

May 1, 2012

### **Dean's Response to the Program Review of the Philosophy Program**

I appreciate the thought and effort that went into the Program Review Team's report, and into the Philosophy faculty's self-study and response to the report.

The Review Team found the Program to be an excellent academic unit, with particular strengths in teaching, assessment of student learning, connections with external communities, and a vibrant culture of learning. The Team's report identified as well areas of concern for the Program,

The report recommended that the Mission statement be modified to explicitly mention the training in exposition and in oral communication provided by the Program. In their response, the faculty agreed to make this modification.

Noting that enrollments have risen over time, and that sometimes not enough upper-division courses are offered to meet student demand, the report recommends (with the faculty's concurrence) that another tenure-track position in the Program be authorized. I appreciate that demand has grown for Philosophy General Education courses, but would point out that the proposed hire would represent a new position, at a time when several departments in the College are still "short" a faculty member in the wake of recent budget cuts. Resources to allow consideration of possible hires, including the one proposed in the Team's report, would need to come from future retirement savings, or possible future increases to the College's salary budget, or some combination of both. A proposed hire would have to be weighed and prioritized relative to others in the light of need and available resources.

In commending the Program on strong academic advising, the Review Team wondered whether formal (as opposed to anecdotal) assessment is in order. The faculty response notes that the faculty will discuss this issue. I would suggest that the faculty could consult with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness regarding an effective, but not burdensome, means of assessing advising.

At the end of their response, the faculty affirm their plan over the long-term to emphasize the growth of the Program and gaining approval of a new position, further improvement of assessment, their commitment to extracurricular activity, and their scholarly agendas.

I believe that the Review Team report correctly identified and stressed the considerable strengths of the Philosophy Program, and made some useful suggestions, and that the Program's response to their report has been appropriate.

Francis B. Harrold

Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences