

## End of Year Assessment Report for Programs

Program: THEOLOGY

Semester/year: SPRING 2019

Contact Person: BEN WAYMAN

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### Program Mission Statement

The theological studies major trains students to think honestly, courageously, and methodically about God by introducing them to the rich and diverse resources of the global church, past and present, and by nurturing openness to God through spiritual disciplines.

### Program Objectives

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic Christian doctrine.
2. Display an understanding of the nature, development, and diversity of the Christian theological tradition, and a willingness to reflect critically on one's own theological orientation and worldview.
3. Exhibit familiarity with the history, context, and interpretation of Christian Scripture, and demonstrate an understanding of Scripture's significance for Christian life.
4. Translate theological knowledge and conviction into a life of vocation and service.

### Assessment Methods and Benchmarks – SPRING SEMESTER

For each program objective, choose one “best representative” assignment at the Introductory, Developmental, and Mastery levels. You will have a total of three assignments/measurements per program objective. Put this information in a chart. Refer back to your Program Learning Objective Alignment Chart to determine best representative assignments and benchmarks. In any given semester, you may not have assignments at all three levels for every program objective; simply report all that you can.

Program Objective	Introducing	Developing	Mastering
PO1. Christian Doctrine	Not offered this semester	THEO366 Terminology Test	Not offered this semester (THEO 451)
	Benchmark: >=75%	Benchmark: >=75%	Benchmark: >=75%
	Evidence:	Evidence: 64%	Evidence:
PO2. Knowledge of Tradition	Not offered this semester (THEO 451)	THEO 343 Exams	THEO 452 Reading Reports
	Benchmark: >=75%	Benchmark: >=75%	Benchmark: >=75%
	Evidence:	Evidence: 68%	Evidence: 75%
PO3. Knowledge of Scripture	THEO 111 Scripture Study	BIBL 320 Text Analysis	THEO 452 Theology group paper
	Benchmark: >=75%	Benchmark: >=75%	Benchmark: >=75%

	Evidence: <b>100%</b>	Evidence: <b>86%</b>	Evidence: <b>92%</b>
PO4. Relational Intelligence	THEO 111 Interviews	THEO 343 What's Good Presentation	THEO 452 Lenten Journal
	Benchmark: >=75%	Benchmark: >=75%	Benchmark: >=75%
	Evidence: <b>100%</b>	Evidence: <b>100%</b>	Evidence: <b>100%</b>

### Analysis of Assessment Findings – SPRING SEMESTER

Discuss the significance of the findings of the current semester in light of the desired results, findings from previous semesters/years, recent changes in the program or the assessment process, etc. What did you learn from the assessment? In particular:

(1) What strengths and weaknesses do the findings reveal about the program and/or the assessment process?

The Methods findings reveal that the program is doing a very fine job of helping students master our objectives. I was impressed with the students' relational maturity, consideration of other perspectives, knowledge of tradition and Scripture, and application of their theological education to practical ministry issues. The weakness of this course can be observed in student comments from the philosophy major who preferred an explicitly philosophy-based capstone course.

The Early Christianity findings reveal that until this course, students have very little interaction with early church history (from 100-500 c.e.). The students showed a strong aptitude for learning about the subject matter however, which can be seen in their drastically improved exam scores in the second exam. In addition, the What's Good assignment provided students the opportunity to apply their knowledge of church tradition to contemporary Christian thinking and living. The findings of this course expose the programmatic weakness that we have not introduced students to early church history prior to this 300-level course.

The strengths of the findings reveal that our students are capable of doing well at the introductory level when introducing Program Outcomes 3, 4, and 5. They are able to do well with an introductory Scripture study, interviews with both veteran and rookie people in ministry, and reflecting upon their own calling when it comes to ministry. No significant weaknesses are evident at the introductory level.

(2) What impact have program changes in the last several years had on student learning (indicate those program changes that resulted from previous assessment findings)?

Program changes in curriculum, specifically in using more non-white European authors (e.g., James Cone and Justo González), have helped our students develop an awareness both of their own worldview (and its context) and an appreciation of other perspectives. For example, our programmatic push toward the margins has exposed students to their assumptions about "normal" theology and accordingly revealed its contextual nature.

Over the past two years, I introduced the formal assignments of Pastoral interviews and the "Reflection of My Calling" paper in Ministry Seminar (THEO 111). These two assignments reveal to students the diversity of ministry practice and how their experience might mirror the experiences of those already involved in ministry.

(3) What impact have recent changes in the assessment process had on the quality and usefulness of the findings? Of particular importance to note are recent changes and improvements in the program that resulted from previous assessment efforts.

Recent changes have helped us develop assignments that more directly address program objectives and accordingly, have helped us identify what we are assessing. Our syllabi, assignments and overall course construction are much more attentive to program objectives.

The impact has been positive, in that we can make changes more quickly to improve the effectiveness of assignments in meeting the objectives. The findings become very useful in this process of assessing the effectiveness of our assignments much more quickly and efficiently.

### **Sharing and Discussion of Assessment Findings – SPRING SEMESTER**

We meet every semester to discuss the findings from FCARs in particular. Through conversations, we are able to discover trends and commonalities across courses. We identify areas of weakness and think creatively about how to address them. Usually, that means introducing materials earlier in the program so that it's not new stuff when they're juniors. Given our very limited number of courses, however, the danger is that each course we offer has to do too much in the way of content/skill development.

### **Use of Assessment Findings for Program Improvement (Action Plan) – SPRING SEMSTER**

(A) Add a mini-unit on doctrine and tradition to THEO 200, so that THEO 343 is the not first encounter they have with early Church history.  
(B) We have had frustrations in data collection due to being forced to cancel all upper-division Biblical Studies courses in the Fall, and all but 1 in the spring. This has interrupted our I-D-M structure significantly and has also added chaos to student schedules and experiences.  
(C) THEO 200: offered in the Fall. Add doctrine/tradition review mini-unit.  
THEO 110: Ben is tackling a review of this course as his sabbatical project. A main issue is that our students are wildly variant in terms of familiarity with Christianity and Scripture. Lori has suggested a self-selection of THEO 110 Beginner, and THEO 110 Advanced.

### **Full Year Reflection – FALL/INTERTERM/SPRING TERMS**

When we map the two semesters together, we learn some interesting things. First, our students are very strong in PO4 and PO5—relational intelligence and developing a model for ministry. Secondly, we realized that we don't really hit PO1 and 2 hard in THEO 200. As such, they head into the developing level courses with less information under their belts than we think. Therefore, there is a clear trend of higher benchmark levels in Intro, a dip down into the 60% range for Developing, and then a rise into the 80% range in the Mastery Level.

Another key element is that many of our Developing level courses are taught by adjuncts. While we try to provide lots of guidance and participation, there can be a disconnect in that level.

We are going to open up UD BIBL courses as gen ed offerings again to help the enrollment issue in Fall 2019. However, this will dilute the ability we will have to go in-depth regarding scripture, thus potentially shortchanging our majors. If the numbers continue to be lower, the VPAA will continue to pressure us to cancel them, thus making a rational and helpful assessment plan impossible.

#### **ACTIONS:**

1. Add doctrine/tradition unit to THEO 200 (BEN WAYMAN).

2. THEO 110 Analysis will be conducted by Ben Wayman as part of sabbatical.

### **Supporting Documents**

[If you attach any supporting documents, please list them here. You may submit these supporting documents into the D2L dropbox.]