This document brings up to date the assessment data that was documented in the Sixth Cycle of the Self Study.

Since that study, the basic structure of the Philosophy M.A. Program has not changed (see below for selection from Section IIa of Appendix D Self Study, which describes this structure). In brief, we still require Phil 715: Seminar on Philosophical Writing, Phil 896: Directed Readings in Philosophy, and Phil 898: Thesis, in addition to eight additional courses (four are philosophy seminars, four are other classes).

Also unchanged are both the assessment strategies as related to the program structure and the student progress toward program objectives as related to program structure (see below selection from sections IIb and c of Appendix D of Self-Study): Faculty teaching Phil 715 still assess student learning individually; formal instruments are still used at the conclusion of Phil 896, and assessment continues with the Culminating Experience (Phil 898: Thesis).

Further, the details of instruction and assessment mechanisms for instructional success for each program objects have remained unchanged since the Sixth Cycle Review (see below selection from section III of Appendix D of Self-Study).
## IV. ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

### Assessment data AY 13-19

The following tables include data about the *three* ways in which assessment takes place: the exam at the conclusion of Phil 896, the written thesis portion of Phil 898, and the oral defense portion of 898.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1: INDIVIDUAL PHIL 896 EXAM RESULTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled for Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **F 13**          | 17        | 15     | 14                    | One NC: took exam and failed (M.L.)  
                   |           |        |                       | One NC: did not sit for exam (R.K.)  
                   |           |        |                       | One W due to family crisis (A.I.)  
| **Sp14**          | 21        | 19     | 18                    | One NC: took exam and failed (A.P.)  
                   |           |        |                       | One NC: did not sit for exam (B.W.)  
                   |           |        |                       | One W due to illness (M.C.)  
| **F 14**          | 15        | 14     | 13                    | One NC: took exam and failed (M.C.)  
                   |           |        |                       | One W for personal reasons (J.W.)  
| **Sp 14**         | 13        | 11     | 11                    | One NC: did not sit for exam (D.G.)  
                   |           |        |                       | One W: due to illness (M.C.)  
| **F 15**          | 22        | 19     | 16                    | Three NC: took exam and failed (J.R., J.W., J.C.)  
                   |           |        |                       | Three W's (did not sit for exam): W.C., D.M., M.J.  
| **Sp 16**         | 13        | 13     | 12                    | One NC: took exam and failed (M.B.)  
| **F 16**          | 14        | 13     | 13                    | One W: V.P.  
| **Sp 17**         | 13        | 13     | 12                    | One NC: took exam and failed (K.T.D.)  
| **F 17**          | 13        | 12     | 11                    | One W: P.T.  
| **Sp 18**         | 12        | 12     | 12                    | All students sat for and passed the exam.  
| **F 18**          | 9         | 8      | 7                     | One NC: did not sit for the exam (D.L.)  
                   |           |        |                       | One NC: failed the exam (M.W.)  
| **Sp 19**         | 9?        | 9      | 9                     | All students sat for and passed the exam.  
| **Total**         | 171       | 147    | 136                   | 92% Pass rate for those who took the 896 Exam during the five AYs Fall 2013 – Spring 2019.  

Sources: Grade Rosters, Department of Philosophy Records

During the period covered in the six years after the Sixth Cycle Review, 136 of 147 students passed the exam, demonstrating mastery of the skills and knowledge stated in program objectives 1, 2, 7 and 8.

Regarding the *eleven* who did not pass in AY 13-19: this was the first try for all of these students, and no student in this period has failed the exam twice. Nine of these students have since passed the exam, after receiving individualized guidance from the Graduate Coordinators.
Of these nine students that have since passed the exam, there were a number of reasons why they did not pass on their first try and what kind of remediation they received:

1. M.L. needed work on his philosophical writing. He was giving advising regarding this, and when he 896 the next semester, Spring 2014, he passed. He has since completed his MA degree.
2. A.P., was undergoing extreme personal problems during the semester she sat for the exam. She was advised to take additional seminars and wait a year before retaking the exam. In Spring 2015, she passed the exam.
3. M.C., had been suffering from various illnesses and, after meeting with the Graduate Coordinator, realized that she also qualifies for DPRC. She was scheduled to take the exam through the DPRC in Spring 2015, but withdrew due to medical reasons. She passed the exam in Spring 2017.
4. J.R., needed additional work on his writing. He was given advising regarding this, and took the exam again in Spring 16 and passed.
5. J.W. experienced an employment crisis shortly before the exam that prevented her from adequately preparing for it. She enrolled in 896 again in Fall 2016, but again had to withdraw due to family medical emergencies. She plans to take the exam again in Fall 2019.
6. W.C. is an English-as-second-language speaker. He took additional courses in order to work on his writing. He sat for the exam again in Spring 2017 and passed.
7. M.B. started his career at SFSU by taking on a full-time job and a commute from L.A., while also taking two graduate courses. Three members of the committee met with him in person and advised him about the following: the pitfalls of overscheduling; the importance of carefully reading the exam questions and responding to entire questions; the utility of taking refresher course on Hume and Kant, preferably a course that goes deeply into the standard issues in these figures. It is currently not known which semester he will re-enroll in the course and take the exam.
8. K.T.D took on a new, demanding job which severely impacted his ability to study properly for this exam and his other seminars. Additionally, he had close to a 4-hour round-trip commute on the days he comes to campus. He has been counseled by about how to better prepare for the exam next semester. He passed the exam in Fall 2018.
9. W.C. is an ESL speaker and writer, and needed more practice and tutoring, which he obtained, and passed the exam in Spring 2017.
10. P.T. withdrew shortly before the exam in Fall 2017; he was experiencing personal issues and not registered at DPRC; he signed up for the class again in Spring 2018, received test accommodations through DPRC, and subsequently passed the course.
11. M.W., who failed the exam in Fall 2018, did not take seriously the need to prepare adequately for the exam. After he failed, the Graduate Coordinator again instilled in him the importance of study, and he took this to heart and into practice the next semester. He has since passed the exam in Spring 2019.

Two students still need to pass the exam in future semesters. Both have received individualized guidance from the Graduate Coordinators: 
--J.W. had enrolled again in Fall 2016, but had to Withdraw due to a family medical emergency. She is considering taking the exam in Fall 19.

--M.B. has not yet registered for the exam, but he has been invited to reapply to the university.

The Graduate Coordinators, Department Chair, and the Graduate Faculty as a whole discuss cases of failure to determine causes. These discussions have been extremely helpful in guiding advisors in being better able to judge, based on the student’s record in our program, when the student has mastered, and therefore is ready to demonstrate, the expected mid-course of study skills.

During this 6-year period since the Sixth Cycle Review, however, no students have failed twice and thus none were dropped from the program because of their inability to pass Phil 896. This marks progress in the six years since the Sixth Cycle Review. In the 12 semesters covered by the Sixth Cycle Self-Study, 174 students took the exam, 23 (13.2 %) did not pass on the first try, and six (3.4%) students failed twice and were dropped from the program. In the twelve semesters since the Sixth Cycle, 11 did not pass on their first try, and 0% failed twice and were dropped from the program. Two still need to take the exam a second time and pass.

The 896 exam is one of three ways in which our student learning outcomes are assessed. This exam is a means of mid-course of study assessment. It enables us to be sure the individual student is well prepared to cut free of seminar-directed research and organize a major study project on her/his own. The collective results provide important data on the effectiveness of our seminar instruction and advising during students’ initial semesters in the program.
The other two assessment instruments are the two parts of the culminating experience: the written thesis and oral defense.

Below are quantitative data on the completion of the culminating experience.

| TABLE 3a: NO. STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THESIS, ORAL DEFENSE, AND GRADUATED (AY 2013-7)* |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|                                | Summer | Fall | Spring | Total |
| AY 2013-14                    | 1     | 13   | 15     | 29    |
| AY 2014-15                    | 1     | 18   | 18     | 37    |
| AY 2015-16                    | 1     | 7    | 22     | 30    |
| AY 2016-17                    | 1     | 6    | 12     | 19    |
| AY 2017-18                    | 2     | 10   | 11     | 23    |
| AY 2018-19                    | 0     | 9    | 9 (anticipated) | 18 |
| Total                         | 6     | 63   | 87     | 156   |

| Six Yr. Average | 1 | 10.5 | 14.5 | 26 |

Sources: Philosophy Department Records and Graduate Studies Graduation Lists

*These numbers are based on the amount of students that successfully defended their thesis each semester. Almost all of the time, the students also graduate that semester, but very occasionally students officially graduate the semester following their thesis completion (due to administrative issues, etc.).

| TABLE 3b: NO. STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THESIS, ORAL DEFENSE, AND GRADUATED (AY 2009-13) |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|                                | Summer | Fall | Spring | Total |
| Averages                       | 0.5   | 5.75 | 13     | 19.25 |

Sources: Sixth Cycle Self-Study, Department of Philosophy

Our new graduation average is 26 students per year, which is up significantly from the average number of students graduated during four years (AYs 09-13) of the Sixth Cycle Review, which was 19.25 students per year.
In Table 3d, we list admissions data going back well beyond this cycle's assessment years in order to let the admissions trends clarify our rates of earned degrees. Though we hesitate to make any predictions, we note that our numbers suggest our MA program should stabilize with around 25-30 new enrollments each AY and 15-20 degrees earned each AY, over the coming years. This remains impressive in light of the extraordinarily high cost-of-living in the Bay Area and the absence of graduate stipends for students in SFSU Master's programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3d: Philosophy MA Program Admissions</th>
<th>Each AY includes both Fall and Spring admissions:</th>
<th>Total MA applications</th>
<th>Total New Students Enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AY 2005-06</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2006-07</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2007-08</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2008-09</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2009-10</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2010-11</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2011-12</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2012-13</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2013-14</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2014-15</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2015-16</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2016-17</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2017-18</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2018-19</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 2019-20 (as of 5/24/19)</td>
<td>27 applicants plus 4 SF Scholars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: SFSU Graduate Division Admissions data.*

As of the time of writing this report (May 30),:

- 3 of the 27 were admitted yesterday (May 29)
- 8 confirmed they will attend
- 4 SF Scholars who will transition to graduate status.

Prompted by the late news regarding the WICHE program, we are advertising our program to a national audience, and we will keep admissions open until mid-August. It is not uncommon for us to pick up five to ten new applicants during that time, the majority of whom are more likely to attend than those who apply earlier in the year.
DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR MA PROGRAM

We have had many changes over the last year, and these build on many others from 2013-2018.

Change in standing on The Philosophical Gourmet

We continue to be recognized as a terminal M.A. program with a strong faculty by the Philosophical Gourmet Report (since 2009). Note that we are the only CSU to crack the top nine. The Report notes:

Among terminal M.A. programs offered by schools that do not grant the Ph.D., the top program in the country (in terms of faculty reputation) is Tufts University. After Tufts, several other terminal MA programs have very strong faculties: Brandeis University; Georgia State University; Northern Illinois University; and University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. Other terminal M.A. programs with strong faculties include University of Houston; San Francisco State University; University of Missouri, St. Louis; and Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University. Other M.A. programs also worth considering for students with the right interests include California State University, Long Beach; California State University, Los Angeles; Colorado State University (esp. for applied ethics); Ohio University; Texas Tech University; and Western Michigan University.

(https://www.philosophicalgourmet.com/m-a-programs-in-philosophy)

CHANGES IN GRADUATE FACULTY

Our MA program suffered a great loss this year with the passing of Anita Silvers, who brilliantly and tirelessly served the Department of Philosophy and San Francisco State University for over 50 years. She established highly successful field projects in bioethics and research ethics. Under her recent 10-year chairship, the Department became one of the most productive and dynamic in the University. It hired highly accomplished faculty and won national recognition for its graduate program and its contributions to the diversification of the profession. She accomplished all of this while maintaining an international stature as a philosopher of bioethics and disability, winning several awards for her scholarship and leadership in philosophy.

A bittersweet change is that Professor Wendy Salkin (PhD Harvard; JD Stanford), who joined us in Fall 2018, will now join the Department of Philosophy at Stanford University. Professor Salkin intends to keep strong ties with our department. While at SF State she reinvigorated and improved a field study program for students on the pre-law track, developing connections and special projects with several Bay Area legal services providers.

Professor Arezoo Islami (PhD Stanford) joined our department in Fall 2018, and is bringing new expertise in philosophy of science and math. She has pioneered a new and highly effective course in the arts and quantitative reasoning. In her second semester at SF State she won an
Extraordinary Ideas Grant from the College of LCA to develop a multi-disciplinary research program on the history of consciousness.

Professor Jeremy Reid (PhD University of Arizona), will join us in Spring 2020, adding expertise in ancient Greek and Roman philosophy to our current strengths in history of philosophy. He has published broadly in this area but has particular strengths in ancient ethics and political philosophy, and does pioneering work on under-appreciated realist strands of political thought in ancient Greek philosophy. He comes to SFSU with an extraordinary record of publication for a new assistant professor.

**CHANGES IN STRUCTURE OF PROGRAM**

**Ethical Artificial Intelligence**

Our MA Philosophy program now offers two courses in the interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate in Ethical Artificial Intelligence. This program made national news in a recent article in the Wall Street Journal: [https://www.wsj.com/articles/university-is-rolling-out-certificate-focused-on-ai-ethics-11558517400?mod=djemAIPro&ns=prod/accounts-wsj](https://www.wsj.com/articles/university-is-rolling-out-certificate-focused-on-ai-ethics-11558517400?mod=djemAIPro&ns=prod/accounts-wsj)

The philosophy component is an essential part of this Certificate, in coordination with the College of Business and the Computer Science department. Our students will benefit from interdisciplinary training on one of the most critical topics in academia, business and government.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an integral technology in many areas (medicine, health, autonomous driving cars, business, loan approvals, law enforcement, distribution of government and health services, news filtering, etc.) and is often considered the driving force of a 4th technological revolution. The impact of AI is expanding rapidly, but due to its complexity it offers challenges to ensuring proper, ethical, unbiased and transparent operations. This is evidenced by increasing reporting on the use and misuse of AI in government and media, and calls for greater scrutiny and oversight. Skills related to ethical use of AI will be more and more important for both developers and users of AI technology. To address these needs, SFSU’s Computer Science Department, College of Business and Philosophy Department established a multi-College Graduate Certificate in Ethical AI. Our approach to this certificate is unique in its multidisciplinary and multi-college nature, which involves three critical areas necessary for understanding this subject.

**SF State Scholar’s Program**

The Department of Philosophy was thrilled to be one of the first five departments to offer the San Francisco State Scholar’s Program.

The San Francisco State Scholars program provides undergraduate students with an accelerated pathway to a graduate degree. Students in this program pursue a bachelor’s and master’s degree simultaneously. This program allows students to earn graduate credit while in their junior and/or senior year, reducing the number of semesters required for completion of a master’s degree. The
San Francisco State University Scholars program offers students additional career prospects, intellectual growth and the opportunity to deepen skills and research competencies. In addition, Scholars program students will receive a unique form of mentorship that is not often expected at a large urban university. ([http://academic.sfsu.edu/content/san-francisco-state-scholars-program](http://academic.sfsu.edu/content/san-francisco-state-scholars-program)).

We had 13 enter the program in Fall 2018 (one, A.P., has been removed from the program); four enter in Spring 2019, and three have applied for Fall 2019. Of the seventeen currently in the program, four will transition to graduate status in Fall 2019.

The Department is working on various ways in which we can help the SF Scholars build more community among themselves and within the departments. Several has been quite active in Philosophy Club, others have served as tutors for Philosophy 303. This Fall 2019 we will hold an additional mentoring session for them as part of our Orientation Day.

**CURRICULAR CHANGES**

**Course in Public Philosophy**

We introduced a new course focused on public philosophy. Students wrote short pieces, such as blog posts, medium-length essays, and letters to the editor. They also organized, participated in, and critiqued panel discussions. The faculty will discuss options for including more public philosophy and outreach in the MA curriculum.

**Course in Quantitative Reasoning**

The Department of Philosophy has started teaching courses on quantitative reasoning at the undergraduate level. These courses provide an opportunity for humanities and art students to learn mathematics in a conceptual and foundational way. It also is unique opportunity for our graduate students to develop and teach a course which lies at the intersection of mathematics, art, and philosophy. In this space our students get to develop their unique take on philosophy of mathematics and mathematical practice.

**Phil 896 Revisions**

The Graduate Faculty of the Department of Philosophy engaged in a year-long discernment process to evaluate and revise the qualifying exam, PHIL 896. This was a much needed process, as the exam had been organized in the same way for at least 30 years (perhaps much longer) and reflected a much outdated understanding of the history of philosophy.

The main changes in the new exam are:

- **Updated Course Readings**: will better facilitate student demonstrations of advanced knowledge of the history and current state of the discipline of philosophy, and offer a sophisticated grasp of representative philosophical issues and ways of dealing with them (insofar as the reading will now more consistently match discipline-standard conceptions of the history and current state of the discipline and ways of treating philosophical issues). (Learning Outcomes 1 and 2)
Formalized Study Groups: will better develop the skills and knowledge necessary to teach philosophy at the community college level (insofar as many distinctly philosophical and teaching-oriented skills such as clear communication, argumentation, dialectic, cooperative learning, etc. are social ones). (Learning Outcome 8)

New Final Exam Format: will better facilitate students demonstrations of mastery of the imaginative development of abstract formulations and their concrete applications at the Ph.D. level (insofar as the discipline-standard measure of such mastery is via untimed, open-book, open-note written assignments). (Learning Outcome 7)

New Assessment Rubric: will better allow students to understand faculty expectations and to help faculty articulate to each other their evaluations of student work.

**CHANGES IN FUNDING**

**Part-Time Tuition Reimbursement**
The department is thrilled to be one of the five departments at SFSU chosen to be part of a pilot program of giving reimbursements to MA students who are serving as Graduate Teaching Associates.

**WICHE program:**
We are thrilled that SFSU is now taking part in the Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP), which enables students in 16 Western states and territories to enroll in participating public graduate programs as nonresidents, yet pay the lower resident tuition rate.

WICHE and its 16 members work collaboratively to expand educational access and excellence for all citizens of the West. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy, WICHE strengthens higher education’s contributions to the region’s social, economic, and civic life.

We received news about SFSU’s new participation in WICHE late in Spring, and are striving to find ways to publicize this so that we generate new applications. Toward this end, we have posted advertisements on Daily Nous for three months in a row.

**Philosophy Graduate Student Tuition Scholarship (since Spring 2015)**
*informally called the Corbenic Scholarship*
We have been proud to offer this scholarship since Spring 2015. It was made possible through a generous endowment donation from a former student in our program. This scholarship assists our students with tuition and fees so that they can concentrate on their philosophical studies. This scholarship awards $2,000 each to four incoming and new philosophy graduate students that have a successful track record and show dedication and potential toward excelling as professional philosophers.

- Fall 2016:
  - Nicholas Eggert (Sp 2019; will attend John’s Hopkins University in Fall 19)
- Jacqueline Alvarez (Sp 2018; teaching at Fresno City College—needs to stay in Fresno for family reasons)
- Kevin Little (withdrew from SFSU due to financial reasons)

Fall 2017:
- Micah Dubreuil (Spring 2019; working for an educational startup; will apply for PhD programs in Fall 19)
- Matthew Maler (Spring 2019; will attend University of Arizona Law School)
- Edwin Wolf (also received the Provost Award; will apply for PhD programs in Fall 2019; will apply to graduate in Spring 2020)
- Michelle Thomas (Spring 2019; will attend University of Western Ontario in Fall 2019)

Fall 2018:
- Yuze Wei; Drew Gallagher; Vanessa Cernac (left the program)

Fall 2019:
- Iman Roohnavazkohahsars; Eric Draper; Aaron Batker; Katherine Dittman

**Jason Louis Zarri Memorial Scholarship (since Spring 2016)**
This scholarship was set up to honor the memory and reflect the philosophical interests of one of our former M.A. students.

- Fall 2016: Jacob Zellmer, was awarded his $1000 disbursement in Fall 2016. He graduated in Spring 2017 and went on for a Philosophy PhD at UC San Diego.
- Fall 2017: Michelle Thomas, received this scholarship for Fall 2017. She is graduating in Spring 2019 and will attend the PhD program at University of Western Ontario.
- Fall 2018: Darius Hockel, who is still completing his MA.
- Fall 2019: Matthew Madruga, who is still completing his MA.

**Silvers 50th Scholarship (since Spring 2019)**
This scholarship, named in honor of our chair, Professor Anita Silvers, will be awarded for the first time in Fall 2019, will support both undergraduate and graduate students, especially those who are immigrants or come from a family of immigrants.

- Fall 2019: Yuze Wei

**Fellowships-- Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Fellowship**
With our professors' support and guidance, our graduate students continue to secure and win highly competitive state fellowships, especially the Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Fellowship. We have had thirteen Casanova recipients over the past seven academic years (2011-2019)

- 2018/9: three awards—two to philosophy MA students, one to a BA student,
- 2017/8: two awards to philosophy MA students,
- 2015/6: one award to a philosophy MA student,
- 2014/5: two awards to philosophy MA students,
- 2013/4: one award to a philosophy MA student,
- 2012/3: two awards to philosophy MA students,
- 2011/12: two awards to philosophy MA students.
CHANGES IN OUR COMMUNITY

Further Assessment
We are now holding monthly meetings of the graduate faculty in which we review departmental decisions with staff, the graduate and undergraduate programs, and do planning about the future of the department. These meetings have allowed us to strengthen our connections with each other and thus to further bolster the department.

This new practice builds on our prior practice of holding bi-annual Graduate Faculty Planning Meetings, where we reviewed each student’s progress in the program. During these meetings, there was an assessment of graduate students just after the time when the comprehensive exam was given and oral defenses of theses are held.

These reports not only enabled us to determine objectively whether each of our students individually has achieved the program’s learning outcomes, but also invited conversations among faculty about general demonstrations of students’ learning. General conclusions about the effectiveness of our instructional program were reached based on assessment reports and on the comments we asked each member of the Graduate Faculty to make, in turn as we went around the room, about means for improving standards in our program.

Recognition Ceremony
The Philosophy Department held its first ever departmental recognition ceremony this spring. The semi-formal ceremony and reception where we recognized 2018/9 graduates and their families were exceptionally successful and well-attended. The afternoon included speeches by an undergraduate, a graduate, and one of our alumni. We plan to make this an annual event.

High School Ethics Bowl Coaching
In the 2013-2014 school year, San Francisco State University's Philosophy Department was proud to begin their participation in the National High School Ethics Bowl (NHSEB) program, sponsored by UNC Chapel Hill. Several of our graduate students in philosophy volunteered their time to coach local high school students in preparation for the regional championship which took place at UC Santa Cruz. In our first year participating, we successfully coached a team into the final round of the regional championship. Over the past few years we have expanded our program to include even more high schools.

In 2015-16 we had one team from Ruth Asawa School of the Arts (SOTA) compete – and do well – in the regional competition. This year our MA student and Ethics Bowl coordinator, Dorian Lok, assisted a team from Philip and Sala Burton High School in an ethics bowl invitational at UC Santa Cruz in May 2017. This invitational was created by UCSC for the purpose of getting more students from under-represented communities into the Ethics Bowl. Dorian is hoping to lead these students into forming a team for the regional competition this upcoming AY.

Our involvement in the Ethics Bowl has caught the attention of our new applicants, many of whom have had prior experience in the group. One difficulty in organizing this group is that student turnover is high due to our two-year program. We are currently working on recruiting
more leaders for this outreach program. Students who engage in leadership in the Ethics Bowl program give short presentations at Fall MA student orientations to recruit new coaches.

Placement
Admission to doctoral programs depends to an important extent on the doctoral admissions committees’ judgment of the applicants’ writing samples. Our MA students who seek admission to doctoral programs have been very successful. Recent degree recipients have been admitted (most with generous financial support) to many philosophy doctoral programs. We find that this placement is one of the best ways of assessing whether our program objectives are being met is through the judgments made by professional peers of our program’s products. We believe that, during the last four years, we have continued to make good progress in improving student learning outcome quality, which is the test of achieving our program objectives, as judged by professional peers.

In an effort to give potential applicants more information about our placement records, we are now posting placement information on our website in a new fashion.

We will now note:

- how many MA students are entering advanced programs;
- the list of philosophy PhD programs they will enter (and, in parentheses, a list of those to which they were admitted);
- the list of law programs (and, in parentheses, a list of those to which they were admitted);
- the list of other advanced degree programs they will enter (and, in parentheses, a list of those to which they were admitted).

Formerly, we only posted the long list of schools to which our students were offered admission.

Thus we have just posted:

Eleven of our recent MA students will begin advanced studies in Fall 2019. Below are the programs where they will study (and in parentheses are listed other programs to which they were accepted).

**Philosophy PhD Programs**
Johns Hopkins University; Syracuse University; UC Davis; UC Irvine; University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign; University of Pennsylvania (2); University of Western Ontario.
(Students were also accepted at: Seattle; University of Kentucky; University of South Florida; University of Washington)

**Law Programs**
University of Arizona Law School (Students were also accepted at: Notre Dame Law School; UC Davis Law School; UC Irvine Law School)

**Other advanced degree programs**
UC Berkeley, Jurisprudence and Social Philosophy
California Institute of Integral Studies—Clinical Psychology
In our Spring 2018 assessment report, we listed those doctoral programs in philosophy in which students had not been previously admitted, and thus which marked new achievements for our students and our program:

California Institute of Integral Studies, Carnegie Mellon University, Monash University, Purdue University, Rutgers University, Stanford University, SUNY Binghamton, Temple University, Texas A&M University, The New School, Tulane University, UC Berkeley, UC Los Angeles, UC Riverside, University of Arizona, University of Cincinnati, University of Memphis, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, University of New South Wales, University of Pennsylvania, University of South Florida, University of Wisconsin—Madison, Yale University.

In Spring 2018, we also noted how acceptances in non-philosophy programs were extended, as students were admitted to:

the J.D. at UC Hastings; a Doctorate in Comparative Religion at the Graduate Theological Union; Marine Biology at Florida Atlantic University; J.D. at McGeorge Law School; the M.S. in Accounting at the University of Southern California; the M.A. in East Asian Studies Program at Stanford University; the DBA (Doctor of Business Administration) at Golden Gate University; and the Program of Clinical Psychology at the Wright Institute; as well as in joint doctoral programs in classics and philosophy at: Bryn Mawr College, Duke University, Rutgers University, University of Chicago, UC Los Angeles, UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, University of Washington, at Seattle.

(Note that these lists are of all program acceptances our students have received, which is more comprehensive than the list of where our students have accepted and are attending.)

In addition, students continue to be admitted to many of the PhD programs that were listed in Sixth-Cycle Self-Study:

Brown University, Boston University, City University of New York (CUNY), Claremont Graduate University, Columbia University, Duke University, Georgetown University, Marquette University, Ohio State University, SUNY Albany, SUNY Stony Brook, UC Davis, UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, UC Santa Cruz, UC San Diego, University of Chicago, University of Colorado (Boulder), University of Illinois at Champagne-Urbana, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts (Amherst), University of Miami, University of Missouri, University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill), University of Texas, University of Utah, University of Virginia, University of Washington, Vanderbilt University, University of British Columbia, (Canada), Western Ontario University (Canada), and Edinburgh University (UK). Doctoral programs in religious studies, theology, and interdisciplinary area studies include University of Chicago, Boston University, Indiana University, Masaryk University (Czech Republic), University of Virginia, University of Washington, Graduate Theological Union, and Rice University. Law schools include Pittsburgh, Lewis and Clark, and William and Mary, as well as many in California. Other recent graduates are studying for doctorates in Sociology at the University of Sydney, Human Development at UC Berkeley, and Clinical Psychology at Palo Alto University (affiliated with Stanford University), and for an MS in Environmental Studies at Kingston University in London.
Revised Webpage

In Spring 2019, we made another overhaul of our website, this time with an eye to how we could better represent the diversity that is so present in our department. One of these changes involves how we better represent the placement of our recent MAs in PhD and JD programs (discussed above).

These revisions built on earlier ones, taken in Summer 2014, when we undertook a project to update the graduate program portion of our website. We updated the webpages and added more helpful and current information. The overall goal was two-fold: to be useful for our current students, and to market/sell our program to potential students through highlighting the strengths of our faculty and the many activities and happenings around the department. As with any website, this is a work-in-progress and we plan to update and improve the site again this coming year.
Changes Noted in Prior Assessments AY 2013-18:

New Staff Position: Graduate Program Administrative/Assistant Coordinator (GPAC)
We hired a new staff member, Dennis Browe (MA SFSU, Sexuality Studies, 2011), was the first staff member to be hired to help administratively coordinate our Graduate Program. He was half-time in Philosophy for AY 14/15 (he was also half-time in Communications); a full-time position in Philosophy was created for him as of Summer 2015 (he has additional duties unrelated to the MA program for the department as well). With this full-time position we are able to provide more comprehensive programmatic and student support, assisting the Graduate Coordinators who are more limited on time.

The GPAC helps clarify and communicate department and university policies to current students; organizes all M.A. program application files; helps students in one-on-one meetings and in small group workshops to fill out their important university forms such as Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) forms and Proposal for Culminating Experience (PCE) forms; coordinates and prepares all paperwork for student travel funding applications; provides administrative support for thesis defenses; and ensures a smooth graduation process for all students defending their thesis in their final semester.

In Fall 2017, Mr. Browe entered the PhD program in Sociology at University of California, Santa Cruz. His departure was bittersweet, but we are thrilled he will develop his career and we will sorely miss his incredible administrative skills! We will be hiring a new GPAC for Fall 2017.

We subsequently hired a new GPAC for Fall 2017, Linda Leonard, who has been with SF State for 17 years, starting her career here as the Graduate Program Administrative Office Coordinator (AOC) in the School of Nursing, followed by 10 years supporting the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Electronic MA Admissions
In Summer 2016, we began construction on a new electronic admissions page. This page brings our program’s admissions process into the twenty-first century by allowing students to submit paperless applications to the Department of Philosophy.

As of Fall 2017, SFSU Graduate Studies switched their application software from CSU Mentor to Cal State Apply. Cal State Apply went live for late Fall 2017 applicants through a special exceptions process, and became fully functional for Spring 2018 applications. Cal State Apply now handles all parts and documents of the graduate admissions process.

Philosophy Graduate Student Handbook
We have expanded an existing document—Philosophy Graduate Student Timeline Packet—that Drs. Sowaal and Landy have modified and updated each year, to create the Philosophy Graduate Student Handbook. This handbook aims to be more user-friendly and contain more comprehensive information about relevant aspects of our graduate program. This is intended to serve as a helpful reference guide for students at all stages of the program.

Hypatia Journal
Professor Shelley Wilcox served as the Book Review Editor for *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* from 2013 to 2017. This allowed for one graduate student to serve as the Editorial Assistant, which, over the four years, gave them paid employment while gaining valuable philosophy publishing experience. The student worked in depth on all book reviews, helping to edit their content, as well as corresponds regularly with numerous professors in the discipline. Altogether three MA students—Julia Loo, Lily Simmons, and Maja Sidzinska—held the Editorial Assistant position. Lily, after graduating, went on to take an editorial intern position at Oxford University Press, was next a full-time Assistant Editor at Springer, and she is now Acquisitions Assistant at University of Pennsylvania Press. This highlights the academic and professional benefits that this *Hypatia* opportunity brought to our graduate students.

**Recruitment Visit from UCLA Professor**

In Fall 2014 and 2015 Professor John Carriero (Professor of Philosophy, UCLA) visited our department for one-day recruitment visits. During this time, he met with students one-on-one and in small groups, and he also held a workshop on applying to PhD programs for all interested undergraduate and graduate majors end. Professor Carriero expressed interest in visiting again in Fall 2016, but was not able to make the visit.
INTRODUCTION: The Graduate Program Objectives

Students who seek our Philosophy M.A. fall into one or more of three broad categories: those who intend the M.A. as a step along the road to admission to a doctoral or professional degree (most go on to the philosophy doctorate or to the J.D., but some have entered doctoral programs in other disciplines); those who intend the M.A. as a terminal degree enabling them to teach lower division philosophy courses in baccalaureate or two-year colleges, or to improve their credentials for other teaching jobs; and those who intend to enhance their abilities in other careers or who study philosophy for their own intellectual enrichment.

Our M.A. program’s nine learning objectives pertain to students in all these three categories, although some are more pertinent to students in one category more than the others. Here is a list of our M.A. program’s learning objectives. All our graduate courses are designed to enable students to meet one or more of these objectives.

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the history and current state of the discipline of philosophy
2. Demonstrate a sophisticated grasp of representative philosophical issues and ways of dealing with them
3. Demonstrate a mature capacity to apply philosophical methods to intellectual problems and to engage in philosophical discussions meeting the standards of the discipline
4. Apply advanced analytic skills
5. Apply advanced interpretive skills
6. Demonstrate mastery of the imaginative development of abstract formulations and their concrete applications
7. Demonstrate mastery of the imaginative development of abstract formulations and their concrete applications Ph.D. level
8. Develop the philosophical skills and knowledge necessary to teach philosophy at the community college (lower-division) level
9. Demonstrate the capacity to study philosophy beyond the undergraduate level for the purposes of self-enrichment or to acquire additional expertise related to their professions

In the report that follows, we first explain in Section I, in both narrative and tabular form, the points in the course of study where we assess whether the student has achieved the various objectives. In Section II, we describe in detail the initial points in the course of study where students are introduced to the skills and knowledge needed to achieve each of the learning objectives, then the mid-course points where they build these out, and then the culminating experiences where they integrate the objectives and demonstrate their mastery. We also present
the rubrics we apply to students’ products at mid-course, and at the culmination points, to assess whether students have achieved the objectives. Section III provides quantitative reports of student learning outcomes. Section IV reports the changes we have made as a result of assessment results.

II. OVERVIEW: PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

II.a. The Basic Structure of the Philosophy M.A. Program

In addition to the graduate seminars and other regular coursework that our students take, there are three required courses that form the backbone of the philosophy department’s MA program and the benchmarks for students’ courses of study. These provide the occasions for the introduction, practice, and final demonstration of mastery of the program’s student learning outcomes:

- Phil 715: Seminar on Philosophical Writing (first semester of graduate work) introduces student learning outcomes and provides a first opportunity to develop and practice the requisite skills.
- Phil 896: Directed Readings in Philosophy (second or third semester of graduate work) is the first point at which outcomes 1, 2, 7, and 8 are assessed. This leads up to a mid-course of study comprehensive exam. The Graduate Coordinators make up and administer the exam, which also is graded by four of the Graduate Faculty (who alternate), with the Chair breaking ties. Thus, each year the entire Graduate faculty participates in making the assessment.
- Phil 898: Culminating Experience, which includes a written thesis and oral defense, is the point at which outcomes 1 through 6 are both assessed twice, and outcome 9 is also assessed.

II.b. Assessment Strategies As Related To The Program Structure

A programmatic assessment approach should, we believe, be cost-effective by providing both guidance for individual student outcome improvement and data for improvement of the program as a whole. We have attempted to develop such an assessment strategy. In our report we describe the instruments we use to effect two-fold assessment results. In doing so, we are able to keep individual students’ learning experiences in courses closely aligned with the overall program objectives.

Students’ mastery of these program objectives is assessed in three ways that all work in concert with one another and have significant overlap.

In Phil 715, the required gateway course, students are introduced to and practice each of the learning outcomes through a program consisting of weekly assignments that familiarize students with professional-level philosophical research, writing, and presentation skills, all of which contribute to the students’ semester-long construction of an extended philosophical interpretation and argument. Here learning outcomes are introduced and assessed individually; summarized assessment is undertaken during our Graduate Faculty planning meetings mainly in the form of
instructors’ reports on and critiques of the effectiveness of the course in achieving its programmatic aims.

The formal instruments used for summarized assessment are the exam at the conclusion of Phil 896, which occurs about mid-way during the student’s course of study and assesses whether students generally are making satisfactory progress, and the rubrics we apply to the thesis portion and the oral defense portion of Phil 898, which assess student learning outcomes as manifested in the two-part Culminating Experience (the written Thesis and the public Oral Defense).

Formal summary assessment occurs first as part of Phil 896, a course in which students practice written presentational skills needed for research and teaching, including the ability to recall and present philosophers’ views and their arguments for those views without recourse to notes or texts. For many years, Phil 896 involved a 3-hour closed-book written exam in which students wrote three essays in response to prompts given by the faculty. The exam now requires a take-home exam instead.

Students are required to organize their knowledge of important core topics in the history and for the contemporary state of the discipline and then apply it skillfully in response to questions. For each student unable to execute this work satisfactorily, we investigate why that individual has failed to meet mid-course benchmarks for achieving programmatic student learning outcomes. Any pattern that emerges calls for revision of our advising, course content, or degree requirement program components.

The 896 exam also serves as a means of ensuring that students ought to proceed to the culminating experience, which is a standard use of comprehensive exams in post-baccalaureate education in philosophy. Therefore, additional bench-mark criteria beyond those drawn from the specified program objectives are applied to determine passing and failing grades on the exam.

Assessment continues with the products of the Culminating Experience, for which graduate students research and write a professional-level philosophical essay and then defend it publicly as one might in discussion at a professional meeting. The Culminating Experience thus includes demonstration of mastery of extended philosophical interpretation and argument made in writing, ability to respond to criticism through several drafts, oral presentation of the material from this essay to the faculty and students who attend their defense, and then response to questions from those attendees on the written work and oral presentation.

II.c. Student Progress Toward Program Objectives As Related To The Program Structure

Following is a table showing where in the program progress of different sorts toward these outcomes is made.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Philosophy MA Program Learning Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Requisite Philosophy Courses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **715** | I, D | I, D | I, D | I, D | I, D | I, D | I, D | I, D | I, D |
| **896** | M | M | | | | | | | |
| **898** (thesis) | M | M | M | M | M | | | M | |

*I = Introduced, D= Developed and Practiced with Feedback, M = Demonstrated at the Mastery Level Appropriate for Graduate Students

*The Learning Outcome referenced here is the mastery of requisite knowledge for teaching the usual Introduction to Philosophy classes and the skill to present the knowledge clearly enough, and without notes, to beginning students. For general teaching skills and strategies, students participate in the Graduate Teaching Associate program.*
III. ONE BY ONE: DETAILS OF INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT MECHANISMS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL SUCCESS, FOR EACH PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

1 Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the history and current state of the discipline of philosophy

Introduction to Outcome

Pre-requisites
Students are expected to have taken undergraduate history of philosophy courses in ancient philosophy and modern philosophy before receiving their B.A. Courses that include current states in ethics and in metaphysics/epistemology (broadly construed) also are pre-requisites. Students who enter conditionally classified because they lack one or more pre-requisites must take these undergraduate courses as early as possible in their courses of study.

Introduction at Graduate Level
Students are first introduced to professional-level philosophical practice, which includes engaging in contemporary philosophical debates via engaging the history of these debates, in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this kind of knowledge:

- Philosophical Research: three possible topics for a philosophical paper, with a list of seven articles, book chapters, etc. relevant to those topics
- Philosophical Research: paragraph-long summaries of the articles, etc. relevant to one of those topics presenting the main thesis and form of argument of each
- Argument Presentation: a reconstruction of the main argument from one of these articles

These assignments require the students to demonstrate the ability to successfully conduct research on the history and current state of the discipline, to accurately report on that research, and to articulate the findings of that research in a form suitable for professional philosophical writing.

Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome
All of the graduate seminars in philosophy provide opportunities for graduate students to elevate and refine their knowledge of the history and current state of the discipline. Modes of assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must demonstrate the ability to conduct independent philosophical research and to clearly and accurately report the results of that research in a form suitable for professional philosophical engagement.

Department Outcomes assessment
The philosophy department tests the students’ acquisition of the knowledge of the history and current state of the discipline in three separate ways: the written exam at the conclusion of Phil 896, the written thesis portion of Phil 898, and the oral defense portion of Phil 898.

- The material on which the students write for the 896 exam are texts selected from the history of philosophy and the current state of the discipline. Students are assessed according to their ability to demonstrate that they understand these canonical and current works and can answer questions about them clearly and accurately. The topics on which
they write are live topics in the current state of the discipline, and so their essays also demonstrate their acquisition of knowledge of such topics. Students must be able to:
  o articulate the theses at issue,
  o present the philosopher’s arguments in favor and against these theses, and
  o compare and contrast different philosophical approaches to these theses.

- The written portion of Phil 898 is a thesis the standard of which is a professional piece of philosophical writing. Because of the nature of professional philosophical writing, to meet this standard, students must
  o demonstrate a sophisticated and comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter at hand including its historical roots and its relation to contemporary work in the field,
  o demonstrate their ability to execute philosophical research,
  o interpret and articulate philosophical theses and arguments, and
  o draw upon their knowledge of these subject matters in constructing a sustained defense of an original thesis.

- The oral defense portion of 898 requires the student to present and defend an original thesis, success in which likewise requires students to demonstrate these kinds of knowledge.

As the assessment procedures for this outcome are the 896 exam (see the Appendix for the new Phil 896 Grading Rubric), and the submission of a written thesis and oral defense of that thesis, the success of our student population in achieving it is demonstrated by the data presented earlier in this section concerning success rates of the exam and the number of students successfully completing the culminating experience. Also relevant are the data on student success in having their writing accepted for presentation and publication and in gaining admittance to PhD programs presented farther on, both of which require the exercise of this skill.

2 Demonstrate a sophisticated grasp of representative philosophical issues and ways of dealing with them

Introduction to Outcome

Pre-requisites
Before receiving their B.A. degrees, students are expected to have taken undergraduate courses that have introduced them to representative philosophical issues, including both historical encounters with these issues—ancient and modern—and contemporary ones—in courses in ethics and metaphysics/epistemology, broadly construed. A course in formal logic, which is an important tool for dealing with philosophical issues, is also a pre-requisite. Students who enter as conditionally classified because they lack one or more pre-requisites must take these undergraduate courses as early as possible in their courses of study.

Introduction at Graduate Level
Students are first introduced to ways of coming to grasp and deal with representative philosophical issues in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this kind of knowledge:

- Philosophical Research: three possible topics for a philosophical paper, with a list of seven articles, book chapters, etc. relevant to those topics
- Philosophical Research: paragraph-long summaries of the articles, etc. relevant to one of those topics presenting the main thesis and form of argument of each
• Argument Presentation: a reconstruction of the main argument from one of these articles
• Objecting to an Argument: an objection to one of the premises or form of the argument reconstructed
• Responding to Objections: three responses on behalf of the philosopher being engaged to the objection raised, with rebuttals of each
• Original Thesis: an original philosophical thesis stemming from the objection raised

These assignments require students to demonstrate their ability to conduct research on representative philosophical issues and to engage with those issues in ways appropriate to professional philosophical practice.

Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome
All of the graduate seminars in philosophy provide opportunities for graduate students to elevate and refine their grasp of representative philosophical issues and ways of dealing with them. Modes of assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must demonstrate the ability to conduct independent philosophical research and to engage the philosophical content of that research by critiquing and assessing it and presenting original philosophical theses in response to these assessments.

Department Outcomes Assessment
The philosophy department tests the students’ sophisticated grasp of representative philosophical issues and ways of dealing with them in three separate ways: the written exam at the conclusion of Phil 896, the written thesis portion of Phil 898, and the oral defense portion of Phil 898.

• In order to pass the written exam at the conclusion of Phil 896 students must
  o demonstrate a sophisticated grasp of the representative philosophical issues from the texts, and
  o in comparing the texts to one another, demonstrate an ability to deal with these issues,
  o be able to clearly articulate the theses at hand,
  o present the reasons for and against each view, and
  o compare and contrast these view with each other.
• The written portion of Phil 898 is a thesis the standard of which is a professional piece of philosophical writing. Because of the nature of professional philosophical writing, to meet this standard students must
  o demonstrate their grasp of representative philosophical issues in presenting the contemporary literature on their topic,
  o demonstrate the ability to deal with these issues by engaging with this literature (presenting objections, considering responses to these objections, replying with rebuttals to these), and
  o present an original thesis of their own.
• The oral defense portion of 898 requires the student to present and defend an original thesis, success in which likewise requires students to demonstrate a sophisticated grasp of representative philosophical issues and an ability to deal with them (in this context, in response to questions from the audience).

As the assessment procedures for this outcome are the 896 exam, and the submission of a written thesis and oral defense of that thesis, the success of our student population in achieving it is demonstrated by the data presented earlier in this section concerning success rates of the exam
and the number of students successfully completing the culminating experience. Also relevant are the data on student success in having their writing accepted for presentation and publication and in gaining admittance to PhD programs presented farther on, both of which require the exercise of this skill.

**3 Demonstrate a mature capacity to apply philosophical methods to intellectual problems and to engage in philosophical discussions meeting the standards of the discipline**

**Pre-requisites**
Students are expected to have taken undergraduate courses in which they are introduced to standard philosophical methods, which include. Some representative philosophical methods meeting the standard of the discipline are argument reconstruction, critique of arguments, responding to critiques of arguments, and generally engaging the reasons in favor or against a given philosophical thesis. These methods are used in both written and oral philosophical engagement. Students who enter conditionally classified because they lack one or more pre-requisites must take these undergraduate courses as early as possible in their courses of study.

**Introduction at Graduate Level**
Students are first introduced to professional-level philosophical methods in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this kind of knowledge:

- Philosophical Research: three possible topics for a philosophical paper, with a list of seven articles, book chapters, etc. relevant to those topics
- Philosophical Research: paragraph-long summaries of the articles, etc. relevant to one of those topics presenting the main thesis and form of argument of each
- Argument Presentation: a reconstruction of the main argument from one of these articles
- Objecting to an Argument: an objection to one of the premises or form of the argument reconstructed
- Responding to Objections: three responses on behalf of the philosopher being engaged to the objection raised, with rebuttals of each
- Original Thesis: an original philosophical thesis stemming from the objection raised.

**Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome**
Students are given the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on their application of these methods during the course of Phil 715 and in the other graduate seminars that they take. Modes of assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must demonstrate the ability to apply these methods to the topics of each seminar.

**Department Outcomes Assessment**
The philosophy department tests the mature capacity to apply philosophical methods to intellectual programs and to engage in philosophical discussions meeting the standards of the discipline in two ways: the written thesis portion of Phil 898 and the oral defense portion of Phil 898.

- The written portion of Phil 898 is a thesis the standard of which is a professional piece of philosophical writing. Students must:
o demonstrate the ability to apply a variety of philosophical methods to in a sustained way to a single topic, including
o presenting research on that topic,
o reconstructing arguments found in that research,
o critiquing these arguments,
o responding to these critiques of arguments, and
o generally engaging the reasons in favor or against a given philosophical thesis critiquing the views of other philosophers working on the topic,

- The oral defense portion of 898 requires the student to present and defend an original thesis, success in which likewise requires students to demonstrate a mature capacity to apply these methods.

As the assessment procedures for this outcome are the submission of a written thesis and oral defense of that thesis, the success of our student population in achieving it is demonstrated by the data presented earlier in this section concerning the number of students successfully completing the culminating experience. Also relevant are the data on student success in having their writing accepted for presentation and publication and in gaining admittance to PhD programs presented farther on, both of which require the exercise of this skill.

4 Apply advanced analytic skills

Introduction to Outcome

Pre-requisites
Before receiving their B.A. degrees, students are expected to have taken undergraduate courses in which they are introduced to the analytic skills employed in philosophers. Courses in the history of philosophy or contemporary issues provide an introduction to some of these skills, and a course in formal logic, which is a particular analytic skill unto itself, is also a pre-requisite. Students who enter conditionally classified because they lack one or more pre-requisites must take these undergraduate courses as early as possible in their courses of study.

Introduction at Graduate Level
Students are first introduced to the application of advanced analytic skills in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this kind of knowledge:

- Philosophical Research: three possible topics for a philosophical paper, with a list of seven articles, book chapters, etc. relevant to those topics
- Philosophical Research: paragraph-long summaries of the articles, etc. relevant to one of those topics presenting the main thesis and form of argument of each
- Argument Presentation: a reconstruction of the main argument from one of these articles
- Objecting to an Argument: an objection to one of the premises or form of the argument reconstructed
- Responding to Objections: three responses on behalf of the philosopher being engaged to the objection raised, with rebuttals of each
- Original Thesis: an original philosophical thesis stemming from the objection raised.
Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome

Students are given the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on their application of these methods during the course of Phil 715 and in the other graduate seminars that they take. Modes of assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must demonstrate the ability to apply these skills to the topics of each seminar.

Department Outcomes Assessment

The philosophy department tests advanced analytic skills in two ways: the written thesis portion of Phil 898 and the oral defense portion of Phil 898.

- The written portion of Phil 898 is a thesis the standard of which is a professional piece of philosophical writing. Because of the nature of professional philosophical writing, to meet this standard, students must demonstrate advanced analytic skills in:
  - the interpretation and presentation of arguments,
  - the formulation of objections,
  - the formulation of responses to these objections and rebuttals to these, and
  - arguing for an original philosophical thesis.

- The oral defense portion of 898 requires the student to present and defend an original thesis, success in which likewise requires students to apply advanced analytic skills. (in this context, in response to questions from the audience).

As the assessment procedures for this outcome are the submission of a written thesis and oral defense of that thesis, the success of our student population in achieving it is demonstrated by the data presented earlier in this section concerning the number of students successfully completing the culminating experience. Also relevant are the data on student success in having their writing accepted for presentation and publication and in gaining admittance to PhD programs presented farther on, both of which require the exercise of this skill.

5 Apply advanced interpretive skills

Introduction to Outcome

Pre-requisites

Before receiving their B.A. degree, students are expected to have taken undergraduate courses in the history of philosophy, ancient and modern, in which they are introduced to the interpretive skills employed in historical scholarship in philosophy. Courses on contemporary issues in ethics and metaphysics/epistemology (broadly construed) are also pre-requisites and introduce the student to the skill of interpreting contemporary work in philosophy. A course in formal logic is also a pre-requisite and introduces students to a valuable tool in philosophical interpretation.

Introduction at Graduate Level

Students are first introduced to professional-level philosophical interpretation in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this skill:

- Philosophical Research: three possible topics for a philosophical paper, with a list of seven articles, book chapters, etc. relevant to those topics
- Philosophical Research: paragraph-long summaries of the articles, etc. relevant to one of those topics presenting the main thesis and form of argument of each
• Argument Presentation: a reconstruction of the main argument from one of these articles
• Responding to Objections: three responses on behalf of the philosopher being engaged to
  the objection raised, with rebuttals of each

Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome
Students are given the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on their application of these
skills during the course of Phil 715 and in the other graduate seminars that they take. Modes of
assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must
demonstrate the ability to apply these skills to the topics of each seminar.

Department Outcomes Assessment
The philosophy department tests advanced interpretive skills in two ways: the written thesis
portion of Phil 898 and the oral defense portion of Phil 898.

• The written portion of Phil 898 is a thesis the standard of which is a professional piece of
  philosophical writing. Because of the nature of professional philosophical writing, to meet
  this standard students must demonstrate advanced interpretive skills in:
    o the research and presentation of the material that must be included and engaged in
      any such paper, and
    o the consideration of objections to this material, and responses to these objections.
• The oral defense portion of 898 requires the student to present and defend an original thesis,
  success in which likewise requires students to apply advanced interpretive skills. Students
  must:
    o situate this thesis for their audience within the broader dialectic to which it is a
      contribution, and
    o interpret philosophical questions from the audience about their thesis and formulate
      responses to these.

As the assessment procedures for this outcome are the submission of a written thesis and oral
defense of that thesis, the success of our student population in achieving it is demonstrated by the
data presented earlier in this section concerning the number of students successfully completing
the culminating experience. Also relevant are the data on student success in having their writing
accepted for presentation and publication and in gaining admittance to PhD programs presented
farther on, both of which require the exercise of this skill.

6 Demonstrate mastery of the imaginative development of abstract formulations and their
concrete applications

Introduction to Outcome

Pre-requisites
Before receiving their B.A. degree, students are expected to have taken undergraduate courses on
contemporary issues in ethics and metaphysics/epistemology (broadly construed) in which they
are introduced to the imaginative development of abstract formulations and their concrete
applications.
Introduction at Graduate Level

Students are first introduced to professional-level philosophical originality in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this skill:

- Objecting to an Argument: an objection to one of the premises or form of the argument reconstructed
- Responding to Objections: three responses on behalf of the philosopher being engaged to the objection raised, with rebuttals of each
- Original Thesis: an original philosophical thesis stemming from the objection raised.

Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome

Students are given the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on their application of these skills during the course of Phil 715 and in the other graduate seminars that they take. Modes of assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must demonstrate the ability to apply these skills to the topics of each seminar.

Department Outcomes Assessment

The philosophy department tests the imaginative development of abstract formulations and their concrete applications in two ways: the written thesis portion of Phil 898 and the oral defense portion of Phil 898.

- The written portion of Phil 898 is a thesis the standard of which is a professional piece of philosophical writing. Because of the nature of professional philosophical writing, to meet this standard students must:
  - present and defend an original thesis,
  - consider consequences and/or applications of this thesis, and
  - consider possible objections to this thesis.
- The oral defense portion of 898 requires the student to present and defend an original thesis, success in which likewise requires students to demonstrate this skill. Students must:
  - respond to questions from the audience with novel philosophical content over and above that presented in their thesis.

As the assessment procedures for this outcome are the submission of a written thesis and oral defense of that thesis, the success of our student population in achieving it is demonstrated by the data presented earlier in this section concerning the number of students successfully completing the culminating experience. Also relevant are the data on student success in having their writing accepted for presentation and publication and in gaining admittance to PhD programs presented farther on, both of which require the exercise of this skill.

7 Develop the philosophical skills and knowledge necessary to do graduate work at the Ph.D. level

Introduction at Graduate Level

Students are first introduced to the philosophical skills necessary to do graduate work at the Ph.D. level in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this kind of knowledge:
Philosophical Research: three possible topics for a philosophical paper, with a list of seven articles, book chapters, etc. relevant to those topics

Philosophical Research: paragraph-long summaries of the articles, etc. relevant to one of those topics presenting the main thesis and form of argument of each

Argument Presentation: a reconstruction of the main argument from one of these articles

Objecting to an Argument: an objection to one of the premises or form of the argument reconstructed

Responding to Objections: three responses on behalf of the philosopher being engaged to the objection raised, with rebuttals of each

Original Thesis: an original philosophical thesis stemming from the objection raised

Incorporating Feedback: second draft of a paper revised in light of instructor’s comments

Oral Presentation: oral presentation of paper to course participants

These assignments require the students to demonstrate the ability to successfully conduct research in philosophy and to exercise the skills necessary for doing graduate work at the Ph.D. level including those involved in philosophical research, writing, and oral presentation.

Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome

Students are given the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on their application of these skills and knowledge during the course of Phil 715 and in the other graduate seminars that they take. Modes of assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must demonstrate the ability to apply these skills to the topics of each seminar.

Department Outcomes Assessment

The philosophy department tests the students’ development of philosophical skills and knowledge necessary to do graduate work at the Ph.D. level using the written exam at the conclusion of Phil 896.

In order to pass this exam students must

- demonstrate the ability to draw on their knowledge of representative philosophical topics from the history of philosophy and current state of the discipline, and
- write articulately about these topics.

By way of measuring our success in achieving this outcome and exceeding the standard set by it, it is worth noting the long list of doctoral programs to which our recent graduates have been accepted (see section 7.5).

8 Develop the philosophical skills and knowledge necessary to teach philosophy at the community college (lower-division) level

Introduction at Graduate Level

Students are first introduced to the philosophical skills and knowledge that are necessary to teach philosophy at the community college (lower-division) level in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this kind of skill and knowledge are:

- Philosophical Research: three possible topics for a philosophical paper, with a list of seven articles, book chapters, etc. relevant to those topics
• Philosophical Research: paragraph-long summaries of the articles, etc. relevant to one of those topics presenting the main thesis and form of argument of each
• Argument Presentation: a reconstruction of the main argument from one of these articles
• Objecting to an Argument: an objection to one of the premises or form of the argument reconstructed
• Responding to Objections: three responses on behalf of the philosopher being engaged to the objection raised, with rebuttals of each
• Oral Presentation: oral presentation of paper to course participants

Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome
Students are given the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on their application of these skills and knowledge during the course of Phil 715 and in the other graduate seminars that they take. Modes of assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must demonstrate the ability to apply these skills to the topics of each seminar. Additionally, we offer two courses on teaching philosophy—Phil 717 and Phil 718—in which students can hone their teaching craft. We also provide opportunities for students to teach for remuneration.

Department Outcomes Assessment
The philosophy department tests the students’ development of philosophical skills and knowledge necessary to teach philosophy at the community college (lower-division) level using the written exam at the conclusion of Phil 896.

• In order to pass this exam students must:
  o demonstrate knowledge of historical and current texts that would be appropriate to teach at the community college (lower-division) level and/or that would inform that teaching,
  o demonstrate the ability to answer questions about these texts that would be expected to arise in teaching at that level,
  o clearly articulate the main theses and positions found in those texts,
  o compare and contrast these theses and positions with one another.

By way of measurement, the below is a list of the schools at which our students have earned teaching positions.

Recent graduates have been hired at CSU, Sacramento (3 recent grads hired), Sacramento City College, San Francisco State University, Santa Barbara City College, Green River Community College (Washington), De Anza College, Madison Technical College (Wisconsin) and Diablo Valley College.

9 Demonstrate the capacity to study philosophy beyond the undergraduate level for the purposes of self-enrichment or to acquire additional expertise related to their professions

Introduction at Graduate Level
Students are first introduced to the capacities that are necessary to study philosophy independently in Phil 715. Among the assignments in that class, the following provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this kind of skill and knowledge are:
• Philosophical Research: three possible topics for a philosophical paper, with a list of seven articles, book chapters, etc. relevant to those topics
• Philosophical Research: paragraph-long summaries of the articles, etc. relevant to one of those topics presenting the main thesis and form of argument of each
• Argument Presentation: a reconstruction of the main argument from one of these articles
• Objecting to an Argument: an objection to one of the premises or form of the argument reconstructed
• Responding to Objections: three responses on behalf of the philosopher being engaged to the objection raised, with rebuttals of each
• Abstracts/Proposals: three abstracts of the paper being constructed of 200, 350, and 500 words
• Oral Presentation: oral presentation of paper to course participants

Elevation, Refinement, and Practice Application of Outcome
Students are given the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on their application of these skills and knowledge during the course of Phil 715 and in the other graduate seminars that they take. Modes of assessment used in graduate seminars are written papers and oral presentations. Students must demonstrate the ability to apply these skills to the topics of each seminar.

Department Outcomes Assessment
The philosophy department tests the students’ capacity to study philosophy beyond the undergraduate level for the purposes of self-enrichment or to acquire additional expertise related to their professions using in two ways: the proposal for culminating experience and the oral defense portion of Phil 898. For the proposal students must:

  o demonstrate their ability to identify interesting and important topics, and pursue them.
For the oral defense students must:

  o demonstrate an ability to conduct philosophical research,
  o formulate an original thesis,
  o and discuss this thesis with the audience.
As the assessment procedures for this outcome are the submission of a proposal for the thesis and the oral defense of that thesis, the success of our student population in achieving it is demonstrated by the data presented earlier in this section concerning the number of students successfully completing the culminating experience.
Appendix

Department Learning Outcomes (for 896) as of Fall 2019

L1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the history and current state of the discipline of philosophy
L2. Demonstrate a sophisticated grasp of representative philosophical issues and ways of dealing with them
L7. Demonstrate mastery of the imaginative development of abstract formulations and their concrete applications at the Ph.D. level
L8. Develop the philosophical skills and knowledge necessary to teach philosophy at the community college (lower-division) level

Assessment rubric

Rating on a scale from 0 to 3:
(0: nonexistent. 1: below expectations. 2: meets expectations. 3: exceeds expectations)

1. Theses ______ Does the author plausibly present what thesis is being argued for and against in each reading? (L1, L2)

2. Argument ______ Does the author plausibly present what the arguments are for those theses in each reading? Does the author plausibly present the supporting arguments from each reading? Does the author plausibly present the objections considered in each reading? (L1, L2, L7)

3. Relations between readings ______ Does the author plausibly present the relations of the readings to each other, including which readings present what arguments against which others, which share conclusions, and which share important assumptions? (L1, L2, L7, L8)

4. Interpretation of text ______ Does the author give a good account of another author’s text that shows the author to be a charitable reader? (L1, L2, L7, L8)

5. Clarity and coherence ______ Is the essay organized in a clear and coherent manner? Is the language precise? Are technical terms defined? Is the essay self-contained? (L1, L2, L7, L8)

Total: ______