A. Student learning outcomes for Philosophy Major (BA)

1. Students acquire the skills
   - of careful reading and interpretation of philosophical texts,
   - of writing clear, succinct and well argued papers
   - of responding critically to the ideas advanced by others
   - of expressing ideas logically and coherently

   Students acquire a basic knowledge of the history of Western Philosophy
   Students are acquainted with at least one non-Western philosophic tradition
   Students are acquainted with at least one major topic in the contemporary study of philosophy.

   Students demonstrate the ability to write a paper on a philosophical topic on which they have conducted independent research
   (Adopted by department on 18 August 2005)

2. These will be published in the pamphlet we distribute to prospective majors and on the department web site.

3. Students acquire the skills
   - of careful reading and interpretation of philosophical texts,
   - of writing clear, succinct and well argued papers
   - of responding critically to the ideas advanced by others
   - of expressing ideas logically and coherently

Careful reading and interpretation of philosophical texts is a standard part of all our courses. Nearly all our courses above the 100 level are writing intensive. This means that our majors have a lot of practice on assignments designed to foster the skills mentioned above. Where possible we include focused class discussion and debate in our teaching format.

Students acquire a basic knowledge of the history of Western Philosophy
Majors are required to take at least two courses from our three, 200 level, History of Western Philosophy series.

Students are acquainted with at least one non-Western philosophic tradition
Majors are required to take at least one course introducing them to the philosophy of a non-Western culture. The department regularly teaches Introductory courses in Chinese Philosophy, Japanese Philosophy, Indian Philosophy, Buddhist Philosophy and Islamic Philosophy.

Students are acquainted with at least one major topic in the contemporary study of philosophy.
Majors are required to take at least one course based on contemporary material covering an area or set of issues of current concern to philosophers.

Students demonstrate the ability to write a paper on a philosophical topic on which they have conducted independent research
This is the specific aim of our capstone course for majors, PHIL 449, in which
students are mentored as they work on such papers through the semester.

4. No data were collected last year. For the coming year we propose to use the following assessment instruments:

   **Portfolio Evaluation:**
   Final papers and exams written by senior level Philosophy Majors will be collected each Fall semester, will be reviewed by a faculty committee for evidences of skills acquisition. The committee will report its findings to the department.

   **Syllabus evaluation:**
   Syllabi and related materials for all undergraduate courses will be collected each semester and reviewed by the curriculum committee, which will report to the department.

   **Undergraduate questionnaire:**
   A questionnaire, taking a whole class period to complete, will be given to students taking the capstone course – PHIL 449. It will seek to assess content knowledge and impact of studying philosophy on student attitudes and ways of thinking. This will not necessarily only go to seniors. Because the course is only taught once a year, some students take it early.

   As yet we cannot think of a feasible way to assess the outcomes of our many service courses.

6. General Education Assessment Within the Major:

Manoa’s General Education Program includes the following requirements of majors. All students who graduate with the major:

1) are proficient in the primary information-accessing and information-processing methods of the field; by either integrating such skills within courses or research projects or by recommending an appropriate course offered in another department (computer/info sciences, etc.);

2) are proficient in the problem-solving and oral communication methods of the field;

3) have had training and experience in the modes of inquiry and analysis appropriate to the field. The purpose is to have all students actively engaged in scholarship at a high level, and to avoid having students completing their degrees by means of passive learning alone.

How have you met the above requirements in your degree program?
(1) Is not addressed systematically in our curriculum, although most professors do advise students on use of bibliographies and library searches, and PHIL 449 includes this explicitly. This would still be the primary information accessing and information processing method in the field. Use of computer-based information technology is very uneven in the philosophy profession and this is reflected in our department.

(2) It isn’t clear that philosopher’s ever solve any problems. We are still discussing those raised by Plato and Aristotle! Our whole curriculum is aimed at getting student’s to ask questions that problematize views they have taken for granted and to then to get them to consider and discuss, orally and in writing, the justification that can be offered for proposed solutions.

(3) This is addressed by PHIL 449. It should also be noted that passive learning is not acceptable in philosophy; no student can get a good grade in philosophy courses without actively engaging the material.

B. Graduate Assessment by Degree/Certificate Program

1. Student learning outcomes for MA (plan A and B) students in Philosophy

- Students acquire basic proficiency in at least one philosophically significant language other than English.

- Students acquire competence in each of three areas
  - history of Western philosophy
  - metaphysics, epistemology, logic and philosophy of science
  - political, ethical, and social theory and aesthetics

- Students are able to conduct research which leads either to a thesis or a significant portfolio of shorter works

- Students demonstrate the ability to write and prepare presentations at a high level of proficiency

Since students come to the program with diverse professional goals, the following outcomes are appropriate for many students but not for all

Student is prepared to enter a Ph.D. program
Student is prepared to teach philosophy at the junior college level.

Student Learning Outcomes for Ph.D. in Philosophy

- Students demonstrate philosophical reading competence in a philosophically significant language other than English.

- Students demonstrate reading and research competence in English.

- Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the Western philosophical tradition and where applicable in a non-Western tradition.

- Students demonstrate their knowledge and ability to participate in a field of contemporary philosophic endeavor.
- Students gain mastery of a specific topic
- Students develop the ability to conduct and write up publishable research
- Students develop the ability to express and defend their views in oral presentations

(adopted 18 August 2005)

2. These will be published in the Department’s Graduate Student Handbook and on the Department web page.

3. How the SLOs map to the curriculum

**MA**
- Students acquire basic proficiency in at least one philosophically significant language other than English.
- Students acquire competence in each of three areas
  - history of Western philosophy
  - metaphysics, epistemology, logic and philosophy of science
  - political, ethical, and social theory and aesthetics

These reflect the degree and course requirements for MA students.

- Students are able to conduct research which leads either to a thesis or a significant portfolio of shorter works
- Students demonstrate the ability to write and prepare presentations at a high level – of proficiency

Graduate level courses are almost all seminar courses. Students are expected to participate actively in the class, to prepare brief presentations for class, and to write extended papers. The MA culminating exam has both written and oral components. Students submit either a portfolio of their written work, or a thesis; this is followed by an oral examination.

**Ph.D.**
- Students demonstrate philosophical reading competence in a philosophically significant language other than English.
Students continue their language studies in the relevant language department and independently. They take an exam administered by the relevant language department.

- Students demonstrate reading and research competence in English.
Foreign students work intensively with professors in the department and with students who are native English speakers to improve their English language skills.

- Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the Western philosophical tradition and where applicable in a non-Western tradition
This is assessed by take home written examination, followed by an oral exam. Students working in Asian and Comparative Philosophy are assessed on both Western and the relevant non-Western texts. Students working only in Western
philosophy are required to have a more extensive knowledge of the Western tradition.

students demonstrate their knowledge and ability to participate in a field of contemporary philosophic endeavor.

The department has developed graduate level courses designed to develop students ability to engage with topics in contemporary philosophy. This is assessed by a take-home written examination followed by an oral exam.

students gain mastery of a specific topic

This is assessed in the thesis proposal defense

students develop the ability to conduct and write up publishable research

In coursework by the requirement to write and revise article length papers on topics requiring research related to, but not covered in, class material. Through mentoring by the members of the PhD committee.

students develop the ability to express and defend their views in oral presentations

This is encouraged by the format of our examinations at the graduate level. In addition the Philosophy Student’s Association runs its own colloquia where students can practice presenting to an audience of their peers.

4. What population is covered by your assessment(s)? – All graduate students.

5. Please list/describe all the assessment events and devices used to monitor graduate student progress through the program.:

Assessment instruments for MA Program

MA Culminating exam (in future this will include compiling examiners' scoring on desired characteristics of oral and written components, without student names attached so that we can look at a more global picture.)

Placement of students

Assessment instrument for PhD Program

Exams: language exam, two area exams, proposal defence, dissertation defence. (see 3 above)

Placement of ex students.

Progress of all graduate students is reviewed by the whole department once a year.

6. Philosophy Department students participate actively in the annual SHAPS student conference. We encourage students to submit papers for professional conferences and to submit papers to professional journals, and each year several are successful. A few years ago our graduate students organized a very successful national conference for philosophy students. We are hoping that this might happen again in the near future.

7. The Philosophy Department maintains a list of graduate alumni, tracking their placement into doctoral programs, teaching positions, etc.
Assessment Report, 2004-2005

Our MA students typically enter Ph.D. programs, either our own or at another institution. The most frequently cited reason for moving to another institution is the lack available TA ships, or fellowships in our department. Many get lucrative offers elsewhere. Of the 72 students getting MA degrees in Philosophy at UH in the past 10 years, 33 have continued in our program. Of the remaining 39 we know that 13 went in to PhD programs in other schools, 2 continued to law school, 1 went to UH Political Science PhD program, 1 entered an Asian Studies Ph.D. program, 2 took up teaching philosophy at the community college level.

Of the 48 students completing PhD degrees in the last 10 years. We have no knowledge of the fate of 6. Of the remaining 42, 30 have university positions, mostly tenured or tenure track, 5 have community college positions, 1 lawyer, 1 in law school, 1 in medical school, 1 elementary school teacher, 1 community college librarian, 1 development officer for the E-W center Asian Studies Development Program, 1 post-doc. Of the 25 students who obtained Ph.D. degrees in the past 5 years 17 have tenured or tenure track positions at universities.