SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE

Program Review

Summary and Reflections with Unit Goals, Action Plans, and Updates

Instructional Program - Philosophy (PHIL)

Executive Summary

Describe the successes and challenges your unit has faced since the last comprehensive review.

Our most significant challenge is that our program has had a large decline in enrollment since the last program review cycle. In Fall 2017 we had 1,165 enrollments at Census, and in Spring 2018 we had 1,125 for a total of 2,290 enrollments. In Fall 2022 we had only 833 enrollments and 866 for Spring 2023 for a total of 1,699 enrollments. This amounts to a loss of 591 enrollments and represents a decline of over 25%. This roughly matches the overall decline in enrollments at Mesa college during the same period.

These enrollment losses have particularly impacted what used to be our largest course offering of PHIL 100. In the 19-20 academic year we offered 27 sections of PHIL 100, this year we offered 16. This represents a loss of over 40%.

Another challenge has been the dramatic shift away from on-campus to online education. In 19-20 we offered 45 face-to-face sections representing 67% of our course offerings and 22 online sections. In 22-23 only 25% of our offerings are on-campus (15 sections) with the remainder being online courses (41 asynchronous and 3 synchronous). This has dramatically shifted the way we teach philosophy and has resulted in the loss of a number of excellent face to face instructors who have been unwilling to shift to online education.

On a more positive note, we have maintained the number of sections of our other multi-section offerings. In 19-20 we offered 12 sections of PHIL 102A, 9 sections of PHIL 102B and 7 sections of PHIL 205. In 22-23 we offered 9 sections of 102A, 10 of 102B, and 10 of 205. This issue with PHIL 100 may become more acute when the new Cal-GETC transfer pattern is finalized. According to preliminary drafts, PHIL 100 will no longer satisfy these transfer requirements which will likely result in a further loss of enrollments in the course. However, PHIL 205 will continue to articulate, and as the only option to ENGL 205, this may represent an area where the department could grow enrollments.

While these enrollment numbers are concerning, there is some evidence that the trend of dropping enrollments may be reversing. Our low point was Fall 21 where we had only 747 students enrolled. By contrast, we currently have 866 students enrolled, and this doesn't include all the late start courses which will add to these numbers. Given that there is a trend of increasing enrollment, it seems reasonable to conclude that we can support more sections going forward, though we will need to continue monitoring these numbers.

An additional success of the program is the wide variety of courses, course modalities, and session lengths we offer in our discipline. By offering the variety of courses that we offer, we give students the opportunity to be exposed to various ways of thinking about the world and interacting with others, and students benefit from this exposure. This is evidenced by the success rates in these courses. The success rates for the majority of these specialized courses (e.g. 101, 104A, 104B, 106, 107, 108, 109, 112, 125, 126, 130, and 131) exceed the campus average. While they are specialized, they all transfer to UC and CSU and fulfill IGETC and CSU GE requirements and will continue to fill similar requirements under the Cal-GETC transfer pattern.

If applicable, describe any major curricular or service changes your unit has engaged in and the impact of those changes since the last comprehensive review.
N/A

If applicable, describe the impact of any new resources (human, fiscal, etc) on the unit and/or action plan implementation.
N/A

If you assess OUTCOMES, please confirm that the outcomes have been reviewed for accuracy. If you do not assess Outcomes, skip this question.
Reviewed & Accurate

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Executive Summary Complete
Yes

Data Reflection

Trends observed in program/service area's data.

As noted above, one major trend we see is a significant loss in enrollments with the one significant bright spot being an increase in the enrollments for PHIL 205. Given that this course is the only alternative to ENGL 205 that satisfies the same transfer requirements, this may be an area for the Philosophy program to focus on in the future. Another major trend, also noted above, has been the dramatic shift to online education with 75% of our sections being online compared to only 25% being face to face.
Regarding course success and retention rates, these have remained relatively constant and are roughly at the college average. In drilling down to the individual courses, we see the same consistency in success and retention rates regardless of course modality.

Looking at degrees conferred, we had a peak of 9 in 20-21 with the general average being 5-7 degrees awarded per year. Although we do not award many degrees, the average time to completion for the Philosophy degree is much shorter than the college average. Students typically earn their degree in 3.4 years taking 6.6 terms to complete with an average of 83 units earned. This is lower than the college average of 4.2 years, 7.8 terms, and 97 units earned.

Describe any equity gaps in the data. Are there differences and/or patterns observed by demographics (e.g.race/ethnicity, gender, age, etc.)

In looking at the equity data, I will first reiterate my desire for there to be an equity trends dashboard so that it is easier to see the size of equity gaps across time. It is confusing to be plugging in and comparing different years one at a time.
The general trends that were identified are that, first, the persistent equity gap among Latinx students has been narrowing over time. In 16-17 the equity gap was -10%. In 21-22 the gap was -4.3%. This represents a significant reduction and puts the Latinx equity gap for Philosophy well below the college-wide equity gap of -7.6%. Driving this drop has been the elimination of an equity gap for Latinx students in PHIL 100. That being said, some of our courses continue to have large equity gaps among Latinx students with an enormous gap in PHIL 205 of -17.3% and a gap of -10.7% in PHIL 102B. There is clearly additional work to be done in these courses particularly directed towards our Latinx students.

While there is generally good news in Philosophy regarding Latinx students, we have seen a significant increase in the equity gaps for Black and African American students at -22.9%. This gap appears to be entirely in our online, asynchronous courses as we do not see any gap in our face-to-face courses. This is another area where additional work is required to identify the cause of these gaps and develop strategies to rectify them.

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Describe the discussion(s) that took place about the unit's learning outcomes assessment data.

All our courses meet or exceed the outcome standards. We are very proud of the hard work and success of our courses in meeting these outcomes.

Data Reflection Complete
Yes

Practice Reflection

Describe current practices your program/service area has engaged in that you believe impact the above data trends and equity gaps.

Based on the data discussed above, it seems likely that the shift to online education has negatively impacted our Black and African American students resulting in a significant increase in equity gaps among that population. The exact causes of this are unclear, but it is an area the department will need to explore. We will encourage instructors to work with MOST and review the CVC-OEI Online Rubric to jumpstart these efforts.

Regarding the decrease in equity gaps among Latinx students, I believe this has been a result of sustained professional development activities focused around equity conducted by our faculty.

What other factors (internal or external) might also impact the above data trends and equity gaps?

As mentioned above, one of the major external factors that will impact our program is the new Cal-GETC transfer pattern. As a result of this (still to be finalized) plan, students transferring to a UC or Cal-State will be required to take one less humanities course (two instead of three) and there will no longer be a stand-alone critical thinking requirement. This will mean that PHIL 100 will be less useful to students and will consequently be in much less demand. However, there will continue to be a Critical Thinking and Composition requirement which PHIL 205 currently satisfies. As the only alternative to ENGL 205, this has the potential to be a significant area of growth for our program. In addition, several of our courses do satisfy the Social and Behavioral Sciences area (also reduced from three to two courses required). Promotion of these courses may be another area where the program could maintain or increase enrollments.

Other external factors impacting the program include the general decline in community college enrollments and the preference among students for online, asynchronous courses. Connected to this last point, we also need to consider the impact that Large Language Model AI's may have on online instructions. Given the recent advances in this technology (such as ChatGPT) there may soon be no way to ensure that work submitted electronically is actually created by the student, thereby threatening the integrity of online education in its entirety.

Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

Practice Reflection Complete
Yes

Mid-Cycle Updates

YEAR 2 Updates (2023 - 2024)

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Executive Summary section for Year 2.
In the 22-23 academic year we did see an uptick in enrollments and this trend seems to be continuing into the Fall 2023 semester. This is an encouraging sign given some of the extreme enrollment drops we saw during the pandemic.

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Data Reflection section for Year 2.
For the 22-23 Academic Year, it does appear that we have eliminated equity gaps among Black/African American students, but we did see a slight widening of the equity gap among Latinx students. Hopefully the other plans outlined in program review will go some way towards reducing and eliminating those gaps.

Review Outcomes Report. Review the unit's outcomes assessment process for 2022 - 2023. Discuss connections to unit goals/action plans/resource requests.
We continue to remain on track for completion of all CLO's by the end of the evaluation cycle.

Summary and Reflection

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Practice Reflection section for Year 2.

No

YEAR 3 Updates (2024 - 2025)

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Executive Summary section for Year 3.

We are pleased to see that our enrollments have started to trend upwards in recent semesters and we are starting to approach our pre-pandemic levels. We hope to see these trends continue into the Spring and subsequent academic years.

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Data Reflection section for Year 3.

In the 23-24 academic year, our program continues to only see equity gaps among Latinx students. Looking at our four multi-section courses (PHIL 100, 102A, 102B, and 205), in 100 we continue to see equity gaps among our Latinx students that do appear to be increasing. However, these gaps only exist in our online courses with no equity gaps in our F2F sections. In 102A we see no equity gaps in our courses regardless of modality. In 102B we see equity gaps among our Latinx students, but again these are only in our online sections with no gaps in our F2F courses. Finally, we see no equity gaps in our 205 courses. This data indicates that if we shifted to more F2F courses and away from online courses we could reduce or eliminate equity gaps. New full-time faculty in our department (such as a joint hire in PHIL and WMNS) would enable us to increase our F2F offerings and would likely help close some of the outstanding equity gaps we are currently facing.

Review Outcomes Report. Review the unit’s outcomes assessment process for 2023 - 2024. Discuss connections to unit goals/action plans/resource requests.

We continue to successfully meet our outcomes targets. One big issue we face is that, while our faculty are generally good at completing CLO"s, we do face some issues with adjunct faculty completing the work. As the CLO demands increase and the timeline for completion of them is shortened, it would be extremely beneficial to have more of our courses taught by full-time faculty which would require a new hire. In addition, in discussing our CLO outcomes and our equity data as a department, we do see a need for the development of new curriculum, particularly in the areas of Women's Studies. For this reason, we have decided to seek a joint hire in PHIL and WMNS. This will allow us to maintain our current levels of excellence and provide new courses and learning pathways for future students.

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Practice Reflection section for Year 3.

N/A

YEAR 4 Updates (2025 - 2026)

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Executive Summary section for Year 4.

We are extremely pleased to see a significant upward trend in enrollments in our discipline. Based on the numbers, we appear to have returned to pre-pandemic levels of enrollment. In fall of 2020 we had an enrollment of 1043 students, dropping to a low of 747 in Fall 2021. For Fall of 2025 we are back up to 1067 students. Similarly, in Spring of 2020 we had 1064 students enrolled, dropping to a low of 869 in Spring 2022. Enrollments for Spring of 2025 are at 997 students. Current enrollments for Spring 2026 are looking good, so it is our hope that we will be able to surpass those pre-pandemic levels next year. While our enrollments are at pre-pandemic levels, our productivity has significantly exceeded those levels. In Fall of 2019 our fill rate was 74% and our productivity was 16.66. For Fall of 2025 our fill rate was 92% and our productivity was 19.57. In Spring of 2020 our fill rate was 74% and our productivity was 74%. In Spring of 2025 our fill rate was 81% and productivity was at 16.98. Both Spring and Fall of 2025 saw the highest rates for both these numbers since the charts began in Fall 2019. Overall, these trends are very encouraging, and we are hopeful that we will exceed these numbers again in Spring.

We also continue to offer a robust number of courses to serve our students, and we are pleased to see the increased enrollment in our specialty courses as well as our bread-and-butter multi-section courses. We seem to have adapted well to the new Cal-GETC standard, and our next big effort will be to respond to the common course numbering for PHIL 101. We will also likely want to create a new course in line with PHIL C1000 (a general introduction to philosophy course that we do not currently offer in our District).

Summary and Reflection

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Data Reflection section for Year 4.

We are pleased to see that we are making improvements in closing equity gaps. in the 2019-2020 academic year, we had disproportionate impacts on our Black/African American students with an equity gap of -15.1% and on our Latine students with an equity gap of -7.1%. By contrast, in the 2024/25 academic year these groups were no longer disproportionately impacted, with the equity gap for Black/African American students shrinking to -7.1% and the gap for Latine students shrinking to -2.3%.

Looking specifically at online, asynchronous courses, where we had previously seen our most significant equity gaps, we can see that these have narrowed significantly. In 2019-20, we saw our Latine population disproportionally impacted in this modality, with an equity gap of -6.6%. In 2024-25, there are no disproportionately impacted groups, and the equity gap shrank to -2.2%.

Review Outcomes Report. Review the unit's outcomes assessment process for 2024 - 2025. Discuss connections to unit goals/action plans/resource requests.

We completed assessments of all CLOs in Spring 2025. All of our courses meet or exceed our standard of competency. We regularly discuss these outcomes and our assessment results at department meetings during the Fall and Spring FLEX week. Based on these conversations, we are extremely pleased by these results and our processes for collecting and evaluating them. We will continue to assess, monitor, and discuss outcomes as we move into the new outcomes assessment cycle. We plan to complete our PLO assessments by the end of Spring 2026.

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Practice Reflection section for Year 4.

N/A

YEAR 5 Updates (2026 - 2027)

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Executive Summary section for Year 5.

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Data Reflection section for Year 5.

Review Outcomes Report. Review the unit's outcomes assessment process for 2025 - 2026. Discuss connections to unit goals/action plans/resource requests.

Provide any edits or updates to the prompts originally documented in the Practice Reflection section for Year 5.

Unit Goals, Action Plans, and Updates

Cal-GETC Transfer Pattern & Philosophy Program Changes

Unit Goal: Goal 1: Review and modify the Philosophy Program as necessary to account for changes resulting from the new Cal-GETC transfer pattern.

Goal Status: Completed

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2024 - 2025

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030:

- **Community - Objective 2:** Develop activities, spaces, and programs that support a sense of belonging with a focus on antiracism, historically minoritized groups, and inclusion. (✓)
- **Completion - Objective 1:** Develop pathways that provide students with clarity about degree, certificate, and transfer requirements. (✓)
- **Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 1:** Develop and implement frameworks to create communities that can provide more targeted delivery of educational resources and support services. (✓)
- **Scholarship - Objective 2:** Evaluate and improve Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practice in classroom environments, campus activities, departments, schools, and administrative units (✓)

Action Plans	Updates
Action Plan Status: Active **Action Plan:** 1. Meet with faculty across the district to reassess, and if necessary, modify the degrees being offered. 2. Meet with faculty across the district to reassess and, if necessary, modify the courses that are offered. **Action Plan Cycle:** 2025 - 2026, 2024 - 2025, 2023 - 2024, 2022 - 2023	**Submission Date**: 09/19/2024 **Action Plan Update**: We have completed the deactivation of two of our majors, leaving us with only one major, the ADT. **Update Year**: 2024 - 2025 **Action Plan Progress**: Completed **Submission Date**: 09/06/2024 **Action Plan Update**: Our program changes continue to make their way through the curriculum review process. **Update Year**: 2024 - 2025 **Action Plan Progress**: On Track **Submission Date**: 11/28/2023 **Action Plan Update**: We deactivated two of our majors leaving us with just an ADT in Philosophy. We also modified that remaining major, adding several courses to the list and rearranging the categories for some of the courses. These changes have all been launched in CurricUNET and are working their way through the process. **Update Year**: 2023 - 2024 **Action Plan Progress**: On Track

Unit Goals, Action Plans, and Updates

Goal 2: Equity and OER

Unit Goal: Goal 2: Improve equitable outcomes by developing additional OER resources for students.

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030:

- **Completion - Objective 3:** Design and promote programs and services that intentionally target a reduction in equity gaps in completion outcomes (✓)
- **Completion - Objective 4:** Support students' access to resources to mitigate the impact caused by technological and basic needs insecurity (✓)
- **Scholarship - Objective 5:** Reduce costs associated with instructional materials to support the elimination of equity gaps (✓)

Action Plans	Updates
Action Plan Status: Active **Action Plan:** 1. Support development of OER resources for our courses. 2. Develop OER material for PHIL 100. **Action Plan Cycle:** 2025 - 2026, 2024 - 2025, 2023 - 2024, 2022 - 2023	**Submission Date**: 11/28/2023 **Action Plan Update**: Dr. Mary Gwin took a sabbatical in Spring 2022. She developed a number of OER resources including fully online, OER, ZTC section of PHIL 101 and PHIL 100. **Update Year**: 2023 - 2024 **Action Plan Progress**: On Track

Goal 3: Equity and Non-Western Philosophical Perspectives

Unit Goal: Goal 3: Improve equitable outcomes by modifying course outlines and developing curriculum that engages more directly with non-Western philosophical perspectives.

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2022 - 2023

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030:

- **Community - Objective 2:** Develop activities, spaces, and programs that support a sense of belonging with a focus on antiracism, historically

minoritized groups, and inclusion. (✓)

- **Scholarship - Objective 2:** Evaluate and improve Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practice in classroom environments, campus activities, departments, schools, and administrative units (✓)

Action Plans	Updates
Action Plan Status: Active **Action Plan:** 1. Meet with faculty across the district to discuss modifications of Course Outlines of Record to include non-Western perspectives and discuss creation of new curriculum. 2. Implement the changes that result from (1). **Action Plan Cycle:** 2025 - 2026, 2024 - 2025, 2023 - 2024, 2022 - 2023	**Submission Date**: 09/06/2024 **Action Plan Update**: We continue to modify and update the Course outline of Record as our courses come up for the regular 6-year review. **Update Year**: 2024 - 2025 **Action Plan Progress**: On Track **Submission Date**: 11/28/2023 **Action Plan Update**: Philosophy faculty from across the district met in the summer of 2023 to discuss these changes and a plan for implementing them. We continue to work on this goal. **Update Year**: 2023 - 2024 **Action Plan Progress**: On Track

Goal 4: Pursue new faculty positions through joint hires with allied programs.

Unit Goal: Hire two new faculty joint hires: one with WMNS and one with SUST

Goal Status: Active

Beginning Year: 2024 - 2025

Projected Completion Year: 2025 - 2026

Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030:

- **Community - Objective 4:** Remove barriers to equitable participation by developing, incentivizing and creating structures for all employees to engage in and design professional learning (✓)
- **Community - Objective 5:** Increase opportunities to be an asset and resource to the external community (✓)
- **Completion - Objective 1:** Develop pathways that provide students with clarity about degree, certificate, and transfer requirements. (✓)
- **Completion - Objective 2:** Develop cross - functional teams that support student success and include integrated career and transfer counseling. (✓)
- **Completion - Objective 3:** Design and promote programs and services that intentionally target a reduction in equity gaps in completion outcomes (✓)
- **Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 1:** Develop and implement frameworks to create communities that can provide more targeted delivery of educational resources and support services. (✓)
- **Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 3:** Increase community engagement, experiential learning, integrated career planning, and workforce

training to prepare students for future careers (✓)

- **Pathways and Partnerships - Objective 5:** Develop and implement technologies, including website redesign, that will make pathways information available to students so that they can effectively utilize this information in their educational and career planning (✓)
- **Scholarship - Objective 1:** Expand and prioritize professional learning experiences for all employees that create parity in outcomes across racial/ethnic groups and all disproportionately impacted groups (✓)
- **Scholarship - Objective 2:** Evaluate and improve Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion practice in classroom environments, campus activities, departments, schools, and administrative units (✓)
- **Scholarship - Objective 4:** Expand the use of innovative and high-quality teaching, learning, and support practices that achieve equitable outcomes and increase student success (✓)