

**Tenure and Promotion Statement:
Expectations Regarding Teaching, Research, and Service
Philosophy Department
2016**

The Philosophy Department strives to develop students who appreciate and demonstrate rigorous thinking as a way of life. Given the diversity of careers our majors and minors pursue, we feel that it is incumbent upon the Department to prepare students to address not only the practical concerns of life, but also more conceptual concerns. In order to address the practical, our students develop critical reasoning skills, careful listening skills, and the ability to defend well-considered beliefs. Alongside these abilities, students are also required to engage in the consideration of questions that are unique to human flourishing—What is the nature of truth? What is the nature of justice? What, in the end, is it to lead “a good life”?

In order to equip students with the above noted skills, members of the Philosophy Department recognize the importance of teaching and advising, but also active role-modeling. Each member of the Department views “doing philosophy” as more than “just a job.” Philosophy is a way of life for our faculty. It is marked by the teaching we do, the advising we provide, and the fact that we remain philosophers outside the classroom as well.

In light of the above, we have three major components of student development within the discipline: First, studies in the history of philosophy (ancient, modern, analytic, and existentialism/phenomenology); secondly, studies in the method of philosophy (logic and critical reasoning); and finally, studies in courses devoted to specific areas within philosophy (for example, philosophy of law, philosophy of religion, decision theory, ethical theory, philosophy

of mind, philosophy of art). We also require that our majors complete a seminar in philosophy. Additionally, for those majors who intend to do graduate work in philosophy, we strongly recommend the Senior Thesis. Throughout each of these courses, teaching is given priority. This is especially important since most of our students have had no prior exposure to philosophy, our course content is often quite abstract in nature, and our commitment to the use of primary texts. In order to determine the success of the department's instructional objectives, we focus on both course design and course delivery:

Course Design—what is the course content? What role does it play in the development of the student within the department? What role does it play in the context of a liberal arts college? Basic evaluation of this component comes from the faculty member's pre-tenure statement, tenure statement, or post-tenure statement as well as the department chair's report. Input for these documents will include, but not be limited to:

- i. Review of the syllabus
- ii. Familiarity with "best practices" within the discipline of Philosophy
- iii. Collaborative efforts among departmental members

Course Delivery—how well does the course satisfy the objectives of the course and the larger objectives of the department? Evaluation of this component will come from the faculty member's statement and the department chair's report. Input will include, but not be limited to:

- i. Review of syllabus
- ii. IDEA quantitative data and student comments
- iii. Classroom observations by department chair, others within the department, and the Division Chair
- iv. Conversations with current students
- v. Questionnaires and conversations with former students

In addition to teaching, the Department also places a high value on research. We firmly believe that successful teaching goes hand-in-hand with a productive research program. Whether research takes the form of peer-reviewed presentations, publications, or active participation in research seminars, the point of remaining professionally active is twofold: (1) to remain

current within our respective areas of specialization, and (2) to model the life of an active scholar outside the walls of our classroom and beyond the boundaries of our campus.

Given the seriousness with which we take our research agenda, we expect probationary faculty in the department to submit, at minimum, copies of the following evidence of their research:

EITHER:

Three distinct philosophical papers (as opposed to papers on teaching philosophy) published by nationally or internationally recognized peer-reviewed journals or presented at national or international peer-reviewed forums (such as the annual meetings of the American Philosophical Association).

OR:

One paper published by a leading philosophy journal. We define the term “leading philosophy journal” for 6-year periods. Currently, the list consists of:

The Philosophical Review

The Journal of Philosophy

Mind

OR:

One scholarly book in philosophy published by a recognized peer-reviewed publisher.

Though the Philosophy Department is relatively small in terms of the number of majors and minors, we continue to grow. The number of our majors continues to increase slowly, while the number of minors has seen a rapid increase. Additionally, we are committed to the College's general studies courses (FYI courses, Honors Courses, Learning Communities). We recognize that with this growth and commitment come additional responsibilities, especially in light of the changing nature of our incoming students. In order to build the "philosophical community" among all of our students, we have recently renewed our commitment to the Socratic Society. This "Philosophy Club" reaches all students (not only our majors and minors) with an interest in philosophy. This is an example of only one of the initiatives we have undertaken to enhance our dedication as a Department to the serious business of teaching both inside and outside of the classroom.

Given the College-wide emphasis on Service, we expect our faculty members (both probationary and tenured) to be active participants on several College committees and advisory groups. We also encourage members of the Department to participate in the broader Quad City Community.

The teaching that we do, the research we conduct, and the renewed activities of our Socratic Society enable all members of the Department to skillfully engage in the important task of advising our students. At a foundational level, we have developed a coherent, integrated program of study that provides committed students with a solid basis for graduate studies in Philosophy. More broadly speaking, the nature of our major has launched many of our majors and minors into successful studies in medical school, law school, seminary, and other graduate

or professional programs. We determine the success of our advising at both the foundational level and at the more interdisciplinary level by a number of measures including, but not limited to:

- i. Admission rates into graduate school in philosophy
- ii. Admission rates into other graduate and professional programs
- iii. Frequent communication with our graduates during graduate school (and when possible, throughout the development of their professional lives) regarding the effectiveness of our undergraduate program of study.