Boise State University
Foundational Studies Program Course Application Form
Due to the Foundational Studies Program by August 19, 2011

After the Foundational Studies Program has approved a course, departments will continue through the regular department and college procedures. The approved course should be submitted to the University Curriculum Committee by October 1, 2011.

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Instructions:
1. Complete one form per course.
2. Attach this Foundational Studies Course Application Form to the back of the University Curriculum Committee “Request for Curriculum Action” form. Both forms should be submitted to the Foundational Studies Program Office by August 19, 2011.

Part I. Course Information:

Course Number and Title: PHIL 101 Knowledge and Reality

Type of Foundational Studies Course – (Choose One):
[ ] DLS (Disciplinary Lens – Social Science)
[x] DLL (Disciplinary Lens – Literature and Humanities)
[ ] DLV (Disciplinary Lens – Visual and Performing Arts)
[ ] DLM (Disciplinary Lens – Mathematics)
[ ] DLN (Disciplinary Lens – Natural, Physical, and Applied Sciences)
   Includes Lab: [ ] Yes [ ] No
[ ] CID (Communication in the Discipline)
[ ] FF (Finishing Foundations)

Delivery Format(s) – (Check all that apply):
[x] Face to Face
[ ] Fully Online
[ ] Hybrid
[ ] Concurrent Enrollment
[ ] Other (briefly describe):
Part II. Syllabus Statement:
In the space below, include the syllabus statement for this course which will appear on the first page of the syllabus for each section of this course. (Template and examples are appended to this application form.)

Boise State’s Foundational Studies Program provides undergraduates with a broad-based education that spans the entire university experience. **PHIL 101: Knowledge and Reality** satisfies three credits of the Foundation Program's Disciplinary Lens – Literature and Humanities (DL-L) requirement. It supports the following University Learning Outcome, along with a variety of other course-specific goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LO</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Apply knowledge and the methods of inquiry characteristic of literature and other humanities disciplines to interpret and produce texts expressive of the human condition.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**PHIL 101: Knowledge and Reality** is designed to introduce some standard problems and methods in philosophy. This course helps to achieve the goals of the Foundational Studies Program by focusing on the following course learning outcomes. After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Accurately comprehend and charitably interpret philosophical texts.
- Express yourself in well-organized prose which meets the discipline’s standards of clarity and precision.
- Identify, reconstruct, evaluate and give arguments, with attention to their internal structure (premises vs. the conclusions they support) and what distinguishes them from claims.
- Approach positions—especially those with which one disagrees—fairly, patiently, and imaginatively.
- Be familiar with some major issues in metaphysics and epistemology, such as free will, the existence of God, the rationality of religious belief, the mind/body problem, personal identity, skepticism about external world, the problem of induction.

Part III. Design for Accessibility:
In the space below, briefly describe plans for providing access to course materials and activities (or equivalent alternatives) to all students in adherence with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Although these plans may vary from instructor to instructor, the descriptions provided below should be representative of intended departmental and instructor practices. (See example statements appended to this form.)

The department will continue its current successful practice of dealing with accessibility issues by working with students and the Disability Resource Center on a case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature of the case, means to accessibility might include (but is not restricted to): a scribe, text-to-voice software (i.e., screen readers), extra time on exams and in-class assignments, and individual meetings to give needed oral explanations (say, of written comments on an assignment).

Part IV. Evidence of Quality Course Design:
Please use the table below (column headings for this table should not be changed) to provide evidence that the course has been carefully designed and is clearly aligned with Foundational Studies Program desired ULOs. All sections of the course should share similar student learning outcomes.
Teaching and Learning Activities and Assessment Methods may vary from instructor to instructor. Please use the table to report representative strategies that may be used. Assessment activities used for reporting to the Foundational Studies Program should be consistent across different sections of the course.

Please see below.

Part V. Additional Justification (Optional):

If the brief justification provided to the University Curriculum Committee in the proposal to accompany the “Request for Curriculum Action” is not sufficient to make the case for including the course in the Foundational Studies Program, additional (optional) narrative can be added here.

We have not included a CLO for the following criterion for the satisfaction of ULO 10.

*Cultural, historical, conceptual, and linguistic awareness*

- exhibits awareness of and sensitivity to human values by demonstrating knowledge and appreciation of cultural, historical, conceptual or linguistic differences
- explain one’s own cultural perspectives
- make meaningful comparisons with the cultural perspectives of others

It would warp the nature of the course to include such a learning objective. The course is concerned with whether, say, Aquinas had a good argument for the existence of God. The right verdict might be that it was a bad argument. That doesn’t seem to be the kind of thing the framers of the ULO criterion had in mind by asking for “awareness of and sensitivity to human values”, for example. While everyone in the philosophy department approves of the goals in this ULO 10 component, we don’t feel that it is the job of every DL-L class to pursue those goals.

We are adopting the following Departmental Internal Guideline: “The sustained piece of writing, used for the assessment reported to the Foundational Studies Program, will typically be around 750 words. It may be produced outside of class or in exam conditions. It may take the form of an essay, or of paragraph-long answers that resemble an essay when taken together.”

Review Committee Checklist:

X Syllabus Statement - statement introduces the student to the purpose and role of the course in the Foundational Studies Program curriculum.

An appropriate number of Course Learning Outcomes are specified for the course and are clearly designed to support the Foundational Studies Program ULOs. **One ULO is missing.**

Course Learning Outcomes are appropriately designed for level of the course and address both content mastery and skill-based outcomes.

The types and numbers of assessments planned for the course are appropriate for measuring the content or skills being assessed

Course learning activities are likely to promote the achievement of the stated outcomes

Course design and materials have considered best practices for accessibility to course materials and ideas by all students (e.g., alternatives to auditory and visual content)

Feedback from Review Committee:

This looks like a very interesting course, especially in the ways it teaches students to think like philosophers. The learning outcomes appear to be mostly skills-based, with only the last one
addressing content mastery in an almost tentative way. Will students be expected to come away from the course with any significant understanding of specific theories or texts? If so, “be familiar” seems to lack the strength to communicate this expectation. The explanation of why there are no CLOs to discuss “cultural, historical, conceptual, and linguistic awareness” makes some good points, but seems to take a pretty limited view of how this awareness might be addressed in a course like this one. Even if Aquinas’ argument is deemed ineffective, shouldn’t students be able to make this judgment in a way that demonstrates awareness of their own cultural context and the ways that it differs from the context in which Aquinas was writing? So excluding this element of the rubric doesn’t seem justified, especially since many students will only be taking one DL-L course. Aside from this, the course appears to include a broad range of activities and assessments to help students achieve the objectives and learn the methods of philosophy.

In the category of CLOs, what does it mean to “charitably interpret” a philosophical text? Does this mean students need to be proficient at interpretation? Does it mean they are required to agree with the text? Or does it merely mean they are required not to dismiss it out of hand?

Perhaps “charitably interpreting” a philosophical text is the response to the ULO Cultural, historical, conceptual, and linguistic awareness. The idea is merely to ask students to recognize that they do not share Aquinas’ culture; they do not live during his historical time period; they recognize that they are not reading Aquinas in his original language, and yet they can engage with “whether, say, Aquinas had a good argument for the existence of God.” I see absolutely no incompatibility with this ULO and the course as presented. Are students actively prohibited from reflecting (albeit informally, in class, in discussion) on the fact that they are atheist / Jewish / Muslim / LDS / Buddhist and comparing what they do or do not believe about God with what Aquinas is saying?

I like the Departmental Internal Guideline about the sustained piece of writing that will be used for the assessment reporting. It may be a helpful example to other departments striving to maintain consistency with diversity.

**FSP comment** – this course is certified for approval as designed. It is understood that if a criterion of a ULO is not suitable for a course, that criterion may be omitted. If a course has multiple criteria that are not a match, it would be an indication that the course was not suitable for the category.

Electronically signed by Vicki Stehe, Director, Foundational Studies Program Boise State University

CERTIFIED FOR APPROVAL 9-8-2011.
# Course Design Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation ULO 10 Criteria</th>
<th>Foundation ULO 10 Notions of Exemplary Work</th>
<th>Course Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, each student should be able to…</th>
<th>Assessment Method: Evidence of Student Learning</th>
<th>Planned Teaching &amp; Learning Activities / Pedagogy</th>
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</table>
| ULO 10: Critical reading skills within the discipline | • Skillfully uses disciplinary tools and vocabulary appropriate for the course  
• Accurately comprehends appropriate texts  
• Convincingly interprets appropriate texts  
• Insightfully analyzes assigned texts | Accurately comprehend and charitably interpret appropriate philosophical texts (e.g. by reconstructing the argument). | Basis for the report to the Foundations Program:  
• a piece of sustained writing, in which an argument is stated, an objection put forward and evaluated.  
Other forms of assessment may include:  
• other sustained pieces of writing  
• short essay exams  
• multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank exam questions  
• quizzes  
• participation in blackboard discussions  
• participation in classroom discussions | May include:  
• Homework reading responses  
• Discussion groups  
• Blackboard discussions  
• Each one teach one  
• In-class debates  
• Whole-class discussion about how to the reconstruct the argument  
• ‘muddiest point’ papers  
• one-minute papers  
• Faculty feedback on written work  
• Peer assessment of written work  
• Individual student/teacher conferences |
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<td>ULO 10: Writing and/or speaking within the discipline</td>
<td>• Articulates complex ideas in clear and coherent language appropriate to the discipline • Demonstrates exemplary skill with grammar and style appropriate for the course</td>
<td>• Express themselves in well-organized prose which meets the discipline’s standards of clarity and precision.</td>
<td>Basis for the report to the Foundations Program: • a piece of sustained writing, in which an argument is stated, an objection put forward and evaluated. Other forms of assessment may include: • other sustained pieces of writing • short essay exams • in-class oral presentations • participation in blackboard discussions • participation in classroom discussions</td>
<td>May include: • Homework reading responses • Discussion groups • Blackboard discussions • Each one teach one • In-class debates • Whole-class lecture and discussion about how to the reconstruct the argument • Tutorial videos on how to write argumentative essays • Faculty feedback on written work • Peer assessment of written work • Students mark a sample essay in class using a rubric • Oral presentations • Individual student/teacher conferences</td>
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<td>ULO 10: Reasoning within the discipline</td>
<td>• Demonstrate a high level of skill in logical reasoning in written and oral work appropriate for the course</td>
<td>• Identify, reconstruct, evaluate and give arguments, with attention to their internal structure (premises vs. the conclusions they support) and what distinguishes them from claims.</td>
<td>Basis for the report to the Foundations Program:</td>
<td>May include:</td>
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<td>• Identify important underlying assumptions</td>
<td></td>
<td>• a piece of sustained writing, in which an argument is stated, an objection put forward and evaluated.</td>
<td>• Whole-class lecture and discussion about how to the reconstruct the argument</td>
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<td>• Distinguishes pertinent facts from opinions</td>
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<td>Other forms of assessment may include:</td>
<td>• Tutorial videos on what constitutes a good argument</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Differentiates claims from reasons</td>
<td>• Arranges relevant evidence in concise and clear language appropriate for the course</td>
<td>• other sustained pieces of writing</td>
<td>• Discussion groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Arranges relevant evidence in concise and clear language appropriate for the course</td>
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<td>• short essay exams</td>
<td>• Blackboard discussions</td>
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<td>• multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank exam questions</td>
<td>• Each one teach one</td>
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| ULO 10: Cultural, historical, conceptual, and linguistic awareness | • Exhibits awareness of and sensitivity to human values by demonstrating knowledge and appreciation of cultural, historical, conceptual or linguistic differences  
• Explain one’s own cultural perspectives make meaningful comparisons with the cultural perspectives of others | Approach positions—especially those with which one disagrees—fairly, patiently, and imaginatively. | Basis for the report to the Foundations Program:  
• a piece of sustained writing, in which an argument is stated, an objection put forward and evaluated.  
Other forms of assessment may include:  
• other sustained pieces of writing  
• participation in blackboard discussions  
• participation in classroom discussions  
• discussion in individual student/teacher conferences | May include:  
• Discussion groups  
• Blackboard discussions  
• Each one teach one  
• In-class debates  
• Faculty feedback on written work  
• Peer assessment of written work  
• Individual student/teacher conferences  
• Writing a reflection paper, about what parts of the course have changed them, and how. |
| ULO 10: Personal development | • Responsibly entertain and evaluate views that differ from one’s own  
• Actively explore and navigate ambiguity and difference  
• Ask probing questions relevant to the discipline  
• Approach problems imaginatively and creatively | | | |
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<td>NON ULO Class LO’s</td>
<td>Be familiar with some major issues in metaphysics and epistemology, such as free will, the existence of God, the rationality of religious belief, the mind/body problem, personal identity, skepticism about external world, the problem of induction.</td>
<td>Assessment may include: • a sustained piece of writing • short essay exams • multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank exam questions • quizzes • participation in blackboard discussions participation in classroom discussions</td>
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