Mission / Purpose

The Department of Religious Studies promotes learning and research through descriptive, comparative, and analytical studies of cross-cultural beliefs and practices, both past and present. Within the University, the Department is one of the principal settings in which students critically engage the history, diversity, and ingenuity of human collections of beliefs and rituals. This disciplined study fosters intellectual development that strengthens the abilities of faculty and student scholars to critically, actively, and effectively engage the issues confronting a technologically changing and interconnected world.

Goals

G 1: Revamp Assessment in REL
An overall Departmental goal for 2013-14 is to revamp our assessment process/objectives completely.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Acquiring Knowledge of Key Terms and Theorists
We expect our students to retain, recognize, and employ technical vocabulary and information about key theorists in the study of religion.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:

Related Measures

M 1: Terms and Theorists: Embedded Measure
At least once per academic year, and in a lower-level introductory course, a professor will embed no less than two separate measures in a test offered during the first half of the semester and then repeat these two measures in a test offered during the second half of semester (e.g., the final examination), to assess: (1) the retention and recognition of specific information concerning vocabulary and theorists and (2) the rate of change in the retention and recognition of this information.
Source of Evidence: Writing exam to assure certain proficiency level

M 2: Terms and Theorists: Writing Measure
At least once per academic year, and in an upper-level seminar, a professor will, as part of his/her assessment rubric for a writing assignment, assess whether students are able to demonstrate their ability to employ technical vocabulary and properly draw upon information about key theorists in the study of religion.
Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

SLO 2: Acquiring and Retaining Descriptive Information
We expect our students to acquire and retain descriptive and historical information about the beliefs, practices, texts, and institutions associated with the people studied in their courses.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Related Measures

M 3: Descriptive Information: Pre/Post Test
At least once per academic year, a professor will develop, implement, and report on a pre-/post test, offered in a lower-level, introductory course, that is focused on descriptive and historical information about the beliefs, practices, texts, and institutions of relevance to the people studied by scholars of religion.
Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

M 4: Descriptive Information: Written Assignment
At least once per academic year, a professor will devise an assessment rubric to report on the success rate of students accurately describing, in their writing, information concerning the beliefs, practices, texts, and institutions of the people studied by scholars of religion.
Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

SLO 3: Application of Methods
We expect our students to apply methods of analysis (e.g., description, comparison, explanation) widely practiced throughout the human sciences to the data of religion.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Related Associations:

Related Measures

M 5: Application of Methods: Reading in Context
At least once an academic year a professor will develop and implement a lower-level introductory group assignment in which students are assessed based on their ability to apply the method of describing texts within their historical and social situation.

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group

M 6: Application of Methods: Comparison
At least once per academic year a professor will develop and implement an upper-level writing assignment in which students apply the comparative method to analyze two texts in terms of their similarities and differences.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

SLO 4: Acquiring Research Skills
We expect our students to acquire and employ scholarly research skills as part of carrying out their own original research.

Related Measures

M 7: Research Skills: Use of Library Databases
At least once per academic year an upper-level class will be enrolled for a tour of Gorgas Library and tutorial (led by a reference librarian) on using online library databases to acquire information and citations to academic articles. Subsequent to that tour students will be asked to find a specific online resource through the databases to assess their retention of the tour's/tutorial's information.

Source of Evidence: Performance (recital, exhibit, science project)

M 8: Research Skills: Annotated Bibliography
At least one per academic year a class will require students to demonstrate their ability to carry out original, individual research by using databases to create an annotated bibliography on a research topic of relevance to the class.

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group

SLO 5: Formulating and Presenting Original Arguments
We expect our students to formulate and present their own arguments, both verbally and in writing.

Related Measures

M 9: Original Arguments: Oral
At least once per academic year, a professor will develop and employ a rubric to assess students’ abilities to draw upon/integrate class material as part of an original, persuasive oral presentation.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

M 10: Original Arguments: Written
At least once an academic year a professor will develop and employ a rubric to assess students' abilities to draw upon and integrate class material in an original, persuasive, written argument of their own.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

OthOtcm 6: Program Outcome 1: Quality
The program will improve and sustain a high level of recognized quality

Related Measures

M 11: Mentoring and Professionalization: Class Visits
The Department will develop and implement a new system for mentoring tenure-track faculty and Full Time Temporary Instructors (FTTI) to help professionalize them to the academy, the life of the Department, and improve their teaching skills and thereby enhance the quality of the BA in REL. This task will be adopted by the Chair of the Retention Committee.

Source of Evidence: Evaluations

M 12: Mentoring and Professionalization: GTA Initiative
The Department’s Retention Committee Chair will develop, in the Summer of 2013, and implement in Fall 2013 and Spring 2014, a new Graduate Teaching Assistant mentoring process whereby GTAs will read a common set of articles on the academic study of religion and then meet periodically throughout with him/her to discuss common issues related to working in the undergraduate classroom. The goal is to enhance the interactions among our students with the GTAs who are assisting our faculty in large enrollment 100-level courses. As part of this initiative, an evaluation form will developed by REL faculty, under the leadership of the Retention Committee Chair, and implemented twice per semester (by the GTA's supervising professor) to assess the GTA's performance in class.

Source of Evidence: Evaluations

OthOtcm 7: Program Outcome 2: Optimal Enrollees and Graduates
The program will build and sustain an optimal level of annual program enrollments and degree completions

Related Measures
**M 13: Student Recruiting: Advertising**

In order to attain the optimal level of enrollees the Department will develop a variety of new methods to alert students on campus, and incoming students, to opportunities in the the Department of Religious Studies, such as: advertisements in the Crimson White and related publications; posters in Ferg showcases during the advising period; meetings with Academic Advisors across campus as well as materials sent to them alerting them to Core courses in REL; participating in Homecoming and having various promotional events along the Crimson Promenade that coincide with advising periods; placing business cards int he Ferg during Bama Bound sessions.

Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

**M 14: Graduation Rate Initiative: Advising**

In order to ensure prompt graduate rates, the Department will unify all advising duties into one service role and that professor will visit all REL classes at the start of each semester to alert students to opportunities in the Department, the coming semester's courses, the many activities of the Religious Studies Student Association (RSSA), etc. The advisor will meet once per semester with all REL first majors and work toward meeting annually with all REL second majors and minors, to ensure prompt completion of their degree requirements.

Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

**OthOtm 8: Program Outcome 3: Graduate Satisfaction**

The program will be highly valued by its program graduates and other key constituencies it serves

**Related Measures**

**M 15: Graduates Focus Groups**

The Chair of the Department, or his designee, will meet with selected groups of graduates to inquire about their experiences in the degree and the applicability of their skills after graduation. Select meetings will be filmed and posted on the Department's Vimeo site.

Source of Evidence: Focus groups on teaching, learning, program value

**Target:**

In this first year of this initiative we aim to meet at least one group of graduates

**M 16: Graduate Survey Initiative**

The Department will develop an online graduate survey (comprising quantitative and qualitative data) that it will implement in the Spring 2014 semester to determine the relevance of the BA in REL for our graduates and to develop a series of practical examples of how graduates have used their degree in their careers. The Department will then administer this survey in each future semester for new graduates, periodically asking those who have already completed the form to revisit it to provide further elaboration. Student with particularly novel replies will then be asked to elaborate on their response for the REL grad blog (www.as.ua.edu/rel/blog).

Source of Evidence: Alumni survey or tracking of alumni achievements

---

**Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)**

**enforce conformity**

We will enforce conformity with the requirement to take the test by linking successful completion of the test to clearance for registration.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** High
- **Implementation Description:** Majors who have not taken the test will not be cleared for registration. Computers will be available in the office for test-taking. In addition, a computer lab is located in the building.

- **Projected Completion Date:** 03/2013
- **Responsible Person/Group:** Faculty adviser; department administrator.

**New Outcomes Coordinator**

Trost will assume this position effective June 1, 2012.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** High

**Writing skill scrutiny**

We will monitor our students' ability to write (this changes from class to class and year to year) in an effort to determine whether remedial measures are required to ensure good writing ability prior to graduation.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** Low
- **Implementation Description:** monitor
- **Responsible Person/Group:** instructors in "W" courses

**Filming Graduates**

Based on budgetary criteria, obtain filming equipment, train a student and, in 2013-14, begin interviewing more graduates as part of the focus group initiative, discussing the relevance of their REL degree.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013
- **Implementation Status:** In-Progress
- **Priority:** High

**Imbedded Questions**

The SORSK will be reviewed to determine what questions are key to the faculty.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** Low
- **Implementation Description:** Faculty will review existing SORSK to determine what questions are crucial to the study of religion. These questions will be singled out and monitored with particular scrutiny.

- **Projected Completion Date:** 09/2014
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Responsible Person/Group:</strong> Department faculty under direction of Department Advisor.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Implementation of Major and Minor Survey**  
The Department needs to revisit this measure in relation to the advising process to ensure that the survey is completed early on in the career of a major. In addition, the advisor could lead a discussion among the faculty about the effectiveness of the existing survey with the intention of devising a new survey.  
**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** Low  
**Implementation Description:** Rethink and possibly redesign major declaration survey.  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Advisor with faculty. |
| **Refine Mid-semester Progress Report**  
Determine nature of mid-semester progress report and fine-tune the mechanism to determine whether it is a satisfaction survey or an assessment mechanism.  
**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** Low  
**Implementation Description:** Refine the survey during the next two midsemesters to determine what information is most useful for pedagogical purposes.  
**Projected Completion Date:** 12/2014  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Steve Jacobs |
| **Survey of Graduating Seniors**  
The Long Range Planning Committee will review this assessment measure to determine its desirability.  
**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** Low  
**Implementation Description:** Department needs to determine if an exit survey is desirable.  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Faculty |
University of Alabama

Detailed Assessment Report
2012-2013 Religious Studies B.A.
As of: 8/19/2014 07:42 AM CENTRAL

Mission / Purpose

The Department of Religious Studies promotes learning and research through descriptive, comparative, and analytical studies of cross-cultural beliefs and practices, both past and present. Within the University, the Department is one of the principal settings in which students critically engage the history, diversity, and ingenuity of human collections of beliefs and rituals. This disciplined study fosters intellectual development that strengthens the abilities of faculty and student scholars to critically, actively, and effectively engage the issues confronting a technologically changing and interconnected world.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Discipline Knowledge
We expect our students to recognize and use key terms, texts, theorists, and traditions in the study of religion.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
Student Learning Outcome #1 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:

Prof. Jacobs will implement the pre- and post- "Judaism Literacy Survey" again the next time he teaches REL 223 "Introduction to Judaism" to evaluate both the survey itself and student results. Further, the "Survey of Religious Knowledge" will be implemented during the Fall 2011 advising period, and the results will be used to determine what additional courses students should take.

Related Measures

M 1: General Religious Knowledge
Upon declaration of the major, students will take the "Survey of Religious Knowledge (SORSK)" test to measure familiarity with key terms, texts, theorists, and traditions. The average percentage of correct answers will be calculated and recorded in the annual assessment report. The test will be offered during subsequent fall semesters as students progress through the program to monitor each individual student's improvement. In addition, courses associated with the Judaic Studies minor will require the Jewish Literacy Survey at the beginning and the end of each semester. These results will be collected and analyzed by the director of the Judaic Studies minor.

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

Target:
All majors are required to take the Survey of Religious Studies Knowledge test upon admission to the program. This test should be taken yearly. For 2011-12, our target is to have the test up and running and available on e-Learning.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met

Measure 1: Survey of RS Knowledge
The results of the SORSK, administered Fall 2012, are as follows: 1. There were 21 respondents and the average score was 33.8. 2. Nine respondents took test for the second time. 3. Of these, the 1st year average score was 34.6; the 2nd year average score was 33.3.

In 2011-12 there were 11 respondents to the survey. This year participation has increased by 10: a 90% increase. In the previous year, the average score was 35.36. This year’s average represents a decrease of 4.4%. This may simply be a matter of having students participate in the survey at an earlier moment in their careers as majors.

Oddly, the results also show a 3.7% decrease in the overall score of those who took the test for the second time. This may register forgetfulness; it may also suggest that our courses do not continue to address the kinds of questions that occur in the survey. We may need to come up with a test that represents more closely the kinds of topics currently taught in the department.

Measure 1: Jewish Literacy Survey
The JLS was administered to students in REL 244 and 372 during the fall semester. The August results are as follows: 1. There were 25 respondents. 2. The high score was 42; low 16; median 29. The December results are as follows: 1. There were 17 respondents. 2. The high score was 40; low 24; median 33.

Overall, a 4-point improvement over the course of the semester.
enforce conformity

We will enforce conformity with the requirement to take the test by linking successful completion of the test to clearance for registration.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: General Religious Knowledge | Outcome/Objective: Discipline Knowledge

Implementation Description: Majors who have not taken the test will not be cleared for registration. Computers will be available in the office for test-taking. In addition, a computer lab is located in the building.
Projected Completion Date: 03/2013
Responsible Person/Group: Faculty adviser; department administrator.

M 2: Specific Religious Knowledge

Specific questions will be embedded into the SORSK that reflect common emphasis of the entire faculty. The average percentage of correct answers will be calculated and recorded in the annual assessment report. From time to time embedded questions will be incorporated into survey courses such as REL 100 to determine whether emphases of specific faculty members are registering with students.

Source of Evidence: Existing data

Target: Review to commence fall 2012.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Partially Met
Measure 2: Imbedded questions in the SORSK

There was no common review of the SORSK so there are no results to report.

Measure 2: Imbedded questions in survey courses

In REL 100 (fall semester): On Test 1, 60.3% of the students were able correctly to identify Rudolf Otto’s definition of religion; on the Final Exam, 78.6% of the students were able correctly to identify Rudolf Otto’s definition of religion. Historical Comparison: In Spring 2009, 57% of students were able correctly to identify this answer. On Test 2, 42.4% of the students were able correctly to identify the definition of religion used by Karl Marx; on the Final Exam, 88.9% of the students were able correctly to identify the definition of religion used by Karl Marx. Historical Comparison: In Spring 2009, 49% of students were able correctly to identify this answer.

The improvement from Fall 2012’s Test 1 to the Final Exam is based on the inclusion of review sessions run by Graduate Teaching Assistants working under the Professor’s guidance; there was no such review session in Spring 2009. This improvement satisfies the Professor’s goal of achieving at least 75% correct answers on this question. This improvement (in Fall 2012, and also as compared to Spring 2009) far exceeds the Professor’s goal of achieving at least 75% correct answers on this question. These findings suggest that no change is necessary. GTA-run review sessions are of significant value in this course’s learning outcomes.

The Professor will now expect at least 80% of his students to answer this question correctly the next time a Final Exam is given in this course. Graduate Teaching Assistants will be instructed to pay closer attention to reviewing the unit of reductionism/materialism in the study of religion.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

Imbedded Questions

The SORSK will be reviewed to determine what questions are key to the faculty.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: Specific Religious Knowledge | Outcome/Objective: Discipline Knowledge

Implementation Description: Faculty will review existing SORSK to determine what questions are crucial to the study of religion. These questions will be singled out and monitored with particular scrutiny.

Projected Completion Date: 09/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department faculty under direction of Department Advisor.

M 3: Summary of Courses Taken

The Religious Studies courses that a student has taken at the time he or she declares the major will be summarized during the initial advising appointment to create a context for the survey results and to alert the student to requirements and opportunities in the curriculum.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target: We intend to implement this phase of advising activity in fall 2012.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met

Measure 3: REL Course Inventory

18 students participated in the fall advising event; 11 were present in the spring. Over the course of the academic year, 8 new majors were advised, during which time a course inventory was made and advising recommendations were advanced based on each student’s perceived and articulated religious studies background.
SLO 2: Application of Methods and Theories

We expect our students to apply methods and theories widely practiced throughout the human sciences to the data of religion.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
Student Learning Outcome #3 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:

As student data is accumulated and evaluated based upon the various writing rubrics, evidence of the above applications will become clearer as will areas of improvement.

Related Measures

M 4: Group Presentation Rubric
Selected regularly offered courses will assess student ability to analyze in a discipline-specific way the representation of religions in fiction, textbooks, scholarly articles, and/or video through group presentations. A summary of students' performance will be reviewed by the instructor in repation to pre-distributed "group presentation" assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

Target: No target established.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met

Measure 4: group presentation rubric

REL 102 (spring): In group presentations, students will be able to articulate a critical analysis of the categories associated with religions and the related agendas. Of the nineteen groups, 17 effectively articulated the critical analysis of the categories in the second presentation in accordance with pre-distributed rubrics, an increase from 8 on the first presentation. Continue the activity, with at least two presentations.
The feedback at the time of the first presentation and the rubric need to be continued.

M 5: Discussion Rubrics
Selected regularly offered courses will assess student ability to analyze in a discipline-specific way the representation of religions in fiction, textbooks, scholarly articles, and/or video through class discussions. A summary of students' performance will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed "discussion" assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Target: Discussion rubrics will be established in select courses that feature discussion.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met

Measure 5: discussion rubric

REL 430 (REL and Literature) (spring) is a seminar heavily dependent on discussion. This class talked at the beginning of the semester about what constitutes "productive scholarly discussion," and students aimed to meet this agreed-upon standard as rubricized by the class throughout the course. 11 of 12 students participated "fully" in class discussions. 2 of 12 students received final grades that were negatively affected by lack of participation. For the future, a formal/written discussion rubric will be introduced on the first day of a seminar; in addition, the emphasis on discussion will weigh more heavily into the "participation" percentage of the final grading average.

M 6: Mid-semester Progress Performance
Selected regularly offered courses will assess indirectly student familiarity with discipline-specific theories and methods with a mid-semester progress evaluation report. A summary of students' "mid-semester progress" performance will be reviewed by the instructor.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target: Thus far the "midsemester progress report" has been more of a satisfaction survey. It gauges student satisfaction with course material. This needs to be reconsidered in light of the objective to measure the application of methods and theories.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Partially Met

Measure 6: mid-semester progress report

For REL 224 (fall): Out of 15 students, Textbook was rated more or most effective by 13; Additional readings: 10; Assignments: 13; Discussions: 12; Teaching: 12. For REL 372 (fall) Out of 13: Textbook was rated more or most effective by 15; Additional readings: 15; Assignments: 14; Discussions: 143 Teaching: 15; Media: 11. These designations were reconsidered and in the Spring results were reported differently. For REL 223 (spring): Readings: 59% excellent, 25% superior, 9% average; Graded assignments: 71% excellent, 18% superior, 6% below average; Discussions: 76% Excellent, 16% superior, 6% average; Teaching 76% excellent, 12% superior; Media: 66% excellent, 24% superior. For REL 372 (spring): Readings: 63% excellent, 37% superior; Graded assignments: 13% excellent, 38% superior, 13% average; Discussions: 88% Excellent; Teaching 88% excellent; Media: 76% excellent, 12% superior.

Conclusion: Resolution to continue to fine-tune measures in consultation with assessment coordinator, changing scale of excellent, superior, average to excellent, good, average, for example.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
Refine Mid-semester Progress Report
Determine nature of mid-semester progress report and fine-tune the mechanism to determine whether it is a satisfaction survey or an assessment mechanism.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Mid-semester Progress Performance | Outcome/Objective: Application of Methods and Theories

Implementation Description: Refine the survey during the next two midsemesters to determine what information is most useful for pedagogical purposes.
Projected Completion Date: 12/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Steve Jacobs

SLO 3: Scholarly Arguments Constructed from Course Data
We expect our students to draw upon data acquired in their courses in order to construct scholarly arguments.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
Student Learning Outcome #2 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced;
The data collected this year will serve as a base-line for the following years. In 2011-12 we will again gather the data and compare them with the 2010-11 data.

Related Measures

M 7: Summary of Scholarly Argument Writing Rubric
Selected regularly offered courses will conduct writing exercises in which students must demonstrate the ability to engage, summarize, and develop the arguments of key scholars and figures in the study of religion. A summary of student’s performance will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed “writing” assessment rubrics.
Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other
Target: no target established
Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
Measure 7: writing rubric
In REL 240 (fall): Average overall writing performance for first paper: 12.7 (out of 15); for second paper: 13.58. Evaluation: Average improvement of .78 from 1st to 2nd paper. Matrix is sufficiently clear from the start, but slight improvement from 1st to 2nd paper is also a good sign. Writing rubric is working. No action needed.
REL 415 (spring) (Religion and the American South) is a seminar carrying the W-designation. The students, therefore, received writing rubrics to refer to as they worked throughout the semester on their final essays. The rubrics especially spelled out the expectations for peer review exercises, which they completed at two intervals. Of 13 students, 11 turned in their essays on time, and 10 went completely and successfully through the entire writing process (brainstorming, drafting, editing, revising). Action: Make the writing rubric perhaps even more thorough/specific regarding various parts of the essay. I also plan to experiment with assigning two central writing assignments instead of just one. The steps of the writing process will remain a focus.

M 8: Evidence-based Arguments Rubrics
Selected regularly offered courses will conduct writing exercises in which students must demonstrate their ability to construct an arguments with “evidence.” A summary of students’ performance will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed assessment “evidence” rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric
Target: no targets established.
Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
Measure 8: "evidence" rubric
In REL 240 (fall): Result: Average score on use of evidence rubric for first paper 8.6; for second paper: 9 (out of 10). Evaluation: average improvement of .36 from 1st to 2nd paper. Rubric is sufficiently clear from the start, but slight improvement is also a good sign. Action: Grading rubric is working. No action needed.

SLO 4: Formulation and Presentation of Original Insights
We expect our students to formulate, present, and advance their own original insights.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps
**Relevant Associations:**

Student Learning Outcome #4 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:

We will continue to monitor the success of blogging exercises through student evaluations and statistics enumerating participation.

**Related Measures**

**M 9: Original Insights In-class Presentation Rubric**
Selected regularly offered courses will require students to research, organize, and make in-class presentations. A summary of students’ performances will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed “in-class presentation” assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

**Target:**
None established.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**
Nothing to report this cycle.

**M 10: Blog Participation Rubric**
Selected regularly offered courses will increase student engagement by requiring students to contribute to on-going debates in the field of religious studies through effective participation in "blog" and other media discussions. A summary of students’ performances will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed "Blog Presentation" assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**Target:**
No target established

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**
Measure 10: blog participation rubric

REL 226 (fall) formed a Facebook discussion group called "The Transatlantic Avengers" to which students were required to post weekly and engage in discussions about pop culture/news stories that were relevant to course content/material. Out of 10 required postings, 3 of 5 students submitted 9 or more. One student submitted 6, and one submitted 3. However, these two students were nonetheless active participants in class discussion and kept up with readings. Evaluation: Continue with Facebook groups as relevant or productive for a course. Emphasize the percentage of the final grade for which participation in the group matters and offer students a record of their standing at intervals throughout the semester.

**SLO 5: Value of the Religious Studies Major**
We expect our students to assess in a preliminary way the "value" of the Religious Studies major for their personal growth and development.

**Related Measures**

**M 11: Essay on Value of Religious Studies Major**
Each spring, students in the Capstone Rel 490 course will complete an essay assignment designed to assess the "value" of the Religious Studies major for their personal growth and development. A summary of the students’ reports will be prepared by the instructor.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**Target:**
No target established

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

Students in the REL 490 Capstone course actively engaged with this assignment. Copies of their responses, minus identifiers, are archived with this report. This document will be shared with the faculty to help assess the department's overall effectiveness. Several themes recur throughout the essays that are noteworthy. These include: 1. An awareness of the complex problem of defining "religion." 2. An appreciation for the intellectual challenge the study of religion poses. 3. Exposure to a variety of world cultures made accessible through the study of religion. 4. An appreciation for the faculty and student community in the religious studies department. 5. An expression of the value of the religious studies major in relation to (in conversation with, as supplement to) another major or minor. One student, a Judaic Studies minor, questioned the need for JS minors to take the Capstone course -- a problem already under discussion in the department.

**M 12: Pre & Post Major Comparison of Goals**
Each spring, students in Capstone Rel 490 will complete an exercise comparing their goals for the major as stated upon declaring the major to their goals upon completion of the major. A summary of this exercise will be prepared by the instructor.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**Target:**
Test existing survey to determine if the questions are adequate to the comparative task. Determine usefulness of the survey for establishing comparison over time.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Met**
Five of 18 students had filled out the first survey upon declaration of the major. In addition, none of the minors had filled out the first survey. Most students were able to imaginatively reconstruct their states of mind when they first came into the Department, but contrary to the intent of this assessment measure, they did not have a document to work with. The exercise was nevertheless useful in establishing a framework for the essay assignment that constitutes measure 11. The Department needs to revisit this measure in relation to the
advising process to ensure that the survey is completed early on in the career of a major. In addition, the advisor could lead a discussion among the faculty about the effectiveness of the existing survey with the intention of devising a new survey.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

**Implementation of Major and Minor Survey**

The Department needs to revisit this measure in relation to the advising process to ensure that the survey is completed early on in the career of a major. In addition, the advisor could lead a discussion among the faculty about the effectiveness of the existing survey with the intention of devising a new survey.

- **Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013
- **Implementation Status:** Planned
- **Priority:** Low
- **Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
  - **Measure:** Pre & Post Major Comparison of Goals | **Outcome/Objective:** Value of the Religious Studies Major
  - **Implementation Description:** Rethink and possibly redesign major declaration survey.
  - **Responsible Person/Group:** Advisor with faculty.

**Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**

**OthOtcm 6: Program Outcome 1: Quality**

The program will improve and sustain a high level of recognized quality

**Related Measures**

- **M 13: Outside Review: Program Quality**
  - During 2012-13 the Department will undergo its regular 8 year review process and bring in an outside expert to assess the quality of the degree program.
  - **Source of Evidence:** Academic direct measure of learning - other
  - **Target:**
    - Our goal is to meet or exceed the outside reviewer's expectations.
  - **Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**
    - The outside expert, Prof. Greg Johnson (UC Boulder), Chair of his own Department, concluded that our BA in Religious Studies offers a rigorous undergraduate education, delivered by nationally and internationally respected scholars. He suggested augmenting the unit with a scholar of Islam and that we consider revising the BA minor in Judacc Studies.

- **Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**
  - **Response to Outside Reviewer**
    - A plan was put in place to request a position for a scholar of Islam (which was granted by the University and we successfully hired Prof. Eleanor Finnegan, cross-appointed to HY). Also, in 2013-14 a goal is to begin plans to revise the Judaic Studies minor, in accordance with the revision to the BA in Religious Studies.
  - **Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013
  - **Implementation Status:** In-Progress
  - **Priority:** High
  - **Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**
    - **Measure:** Outside Review: Program Quality | **Outcome/Objective:** Program Outcome 1: Quality

- **M 14: Outside Review: Faculty Quality**
  - During 2012-13 the Department will carry out its regular 8 year review and, as part of this, bring in an outside expert to assess the quality of the faculty's research.
  - **Source of Evidence:** Academic direct measure of learning - other
  - **Target:**
    - Our aim is to pass the outside review
  - **Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**
    - The outside reviewer, Prof. Greg Johnson (UC Boulder), the Chair of his own Department, concluded that the faculty at the University of Alabama's Department of Religious Studies has an enviably high national and international scholarly reputation.

**OthOtcm 7: Program Outcome 2: Optimal Enrollees and Graduates**

The program will build and sustain an optimal level of annual program enrollments and degree completions

**Related Measures**

- **M 10: Blog Participation Rubric**
  - Selected regularly offered courses will increase student engagement by requiring students to contribute to on-going debates in the field of religious studies through effective participation in "blog" and other media discussions. A summary of students' performances will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed "Blog Presentation" assessment rubrics.
  - **Source of Evidence:** Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

- **M 15: Sponsored Lectures and Lunchtime Discussions**
  - The Department will sponsor lectures and lunch-time discussions throughout the year that address the interest and concerns of both registered and prospective Religious Studies majors and minors. The chair will report on these recruitment and retention activities in the Department's Annual Report.
  - **Source of Evidence:** Presentation, either individual or group
**Target:**
The Department will aim to recruit an optimal number of majors by hosting at least 2 widely advertised public lectures and at least 3 widely advertised lunchtime discussions with visiting scholars.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**
To promote the major in REL the Department sponsored 5 widely advertised and well attended public lectures, as part of a "The Relevance of the Humanities" lecture series (with associated blog) and offered 10 different lunchtime discussion events for students, 8 of which were with visiting scholars.

**OthOutcm 8: Program Outcome 3: Graduate Satisfaction**
The program will be highly valued by its program graduates and other key constituencies it serves

**Related Measures**

**M 11: Essay on Value of Religious Studies Major**
Each spring, students in the Capstone Rel 490 course will complete an essay assignment designed to assess the "value" of the Religious Studies major for their personal growth and development. A summary of the students’ reports will be prepared by the instructor

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**M 12: Pre & Post Major Comparison of Goals**
Each spring, students in Capstone Rel 490 will complete an exercise comparing their goals for the major as stated upon declaring the major to their goals upon completion of the major. A summary of this exercise will be prepared by the instructor.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**M 16: Graduates Focus Groups**
The Chair of the Department, or his designee, will meet with selected groups of graduates to inquire about their experiences in the degree and the applicability of their skills after graduation

Source of Evidence: Focus groups on teaching, learning, program value

**Target:**
In this first year of this initiative we aim to meet at least one group of graduates

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Partially Met**
In the Fall of 2012 Ted Trost, Chair of REL, and Russell McCutcheon, previous chair, traveled to Birmingham, AL, to meet with two graduates of the program (Jennifer Nelson and Justin Nelson)--the former a middle school teacher with a BA in REL (double major in English) and the latter a businessman with a BA in REL (minor in Business). Because they were generous with their description of how skills taught in REL have practical applications in their careers, the discussion was informative, convinced REL to carry out this initiative with greater scope in 2013-14, and to dedicate resources to filming these conversations so they can be posted online.

**Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):**

**Filming Graduates**
Based on budgetary criteria, obtain filming equipment, train a student and, in 2013-14, begin interviewing more graduates as part of the focus group initiative, discussing the relevance of their REL degree.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Graduates Focus Groups | Outcome/Objective: Program Outcome 3: Graduate Satisfaction

**Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)**

**enforce conformity**
We will enforce conformity with the requirement to take the test by linking successful completion of the test to clearance for registration.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: General Religious Knowledge | Outcome/Objective: Discipline Knowledge

Implementation Description: Majors who have not taken the test will not be cleared for registration. Computers will be available in the office for test-taking. In addition, a computer lab is located in the building.

Projected Completion Date: 03/2013
Responsible Person/Group: Faculty adviser; department administrator.

**New Outcomes Coordinator**
Trost will assume this position effective June 1, 2012.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

**Writing skill scrutiny**
We will monitor our students' ability to write (this changes from class to class and year to year) in an effort to determine whether remedial measures are required to ensure good writing ability prior to graduation.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Low
**Filming Graduates**

Based on budgetary criteria, obtain filming equipment, train a student and, in 2013-14, begin interviewing more graduates as part of the focus group initiative, discussing the relevance of their REL degree.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** In-Progress  
**Priority:** High  

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
**Measure:** Graduates Focus Groups  
**Outcome/Objective:** Program Outcome 3: Graduate Satisfaction

**Imbedded Questions**

The SORSK will be reviewed to determine what questions are key to the faculty.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** Low  

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
**Measure:** Specific Religious Knowledge  
**Outcome/Objective:** Discipline Knowledge  

**Implementation Description:** Faculty will review existing SORSK to determine what questions are crucial to the study of religion. These questions will be singled out and monitored with particular scrutiny.  
**Projected Completion Date:** 09/2014  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Department faculty under direction of Department Advisor.

**Implementation of Major and Minor Survey**

The Department needs to revisit this measure in relation to the advising process to ensure that the survey is completed early on in the career of a major. In addition, the advisor could lead a discussion among the faculty about the effectiveness of the existing survey with the intention of devising a new survey.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** Low  

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
**Measure:** Pre & Post Major Comparison of Goals  
**Outcome/Objective:** Value of the Religious Studies Major  

**Implementation Description:** Rethink and possibly redesign major declaration survey.  
**Projected Completion Date:** 12/2014  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Advisor with faculty.

**Refine Mid-semester Progress Report**

Determine nature of mid-semester progress report and fine-tune the mechanism to determine whether it is a satisfaction survey or an assessment mechanism.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** Low  

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
**Measure:** Mid-semester Progress Performance  
**Outcome/Objective:** Application of Methods and Theories  

**Implementation Description:** Refine the survey during the next two midsemesters to determine what information is most useful for pedagogical purposes.  
**Projected Completion Date:** 12/2014  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Steve Jacobs

**Response to Outside Reviewer**

A plan was put in place to request a position for a scholar of Islam (which was granted by the University and we successfully hired Prof. Eleanor Finnegan, cross-appointed to HY). Also, in 2013–14 a goal is to begin plans to revise the Judaic Studies minor, in accordance with the revision to the BA in Religious Studies.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** In-Progress  
**Priority:** High  

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
**Measure:** Outside Review: Program Quality  
**Outcome/Objective:** Program Outcome 1: Quality

**Survey of Graduating Seniors**

The Long Range Planning Committee will review this assessment measure to determine its desirability.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013  
**Implementation Status:** Planned  
**Priority:** Low  

**Implementation Description:** Department needs to determine if an exit survey is desirable.  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Faculty
Mission / Purpose

The Department of Religious Studies promotes learning and research through descriptive, comparative, and analytical studies of cross-cultural beliefs and practices, both past and present. Within the University, the Department is one of the principal settings in which students critically engage the history, diversity, and ingenuity of human collections of beliefs and rituals. This disciplined study fosters intellectual development that strengthens the abilities of faculty and student scholars to critically, actively, and effectively engage the issues confronting a technologically changing and interconnected world.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Discipline-Specific Knowledge
We expect our students to recognize and use key terms, texts, theorists, and traditions in the study of religion.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
Student Learning Outcome #1 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:

Prof. Jacobs will implement the pre- and post- "Judaism Literacy Survey" again the next time he teaches REL 223 "Introduction to Judaism" to evaluate both the survey itself and student results. Further, the "Survey of Religious Knowledge" will be implemented during the Fall 2011 advising period, and the results will be used to determine what additional courses students should take.

Related Measures

M 1: Religious Knowledge
Upon declaration of the major, students will take a "Survey of Religious Knowledge" (SORK) multiple choice examination that tests for key terms, texts, theorists, and traditions with embedded questions dedicated to determining departmentally agreed-upon "crucial" knowledge. Average percent correct will be calculated. This test will be offered each fall as a student progresses through the program to monitor improvement (or lack thereof).

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

Target:
All majors are required to take the Survey of Religious Studies Knowledge test upon admission to the program. This test should be taken yearly. For 2011-12, our target is to have the test up and running and available on e-Learning.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Partially Met
The Department successfully created the test. The test was successfully administered to 11 of 30 majors. High score out of 50 was 46; low 18; average 35.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

enforce conformity
We will enforce conformity with the requirement to take the test by linking successful completion of the test to clearance for registration.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Religious Knowledge | Outcome/Objective: Discipline-Specific Knowledge

Implementation Description: Majors who have not taken the test will not be cleared for registration. Computers will be available in the office for test-taking. In addition, a computer lab is located in the building.

Projected Completion Date: 03/2013
Responsible Person/Group: Faculty adviser; department administrator.

M 2: Summary of Courses Taken
The religious studies courses that students have taken at the time they declare will be summarized during the fall advising period to create a context for the survey results.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
We intend to implement this phase of advising activity in fall 2012.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.
Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No findings to report at this time. Existing data will be analyzed by the curriculum committee in the fall.

M 3: Survey Modifications
Based upon survey data results and review -- as well as changing teaching emphases of the Departmental faculty -- SORSK will be modified or changed as warranted. This is not an outcome and was improperly placed here.

Source of Evidence: Existing data

Target: Review to commence fall 2012.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Material gathered. Will be reviewed in fall 2012.

SLO 2: Data Acquisition
We expect our students to draw upon data acquired in their courses in order to construct scholarly and critical arguments.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
Student Learning Outcome #2 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced;

The data collected this year will serve as a base-line for the following years. In 2011-12 we will again gather the data and compare them with the 2010-11 data.

Related Measures

M 1: Religious Knowledge
Upon declaration of the major, students will take a "Survey of Religious Knowledge" (SORK) multiple choice examination that tests for key terms, texts, theorists, and traditions with embedded questions dedicated to determining departmentally agreed-upon "crucial" knowledge. Average percent correct will be calculated. This test will be offered each fall as a student progresses through the program to monitor improvement (or lack thereof).

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

M 4: Evidence-based Arguments lower division
Regularly offered lower division courses will conduct writing exercises in which students must demonstrate their ability to construct arguments with "evidence." A summary of students' performance will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target: No targets established.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
18 out of 26 (69%) students demonstrated a strong or good ability to construct a written argument with evidence in the second writing assignment of REL 220. 10 out of those 18 good/strong written assessments (55%) also demonstrated significant improvement over their first writing assignment.

This assignment is working. We may need to consider remedial writing measures for our weaker students.

M 5: Evidence-based Arguments
Regularly offered upper division courses will conduct writing exercises in which students must demonstrate the ability to construct arguments with "evidence." A summary of students' performance will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target: Written assignments were reviewed for this outcome in REL 420. Two assignments were administered. Of 16 students, 12 performed at "good" or better level using evidence.
Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
Written assignments were reviewed for this outcome in REL 420. Two assignments were administered. Of 16 students, 12 performed at "good" or better level using evidence.

22 – 7 out of 10 (70%) demonstrated a strong or good ability to construct a written argument with evidence in their final research paper for REL 321. Most students have or have acquired this skill by the end of the semester.

Some students still do not know how to use evidence well. This is a larger university problem and may require the department to inaugurate remedial writing classes to ensure that all of our students do well in "W" designated courses.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):
Writing skill scrutiny
We will monitor our students' ability to write (this changes from class to class and year to year) in an effort to determine whether remedial measures are required to ensure good writing ability prior to graduation.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Evidence-based Arguments | Outcome/Objective: Data Acquisition

Implementation Description: monitor
Responsible Person/Group: instructors in "W" courses

M 6: Writing Rubric for Religious Studies
Writing rubrics will be shared departmentally with the goal of designing a “Religious Studies Writing Rubric” applicable to department courses.

Source of Evidence: Discussions / Coffee Talk
Target: Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
This is an Action Plan imported as an Outcome into WEAVE in error.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
We intend to address uniform rubrics in the Faculty Retreat.

SLO 3: Methods and Theories
We expect our students to apply methods and theories widely practiced throughout the human sciences to the data of religion.

Connected Document
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

Relevant Associations:
Student Learning Outcome #3 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:

As student data is accumulated and evaluated based upon the various writing rubrics, evidence of the above applications will become clearer as will areas of improvement.

Related Measures
M 7: Analysis of Religious "Content"
Selected regularly offered lower division courses will assess student ability to analyze the representation of religions in fiction, textbooks, scholarly articles, and/or video through written assignments, individual or group presentations or class discussions. A summary of students' performance will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group
Target: Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
No Target Established.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
19 out of 30 (63%) demonstrated a strong or good ability to analyze representations of religions of Asia within in novel in the first writing assignment of REL 220.

M 8: Analysis of Religious "Content" in Upper Level Courses
Selected regularly offered upper division courses will assess student ability to analyze the representation of religions in fiction, textbooks, scholarly articles, and/or video through written assignments, individual or group presentations or class discussions. A summary of students' performance will be reviewed reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Project, either individual or group
Target: Development presentation skills.
Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
6 out of 10 students (60%) demonstrated a strong or good ability to analyze their research in a written paper in REL 321.
These skills are being acquired to an appropriate degree.

**M 9: Uniform Departmental Rubrics**
Writing rubrics will be shared departmentally with the goal of designing a “Religious Studies Writing Rubric” as well as a “Religious Studies Oral Presentation Rubric” applicable to department courses.

Source of Evidence: Discussions / Coffee Talk

**Target:**
Retreat discussion will take place on August 17, 2012.

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**
This action plan was mistakenly imported into WEAVE as an Outcome.

**SLO 4: Formulation and Presentation of Arguments**
We expect our students to formulate and present their own verbal arguments in individual and group presentations.

**Connected Document**
Religious Studies BA Curriculum Maps

**Relevant Associations:**
Student Learning Outcome #4 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:

We will continue to monitor the success of blogging exercises through student evaluations and statistics enumerating participation.

**Related Measures**

**M 10: Lower Division In-class Presentations**
Selected regularly offered lower division courses will require students to research, organize, and make in-class presentations. A summary of students’ performances will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

**Target:**
None established.

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
5 of 6 small groups made excellent or very good presentations on alternative ways of diagramming Chinese religions in REL 220.

These are good results.

We will continue this and similar exercises.

**M 11: Upper Division In-class Presentations**
Selected regularly offered upper division courses will require students to research, organize, and make in-class presentations. A summary of students’ performances will be reviewed by the instructor in relation to pre-distributed assessment rubrics.

Source of Evidence: Presentation, either individual or group

**Target:**
None established.

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
In REL 420: 7 of 8 presentations in REL 420 were good or excellent. Only one student was identified by peers as having shirked work responsibilities.

In REL 321: 9 out of 10 students (90%) presented their research in an excellent or good manner, all 9 showing improvement over previous presentations.

These are good results.

**M 12: Oral Presentation Rubrics**
Oral Presentation Rubrics will be shared departmentally with the goal of designing a "Religious Studies Oral Presentation Rubric" applicable to department courses.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**Target:**
to accomplish in retreat on August 17, 2012.

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**
This action plan was mistakenly imported into WEAVE.

**Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**

**OthOtcm 8: Department Outcome: Equitable Teaching Assignments**
All tenured and tenure-track faculty will teach an equal distribution of large enrollment, advanced seminar, and honors courses.

**Relevant Associations:**
Department Outcome #1 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:
The current system of course assignments will be kept as long as the faculty cooperates and the distribution of types of courses remains fair.

**Related Measures**

**M 22: Course Plans**  
Update annually the two-year course plan submitted to chair by each faculty member to ensure equal distribution of course load assignments throughout the Department.

Source of Evidence: Document Analysis  
**Target:**  
receive course plans from all faculty by 6-1-2012  
**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**  
course plans received by target date. Equitable teaching proposed for spring 2013 semester.

**M 23: Course Distribution Review**  
The distribution of courses across faculty is reviewed annually using data from the Faculty Activity Report.

Source of Evidence: Document Analysis  
**Target:**  
Consent on the part of all faculty members that teaching load is indeed equitable.  
**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**  
Consensus obtained.

**M 24: Faculty Activity Report Review**  
As a result of last year’s (2011) FAR review, one faculty member who had not taught a large enrollment course for a period of time was assigned a large enrollment course for Fall 2011.

Source of Evidence: Document Analysis  
**Target:**  
Equal share of teaching should be maintained

**OthOtcm 9: Department Outcome: Scholarly Productivity**  
Each faculty member is expected to produce one peer-reviewed article (or equivalent) per year and make at least one presentation per year at a national, international or regional conference.

**Relevant Associations:**  
Department Outcome #2 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:

To continue this level of productivity, the chair will continue to reward productivity on ratings of research performance which will translate to higher merit raises. No improvement plans are slated for next year, but this may change if performance decreases.

**Related Measures**

**M 31: Evidence of on-going research**  
The chair will review the distribution of presentations and publications for each faculty member in the annual Faculty Activity Report.

Source of Evidence: Document Analysis  
**Target:**

**M 32: Publication and Presentation opportunities**  
Each faculty member notifies the chair informally of publication and presentation opportunities.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other  
**Target:**  
general practice now

**M 33: Article writing for engagement**  
Given the nature of the discipline, writing one article (usually in addition to other book projects underway) is deemed a sufficient measure of engagement in the discipline.

Source of Evidence: Document Analysis  
**Target:**

**OthOtcm 10: Department Outcome: Faculty Service to Department**  
We expect our faculty and staff to facilitate the mission of the department in its many venues.

**Relevant Associations:**  
Department Outcome #3 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced:

To continue this level of productivity, the chair will continue to reward service activity on ratings of service performance which will translate to higher merit raises. No improvements are slated for next year, although this may change if problems arise in levels of activity.
Related Measures

M 25: Representation on Department Committees
There are ten standing committees in the department. All faculty members are expected to serve as chair on at least one Departmental committee. Data is collected in the annual FAR.

Source of Evidence: Activity volume

Target:
Target is to ensure the quality of work and not simply the quantity

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Partially Met
adjustments were made to the assessment coordinator position to ensure quality reporting in the future. The new arrangement will be rolled out at the Departmental retreat on August 17, 2012.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

New Outcomes Coordinator
Trost will assume this position effective June 1, 2012.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Representation on Department Committees | Outcome/Objective: Department Outcome: Faculty Service to Department

M 26: Service-related Activities and Projects
Various service-related faculty and staff activities within and beyond the Unit are reviewed on a regular basis and reported in the monthly faculty-staff minutes.

Source of Evidence: Activity volume

Target:
ensure quality and quantity of all service

M 27: No Improvement Needed
No improvement actions are called for at this time.

Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

OthOtcm 11: Department Outcome: Increase Majors and Minors
We expect to increase the number of majors and minors in Religious Studies.

Relevant Associations:
Department Outcome #4 Improvement Action(s) to be advanced;

A department committee will be convened this academic year (2011-2012) to address this change and will propose a plan of action to be implemented in the 2012-13 academic year.

Related Measures

M 28: Department Annual Report
A comparison of the number of majors and minors between the current year and previous years is made in the department's Annual Report.

Source of Evidence: Existing data

Target:
Establish a consistently reliable statistical basis for making claims about the numbers of our majors and minors.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
With annual report 2011-12, the statistics used to determine the number of REL majors and minors are the ones delivered by OIRA.

M 29: Recruitment Efforts
Recruitment efforts through the Religious Studies Student Association and in other venues are reported in the department's Annual Report.

Source of Evidence: Existing data

Target:
establish ongoing social events for the RSSA

M 30: Orientation Session
Due to more accurate recording instruments, the fact that our majors numbers were down last year, and in response to the recommendation of the department's long-range planning committee, we will conduct an orientation session for all majors and minors prior to the fall advising period.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
fall and spring orientation sessions. Fall session was optional with 12 students attending. Spring session was mandatory. Prizes were given out. 19 students attended.
enforce conformity
We will enforce conformity with the requirement to take the test by linking successful completion of the test to clearance for registration.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Religious Knowledge | Outcome/Objective: Discipline-Specific Knowledge

Implementation Description: Majors who have not taken the test will not be cleared for registration. Computers will be available in the office for test-taking. In addition, a computer lab is located in the building.
Projected Completion Date: 03/2013
Responsible Person/Group: Faculty adviser; department administrator.

New Outcomes Coordinator
Trost will assume this position effective June 1, 2012.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Representation on Department Committees | Outcome/Objective: Department Outcome: Faculty Service to Department

Writing skill scrutiny
We will monitor our students' ability to write (this changes from class to class and year to year) in an effort to determine whether remedial measures are required to ensure good writing ability prior to graduation.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Low

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Evidence-based Arguments | Outcome/Objective: Data Acquisition

Implementation Description: monitor
Responsible Person/Group: instructors in "W" courses
Curriculum Maps #1 (In which courses are Student Learning Outcomes Addressed)
Use “Introduce” when outcome is first address; “Reinforce” when outcome is reinforced; and “Master” when outcome is expected to be mastered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 1</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 2</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 3</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 4</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 5</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REL 100</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 105</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 110</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 112</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 124</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td>Introduce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 208</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 210</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 213</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 220</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 223</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 224</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 226</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 228</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 231</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 234</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 235</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 236</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 237</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 238</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 240</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 241</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td>Reinforce</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 241</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>REL 311</td>
<td>REL 321</td>
<td>REL 332</td>
<td>REL 335</td>
<td>REL 340</td>
<td>REL 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Master</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Curriculum Maps #2 (What assessment measures will be employed in which courses for each SLO)**

Indicate which measure is being obtained in which course by typing “Measure n.n” in the appropriate cell. If you’d rather use a description of the measure, that is fine. Also, indicate the year/semester in which the measure will be obtained (e.g., Fall 2011). Student learning outcomes must be assessed at least once within a 2-year period. Note that a measure does not need to be obtained from every course in which an outcome is covered (see Map #1).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 1</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 2</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 3</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 4</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 5</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REL 100</td>
<td>1.1/Fall 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL 105</td>
<td>1.1/Fall 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>REL 124</th>
<th>REL 220</th>
<th>REL 223</th>
<th>REL 234</th>
<th>REL 321</th>
<th>REL 341</th>
<th>REL 370</th>
<th>REL 410</th>
<th>REL 482</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1/Fall 2011</td>
<td>3.1/Fall 2011</td>
<td>4.1/Fall 2011</td>
<td>2.1/Fall 2011</td>
<td>3.1/Fall 2011</td>
<td>4.1/Fall 2011</td>
<td>2.2/Fall 2011</td>
<td>3.2/Fall 2011</td>
<td>4.2/Fall 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Additional Narrative:</td>
<td>Use this space to provide any additional details concerning the 2011-12 Department Assessment Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| *NOTE:* Curriculum Map #2 is based solely on the courses being offered Fall 2011. Spring 2012 schedule is not yet available. Departmental colleagues do annually submit a 3-semester sequence of their courses, which is then taken into consideration by the chair in selecting semester course offerings.