

October 4, 2017

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

I appreciate the work of the program review evaluation team (Dr. Michael Popich and Dr. Michael Wutz) in producing their report, and of the Philosophy Program in compiling their self-study, and preparing a response to the review team's report.

The review team's report was overall a highly positive one. In their assessment of a number of evaluation standards, they had praise for the program's performance, and no recommendations for improvement. These areas include academic advising, program support, relations with external communities, and most notably, student learning outcomes and assessment. I concur with the report's assessment of strong performance by the Philosophy faculty in these areas.

In regard to the program's mission statement, the report suggested that the faculty review this document with a view toward more explicitly connect with the University's mission statement. The faculty will comply with this suggestion.

The review team found the Philosophy curriculum to be a "solid typical undergraduate philosophy curriculum," with a distinctive use of the distinction between "knowledge of" and "knowledge how" that links directly with learning outcomes and assessment. They also find the Philosophy faculty to be dedicated and well-qualified, and successfully active in teaching, scholarship, and service.

The review team's report concludes with two recommendations. The first is the hire of a fourth Philosophy faculty member. They conclude that such a hire would remedy the only shortcomings they find in the areas of curriculum and faculty: a fourth faculty member with expertise complimentary to that of the current faculty could strengthen the curriculum by enriching and diversifying it beyond what the current three-person faculty can offer. The program response very much agrees with this recommendation, and I support it as well. I will support the hire of a fourth faculty member.

The team's second recommendation is that the program explore offering team-taught interdisciplinary courses that would expose more students to Philosophy and perhaps attract more Philosophy majors and minors. The program response expresses interest in this possibility, and remarks on its timeliness in connection with the development of WSU-prefix courses and the revision of General Education at WSU. Both the review team and the program response note that following this suggestion would be more feasible with the addition of a fourth faculty member.

I find the review team's recommendations, and the program's responses to them, appropriate. The Philosophy program at WSU is a strong and cohesive one, and I am pleased at the very positive assessment of the review team.