

Philosophy Major: Graduate Attribute Mapping (2014)

Courtesy of Associate Professor Stuart Brock, School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations)

All academic programmes at Victoria have been asked to foster and provide evidence of the achievement of course learning objectives, which themselves contribute to the development of the programme/major attributes and in turn reflect the development of Victoria graduate attributes. Because the philosophy programme was engaged in substantial changes to its curriculum, it chose to implement the proposed changes early. With the support of CAD, the philosophy programme began the process of considering, in a holistic way, its graduate profile, its course offerings, and the course learning objectives and assessment scheme within each of its courses.

The process (which began in January 2014) was completed, after a number of constructive meetings, in April 2014. Academic staff in philosophy found the process to be useful in the following ways:

1. the resulting structure of the undergraduate programme in philosophy is more transparent and informative to students,
2. the mapping process will assist academic staff in putting together their course outlines and developing their curriculum in the future,
3. the overall undergraduate programme in philosophy is more coherent, and the pathway through the major is now transparent and scaffolded in a way it was not previously,
4. students completing a major in philosophy will have a suite of discipline specific skills as well as a set of soft and transferable skills, which bear a clear and straightforward relationship to Victoria's Graduate Profile.
5. evidence of (1) through (4) is now relatively straightforward to provide.

(Stuart Brock, June 2014)



Victoria University's Graduate Profile

Victoria prepares its graduates to be scholars who:

1. have a specialised understanding of their chosen field(s) of study
2. exhibit well-developed skills in critical and creative thinking
3. communicate complex ideas effectively and accurately in a range of contexts
4. demonstrate intellectual autonomy through independence of thought, openness to ideas and information and a capacity to manage their own learning
5. demonstrate intellectual integrity and understand the ethics of scholarship.

These attributes will be reflected in the formal curriculum and tested through academic assessment.

Philosophy Programme Graduate Profile

Students who complete the Philosophy Major at Victoria University of Wellington will have:

- A. an understanding of the ethics of scholarship
- B. a specialised understanding of philosophy (including its distinctive methods, questions, contribution, context and debates)
- C. an ability to think logically and critically in a wide variety of contexts using established methods of formal or informal logic
- D. an ability to analyze or elucidate complex ideas and concepts and to define them clearly and precisely
- E. an understanding of the various kinds of value, and an ability to make rational and ethical decisions in personal and professional contexts, and as an engaged citizen
- F. an ability to articulate original and useful philosophical theses or to provide original arguments in support of contentious philosophical theses
- G. an ability to engage in original and ethical research in philosophy under close supervision



PROFILE MAPPING

Attribute for the Major	1. Discipline knowledge	2. Creative & Critical Thinking	3. Communication	4. Intellectual autonomy	5. Intellectual integrity
A. Ethics of scholarship					✓
B. Philosophical knowledge	✓				
C. Logical and critical thinking		✓			
D. Conceptual elucidation			✓		
E. Value judgments/decision making		✓		✓	✓
F. Original thought				✓	✓
G. Research skills			✓	✓	✓

ATTRIBUTE ASSESSMENT

Attribute for the Major	100-level [all courses]	200-level [all courses]	300-level [all courses]
A. Ethics of scholarship	✓		
B. Philosophical knowledge	✓	✓	✓
C. Logical and critical thinking	✓	✓	✓
D. Conceptual elucidation	✓	✓	✓
E. Value judgments/decision making	✓		
F. Original thought			✓
G. Research skills			✓

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOs)

100-level

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. explain the fundamental ethical principles that govern good scholarship in philosophy* [PHILGP A]
2. explain some of the current debates in the field of philosophy/metaphysics and epistemology/applied ethics and moral philosophy/aesthetics [PHILGP B]
3. evaluate a variety of arguments using established methods of formal or informal logic [PHILGP C]
4. an ability to define clearly and precisely key concepts in the field of philosophy/metaphysics and epistemology/applied ethics and moral philosophy/aesthetics [PHILGP D]
5. evaluate various artifacts, situations or outcomes and use this information to inform decision making [PHILGP E]

** A University wide or programme specific short video on academic integrity, plagiarism, etc., will be posted on blackboard for all of our 100-level courses. We will require all students to watch it and successfully complete a multiple choice quiz after viewing (taking it over if they fail the first time). This will be a mandatory course requirement, will ensure all of our majors have done something on 'the ethics of scholarship,' but does not require us to build it into our marking criteria for other assessment tasks at 100-level.*

200-level

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. demonstrate an in depth understanding of a variety of debates in the field of XXX [PHILGP B]
2. critically evaluate a variety of arguments in the field of XXX using established methods of formal or informal logic [PHILGP C]
3. analyze or elucidate complex ideas and concepts in the field of XXX [PHILGP D]

300-level

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. integrate disciplinary knowledge and skills developed at 200 level in the field of XXX [PHILGP B, C, D]

2. articulate original and useful philosophical theses <OR> provide original arguments in support of contentious philosophical theses
[PHILGP F]
3. engage in original and ethical research in philosophy under close supervision* [PHILGP G]

* *We distinguish our 300-level courses from our 200-level courses by requiring students to formulate their own research/essay questions and to do some original research by identifying and engaging with relevant papers located through PhilPapers, Philosopher's Index or Google Scholar.*

NOTES:

1. Students' mastery of each CLO will either be assessed through essays, tests, exams, assignments and other assessment tasks or tested by way of the mandatory course requirements.
2. CLOs should directly inform marking criteria for each assessment item (which need to be stated explicitly on course outlines).
3. Course Coordinators are free to put forward additional CLOs for their course, but need to state clearly how they are assessed and where relevant, which attributes of the major they map onto.
4. Course Coordinators are free to put forward alternative CLOs for their course, but need to state clearly how they are assessed and (more importantly) how they map onto attributes of the major. See the matrix 'attribute assessment' above to determine which attributes need to be demonstrated at each year level.
5. When formulating additional CLOs or alternative CLOs, consult the Victoria University document entitled 'Creating Effective Learning Objective Statements'.
6. Additional CLOs, alternative CLOs and changes to assessment must be approved by the School Learning and Teaching Committee. A Course Amendment Form (attached) should be submitted to the School Manager (Pennie.Gapes@vuw.ac.nz).