Program Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Assessed</th>
<th>B.A. Philosophy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>College of Liberal Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department Chair</td>
<td>Dave Beisecker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Coordinator</td>
<td>Todd Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Submitted</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Contact Person for This Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Todd Jones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>702 885 9263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tjones@unlv.nevada.edu">tjones@unlv.nevada.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please address the following items:

- What are the student learning outcomes? Please provide a numbered list.
- **Plans must include a curriculum map showing which courses will address which learning outcomes.** Examples can be found here: [http://provost.unlv.edu/Assessment/map.html](http://provost.unlv.edu/Assessment/map.html)
- Which learning outcomes will be assessed in each cycle year (i.e., assessment timeline)?
- How will the learning outcomes be assessed? (Programs must use at least one direct assessment of student learning.)
- Undergraduate programs should assess at least one University Undergraduate Learning Outcome (UULO) each year, which may or may not overlap with a program learning outcome.
- Graduate programs should assess at least one outcome related to one of the following graduate level requirements each year:
  - student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.
  - activities requiring originality, critical analysis and expertise.
  - the development of extensive knowledge in the field under study.
- What is your plan for sharing the assessment results and acting on them (i.e., closing the loop)?

Please limit the narrative portion of your report to no more than four pages. You may attach appendices with data, tables, charts, or other materials as needed. Please explain the relevant conclusions from any appendices in your narrative. Please contact the Office of Academic Assessment if you have questions or need assistance.
1. University and philosophy department learning outcomes.

Over the next three years, we will be taking measures (described below) to evaluate both the university and the department learning outcomes. It should be noted that it will be comparatively straightforward for the philosophy department to simultaneously evaluate both general education learning outcomes and our own. Most disciplines evolved out of philosophy -- which was originally the term for general scholarly interest. The subject matters still studied in the discipline of philosophy tend to be ones of highly general scholarly interest. So the goals of general education and philosophy overlap substantially.

In section 2 below is a curriculum map, describing philosophy courses that emphasize the five university general education learning outcomes and ones that emphasize our learning outcomes. The map shows how four of our five line up directly with four of the five university outcomes. Below each category are boxes showing a) courses required by the department that emphasize these specific learning outcomes, b) courses that are not required by the department, but are taught there and have a special emphasis on teaching these learning outcomes, and c) courses that place some degree of emphasis on these outcomes, even if these may not be their central focus. (Note that, while the boxes contain courses that definitely focus on these specific learning objectives, this does not imply that if a course is not listed, it thereby does not give some emphasis to one or another of these objectives. (We cannot list all courses ever taught in the Philosophy Department on this map.))

Here are the Philosophy Department’s student learning outcomes:

*Goal I: To exhibit facility in the theory and practice of argumentation, reasoning, and critical thinking:*

Students shall be able to:

(1) Master the practice of reasoning well, including
   • The ability to construct clear and concise summarizations and assessments of the reasoning in complex passages by
     Extracting their conclusions,
     Distilling the lines of reasoning in support of those conclusions, and
     Evaluating how well such reasoning supports those conclusions.
   • The ability to construct cogent arguments for their own conclusions and to express their reasoning in a coherent and convincing manner.

(2) Demonstrate knowledge of, and competence with, the theory of argumentation and logic through their abilities to:
   • Describe different approaches to logical theory, and to articulate their aims and scope,
   • Define and apply central concepts and techniques of logical theory,
   • Describe major results of logical theory, and
   Sketch how to arrive at those results.
Goal II: To demonstrate an understanding of the classics of Western philosophy from antiquity to the present;

Students shall be able to:
• Identify major works or figures from at least three periods of the history of Western philosophy,
  Articulate and, when appropriate, compare or contrast, the overall philosophical positions taken by these works or figures,
• Summarize the major motivations or arguments for these positions,
• Present objections that have been raised or could be raised to these positions,
• Assess the relative merits of these arguments and objections.

Goal III: To demonstrate knowledge about central problems in major branches of (non-value) contemporary philosophical theory, such as metaphysics, epistemology, and the philosophy of science;

Students shall be able to:
• Identify central issues or debates in at least two core areas of contemporary philosophical theory,
  Articulate and, when appropriate, compare or contrast, different views that might be taken with respect to these issues,
• Summarize major motivations or arguments for these alternative positions,
• Present significant objections that have or could be raised to these positions,
  Assess the relative merits of these arguments and objections.

Goal IV: To demonstrate knowledge about central problems in major branches of value-centered contemporary philosophical theory, such as ethics, political philosophy, and aesthetics.

Students shall be able to:
• Identify central issues or debates in an area of contemporary philosophical value theory,
  Articulate and, when appropriate, compare or contrast, different views that might be taken with respect to these issues,
• Summarize major motivations or arguments for these alternative positions,
• Present significant objections that have or could be raised to these positions,
  Assess the relative merits of these arguments and objections.

Goal V: To demonstrate the ability to present arguments and to discuss philosophical ideas clearly in writing and speaking.

Students shall be able to:
Here are the University’s General Education learning outcomes:

**Intellectual Breadth and Lifelong Learning**

Graduates are able to understand and integrate basic principles of the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, fine arts, and health sciences, and develop skills and a desire for lifelong learning. Specific outcomes for all students include:

- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and skills in at least one major area.
- Identify the fundamental principles of the natural and health sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts.
- Apply the research methods and theoretical models of the natural and health sciences, social sciences, humanities, and fine arts.
- Transfer knowledge and skills gained from general and specialized studies to new settings and complex problems.
- Demonstrate lifelong learning skills, including the ability to place problems in personally meaningful contexts; reflect on one's own understanding; demonstrate awareness of what needs to be learned; articulate a learning plan; and act independently on the plan, using appropriate resources.

Achieve success in one's chosen field or discipline, including applying persistence, motivation, interpersonal communications, leadership, goal setting, and career skills.

**Inquiry and Critical Thinking**

Graduates are able to identify problems, articulate questions, and use various forms of research and reasoning to guide the collection, analysis, and use of information related to those problems. Specific outcomes for all students include:

- Identify problems, articulate questions or hypotheses, and determine the need for information.
- Access and collect the needed information from appropriate primary and secondary sources.
- Use quantitative and qualitative methods, including the ability to recognize assumptions, draw inferences, make deductions, and interpret information to analyze problems in context, and then draw conclusions.
- Recognize the complexity of problems, and identify different perspectives from which problems and questions can be viewed.
- Evaluate and report on conclusions, including discussing the basis for and strength of findings, and identify areas where further inquiry is needed.
Identify, analyze, and evaluate reasoning, and construct and defend reasonable arguments and explanations.

**Communication**
Graduates are able to write and speak effectively to both general and specialized audiences, create effective visuals that support written or spoken communication, and use electronic media common to one's field or profession. Specific outcomes for all students include:
- Demonstrate general academic literacy, including how to respond to the needs of audiences and to different kinds of rhetorical situations, analyze and evaluate reasons and evidence, and construct research-based arguments using Standard Written English.
- Effectively use the common genres and conventions for writing within a particular discipline or profession.
- Prepare and deliver effective oral presentations.
- Collaborate effectively with others to share information, solve problems, or complete tasks.
- Produce effective visuals using different media.
- Apply the up-to-date technologies commonly used to research and communicate within one's field.

**Global/Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness**
Graduates will have developed knowledge of global and multicultural societies, and an awareness of their place in and effect on them. Specific outcomes for all students include:
- Demonstrate knowledge of the history, philosophy, arts, and geography of world cultures.
- Respond to diverse perspectives linked to identity, including age, ability, religion, politics, race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality; both in American and international contexts.
- Apply the concept of social justice.
- Demonstrate familiarity with a non-native language, or experience living in a different culture.
- Function effectively in diverse groups.
Demonstrate awareness of one's own place in and effect on the world.

**Citizenship and Ethics**
Graduates are able to participate knowledgeably and actively in the public life of our communities and make informed, responsible, and ethical decisions in their personal and professional lives. Specific outcomes for all students include:
- Acquire knowledge of political, economic, and social institutions.
- Identify the various rights and obligations that citizens have in their communities.
- Apply various forms of citizenship skills such as media analysis, letter writing, community service, and lobbying.
- Explain the concept of sustainability as it impacts economic, environmental, and social concerns.
- Examine various concepts and theories of ethics, and how to deliberate and assess claims about ethical issues.
Apply ethical concepts and theories to specific ethical dilemmas students will experience in their personal and professional lives.

2. Curriculum map
Below is the curriculum map describing how department courses aim to meet both of these types of learning outcomes.
## University Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Citizenship and Ethics</th>
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## Philosophy Department Learning Outcomes

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<th>Argument Theory</th>
<th>Value Theory</th>
<th>Speaking and writing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fulfills Department Requirements</td>
<td>PHIL 330 – Computers and Culture</td>
<td>PHIL 102 – Reasoning and Critical Thinking</td>
<td>PHIL 311 – Professional Ethics</td>
<td>PHIL 320 – Philosophy of Law</td>
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<td>PHIL 342 – Phenomenology</td>
<td>PHIL 114 – Introduction To Symbolic Logic</td>
<td>PHIL 345 – Health Care Ethics</td>
<td>PHIL 446 – Social and Political Philosophy</td>
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<td>PHIL 356 – Theories of Culture</td>
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<td>PHIL 450 – Ethical Theory</td>
<td>PHIL 452 – Aesthetics</td>
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<td>PHIL 425 – Philosophy of Language</td>
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<td>PHIL 304 – Just War Theory</td>
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<td>PHIL 430 – Philosophy of Science</td>
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### Special Emphasis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All History and Value courses</th>
<th>All Theory And Value courses</th>
<th>All History, Theory, and Value courses</th>
<th>All upper division philosophy courses. Emphasize clear writing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Some Emphasis

| All History and Value courses | All Theory And Value courses | All History, Theory, and Value courses | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------||
3. Assessment over the next three years.

Here is our plan for assessing the university and departmental learning outcomes over the next three years.

Year 1
In the philosophy department, we place a very heavy emphasis on reasoning, critical thinking and arguing skills. We view this as a foundation for all philosophy, just as it is a foundation for all inquiry (and one of the UULO’s).

In 2015 we will be assessing reasoning and critical thinking skills acquired in the department in the following manners:

A. Ian Dove will conduct a pre-test for students in his Advanced Logic class and a post test afterward.
B. In the Milestone Experience classes, we collected sizeable samples of papers of students’ best papers (from any class) written during their previous years at UNLV. At the end of the semester, we collected sizable samples of what students considered their best papers written during that semester. Department members will compare the argument and reasoning styles of the earlier and later written papers.

Year 2
In 2016 we will assess students writing and communication abilities. We will use the “before and after” papers described above to assess student writing skills. We will also examine the quality of writing in the papers that the students submit for the department essay prize to look for particular patterns of strength and weakness.

Year 3
In 2017, we will assess well students have learned history of philosophy. This will also allow us to look at how well our students are familiar with various intellectual forces creating beliefs that still play a role in the involved in the world today. This will help us assess intellectual breadth and lifelong learning. To assess these this we will

a. Look at the student exist surveys for the last several years that include specific questions about intellectual history.

b. Interview the professors teaching the history of philosophy courses, asking them questions about the strengths and weaknesses of students in this area.

During this time, we will also be doing other things to assess departmental areas of strength and weakness (e.g. looking at graduations rates etc.).
4. Sharing results and closing the loop.

The initial results of each assessment will be shared with the entire department at a department meeting prior to the submission of the yearly assessment report. At the meeting, department members will be given a chance to give additional input regarding students’ progress toward meeting the learning outcomes. At that meeting, we will also propose solutions for any problems uncovered. At a subsequent meeting we will vote on which solutions seem most promising, and we will assign responsibility to particular committees and individual faculty members for implementing those suggestions.