

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Mission

The Department of Philosophy critically analyzes the basic questions confronting human individuals and societies (such as the nature of knowledge, reality and human value, the nature of religious experience, and the proper goals for individuals and societies). It also stresses critical and creative thinking, and helps students develop these skills by insisting on detailed argumentation and careful consideration of alternative points of view throughout the curriculum.

Vision

The Department of Philosophy will:

- Continue to be recognized by students and peers for excellence in research, teaching, and service. We will expand on past efforts by striving to add new faculty positions, allowing for both greater *diversity* in courses offered and programs supported, and to free faculty from overly heavy teaching loads in order to encourage and enable further research and service efforts;
- Explore the prospects of creating a Ph.D. program on the Stillwater campus, with an emphasis on *Professional Ethics* (Biomedical ethics, Environmental Ethics, Business Ethics, etc.), and develop a Masters Program in Tulsa, including cooperation with cross-cutting programs such as Environmental Studies, American Studies, and various programs concerned with Medical training, Social Science, and Business;
- Support and improve the quality of our Undergraduate Programs in Stillwater and Tulsa, and strengthen our Masters Program. We will do this by trying to add additional faculty on both campuses, providing a wider diversity of courses and strengthening the professional training of our majors and graduate students;
- Continue to support critical and creative thinking about issues of individual and social concern in the classroom, in research and professional publications, and in campus, community, and national forums. We will expand on past efforts by increasing the number and diversifying the topics covered in public forums, conferences and other events sponsored by the Ethics Center, by striving to add *additional faculty* specializing in *Professional Ethics* (Biomedical Ethics, Environmental Ethics, Business Ethics, etc.), and by developing new courses in these areas;
- Continue to support the larger mission of the university through interdisciplinary team-teaching, Honors teaching, providing upper-level General Education courses and supporting our Undergraduate Majors—on both the Stillwater and Tulsa campuses, housing and organizing the Ethics Center, sponsoring the Friends of the Forms series of campus lectures and discussions, and actively participating in college and university committees.

Core Values

Diversity - We respect others and value diversity of opinions, freedom of expression, and other ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Integrity - We are committed to the principles of truth and honesty, and we will be equitable, ethical and professional.

Service - We believe that serving others is a noble and worthy endeavor.

Intellectual Freedom - We believe in ethical and scholarly questioning in an environment that respects the rights of all to freely pursue knowledge.

Stewardship of Resources - We are dedicated to the efficient and effective use of resources. We accept the responsibility of the public's trust and are accountable for our actions.

Excellence in Teaching, Research and Service - We believe our major responsibility is to strive for excellence in all of our endeavors, as listed in the above Visions and Values, and in the Goals listed below.

Goals, Critical Success Factors, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1: Maintain and improve excellence, diversity, and intellectual freedom in our teaching at undergraduate and graduate levels.

Critical Success Factors:

- All courses evaluate arguments, present diverse points of view, and train students to critically assess controversial issues of individual and public concern
- All faculty actively support the goals of Excellence, Diversity and Intellectual Freedom in the classroom and in all professional activities
- All majors and graduate students develop an appreciation for the goals of Excellence, Diversity and Intellectual Freedom
- All students, from whatever discipline, develop an appreciation for the goals of Excellence, Diversity and Intellectual Freedom through their experiences in Philosophy classes
- Outstanding teachers are recognized for their contributions
- Outstanding graduate students are recruited
- Undergraduate program is strengthened

Objectives:

Objective 1.1: Seek additional faculty with expertise in Professional Ethics (Environmental Ethics, Biomedical Ethics, Business Ethics, etc.) on both Stillwater and Tulsa Campuses.

Strategies:

- Complete and submit Five-Year Plan for OSU-Tulsa activities, including request to staff.
- Discuss needs for additional faculty member(s) on Stillwater Campus with Dean's Office.
- Actively encourage applications from under-represented groups when recruiting new faculty.

Objective 1.2: Further diversify offerings on Stillwater and Tulsa campuses, especially in Professional Ethics and courses supporting cross-cutting programs (Environmental Studies, American Studies, Medical Training, Social Sciences, Business, etc.).

Strategies:

- Complete and submit Five-Year Plan for OSU-Tulsa activities, including outline of course offerings.
- Further diversify course offerings on both campuses by using additional faculty members to allow for additional specialized courses.

- Make additional connections with other programs (Medical Training programs, American Studies, Business education, Environmental Studies) on both campuses, to plan additional cross-cutting classes.

Objective 1.3: Support Honors teaching, Interdisciplinary teaching, and participation in cross-cutting programs.

Strategies:

- Continue to cooperate with Honors Program in terms of additional Honors sections.
- Continue to participate in core Honors offerings, including Interdisciplinary Honors courses.
- Make additional connections with other programs (Medical Training programs, American Studies, Business education, Environmental Studies) on both campuses, to plan additional cross-cutting classes.

Objective 1.4: Establish a Ph.D. Program in Professional Ethics on the Stillwater Campus, and a Masters Program on the Tulsa Campus.

Strategies:

- Seek additional faculty on both campuses, for at least 12 total tenure-track positions.
- Develop a Masters Degree for OSU-Tulsa, emphasizing professional ethics, appealing primarily to non-traditional students from American Studies, Business, Health Care professions, the Ministry, and the Arts.
- Develop a Ph.D. Program for the Stillwater campus, Emphasizing professional ethics.
- Use additional faculty to enhance the diversity of offerings on both campuses.
- Use Outreach activities (described below) as recruitment vehicle for both programs.
- Use outreach activities (described below) to help provide Internships for Ph.D. students in Health Facilities, Business facilities, Seminaries, Museums, etc.

Objective 1.5: Strengthen the Graduate Program, particularly in terms of professional development.

Strategies:

- Establish yearly meeting with graduate students as a group, to discuss the program, preparation for comprehensive exams, etc.
- Establish exit interviews and questionnaires for all graduate students upon graduation, soliciting information concerning strengths and weaknesses of the program.
- Meet every semester with each student separately to monitor progress, ascertain strengths and weaknesses of program, advise in terms of professional placement, etc.
- Use informal Internships established through outreach activities (described below) to help train and, when appropriate, place grad students into professional positions.
- Better inform students of important deadlines, conferences, class schedules, etc. by keeping the WEB site current on these issues.

- Encourage graduate students to meet informally on a monthly basis to discuss relevant issues among themselves, invite appropriate faculty for consultation, etc., provide space for them to meet.
- Encourage participation in student and professional conferences, etc. Seek funds to help with graduate student travel to such conferences.

Objective 1.6: Establish a local Chapter of Phi Sigma Tau, the National Philosophy Honors Society.

Strategies:

- Contact National Chapter of *Phi Sigma Tau*.
- Contact University officials about a new student organization.
- Encourage student participation, and help coordinate better student-student, and student-faculty communication by regular meetings, joint discussions, etc.

Objective 1.7: Establish 'Ethics Bowl' Teams among undergraduate students to publicly and formally debate controversial ethical issues, and to participate in national competitions.

Strategies:

- Seek funds to provide room and board and travel for the winning teams to participate in national competition.
- Use additional faculty to free up time for a faculty mentor to train and supervise teams.

Objective 1.8: Acknowledge Faculty who provide outstanding service in the classroom.

Strategies:

- Specifically recognize outstanding teaching and course development on yearly faculty A&Ds.
- Nominate outstanding teachers for college and university teaching awards.
- Publicize recognition of teaching excellence by announcing awards, course-development, etc. on the department WEB page.

Objective 1.9: Constantly strive to improve classroom teaching performance, at all levels.

Strategies:

- Establish mentors among faculty already recognized for teaching excellence for faculty with below-average teaching evaluations, etc.
- Establish faculty mentors for all TAs, and provide a full year of training for all TAs before they teach their own sections.

Goal 2: Maintain and improve excellence, diversity, and intellectual freedom in our Research.

Critical Success Factors:

- Improve the quality and quantity of professional presentations and publications
- Faculty conduct research in a wide variety of areas within the field, as well as from a wide variety of perspectives, ensuring appreciation of and furtherance of *diversity of opinion* and *intellectual freedom*
- Recognition by students and peers for contributing to the broader intellectual environment of the campus, the community, and the profession
- Interdisciplinary research, with application for cross-cutting programs (Environmental Studies, American Studies, Biomedical Ethics, etc.)

Objectives:

Objective 2.1: Seek additional faculty with expertise in Professional Ethics (Environmental Ethics, Biomedical Ethics, Business Ethics, etc.) on both the Stillwater and Tulsa campuses.

Strategies:

- Submit 5-year plan to OSU-Tulsa, including request for additional faculty.
- Discuss need for additional faculty on Stillwater campus with Dean's Office.
- Use additional faculty to both strengthen programs and offerings and to reduce average teaching load to 3:2 to promote additional research efforts.

Objective 2.2: Seek research and service grants more aggressively.

Strategies:

- Use additional faculty numbers to allow key faculty in Professional Ethics to actively seek grants and write proposals.
- Have all faculty meet with Dean's Research Staff to discuss whether their areas of expertise may fit various grant proposal needs.
- Have all faculty meet with Dean's Research Staff to help find proposals in cognate and cross-cutting programs that may include their areas of expertise.

Objective 2.3: Negotiate reduced teaching loads to encourage and enhance faculty research production.

Strategies:

- Discuss existing SCHs and research productivity with Dean's Office, indicate need for reduction in excessive teaching loads for enhanced research productivity.
- Identify specific faculty with exceptional research potential for occasional special reductions in teaching load to complete specific projects.

Objective 2.4: Seek opportunities for interdisciplinary research more aggressively.

Strategies:

- Encourage faculty to make connections with faculty from other departments and colleges with cognate interests.
- Have all faculty meet with the Dean's Research Staff to help identify faculty from other departments and colleges with cognate interests.
- Encourage interdisciplinary research endeavors, and recognize these as important contributions in yearly faculty A&Ds.

Objective 2.5: Encourage faculty participation in regional, national and international professional organizations.

Strategies:

- Seek additional travel funds to help faculty attend regional, national, and international professional meetings.
- Encourage faculty to be active in such organizations, and recognize such activities in yearly faculty A&Ds.

Objective 2.6: Promote campus and community recognition of faculty research efforts.

Strategies:

- Nominate outstanding faculty researchers for College and University research awards.
- Use outreach activities (described below) to enhance campus and public recognition of the importance of philosophical research.
- Publicize faculty participation in outreach activities, and the winning of research awards on the department WEB page.

Objective 2.7: Achieve and maintain higher levels of research productivity across the department.

Strategies:

- Strive to keep the *average* number and quality of faculty publications and presentations at the same level as required for promotion and tenure (i.e., keep *all* faculty productive at these levels, or higher).

Goal 3: Maintain and improve excellence, diversity, and intellectual freedom in our outreach and service activities.

Critical Success Factors:

- Improve the quantity and quality of conferences and other activities sponsored by the *Ethics Center*
- Engage in team-and interdisciplinary teaching, especially in support of the Honors Program and cross-cutting programs (Environmental Studies, American studies, etc.)
- Improve and expand the venues for on-campus discussions of topics of individual and public concern and professional ethics
- Improve and expand the venues for off-campus discussions of topics of individual and public concern and professional ethics
- Active faculty involvement in regional and national professional organizations, and professional and community service organizations
- Active faculty participation in college, university and community service (committee-work, volunteer work, etc.).

Objectives:

Objective 3.1: Seek additional faculty on both the Stillwater and Tulsa campuses with expertise in Professional Ethics (Biomedical Ethics, Environmental Ethics, Business ethics, etc.), in order to better staff existing outreach activities, and increase the number of these activities.

Strategies:

- Negotiate additional faculty on both OSU-Tulsa and Stillwater campuses in areas supporting professional ethics.
- Use additional faculty to both help plan and supervise conferences, public lectures and roundtable discussions, etc. on crucial ethical issues.
- Use additional faculty to reduce excessive teaching loads for all faculty, allowing more time to be devoted to these outreach activities.
- Negotiate reduced teaching loads, encouraging and enabling greater faculty service output.

Objective 3.2: Seek service grants more aggressively, expanding and supplementing the efforts of the Ethics Center to provide forums for critical discussions of topics of individual and public concern.

Strategies:

- Establish ties with medical, business, and other professional communities, seeking cooperation and financial help for the above activities.
- Use these professional ties to better seek out and apply for service grants to enhance the above and other community service activities.

- Have all faculty with expertise in professional ethics meet with the Dean's Research Office to help identify such service grants.

Objective 3.3: Increase the number and diversity of topics covered in outreach activities; including Ethics Center sponsored conferences on professional ethics, roundtable discussions on issues of individual and public concern, public lectures by local and national philosophers on such issues, public Ethics Bowl debates, and more discussions on campus concerning ethical concerns in each field.

Strategies:

- Seek additional faculty in professional ethics to both help with these activities, and to help reduce teaching loads for other faculty to participate.
- Seek funding from appropriate areas on campus to help finance these activities.
- Seek funding from Medical facilities, Business, Community and other Professional groups to help finance these activities.
- Seek appropriate grants to help finance these activities.
- Establish contacts with relevant professional, community and campus groups to help plan the topics and frameworks for such activities.

Objective 3.4: Encourage faculty involvement in regional and national professional organizations, professional and community service organizations, and individual professional and community activities.

Strategies:

- Seek funding to help enable faculty travel to regional and national professional meetings.
- Acknowledge professional and community activities on yearly faculty A&Ds.
- Publicize such participation by announcing faculty participation, awards, etc on the department WEB site.

Objective 3.5: Encourage faculty and student participation in college, university and community service (committee work, volunteer work, etc.).

Strategies:

- Encourage student participation in relevant university committees, using existing and proposed student organizations and the department WEB site.
- Encourage faculty participation in relevant college and university committees, and acknowledge such activity in yearly faculty A&Ds.
- Establish contacts with community organizations, and publicize meetings, needs, etc. on department WEB site.

Goal 4: Develop framework and resources for Faculty and Staff development.

Critical Success Factors:

- Establish regular venues for enhancing faculty development
- Establish regular venues for enhancing staff development

Objectives:

Objective 4.1: Improve faculty participation in professional organizations, and provide a better monitoring system for achieving professional goals.

Strategies:

- Seek additional funding for faculty travel and participation in professional meetings.
- Establish a mentoring program, with a senior faculty member meeting with junior faculty each semester to monitor the latter's progress and provide advice.
- Use the yearly faculty A&D as another opportunity to monitor and provide advice for the progress of *all* faculty.

Objective 4.2: Provide a better monitoring system for staff members achieving professional goals.

Strategies:

- Establish a mentoring program, where a senior staff member meets regularly with junior staff members to monitor the latter's progress and provide advice.
- Establish a framework for the department head to meet regularly with the senior staff member to address issues of concern, and to attempt to improve staff development.
- Staff provided with opportunity to attend classes as necessary to increase their skills through the Human Resources office, including the Leadership Development Program.
- Staff encouraged to attend A&S staff meetings and various procedural update meetings as they are offered.