

PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW (PPR)
Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
In Philosophy
The Faculty of Arts

In accordance with the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response and assessments of the undergraduate **Philosophy** program. The report identifies the significant strengths of the program, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, and it sets out and prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation.

The Implementation Plan identifies who will be responsible for leading the implementation of the recommendations; who will be responsible for providing any resources entailed by those recommendations; and timelines for acting on and monitoring the implementation of the recommendations.

SUMMARY OF THE PERIODIC PROGRAM REVIEW OF THE PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM

The Philosophy program submitted a self-study report to the Vice-Provost Academic on September 28, 2019. The self-study presented the program description and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the program, and program data including the data collected from student, alumni and employer surveys, along with the standard University Planning data tables. Appended were the course outlines for all core required and elective courses in the program and the CVs for all faculty members in the Department of Philosophy and other faculty who have recently taught core courses (required and/or elective).

Two arm's-length external reviewers, Dr. Alice MacLachlan, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, York University, and Dr. John Hacker-Wright, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Guelph, were appointed by the Dean of Arts from a set of proposed reviewers. They reviewed the self-study documentation and then conducted a virtual site visit via video conferencing (Zoom) on October 27 and 28, 2021.

The visit included meetings with the Provost and Vice-President Academic, Vice-Provost Academic; Dean of Arts; the Associate Dean of Arts, Undergraduate Studies, the program Chair, the Undergraduate Program Director, representatives from the Philosophy faculty, staff, and students, as well as the Chief Librarian, and the subject librarian. The Peer Review Team (PRT) also met with recent graduates.

In their report, dated November 25, 2021, the PRT provided feedback that describes how the Philosophy program meets the IQAP evaluation criteria and is consistent with the University's mission and academic priorities. The PRT acknowledged the rich curriculum conversations that took place with the program faculty which were fully engaged throughout the process of the review. The main areas of strength identified by the PRT include:

- **Outstanding Program.** Its most notable strength lies first and foremost, in the superb level of instruction happening throughout the program. We heard uniform praise from current students and alumni for passionate instructors who offer engaging courses and make themselves available to their students.
- **Innovative Experiential Learning.** A second noteworthy strength is the innovative experiential learning curriculum, the flagship of which is PHL 803, "Philosophy Engaging Communities." Not to

rest content with this significant achievement, the department is pioneering a co-op program in philosophy that shows promise to be an exemplary experiential learning experience, unique among philosophy BA programs.

- **Pluralism.** The program has one of the strongest representations of Continental philosophy of any program in Canada, and this is important as it is a vibrant tradition that engages undergraduates with exciting philosophical reflection in areas such as existentialism and phenomenology, which many programs treat only begrudgingly. But the pluralism of this program does not stop there; recent hires have expanded the pluralism along other dimensions, including non-Western philosophy and soon, Indigenous philosophy. This is crucial for any philosophy program, but especially for one with such a diverse student body.

The PRT also identified areas of improvement, such as:

- **Cohesion.** Perhaps the foremost challenge is finding ways of offering opportunities for majors to form cohesion early in the program and have more educational experiences that are focused on them. We heard from students and alumni who noted that they went through an entire year without meeting a fellow philosophy major. The students find themselves early on in large classes serving students across the university and hence have a fairly anonymous place as majors within the larger student body.
- **Lack of Specialist in Logic.** The department lacks a specialist in logic and therefore has sparse offerings in that area, which is certainly noticed by some students. This is a core area that the department recognizes as an area of weakness.
- **Lack of Physical Space.** There is a noted lack of physical space, which is especially important given that the department is continuing to expand. Incoming faculty and increasing enrollment will call for more offices and space for majors to congregate, not to mention classrooms.

The Chair of Philosophy submitted a response to the PRT Report on December 10, 2021. The response to both the PRT Report and the Program's Response was submitted to the Vice-Provost Academic by the Dean of Arts on April 20, 2022.

The Academic Standards Committee completed its assessment of the Philosophy Program Review on May 26, 2022. The Committee indicated that a thorough, analytical and self-critical program review was conducted. The School integrated into the implementation plan feedback from students, alumni, employers and peer reviewers, and outlined a comprehensive plan for program enhancements moving forward.

The Academic Standards Committee recommends that the program continue, as well as provide a one-year follow-up report, as follows:

1. The mandated One-Year Follow-up Report be submitted by June 30, 2023 to include:
 - a. An update on the status of the recommendations in the Implementation Plan

Presented to Senate for Approval: **June 7, 2022**

Start date of next Periodic Program Review: **2026-27**

SUMMARY OF THE REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS WITH THE PROGRAM'S AND DEAN'S RESPONSES

RECOMMENDATION 1. *Co-op Study Program.* Launch a co-op study program option for Philosophy students starting in the academic year 2023-2024 as part of the overall Faculty of Arts co-op development in partnership with the Ryerson Career and Co-op Centre. The program will include an alternative curriculum stream with 3 work terms.

Department's Response: We agree that a co-op program may help with retention, and with the perception that philosophy does not adequately prepare students for a career, and appreciate the initiative and dedication of the Ryerson Career and Co-op Centre as well as its institutional supporters. The Philosophy Department will reinforce this initiative by way of our regular career nights series with guest speakers, the evolution of our experiential courses, the advice and leads from our PAC, as well as our new alumni network. While the co-op process for students will be coordinated principally by the Career & Co-op Centre, we expect that there might be additional support work needed from our Department such as helping to identify new placement sites.

Dean's Response: The Office of the Dean of Arts unequivocally supports this career-integrated learning initiative. Increasingly, the Faculty of Arts has promoted career-integrated learning through such initiatives as job-shadowing (e.g. SSH 500), placements and the new co-op program. The recommendation is also overwhelmingly supported by program students, the PRT members and Program Advisory Council members.

RECOMMENDATION 2. *Investigate options for dedicated tutorials, sections, or courses for Philosophy students in years 1 and 2.* This recommendation, to establish dedicated tutorials or sections for philosophy students, seems especially crucial to us. Current students and alumni both expressed strong desire to see dedicated tutorials or sections. This will help address the sense of lack of cohesion with fellow philosophy majors felt among many first and second year students which no doubt contributes to the problems with retention.

Department's Response: With no cost except for organization, the program could foster a greater sense of community by way of dedicated tutorials for SSH 105 and PHL 201, as well as a dedicated fundamentals course as discussed in Recommendation #3. It would also be possible to run dedicated sections of PHL 503 and PHL 708 (or equivalent courses) in the third semester since both courses are run in each term. These are low-cost ways to build community. As well, the Department will consider establishing a dedicated course in ancient philosophy (Recommendation #5). There is more consideration given to community building under Recommendations #5 and #9.

Dean's Response: The Office of the Dean is certainly willing to discuss these options with members of the Philosophy Department, although there are some concerns as to how such initiatives would align with the First Year Common Platform. Along with 11 other programs in the Faculty of Arts, the Philosophy program is part of the First Year Common Platform, a structure that recognizes that first-year university students often arrive at university without a clear understanding of their options for a major and that they may wish to explore their options in the Social Sciences and Humanities with the possibility of transferring seamlessly from one program to another at the end of first year without having to make up any additional credits. For this reason, in their first year, Arts students typically find themselves in classes with other members of their program cohort along with students from a number of other programs in the Social Sciences and Humanities. We consider this to be an important strength of our curriculum. It provides the basis for a rich and flexible transitional year for our first year students. One of the core courses for the common platform is SSH 105 Critical Thinking I, taught by instructors in the Philosophy Department. This course is taken not exclusively by Philosophy students but also all other students from the Faculty of Arts. Other lower level Core courses such as PHL 101, 201, 333 and 366 are also Liberal Studies courses that are offered to students from all Ryerson Faculties. This use of Liberal Studies courses as Core courses reflects a decision made at the inception of the program to offset the cost of the original, relatively low, enrolment target of approximately 30

students (now grown to 45-50 students per year). To create community and increase retention, the Department would like to create a greater sense of cohort in first and second year by having sections of SSH 105 and the Liberal Studies Philosophy courses dedicated to its own program students.

RECOMMENDATION 3. *Fundamentals course for incoming philosophy students.* This would be a mandatory pass/fail course that meets throughout one semester (number of hours to be determined) for writing workshops, an introduction to discipline-specific research and methods, and to discuss career options with guest speakers from various professions.

Department's Response: We appreciate the PRT's recognition of the possible benefits of a fundamentals course for first year students. This will be planned in consultation with students, who first suggested this idea after a number of discussions with the Philosophy UPD and PA about the challenging leap from high school to university. It will also address the need for more cohesion in the Philosophy undergraduate program.

Dean's Response: This recommendation is based on similar mandatory pass/fail courses such as SCI 180 Orientation, in the Faculty of Science and BUS 100 Strategies for Success, formerly in Ted Rogers School of Management (TRSM). The Department will need to review the benefits of such a credit course carefully. Its goal would be to increase the cohort effect and to ensure that students truly understand the Philosophy program and the potential for careers early on in their studies. A mandatory pass/fail course would necessarily be a degree credit Core course that would have to fit into the existing 40-credit program. The Department must also decide on the semester in which they would position such a course, given the recommended flexibility of the first year in the Common platform. I note that the current double majors in Philosophy are already beyond the maximum percentage of Core courses so that this new Core course should replace another Core course rather than add to the overall number of Core courses. The Department should also ensure that there is no substantial overlap between the Fundamentals course and SSH 104 Co-op Preparation. There may be other more effective ways to ensure that Philosophy students have the cohort experience and build community, such as peer mentors, workshops and speaker series, many of which appear in the PPR and the PRT report. The Department should also note that the Office of the Dean of Arts is developing new Faculty-wide supports for student success within the next year, which should reduce the need for Departments to provide such support.

RECOMMENDATION 4. *Increase the diversity of the curriculum and the program.* This program has made considerable strides in this direction already, and we are strongly supportive of its continuing efforts in this direction. Even though this program is surely ahead of its comparison programs in diversity, it clearly needs to be, having a very diverse student body that would be understandably dismayed by the continuance of a white male centred canon. This was mentioned by some of the students we spoke to. The proposals enumerated under this recommendation are well-conceived and should be enacted, in our view.

Department's Response: The Philosophy faculty are keen to review the curriculum with the values of EDI in mind. A new course on a female philosopher has been added for 2022. For the next round of calendar changes, our descriptions will be altered to be more inclusive, and courses will be added in social and political philosophy that are diverse in content (with the expertise of the newest faculty member, Dr. Mulaj, in mind). The 2022 job search for an Indigenous scholar will also further the goals of Recommendation #4. Furthermore, the newly established Committee for Diversity and Inclusion (formerly the Equity committee), as well as the TRC Committee, are hosting events with Indigenous speakers, women philosophers, and thinkers from diverse philosophical traditions. One faculty member has launched a new scholarly society on women thinkers (Society for Women of Ideas), with events open to the Ryerson community. As well, the Canadian Philosophical Association and the Diversity Institute in conjunction with the Philosophy departments in the GTA are planning to co-host a week of professional, academic, and social events for 12-18 Indigenous students in the final years of their undergraduate degrees from across Canada in June of 2021.

This will hopefully be the first of such events in the GTA.

Dean's Response: From the point of view of the Office of the Dean, the initiative to increase the diversity of the curriculum and the program is an essential element of the PPR and should be one of its highest priorities. There is support available from the Dean's office, particularly in the form of consultation with the Dean's Advisor on Indigenous Education, Dr. Hayden King and the Dean's Advisor on Blackness and Black Diasporic Education, Dr. Mélanie Knight, to open up the curriculum to a greater diversity of perspectives, in particular, decolonization, anti-racist thought and action. The Dean's Office also offers curriculum development grants in the areas of Indigenous Studies, Black Studies and Experiential education. Faculty members in the Philosophy Department are encouraged to take advantage of such resources. It is crucial that the whole Department be involved in broadening perspectives in curriculum and research and that equity commitments are not imposed as a burden on racialized faculty only. It is not clear what role a new administrative position would play in achieving this objective, one that should be embraced by all faculty members who are involved in teaching and research. As the PRT members have noted it is important to avoid reinforcing the traditional approach of a curricular canon focused on "dead white men."

RECOMMENDATION 5. Review program requirements and address curriculum gaps. This recommendation calls for a curriculum review, but more substantively the suggestion seems to be that there could be additional requirements in history and possibly social and political philosophy. It also recognizes the need for more offerings in logic.

Department's Response: The lack of logic courses has been partially remedied with PHL 650: Beyond Classical Logic, which is a more advanced logic course than PHL 597: Formal Logic. Starting in winter 2022, PHL 650 will be available to Philosophy, Mathematics and Computer Science students on the open elective table with prerequisites: PHL 597, MTH 110 or MTH 714. Political philosophy is coming together as a supported objective of the Department and will surely grow. As for a shortage of history requirements, a required course in ancient philosophy would provide the roots our program students need for their studies, and we now have the expertise to deliver it. If a course in ancient philosophy is to be required, we could make it a dedicated section for program students in the lower years of the program to help build a sense of community. The cost seems reasonable given the usual intake of roughly fifty students per year. As well, a suite of required courses in history would provide some assurance of a shared background in the student body coming into the seminars in their third and fourth years. These could include a required course in non-Western philosophy, or women in the history of philosophy.

Dean's Response: The Office of the Dean applauds the Department's commitment to review and revise its curriculum in a manner that respects and highlights the focus on diversity and inclusion in Recommendation #4, consistent with the advice of the PRT members. Department members have already added a new course on logic and plan to add courses on Ancient Philosophy and on Social and Political Philosophy. In emphasizing new requirements in the history of philosophy, logic, and social and political philosophy, the Department must take care to integrate the goals of diversity, equity and inclusion into the entire curriculum rather than relegating these issues to specific courses highlighting neglected, marginalized voices.

RECOMMENDATION 6. Establish an alumni network. The recommendation is to build an alumni network, and this is a great idea. It will help to measure the effectiveness of efforts to bridge philosophy majors into work roles, and, assuming that those efforts are successful, the alumni can help to recruit majors and possibly mentor them in the proposed new orientation course and the metaphilosophy course. We recommend the hiring of an additional staff person to facilitate this effort (among other tasks).

Department's Response: Efforts are underway to utilize LinkedIn to create a student alumni networking group.

Dean's Response: The Dean's Office, the Department and the PRT members are all in agreement regarding the importance of an alumni network. The Department has taken the step of consulting Laura MacKinnon,

the Career Engagement specialist assigned to the Faculty of Arts, as this is an area where she has considerable expertise. The Dean's Office provides expertise in social media through the Arts Communications Strategist, Riannon John.

RECOMMENDATION 7. Investigate and monitor retention data from 2021 until next PPR and strengthen recruitment efforts. This recommendation is to measure the extent of the program's retention problem, to determine whether there is a distinctive problem for philosophy or whether it is part of a general university-wide problem. If there is a distinctive problem for philosophy, the goal is to gather data about its causes and to track whether measures taken arising from this program review have an impact.

Department's Response: The Department will investigate a more speculative proposition as well: we might have more students getting out of phase because a disproportionate number of our students do not come into the program by way of direct entry. They have been out of high school for awhile and some did not finish. Their reading and writing skills might be rusty and some students must support themselves. The foundation course will help address some of the skills-based issues that might be affecting retention or delaying graduation. We do have some survey data to consider concerning how much time students spend working outside their studies, and we will follow up in the next PPR. Our new bursary offerings might reveal that financial trouble is part of the problem.

Dean's Response: The Department highlights retention issues, especially in regard to students in second and third year. They propose to do research to add data regarding the fifth year. One proposed solution to these retention issues is to improve recruitment and ensure that students truly understand what is entailed in the study of philosophy as well as a deeper awareness of its benefits.. The PPR offers a number of solutions elsewhere, partly focusing on increasing the sense of cohort and community within the program and emphasizing career-integrated learning, notably through the introduction of co-op education. This recommendation recognizes that the problem needs greater analysis in order to determine the most effective solutions. The Department situates the responsibility for this work largely with the Undergraduate Program Administrator and a potential part-time staff member. Given the importance of this academic issue, the involvement of faculty members, including the UPD and the Curriculum Committee members, is vital.

RECOMMENDATION 8. Hire a part-time staff person. Recommendation seems essential to the fulfilment of other recommendations, which make additional administrative demands. The current Philosophy Administrator is universally admired by students and faculty. He knows the program thoroughly and even helps to guide the students to relevant resources. He surely already has a full plate and the additional demands made by, for example, the co-op program seem to pose the threat of over-burdening him.

Department's Response: We agree with the PRT's assessment. Ryan Walters is essential to the smooth operation of the Philosophy undergraduate program and given the growth of the BA Honours program, along with the other responsibilities of the Department, including overseeing courses in Religion and Music, RUIC, and the upcoming co-op program and alumni networking, as well as the implementation of the PPR recommendations, another staff member is essential.

Dean's Response: The Office of the Dean of Arts is open to a review of staffing requirements and roles in the Department of Philosophy. As part of this review, we must be aware of the need to maintain consistency and equity across all Departments in the Faculty. We commend the program for its growth from the initial intake of around 30 students to 45-50 students. At the same time, we must note that this intake still situates the Department in the lower percentile of program enrolments in Arts programs. It is not clear that additional staffing is needed based on the current size of the undergraduate program. Other departments with an intake of 40-60 students generally have only a single Undergraduate Program Administrator and a Departmental Administrator. Having said this, we note that the Department does have a Masters of Arts

program and plays a significant role in service teaching at the undergraduate level. Furthermore, the staffing structure in the Philosophy Department is not aligned with that of other Faculty of Arts departments. While Philosophy has two staff positions, that is, a Department Administrator and Undergraduate Program Administrator, and a Department Administrator and Graduate Program Administrator, most programs with both an undergraduate and a graduate program have an Undergraduate Program Administrator, a Departmental Administrator and a Graduate Program Administrator, the latter of which is in some cases shared with another Department. As mentioned, we support a review of the structure of staffing in the Philosophy Department more closely aligned with Faculty of Arts norms.

RECOMMENDATION 9. *Create more tutorial sections in more courses.* Currently tutorials are only offered in SSH 105 (Critical Thinking) and PHL 201 (Problems of Philosophy). This recommendation is to expand tutorials (beyond Recommendation #2) in courses including (but not limited to) PHL 101, PHL 333, PHL 366, PHL 503 and PHL 597. Dedicated tutorials for philosophy majors should be created where appropriate. The additional discussion time with TAs and fellow students will benefit all students in the program. Since staffing these tutorials is a challenge without a PhD program to draw from, SSH 105 could employ non-philosophy grads from other programs. Additionally, senior undergrads could be given TAships.

Department's Response: This is an expansion of Recommendation #2. We agree that dedicated tutorials in more of the large courses in years one and two will go a long way to addressing the students' concerns about the lack of cohesion or community in the Philosophy BA Honours program. We will look into the possibilities of hiring TAs from other departments for SSH 105 in order to save the Philosophy MA students for tutorials in other courses.

Dean's Response: The Office of the Dean and the Philosophy Department both see this recommendation as an expansion of the Department's second recommendation, which calls for dedicated tutorials specifically for first and second year students. The Faculty of Arts allows for tutorial sections in courses where a pedagogical argument can be made to justify their use. While we applaud any efforts to hire and to engage our own graduate and undergraduate students as TAs and GAs, we note that resource constraints make it infeasible to offer tutorial sections in all courses. Nonetheless, where a case can be made that a given course requires tutorials based on pedagogical requirements, the request will be considered. Another possibility is the creation of an upper level course that includes mentoring of junior students by advanced students, a model that has been successfully used in the Department of Sociology, for example.

RECOMMENDATION 10. *Work to resolve the issue of limited physical space for Philosophy faculty and students.* The PRT comments on the "noted lack of physical space" for the Department, mentioned by students who believe that a dedicated philosophy student lounge would help with community-building. There is also a faculty office shortage. New faculty must be accommodated, preferably on the same floor and building as their colleagues.

Department's Response: The space crunch is an ongoing issue for the Department, and we appreciate the PRT's recommendation for a student lounge and the guarantee of office spaces in proximity to current offices. With one new faculty member joining us this academic year (arriving on campus in January), and three more in July 2022 if the current searches are successful (one of the three is from our 2021 search), it is essential to procure four more offices. We will discuss this recommendation with the Dean's office.

Dean's Response: Space is an ongoing issue for the Faculty of Arts and for Ryerson University in general. The Office of the Dean recognizes the value of dedicated physical spaces for students yet it is a challenge to find space in light of our downtown location. We should note, however, that the Faculty of Arts benefits from a general student lounge in POD 349 (currently under renovation) as well as two Faculty of Arts computing labs. The Office of the Dean also recognizes the importance of contiguous space for faculty offices to create and foster community and we are working to meet this need, even where it requires recourse to leased

space. Some new campus buildings have been developed in recent years and we hope to benefit from the current backfill.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
Recommendation #1: Launch a co-op study program option for Philosophy students
Rationale: There is a strong need to help Philosophy students transition from the Philosophy program to the workforce. This has been identified in student surveys. Most Philosophy students enjoy the program but feel anxious and unprepared for the labour market.
Implementation and Timeline: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve at a Department Council meeting in Winter 2022 a modified curriculum stream that includes 3 co-op work terms as part of a proposal to go to the Academic Standards Committee. 2. Work with the Ryerson Career Centre to finalize a co-op proposal to the Academic Standards Committee for submission in Spring 2022. 3. Submit calendar changes by Fall 2022 for 2023-2024 implementation. 4. Open applications for the co-op stream in Spring 2023 for 2023-2024 year (first work term ideally in Winter 2024).
Responsibility for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Leading initiative: Department of Philosophy in partnership with the Ryerson Career and Co-op Centre. b) Responsibility for approving recommendation, providing resources, monitoring: Department of Philosophy, Dean, Academic Standards.

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
Recommendation #2: Investigate options for dedicated tutorials, sections, or courses for Philosophy students in years 1 and 2.
Rationale: Students have voiced a need to foster a stronger community among the student body. Philosophy students do not have a dedicated course until third year and many believe a dedicated course earlier in the program would go a long way towards community building. <p>The aim of a dedicated philosophy course in second year, and dedicated tutorials or sections in first year, is to foster community for philosophy majors, and to more freely focus on the methods and approaches of the discipline (for e.g. philosophy essay-writing). This should help improve retention rates.</p>
Implementation and Timeline: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The new plan calls for a dedicated section of PHL 201 in Fall 2022, switching in 2023-2024 to a new philosophy course listed only on Table 1 as the Dean suggested. 2. Strike an expanded curriculum committee for summer 2022 to review second year required courses and propose a dedicated course for Philosophy students in year two. (Options to be explored include: a new dedicated Ancient course; a philosophy specialist version of PHL 503 or PHL 708). The committee presents their recommendation for approval at a Department Council meeting in Fall 2022. 3. Submit calendar changes by Fall 2022 for implementation for the 2023-2024 academic year.
Responsibility for leading initiative: Department of Philosophy
Responsibility for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation: Curriculum committee, Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts Dean's Office

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommendation #3: Increase the diversity of the faculty and the curriculum.

Rationale: The discipline of philosophy is still predominantly focused on male, European, canonical thinkers, and needs to include more under-represented minorities including women, people of colour, and scholars working in non-Western philosophical traditions, including Indigenous philosophy. The objective is to foster greater inclusivity and expose students to a broader sense of what philosophy is and can be.

Specific Actions:

1. Establish a Committee for Diversity and Inclusion to propose and implement measures intended to diversify the program.
2. Revise the calendar descriptions to include female authors.
3. Propose a \$1000 bursary for Indigenous students entering the program with the possibility of renewal after the first year, funded by the Department.
4. Propose a \$1000 bursary for students entering the program with financial need, possibly renewable, funded by the Department.
5. Revise current course offerings with a view to incorporating more authors from under-represented minorities in philosophy.
6. Offer a course exclusively focused on a major female philosopher.
7. Organize a speaker series and reading group on Indigenous philosophy.
8. Organize a speaker series on women philosophers (through the Society for Women of Ideas).

Implementation and Timeline:

1. Committee for Diversity and Inclusion established May 2021.
2. Curriculum changes will be submitted in fall, 2022 for 2023 implementation.
3. The speaker series on women philosophers (through the Society for Women of Ideas) began 2021-2022.
4. The speaker series and reading group on Indigenous philosophy began in 2021-2022.
5. Diversification of curriculum is ongoing.
6. Set up Indigenous bursary and financial need bursary by 2022-23.

Responsibility for leading initiative: Philosophy Program Chair, Director and Administrator, Curriculum Committee, Committee for Diversity and Inclusion, Speaker Series Committees.

Responsibility for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation: Department of Philosophy

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommendation #4: Review program requirements and address curriculum gaps

Rationale: The Comparator Report reveals that Ryerson’s Philosophy program has fewer history requirements than all the other comparison programs but one. This means students lack foundational knowledge important for more advanced philosophy courses. Other program requirements need revision, and curriculum gaps need to be filled. In a series of focus group discussions with faculty, those teaching the “Classic Readings” seminars have complained that students do not have the relevant background for these seminars, including logic (important for PHL 600). Faculty discussions have furthermore revealed an interest in exploring the possibility of a social and political requirement, as well as offering more choices in experiential learning (e.g. a course on public philosophy, philosophy through media, or practical research).

Specific actions:

1. Review core requirements and address curriculum gaps with a view to strengthening the foundational knowledge of philosophy majors
2. Consult with faculty on whether to propose new requirements in history, logic, and social and political philosophy
3. Review all the program requirements in consultation with faculty members
4. Add dedicated required philosophy course in second year to strengthen foundational knowledge
5. Expand offerings in logic by adding an advanced course for students interested in further study
6. Explore more options in experiential learning

Implementation and Timeline:

1. Curriculum committee to consult with faculty members over summer 2022.
2. Make calendar changes in fall 2022 for 2023 implementation.

Responsibility for leading initiative: Philosophy Program Chair, Director and Administrator, Curriculum Committee

Responsibility for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation: Department of Philosophy

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommendation #5: Establish an alumni network

Rationale: It has been difficult to stay in touch with alumni of the program as alumni relations are managed centrally by a different administrative area of the University. However, alumni can and should form an important part of the broader program community and assist with enriching the experience of current students, for example by providing career mentorship. A better system for connecting with alumni could also help the department to get employer feedback.

Actions:

1. Investigate how to improve connections with program alumni and build a robust alumni network.
2. Consult with the Alumni Relations department to discuss objectives of this recommendation.
3. Investigate possible platforms or services that can assist with maintaining an alumni network (for example, Discord, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)
4. Consult current alumni.
5. As suggested by the Dean, consult Laura MacKinnon of the Career Engagement Office and Riannon John as the Arts Communications Strategist.

Implementation and Timeline: As soon as the PPR is approved with this recommendation (estimated by end of Summer 2022), the above actions can be started.

Responsibility for leading initiative: Philosophy Program Chair, Director and Administrator

Responsibility for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation: Department of Philosophy

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommendation #6: Investigate and monitor retention data from 2021 until the next PPR and strengthen recruitment efforts.

Rationale: Investigate whether retention data is truly pointing to a trend of students prematurely leaving the program or if this is a matter of students getting out of phase. If so, investigate reasons why and whether these are particular to the Philosophy program. Assess whether recommendations implemented after the PPR have an effect on retention.

Implementation and timeline:

1. Study the effects of students being out of phase when it comes to our actual retention numbers for the sake of a better analysis in order to determine the nature of the problem for the sake of solving the problem. This work will take place during winter 2023.
2. As suggested by the Dean, this should be a collective effort shared by the UPD, PA, the curriculum committee and the Department as a whole.

Responsibility for leading initiative: Philosophy Program Chair, Director and Administrator

Responsibility for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation: Department of Philosophy

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Recommendation #7: Formalize additional administrative support

Rationale: We believe that we are in line with departments who have the equivalent of 2.5 positions. It should be noted that the Department has already been hiring part-time support for the last 3 years. The Dean's office initially covered this expense for the first year in recognizing a need for additional support, but the Department has paid for it since then out of its own budget.

Implementation and timeline:

1. Consult with the Dean's Office on making a request to the University over the summer of 2022.
2. Write up the job responsibilities and work with HR to formalize and grade the position.
3. Post and hire for the position for Fall of 2022.

Responsibility for leading initiative: Philosophy Program Chair and Administrator

Responsibility for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation: Dean

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

(PRT) Recommendation #8: Create tutorial sections in more courses.

Rationale: Currently the program has limited tutorials (SSH 105 and PHL 201). Expanding tutorial sections in other first and second year courses would help build community in the program, assist students with discipline-specific skills, and help with retention.

Implementation and Timeline: Given the current lack of resources needed to expand the number of tutorial sections offered in the undergraduate program, there are no immediate plans to implement this recommendation; it will be explored in the coming years.

Responsibility for leading initiative: Philosophy Program Chair, Director and Administrator as well as curriculum committee

Responsibility for approving recommendation, providing any resources made necessary by the recommendation, and overall monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation: Dean

RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

(PRT) Recommendation #9: Work to resolve the issue of limited physical space for Philosophy faculty. (The PRT also noted students' request for a dedicated Philosophy student lounge).

Rationale: There is an urgent need for more office space for 4 incoming faculty who are new or who have been teaching online.

Actions: Consult with the Dean.

Timeline: Offices need to be located by July 1, 2022.

Responsibility for leading initiative: the Dean and the Chair.