

Department of Religion
Assessment Program
Student Learning Objective
April 26, 2005

Upon graduating, a Religion Major will:

1. Demonstrate **general knowledge and skills in the area of biblical studies**, including one area of the Old Testament (Pentateuch; Prophets; etc.) and one area of the New Testament (Gospels; Paul; etc.).
 - a. General knowledge in Old Testament will consist of the ability to identify and integrate into the interpretation of a text the following items:
 - 1) literary issues (context, genre, sources, redaction, structure)
 - 2) historical issues (author, recipients, situation, historical-geographical context)
 - 3) matters of content (key terms, concepts, and themes; key problems of interpretation)
 - 4) theological import
 - b. General knowledge in New Testament will consist of the ability to identify and integrate into the interpretation of a text the following items:
 - 1) literary issues (context, genre, sources, redaction, structure)
 - 2) historical issues (author, recipients, situation, historical-geographical context)
 - 3) matters of content (key terms, concepts, and themes; key problems of interpretation)
 - 4) theological import

Measure: a departmentally constructed test on knowledge and ability to analyze biblical texts from both the Old Testament and New Testament will be administered to senior majors in the Religion Seminar every three years. Students will be evaluated as follows:

- 1) excellent proficiency (e.g., identifies all key literary issues and integrates them into the interpretation of the text)
- 2) average proficiency (e.g., identifies some key literary issues and integrates some into the interpretation of the text)
- 3) insufficient proficiency (e.g., identifies no key literary issues or identifies some but does not integrate them into the interpretation of the text)

2. Demonstrate **general knowledge and skills in the area Christian theology**, including one area of systematic theology (Christology; Creation; etc.) and one area of historical theology (Patristic/Medieval; American; etc.).
 - a. General knowledge in systematic theology will consist of the ability to discuss a topic in terms of:
 - 1) its biblical and confessional basis
 - 2) its place or development in the history of theology
 - 3) key issues, problems, and thinkers associated with the topic
 - 4) significance of the topic for Christian theology
 - b. General knowledge in historical theology will consist of the ability to discuss a period in terms of:
 - 1) broader historical and intellectual context of period
 - 2) key theological issues, problems, and thinkers associated with the period
 - 3) significance of the period for Christian theology

Measure: a departmentally constructed test on knowledge and ability to analyze theological concepts and historical developments will be administered to senior majors in the Religion Seminar every three years. Students will be evaluated as follows:

- 1) excellent proficiency (e.g., discusses with precision all key issues, problems, and thinkers associated with a topic)
- 2) average proficiency (e.g., discusses with some precision some key issues, problems, and thinkers associated with a topic)
- 3) insufficient proficiency (e.g., discusses without precision only some key issues, problems, and thinkers associated with a topic)

3. Demonstrate **general knowledge and skills in one area of religious studies**

(phenomenology; Islam; Judaism; etc.).

a. General knowledge in phenomenology will consist of the ability to discuss:

- 1) key theories about religion (origin, explanation)
- 2) key issues addressed by religion
- 3) various methods used in the study of religion
- 4) significance of religion for human life

b. General knowledge in a religious tradition will consist of the ability to discuss:

- 1) the history of the religious tradition
- 2) key writings, beliefs, and ideas of a religious tradition
- 3) key rituals and practices
- 4) significance of religious tradition in the world

Measure: a departmentally constructed test on knowledge and ability to analyze religious phenomena and non-Christian religions will be administered to senior majors in the Religion Seminar every three years. Students will be evaluated as follows:

- 1) excellent proficiency (e.g., discusses all key historical periods of a religious tradition)
- 2) average proficiency (e.g., discusses some key historical periods of a religious tradition)
- 3) insufficient proficiency (e.g., discusses no key historical periods of a religious tradition)

4. Demonstrate **advanced knowledge and skills in the two fields** in which a student took advanced (300-) level courses.

Measure: majors enrolled in 300-level courses will be assessed by the teacher on their proficiency in meeting the course objectives of the 300-level course (see specific course objectives for the different 300-level courses). Results will be placed in a department file for reference when the student is completing his or her senior year.

5. Be able to **plan and execute a research/writing project**, including the following components:

- a. develop an appropriate research question
- b. demonstrate good research skills and use of relevant sources in the field of study
- c. write an well-organized, persuasive paper arguing a thesis
- d. write grammatically and stylistically correct prose

Measure: the teacher of the senior seminar will assess the major paper of senior majors in the Religion Seminar with respect to the four areas of competency.