**Program Assessment Plan**

**American University**

**Academic Program: CAS: Philosophy - BA**

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**Contact Person for Assessment:** Amy Oliver  
**Unit Website Address:** http://www.american.edu/cas/philrel/index.cfm  
**Unit's Primary Department:** Philosophy/Religion  
**Are there any changes in your assessment method?:** Yes

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**Learning Outcome: General Philosophical Literacy**

Students should demonstrate that they are able to successfully navigate the historical and disciplinary branches of philosophy and different philosophical approaches, showing knowledge of the breadth and depth of the discipline, including:

1. demonstrate how to locate a particular topic within its relevant larger philosophical context.
2. use conceptual frameworks including epistemological, metaphysical, ethical, and other philosophical specializations.
3. explain this history or genealogy of ideas and concepts.

**Outcome Year:** 2009-2010  
2010-2011  
2011-2012  
2012-2013

**Start Date:** 04/03/2009  
**Outcome Status:** Active Learning Outcome

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**Assessment Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Method</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Schedule/Cycle</th>
<th>Active</th>
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<td>Written evaluations by department faculty and graduate students of the capstone seminar projects. Capstone professor, undergraduate adviser, and department chair review, then report extensive comments to capstone students and a summary to department faculty. We will also compare the results of transfer students to those of students schooled exclusively at AU.</td>
<td>100% of students will improve their projects.</td>
<td>Every two years.</td>
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**Learning Outcome: Argumentation Skills**

Students should display acuity and expertise in logical reasoning and philosophical analysis, including:

1. recognize different forms of argumentation.
2. identify the presupposed or unacknowledged premises.
3. critique arguments.
4. construct sound and persuasive arguments.
5. recognize and use different kinds of support in shaping arguments in different philosophical areas.

**Outcome Year:** 2009-2010  
2010-2011  
2011-2012  
2012-2013

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### Learning Outcome: Research Skills

Students should demonstrate their ability to effectively navigate both the library and on-line research tools, including:

1. demonstrate ability to use standard reference works (e.g. Encyclopedias and Dictionaries of Philosophy).
2. use online databases (e.g. Philosopher's Index, JSTOR, Project Muse, etc.).
3. locate and evaluate relevant scholarly books and articles.
4. distinguish between primary and secondary sources.

**Outcome Year:**
- 2009-2010
- 2010-2011
- 2011-2012
- 2012-2013

**Start Date:** 04/03/2009

**Outcome Status:** Active Learning Outcome

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Learning Outcome: Communication Skills

Students should display their ability to communicate complex arguments and concepts effectively, both orally and in writing, including:

1. present arguments in a clear and straightforward manner.
2. clearly identify and communicate the central ideas.
3. listen and respond to questions carefully and thoughtfully.

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2010-2011
2011-2012
2012-2013

Start Date: 04/03/2009

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