

Form E-1-A for Boston College Core Curriculum

Department/Program THEOLOGY

- 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?)

The following are the learning outcomes as of Fall 2016:

Theology core courses should enable students to:

1. Appreciate and constructively engage the universal, perennial quests for truth and meaning that generate theological insight in Christianity and other religious traditions;
2. Demonstrate a working understanding of the fundamental texts and practices that shape Christian theology, especially as expressed in Scripture and the Creeds;
3. Understand and constructively engage the dynamic relationship between religious truth claims and their moral implications, both personal and societal;
4. Constructively engage the various disciplinary methods required for theological insight, including textual, historical, social, and cultural analysis;
5. Be able to relate theological inquiry to the enduring questions animating the broader liberal arts tradition in an academic environment that welcomes diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

- 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 for all core sequences are posted on the Theology Department website.

<https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/schools/mcas/departments/theology/undergraduate/core-in-theology.html> Additional learning outcomes specific to each course sequence are printed on course syllabi.

- 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?)

We have two add-on course evaluation questions each year for the purpose of assessing how successful our core courses are in fulfilling two of our new learning goals. We designed this targeted assessment to show us what we most need to focus on next year as the new learning outcomes are implemented.

Those add-on course evaluation questions are as follows:

1. The Core Theology course has helped me understand the fundamental texts and practices that shape Christian theology.

2. This Core Theology course has helped me understand the relationship between religious truth claims and their moral implications, both personal and societal.

- 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 Department Chair and the Undergraduate Program Director collate and evaluate the data after the end of the academic year. The information is shared with the entire Department.

- 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?)

These data continue to confirm some of the strengths of our current practice. However, the Theology Department is in the process of implementing a major revision of its Core. This revision came as the result of an 18-month process of deliberation that included the entire faculty, consultation with the University Core Renewal Committee, and feedback from the Dean and the University President. The assessment data we gathered contributed modestly to this revision.

The new theology core is in place for full implementation for the 2019-20 academic year.

We intend, moreover, to reassess the implementation after the first and third years:

- Year 1 – The Chair, DUS, and Undergraduate Advisory Committee (to be formed) will conduct an initial assessment at the end of Year 1 in order to troubleshoot and improve the logistics of implementation (number of sections, use of teaching fellows, advising procedures, faculty resources, etc.).
- Year 3 – The Chair, DUS, and Undergraduate Advisory Committee will conduct a more thorough assessment at the end of Year 3 in order to determine the impact of the implemented changes to the Theology Core. The means of assessment will include review of syllabi, targeted add-on questions to course evaluations, focused conversations with faculty, dialogue with Advising Services, and review of previous E-1-A reports. The Theology Department will communicate the results of its assessment to the UCRC.

Furthermore, ongoing assessment will follow the three-year cycle of reporting to the UCRC as proposed by the Core Renewal Strategic Plan (2018).

- 6) **Date of the most recent program review.** (Your latest comprehensive departmental self-study and external review.)

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