



Date: March 9, 2020

To: Cathy Sandeen, Chancellor

From: John Stalvey, Interim Provost *John RS Stalvey*

Cc: John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Terry Kelly, Associate Professor; Chair, Department of Philosophy
Stephanie Bauer, Associate Professor
Susan Kalina, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Claudia Lampman, Vice Provost for Student Success

Re: **AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings – Philosophy BA**

I have reviewed the dean's findings, the program's response to the dean's findings, and the completed Expedited Program Review Template for the Philosophy BA.

Recommendations

My recommendation is to accept the decision and recommendations of the dean with the additional commentary that the program should decrease the number of upper-division courses offered per semester in order to increase enrollment per course and also establish more efficient course rotations designed to provide students a pathway through the major. Among other things, the program should continue to collaborate with UAF to enhance the enrollment in upper-division courses. An interim progress report on all recommendations is due to the dean by March 1, 2021. The dean will submit a review along with the program's interim progress report to the provost by April 1, 2021. A follow-up Program Review will be conducted in AY22.

Decision

Recommend Continued Review

Date: February 28, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: Terrence Kelly, Chairperson, Philosophy Program Review Committee

Cc: John Petraitis, Dean, CAS
Stephanie Bauer, Philosophy Program Review Committee

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review: Optional Program Response to Dean's Recommendation

Program/s in this review:

Philosophy

Program response to dean's findings:

Provost Stalvey:

The Philosophy Program Review Committee extends its appreciation for Dean Petraitis' careful review done under difficult circumstances. This committee is in general agreement with that review, but requests reconsideration of his conclusion that the program should be reviewed again in Spring 2021. The diversified nature of the program's service makes it most unlikely that demand for philosophy courses will decrease. In fact, it is more likely that demand for its courses with UAA's health programs.

Program Productivity

Dean Petraitis found that the program was extremely economically productive and efficient, but the case is perhaps understated. The Philosophy program is *the* most efficient program at UAA and 8th most profitable. Whereas numerous, and perhaps even most, programs at UAA lose money, the philosophy department is a breadwinner for UAA.

- In Fall 2019 alone, the program produced \$193,000 in tuition revenue beyond total faculty pay—5th highest for bachelors programs at UAA and 8th highest of any program.
- Tuition Return for total faculty pay was 174%-- *the best rate of return for any program at UAA.* Even discounting GER courses, the program had a 129% return of tuition for total costs.

The program is able to do this through large class sizes (50% larger than the UAA average), high course demand, low facilities costs, and relatively low faculty salaries (philosophers are relatively inexpensive academics, philosophy lab equipment— the mind— is free, and the department is relatively young.)

High course demand is fueled by the program's commitment to supporting "ethics across the curriculum."

- The program plays a key supporting role for flagship programs at UAA such as nursing, civil engineering, electrical engineering, and computer science.
- The program also plays a key supporting role in the General Education program by offering courses in logic and ethics.
- No other program in the University of Alaska system, including our colleagues at UAF, is poised to replace the expertise offered by the Philosophy program in biomedical ethics, professional ethics, and logic.
- The program has been a pioneer in developing a "strategic pathway" with our philosophy colleagues at UAF. Expertise and even some courses are shared and a formal MOA has been developed outlining course equivalencies.

Dean Petraitis rightly points out that the program does not award many degrees. Recruiting majors is a key priority for the program.

Continued Review?

Dean Petraitis concludes his review by finding the program should be reviewed again in Spring 2021 because:

it is possible that programs that rely on Philosophy courses might be discontinued, thereby impacting the role and necessary size of the Philosophy Department.

While this concern was understandable when Dean Petraitis wrote his review, now that all of the College Deans' recommendations have been submitted, it appears most unlikely that a substantial number of programs served by Philosophy will be deleted. You, Provost Stalvey, will of course have an even better understanding of the extent of program cuts at UAA. However, philosophy program demand is highly diversified, serving at least 20 different programs across campus, only two of which have been recommended for deletion at this time.

- The only relevant programs recommended for deletion are Sociology (which requires PHIL 301: Ethics or 305: Professional Ethics) and Environment and Society (which requires PHIL 303: Environmental Ethics). While it is heartbreaking to see these high

quality programs eliminated, that loss has a negligible quantitative impact on the Philosophy program.

Negligible Impact of Proposed Sociology Deletion on Philosophy

- In SP 20, there is a total of 1 Sociology student between two sections of PHIL 305.
- In FA 19, there were only 3 Sociology students in PHIL 301 (class size 27).

Negligible Impact of Proposed Environment and Society Deletion on Philosophy

- PHIL 303 accounted for only 2 of the 48 (~4%) course sections offered by the Philosophy this year (Summer, Fall, Spring).
- There would still be demand for at least one section of this course (ES student made up only ~50% of enrolled students). In the short term, Philosophy would need to offer *more* sections of 303 if ES is in “teach out.”

Unless significant further program cuts are proposed, there is little reason at this point to think that the Philosophy program will have diminished service demand this time next year and into the future. Indeed, the demand for ethics courses will likely grow in the near future as UAA prioritizes its health programs.

Further review is not only unnecessary, it is costly. Aside from the lost work hours preparing (and assessing) such a review, continued review in Spring 2021 creates instability in the program. The perception that the program may yet be eliminated or dramatically diminished makes it more difficult to keep and attract majors—a central goal of the program. It also makes it more difficult to develop partnerships across campus, which undermines the goal of bringing “ethics across the curriculum.”

Thank you for your consideration of this response.



Date: February 21, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Cc: Terry Kelly, Associate Professor; Chair, Department of Philosophy
Stephanie Bauer, Associate Professor

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

Program/s in this review: Philosophy BA

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): None

Campuses where the program is delivered: Anchorage

Members of the program review committee:

Terry Kelly, Associate Professor; Chair, Department of Philosophy
Stephanie Bauer, Associate Professor

Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role

UAA's mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement and creative expression. UAA is committed to serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities and its diverse peoples. It is also committed to instruction at multiple academic levels, success of all students regardless of their higher education goals, and service to the diverse peoples and communities of the state. UAA's core themes are (1) Teaching and Learning, (2) Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity, (3) Student Success, (4) UAA Community, and (5) Public Square. UAA values international and intercultural education, diversity of experiences and perspectives, and the diversity of our unique location in Southcentral Alaska that comes from the Alaska Native peoples of this area.

The College of Arts and Sciences CAS contributes to UAA's mission with a suite of programs that provide, among other things,

1. general education courses for undergraduates in CAS and other Colleges,
2. opportunities for undergraduates to pursue majors in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and the arts, and

3. opportunities for faculty and students to pursue research and creative activities in CAS's academic disciplines,
4. graduate programs for advanced studies.

Given decreased enrollments across UAA and significant budget cuts to CAS, the challenge is to serve UAA's and CAS's missions with only 75% of the funds it had in 2018-2019. CAS's shrinking budget is especially challenging for programs that rely on state financial appropriations through CAS because the programs have a gap between (a) the total costs of everything the program does and needs, and (b) the tuition CAS receives to cover those costs. This describes most programs in CAS: most rely on state appropriates and CAS has 30% less than it had two years ago.

In its most important role, CAS's Department of Philosophy contributes to CAS's and UAA's mission by providing Tier 2 and required courses for students in other majors (such as International Studies) and other colleges (especially the College of Health and the College of Engineering). It also provides opportunity for a small number of students to major in this discipline and learn from faculty who conduct research in philosophical questions, most of which are very applied in nature.

Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity

One indicator of program demand is the number of incoming high school students who select Philosophy as their initial major. That number is quite small: only 2-3 students per year. Also quite small is the number of students who currently are majors in the department. At only 29 majors, it is CAS's major with the lowest demand. However, while the Philosophy BA is not in high demand, Philosophy courses are. In 2019 the department produced nearly 4,500 student credit hours, nearly double the median for courses in CAS. Consequently, the fiscal situation in the department is such that it is one of the few departments in CAS (or the entire university) where the tuition CAS receives from its courses not only covers the instructional costs of the courses, but also covers the costs of everything that faculty do (namely, instruction, research and service). This makes the department productive by one measure. However, by another measure – number of degrees awards – the department is far less productive, generating an average of only 6.6 awards per year, putting it at the bottom of CAS's baccalaureate programs on this measure. Overall, this picture is of a program that attracts and graduates few majors, but is remarkable in its service to students in other majors and colleges.

Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success

The program honestly uses its annual assessment data to inform program revisions. Increasingly, courses are offered online to bring the classroom to students rather than bring students to the classroom.

Program Duplication / Distinctiveness

UAF also offers a Philosophy BA with a much smaller set of faculty. Between UAA's and UAF's programs, 30 students were awarded BA's in Philosophy, with 26 of those awards coming from UAA. Given the small size of both programs, they started collaborating on ways where courses taken at one university would transfer more easily to a degree from the other university.

Commendations and Recommendations

Program faculty are commended for courses that serve majors in other departments and colleges, and commended for its collaborative work with the Philosophy Department at UAF, collaboration that helps students at both universities. The faculty also should be commended for the hard work they put into their expedited program review submission.

Decision

Continued review. Much of what the Philosophy Department does is in service to other majors and colleges. With the current program review process going on in Spring 2020, it is possible that programs that rely on Philosophy courses might be discontinued, thereby impacting the role and necessary size of the Philosophy Department. Therefore, the program should be reviewed again in Spring 2021 to determine how many faculty are needed.

Submission date: February 11, 2020

Program/s in this review: Philosophy B.A.

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): N/A

Campuses where the program is delivered: UAA

Members of the program review committee:

- Dr. Terrence Kelly , Associate Professor and Chair, UAA, Anchorage campus
- Dr. Stephanie Bauer, Associate Professor, UAA, Anchorage campus

1. Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role (700 words or less)

Since the birth of the university in the 11th Century, philosophy has been at the heart of higher education. Today the Philosophy B.A. Program at UAA is central to the mission and strategic plans of UAA by promoting the career readiness, civic responsibility, and the personal flourishing of students. Program faculty implement AAC&U high-impact educational practices. Philosophy graduates are career-ready and a majority end up in leadership positions.

The program promotes student learning and success through the development of widely recognized core competencies such as:

- **Critical and creative thinking**
- **Ethical judgment**
- **Written and oral communication**
- **Teamwork/Group deliberation**
- **Inter-cultural fluency**

Program faculty have expertise in **biomedical, professional, and environmental ethics** – all essential areas of study for the workforce and civic readiness of UAA students.

Program courses provide for advanced study in philosophy and also support a variety of academic programs across the university.

- **General Education Program:** PHIL 101: *Logic*, PHIL 201: *Introduction to Philosophy*; PHIL 211: *Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*; PHIL 212: *Modern Philosophy*
 - PHIL 201, 211, and 212 also been designated as also satisfying the GE Diversity requirement.
- **Nursing and other Health Professional Programs:** PHIL A302: *Biomedical Ethics*, is required for a bachelor's degree in Nursing and Health Sciences, and it fulfills a requirement in Medical Laboratory Science. It is also popular among students in dentistry, dietetics and premed programs. PHIL 101: *Logic* or PHIL 201: *Introduction to Philosophy* are required for the Nursing Program.
- **Engineering and Computer Science:** PHIL 305: *Professional Ethics* is required in a variety of engineering programs; computer science; and geomatics.
- **International Studies:** PHIL 301: *Ethics* is required for the degree and PHIL 400: *Ethics and Community* is a popular capstone course in the program. PHIL: 303 *Environmental Ethics* is required in the **Environment and Society** major. It is also a popular course for International Studies Majors.

- **Applied Technology Leadership:** PHIL 302: *Professional Ethics* and PHIL 303 *Environmental Ethics* are both required in this program.
- **Fine Art:** PHIL 400: *Aesthetics* is required for the B.A. and B.F.A. in Fine Art.

Prior Reviews

The Philosophy Program has undergone two extensive, positive reviews since 2013.

The 2015 *UAA Programs and Functions Prioritization* report designated the Philosophy Program as “**Category 1: Priority for Enhancement**” which was defined as:

programs [which] appeared to be well-aligned and worthy of enhancement when additional funds become available.” (4)

The Prioritization Academic Task Force commented that the program had a:

[s]trong case for external demand. Good discussion of student outcomes assessment and how it has driven changes to the program. Faculty and students active in campus life, faculty productive in terms of products of creative activity and aggressive at pursuing external funding. Conscious effort to maximize efficiency with respect to course offerings. (56)

The program also conducted its regular seven-year review in 2017. Dean John Stalvey found that:

The mission of Philosophy aligns well with the mission and strategic goals of College of Arts and Sciences and the University....
The Department of Philosophy provides important programmatic support for many majors across multiple colleges and the Philosophy B.A. is an important Liberal Arts major. Although the number is small, students who major in Philosophy graduate well-grounded in analytical thinking and writing skills....The program is serving its students and meeting its mission and goals. No immediate changes needed other than regular, ongoing program improvements. [underlining added]

2. Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity (7 year trend; 1400 words or less)

The Philosophy program is extremely efficient and productive. It produces a significant number of student credit hours, while maintaining a very strong FTEF/SCH ratio.

Overall, the philosophy program produces significant tuition revenue for UAA at low cost—a nearly 200% return of tuition revenue per instructional costs.

The Philosophy program is very strong both in terms of student credit hours produced and in FTEF/Student Credit hour ratios—roughly one of the top programs in both categories at UAA.

Seven Year Degree Awards Trend

While the program is extremely efficient, a challenge has been in attracting majors. The current number of majors low (29) as has been the awarded degrees (ranging from 3-10 per year).

For a variety of reasons philosophy programs rarely attract many majors. Students are often not exposed to the subject in high school and only come to take their first philosophy course after committing to another major. Moreover, the first philosopher they are introduced to—Socrates—is executed for his efforts! Finally, while philosophy is, in fact, excellent career preparation, the career-path from graduation is not obvious and/or entails post-graduate education.

Nonetheless, the low number of philosophy majors and awarded degrees is concerning. Because philosophy is excellent preparation for students to flourish as members of the workforce, as citizens, and as human beings, program faculty are committed to recruiting more majors to the program. Some ongoing efforts include:

- Program faculty continue to participate in “UAA Preview” day and major/minor fairs.
- The program continues to support the UAA Ethics Bowl—an ethics debate competition that motivates student interest in philosophical ethics.
- Program faculty identify promising students in philosophy courses who are then contacted by the department chairperson encouraging them to major in philosophy.
- The program is offering more of its degree online, including video-conferencing classes that are available to UAF students to make the program more accessible.

In addition to these ongoing efforts, program faculty plan to:

- Create more outreach to high school students. Program faculty have periodically presented at high schools and middle schools, but those efforts have been ad hoc.
- Along those lines, program faculty intend to develop a high school ethics bowl. The program conducted a successful high school ethics bowl in 2014, but has not institutionalized the practice.

- Revising “front porch” courses. Courses such as PHIL 101: Logic and PHIL 201: Introduction to Philosophy are being reworked to be more diverse and more relevant to the Alaska experience.
- Improve communication (through social media and other media) to better demonstrate the relevancy and career path associated with philosophical study.
- Diversify the curriculum. Program faculty are working closely with Jenny McCurdy, the program’s new multicultural pre-professorate fellow, to de-colonize the curriculum and present a curriculum that is more reflective of the diverse UAA population.

Credits /Degree

The program has *average* graduation efficiency. Philosophy majors graduate, on average, with 123.4 credits (UAA=121/ CAS=120.9), though philosophy majors spread these credits over a longer period of time (10.9 semesters/7.3 years vs. 9.9/6.2 years UAA overall). Anecdotal evidence suggests that, like many UAA student, this longer duration of study is due to the demands of work, caretaking, and family, which require students to take semesters off, or take fewer credits per semester.

- Faculty aggressively addressed graduation efficiency by redesigning the program. Previously the program was broken into several “tracks,” which created a variety of potential bottlenecks in a student’s path to graduation. After the program’s 2017 review, those tracks and options were removed and the path to graduation was made more straightforward and easy to understand.

Student success depends the whole student. Faculty work closely with UAA’s Care Team, the Dean of Student’s Office, the Humanities Hub advisor, and 1st Year advising to ensure that philosophy students complete the program in a timely manner. Philosophy faculty meet extensively to advise students, and reach out to students who appear to be struggling—academically or otherwise.

The program has also been offering more of its courses online in an effort to widen the path to degree. In order to promote a better path to degree, the program has been offering more courses via distance education. Most of the program’s introductory courses and ethics courses are offered online. In addition, occasionally, philosophy faculty offer hybrid sections of their courses, and the department has tested 8 week sections of exceptionally popular courses for greater student availability. In partnership with UAF, some advanced upper-division courses are offered through UAA’s video conferencing services.

Course Pass Rate

Overall, the Philosophy program’s courses have a strong pass rate that has remained steady over the past seven years. It has a higher overall DWF rate compared to UAA. *However*, this is misleading because the program teaches a disproportionate number of GER courses, which have much higher DWF rates campus-wide.

In fact, for BOTH GER and non-GER courses the Philosophy Program has a lower DWF rate than UAA overall.

	PHILOSOPHY	UAA
GER DWF	22.3%	22.4%
~GER DWF	10.5%	12.6%

The program is nonetheless committed to reducing its DWF rate. Using IR data, faculty identified the program course with the worst DWF rate (PHIL 101: Logic) and began the work of revising the course to make it more relevant for students, for instance, by reducing the use of symbolic logical calculus and using more “natural language” exercises.

Internal Demand

There continues to be strong internal demand for philosophy courses at UAA. The number of students taking philosophy courses both within and outside the major are high as seen by this chart. More specifically, there is greater demand for students taking philosophy classes outside their major than in CAS or UAA overall.

- 64% of students in lower division philosophy courses are taking the course outside of their major requirements (compared with 58% for UAA as a whole and 59% for CAS).
- 36% of students in upper division philosophy courses are taking the course outside their major (compared with 23% for UAA as a whole and 28% for CAS).

Strong internal demand for philosophy courses is not surprising. For instance, while there are many excellent critical thinking courses on campus, Logic is widely recognized—and has been so since the birth of the university in the 11th century— one of the best courses to promote critical reasoning skills. Moreover, topics such as ethics, biomedical ethics, environmental ethics, mind, law, politics, eastern thought and the like are inherently interesting and courses covering these areas remain popular with students.

Internal demand is also boosted by courses that support other programs on campus such as nursing, engineering, computer science, geomatics, and international studies.

Seven Year Student Credit Hour (SCH) Production Trend

The Philosophy Program produces the 12th highest total SCH of all programs at UAA. While SCH are down approximately 22% since 2013, this outperforms CAS (down nearly 30%) and is on par with UAA overall (down ~20%). Due to budget cuts, the program has offered fewer courses over this period. Increased course sizes has offset some of the lost SCH.

SCH/FTEF

- The program has large class sizes, greater capacity utilization, and excellent FTE/SCH ratio. Moreover, philosophers are relatively inexpensive academics. Indeed, Diogenes happily lived in a barrel at the *agora* (this is not a cost savings suggestion, btw!).
- **As a result, the Philosophy Program produced significant tuition revenue for UAA between 2015-19, producing nearly 200% tuition revenue per instructional costs.**
 - **University-wide, instructional costs between 2015-19 were *higher* than tuition revenues. For every dollar spent on instructional costs, the university lost about \$.04.**
 - **In philosophy courses on the other hand, tuition revenue was 179% higher than instructional costs during the same period. For every dollar spent on philosophy instruction, the university made \$1.79.**

Enrollment/FTEF

Since 2015 there has been a strong trend to increase enrollment per FTEF. In 2019, the program had the 13th best FTEF/SCH ratio at UAA and the 7th best in CAS.

Class Size

The Philosophy Program runs class sizes well above UAA averages with efficient use of class capacity.

- **the average philosophy class is approximately 50% larger than the average UAA class.**

2019 AVERAGE CLASS SIZES

UAA Class Size= 18.9

CAS Class Size= 18.2

PHIL Class Size= 24.5

2019 UPPER DIVISION CAPACITY UTILIZATION

UAA = 73%

PHIL= 89%

Tuition Revenue/SCH

Tuition revenue per SCH rose 23% between 2015-19. Larger class sizes and efficient utilization of class capacity have increased revenue production for UAA.

While UAA generally *lost* money in terms of instructional costs/tuition revenue, the Philosophy program earned 179% of tuition revenue per instructional cost.

- **In 2019 the program produced a +200% tuition return per instructional investment.**

External Demand

UAA philosophy majors have gone on to excellent law schools and graduate schools, including Yale University, Duke University, and the University of Washington. Moreover, philosophical study develops critical reasoning, communication, teamwork, leadership, and intercultural fluency skills— all highly prized skills identified in employer surveys. Philosophy majors nationally assume leadership positions within their organizations.

Philosophy majors either the top scorers or among the top scorers year after year in a variety of post-graduate exams including the LSAT, GMAT, and GRE.

Despite stereotypes to the contrary, philosophy majors generally do well after graduation. According to Payscale’s “Majors That Pay You Back” mid-career earnings of philosophy majors compare favorably with a variety of more professional-oriented degrees.

MEDIAN MID-CAREER SALARIES

PHILOSOPHY:	\$87,900
BUSINESS ADM:	\$86,700
NURSING:	\$79,600
CRIMINOLOGY:	\$69,300

Additionally, the National Association of Colleges and Employers found for the graduating class of 2015 that:

- within six months, just over **78 percent of graduates with bachelor’s degrees in philosophy had either found employment or were continuing their education**
- Those graduating with a master’s degree in philosophy in 2015 fared even better, with **over 85 percent finding employment or continuing their education** within six months of graduation.
 - **Their mean starting salary was over \$75,500.**

3. Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success (1500 words or less)

Program quality flows from faculty commitment to a culture that inspires and enables student learning and student success.

Student learning is focused on the latest innovations in the field and the most up to date controversies based on faculty expertise in biomedical, professional, environmental ethics, and colonial studies. Faculty research has directly translated into a cutting-edge curriculum and opportunities for our students.

Faculty Use AAC&U High-Impact Practices

- Phil 400, Ethics, Community and Society— students engage in thesis-driven projects, tied together by a globally relevant theme. Projects often involve service-learning engagement in the community, which creates a coherent learning experience that cuts across the “theory/practice” divide. Examples include:
- 2016 Food and Justice in the Arctic: tied to an NLM/EnHIP grant in which students worked with two Anchorage elementary schools to raise awareness about and mitigate food waste.
- 2017 Ethics and Public Deliberation: students integrated the theory and practice of deliberation and worked in groups to organize two public deliberations in Anchorage.
- ePortfolio student final projects were used in a 2018 Phil 400. In two instances, students used their ePortfolio projects as the foundation for later senior research projects in Philosophy.
- Phil 495, Service-Learning in Applied Ethics, is an independent study course in which students relate issues in applied ethics to community-engaged project. It meets a requirement in the Philosophy B.A. and minor. Students often present their final projects to their community partners.

Cultural Diversity in Student Learning.

- PHIL 313: *Eastern Philosophy* introduces students to a variety of alternative cultural modes of thought.
- Dr. Kelly uses Yup’ik ethics and Confucianism in *Professional Ethics* and *Biomedical Ethics*.
- PHIL 406: *Philosophy of Law* focuses on issues of indigenous sovereignty, particularly in the context of Alaska indigenous peoples.
- PHIL 490 in Spring 2019 focuses on gender and philosophy.
- Program courses routinely consider the role of race, gender, and other intersectionalities of power in social justice.

- The program was awarded a multiculturalism pre-professorate position beginning in Fall 2019. That faculty member, Dr. Jenny McCurdy, taught PHIL 400 in Fall 2019 on colonialism in North America and is working with program faculty to further decolonize the philosophy curriculum. This is a significant step for a program (and a field) that has tended to focus on Western canonical philosophers.
- Gunner Deery integrates both Eastern and Middle Eastern philosophy into PHIL 201: *Introduction to Philosophy* and the program's history sequence.

Support of Student Research

- Each year, students publically present their scholarship at the Philosophy Club's UAA Undergraduate Philosophy Conferences. In 2014 (Confucian Ethics) and 2016 (Cyber-Ethics), the department collaborated with other UAA departments to bring internationally renowned keynote speakers who interacted with students.
- Students present their research in UAA's Student Showcase, and last year, two philosophy students' essays won top honors.
- Students publish in journals for student research in philosophy, such as the journal *Dialogue*.
- Student internships and research projects are organized in collaboration with the Municipal Ethics Board and Providence Hospital.
- The UAA Ethics Bowl offers students the opportunity to compete in an ethics debate tournament. In 2015, a team of UAA students, coached by Dr. Potter, qualified and competed at the National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl.
- Thesis-driven writing assignments and projects are standard at every course level.
- The department also maintains an active philosophy club.

Student Success

Philosophy majors are students of high achievement.

PHIL Students Graduating With Honors: 34%

CAS Students Graduating With Honors: 30%

UAA Students Graduating With Honors: 27%

UAA's Philosophy Majors Achieve University and Post-Graduate Success.

- Student #1 (B.A. 2019) received a full-scholarship to Duke University Law School. He published one of his philosophy essays in the journal *Dialogue* in 2019 and won an honor for an essay in UAA's Student Showcase.
- Student #2 (B.A. 2019) and is currently applying to law school. #2 was awarded a CESA tuition scholarship through UAA's CCEL to support her research and community

engagement in public deliberation. She won an honor for her essay in meta-ethics in UAA's Student Showcase.

- Student #3 (B.A. 2019) received a T.A. award for the M.A. program in English at UAF.
- Student #4 (B.A. 2017) received a fellowship for the PhD Philosophy program at the University of Rochester.
- Student #5 (B.A. 2017) was Student Regent for UA's Board of Regents from 2015-17. She was a program assistant for the CIRI Foundation for three years. She currently advocates for indigenous rights and awareness in Alaska, works as a consultant, and is currently a member of the UAA Alumni Association Board of Directors.
- Student #6 (B.A. 2014) earned his M.A. at Yale Divinity School. He is now pursuing a Ph.D. in theology and environmental ethics at the Lincoln School of Theology in Manchester. He received the Lincoln International Doctoral Studentship.
- Student #7 (B.A. 2014) volunteered as a teacher for a year in Thailand. He then earned his J.D. from the University of Washington Law School. He is now a lawyer with Oles, Morrison, Rinker & Baker LLP.
- Student #8 (B.A. 2007) earned her J.D. at the University of Washington, served as an Alaska Assistant Attorney General, and is now Associate General Counsel and Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer at Bering Straits Native Corporation.

E-Learning

In order to promote a better path to degree, the program has been offering more courses via distance education. Most of the program's introductory courses and ethics courses are offered online. In addition, occasionally, philosophy faculty offer hybrid sections of their courses, and the department has tested 8 week sections of exceptionally popular courses for greater student availability.

- In partnership with UAF, some advanced upper-division courses are offered through UAA's video conferencing services.

Quality in online courses is a priority for the program.

- Faculty in the program have received Quality Matters certificates through UAA's Innovations and eLearning center.
- Prof. Anthony, helped to develop a "Trailguide" through UAA's eLearning center to assist faculty new to eLearning in developing their own online classes.
- Dr. Bauer recently attended a CAFÉ session on attending to Alaska Native traditions and perspectives in online courses. Faculty will further prioritize quality in online courses.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes – Philosophy B.A.

1. Identify, comprehend, analyze and evaluate complex philosophical arguments in oral and written discourse.
2. Understand, analyze, interpret and apply major works in the areas of the history of philosophy, ethics and contemporary topics

Yearly, the program evaluates whether its SLO's are met through a rubric-based assessment of thesis-driven term papers in a senior-level philosophy class offered in the fall or spring semester. Nine elements critical to a mature philosophy paper are included in the rubric. The program has found students excel at clarity of thesis, designing objections, and identifying complex ideas. Some students still struggle, though, in clearly evaluating philosophical arguments in a coherent, fully integrated paper. One of the goals of the program is to identify and aid these students systematically and early.

Philosophy faculty have participated in UAA's GER Assessment over the past 5 years. The assessment of PHIL A101 and A201 courses has been based on a rubric that philosophy faculty helped create during the Pilot AA/GER Humanities Assessment Faculty Working Group in May and June 2015. In PHIL A101 and A201 classes assessed in 2015 and 2016, students showed improvements in the following domains: Responds Effectively To Assignments, Effective Argument, and each of the papers met the Information Literacy outcomes.

Assessment: Moving Forward

Program faculty will continue to improve SLO assessment. Goals include a creating system of skill-based benchmarks for that allows students to track on ePortfolios their own accomplishments through the program. This would not only aid them in articulating their skills for employment, but aid the program in defining the distinct role philosophy classes play in their development.

4. Program Duplication / Distinctiveness (300 words or less)

UAA's Philosophy program works to make the study of philosophy accessible across Alaska. In 2015 UAF suspended its philosophy program.

- Philosophy faculty at UAA and UAF collaborated to develop a strategic pathway to share resources.
- The programs launched video-conferencing sections of specialized upper-division classes that students at both campuses could take and still experience the robust discussion needed for high-level philosophy.
- In addition, students and faculty traveled to attend UAA's philosophy conferences and ethics bowl competitions. Sharing expertise across the system has benefited students and faculty at both campuses.

In January of 2019, UAA and UAF Philosophy and administration agreed to formal Articulation of Agreement that established course equivalences and formalized collaboration between the programs.

- The agreement outlines equivalences between philosophy classes at both programs with the hopes that students at UAF and beyond could meet degree requirements and once again earn a BA in philosophy. In later 2019, UAF administration agreed to restart their Philosophy BA program. The programs plan to continue to coordinate resources as they have complimentary expertise—UAA in ethics and UAF in philosophy of science and epistemology.

5. Summary Analysis (500 words or less)

At a recent NWCCU meeting, Mehmood Khan, M.D., former chief scientific officer for PepsiCo, lamented the fact that so many of his young employees, while well-trained in STEM fields, lack judgment. “They lack”—he said provocatively—“wisdom.”

The Philosophy program’s primary mission is to help students develop the practical wisdom necessary for career readiness, civic responsibility, and personal flourishing. Philosophical education teaches students to recognize diverse values and ethical and cultural viewpoints, identify and clarify norms, address conflicts, and develop skills of communication and decision-making that contribute to personal and professional identity. Its faculty members are uniquely trained to assist students in essential areas such as biomedical ethics, environmental ethics, and professional ethics.

The Philosophy B.A. program is extremely efficient and productive and is also revenue generating. The Philosophy program produces a significant number of student credit hours, while maintaining a very strong FTEF/SCH ratio. It runs class sizes well above UAA averages with efficient use of class capacity. As a result, [it produces significant tuition revenue for UAA at low cost—creating 179% tuition revenue compared to instructional costs \(and 200% in 2019\)](#). The Philosophy program is very strong both in terms of student credit hours produced and in FTEF/Student Credit hour ratios—roughly one of the top 15 programs in both categories at UAA. There continues to be strong internal demand for philosophy courses at UAA.

Program faculty have developed a culture of excellence that enables and inspires student learning and success not only for philosophy majors, but also for students in a wide variety of programs across campus by promoting critical thinking, communication, deliberation, inclusivity, and applied problem-solving skills. While relatively small in number, program graduates are high achievers of educational and post-graduate success.

The program also supports students in programs across campus such as nursing, engineering, computer science, international relations, and general education. Our faculty expertise in applied areas such as professional, bioethical, and environmental ethics provide an important resource for students across campus. Moreover, program faculty members use their expertise in service to the broader Alaskan community.

Moving forward, program faculty will recruit more majors, increase graduation efficiency, continue to diversify the program, increase its e-presence, while continuing to develop strategic pathways with colleagues at UAF. Program faculty also plan to develop adult education experiences based on the successful self-paced e-courses offered by Arizona State University. Courses focusing on the LSAT, critical thinking, climate change, ethical leadership, medical ethics, business ethics, and professional ethics could be popular ways for adult learners to bolster their job skills and career credentials.