

Assessment Reports Electronic Template*

Rosemont College --Undergraduate

Form updated: 3/10/09

I. General information:

Date of Report: 5/12/09
Semesters or Academic Years Covered: Fall 2008- Spring 2009
Division: Humanities
Department: Religious Studies
Chair or Person Preparing the Report: Tobie Tondi, SHCJ

II. Departmental Profile:

Number of Majors: 3
Number of Faculty: 2 *full time*
 0 *part time*

Courses Offered in the Assessment Period:

Fall: Introduction to the Old Testament
Religious Violence and Peace Making
Dialogue Among Religions
Introduction to Catholic Thought
Dynamics of the Church
Women and Religion
Foundations of Religious Belief

Spring: Contemporary Religious Issues
Dynamics of World Religions
The Meaning of Christ
Senior Research Seminar
Religious Questions of the Holocaust
Foundations of Religious Belief

Factors that Affect Assessment: No extraordinary factors existed that affected the assessment process.

III. Assessment results

A. Learning Outcomes for Majors

Two major tasks existed for this academic year: the revision of learning outcomes since the last time we had drafted them and the beginnings of gathering of data during this academic year.

Progress was made in each of the learning outcomes for the three Religious Studies majors who will graduate in May, 2009.

Text in italics describes accomplishments for this academic year.

GOAL 1: Religious Studies majors will be trained to write effective papers that apply aspects of theological inquiry to questions concerning world issues, national concerns or personal spirituality

Objective 1.1: students will be able to demonstrate proficiency in research and writing in the field of religious studies by producing theological papers suitable for the undergraduate level.

Each RST major contributed papers to a personal academic file; the papers are the result of work done in various courses in the department. The work covered all four years of study. A developing sense of sophistication in terms of topics and inquiry, as well as the rubrics of research and documentation is evident from year to year.

Outcome 1.2: On the required Senior Thesis, all Religious Studies majors will earn a grade of B or better, signifying a score of 4 out of 5 on the paper grading rubric described above.

The Religious Studies majors each produced a major thesis on a religious/theological topic of her own choice. In the course of the seminar, students along with the advisor critiqued the progress of the research and writing as well as contributing knowledge on the topic from courses taken and research done for other courses.

The RST majors presented formally the results of their research to an audience of faculty, administrators, family and friends.

In the end, each paper merited a grade of A.

GOAL 2: Religious Studies majors will gain a broad range of religious knowledge.

Objective 2.1: students will demonstrate a level of knowledge appropriate to an undergraduate program in at least three of the following areas of study: scripture, world religions, Catholic theology, churches and challenges in the modern world.

Outcome 2.1: students will achieve a “pass” or higher in the Senior Comprehensive exam which will test a student’s ability to synthesize material by responding in writing to questions designed to test skills of analysis, application, integration and creativity.

RST majors are able to design the scope of the comprehensive exam with the seminar advisor. The goal is to review, understand and be able to respond to questions from diverse faculty members that cover minimally three areas of study in the program, e.g., Scripture, Catholic Theology, and World Religions.

The design of the comprehensive exam (each one is personalized) as well as study hints for the comprehensive exam were accomplished in the seminar.

Each student merited a “high pass” grade, resulting from the evaluation by several different faculty members

GOAL 3: Religious Studies majors will demonstrate, in a variety of forms, knowledge gained in the major course of study.

Objective 3.1: Students will compile, over the four years of study in the major, a portfolio, consisting minimally of one paper, one test and the text/power point of one oral presentation project for each year.

Outcome 3.1: Religious Studies majors will be able to demonstrate increased use of research and writing skills, mastery of material and creative ways of presenting knowledge to others by scoring higher on a standardized grading rubric toward the end of their academic experience.

Each of the Religious Studies majors contributed to a personal portfolio which is on file in the department offices. The focus of this academic year was examples of theological research and writing as evidenced in papers produced in the course of a four year program of study.

B. Assessment of Majors

The three majors in Religious Studies this academic year are extraordinary students. Coming from diverse backgrounds (Haiti, Russia and Bucks County, PA) provided a richness and a challenge to their relationships as majors in the same department. Each came to Rosemont with strong study habits, good skills and a deep interest in the scope of study in the department.

These gifts resulted in each having superior GPAs, a “high pass” in the comprehensive exam and an A in the senior thesis paper. Faculty members in the department do not remember ever having three majors of this extraordinary quality in the same graduating class. Each major is being encouraged to continue with graduate study.

C. Changes Based on Assessment

Currently, we do not plan any major changes to the goals and objectives of the Religious Studies program. For majors, we believe that the objectives include a broad range of skill development as well as mastery of knowledge in the field appropriate to the undergraduate program.

Since the requirements in Religious Studies in the General Education program have been increased, we look forward to an increased number of majors and minors. Because each student will have two courses in RST from the General Education program it may be possible to have prerequisites for more of the upper level courses. This will provide, for both majors/minors and other students interested in the area, the possibility of taking courses at a more sophisticated level.

D. Recommendations for Improving the Assessment Process

The major task for faculty in the department in the coming year is to review and choose and utilize rubrics for each of the evaluation areas mentioned in our assessment plan.