student needs to engage. The faculty embraced this idea, and these three questions continue to form the heart of our general education program. The

University Goal 1: Millikin students will prepare for professional success.
University Goal 2: Millikin students will actively engage in the responsibilities of citizenship in their communities.
University Goal 3: Millikin students will discover and develop a personal life of meaning and value.

Philosophy Department Learning Goal	Corresponding Millikin University Learning Goal Number(s)
1. Students will be able to express in oral and written form their understanding of major concepts and intellectual traditions within the field of philosophy.	1, 2, 3
2. Students will demonstrate their ability to utilize the principles of critical thinking and formal logic in order to produce a sound and valid argument, or to evaluate the soundness and validity of the arguments of others.	1, 2, 3
3. Students will demonstrate their ability to complete research on a philosophy-related topic, analyze objectively the results of their research, and present arguments to support their point of view in a variety of venues, including an individually directed senior capstone thesis in philosophy.	1, 2, 3

philosophical study reveals itself to be inherently practical. The skill sets it develops and the issues it engages facilitate professional success, democratic citizenship and the development of a personal life of value and meaning. It seems to us that the daily *practice* of delivering on the promise of education should be the goal of every department and program at Millikin University. This, we do.

Given our emphasis on skill set development, it is no accident that philosophical study is excellent preparation for law school. Accordingly, our Department has

-

school. It is extremely important to emphasize that gaining admission to law

school is not a function of gaining substantive content knowledge as an undergraduate. This is vividly illustrated by pointing out the fact that the undergraduate major with the *highest acceptance rate* to ABA approved law schools is physics. Law schools require no specific undergraduate curriculum, no specific undergraduate major, and no specific undergraduate plan of study for admission. Law schools select students on the basis of evidence that they can

recent study by the American Bar Association shows that, after physics, the major with the highest acceptance rate to law school is PHILOSOPHY.

While our primary emphasis is on content neutral skill set development, we do not want to short-change the substantive content of philosophical writings. We develop the above mentioned skill sets by reading and discussing topics and issues central to the human condition. For example:

> Who am I? How can I know? What should I do? The Millikin core questions are essentially philosophical questions!
> Does God exist? If God exists, how is that fact consistent with the existence of evil in the world?
> Do human beings possess free will? Or is human behavior and action causally determined?

> Major. According to the American Bar Association, after physics, the major with the highest percentage of acceptance into ABA approved law schools is philosophy. We have developed a track within our Philosophy Major to provide students with the courses that emphasize the skills and the knowledge content that will make it both likely that they will get into law school and that they will succeed both there and later as lawyers. (49)

While some of our majors go on to pursue graduate study in philosophy and eventually teach, most of our majors go on to pursue other careers and educational objectives. Accordingly, the successful student graduating from the philosophy major might be preparing for a career as a natural scientist, a behavioral scientist, an attorney, a theologian, a physician, an educator, or a writer, or might go into some field more generally related to the humanities or the liberal arts. Whatever the case, he or she will be well prepared as a result of the habits of mind acquired in the process of completing the Philosophy Major.
-graduate information of recently graduated majors.)

There are no guidelines provided by the American Philosophical Association for undergraduate study.

(2) Snapshot. Provide a brief overview of your current situation.

variety of courses either as political science courses (e.g., Constitutional Law, Civil Liberties) or as cross-listed courses (e.g., Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Law). All of these are 300-level courses. He serves students who need to meet the Historical Studies requirement by offering both Modern Philosophy and Contemporary Philosophy on a regular basis, listed at both the 200 and the 300 levels. He sometimes serves IN 250 students through the Philosophy of Law course. He serves pre-law students as Director of the Pre-Law Program, and as faculty advisor to the Moot Court Team.

The Philosophy Department currently has 23 majors and 4 minors. The Department sponsors the Theo-Socratic Society.

Along with Interdepartmental courses such as University Seminar; Critical Writing, Reading, and Research II; and Honors Seminars, Philosophy Department faculty teach over 12 different courses from 100- through 400-level.

In terms of new initiatives and improvements, the Philosophy Department has just finished aligning its curricular program with the teaching interests and abilities of the philosophy faculty. The Department does not plan any further changes in this regard. Dr. Money has recently taken over as Director of Pre-Law and Advisor to Moot Court, and is also helping to deliver aspects of the Political Science curriculum. Most semesters, Dr. Money will offer one course as either a political science offering, or as a cross-list between philosophy and political science.

The Philosophy Department rotates or modifies the content of its upper-level seminars on an ongoing basis. The Department also makes some modifications in its normal courses, rotating content in and out. Doing so allows philosophy faculty to keep courses fresh and exciting for the students, and helps to keep faculty interest and enthusiasm high. For example, Dr. Money had taught the PH 381 seminar as a course on Nietzsche, as a seminar on personal identity, and as a course on the intelligent design-evolution controversy. Similarly, Dr. Jacobs has taught the same course as a seminar on philosophy and literature, the aesthetics and ethics of class, and the politics and aesthetics of food. The title of

Department.

A number of changes have occurred in the philosophy curriculum in recent years. All courses taught by Dr. Money received a new description in order 90.024 28F

that students take 3 of 5. The old additional course requirement is now designated as another elective within the major

decision to help the Political Science Department in the delivery of its curriculum has had some impact on the number of courses the Philosophy Department can offer for philosophy majors. To compensate, Dr. Money has been teaching more immersion and summer courses. As the Political Science Department regains strength, Dr. Money will lessen his contribution to their curriculum.

(3) The Learning Story. Explain the typical learning experience provided through your major. How do students learn or encounter experiences leading to fulfilling your learning outcome goals?

It is important to emphasize that we do not require that our majors complete the Philosophy Major by following a formal and rigid sequential curricular structural plan. While there are required courses within the major, these courses (with one exception) need not be taken in a specific sequential order. Given the context within which the Philosophy Department operates, the demand for that kind of

importantly, given the nature of philosophical activity and philosophical teaching, the demand for a structural plan is *inappropriate*. What this shows is that assessment efforts cannot demand a

autonomy, as well as the practical realiti
Assessment of philosophy may be a worthy goal, but it must be assessment of *philosophy*. Respect for disciplinary autonomy comes first and assessment tools must be constructed that respect that autonomy. The following makes clear why

Philosophy Major is both impractical and inappropriate.

A structural plan in philosophy is impractical. Students rarely come to Millikin as a declared philosophy majors, since few have even heard of this discipline in high school. Students switch to or add philosophy as a major, often during their second or even third year at Millikin, because they recognize the quality of the teaching provided by our faculty, the way philosophical study develops the skill sets essential to any quality educational experience, and because of the power of the questions philosophy forces students to ask and wrestle with, questions that form the heart of a life of meaning and value

[1]

[1] During the 2005-2006 academic year, one senior student declared a major in philosophy *during his senior year*! He had to take courses in the summer in order to complete the major. It is wildly implausible to suppose that he could complete the major by following some structural plan of study. Yet, the fact remains

our major, we cannot insist on a rigid formal sequential curricular pathway for our majors. While we might prefer our majors start with PH110 (Basic), then move on to PH213 (Logic), then complete the history sequence in order (PH300, 301, 302, 303 and/or 304), then take PH381 (seminar), and finally end with PH400 (senior thesis), this preference is completely unrealistic. The only situation in which we could realistically expect its implementation would be with those very few incoming freshmen students who declare philosophy as a major during summer orientation and registration. Even with these students, however, we would be limited by the small size of our Department
commitment to making substantial contributions to other portions of the university curriculum (e.g., university studies/MPSL program, the honors program, etc.). In light of these realities on the ground, we simply could not guarantee that the needed courses would be offered with the degree of regularity that would make it possible to implement a rigid formal sequential

for us to implement.

Fortunately, implementation of a curricular structural plan is also unnecessary. It is unnecessary for the very same reasons that allow us to cross-list our courses between the 200 and 300 levels. Many of our courses involve a mix of students, both majors and non-majors as well as students registered at the 200 and the

Similarly, Dr. Money employs written assignments as the primary basis for

philosophy professors, engagement with fellow students, reflection and digestion of ideas, and presentation of the stude
overall learning experience in the Philosophy Major, then, is one of intellectual engagement (with a great deal of one-on-one engagement outside of class as well), in which students are challenged to think critically about core beliefs and assumptions, and are expected to be able to present critical and creative ideas regarding those core beliefs and assumptions in oral and, especially, written form.

The Philosophy Major requires 30 credits to complete.

The Philosophy Major includes four required courses (12 credits):

> Philosophy 110, Basic Philosophy. This course gives students an initial glance at both the kinds of texts they will encounter and the kind of teaching style that informs and characterizes the Philosophy Major.

In addition, the Department offers a range of electives, many under the umbrella

Second, students complete a substantial written essay (generally, between 25-30 pages). This essay is the basis for their course grade. We assess the quality of

Appendix Three) in conjunction with our own intuitive judgments regarding the quality of the writing, the difficulty of the subject matter, etc. (Learning Goals 1 and 2).

Finally, each student makes a formal presentation of their senior thesis to philosophy majors and faculty members. We assess the quality of the oral

ning Goal 1).

The senior thesis, therefore, provides us with an opportunity to assess student learning in relation to all three of our learning goals. It is, therefore, the artifact that we will collect and analyze.

(6) Analysis of Assessment Results

general guideline for grading. (The rubric is included as Appendix Three to this report.) In general, if a student earns an A or B on the senior thesis, this will be
nt learning. If a

assessment. Finally, if a student earns a D or an F, this will be taken to indicate a
Finally, any additional information deemed

Electronic copies of all senior theses will be obtained and stored by the Chair of the Philosophy Department. In addition, electronic copies of all senior theses will be posted on the
our website!

The data for philosophy seniors graduating during the 2006-2007 academic year is provided below.

Student: Student #1
Thesis Title: "And Justice For All: A Philosophical Examination of Vengeance"
Grade: A
Color-Code: Green Light

Student #1 exhibits excellent writing skills. Her writing is polished, clear, and coherently organized. Her analysis of the issues surrounding capital punishment and the role of vengeance (retribution) as a justification for it is multifaceted and sophisticated. While Student #1 is personally vehemently opposed to capital punishment, she is able to provide a balanced open-minded treatment of the topic in her essay. She thereby embodies the mark of an educated mind

substantive questions regarding yo
she engaged the au55004490 04C005100e6(re)-3(t)4(ribut)(hy)-3(w D o)5(rlla)-5(ti0059004C00440

gradation of ethical practices. His aim was to then discuss how various ethical theories would respond to these new ethical situations. However, he was never

not do this consistently. The theoretical foundation for his discussion of the ethics of hacking was not well research or well founded. He had the beginnings of an interesting thesis, but this was not his best work.

Student: Student #3
Thesis Title: "If It Ain't Broke Don't Fix It. If it is Broke...: Calvinism, Open Theism, and the Usefulness of Insufficient Theology"
Grade: A
Color-Code: Green Light

essay possesses all the hallmarks of outstanding honors-level work: analytically precise, clear, logically organized, grammatically written, reflective, and interesting. I believe his essay is representative of graduate level philosophical writing and analysis. The quality of his essay is no accident. He read innumerable sources over his junior year and over the summer in between junior and senior year. He constructed a rigorous schedule for the writing of various components of the paper and stuck to that schedule. He submitted a multitude of drafts for my review and critical feedback, each followed by conversations (whether in person or over email). He sought out feedback from other professors. Thus, what we have is the product of a sustained intellectual commitment over time i.e., the very goal of the JMS project.

essay represents the sort of sustained reflection that we want to encourage from our JMS students. He was attracted to this topic for personal reasons, i.e., trying to figure out what he believed about this particular very personal topic. He has worked hard to understand the various theories and issues raised in his essay and has, I believe, modified his own position in light of his sustained reflection on the topic. As he will tell you, he has had many discussions with his parents, his minister, and fellow students about his topic. He has reached a tentative position and he has reached it on the basis of careful reflective consideration of the alternatives, their strengths and weaknesses, their logical implications, etc. Is this not what we want an educated person to do?

Finally, Student #3's essay wa

Color-Code: Green

thesis considered the question of environmental ethics. She effectively argued for a non-anthropocentric ethic using a mixture of contemporary ethical text as well as classical European and Asian theories. Her thesis was well organized and integrated the wide variety of text into a coherent whole. This is the mark of very sophisticated philosophical abilities, since it is difficult to see how various arguments speak to each other as a whole. In addition thesis reflected her other major, political science, in considering an issue that has political as well as ethical implications. She Basic Philosophical Problems course and students responded to her knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject. Knowing a subject well enough to teach goes beyond the knowledge on the page.

Student: Student #5

Color-Code: Green, Green

Student: Student #4
Total Score on Rubric: 50.5, 47
Color-Code: Green, Green

Student: Student #5
Total Score on Rubric: 46, 48
Color-Code: Green, Green

Student: Student #6
Total Score on Rubric: 49, 52.5
Color-Code: Green, Green

C. Post-Graduation Placement (If Known)

Our report will indicate the post-graduation placement of our graduating seniors, if known. This information is also posted on our website and is updated as new information becomes available. Appendix One to this report contains our placement record since 2000. The following data is available at this time for 2006-2007 graduates:

Student: Colleen Cunningham

State Coordinator for Missourians to Abolish the Death Penalty. For the first time in its history, this not for profit organization obtained funding to hire a full-time paid state-wide coordinator. Colleen was the person hired.

Student: Mark Fredricksen

Unknown.

Student: Kyle Fritz

Kyle has been accepted to two graduate schools, but is still awaiting acceptance of a position with the JET program to teach English in Japan.

Student: Colette Gortowski

Colette will be teaching at the Wuhan Yucai Primary School in China.

Student: Nichole Johnson

Nichole will attend

(7) Improvement Plans

The Philosophy Department is pleased with the results in our first year of formal assessment. All six of our six graduating seniors (100%) were assessed in the their senior thesis. Five of the six (83%) were , with two of those five earning external recognition from the honors program for the quality of their work.
category, we are confident that this result reflects on the degree of effort put into the thesis by the student, and does not in any way reflect negatively on the philosophy program itself.

Given these results and the fact that this is our first year of data collection for formal assessment purposes, we do not anticipate making any changes in our program. On the contrary, we are extremely pleased with the performance of our students and we continue to believe that our program facilitates the intellectual growth and development of the critical thinking skills that are essential to

students is compelling evidence in support of this claim.

While the results from our data collection will not lead us to make changes in our program, the Department over the past several years has produced verifiable changes in

of the philosophy faculty, the group of graduating seniors represented from top to bottom the strongest group of philosophy graduates since the Department has been in its current configuration (i.e., since 1999). Among the group of six graduating seniors, we had one Presidential Scholar, four James Millikin Scholars, three students with over a 3.9 cumulative GPA (four over a 3.7 cumulative GPA, and five over a 3.4 cumulative GPA), two Scovill Award winners, one JMS project of the year winner, and one runner up for JMS project of the year. On top of this, five of the six completed an additional major. These are only some of the many academic honors bestowed upon this group of philosophy majors. This is a testament to the ability of the philosophy faculty and the philosophy curriculum to attract students who represent the very brightest Millikin has to offer. In the context of assessment, however, it gives us pause. While our own experience reveals that our program consistently attracts
academically gifted students, we do not believe it is realistic to expect that all future groups of philosophy graduates will represent this degree of academic strength and abilities. We expect future assessment data to represent these

	the explanations utilized.	
	In addition to there being no flaws in the reasoning presented, it is also clear that the most effective arguments are being made. The arguments being presented are compelling.	
	The analysis elicits substantive questions regarding your interpretation.	

B
should meet the following criteria of assessment:

Presentation Goal 1	Few grammatical errors or misspellings.	
	Overall, sentence structure is appropriately complex, incorrect sentence structures occur rarely.	
	Vocabulary is used correctly. Overall, work reflects a college level use of words and understanding of their meanings. Occasional incorrect use of vocabulary.	
Clarity Goal 1	Overall, each sentence expresses an idea.	
	Overall, each paragraph forms a coherent whole. Level of coherence is varied. Paragraphs may include some unrelated sentences.	

C: In light of Department learning goals, a senior thesis earning should meet the following criteria of assessment:

Presentation Goal 1	Some grammatical errors or misspellings. Occasionally sentence structure is appropriately complex.	

	long or too short.	
	The logic used in the analysis is rarely clear.	
	Structure and organization of the introduction and the analysis do not reflect logic and coherence, they are simply strung together.	

Quality Goals 1, 2, 3

APPENDIX FOUR: RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Presentation Context: _____

Evaluator: _____

Rating Scale:
5 = sophisticated communication skills
4 = advanced communication skills
3 = competent communication skills
2 = marginal communication skills
1 = profound lack of communication skills

I. Formal Presentation

5 4 3 2 1	1. Uses notes effectively.
5 4 3 2 1	2. Shows an ability to handle stage fright.
5 4 3 2 1	3. Communicates a clear central idea or thesis.
5 4 3 2 1	4. Communicates a clear and coherent organizational pattern (e.g., main supporting points are clearly connected to the central thesis).
5 4 3 2 1	5. Exhibits reasonable directness and competence in delivery (e.g., voice is clear and intelligible, body is poised, eye contact with audience, etc.).
5 4 3 2 1	6. Avoids delivery mannerisms that detract from the
5 4 3 2 1	7. Meets time constraints.
5 4 3 2 1	8. Overall Evaluation

WRITTEN COMMENTS: