

**University of Washington
Program on Values in Society
Graduate Certificate Program Review
Response to Committee**

Date: April 14, 2010

From: Michael Blake, Program Director

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to respond to the report issued by the Program Review Committee. I would like to begin by thanking the members of the Committee, and David Canfield-Budde, for their work in the creation of this document. I am grateful for their careful analysis; their suggestions offer clear directions by which the Program will be able to improve its profile and academic offerings in the coming years. Since the suggestions of the Committee involve three primary aspects in which improvement might be required – teaching mission, governance, and faculty support – I will focus on these areas in turn.

Teaching mission

I am grateful to the Committee for their positive evaluation of the Program faculty and their curricular offerings. The Committee's primary concerns focus on the need for additional publicity and advertising for the Certificate and minor programs, which are currently undersubscribed. I agree with these concerns. The Program has already begun a program of advertising, and has created a professionally designed poster to be distributed across the University. The Program has also sought to increase awareness of the Program in other units across the University, by directly contacting relevant advisors and decision-makers in these units. These efforts have had some results, as the undergraduate and graduate capstones have enrolled more students this year than in any previous year. Nevertheless, the numbers are still too low, and we will be increasing our efforts to publicize the availability of the Program's courses. We expect to do this in part by advertising the minor in related undergrad courses, such as introductory philosophy courses, and in part by increasing outreach efforts to other academic units, through the use of postcards and electronic publicity. We expect this process to begin by the end of this current quarter.

The Committee has also suggested that the Certificate might not be a viable use of faculty resources. This is a possibility we have discussed internally within the Program, and we are willing to discontinue the Certificate if enrolment does not increase. Nonetheless, I would like the Program to continue to offer the Certificate for the immediate future. I believe that additional publicity might improve the number of students. We are also interested in extending our relationships with interested parties outside the University, and would note that one current member of the Certificate capstone is currently a full-time employee of Microsoft, with no other University affiliation. I would ask, therefore, that the Certificate program be allowed to continue for the immediate future, to see whether or not these forms of outreach are successful. I believe three years might be adequate to get a sense of whether or not the Certificate's low numbers are the result of lack of publicity, or of the difficulty of placing such a

Certificate within the already crowded academic calendars of graduate students in other academic units.

Governance

The Program is aware of the need to clarify its governance structure. We would like to clarify two particular ways in which the Program is linked to other constituencies: the first being the Department of Philosophy, and the second the program of affiliate membership. On the first front, we will seek in the coming months to render the relationship with the Department more transparent, and perhaps to seek some more formal documentation as to how these two units ought to be related. Relations with the Department are extremely close and friendly – the Program is very grateful to the Department, and to Ken Clatterbaugh, for their support – but we are aware of the continuing fact that the Program needs to identify itself as an independent academic unit. Accordingly, we will be seeking to clarify its governance structure in the coming months. We will revisit, in particular, the idea of an advisory committee composed of stakeholders from across the University. In the past, we have been hesitant to create such a committee, given the need to increase the number of offerings created by the Program. It is likely time, however, to take this idea up once more; a well-designed board would enable the Program to identify itself across the University as a distinct presence, and not simply as an adjunct to the Department.

We would also welcome input about how we ought to understand the notion of affiliate membership. Since this idea represents one of the primary means by which the Program has extended itself across the University, it is vitally important to get this notion right. Done well, the affiliate members could represent a real strength of the Program, and could help with both Program governance and with the range of Program offerings. We have not, however, made adequate use of our affiliates. A key task in the coming months will be to define the role of the affiliate, and then to extend invitations for affiliation to a wider variety of University stakeholders. We are particularly excited about working with the new Center for Human Rights, given the confluence of interests held by members of our two institutions. We will therefore combine a greater outreach to such relevant units with a greater effort internally to clarify the role and obligations of the affiliation program.

Faculty Support

We are in agreement with the sentiment that faculty support – particularly the support of junior faculty – is of central importance to the Program's success. We hope, in the near future, to develop some means by which the path to tenure for Ingra Schellenberg and Sara Goering might be made more transparent and navigable. I would also like to render the role of the Program in the tenure review process more transparent than it currently is. This is particularly vital given the fact that Schellenberg and Goering are both affiliated with multiple academic units. The Program might achieve its goals, here, by taking responsibility for navigating the competing ideas and obligations created

by these multiple units. The Department of Philosophy already does a great deal to help with pre-tenure support; the Program may be able to supplement this, both with financial resources and with clarification of the overall structure of promotion and tenure decision-making.

Once again, I would like to thank all those who helped to create this report. Your careful analysis and hard work is greatly appreciated. On behalf of the Program on Values in Society, we thank you for your time and effort throughout this process.