General Education Annual Course Assessment Form

Course Number/Title: PHIL 009       GE Area: B4

Results reported for AY: 2015-2016     # of sections 1     # of instructors: 1

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Department Chair: Janet Stemwedel          College: Humanities and the Arts

Part 1

To be completed by the course coordinator:

(1) What GELO(s) were assessed for the course during the AY?

In the AY 15-16 the philosophy department sought to assess progress on GELO 2: Mathematical concepts courses should prepare the student to demonstrate the ability to use mathematics to solve real life problems.

(2) What were the results of the assessment of this course? What were the lessons learned from the assessment?

To assess this GELO the instructor handed out exercises followed by a quiz in which students were asked to use techniques involving logical and quantitative reasoning to solve a problem concerning the question: what is the better deal? The exercise has to do with teaching students to use logic and mathematics to figure out what pricing option is a better deal for them when making a purchase. For example, students might want to buy the new iPhone 7. Apple offers two ways to buy the phone. First, a person can buy the phone by monthly payments and a phone plan or buy the phone outright without a plan. The question is how can one use mathematics to figure out what deal is better for them economically. Is it better to buy outright and then shop for a plan or is it better to pay monthly with a pre-given plan. An example of one of the exercises is attached. After the exercise, the instructor met with members of the department to discuss outcomes.

Assessment consisted of a series of exercises, followed by a short quiz. After the exercises, success at selecting the economically best option rose from about 50% to 75% in the subsequent quiz. This seems to show that the students were able to master the relevant material quickly and effectively. Nonetheless, overall success at 75% is less than hoped. Going forward we may wish to alter either the difficulty or the pacing of the material. That is, we might spend more time going over exercises in order to ensure that students have more time to grapple with the material.

(3) What modifications to the course, or its assessment activities or schedule, are planned for the upcoming year? (If no modifications are planned, the course coordinator should indicate this.)

Overall, we are satisfied with the assessment activities, and think that they adequately measure the students' ability to make use of mathematical concepts in real-world situations. However, as above, it is thought that slowing the pace of this part of the course might increase student achievement. In addition, we thought that generalizing to other real-world situations, like assessing mortgages, securing financing on car purchases, or assessing various health-plan options they might receive from a future job would better assess their abilities to make use of logical and quantitative reasoning.

Part 2

To be completed by the department chair (with input from course coordinator as appropriate):

(4) Are all sections of the course still aligned with the area Goals, Student Learning Objectives (GELOs), Content, Support, and Assessment? If they are not, what actions are planned?

All sections of Philosophy 9 are aligned with the GELOs and SLOs. Janet Stemwedel: Chair.
If this course is in a GE Area with a stated enrollment limit (Areas A1, A2, A3, C2, D1, R, S, V, & Z), please indicate how oral presentations will be evaluated with larger sections (Area A1), or how practice and revisions in writing will be addressed with larger sections, particularly how students are receiving thorough feedback on the writing which accounts for the minimum word count in this GE category (Areas A2, A3, C2, D1, R, S, V, & Z) and, for the writing intensive courses (A2, A3, and Z), documentation that the students are meeting the GE GELOs for writing.

This course does not fall into any of these categories, and the enrollment is generally not high.

**Economic Rationality and Logic (SAMPLE EXERCISE)**

1. On the basis of the success of the iPhone line, Apple has risen to be the most profitable company in the world. And indeed, the new iPhone 7 is highly anticipated, and likely to be a highly desirable consumer good. However, when buying a new phone, there are a range of prices and plans available. The challenge for us logicians is to figure out which is economically best – that is, which costs us the least?

   Assess the following options to see which is most cost effective:

   A) Buy the phone outright at $649.99, and purchase a service plan for $45 per month for 24 months.

   B) Buy the phone with a plan, at $22 per month plus an additional $45 per month service, over 30 months.

2. Does your answer change if you already own a service plan at $50 for service per month?