

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR 2009-10
Due October 1, 2010

Department/Program: Religion

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Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	For each SLO, list two methodologies and the criteria for successful performance (such as a measurement, rubric or scale that indicates a baseline for competency).				Term Assessed
	<i>Methodology 1</i>	<i>Criteria for Success</i>	<i>Methodology 2</i>	<i>Criteria for Success</i>	
1. Recognize and differentiate a basic core of factual knowledge about the major world religions, and the scholarly study thereof.	Department test: Part A, Major Religions and Theorists, multiple choice questions.	Criteria for success: All students will score 75% or higher on the outgoing exam. Control group: Students will be given the exam immediately upon declaring a religion major or minor.	Questionnaire for graduating religion seniors. Part B: Questions about the Student Learning Outcomes of Religion	Questions will be answered with the following scale: 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neutral), 2 (disagree), and 1 (strongly disagree). Criteria for success: All students will return a score of 4 or above for the question(s) addressing this SLO.	Spring 2008 Spring 2010 Spring 2012 Etc.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	For each SLO, list two methodologies and the criteria for successful performance (such as a measurement, rubric or scale that indicates a baseline for competency).				Term Assessed (F09 or S10)
	<i>Methodology 1</i>	<i>Criteria for Success</i>	<i>Methodology 2</i>	<i>Criteria for Success</i>	
2. Critically evaluate and assess evidence and argumentation, and formulate coherent and persuasive original arguments.	Portfolio: Research paper from a 300- or 400-level course	A rubric with this assessment scale will be used for examining the paper in terms of this SLO. Assessment scale: 0=not competent; 1=minimally competent; 2=competent; 3=highly competent. Criteria for success: 100% score 1 or above; 80% scores 2 or above; 20% scores 3.	Questionnaire, part B	Same as above.	Spring 2009 Spring 2011 Spring 2013 Etc.
3. Recognize, identify, and use credible sources of information, employing technology as appropriate.	Portfolio: Research paper from 300- or 400-level course	A rubric with this assessment scale will be used for examining the paper in terms of this SLO. Assessment scale: 0=not competent; 1=minimally competent; 2=competent; 3=highly competent. Criteria for success: 100% score 1 or above; 80% score 2 or above; 20% score 3.	Questionnaire, part B	Same as above.	Spring 2009 Spring 2011 Spring 2013 Etc.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO)	For each SLO, list two methodologies and the criteria for successful performance (such as a measurement, rubric or scale that indicates a baseline for competency).				Term Assessed (F09 or S10)
	<i>Methodology 1</i>	<i>Criteria for Success</i>	<i>Methodology 2</i>	<i>Criteria for Success</i>	
4. Observe, engage, understand, and interpret living religious communities and their practices.	Questionnaire, part C	<p>Students will be asked questions inquiring about the degree of their observation of or engagement with living religious communities in support of coursework in the major.</p> <p>Criteria for Success: Affirmative answers, on average, to all three questions.</p>	Portfolio: All full-time (non-sabbatical) RL faculty will read RL381 papers of graduating seniors, and will grade them based solely on the question, "Does this paper demonstrate that the student has learned to understand and interpret living religious traditions using the theoretical tools and methods in the study of religion?"	All graduating students will receive a grade of B or above from all full-time (non-sabbatical) RL faculty.	Spring 2009 Spring 2011 Spring 2013 Etc.
5. Give and accept criticism thoughtfully.	Portfolio: Students will submit both drafts (rough and final) of their RL381 paper	<p>In RL381, students submit a rough draft of a paper which other students read and critique in class. They then rework the paper and turn it in at the end of the class.</p> <p>A rubric will be developed for comparing these two drafts, looking for evidence that students have internalized and addressed criticisms</p>	Questionnaire, part B	See Criteria for Success for Methodology II for SLO 1.	Spring 2009 Spring 2011 Spring 2013 Etc.

1. Findings—*Summarize the findings from the assessment activities for each SLO that was assessed. Identify the SLO # and append supporting documentation such as rubrics, scales, pass rates, test scores, or other measurements used to assess each SLO.*

Because of the structure of the RL department's SLOs, and the methods used to assess them, we test SLOs 2-5 together in one year, and then SLO 1 by itself the next. In 2008-2009 we assessed SLOs 2-5. For 2009-2010, therefore, we are testing only SLO 1, which means that this year we have considerably less data/analysis than last.

SLO 1 is that RL students will “Recognize and differentiate a basic core of factual knowledge about the major world religions, and the scholarly study thereof.” The first assessment method is an objective “examination” (see below) that is given to all outgoing majors. Success on this assessment measure is that “all students will score 75% or higher on the outgoing exam.” This year RL had only three outgoing majors. However, since this SLO is tested only every two years, we have also included in our assessment the scores from outgoing exams delivered to the four majors who graduated in 2009. Of these seven outgoing majors, two scored 15/20 (75%) four scored 17/20 (85%), and one scored 18/20 (90%). We are pleased with these results, and they clearly constitute success according to Methodology 1.

The second methodology (Methodology 2) utilizes a questionnaire given to graduating religion seniors (“Part B: Questions about the Student Learning Outcomes of Religion”—see below). These questions indirectly assess the department's achievement of SLO 1 by soliciting outgoing majors' opinions on a variety of elements of the RL program. The criteria for success on this methodology is that “all students will return a score of 4 or above for the question(s) addressing this SLO.” All seven of the 2008-2009/2009-2010 graduating majors returned 4's or 5's on seven of the nine questions. On question 2 (“Work in the major has taught me about various theories of religion, its nature and its “origins”), one student returned a 3. We consider that score somewhat of a fluke, since the student was at the very moment she filled out the questionnaire enrolled in our Theory and Method course, which by according to all appearances is a successful course and effectively involves learning about theories about religion and methods in the study thereof. Therefore, while we will surely watch carefully to make certain that this students' evaluation of the department on this question does not become the norm, we are not particularly troubled by it.

More significant, in our view, is the fact that four of the seven students questioned returned a 3 on question 7, “Work in the major has given me the opportunity to develop my public speaking skills” (the rest returned 4's or 5's). The existence of that question on our questionnaire is to some extent an artifact of an earlier list of RL SLOs, one which included a SLO about the development of public speaking skills (the current list does not). Moreover, we believe that the relatively low scores on this question are to some extent attributable to student perception, i.e., that students don't think of class discussions (which are quite common in our classes) as a means of developing their public speaking skills. Nevertheless, we do consider the ability to speak publicly an important one, and do desire to help students develop it. And we therefore intend to address this perceived lack of opportunity to develop public speaking skills by being somewhat more intentional and public about providing such opportunities in our classes, and by doing so more regularly than in the past. We therefore recommend incremental changes in all courses as a first step in response to this assessment, rather than any major programmatic change.

2. **Use of Results**—*What programmatic changes, if any, were made in response to the findings? Reference the SLO #.*

See the end of the narrative just above. Other than implementing the noted incremental changes in order to address the public speaking issue, the department has no plans for major programmatic changes.

3. What **support services or resources** for faculty would help your department assess its SLOs better?

n/a

4. What **revisions**, if any, to current SLOs did you make or are under consideration?

The department has had very preliminary discussions about integrating vocational exploration/discernment experiences and courses into the RL curriculum. If those discussions were to issue in significant programmatic changes, the department would most likely be inclined to add a SLO which would allow it to assess its achievement of related goals.

5. Map each of your program's SLOs to the University Learning Outcomes. Make annual updates only if your SLOs changed.

NO change:

Butler University students will:

1. Explore various ways of knowing in the humanities, social and natural sciences, quantitative and analytic reasoning, and creative arts. (*Know*)
2. Articulate and apply required content knowledge within their area(s) of study. (*Know*)
3. Find, understand, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and use information, employing technology as appropriate. (*Know*)
4. Explore a variety of cultures. (*Know*)
5. Recognize the relationship between the natural world and broader societal issues. (*Know*)
6. Communicate clearly and effectively. (*Do*)
7. Demonstrate collaborative behavior with others. (*Do*)
8. Practice ways and means of physical well-being. (*Do*)
9. Acquire the skills to make informed, rational and ethical choices. (*Do*)
10. Experience diverse cultures, ethnicities, religions and sexual orientations. (*Value*)
11. Share their talents with Butler and the greater community at large. (*Value*)
12. Be exposed to the value of lifelong learning. (*Value*)

Religion Student Learning Outcomes:	Butler University Learning Outcomes
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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Recognize and differentiate a basic core of factual knowledge about the major world religions, and the scholarly study thereof.	X	X		X	X					X		
2. Clearly evaluate and assess evidence and argumentation			X						X			X
3. Recognize, identify, and use credible sources of information, employing technology as appropriate.	X		X						X			
4. Observe, engage, understand, and interpret living religious communities and their practices.	X		X	X	X		X			X	X	
5. Give and accept criticism thoughtfully	X					X	X		X		X	X

6a. List all courses in the program and map each of your SLOs to the **curriculum** in which the learning occurs, indicating the extent to which the outcome is introduced (I) or refined (R). [Make annual updates only if your SLOs or curriculum changed.]

New courses added

	SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 3	SLO 4	SLO 5
RL 101	I	I	I	I	I
RL 202	I	I	I	I	I
RL 304	R	R	R	R	R
RL 307	R	R	R	R	R
RL 308	R	R	R	R	R
RL 347	R	R	R	R	R
RL 350	R	R	R	R	R

RL 353	R	R	R	R	R
RL 354	R	R	R	R	R
RL 358	R	R	R	R	R
RL 363	R	R	R	R	R
RL 366	R	R	R	R	R
RL 367	R	R	R	R	R
RL 368	R	R	R	R	R
RL 370	R	R	R	R	R
RL 371	R	R	R	R	R
RL 375	R	R	R	R	R
RL 377	R	R	R	R	R
RL 372	R	R	R	R	R
RL 374	R	R	R	R	R
RL 381	R	R	R	R	R
RL 391/2	R	R	R	R	R

- 6b. **Learning/developmental opportunities for students outside the classroom**—*If any SLO was addressed outside the classroom, explain where and how the learning/developmental opportunities were provided to students in your program? (i.e., internships, field experiences, visiting lectures, collaborative projects, and other creative ideas you may have employed.)*

While the RL department is currently considering integrating internships, etc., as a required part of the RL curriculum, they are not currently a major element of the curriculum.

Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Part A will ask students about what they perceive be strengths and weaknesses of the program, suggestions for change, and plans after graduation.

Part B will indirectly measure success in meeting the Religion SLOs. Examples of questionnaire questions,

Scale: 5 strongly agree, 4 agree, 3 neutral, 2 disagree, 1 strongly disagree

1. Work in the major has helped me develop a basic and relatively broad core of factual knowledge about the major world religions
2. Work in the major has taught me about various theories of religion, its nature and its “origins.”
3. Work in the major has taught me about, and taught me to employ various methods in the study of religion (i.e., ways to study religion).
4. Work in the major has helped me develop my ability to critically evaluate and assess evidence and argumentation.
5. Work in the major has helped me learn to recognize, identify, and use credible sources of information, employing technology as appropriate
6. Work in the major has helped me learn to (or has required me to) observe, engage, understand, and interpret living religious communities and their practices.
7. Work in the major has given me the opportunity to develop my public speaking skills.
8. In the course of my work towards the major, I have submitted my views or work to criticism from the professor and other students
9. Work in the major has helped me develop the ability to give and take criticism thoughtfully.

Part C will directly measure success in SLO 4 on basis of a series of questions such as the following:

Please answer yes or no.

1. I have visited a religious community (other than my own) at its place of worship
2. I have interviewed a person of a faith other than my own
3. I have engaged a person of a faith other than my own in conversation about religious matters