THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES
PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Goal 1: To analyze fundamental issues posed by the world's religious and theological traditions.

Outcomes and Rubrics:

1) Students will compare the treatment of social issues (gender/sex, the environment, etc.) in diverse religious traditions

   a) Below expectations: Students are unable to compare and contrast how two religious traditions address specific social issues, such as gender/sexualities, the environment, poverty, etc.
   b) Minimal acceptable: Students can compare and contrast how social issues (gender/sexualities, race/class, the environment) are treated in at least two religious traditions such as Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, indigenous religions, etc.
   c) Exemplary: Students critically analyze the intersection of two or more social issues and fully explore their intersection with at least four religious traditions.

   Measurement: Senior Capstone Project and Presentation

   Time frame: During the student's senior year. Project and Presentation will be presented at the end of the semester.

   Who assesses: Department Chair, Senior Capstone Seminar instructor and appointed department committee

   How data will be used to improve program or revise curricula

   The department will meet as a whole to discuss findings and will recommend to the Chair and curriculum committee methods of improving department curriculum.

2) Students will apply the ethical perspectives of religious and theological traditions to contemporary social justice issues.

   a) Below expectations: Students are unable to apply ethical models from religious traditions to issues in social justice such as race/class, global poverty, health, sexualities, etc. Minimal acceptable: Students can identify ethical models and social justice approaches in two religious and the

b) Minimal acceptable: Students are able to apply ethical models from two religious traditions to two issues in social justice.
c) Exemplary: Students apply ethical models and approaches to social justice in at least four religious and theological traditions to a minimum of four social justice issues.

Measurement: Test questions developed by a committee of faculty and embedded in the mid term and final exams for three relevant courses **SUCH AS**

Time Frame: Students will take the proposed courses and will complete the mid-term and final exams for these courses. Evaluation of the exam questions will be scheduled at semester's mid-point and end.

Who Assesses: The Department Chair and an appointed committee will grade questions for outcomes assessment and review.

Use of data: The department will meet as a whole to discuss findings and will recommend to the Chair and curriculum committee methods of improving department curriculum.

Goal 2: To demonstrate an understanding of the development of religious traditions and of subdivisions within them, including the Catholic Christian tradition and its engagement with other religions.

Outcomes and Rubrics:

1) Students will differentiate the major features of world religions in terms of their historical development and diversity of beliefs, practices, and social forms.
   a) Below expectations: Students provide little or incomplete identification of the major features of a minimum of two of the world religions. Students demonstrate little to no knowledge of the historical development, beliefs, practices and social forms of two world religions.
   b) Minimal acceptable: Students demonstrate knowledge of and ability to critically analyze the historical development, beliefs, practices and social forms of two of the world's major religious traditions.
   c) Exemplary: Students provide clear, accurate and detailed identification and analysis of major features of four or more of the world's religions, including Christianity, emphasizing historical development and diverse beliefs, practices and social forms.

Measurement: Senior Capstone Project and Presentation

Time frame: During the student's senior year. Project and Presentation will be presented at the end of the semester.

Who assesses: Department Chair, Senior Capstone Seminar instructor and appointed department committee

How data will be used to improve program or revise curricula

The department will meet as a whole to discuss findings and will recommend to the Chair and curriculum committee methods of improving department curriculum.

2) Students will analyze the Catholic Christian tradition's engagement with other religious traditions, demonstrating an understanding of inter-religious dialogue.
   a) Below expectation: Students are unable to describe the Catholic Christian tradition's historical and contemporary relationship to at least two other religious traditions.
   b) Minimal acceptable: Students can describe the Catholic Christian tradition's historical and contemporary relationship with at least two other religious traditions and provide examples of inter-religious dialogue.
   c) Exemplary: Students can describe historical and contemporary relationships among four of the world's religions, including the Catholic Christian tradition and analyze critical moments of inter-religious dialogue.

   Measurement; Analysis of term papers in selected courses.

   Time frame: At the end of selected courses **SUCH AS**. Term papers will be analyzed by scoring rubrics.

   Who assesses: Department chair and an appointed committee

   Use of data: The department will meet as a whole to discuss findings and will recommend to the Chair and curriculum committee methods of improving department curriculum.

Goal 3 To utilize academic methods and practices characteristic of the study of theology and/or religion, including methods from textual, historical, social, and interdisciplinary studies.

Outcomes and Rubrics

1) Students will utilize two or more methodologies appropriate to the study of theology and/or religion.

    a) Below expectations: Students demonstrate no or minimal ability to apply basic methodological approaches in theology/religious studies (historico-critical, social, textual, anthropological, sociological, etc. analyses).
    b) Minimal acceptable: Students demonstrates basic competence in two methodologies, including the historical-critical approach for texts.
    c) Exemplary: Student can identify and employ four methodologies appropriate to the study of theology/religious studies.

Measurement: Senior Capstone Project and Presentation

Time frame: During the student's senior year. Project and Presentation will be presented at the end of the semester.

Who assesses: Department Chair, Senior Capstone Seminar instructor and appointed department committee

How data will be used to improve program or revise curricula

The department will meet as a whole to discuss findings and will recommend to the Chair and curriculum committee methods of improving department curriculum.

THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES
PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

[Notes for Department Retreat, 8/27/08]

1. The "new" assessment model limits "goal statements" to the most general aims of the program, while "outcomes" are specific observable behaviors that may be assessed. In this case, both goal and outcomes statements are adapted from our existing Program document which states 3 goals (see below). I have collapsed two of the goals into one and added a goal related to methodology (standard for most assessment models).
2. An "outcome" is not the same as a grade, since grades track more and typically other information than outcomes.
3. A "program assessment" plan is different from course assessment of student outcomes. Nevertheless, the development of rubrics to evaluate program performance may be facilitated by the implementation of course rubrics, where those course rubrics provide the data-generating mechanism for later program assessment.
4. Among the wide range of options for assessment, it seems appropriate to remain within the existing framework of the department with what is called "embedded assessment" (using existing courses to fulfill assessment needs) and building on our capstone seminar.. Others may be introduced if this is found to be insufficient (e.g. portfolio, exit questions or other self-reporting data, alumni questionnaires).[1]
5. Embedded assessment may lead to a need to specifically regulate the placement of essay or exam questions, if data on outcomes is otherwise insufficiently available.

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[1] Course-Embedded Assessment. Assessment practices embedded in academic courses generate information about what and how students are learning within the program and classroom environment. Course-embedded assessment takes advantage of already existing curricular offerings by using standardized data instructors already collect or by introducing new assessment measures into courses. The embedded methods most commonly used involve the development and gathering of student data based on questions placed in course assignments. These questions, intended to assess student outcomes, are incorporated or embedded into final exams, research reports, and term papers in senior-level courses. The student responses are then evaluated by two or more faculty to determine whether or not the students are achieving the prescribed educational goals and objectives of the department. This assessment is a separate process from that used by the course instructor to grade the exam, report, or term paper. There are a number of advantages to using course-embedded assessment. First, student information gathered from embedded assessment draw on accumulated educational experiences and familiarity with specific areas or disciplines. Second, embedded assessment often does not require additional time for data collection, since instruments used to produce student learning information can be derived from course assignments already planned as part of the requirements. Third, the presentation of feedback to faculty and students can occur very quickly creating a conducive environment for ongoing programmatic improvement. Finally, course-embedded assessment is part of the curricular structure and students have a tendency to respond seriously to this method.. See http://www.wisc.edu/provost/assess/manual/manual2.html#a2

6. For each of the following three years, we are expected to evaluate 1/3 of our program outcomes and assessment practices. Specifically, this means generating data on goal #1 for the 2008-09AY, goal #2 for 2009-2010AY, and within goal #3 for 2010-2011AY.

Learning Goals/Outcomes for the B.A. in Theology and Religious Studies

Program Outcomes

The aim of the program is to foster and deepen an engaged, critical, and integrated understanding of the disciplines of Theology and Religious Studies within the University's tradition of Jesuit liberal education. The program of study we provide for our students bridges three thematic areas:

*Theology and Spiritualities
*Scriptures and Religious Traditions
*Religion, Society, and Ethics
Classes are grouped with specific thematic areas, allowing both majors and minors a wide range of options in designing a course of study. The program will provide:

an understanding of fundamental issues posed by the world's religious and theological traditions:

inquiry into the diverse forms and expressions of religious experience;

emphasis on the Catholic Christian tradition as well as respectful engagement with other religious, theological, and philosophical traditions of the world.

Learning Outcomes

Human Dimensions of Religion, Theology and Spirituality

Students will be able to understand their own spirituality and recognize how religion, theology, and spirituality underlie and correlate with a broad range of human experience.

Religious Diversity

Students will be able to understand, differentiate, and appreciate various religious traditions, as encouraged by Vatican II's stance on the Catholic Church's relationship with other faiths. This understanding will entail the creedal vision, moral teachings, historical context, social expression, and key rites and symbols of these faith traditions.

Social Justice

Students will investigate and discuss how religious and theological traditions can work effectively for social justice and for the good of the entire human family and the environment that sustains it.