

# Department of Philosophy Program Review Report of the Committee

*March 15, 2019*

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## **Committee:**

Ron Irving (Committee Chair), Professor

Department of Mathematics

University of Washington

Leslie Francis, Distinguished Professor of Law and Philosophy

Alfred C. Emery Professor of Law

Department of Philosophy and S. J. Quinney College of Law

University of Utah

Laura Ruetsche, Louis E. Loeb Collegiate Professor of Philosophy

Department of Philosophy

University of Michigan

Shirley Yee, Professor and Chair

Department of Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies

University of Washington

# 1 Introduction and Recommendations

We greatly enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about the University of Washington's Department of Philosophy, and came away especially impressed with the way in which their vision of engaged philosophy informs their efforts in research, education, and outreach. We will record below opportunities for improvement on their part or for improved support from the University, but let us first highlight their strengths.

The Department's self-study explains that "we are a department that aims to practice 'engaged philosophy' by which we mean philosophy that makes active contributions to public policy and social justice and toward sensitive implementation of new technologies, all while offering appropriately critical assessment of the emerging patterns of modern social life." Through this commitment, which is reflected in the Department's work within the University and in the community, it has established a distinctive identity amongst its national peers. Moreover, the focus on participation in wider conversations within academia and beyond lends itself naturally to the Department's outreach efforts, serves to attract a diverse set of talented students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and allows the Department to prepare students better for non-academic careers.

Indeed, we would argue that in diversity, outreach, public philosophy, and preparation for non-academic careers, the Department is ahead of the pack. The American Philosophical Association has set up task forces or committees on diversity and inclusiveness in recent years as well as publishing *Beyond Academia: Professional Opportunities for Philosophers*, an update of a publication from 1984. The Department has been taking steps on all these fronts.

Were the Department to receive modest additional resources—above all, a small increase in tenure-line faculty and in graduate student support—it could build on its efforts and solidify its position as a national leader in directions that will become increasingly essential to a successful academic philosophy program.

We will explore these issues in more detail in the body of the report. But first, let us gather here the recommendations that are to follow—organized by section heading—concluding with our recommendation on the continuing status of the Department's programs.

## **Undergraduate Program**

1. Expand enrollment in courses at the 100 level, both to better meet existing demand and to entice more students to major (or double major) in philosophy.
2. Offer courses at the upper level more frequently.
3. Provide the Department with additional TA support in order to meet the recommendations above, for instance making it possible to have more sections of 100-level classes and more 300-level classes with TAs as lead instructors.
4. Consider, in parallel, ways to restructure courses so that fewer TAs are required to teach the same number of students.

5. Continue to evaluate lecture courses, in the context of the Department's participation in the University's Evidence-Based Teaching program, with an eye toward introducing additional active-learning opportunities.

## **Graduate Program**

6. Ensure sufficient graduate student funding to stabilize the entering class each year at about five.
7. Given the recent growth in (and unpredictability of) external funding to support graduate students, have the Department and College work together to provide backup for mild risk-taking in making offers to new graduate students, with the dual goal of maintaining the size of the entering class and ensuring a sufficient number of graduate students available to fill TA positions.
8. Ensure sufficient faculty size to allow a richer offering of graduate-level seminars, allowing students greater choice and greater opportunity to take seminars that connect to their qualifying paper and research interests.
9. In graduate student recruitment, strengthen publicity regarding the Department's successful focus on engaged philosophy, and the resulting opportunities available to philosophy graduate students across campus, within the greater community, and within the profession.
10. Consider establishing an internship program that permits a funded graduate student to spend at least one quarter on site in a practical setting. This could be anything from a clinical service in medicine that would help in preparing for a post-doctoral position in clinical ethics to an internship in a business with interests in ethics or a position in a non-profit working in an area of the student's interests.
11. Consider the possibility of joint degrees, for example, Philosophy graduate students also receiving the Graduate Certificate in Climate Science, a Master in Teaching from the College of Education, a Master of Jurisprudence from the Law School, an MA in Bioethics from the Department of Bioethics & Humanities, or one of the certificates or degrees offered by the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance.

## **Diversity**

12. Continue ongoing efforts to ensure diversity in the graduate and undergraduate student communities, and in faculty recruitment.
13. Continue, through teaching and scholarship, to promote an inclusive environment. The Climate/diversity committee, established in 2012 is a laudable move to address diversity and climate within the Department as a whole.

## **Engagement and Outreach**

14. Our only recommendation is: keep up the good work, and continue to take steps to ensure that potential participants and contributors know that the work is going on.

## **Research and Scholarship**

15. Continue to encourage grant funding, with additional administrative support for faculty proposal preparation and grant administration.
16. Continue to promote collaborative efforts within the Department and across campus.
17. Revisit faculty grant-funded buyout policies, especially as the faculty size increases and greater flexibility to provide teaching release becomes available.
18. Place a priority on advancement efforts that would increase possibilities for research support, for example graduate research assistance and collaborative research.
19. Consider how new appointments can be supportive of, and create synergy for, developing the Department's identified areas of research strength.

## **Faculty**

20. Allow the professorial corps to increase by a net of at least 3 faculty members over the next three-to-five years (preferably three), in order to permit a richer offering of courses, greater range of faculty to advise graduate students, and an expansion of the connections the faculty are making with programs across the University and with the community.
21. Continue to hire faculty whose interests are interdisciplinary and collaborative—building on the Department's mission of engaged philosophy—while continuing as well to focus on the Department's commitment to diversity.
22. Develop departmental guidelines on criteria for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor, ensuring that they are consistent with the Department's focus on engaged philosophy, revising or discarding traditional norms as needed.
23. Clarify the role of research in promotion and merit procedures for Lecturers.
24. Revisit faculty meeting and governance procedures, with the possibility of reducing service burdens arising from “committee-of-the-whole” practices.

## **Program on Ethics**

25. Clarify the role of the Program within the Department and the College. For instance, for which components of the Program budget does the director have authority and for which components the department chair? How should Program funds be allocated for graduate student support? What role should the Program play in providing input or determining areas of interest for new faculty search requests? Perhaps there is a benefit to existing ambiguities, but some resolution would be beneficial.
26. Promote efforts of the Program on Ethics to raise funds (current use or endowed) for its activities. As with the previous recommendation, this will require clarification of how the Program's efforts should fit within the broader efforts of the Department, and what role the College advancement staff should play in supporting these efforts.

## **Staff**

27. Improve support for grant preparation and administration, either internally by training staff and shifting staff responsibilities or externally through additional support from other units in the College.
28. Encourage opportunities for staff to enhance their skills and to cross-train.

## **Conclusion**

29. The Review Committee has no critical questions about the continuing status of any of the academic programs within the unit. We recommend that they be continued, and that the next program review of the Department of Philosophy take place in ten years.

## **2 The Review Process**

On May 14, 2018, committee members met at the Graduate School (and by phone) with Wesley Henry, Director, Academic Program Review; George Lovell, Divisional Dean for the Social Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences; Jason Johnson, Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs; Alain Gowing of the Graduate School Council; Andrea Woody, Chair of Philosophy; Sara Goering, Associate Professor and Graduate Program Coordinator; and Beverly Wessel, Department Administrator. At the meeting, the procedure for the upcoming review was discussed and we received our charge. A final charge letter was provided on May 14, 2018.

The Department's self-study was made available to us on January 31, 2019. The site visit took place February 6–8, 2019. However, due to a snowstorm that led to premature closure of the University at 12:30 PM and truncation of the site visit schedule (with the exit session to be re-scheduled for another day), meetings that morning began earlier and were streamlined. This made it possible for the committee, before dispersing, to meet with Chair Woody and

Divisional Dean Lovell, and then with Divisional Dean Lovell alone in a mini-version of the exit session. The storm arrived at 12:20 PM. A half hour later, we concluded our conversation with Dean Lovell, exited Savery Hall, and entered a snow-globe wonderland.

With a draft report nearly completed prior to the re-scheduled exit session, the committee held a meeting amongst ourselves via Skype on March 13. The exit session took place on March 14. Representing the Graduate School were Kima Cargill, the Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Planning; Becky Corriell, Director of Academic Program Review & Strategy, Chris Partridge, Curriculum Specialist; and Deborah Kamen of the Graduate School Council. Also in attendance, once again, were George Lovell, Jason Johnson, Andrea Woody, Beverly Wessel, and the four review committee members (with Jason, Laura, and Leslie calling in).

The report was completed and submitted on March 15.

### **3 Undergraduate Program**

The Department offers a B.A. in Philosophy and a B.A. in the History & Philosophy of Science. The undergraduate program serves the curricular needs of students both within and outside the major and, hence, carries a heavy service load in the College of Arts and Sciences. As evidenced in the high enrollment of courses, such as Ethics, several of the lower division courses operate as “service courses” to UW students, including non-majors. The Department currently enrolls 119 majors and 35 minors. The number of undergraduate degrees conferred has increased over the past five years.

The committee met with about 25 Philosophy majors, a vibrant and intellectually engaged group of students who have clearly benefited from the Philosophy curriculum and saw their Philosophy background as good preparation for entrance into a number of careers, such as law, medicine, public policy and non-profit work. Many of the students were double majors from a range of departments, including Mathematics, Physics, History, Classics, Linguistics, and Law, Societies & Justice. We commend the Department’s innovative spirit in the area of career development.

Although the students came from diverse backgrounds and interests, they articulated a number of common themes: 1) important skills they have learned in Philosophy courses, and 2) the need for more courses at the 100- and 200-levels as well as smaller applied courses. The students we interviewed underscored the following skills they learned in Philosophy courses that articulate well with the University’s mission: improved writing and critical thinking, precision thinking, understanding social and political contexts, and interpreting arguments through close readings of texts. In the process, those who were double majors pointed out that their Philosophy courses taught them to question knowledge production in their other major. Many also expressed appreciation for the faculty, who encourage creative thinking.

The Department’s undergraduate program addresses an important part of the UW’s mission statement: To promote their capacity to make humane and informed decisions, the University fosters an environment in which its students can develop mature and independent judgment

and an appreciation of the range and diversity of human achievement. The University cultivates in its students both critical thinking and the effective articulation of that thinking.

While the students were appreciative of the Department's commitment to teaching, they have also felt the effects of recent budget cuts and faculty vacancies due to retirements and departures to other universities. The decrease in size of the faculty and graduate students has severely impacted the Department's ability to offer courses more regularly at all levels. Additionally, the students identified gaps in the curriculum; they want more courses in aesthetics, metaphysics, epistemology and non-Western philosophy. Not surprisingly, they expressed an interest in interdisciplinarity and a desire for more flexibility in the major for taking courses outside the Department. A wish was also expressed by students interested in graduate school to have academic advising geared to their aspirations.

One unit-defined question in the self-study is, *How can the department most effectively serve a large, diverse set of students in our lower level courses?* We have little to add beyond suggestions that would help all aspects of the 's programs. Additional faculty and TA support would allow the Department to expand its offerings and its enrollments. New or revised teaching methodologies may allow the Department to offer some of its larger classes at the lower level with a higher student-to-TA ratio. Redoubling efforts to educate pre-majors on the career paths opened up through a philosophy major (or double major) and the ways in which philosophy (as practiced at UW) engages students in compelling contemporary issues may attract both more students and a more diverse set of students. Perhaps the Department can explore ways to have pre-majors participate in some of its outreach activities.

Another unit-defined question in the self-study is, *What can the department do to attract undergraduate majors and give them a rich learning experience in the major?* Given the enthusiasm expressed by the majors with whom we met, and the eloquent cases they made for the intellectual and academic rewards accruing to them from their studies, we might wish that no more is needed to attract students to the major than to get the word out. Expand the number of course offerings and the already rich learning experience the Department offers will be richer still. The program is already attractive to a diverse audience and provides excellent preparation (as major or double major) for almost any imaginable graduate/professional program or career, all the more with the faculty's commitment to engaged philosophy.

However, at UW and nationally, students and their families feel pressured to see a direct progression from their course of study to jobs. The more the Department can link its students (majors, double majors, and minors) to programs that visibly further their career goals, the better. They are taking steps in this direction, for instance with the development of major options in Ethics and Science. We praise the Department for this and encourage more such steps. They might consider the addition of career trajectory pathways, such as for law school, medical school, or careers in information science.

## Recommendations:

1. Expand enrollment in courses at the 100 level, both to better meet existing demand and to entice more students to major (or double major) in philosophy.
2. Offer courses at the upper level more frequently.
3. Provide the Department with additional TA support in order to meet the recommendations above, for instance making it possible to have more sections of 100-level classes and more 300-level classes with TAs as lead instructors.
4. Consider, in parallel, ways to restructure courses so that fewer TAs are required to teach the same number of students.
5. Continue to evaluate lecture courses, in the context of the Department's participation in the University's Evidence-Based Teaching program, with an eye toward introducing additional active-learning opportunities.

## 4 Graduate Program

The Department's graduate students impressed us with their energy, dedication, and community spirit. Many testified that the Department's ethos—in particular its dedication to engaged philosophy and its reputation for welcoming diversity—attracted them to graduate study at UW. And the graduate students we met reported feeling affirmed and supported by faculty and staff in their own projects of engagement—projects which include bringing philosophy into prisons and elementary school classrooms, climate activism, work in clinical and environmental ethics, and work with NGOs.

A recent restructuring of the graduate program is well-conceived, but its execution has been hindered by faculty shortages. Historically, the Department has offered two-to-three graduate seminars per quarter. Next quarter it is offering just one. Its offerings at the 400 level (which can count for up to half the coursework required for a graduate degree) have also contracted. The resulting scarcity of graduate-appropriate courses makes it difficult for graduate students to meet degree requirements, and especially difficult for them to acquire background in their intended areas *before* embarking on the PhD qualifying credential of writing a qualifying paper.

Another scarce commodity is ongoing funding (in the form of TA positions) for graduate student support. Right now the graduate program isn't large enough to staff sections of such crucial undergraduate courses as logic. And it's nowhere near large enough for graduate students to have an opportunity to teach independently. That's an opportunity lost, both for graduate students missing out on important professional development and for undergraduates losing a chance to study philosophy in smaller classes. The last five graduate cohorts admitted number 8, 5, 0, 4, 5. Such small graduate student cohorts and wide variations in cohort size have steep costs. They disrupt graduate student community building, make it



difficult for significant clusters of faculty and graduate students to accrete around shared interests, and contribute to graduate student attrition. Better guaranteed funding, along with improvements recommended here and already underway by the Department, may add depth to the graduate applicant pool and allow for consistently larger cohorts.

Yet another scarce commodity is academic employment in philosophy. The vast majority of PhD-granting institutions, including some of the most prestigious, succeed in placing less than half their graduates in permanent academic jobs (see <https://infogram.com/academic-model-1gdjp93xddqepyw> ). In recent years, the profession has begun to take notice. For instance, the APA convened a Committee on non-academic careers which published *Beyond Academia: Professional Opportunities for Philosophers* in 2016. Here again, the UW Department is out ahead of the rest of the profession. Its academic placement record is respectable. But for years it's been supplementing its academic placement efforts with innovative support for students considering non-academic jobs. For instance, 2016–2017's "Philosophy Branches Out" project cultivated contacts with the local community to identify, articulate, and expose graduate students to non-academic career paths emanating from graduate degrees in philosophy. Resources that emerged from this project remain available to current students, alongside a well-curated host of further information about non-academic careers, on a website the Department maintains. Importantly, the Department's faculty and staff have reinforced such support for non-academic careers by sending students the unambiguous message that careers outside of academic philosophy, narrowly construed, are not some sort of second best, but worthy destinations in their own right. Students are hearing, and appreciating, this message; some of them are coming to study at UW because the message aligns with their own aspirations, for instance to work with local communities on climate or health justice, indigenous rights, or elementary education.

It should not escape the notice of the Department and its graduate students that, increasingly, postings for entry-level *academic* jobs in philosophy list "a demonstrated commitment to diversity" as a selection criterion, and that it is becoming standard for an academic job application, regardless of the AOS sought, to require a diversity statement. Doing their graduate work in a Department committed to engaged philosophy, a Department expressing a broad and inclusive understanding of philosophical excellence, should situate UW PhDs to compete successfully in the changing landscape of academic philosophy.

The just-mentioned emphasis on engaged philosophy is admirable and could be developed in a number of ways, perhaps in collaboration with the Program on Ethics. The Program might also help the Department consider strategies for graduate students considering careers outside of the domain of academic philosophy. The micro-immersion experiences for graduate students initiated under the Simpson Center "Philosophy Branches Out" grant may serve as a starting point upon which to expand. This will require resources, both to make the contacts and to support the students. Of particular value would be an enhanced graduate student funding base that allows students to take on responsibilities outside the classroom for a quarter, such as in recommendation 10 below.

One unit-defined question in the self-study is, *How can the department best position itself to have a vibrant PhD program that prepares graduate students for a diverse set of career paths?*

This is another area where the Department is leading the profession. The Department should build on its previous successes, expand its networks of connections, strategies, and ideas—and keep signaling that philosophy isn't just for philosophy professors. And, the Department's commitment on this front notwithstanding, with sufficient resources there would be room for expansion of their efforts.

### **Recommendations:**

6. Ensure sufficient graduate student funding to stabilize the entering class each year at about five.
7. Given the recent growth in (and unpredictability of) external funding to support graduate students, have the Department and College work together to provide backup for mild risk-taking in making offers to new graduate students, with the dual goal of maintaining the size of the entering class and ensuring a sufficient number of graduate students available to fill TA positions.
8. Ensure sufficient faculty size to allow a richer offering of graduate-level seminars, allowing students greater choice and greater opportunity to take seminars that connect to their qualifying paper and research interests.
9. In graduate student recruitment, strengthen publicity regarding the Department's successful focus on engaged philosophy, and the resulting opportunities available to philosophy graduate students across campus, within the greater community, and within the profession.
10. Consider establishing an internship program that permits a funded graduate student to spend at least one quarter on site in a practical setting. This could be anything from a clinical service in medicine that would help in preparing for a post-doctoral position in clinical ethics to an internship in a business with interests in ethics or a position in a non-profit working in an area of the student's interests.
11. Consider the possibility of joint degrees, for example, Philosophy graduate students also receiving the Graduate Certificate in Climate Science, a Master in Teaching from the College of Education, a Master of Jurisprudence from the Law School, an MA in Bioethics from the Department of Bioethics & Humanities, or one of the certificates or degrees offered by the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance.

## **5 Diversity**

This section reports on Diversity in two areas: 1) Representation among faculty, students, and staff, and 2) The Department's curricular offerings.

In a field that historically has been dominated by white males, the Philosophy Department faces a difficult challenge. Currently the number of degrees awarded at all degree levels to

Underrepresented Minorities is small in the field: Bachelor's 17% (6% African American); Master's 10% (4% African Americans); PhDs 6% (4% African Americans). (Source: APA Fact sheet on minorities in philosophy). Women comprise approximately 30% across the board for degrees (comparable to mathematics; physics and computer science are a bit worse). Women constitute roughly 24% at the tenure-track faculty level. (Source: APA Fact sheet on women in philosophy.)

The Department has made consistent and concerted efforts to request hiring faculty that would bring greater diversity to the unit along the lines of gender, race, and sexuality. The Department has been unable to tap into this already small pool of URMs. Although the Department submits hiring requests whenever the College provides the opportunity, Philosophy's requests have consistently been rejected in favor of other departments that the College has prioritized.

In terms of URM, Philosophy graduate and undergraduate students are more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, U.S. and non-U.S, and veteran status, demonstrating the Department's curricular appeal to students across the UW.

Curriculum: The Department's course offerings primarily focus on European-Western Philosophy. The Department's goal is to broaden its courses offerings by hiring faculty who specialize in fields such as critical race and feminist studies. Currently, there are no tenure-line faculty in the Department who are available to teach, for example, "Philosophy of Feminism" (GWSS 206), an introductory undergraduate course that has been shared by Gender, Women, & Sexuality Studies, Political Science, and Philosophy since its inception in the 1970s. At present, the course is taught by a GWSS faculty member and has always brought in strong enrollments. Due to their small pool of graduate students, Philosophy was unable to provide a TA for the course last year, which compromises the interdisciplinary experience all three departments had hoped to provide the students. A faculty hire whose expertise includes feminist philosophy would be a welcome addition to the Philosophy Department and strengthen already positive ties to GWSS and Political Science.

### **Recommendations:**

12. Continue ongoing efforts to ensure diversity in the graduate and undergraduate student communities, and in faculty recruitment.
13. Continue, through teaching and scholarship, to promote an inclusive environment. The Climate/diversity committee, established in 2012 is a laudable move to address diversity and climate within the Department as a whole.

## **6 Engagement and Outreach**

There is a growing awareness among professional philosophers that the discipline of philosophy faces an inclusion problem. Philosophy's demographic homogeneity is a symptom of the problem. Probable causes include: (i) the fact that philosophy is rarely taught at the

elementary or secondary levels in American public schools; and (ii) the fact that traditional philosophical inquiry—for instance, a priori investigation into the nature of knowledge—is conspicuously insulated from pressing contemporary social concerns. (i) and (ii) help consolidate the image of philosophy as an ivory tower pursuit both inaccessible and inapplicable to the majority of citizens. So palpable is philosophy’s inclusion problem that the American Philosophical Association has formed a Committee on Inclusion tasked with considering strategies to increase inclusiveness.

The Philosophy Department at the University of Washington has beaten the APA, and the profession, to the punch, and by a long way. All levels of the Department are contributing, and in venues ranging from Seattle-area elementary school classrooms to prominent media outlets. The Center for Philosophy for Children oversees a longstanding effort, involving both department faculty and graduate students, to bring philosophy into local K-12 classrooms. One component of this effort is a thriving high school Ethics Bowl program: graduate students work with teams from area high schools to prepare them to compete regionally and nationally in a debate-style format judged by local community leaders. Graduate students at UW have brought the Ethics Bowl Program, as well as opportunities to study philosophy, to the Washington Corrections Center for Women in Gig Harbor. The Simpson Center for the Humanities supports Graduate Students in efforts to forge connections with Seattle area two-year colleges, as well as with local industries and non-profits.

The faculty and graduate students of the Department pursue research into an impressive variety of culturally resonant questions and issues: immigration and refugee status; the ethics of emerging technologies; health justice; the rights of indigenous peoples; gender, race, justice, disability, LGBTQ status and their intersections—to name a few. Much of this research involves interdisciplinary collaboration within the University. Department members work with statisticians on the role of implicit bias in peer review; with geengineers on resources for combatting climate change; with engineers developing neurotechnologies to reverse loss of motor control; with mathematicians on conjectures relevant to interpreting physical theories; with UW instructors at all levels on evidence-based teaching methods. But the Department also makes a concerted and effective effort to engage the wider public through their scholarship. Modes of engagement include “Philosophy Responds,” a series of public lunch-time discussions facilitated by philosophy faculty; Program on Ethics programming including an annual Ethics Lecture and Symposia in both Medical Ethics and Environmental Ethics; and faculty contributions to radio and print media outlets, to advising public officials concerning climate policy, and to developing a curriculum for high school students designed to promote understanding of statistical reasoning (arguably a sine qua non for responsible participation in our democracy!).

These are impressive, thoughtful, and meaningful interventions. Expressing a department-wide commitment to making philosophy relevant, they make UW Philosophy a model for the profession. A testament to this is the fact that for each of the last two years, the Department was asked to run workshops on Diversity and Inclusion at the annual meetings of the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association. More importantly, these interventions make the Department a valuable resource for the local community.

## Recommendation:

14. Our only recommendation is: keep up the good work, and continue to take steps to ensure that potential participants and contributors know that the work is going on.

## 7 Research and Scholarship

The Department emphasizes three research areas: applied ethics, history of philosophy, and philosophy of science. Four faculty comprise the applied ethics area (Blake, Fourie, Gardiner, Goering), four in the history of philosophy area (Marshall, Roberts, Rosenthal, Weller), and four in philosophy of science (Feintzeig, Lee, Mayo-Wilson, Woody). In addition, Talbott's work in rights and moral theory is complementary to the work of faculty in the ethics area.

Faculty in the Program on Ethics are all publishing high impact research and have gained impressive notice both nationally and internationally. Areas of particular impact include global ethics (Blake), climate ethics (Gardiner), neuroethics (Goering), and ethics and public health (Fourie). Notable highlights include Blake's coauthored book *Debating Brian Drain: May Governments Restrict Emigration?*, which has been the subject of five symposia, Gardiner's *A Perfect Moral Storm* and work on geoengineering, Goering's series of articles on neurotechnology and disability, and Fourie's work on gender and the social determinants of health.

Although faculty members of the Program share interests, with limited exceptions they have not worked together on sustained research projects. Nor have they worked with faculty in other areas in the Department where there might be shared contacts (for example, Lee, Fourie, and possibly Goering have interests in gender and research; both Marshall and Talbott work in ethical theory). Indeed, pulls on faculty in the Program would appear to be centrifugal rather than centripetal, with Blake involved in the Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, Gardiner appointed as Ben Rabinowitz Endowed Professor of Human Dimensions of the Environment in the College of the Environment, and Goering the leader of the Neuroethics Thrust within the Center for Neurotechnology.

In history of philosophy, Marshall specializes in early modern philosophy (especially Spinoza), Kant, Schopenhauer, and metaethics. He is widely published in both top-rated specialist history journals and general philosophy journals. In addition, he has published one recent book in ethical theory (*Compassionate Moral Realism*) and has another forthcoming. Roberts specializes in ancient philosophy; she continues to give talks, review actively, and has published a guidebook to Aristotle and the *Politics*. Rosenthal specializes in Spinoza and Jewish philosophy. He has a book on Spinoza under contract with Princeton University Press, another edited collection under contract with Palgrave and a number of recent articles or book chapters in these areas. Weller specializes in ancient philosophy and has published several articles since the last review. Gardiner's work in virtue theory and ancient Greek philosophy adds to the history core, as do the work of the several historians of science (Feintzeig, Woody).

All four faculty in philosophy of science are highly research-active. Feintzeig, the most recent hire in the Department in 2016, specializes in philosophy of physics and in probability theory; he has published twelve articles since 2014 in both specialist journals for philosophy of physics and top tier philosophy of science journals. Lee's current work is on implicit bias in science; her work on peer review in science has won a prize from the NIH. Mayo-Wilson specializes in formal epistemology and philosophy of mathematics; since joining the UW faculty in 2014, he has published 7 articles or book chapters in high impact journals such as *The Philosophical Review* and *Synthese*. Woody specializes in philosophy and history of science with particular interests in philosophy of chemistry; she is the recent recipient of a three-year multi-site grant from the Templeton Foundation to develop an operating principle for optimal control in the sciences over vast length and time-scales. Since the 2007 review, Woody has edited the 2012 proceedings of the Philosophy of Science Association, co-edited a volume on chemistry for the *Handbook of the Philosophy of Science*, assumed the helm of *Philosophy of Science* (the premier journal in her discipline), and published six articles or book chapters.

Other research-active faculty include Talbott (ethical theory, with a book on human rights from Oxford in 2010 and a number of recent articles on evolution and ethical naturalism) and both lecturers.

One unit-defined question in the self-study is, *The department aims to reach out across campus and beyond to pursue interdisciplinary partnerships, contribute to a wide range of research initiatives, and enhance our public outreach. What are we doing well now, and how might we reach out more effectively?* We addressed public outreach in the previous section, closing with the recommendation that the Department keep up the good work. As for research, again, the Department is doing much that is commendable. Still, given the opportunities afforded by a sufficient number of new faculty searches, the Department can aim to do more. For example, in addition to continuing to build collaborations across campus, it can aim to enhance research interplay within, such as between philosophy of science and the Program on Ethics.

### **Recommendations:**

15. Continue to encourage grant funding, with additional administrative support for faculty proposal preparation and grant administration.
16. Continue to promote collaborative efforts within the Department and across campus.
17. Revisit faculty grant-funded buyout policies, especially as the faculty size increases and greater flexibility to provide teaching release becomes available.
18. Place a priority on advancement efforts that would increase possibilities for research support, for example graduate research assistance and collaborative research.
19. Consider how new appointments can be supportive of, and create synergy for, developing the Department's identified areas of research strength.

## 8 Faculty

The faculty are professionally respected, research active, authentically committed to the Department's shared mission of engaged philosophy, and committed as well to undergraduate and graduate education. They are also, and have been for some time, sorely over-extended. Although the faculty have rallied with great ingenuity to maintain the Department's excellence in the face of drastically reduced resources, the present tenuous equilibrium appears unsustainable. Exacerbating this instability are the professional accomplishments of the faculty, accomplishments that make them attractive targets for raiding competitor departments. During the review visit, retention efforts were underway for a full *quarter* of the Department's tenure-stream faculty.

The most recent external review, in 2007, concluded that "the Department should not shrink beyond its current size of approximately 20 FTEs." It has shrunk to 15 full-time faculty—13 tenure stream and two full-time lecturers. The TA pool has also shrunk. This leaves the Department unable to meet enrollment demands for undergraduate courses that ought to be at the heart of UW's curriculum. These include courses that constitute connective tissue with other schools within the University: courses on the ethics of emerging technologies, on medical ethics, on public policy and the environment, on computability and logic. The reductions also mean the faculty are unable to staff a robust graduate curriculum. Individual faculty report teaching an ever-broadening range of courses in an attempt to meet curricular demands. They also report that this is exhausting. To supplement reduced general fund support for graduate students, faculty have successfully sought grants—adding the intricacies of grant administration to their considerable service burdens, burdens which have already grown as the number of people who might share them diminishes. The faculty can't keep this up. The Department needs to grow in order to function properly.

In their meetings with us, faculty across ranks and research areas expressed a broad consensus about a hiring plan, with a hire in philosophy of law/or critical race theory as a top priority. Although there were some fine-grained differences in how different parties prioritized or described the next 2–4 hires, these were differences framed by a common commitment to a set of hires sensibly geared to consolidate and deepen existing strengths while reinforcing the Department's mission of engaged philosophy. Particularly given the exemplary level of collegiality in this department, differences at this fine grain are healthy, and could well eventuate in a stronger set of hires than a hiring strategy completely scripted from the outset.

This is a department that can be trusted to hire wisely. Its current crop of assistant professors has served 12 years at UW between them. Not only is each of them contributing meaningfully to the Department's teaching, service, and engagement efforts, they are also publishing at a torrid pace and in premier venues. We count over 40 articles and book chapters published or forthcoming, as well as three edited volumes, between them. This level of research productivity far outstrips tenure expectations at the most highly-regarded philosophy programs in the world. It reflects a commitment of the Department as a whole to the professional development of its early career members. Despite being overextended in many directions, tenured members of the Department have stepped up to reduce the service

burdens of their junior colleagues. All concerned deserve to belong to a department where faculty at all levels have the support they need to contribute to research, service, teaching, and engagement.

Associate professors shoulder service burdens in order to diminish those borne by assistant professors. Associate professors also face a professional hurdle of their own: promotion to full. If the faculty isn't large enough to limit the service tax on associate professors—and right now it isn't—clearing that hurdle is going to be more difficult than it should be. And the hurdle itself deserves clarification. In light of its avowed mission of engaged philosophy, the Department should articulate criteria for tenure and promotion that appropriately weigh contributions to that mission. The Department's outstanding lecturers also deserve clarification on what role their research activity plays in promotion and merit decisions.

Regarding service burdens on the faculty in general, it may be worth re-examining the tradition of having many departmental issues tackled by the faculty as a committee of the whole. This is certainly laudable, but requires more time on the part of all faculty members while introducing decision-making delays.

One unit-defined question in the self-study is, *How can the department enhance its ability to support faculty to pursue research excellence?* First, manage service and teaching burdens. This requires more hands on deck. Second, attract and support graduate students who share faculty research interests. This requires more graduate student support resources. Third, give faculty who bring in grant money access to a robust infrastructure of grant support, so that they can spend more time on teaching, research, and engagement, and less on bureaucratic minutiae. Fourth, as faculty numbers increase, develop a buyout policy that encourages faculty to apply for grants and gives them sufficient time to pursue their grant-funded research.

### **Recommendations:**

20. Allow the professorial corps to increase by a net of at least 3 faculty members over the next three-to-five years (preferably three), in order to permit a richer offering of courses, greater range of faculty to advise graduate students, and an expansion of the connections the faculty are making with programs across the University and with the community.
21. Continue to hire faculty whose interests are interdisciplinary and collaborative—building on the Department's mission of engaged philosophy—while continuing as well to focus on the Department's commitment to diversity.
22. Develop departmental guidelines on criteria for promotion to Associate Professor and Professor, ensuring that they are consistent with the Department's focus on engaged philosophy, revising or discarding traditional norms as needed.
23. Clarify the role of research in promotion and merit procedures for Lecturers.
24. Revisit faculty meeting and governance procedures, with the possibility of reducing service burdens arising from “committee-of-the-whole” practices.



## 9 Program on Ethics

The Program on Ethics serves the Department and the University very well in many respects. It deserves high praise for what it has accomplished since it began. However, like the Department, it has suffered from faculty attrition and resource cutbacks; it is in need of significant support if it is to continue its efforts in a sustainable manner. To this end as well, relationships between the Program and the Department require clarification.

The Program on Ethics has four core faculty members (two full professors, one advanced associate professor who will be coming up for promotion shortly, and one assistant professor who will be coming up for tenure and promotion the year after next). It also has five associate faculty, two of whom are from political science (Mayerfield, specializing in human rights, and Turner, specializing in American political thought and critical race theory), two from the School of Medicine program in Bioethics and Humanities (Campelia, specializing in feminist bioethics, and Jecker, specializing in bioethics), and one from philosophy (Talbot, specializing in human rights). The Program also funds TAs for 12 sections of philosophy courses, one TA funded by the environmental studies program, and a 2/3-time graduate RA for the program. It is staffed by department staff funded on a percentage basis by the Program. Its funding includes \$52,582 for operational funding, the Benjamin Rabinowitz Chair in Medical Ethics (endowment \$4m+), funding for TAs and one RA, and grant funding. Grant funding includes Sara Goering's grants with the Center for Neurotechnology (funding 2 RA positions plus supplementary stipends) and Steve Gardiner's NSF grant for the ethics of geoenvironment (1 RA position in 2017). The Program is actively involved in teaching and mentoring graduate students in philosophy, teaching a course in ethics aimed at non-philosophy graduate students, and offering the Graduate Certificate in Ethics. The Program also provides major support for the undergraduate ethics minor. Steve Gardiner is the current program director and receives high praise for his performance.

With respect to research, the Program is very high profile at all levels. It has also been successful in grant applications, although it could benefit by additional resources to support the preparation and administration of their grants. A noteworthy strength is how it involves its graduate students in their funded research; their students are authors on publications and in good positions to pursue post-docs or academic positions. Some of the funded research, however, is with people outside the Program and the Department, thus pulling Program members away rather than bringing them together. Program research might benefit by bringing collaborators in as Program affiliates, by encouraging visiting scholars to join the Program, or by increasing Program infrastructure with support for RAs or post-docs. These latter will, of course, require additional resources. Program faculty also might want to consider whether there are synergies among themselves, or whether new appointments might be structured to augment collaboration.

With respect to teaching, the Program contributes greatly to undergraduate and graduate education. The graduate certificate program garners very high praise from participants; encouragingly, enrollment in this opportunity seems to be increasing from its average of just under 2/year (3 in 2017, 4 in 2018). The undergraduate ethics minor seems under-enrolled,

however, with an average of just over 5/year. There has been an uptick (7 in 2017, 10 in 2018), but the most recent data are less encouraging, with only 7 students currently enrolled in the minor. Program faculty and the undergraduate advisor reported that they simply do not have time to advertise the minor. The Program needs staff support to enable it to develop strategies and materials to advertise the minor more widely. Materials might include guidance for students about how the minor could contribute to their professional goals, for example in law, health care, or business.

With respect to events and outreach, the Program is spectacular. It has sponsored symposia or speakers on race and medicine, geoengineering, environmental ethics, caregiving, and other critical issues. It cosponsors the high school ethics bowl program. And it spearheads many other public discussions on ethical issues of interest to the broader community.

These successes in research, teaching, and outreach should be celebrated and continued. We do suggest that thought be given to whether the Program (and the Department) would benefit by establishing greater clarity on the relationship between the two.

One unit-defined question in the self-study is, *How might the Program on Ethics be developed to fulfill its potential and maximize its impact?* We will address this in the remainder of the section.

The Program's initial review took place in 2009–2010, two years after the last review of the Department. The present review has the benefit of joining the two together. At the time of the earlier review, the primary assessment was that “the Program . . . is on the cutting edge of applied ethics programs nationally. . . .” While the Program's excellence remains undisputed today, other universities have devoted considerable resources to areas of applied ethics while the Program at the University of Washington has suffered from cutbacks in available resources, with the major exception of the establishment in 2008 of the Rabinowitz chair in medical ethics. The Program remains especially strong in global ethics, ethics and the environment, and bioethics and ethics and disability, but has lost the faculty member who had developed strong connections with the Information School.

The primary recommendations in the earlier review were to

- improve the minor through advertising, creating an attractive brochure, and making these materials available across the campus;
- reconsider the value of the Certificate program in light of its very small enrollments and the difficulty with certificate programs generally in attracting students;
- address the possible “push and pull” between Department and Program resources by considering program relationships with the Department and developing an expanded interdisciplinary advisory board across key units at UW;
- attend to retention of existing faculty and enlarge the roster of associate faculty.

These recommendations remain salient today, with the possible exception of the Certificate program. As described above, the Department needs to attract more students to the minor

with advertising and the creation of materials that are attractive to current student interests and needs. The Certificate program clearly serves its students well but remains small. The Department and the Program may benefit from clarifying the relationship between the two.

The Program should also explore strategic planning to develop interconnections within the Department and across the University. The Program should continue to deepen collaborations among its members and with other areas of research excellence in the Department. In collaboration with the Department's own vision of the directions it wishes to take, the Program could consider its areas of strength, the areas in which it wishes to build, and the collaborative directions across campus that would further these directions. This will require some prioritization as well as additional resources; the Program cannot with its current size, or even with an additional faculty member or two, expect to deepen its expertise and connections in many different directions. Its current strengths and collaborations are in global ethics and human rights, environmental philosophy and climate justice, bioethics and public health, and neuroethics and disability. It could seek to enhance these. Or, it could consider whether it would be helpful to branch out into one or another of these areas in which UW has flourishing programs: information science, law and social justice, business ethics, to name a few. As the Department moves forward in plans for hiring new faculty, an important consideration should be possible connections between one or more of the new appointments and the Program, in accord with this strategic vision. Outreach across the University should also follow this approach. The Program has made recent strides in appointing associate members (Turner and Campenelia), but could take further steps to develop strategic connections across the University. Moreover, the materials we were given did not address how the Program involves its associate members in its activities; the Program might want to consider how its associates can help to strengthen the Program. Overall, the aim of these efforts should be to enhance the Program as a center of excellence, rather than continuing to place centrifugal pressures on the Program and its faculty.

Finally, the Program has suffered from retention issues and its faculty continue to be attractive targets; efforts to retain existing Program faculty remain critical. Any further attrition in Program faculty would threaten its ability to continue to function as a center of excellence for the Department and the University. Addressing these matters will require resources; all are important if the Program is to continue its reputation for excellence and the contributions it makes to the Department and the University.

### **Recommendations:**

25. Clarify the role of the Program within the Department and the College. For instance, for which components of the Program budget does the director have authority and for which components the department chair? How should Program funds be allocated for graduate student support? What role should the Program play in providing input or determining areas of interest for new faculty search requests? Perhaps there is a benefit to maintaining ambiguity, but resolution of some existing ambiguities would be beneficial.
26. Promote efforts of the Program on Ethics to raise funds (current use or endowed) for

its activities. As with the previous recommendation, this will require clarification of how the Program's efforts should fit within the broader efforts of the Department, and what role the College advancement staff should play in supporting these efforts.

## 10 Staff

We met with five of the six departmental staff members: Beverly Wessel (administrator), Gina Gould (undergraduate advisor), Britta Anson (graduate advisor), Annette Bernier (program coordinator), and Kate Goldyn (development coordinator). Our primary impression is that they are happy to be a part of the Department and committed to its mission. The concerns to which we are about to turn are important, but our focus on them should not distract from the over-arching message that the staff find the Department a good place to work, feel welcomed, and enjoy being part of a close-knit community.

With Beverly's imminent retirement, there is unavoidable concern among the staff about the consequent transition. This is an issue for faculty as well, and we are confident that it will be treated with care by department leadership.

The search for a new administrator may simultaneously present an opportunity, given another oft-voiced concern, that of grants management. Faculty members are applying for grants with increasing frequency and success, an exciting development, but intertwined with this success is the sudden need to have support for preparing proposals and managing the resulting budgets. Staff are not well equipped for this. Nor does there appear to be sufficient activity to warrant hiring some fractional FTE of an additional staff member to help. The burden falls on existing staff and the grant-proposing faculty members themselves. Perhaps the integration of these duties into the staff workload can go hand-in-hand with the search for and transition to a new administrator. Or, perhaps the College can find ways to support grant efforts, whether through direct assistance from the dean's office or via the routing of proposals through another unit.

Related to this is a sense on the staff's part that they are working at their limit, with insufficient time for cross-training. The Department has expanded the number of events it organizes, and the staff can handle this thanks to generous funding from the Department's Advisory Board, which allows support of the development coordinator position. Should that support decline or disappear, the Department would face a major challenge. Advising needs are on the increase as well, for example due to increased emphasis on career advising for undergraduates and preparation of graduate students for non-academic careers. Opportunities for additional training would be most welcome.

### **Recommendations:**

27. Improve support for grant preparation and administration, either internally by training staff and shifting staff responsibilities or externally through additional support from other units in the College.

28. Encourage opportunities for staff to enhance their skills and to cross-train.

## 11 Conclusion

We wish to express our thanks to the Graduate School and the Department of Philosophy for their superb job in setting up such an informative and well organized site visit. We conclude, as we began, by noting our highly favorable impression of the Department and offering our strong encouragement to the College and University to provide additional resources—especially for faculty positions and graduate student support—so that the Department can realize its vision of engaged philosophy, a vision that benefits students, programs across campus, and the community and that draws national attention in the discipline to the University.

We close with the one essential recommendation.

### **Recommendation:**

29. The Review Committee has no critical questions about the continuing status of any of the academic programs within the unit. We recommend that they be continued, and that the next program review of the Department of Philosophy take place in ten years.