Summary – Common Contexts – Philosophical Reflections –

For each new course above, please comment on
   a. the ways the course through its syllabus or instruction has (not) helped you understand the goals of the GE
   b. the ways in which the course has (not) contributed to these goals.

2004

PO030  We had four papers with ten page maximums due throughout the semester. I do believe the maximum was difficult (in a good way) because I had to really push myself to analyze and comment on so much material. The question of whether or not people are essentially estranged was visited in each paper (and therefore as we discussed each ideology) and that was one I'd never sought to answer before. Good class. At the end of the semester my friends and I often talked about how well our classes overlapped with each other. We often found ourselves learning things in one class which applied directly to another's current topic and even used facts learned in one class to beef up papers or answer test questions in others. We were learning!! I think that is what affected me most. Seeing the synergy of all my classes and how I need to actively pursue studying to get all that info into my head. Learning doesn't happen by osmosis. :) Good morning!

Spring 2005

PY006H
As an honors course, this philosophy section is structured such that what a student gets out of the class is largely up the student, more so than other courses. Nonetheless, I feel that it has effectively embraced the goals of the new GE program. It is not a simple historical survey of philosophy, but helps students approach the subject from the right perspective, providing arguments that would not be presented in a “secular” environment. The reasoning skills (“strategies of inquiry”) that are developed through challenging
readings and class lecture and discussion are valuable because they are highly applicable. While I feel that at times the course could discuss issues more directly related to Christian life, this aspect is present. I do not come away from the course with a desire to allocate future classes to this topic, but I did find the course foundational for understanding human thought, past and present.

PY 006H
I had never taken another specifically Philosophy class before and it was definitely a fulfillment of the GE goals. It has been an interesting and edifying experience. It was well taught and even though it is not my subject, I learned a lot.

PY6H
a. The course goals stated in the course syllabus begin, "This course aims not only at knowledge, but also at certain skills and attitudes." This course has certainly shaped my attitude towards various philosophical theories and equipped me with the skills by which I may evaluate them.

b. The course has contributed to these goals by requiring students to respond to each philosophical theory with objections and replies. This promotes the formation of an attitude towards each theory.

PY 006
Philosophical Perspectives was a really beneficial course for me in terms of “Philosophical Reflections” because I had never been exposed to thinking critically in a philosophical way. This was a challenging course for me because I was with mainly upperclassmen who maybe had a little more experience in thinking in the fundamentally different ways that philosophy often requires, but I really learned a lot and enjoyed being pushed to examine certain aspects of life in a critical and intellectual light. This was an exemplary liberal arts course because it tied in aspects of faith that I was learning about both in my Christian Doctrine course as well as issues I was dealing with in Life Science.

Fall 2005
1. POL 030
By taking this class I have been enlightened by the different ideologies. I feel that it is very important to know them so that we can better understand people not only in our own country but outside of our borders as well. This course has helped to broaden my understanding of politics and political thinking around the world as we reflect to try and find out a truth.

10. PY006
Philosophical Perspectives on Truth and Value has contributed greatly to my understanding of the goals of the GE. It has allowed me to understand the importance of a liberal arts education, and the benefit of a Christian perspective within that education. Philosophy has allowed me to broaden the lens through which I view my learning, and question the values I hold and the beliefs by which I live, as is central to the purpose of the GE program. Through this course, I have had the opportunity to study major avenues of thought in the field of philosophy, and further view them in light of my faith. The GE program has been a central component in my learning of what it means to determine and participate in a Christian vocation, and this course has further aided me in evaluating what that will entail.

Spring 2006

1. PHI 006
a. The goals of the GE are clearly laid out and met in this philosophy class. The syllabus and introduction to the class make clear the goals set out by the GE.
b. This course was VERY effective in meeting these goals. The class is titled Philosophical Reflections on Truth and Value and it seeks to help you grow in your understanding of the philosophy of truth, ethics, theology and life in general. The readings are all very applicable and class discussion is a very effective tool for understanding the reading and concepts presented.
Once again, it was the syllabus, and my instructor’s discussion of the syllabus, that most clearly laid out the goals of the GE with respect to my philosophy class. I am happy to report that I feel this class in particular has done an exceptional job of accomplishing those goals. I have learned a great deal about the nature and strength of competing truth claims and value systems, and I have been encouraged to evaluate the way that I see, interact with, and evaluate the world from a Christian perspective. This class has exposed some of the assumptions I make about myself, the world, and my faith, and has opened my eyes to the different assumptions that others might make. My professor did an excellent job of integrating the faith in the class as well, and that piece of the class has made the experience even more valuable to me. We, as a class, carefully studied each of the claims made by various philosophers, and then had intriguing discussions about whether or not those claims were compatible with the Christian faith. I feel that this class is a very strong component of the GE program.

The goals of this class were stated quite clearly. The main central problems of Philosophy were addressed, contradicting sides of theories were stated and evidences and proofs for both. We were supposed to think critically on the issues, and think for ourselves about the debatable subject.

This course was definitely very effective in accomplishing these goals. Philosophy, is not my preferred way of thinking, but this class helped me gain a new perspective and appreciation for the subject as a whole. The examples that the professor would use would be applicable to our lives, and we could see Philosophy differently and how it effects our lives, as humans and also Christians. The existence of God discussion was discussed, which applied as an important ingredient to a Christian Liberal Arts College.
syllabus for the class and then throughout the class he made sure to explain and relate what we were studying to the purpose of the class.

B. I believe that the class was very effective in accomplishing the goals of the GE program. I feel that we were taught how to think about truth from both an ethical and religious point of view and we were unbiasedly presented differing views in a way that we were able to see exactly how each principle fit into our way of thinking.

15. PHIL 06

Philosophy has really been a great class in communicating the goals of the GE. The professor makes a note of how the GE is being fulfilled every few classes so we the students know why we are taking it, which I appreciate. This course has been extremely successful in accomplishing the goals of reflecting on Truth and Values.

Fall 2006

For each new course above, please comment on:
a. How effective has the course been in communicating the goals of the GE area(s) for which you are taking it? How, specifically, was this accomplished?
b. How effective was the course in accomplishing these goals?

Please label the two parts of the response with (a) and (b).

PHI 006

Philosophy was a new area of study for me, as well as for many other peers in my class. Having never been exposed to philosophy, I was not sure what to expect. The structure of the class was effective because we took one philosopher at a time, read excerpts of the philosopher’s famous works, and had great class discussions. We were challenged to develop our own perspective and think for ourselves.

My professor often played “devil’s advocate” and was good at questioning our perspectives on a certain philosopher’s arguments, proofs, etc. We looked at truth, knowledge, and beliefs in ways that we abstract. It’s important to see that we need to be reflective in our lives and understand that it is okay to question our beliefs (to a certain extent).