. Doing this gives philosophy faculty a chance to expose philosophy students to many of the seminal works in philosophy. A full overview of the philosophy major and its various "tracks" is provided above, in section (3).

(5) Performance Learning In Philosophy

There are three key performance learning opportunities delivered by the Philosophy Department and its faculty: Ethics Bowl, Moot Court, and Seminar in Philosophy. Each is described briefly below.

PH311: Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl

The philosophy program provides philosophy majors as well as Millikin students more generally with the opportunity to engage in high intensity and high quality performance learning in the form of ethics bowl. Students wishing to participate must enroll in PH360, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl. This course is an experiential and collaborative learning experience in which students are taught the essential elements of ethical reasoning by Dr. Hartsock and eventually perform their learning before third party stakeholders (e.g., professionals from a variety of applied fields, academics, government and non-profit organizational leaders, etc.). Dr. Hartsock teaches the course every fall semester.

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It is worth noting that the students who participate in ethics bowl represent a very diverse range of disciplines. This past year (2015) was typical. Student participants had majors or minors in the following disciplines:

- Majors: Philosophy, English Education and Writing, Music, including Music Education and Performance, Theatre, and Math,
- Minors: Entrepreneurship, Finance, Dance, Biology.

Our students performed exceptionally well during our inaugural competition (fall 2014). Millikin was one of 4 teams in our region to qualify for the **national** competition. One of our teams finished 3rd at the regional competition, and the other team finished in the

top 50%. Students traveled to California during the spring 2015 semester in order to compete in the National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl competition. We took two teams to the regional competition in fall 2015. While neither team advanced to the national competition, both did outstanding work.

PH366: Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court

The philosophy program provides philosophy majors as well as Millikin students more generally with the opportunity to participate in a high intensity and high quality performance learning experience: moot court. In order to participate, students must enroll in PH366, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court. This course is an experiential and collaborative learning experience in which students are taught the essential elements of appellate legal reasoning by Dr. Money and eventually perform their learning before third party stakeholders (e.g., legal professionals, pre-law faculty advisers, law students, etc.). Dr. Money teaches the course each spring semester.

Each year, students who enroll in this course are afforded the opportunity to participate in a state-wide moot court competition held as part of the Model Illinois Government simulation in Springfield, Illinois. At the competition, students work in two-person teams to deliver, based on their analysis of the closed case file materials, persuasive legal arguments before a panel of justices. Each team has a maximum of 30 minutes to present arguments. While team members can divide up the presentation of arguments as they see fit, competition rules require that each team member argue for at least 10 minutes. During the presentation of oral arguments, justices – a combination of legal professionals from central Illinois, law school students, and college students who have had prior experience participating as attorneys in the competition – ask questions, offer rejoinders, and propose hypothetical scenarios in response to the arguments made by student attorneys. Student attorneys must demonstrate listening skills and the ability to think critically on their feet as they work to respond to the justices. After a round of argument concludes, a formal rubric is utilized to assess student performance in five main categories: knowledge of the case, organization and reasoning, courtroom manner, forensic skills, and responding to questions. Teams advance in the competition based on their performance as assessed by the justices utilizing the rubric.

Students who participate in moot court draw on while developing further many of the key skills that are emphasized in our philosophy curriculum as well as our wider University Studies curriculum: critical-analytical reading, critical-ethical reasoning, oral communication, and collaborative learning, among others.

It is worth noting that students who participate in moot court represent a very diverse range of disciplines. This past year (2016) was *typical*. Student participants had majors or minors in the following disciplines:

- Majors: acting, math, music, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology
- Minors: biology, criminal justice, finance, history, political science, Spanish, and writing

Over the past twelve years, Millikin students have performed **exceptionally** well. The team and individual awards speak for themselves:

- Team First Place Finishes (8): 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
- Team Second Place Finishes (7): 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014, **2016**
- Team Third Place Finishes (7): 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015
- Team Fourth Place Finishes (3): 2012, 2013, 2015
- Individual Award for Most Outstanding Attorney (6): 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, **2016 (Novice Award)**
- Individual Award for Runner Up Most Outstanding Attorney (3): 2011, 2012, 2013
- Individual student elected Chief Justice (3): 2005, 2006, 2015

The track record of success by our students – as judged by external evaluators, including legal practitioners and law school students – is clear evidence of the high quality of our program.

PH400: Seminar in Philosophy

All philosophy majors must complete our capstone course: PH400, Seminar in Philosophy. This course, taken toward the end of the student's career, is designed to allow philosophy faculty to mentor students not simply in the study of philosophy, but in the doing of philosophy. In this course, students "do the discipline." Dr. Money, Dr. Roark, and Dr. Hartsock teach the course on a rotating basis each year.

The faculty member in charge identifies an important philosophical topic or philosopher. This topic or philosopher serves as the focus of course readings, class discussions, assorted presentations, and eventually students' theses. Students are free to identify

their thesis topic, subject to approval of the supervising faculty member. Students work to construct a clear and creative thesis. This work frequently involves experimenting with various formulations of their central ideas over the course of the semester. Once their topic and central ideas are identified, students work to locate sources to use in their research. As the semester unfolds, students work to fashion more developed arguments and ideas, building their thesis over time. Students present their arguments and ideas to the other students in the course and the supervising faculty member and receive critical feedback. Students continue to work on their theses over the course of the entire semester. In fact, it is not uncommon for students to continue working on their theses into the following spring semester. In the end, students generate a substantial written essay (typically 15-25 pages), their philosophy capstone thesis. This work is submitted to the supervising faculty member for a grade. In addition to producing a written thesis, each student also makes a formal oral presentation of her thesis to philosophy majors, faculty members, and interested members of the campus community during our university-wide "Celebration of Scholarship." The entire experience is intentionally designed to have students do the work of philosophy: thinking, writing, and presenting philosophical arguments in written form and presenting philosophical ideas orally in a public venue. In short, the goal is for our students not simply to study philosophy, but to do philosophy.

(6) Assessment Methods. Explain your methods and points of data collection for assessing fulfillment of your key learning outcomes and for assessing effectiveness.

The explosion in administration related to assessment – an explosion in which assessment has driven both the size of administration and the priorities identified by administration – deserves serious pushback. We provide this pushback in the form of a reminder regarding a point that we, as faculty members actually teaching courses to students, view as obvious: **student intellectual growth and learning is assessed in <u>every</u> class, on <u>every</u> assignment, and in <u>every</u> course. We call this assessment of student learning "grading."** If we are not assessing student learning when we grade student work, then we have no idea what we are doing. Quite frankly, building a culture of assessment is administrative speak for what we view as faculty members doing their job. We do not need multiple layers of administrative bureaucracy to achieve a "culture of assessment." We simply need faculty members doing their jobs well. This we do.

We repeat: in the context of an intra-departmental program, grading <u>is</u> assessing student learning. The fact that we have assigned each student a grade in each course is already to engage in an extensive assessment of "student performance"

and "student learning." For example, one of our Departmental Learning Goals (#2) is: Students will demonstrate their ability to utilize the principles of critical thinking and formal logic in order to produce a sound and valid argument, or to evaluate the soundness and validity of the arguments of others. Each philosophy major must complete PH113, Introduction to Logic. Here, each student spends an *entire semester* doing nothing but working on mastering the principles of critical thinking and formal logic and applying them. The grade earned in the course signifies our "assessment of student learning" relative to that specific learning goal. Of course, we also assess this learning goal in reference to the arguments constructed in the student's senior thesis (and on all other written papers for that matter!), and that is the important point – our students are assessed on each learning goal continuously in numerous courses as they work to complete the major. Indeed, we have intentionally designed the curriculum to deliver our central learning goals. Hence, if a student successfully completes our curriculum, she demonstrates successfully mastery of our learning goals.

Perhaps an equally powerful illustration of the continuous and pervasive nature of our assessment of student learning can be seen in reference to Departmental Learning Goal #1: Students will be able to express in oral and written form their understanding of major concepts and intellectual traditions within the field of philosophy. The following remarks appeared in Dr. Money's letters of recommendation for three philosophy majors who applied to law school during the 2009 fall semester:

> I want to emphasize the extent of my familiarity with STUDENT'S NAME academic work. To this point, I have had STUDENT in eight philosophy courses. He has excelled across a wide range of assignments including reading quizzes, oral presentations, in-class exams, take-home essay exams, and research papers. His writing, in particular, is outstanding. His papers and exams are models of analytical clarity and compelling reasoned argumentation. Across the eight courses he has taken with me to this point, STUDENT has written a total of thirty-eight (38) essays of 4-8 pages in length. His average grade on these assignments is an outstanding 95%.
>
> Across the six courses he has taken with me to this point, SECOND STUDENT has written a total of twenty-nine (29) essays of 4-8 pages in length. His average grade on these assignments is an excellent 92.93%. (Letter for SECOND STUDENT)
>
> Across the seven courses he has taken with me to this point, THIRD STUDENT has written a total of thirty-two (32) essays of 4-8 pages in length. His average grade on these assignments is an astonishing 95.66%. (Letter for THIRD STUDENT)

The point is that this degree of familiarity with our students and the depth of our assessment of their learning are substantial and pervasive. This is the **NORM** in our Department. One of the great benefits of being a small department is the fact that this ensures that we will get the opportunity to interact with many of our students repeatedly over time. This puts us in an excellent position to make judgments about the growth of their learning while at Millikin and positions us to engage in excellent advising and mentoring. Thus, it should be abundantly clear that we assess student learning continuously and rigorously. Reinvention of the wheel is entirely unnecessary. We will not speculate on why such reinvention has and is occurring.

In addition to the pervasive assessment of student learning that we engage in through formal class assignments, there is the opportunity for assessment that comes from the close mentoring relationship that are formed between philosophy faculty and philosophy majors. Philosophy faculty members interact with philosophy majors a great deal, meeting with them to discuss class materials, life issues, and the like in both formal and informal venues. These "advising" moments are also moments of assessment. In addition, philosophy faculty members assess each student's character development during his or her four years as a philosophy major at Millikin.

Despite these obvious points, we have been asked to engage in even further assessment of student learning. We have complied with this request. Given the peculiar nature of our discipline and the nature of "recruitment" to our major, the natural point for formal "data" collection and analysis is PH400, Seminar in Philosophy. This course, completed toward the end of the student's career, involves the writing of a major research paper (thesis) and is, therefore, an important key opportunity for assessing the student's growth and learning over the course of the Philosophy Major. The thesis provides us with yet another opportunity to assess our effectiveness in delivering on each of our key learning goals. Here is a short description of how PH400 is delivered.

Dr. Money, Dr. Roark, and Dr. Hartsock teach the course on a rotating basis each fall semester. The faculty member in charge identifies an important philosophical topic or philosopher. This topic or philosopher serves as the focus of course readings, class discussions, assorted presentations, and eventually students' theses. Students are free to identify their thesis topic, subject to approval of the supervising faculty member. Students work to construct a clear and creative thesis. This work frequently involves experimenting with various formulations of their central ideas over the course of the semester. Once their topic and central ideas are identified, students work to locate sources to use in their research. As the semester unfolds, students work to fashion more developed arguments and ideas, building their thesis over time. Students present their arguments and ideas to the other students in the course and/or the supervising faculty member and receive critical feedback. Students continue to work on their theses over the course of the entire semester. In fact, it is not uncommon for students to continue working on their theses into the following spring semester. In the end, students generate a substantial written essay (typically 15-25 pages), their philosophy

capstone thesis. This work is submitted to the supervising faculty member for a grade. We assess the quality of the written work by utilizing our own trained judgments regarding the quality of the writing, the difficulty of the subject matter, etc. (Learning Goals 1 and 2). In addition to producing a written thesis, each student also makes a formal oral presentation of her thesis to philosophy majors, faculty members, and interested members of the campus community during our university-wide "Celebration of Scholarship." We assess the quality of the oral presentation by employment of the "rubric for assessment of oral communication" (Learning Goal 1). The entire experience is intentionally designed to have students do the work of philosophy: thinking, writing, and presenting philosophical arguments in written form and presenting philosophical ideas orally in a public venue. In short, the goal is for our students not simply to study philosophy, but to do philosophy. This is "performance learning" in philosophy.

The thesis written for PH400, therefore, provides us with yet another opportunity to assess student learning in relation to all three of our learning goals. It is, therefore, the artifact that we collect and analyze.

(7) Assessment Data

Assessment data on key learning outcomes will be collected each academic year. The "artifacts" to be collected and/or performed include the following:

1. All majors will submit a copy of their written thesis. The thesis will offer a basis to assess student learning in the Philosophy Major in relation to all three stated learning goals. First, it will allow us to assess a student's ability "to express in **written** and oral form their understanding of major concepts and intellectual traditions within the field of philosophy." (Goal 1) The presentation of arguments in the writing will allow us to assess the student's "ability to utilize the principles of critical thinking and formal logic in order to produce a sound and valid argument, or to evaluate the soundness and validity of the arguments of others." (Goal 2) Finally, the thesis and weekly advisory sessions will allow us to assess our student's ability "to complete research on a philosophy-related topic, analyze objectively the results of their research, and present arguments to support their point of view in a variety of venues. (Goal 3).
2. All majors will present an oral defense of their thesis during our campus-wide Celebration of Scholarship during the spring semester. These oral defenses will allow us to assess a student's ability "to express in written and **oral** form their understanding of major concepts and intellectual traditions within the field of philosophy." (Goal 1) The oral presentation and defense of the thesis will allow us to assess the student's "ability to utilize the principles of critical thinking and formal logic in order to produce a sound and valid argument, or to evaluate the soundness and validity of the arguments of others." (Goal 2)

(8) Analysis of Assessment Results

Five students wrote and defended their thesis during the 2015-2016 academic year.

Assessment of student learning in the Philosophy Major focuses on the following:

1) The written thesis produced by each graduating philosophy major.
2) The oral defense of the thesis provided by each graduating philosophy major.

Analysis of assessment results for each key learning outcome goal, with effectiveness measures established on a green-light, yellow-light, red-light scale, occurs for each academic year. We see no reason to reinvent the wheel. We correlate letter grades with this "colored-light" schema. A grade of "A" or "B" correlates to "green." A grade of "C" correlates to "yellow." And a grade of "D" or "F" correlates to "red."

A. Written Thesis

Regarding the written product, the supervising faculty member generates a brief evaluative summary for each thesis supervised during the academic year (included below). This summary will indicate the name of the student, the title of the senior thesis (if titled), the grade earned by the student on the senior thesis, and an indication of the basis for the grade assigned. Electronic copies of all theses will be obtained and stored by the Chair of the Philosophy Department.

The data for philosophy students completing their thesis during the 2014-2015 academic year is provided below. All students not only produced a thesis research paper, but each also presented and defended their thesis orally during the campus wide "Celebration of Scholarship."

Evaluative Summaries of Senior Theses

Within the past five years, the Philosophy Department instituted a new process for the production of senior thesis. We revised our curriculum resulting in a combination of the old PH400 Senior Thesis course with the old PH381 Seminar in Philosophy course. We now have a single course, PH400, Seminar in Philosophy. Most (though not all) of our majors produce their "senior theses" (i.e., a major research paper engaging in argument based thesis defense) within the context of the newly created (modified) course. We did this to provide better guidance to students as they work to produce this major paper. This year, our students wrote their thesis based on PH400 (this year's topic: Philosophy of Mind, taught by Dr. Hartsock). All students not only produced a thesis research paper, but each also presented and defended their thesis orally during the campus wide "Celebration of Scholarship."

Student #1
Title: Viewing the Consciousness Debate Through Spinoza's Eyes
Grade: A (Green Light) (Dr. Hartsock)

Student engages in a novel exploration of Spinoza's views of consciousness. Most impressive is the student's use of relevant material well outside the material covered in class. The student draws clear connections between the work of the early modern philosopher, Spinoza, with contemporary work in the philosophy of mind. The student exhibits a depth of understanding rare in undergraduate work in philosophy.

Student #2
Title: The Illusion of Consciousness
Grade: A- (Green Light) (Dr. Hartsock)

Student argues that consciousness is an illusion. The student defends this claim by arguing that the (false) belief that we are conscious is likely the product of biological evolution. This central feature of the argument could have been better developed, but the student's work nevertheless represents excellent work in undergraduate philosophy.

Student #3
Title: The Possibility and Conceivablilty of Zombies
Grade: A (Green Light) (Dr. Hartsock)

Student defends the claim that we have no reason to believe that we are conscious except for introspective reports. Since Chalmers Zombies would also make such reports, our confidence in our own claims concerning consciousness is suspect. The student develops a clear and novel argument. The positive portion is much stronger than are the student's responses to possible objections. Overall, the student's work far exceeds ordinary expectations for undergraduate work in philosophy.

Student #4
Title: Consciousness: A Requirement for Morally Responsible Agents
Grade: A- (Green Light) (Dr. Hartsock)

Student argues that consciousness is a necessary condition for moral responsibility. The student provides a very clear exegesis of the work of Neil Levy, which required substantial research beyond the course materials. The student also draws insightful parallels between issues in the philosophy of consciousness and the philosophy of free will, demonstrating that concern for moral responsibility drives many of our metaphysical commitments regarding free will and consciousness. Though the thesis is not terribly novel, the rigorous analysis and clear exegesis make this an excellent product of undergraduate research.

Student #5
Title: Conceivability: A Guide to Possibility
Grade: A- (Green Light) (Dr. Hartsock)

Student argues that the conceivability of a proposition is *prima facie* reason to believe that such proposition is logically possible. The student's thesis is not very novel, however the student provides a thorough defense of the claim. Furthermore, the student demonstrates a clear understanding for the broader implications of the claim that conceivability entails possibility in the context of the consciousness debate.

B. Oral Defense of Thesis

All philosophy majors present an oral defense of their thesis. Their oral defense is assessed using the "Rubric for Assessment of Oral Communication." The rubric provides for an available total point range of between 55 and 11. A total score of 34-55 will indicate a green light regarding assessment. A total score of 23-33 will indicate a yellow light regarding assessment. Finally, a total score of 11-22 will indicate a red light regarding assessment. The original assessment sheets will be stored by the Chair of the Philosophy Department.

The data for philosophy seniors graduating during the 2015-2016 academic year is provided below. The score is the average score between the three faculty evaluators.

Student #1:
Total Score on Rubric: 51
Color-Code: Green

Student #2:
Total Score on Rubric: 46.8
Color-Code: Green

Student #3:
Total Score on Rubric: 52
Color-Code: Green

Student #4:
Total Score on Rubric: 50.3
Color-Code: Green

Student #5:
Total Score on Rubric: 46.2
Color-Code: Green

(9) Trend Lines and Improvement Plans

The Philosophy Department is pleased with the results from our ninth year of formal assessment.

100% of our students were assessed in the "green" for their oral defense of their senior thesis. The data is in line with the consistently high performance by our majors and is evidence that the philosophy program is strong. The data we have collected over the past nine years reveals a consistency in the oral competencies of our students. We attribute this primarily to the intensely discussion-driven format of our courses, a format that encourage and rewards student engagement and student contributions. Given our emphasis on this pedagogical style, it is not a surprise that our majors are adept at communicating their views orally. They essentially receive the opportunity to engage in oral communication each and every class meeting!

100% of our students were assessed in the "green" for their written thesis. The data reveals consistently high performance by our majors and is evidence that the philosophy program is strong. We are confident that student learning in the philosophy major is strong.

Given these results and the fact that this is our ninth year of data collection for formal assessment purposes, we do not anticipate making any changes in our program as a result of our assessment review. We are extremely pleased with the performance of our students and we continue to believe that our program facilitates the intellectual growth and development of the critical thinking skills that are essential to delivering on "the promise of education." The high quality work produced by our students is compelling evidence in support of this claim.

Much is made of the need to "close the loop" in assessment. While it is important to work to ensure that the information gained by assessment makes a meaningful impact on Department teaching practices, it is a mistake to assume that effective use of assessment information can only be demonstrated if review of assessment results in **changes** to curriculum and/or pedagogy. We reject this assumption. If analysis and review of assessment data reveal positive student learning achievements, then there is no reason to change what is clearly working. We use assessment; it is simply that the results have confirmed our strategy and approach in terms of curriculum and/or pedagogy. Absent **evidence** presented by others to us that we are in need of changing our curriculum and pedagogy, we will not undertake action to change what, in our considered judgment—judgment informed by being trained in philosophy, interacting daily with our students, grading numerous assignments, etc.—is clearly working. The members of the Department are ready to listen to those who have **evidence** that our pedagogy/curriculum could be improved. In the absence of that evidence, however, no

changes will be made. If no reasons whatsoever are given for why we should change pedagogy and/or curriculum, and if all evidence points to the success of our students in terms of learning and achievement (Does anyone have evidence to the contrary? If so, then present it to us.), then the loop is closed by continuing with our tried and true approach to student learning that we implement. Our assessment efforts to date have revealed no issues or concerns that would justify instituting changes in our pedagogy/curriculum.

Addendum: Performance Learning in Philosophy

Contextual Remarks

Millikin University has identified the use of a particular pedagogical method as a distinctive feature of a Millikin education: "performance learning." At Millikin, we ensure that every student, regardless of major, is afforded the opportunity to engage in performance learning. While a range of characteristics have been identified internally as typical of performance learning[8], we must remember that if performance learning is to function as an effective pedagogical tool for facilitating student learning, it must flow organically from genuine and authentic disciplinary commitments and practices as determined by disciplinary experts, i.e., the faculty of the various disciplines. As a pedagogical tool, faculty members determine the proper contours and utilizations of performance learning within their own disciplines. Performance learning must not be forcibly and externally imposed on disciplines in ways that place at risk authentic teaching and learning within a given discipline. Accordingly, we explicitly reject any notion that performance learning is a "one-size-fits-all" pedagogy that is defined in the abstract and then applied universally in the same form across all disciplines and all courses. As a result, any effort to identify and assess performance learning in philosophy must be firmly grounded in an appreciation of ***philosophy*** as a discipline and convey a genuine and clear respect for philosophy's disciplinary autonomy.

As a matter of historical fact, the Millikin University Philosophy Department has been at the forefront of designing educational experiences that utilize high quality performance learning opportunities as an important pedagogical tool. For example, Dr. Money has utilized performance learning for over a decade in the context of directing moot court, and six years ago he intentionally and carefully developed a curricular home for what was once simply an extra-curricular activity. The result is PH376, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court. The course has resulted in a distinguished track record of outstanding student performance learning. (See below for a more complete discussion.)

[8] For purposes of this overview of performance learning in philosophy, we will rely on characteristics identified in the 2014 Summer Nyberg Seminar report on performance learning and the spring 2015 "Guidelines for the Assessment of Performance Learning."

More recently, Dr. Hartsock and Dr. Roark worked to evaluate whether an approach similar to the approach Dr. Money utilized for moot court might work for ethics bowl. During late February 2013, Dr. Hartsock and Dr. Roark travelled to San Antonio, Texas, where they served as judges for the National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl Competition. They had the opportunity to judge four ethics bowl matches (all preliminary rounds) and were able to see first-hand eight nationally competitive teams at the highest level of competition. The purpose of the travel was two-fold. First, to assess whether the ethics bowl competition would be a fruitful experience for Millikin students. Second, to consider whether the ethics bowl competition was the type of experience that would successfully reinforce the ethical reasoning thread running through the interdisciplinary sequential components of our University Studies curriculum. In their judgment, ethics bowl provided an outstanding opportunity for students to engage in a high quality performance learning experience that aligned perfectly with and provided the opportunity to extend further our University Studies program's focus on ethical reasoning. In order to begin to capitalize on this opportunity, Dr. Hartsock and Dr. Roark both substantially modified their sections of IN183, Honors University Seminar to enable those courses to function as on-campus introductions to the ethics bowl approach to learning.[9] In addition, Dr. Hartsock designed a new course to capitalize more fully on this opportunity: PH370, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl. During the fall 2014 semester, Dr. Hartsock ran the course for the first time. In conjunction with the on-campus classroom component of the course, he was able to take two teams of students to the regional ethics bowl competition in Indiana. One team advanced to the national competition and Dr. Hartsock and Dr. Roark took our students to California where they represented Millikin University at the National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl competition. (See below for more complete discussion.)

As the specific examples of moot court and ethics bowl show, philosophy has embraced and will continue to embrace performance learning – provided performance learning is understood as one pedagogical tool among many, and provided faculty within disciplines determine when the utilization of this tool is appropriate for their disciplines.

We have been asked to provide an overview of performance learning in philosophy and to identify the mechanisms by which performance learning in philosophy is assessed. In what follows, we provide a detailed narrative overview of performance learning in philosophy. We understand our charge to be as follows: to identify clearly how the philosophy program delivers performance learning opportunities to our students. We begin with a few comments on each of these three key elements of our charge.

[9] It is worth emphasizing that Dr. Hartsock and Dr. Roark saw the obvious connections between ethics bowl and the emphasis placed by our University Studies curriculum on ethical reasoning and undertook creative action to capitalize on the opportunities provided by this alignment of wider curricular goals and performance learning opportunities. This is what we mean when we say that performance learning opportunities must be identified that "flow organically from genuine and authentic disciplinary commitments and practices as determined by disciplinary experts."

First, our overview demonstrates how the philosophy **program** delivers performance learning opportunities to our students. The responsibility for providing our students with opportunities to engage in discipline-appropriate performance learning experiences is the responsibility of each program, not necessarily the responsibility of each individual faculty member or each course. To be very clear, it is not necessary for each faculty member or each course to provide opportunities for our students to engage in performance learning experiences. Instead, it is only necessary for the philosophy program considered as a whole to provide our students with such opportunities. Hence, the proper level for the identification and assessment of performance learning is ***programmatic***. As we will show, the philosophy **program** delivers multiple high quality performance learning opportunities to our students.

Second, our overview demonstrates how the philosophy program delivers performance learning **opportunities** for our students. We demonstrate that within the philosophy curriculum, each philosophy major is afforded multiple opportunities to engage in performance learning experiences. Indeed, we show that our program not only affords our majors opportunities to engage in performance learning, but guarantees that each major actually engage in at least one high quality performance-learning based experience – namely, the construction of her philosophy thesis as part of our capstone course, PH400 Seminar in Philosophy, and the oral presentation and public defense of her thesis during our campus-wide Celebration of Scholarship day held near the conclusion of each spring semester. This is not simply an opportunity for performance learning, but a requirement for completion of the philosophy major.

Beyond the guaranteed engagement in performance learning secured by PH400, each philosophy major is also afforded several additional opportunities to engage in high quality performance learning experiences. We highlight two such opportunities in this overview document. First, the opportunity presented by PH376, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court. Second, the opportunity presented by PH370, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl. The combination of these three courses (PH400, PH376, and PH370) is sufficient to ensure that our students have **opportunities** to engage in a diverse range of high-quality performance learning experiences.

Third, our overview demonstrates how the philosophy program delivers performance learning opportunities to our **students**. As we show, the philosophy program has a strong record of providing performance learning opportunities not simply to philosophy majors, but to Millikin students more generally. Students who participate in moot court and ethics bowl, for example, typically come from a diverse range of disciplinary homes, including but not limited to philosophy. Our program's ability to deliver high quality performance learning opportunities to students outside our discipline is one of the many strengths of our program and demonstrates our allegiance to the value of interdisciplinary teaching and learning.

Performance Learning Example #1: Seminar in Philosophy

One way that the philosophy program delivers performance learning opportunities to our students is our requirement that all philosophy majors complete our capstone course: PH400, Seminar in Philosophy. This course, taken toward the end of the student's career, is designed to allow philosophy faculty to mentor students not simply in the study of philosophy, but in the doing of philosophy. In this course, students "do the discipline." Dr. Money, Dr. Roark, and Dr. Hartsock teach the course on a rotating basis each fall semester.

The faculty member in charge identifies an important philosophical topic or philosopher. This topic or philosopher serves as the focus of course readings, class discussions, assorted presentations, and eventually students' theses. Students are free to identify their thesis topic, subject to approval of the supervising faculty member. Students work to construct a clear and creative thesis. This work frequently involves experimenting with various formulations of their central ideas over the course of the semester. Once their topic and central ideas are identified, students work to locate sources to use in their research. As the semester unfolds, students work to fashion more developed arguments and ideas, building their thesis over time. Students present their arguments and ideas to the other students in the course and the supervising faculty member and receive critical feedback. Students continue to work on their theses over the course of the entire semester. In fact, it is not uncommon for students to continue working on their theses into the following spring semester. In the end, students generate a substantial written essay (typically 20-25 pages), their philosophy capstone thesis. This work is submitted to the supervising faculty member for a grade. In addition to producing a written thesis, each student also makes a formal oral presentation of her thesis to philosophy majors, faculty members, and interested members of the campus community during our university-wide "Celebration of Scholarship." The entire experience is intentionally designed to have students do the work of philosophy: thinking, writing, and presenting philosophical arguments in written form and presenting philosophical ideas orally in a public venue. In short, the goal is for our students not simply to study philosophy, but to do philosophy.

Nearly all of the numerous characteristics of performance learning identified by the 2014 Summer Nyberg Seminar can be seen in this course. For example, students work over time to formulate and develop their thesis. It is a ***process***. In addition, it is a process that they do not undertake alone. The supervising faculty member works in collaboration with students as they engage in analysis, reflection, critical thinking, writing, etc. The supervising faculty member ***mentors*** and ***models*** even as he is a ***partner*** in ***exploration*** of the various philosophical topics. Students both "***do the discipline***" and "***do the skills***" as they assume ***responsibility*** for ***creatively*** constructing their capstone philosophical thesis. Students not only write their thesis, but they present their thesis before ***third party stakeholders*** – all departmental faculty

who are experts in the field (not just the supervising faculty member), philosophy majors and minors, and other interested members of the academic community.

The capstone philosophy thesis is assessed by the supervising faculty member in consultation with all other departmental faculty. In addition to an assessment of the student's written thesis, each student makes a formal presentation of her thesis during our spring Celebration of Scholarship. This oral presentation and thesis defense is part of our community tradition regarding the delivery of PH400. We assess the quality of the oral presentations by employment of the "rubric for assessment of oral communication." These assessments of students work – both written thesis and oral presentation – are collected yearly and included in our departmental report on student learning. In short, we already have a well-established structure for the assessment of student performance learning in philosophy as that learning takes place in PH400, Seminar in Philosophy. That structure is described further above, in the body of our main report.

Example of Performance Learning #2: PH311 Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl

The philosophy program provides philosophy majors as well as Millikin students more generally with the opportunity to engage in high intensity and high quality performance learning in the form of ethics bowl. Students wishing to participate must enroll in PH370, Ethical Reasoning – Ethics Bowl. This course is an experiential and collaborative learning experience in which students are taught the essential elements of ethical reasoning by an appropriately credentialed faculty member and eventually perform their learning before third party stakeholders (e.g., professionals from a variety of applied fields, academics, government and non-profit organizational leaders, etc.). It is a paradigmatic example of performance learning at Millikin University. Dr. Hartsock teaches the course every fall semester.

The following description taken from the Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (IEB) website enables one to see several points of intersection between the IEB competition and our institutional commitment to the value of performance learning.[10]

> The Intercollegiate Ethics Bowls (IEB) is a team competition that combines the excitement and fun of a competitive tournament with an innovative approach to education in practical and professional ethics for undergraduate students. Recognized widely by educators, the IEB has received special commendation for excellence and innovation from the American Philosophical Association, and received the 2006 American Philosophical Association/Philosophy Documentation Center's 2006 prize for Excellence and Innovation in Philosophy Programs. The format, rules,

[10] The website is http://appe.indiana.edu/ethics-bowl/intercollegiate-ethics-bowl-competitions/

and procedures of the IEB all have been developed to model widely acknowledged best methods of reasoning in practical and professional ethics.

In the IEB, each team receives in advance of the competition a set of cases which raise issues in practical and professional ethics. Each team prepares an analysis of each case. At the competition, a moderator poses questions, based on a case taken from that set, to teams of three to five students. Questions may concern ethical problems on wide ranging topics, such as the educational classroom (e.g., cheating), personal relationships (e.g., dating or friendship), professional ethics (e.g., engineering, law, medicine), or social and political ethics (e.g., free speech, gun control, etc.) A panel of judges may probe the teams for further justifications and evaluates answers. Rating criteria are intelligibility, focus on ethically relevant considerations, avoidance of ethical irrelevance, and deliberative thoughtfulness.

It is worth noting that students who participate in ethics bowl represent a very diverse range of disciplines. The diversity of disciplines represented in fall 2015 was *typical.* Student participants had majors or minors in the following disciplines:

- Majors: Philosophy, English Education and Writing, Music, including Music Education and Performance, Theatre, and Math,
- Minors: Entrepreneurship, Finance, Dance, Biology.

All of the numerous characteristics of performance learning identified by the 2014 Summer Nyberg Seminar can be seen in this course and the connected competition. For example, students receive the materials in advance and work over time to analyze and develop ethical arguments. It is a ***process***. In addition, it is a process that they do not undertake alone. Dr. Hartsock works in collaboration with students as they engage in analysis, reflection, and ethical reasoning. He ***mentors*** and ***models*** even as he is a ***partner*** in ***exploration*** of the cases. Students both "***do the discipline***" and "***do the skill***" as they assume ***responsibility*** for ***creatively*** constructing appropriate ethical arguments. Students not only present their arguments before ***third party stakeholders*** (a panel of judges), but must respond to questions and probing from those judges. It is simply obvious that participation in the IEB possesses all the key features of a paradigmatic performance learning experience.
The most important artifact is the students' performance at the regional competition. That performance is assessed verbally and quantitatively by the three judge panel for each of the three rounds of competition. The rubric assesses students in the following categories:

- Was Team One's presentation clear and systematic? (1-10) _____
- Did the team's presentation clearly identify and thoroughly discuss the central moral dimensions of the case? (1-10) _____
- Did the team's presentation indicate both awareness and thoughtful consideration of different viewpoints, including especially those that would loom

large in the reasoning of individuals who disagree with the team's position? (1-10) _____

Additional points are awarded based on the quality of the team's response to the opposing team's presentation and the quality of the team's responses to judges' questions.

Our students performed exceptionally well during our inaugural competition (Fall 2014). Millikin was one of 4 teams in our region to qualify for the **national** competition. One of our teams finished 4th at the regional competition, and the other team finished in the top 50%. Our students again performed well at the 2015 regional competition, though no team advanced to the nationals.

Other artifacts include a journal documenting the construction and revision of each student's arguments and analysis for each of the fifteen assigned cases and a final, reflective argument paper. This final paper (approximately 3,000) words requires that the students reflect on their performance in a particular match and offer an idealized presentation, where in they analyze the case laying bare the various ethical issues, make an ethical judgment concerning the ethical question asked during the competition, defend that judgment with moral reasons, and anticipate and reply to possible objections.

Example of Performance Learning #3: PH366: Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court

The philosophy program provides philosophy majors as well as Millikin students more generally with the opportunity to participate in a high intensity and high quality performance learning experience: moot court. In order to participate, students must enroll in PH376, Appellate Legal Reasoning – Moot Court. This course is an experiential and collaborative learning experience in which students are taught the essential elements of appellate legal reasoning by an appropriately credentialed faculty member[11] and eventually perform their learning before third party stakeholders (e.g., legal professionals, pre-law faculty advisers, law students, etc.). Dr. Money teaches the course each spring semester.

Each year, students who enroll in this course are afforded the opportunity to participate in a state-wide moot court competition held as part of the Model Illinois Government simulation in Springfield, Illinois. At the competition, students work in two-person teams to deliver, based on their analysis of the closed case file materials, persuasive legal arguments before a panel of justices. Each team has a maximum of 30 minutes to present arguments. While team members can divide up the presentation of arguments

[11] Dr. Money is ideally positioned to deliver this performance learning opportunity, having earned a JD from Emory University Law School as well as a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Iowa.

as they see fit, competition rules require that each team member argue for at least 10 minutes. During the presentation of oral arguments, justices – a combination of legal professionals from central Illinois, law school students, and college students who have had prior experience participating as attorneys in the competition – ask questions, offer rejoinders, and propose hypothetical scenarios in response to the arguments made by student attorneys. Student attorneys must demonstrate listening skills and the ability to think critically on their feet as they work to respond to the justices. After a round of argument concludes, a formal rubric is utilized to assess student performance in five main categories: knowledge of the case, organization and reasoning, courtroom manner, forensic skills, and responding to questions. Teams advance in the competition based on their performance as assessed by the justices utilizing the rubric.

The on-campus classroom component of PH376 relies on a "simulation" model in which we replicate what will happen at the competition, including conducting oral arguments in class. The competition and, hence, the on-campus classroom component, employs the "closed case" method that is used at most moot court competitions. The closed case file is the file that serves as the basis of the Model Illinois Government Moot Court Competition held in early March. The case file includes numerous items: a statement of the facts of the case, the rulings by the lower courts, select court case precedents, relevant federal and/or state statutory provisions, and relevant constitutional provisions. The course and attached competition involve no research that goes beyond the materials provided in the closed case file. On the basis of this material and this material only, students complete a range of assignments designed to engage them in the central aspects of appellate legal reasoning and prepare them for the competition. This course prepares students for the competition by supervising analysis of the closed case file and by providing structured opportunities for students to develop and practice delivering their oral arguments on campus, before going to competition.

Students who participate in moot court draw on while developing further many of the key skills that are emphasized in our philosophy curriculum as well as our wider University Studies curriculum: critical-analytical reading, critical-ethical reasoning, oral communication, and collaborative learning, among others.

It is worth noting that students who participate in moot court represent a very diverse range of disciplines. The diversity of disciplines represented in spring 2015 was *typical*. Student participants had majors or minors in the following disciplines:

- Majors: acting, math, music, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology
- Minors: biology, criminal justice, finance, history, political science, Spanish, and writing

All of the numerous characteristics of performance learning identified by the 2014 Summer Nyberg Seminar can be seen in this course and the connected competition. For example, students receive the materials in advance and work over time to analyze and

develop legal arguments. It is a ***process***. In addition, it is a process that they do not undertake alone. Dr. Money works in collaboration with students as they engage in analysis, reflection, and critical-logical-legal reasoning. He ***mentors*** and ***models*** even as he is a ***partner*** in ***exploration*** of the cases. Students both "***do the discipline***" and "***do the skills***" as they assume ***responsibility*** for ***creatively*** constructing appropriate legal arguments. Students not only present their arguments before ***third party stakeholders*** (a panel of judges consisting of legal professionals in the area, pre-law advisers, law school students, etc.), but students must respond to questions and probing from those judges. Without question, participation in moot court possesses all the key features of a paradigmatic performance learning experience.

The most important "artifacts" produced by students are their oral arguments delivered at competition. These arguments are assessed and evaluated by judges at the competition (external-stakeholders) utilizing a formal rubric. The rubric identifies five main categories for evaluation: knowledge of the case, organization and reasoning, courtroom manner, forensic skills, and responding to questions. Students advance in the competition (and win individual awards) based on their performance as evaluated by the judges (external stakeholders) during the individual argument rounds. In a very real sense, then, successful performance at competition is a validation of student learning. Over the past twelve years, Millikin students have performed ***exceptionally*** well. The team and individual awards speak for themselves:

- Team First Place Finishes (8): 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
- Team Second Place Finishes (6): 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014, **2016**
- Team Third Place Finishes (7): 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015
- Team Fourth Place Finishes (3): 2012, 2013, 2015
- Individual Award for Most Outstanding Attorney (5): 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, **2016** (novice award)
- Individual Award for Runner Up Most Outstanding Attorney (3): 2011, 2012, 2013
- Individual student elected Chief Justice (3): 2005, 2006, 2015

The track record of success by our students – as judged by external evaluators, including legal practitioners and law school students – is clear evidence of the high quality of our program.