Task Force on Graduate Education: Selective Excellence

Program Ratings and Rationale

Program: Philosophy M.A., Ph.D. Program
Rating: Good

The Philosophy Department has a history of research and teaching excellence. The program focuses on ethics and value theory as well as the history of philosophy, which provides a niche for the program. Philosophy appears to enjoy a strong reputation amongst its peers. Philosophy has a small but high quality applicant pool. The program is selective and has a reasonably good level of diversity for a program of its size. Financial support is limited to TAships and internal fellowships. TTD (6.4 yrs) is comparable to that of the discipline, but could be improved. Completion (42%) for students entering between 1996-2001 is low, and 37% of this cohort left the University of Iowa with no degree. The program indicates that improvements are being made in the program delivery to address these issues, such as a warning letter to students in the 6th year. Graduates from 2003-08 are primarily employed in teaching positions in colleges/universities with 85% of that cohort in tenure track positions. The self-awareness and action plan are dependent upon faculty hires that may be difficult to obtain in the near future due to financial constraints. Recently, faculty have made scholarly overtures to a number of areas on campus. Thus, the TF recommends that the graduate program continue to explore potential curricular and scholarly synergies with other appropriate humanities programs.