

Theology & Religious Studies
Academic Program Long-term Assessment Plan
College of Arts and Sciences
07-01-2011

You are receiving the revised long-term assessment plan template; changes are highlighted below. The purpose of developing a long-term assessment plan is to systematically assess the entire set of program learning outcomes over a period of time so that the results can be used as a foundation for making program-level curricular decisions. All departments now have a plan on file that can serve as the “blueprint” for assessment within an academic program or department. You should or will have also received A-Team recommendations for improving your long-term plans by March 30th; you have until June 10th to upload **revised long-term plans**. Additionally, departments will report yearly assessment findings and curricular impact with an annual update (see separate template).

1. Program Mission Statement:

What is the mission statement for your program? How is it aligned with USD’s mission statement? You can find this at:

<http://www.sandiego.edu/about/missiongoals/mission.php>

THRS has no program mission statement per se. What follows is the department mission statement.

“The Department of Theology & Religious Studies is a diverse community of scholars who advance the teaching and study of religion with particular attention to fostering understanding of Catholic traditions. In support of the educational mission of the University and the furtherance of our own disciplines, we pursue excellence in scholarship. As a faculty that is multidisciplinary in both training and outlook, we bring a spirit of creativity and dialogue to bear on the exploration of religious meaning.

We are dedicated to our role in fulfilling the liberal arts goals of the core curriculum, and equally committed to fostering a vibrant cohort of majors and minors. By providing an intellectually rigorous program, we create opportunities for students to probe religion as a constitutive element of human experience and values, and to acquire skills for engaging diverse dimensions of religion with openness and respect.”

The program in Theology & Religious Studies is closely aligned with the Mission and Core Values Statement of the University in a fourfold manner.

- The study of religion is essential to any college curriculum that represents itself as “expanding academic excellence” and “advancing liberal...knowledge” and the liberal arts.
- The program exemplifies the “probing [of] the Christian message as proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Church” and the promotion of “the intellectual exploration of religious faith” in an academic context.
- The program’s curriculum supports the creation of “a welcoming, inclusive and collaborative community... [for] students, faculty and staff from different backgrounds and faith traditions” through the academic study of “a rich diversity of [religious] ideas.”
- Throughout the department’s curriculum prominence is given to examination of and reflection on the social and ethical ideas of religious traditions, especially “the Catholic moral and social tradition.” Such intellectual examination is a necessary condition for the preparation of “leaders dedicated to ethical conduct and compassionate service.”

2. Program Learning Goals:

- a. List your program learning goals.
- b. How are your program learning goals aligned with the 4 undergraduate learning goals endorsed by the Academic Assembly Nov., 2010? (A list of these can be found at <http://www.sandiego.edu/core/uggoals.php>)

Goal #1. Students will learn the basic terms and definitions of theology and religious studies and be able to explain, analyze, and evaluate fundamental issues that frame theological and religious inquiry.

Goal #2. Students will gain an understanding of methodologies and research techniques standard in theology and religious studies.

Goal #3. Students will acquire effective communication skills in theology and religious studies.

Department program goals (DPG) align with undergraduate learning goals (ULG) as follows:

- DPG #1 with ULG #1
- DPG #2 with ULG #2
- DPG #3 with ULG # 3 and #4

3. Student Learning Outcomes:

- a. List your program learning outcomes.
- b. How are your learning outcomes aligned with the 12 undergraduate learning outcomes endorsed by the Academic Assembly Nov., 2010? Some of your program outcomes may not contribute directly to the general undergraduate outcomes but at least one and probably several will correspond. (A list of these can be found at <http://www.sandiego.edu/core/uggoals.php>)

D.P.L.O. #1 Students will demonstrate a mastery of the categories, technical vocabulary (e.g., terms, definition, concepts, distinctions), well known exempla, historical data, etc. essential to the relevant subject matter by using these accurately and with both depth and nuance.

D.P. L.O. #2 Students will be able to articulate fundamental issues that frame the academic study of religion by constructing well-formed arguments to describe, analyze or explain religious phenomena including texts.

D.P.L.O. #3 Students will be able to communicate effectively in writing that is clear, coherent, well-developed, and expressive of complex thought.

D.P.L.O. #4 Students will exhibit the skills of formal speech necessary to communicate within the discipline.

Department program learning outcomes (DPLO) align with undergraduate learning outcomes (ULO) as follows:

- DPLO #1 with ULO #1
- DPLO #2 with ULO #1, #3, #4, #8, #9, #12
- DPLO #3 with ULO #1, #2, #3, #7, #4, #8, #9, #10, #12
- DPLO #4 with ULO # &

4. **Preparation and Requirements for the Major:** List a brief description of required and recommended coursework. This description should be consistent with what appears in the *UG Bulletin*.

Note: What follows below is the current structure of the major as reflected in the current Bulletin. That structure was completely revised in 2010-2011. Action on the revised structure is currently pending with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Academic Assembly. A copy of that structure will be included in the Annual Update. The final year for THRS 493-494 (W), the locus of current assessment activity, is 2011-2012.

Majors must complete a total of 36 units, including the following courses:

A. Lower-Division Requirements (6 units)

THRS 116: Introduction to Biblical Studies and one other lower division course

B. Upper-Division Requirements (18 units)

1. One course from:

312: Hindu Faith and Practice,
313: Jewish Faith and Practice,
314: Buddhist Faith and Practice,
315: Islamic Faith and Practice,
320: Native American Religious Traditions,
or
321: Afro-Latin Religions

2. Either 341: Christian Worship or 342: Christian Sacramental Practice

3. One course from:

381: The Pentateuch,
382: The Prophetic Tradition of Israel,
383: Matthew and Mark,
384: The Writings of Luke,
385: Pauline Theology,
386: Johannine Theology,
or
399: The World of the Bible

4. Each of the following courses:

360: Jesus in Christian Tradition,
364: The Theology of the Church,
495-496W: Senior Research Seminar

C. Electives (12 units)

5. **Curricular Map:**

- a. Provide a grid or matrix which shows how your program outcomes are distributed across courses within your curriculum (see posted guidelines and samples of completed plans).
- b. Show where outcomes are introduced, developed, and mastered at the course-level.

- c. Check course syllabi to ensure alignment between program-level outcomes on map and listed course outcomes on syllabi. Make sure that your FALL 2011 syllabi reflect this alignment.

There is no current curriculum map for the following reasons. First, the revised DPLOs were adopted in the first half of spring 2011 and the revised structure of the major was completed in the latter half of the spring 2011. There was no reason—other than more pointless and time-consuming busy-work—to address the issue of the curriculum map until the structure of major was completed and approved by the CAS. Second, the curriculum map is a collective document and there was no time to construct, review and approve the map in the academic year just completed. Third, the department anticipates that if the revised core learning outcomes are approved by the University Senate, this will have major implications for the 99% of the department curriculum which primarily addresses the core. In fact, review of the department core curriculum in light of the proposed revised core curriculum learning outcomes is scheduled to be major business in the department in 2011-2012. Fourth, the department still needs to address in light of the department program learning outcomes and proposed core learning outcomes, the horizontal commensurability of various sections within the same course. Given these considerations, construction of a curriculum map was a low priority because it would most probably be otiose soon after it is published given the number of variables currently in play.

6. **Assessment Responsibilities:** These should be distributed across several faculty members, senior and junior level, who rotate responsibilities on a yearly basis. Describe the department's plan for identifying:

- a. Department members that will oversee the assessment process (e.g., dept assessment committee).
- b. Faculty who will collect the data in what classes and in what form (you can use the matrix example in #8 as a guide)
- c. Faculty who will analyze the data each year.
- d. Faculty who will report out to whom findings and implications.

a. THRS Assessment Committee: Drs. Colombo (chair), Doak and Gross in 2010-2011. Dr. Teel will replace Dr. Colombo as chair in 2011-2012.

b. Inasmuch as the current emphasis of assessment is ascertaining what students can do "going out the door," assessment activity has concentrated on the oral presentations and written paper in the required capstone Senior Seminar THRS 493-494 (W). Data is collected by the seminar instructor and the assessment committee.

c. All faculty are eligible to serve in a trio of assessors for each oral presentation and each written paper using the rubrics developed by Dr. Pascuzzi for the seminar.

d. The assessment committee collects and summarizes the findings of the assessment trios and reports the previous academic year's findings to the department in September of the subsequent academic year.

7. **Assessment Activity Matrix:** Describe the department's plan for:

- a. Describing all forms of direct and indirect evidence collected annually (you can use the Activity matrix below as an example).
- b. Identify all methods for evaluating evidence, such as any rubrics or scoring systems used in the evaluation process. You need not attach rubrics to your long-term plan, but rubrics which have been developed in conjunction with your data analysis should be included in your annual update.

- c. Evidence **must** include direct forms of evidence and may include indirect forms (see below).

Note: Implementation of a proseminar for majors, THRS 301 The Religion Café, in Fall 2011 will provide an entry level data point for future assessment of majors.

Direct Evidence	Knowledge (LO1)	Skill1 (LO2)	Skill 2 (LO3)	Skill 3 (LO4)
1. Assessment of THRS 493-494 (W) Oral Presentation (current) or THRS 450W/451W (beginning 2012-2013)	X	X		X
2. Assessment of THRS 493-494 (W) Capstone Paper or THRS 450W or 451W (beginning 2012-2013)	X	X	X	
3. Assessment of THRS 301 Writing Assignments	X	X	X	
Indirect Evidence				
4. Senior Exit Survey	X	X	X	

As noted in 6c, rubrics have been developed and used in scoring both oral presentations and written papers.

8. TIMELINE: Timelines should:

- Construct a three-year cycle in which you have assessed one-third of your outcomes each year for three years. In year 4, you should be repeating the first set of outcomes again. (see example matrix on next page).
- Identify key individuals or groups involved in assessment process.
- Identify time periods for assessing specific program outcomes with identified data samples from specific courses.

Year	Three-Year Cycle Process	Key Persons	LOs 1-4	Courses	Data Outcomes
2011 - 2012	Initiation of process	Asmt Cmte	1, 2	THRS 301 and 493-494W	Identify data
	Collection	Drs. Gillman, Plovanich		THRS 301 and 493-494W	Written assignments; research papers
	Analysis	Faculty in Trios/Asmt Cmte			Results summarized and interpreted
	Reporting to Dept & Dean	Asmt Cmte			
2012 - 2013	Initiation of process	Asmt Cmte	3	THRS 301, 450W, and 451W	Identify data
	Collection	Instructors in THRS 301, 450W, and 451W			Written assignments, research papers
	Analysis	Faculty in			Results summarized and

		Trios/Asmt Cmte			interpreted
	Reporting to Dept and Dean	Asmt Cmte			
2013 - 2014	Initiation of process	Asmt Cmte	4	THRS 301, 450W, and 451W	Identify data
	Collection	Instructors in THRS 301, 450W, and 451W			Written assignments; research papers
	Analysis	Faculty in Trios/Asmt Cmte			Results summarized and interpreted
	Reporting to Dept & Dean	Asmt Cmte			

9. **Annual Assessment Update:** Your annual update is a separate report from the long-term assessment plan described here. The long-term plan serves as a blueprint for your department through one full assessment cycle. The annual assessment update template is available as a separate assignment on webct.
10. **Due date:** Revised long-term assessment plans are due from each department on Friday, June 10, 2011.