

Form E-1-A for Boston College Core Curriculum

Department/Program: Perspectives Program

- 1) **Have formal learning outcomes for the department's Core courses been developed? What are they?** (What specific sets of skills and knowledge does the department expect students completing its Core courses to have acquired?)

As an interdisciplinary program providing core credit in philosophy, theology, arts, literature, social science and natural science, the learning outcomes of the Perspectives Program are developed by the departments in those core areas.

However, each of the four Perspectives courses adapts these core learning outcomes to the Perspectives mission of

- providing a humanist context for professional and scientific education;
- educating the whole person and forming students who are intelligent, responsible, reasonable, and attentive;
- aiding students in the developing the skills of critical thinking and practical living; and
- bringing faculty and students into conversation with the ancient, modern, and contemporary thinkers who have shaped our intellectual and spiritual heritage

- 2) **Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific.** (Where are the department's expected learning outcomes for its Core courses accessible: on the web, in the catalog, or in your department handouts?)

The learning outcomes of the various core areas served by Perspectives can be found at the Core Requirements and Courses web page, as well as the web sites of the relevant departments. The mission of Perspectives, as well as narrative descriptions of the contents of the four Perspectives courses, can be found at the Perspectives Program web site. A description of the Perspectives Program is also included in the distinctive programs brochure offered to incoming students during orientation.

- 3) **Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine whether students have achieved the stated outcomes for the Core requirement?** (What evidence and analytical approaches do you use to assess which of the student learning outcomes have been achieved more or less well?)

None for 2018-19.

At some point prior to 2015 the Perspectives Program developed an assessment regime for Perspectives on Western Culture (Perspectives I) that included a quantitative instrument (to be administered in Fall and Spring) and a random review of sample final essays. The plan was to administer the quantitative instrument every odd year, and the qualitative analysis of essays every even year. The quantitative tool was administered in 2015; the qualitative review of essays was apparently never undertaken. In 2015 the quantitative tool was also used to compare the effectiveness of the Perspectives Living and Learning Communities to non-LLC sections of Perspectives on Western Culture.

The 2015 E-1-A for Perspectives recognized the need to develop instruments for the other three

Perspectives courses. This will be undertaken in the coming years, within the context of a comprehensive review of assessment practices in Perspectives.

However, none of this should be taken to suggest that the Perspective Program does not engage in assessment. Indeed, Perspectives was doing assessment before it became a standard program requirement at Boston College. For over 20 years, the Perspectives faculty have used dedicated sessions in its three-day May workshops to discuss and make changes to the curriculum. Decisions about these curricular changes result from faculty consensus regarding classroom experiences and course outcomes. The value of these sessions is and has been obvious to all participants, and regardless of the assessment instruments developed in the coming years, these faculty conversations will almost certainly continue to serve as the primary way that the Perspectives faculty will reflect on and assess the effectiveness of the program.

- 4) **Who interprets the evidence? What is the process?** (Who in the department is responsible for interpreting the data and making recommendations for curriculum or assignment changes if appropriate? When does this occur?)

Please see answer to #3.

- 5) **What were the assessment results and what changes have been made as a result of using this data/evidence?** (What were the major assessment findings? Have there been any recent changes to your curriculum or program? How did the assessment data contribute to those changes?)

Please see answer to #3.

- 6) **Date of the most recent program review.** (Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study and external review.)

Perspectives was last reviewed as part of the Philosophy Department review undertaken in Spring 2010.