

## ASSESSMENT PLAN

### Assessing Effectiveness in Meeting Learning Objectives – General Strategies –

AIM: To assess effectiveness of individual courses and to determine whether individual courses are meeting stated course objectives. (Learning Objectives #1 – #6)

METHOD: Student Course evaluations

WHEN: End of each semester

AIM: To assess progress in enabling majors in our courses to meet the Religious Studies Learning Objectives (Learning objectives #1 - #5).

METHOD: Thorough review of the Religious Studies curriculum and major requirements. Regular meetings of the curriculum committee.

WHEN: The curriculum review was completed during Fall 2014 - Spring 2015. The curriculum committee meets every semester to monitor and reassess our success in meeting learning objectives.

AIM: To determine students' self-assessment of their mastery of the Religious Studies Learning Objectives. (Learning Objectives #1 - #5)

METHOD: Exit survey of religious studies majors

WHEN: For all majors, just before graduation

AIM: To assess the effectiveness of our introductory course (RELS 1010) in fostering student literacy in the major world religions (Learning Objectives #1 and #3).

METHOD: Student survey at the beginning and conclusion of RELS 1010 to measure improvement in religious literacy.

WHEN: Fall Semester.

AIM: To determine program effectiveness among recent graduates, particularly with respect to placement and performance in graduate schools. (Learning Objective #6)

METHOD: Alumni Survey

WHEN: To all alumni, in 3 year intervals (first conducted in 2014 using a national survey from the American Academy of Religion.)

AIM: To assess the Religious Studies Program in comparison with Religious Studies programs nationwide to determine whether we follow best practices. (All Learning Objectives).

METHOD: Commission a qualitative study of our program in comparison with representative programs in other public and private universities.

WHEN: Spring 2014

AIM: To determine areas for improvement in meeting student learning objectives. (All Learning Objectives).

METHOD: Commission an external review of the Religious Studies Program

WHEN: Spring 2013

**Assessing Effectiveness in Meeting Learning Objectives  
– Strategies Specific to Each Learning Objective –**

Students completing the BA or BS degree in Religious Studies should be able to:

1. demonstrate literacy concerning the major religions of the world

This is an objective in RELS 1010, "Introduction to Religious Studies." Assessed through the religious literacy survey, which is based on the Pew Forum's Religious Knowledge Questionnaire. Also assessed through exit survey of majors.

2. understand the relationship between religion and culture, and think critically about the influence of religious value systems on individuals and societies

This is an objective in RELS 3990, "Religious Studies Methodology" and RELS 4990, "Religious Studies Capstone." Assessed through successful completion of writing assignments in RELS 3990, and successful completion of RELS 4990 with a grade of C or better. Also assessed through exit survey of majors.

3. read and analyze the sacred texts of different religious traditions

This is an objective in RELS 1010, and in each of our World Religions courses (Introduction to Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, etc.). Assessed through successful completion of writing assignments in these courses. Also assessed through exit survey of majors.

4. apply appropriate methods of research and argumentation to questions concerning religion; and

This is an objective in RELS 3990, "Religious Studies Methodology" and RELS 4990, "Religious Studies Capstone." Assessed through successful completion of writing assignments in RELS 3990, and successful completion of RELS 4990 with a grade of C or better. Also assessed through end-of-semester student evaluations, and through exit survey of majors.

5. communicate their findings in clear, well-reasoned writing

This is an objective in RELS 3990, "Religious Studies Methodology," RELS 4990, "Religious Studies Capstone," and all 'CI' designated courses. Assessed through successful completion of writing assignments in these course, and successful completion of RELS 4990 with a grade of C or better. Also assessed through end-of-semester student evaluations, and through exit survey of majors.

6. possess a rigorous foundation for pursuing advanced study in religion or related fields

Assessed through survey of alumni and through comparative study of Religious Studies Programs nationwide. Students' career expectations are also determined using the major entry survey.