

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 (<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/mcas/departments/philosophy/undergraduate/perspectives-program.html>). Descriptions of the Perspectives Program are also included in Core Office documentation connected to "Schedules of Distinction" courses.

- 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?)

As a program with multiple sections, the Perspectives Program leaves assessment primarily in the hands of faculty, who use a variety of assessment tools, which are periodically presented to colleagues at our workshops.

In Fall 2019, students in Perspectives in Western Culture were invited to participate in a survey administered by the Center for the Study of Testing, Evaluation, and Education Policy in the Lynch School. The hybrid survey was designed to measure student perception of and capacity for living a life of meaning and purpose, and to correlate these with moral agency, compassion and moral reasoning.

Explicit curriculum review was begun for two Perspectives Program courses: Modernism and the Arts; and Perspectives on Western Culture. This review is ongoing, and is being undertaken primarily through faculty workshops.

During the period of remote learning brought on by the pandemic in Spring 2020, the Perspectives faculty met twice via Zoom to share experiences of remote teaching and strategies for effective remote teaching.

- 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?)

The hybrid survey was interpreted by the Center for the Study of Testing, Evaluation, and Education Policy in the Lynch School.

Assessment is collaboratively undertaken by the Perspectives Program faculty. Faculty interpret evidence and share their interpretations in workshops organized by the Director and Associate Director of Perspectives.

- 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?)

The pandemic prevented a follow-up survey to measure growth in moral reasoning, sense of purpose and compassion. However, initial results show that students in Perspectives on Western Culture had scores comparable to those of LSOE students, except for lower compassion scores which are lower. Also, moral development was not correlated with measures of a sense of meaning.

The results were positive: the basic approach of Perspectives faculty is fundamentally sound. Throughout the 2020-21 academic year, we will hold faculty workshops on various texts and themes central to the curriculum of the Perspectives Program.

- 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.