

Status: **Reviewed**

Entry #: 223

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OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM REVIEW AND PLANNING FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Program Review is about documenting the plans you have for improving student success in your program and sharing that information with the community. Through the review of and reflection on key program elements, program review and planning identifies program strengths as well as strategies necessary to improve the academic discipline, program, or service to support student success. With our new Guided Pathways plan, this review becomes even more crucial for the success of our students and college.

We are using the Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results (SOAR) strategic planning technique to help us focus on our current strengths and opportunities, create a vision of future aspirations, and consider the results of this approach.

BASIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

Academic Year
2020-2021

Are you completing a comprehensive or annual PRP?
Annual

Department Name
Behavioral Sciences

Discipline Name
Religious Studies (RS)

Department Chair Name
Jeffrey Epstein and Netta Schroer

Division Name
Social and Behavioral Sciences

Website address for your discipline
<https://www2.palomar.edu/pages/religiousstudies/>

Discipline Mission statement

The mission of Religious Studies at Palomar College is to provide religion literacy to students and the larger community in preparation for quality engagement with an increasingly religious, interdependent, and global world. The Religious Studies discipline offers the preparation of learning core knowledge and language of the world's diverse religious traditions, studied in historical and contemporary forms. The academic study of religion also instills vitally important skills of cultivating mutual respect, empathetic learning, appreciation for diversity, integrative thinking, and holistic understanding in order to prepare students for engagement as global citizens. Ultimately, the Religious Studies discipline at Palomar College is directed to facilitation of Palomar as a center interfaith learning, collaboration, and informed public discussion about religion.

[\(click here for information on how to create a mission statement\)](#)

Does your discipline have at least one degree or certificate associated with it?
No

Are any of your programs TOP coded as vocational (CTE/CE)?
No

Please list the names and positions of everyone who helped to complete this document.

Craig Forney, Associate Professor of Religious Studies
Jacqueline Smith, Part-time faculty

Use the link to provided to help answer the staffing questions below. This form requires a login and password to access. Please use your Palomar email and password to log in.

Link: [Permanent Employees Staff Count](#)

Full-time Faculty (total number of FT faculty in your discipline)

1

Full-time Faculty (FTEF)

1

Part-time faculty (FTEF)

.2

Classified and other permanent staff positions that support this discipline

Sheri Frankfurth, ADA

Additional hourly staff that support this discipline and/or department

PROGRAM INFORMATION

In this section you are asked to consider your programs, their learning outcomes, the annual number of completions, goals for completions and enrollment and efficiency trends.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Begin this section by reviewing the Program Review reports for programs and courses in Nuventive Improve (TracDat). All active course and program learning outcomes should be systematically assessed over a 3-year cycle. First, look at program learning outcomes.

- **Program** = Leads to a degree or certificate
- **Discipline** = A group of courses within a discipline

*Programs will be able to complete program completion and outcome questions.

How do they align with employer and transfer expectations?

NA

Program Information Summary

Consider your program outcome assessments, completions, and enrollment/efficiency trends, as well as other internal and external factors.

How have these factors contributed to the success of your program(s)?

NA

How have these factors presented challenges for your program(s)?

NA

The Chancellor's Office Vision for Success stresses the importance of reducing equity gaps through faster improvements of underrepresented groups.

ACCJC also requires that colleges establish institutional and program level standards in the area of success rates. These standards represent the lowest success rate deemed acceptable by the College. In other words, if you were to notice a drop below the rate, you would seek further information to examine why the drop occurred and strategies to address the rate.

Click on this link to review the course success rates (A, B, C, or Credit) for your discipline.

In this section we will identify a course success rate standards and a stretch goal (what you would like to move toward) for programs.

Course Success Rates by gender, age, ethnicity, special population, location, and modality (You can access the Student Equity Plan on the SSEC website <https://www2.palomar.edu/pages/ssec/>)

COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE SUCCESS AND RETENTION

What is your program's standard for Discipline COURSE Success Rate?

75.0%

Why did you choose this standard?

Religious Studies will be one hundred percent online in 2020-2021. So, the standard of 75% is a reachable yet difficult to achieve goal, given that our success rate significantly improved to reach 72% in 2019-2020 and with the teaching of face to face classes.

What is your stretch goal for course success rates?

75.0%

How did you decide upon the goal?

The success rate is up to 72% from 66% and with the increasing use of distance education format. So, 75% looks to be a reasonable and even idealistic stretch for 2020-2021 along with the move to one hundred percent distance education.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

How have you improved course-level assessment methods since the last PRP?

Since last year? We did not particularly find problems or potential improvements related to the assessment methods, but primarily concerning the persistent adjustment of teaching and learning methods in the preparation of students to meet targeted areas for improvement.

Summarize the major findings of your course outcomes assessments.

Results display the need for improvements in learning on comparisons or similarities that exist below the surface, generally requiring more intensive analytical thinking than the identification of contrasts or differences. The identification of differences between religious communities can be too easy and the result of settling for a somewhat lazy approach. Related to history of religion classes (RS 102, 108), the results reveal the need for improvements in learning about dynamics of change that occur within religious communities over time, as religious communities are continually shifting and redefining in orientation. Students too easily give in to thinking of communities as static, with focus on certain core characteristics or themes. Also, the results in each of our Religious Studies classes disclose the need for improvements in learning about elements of doctrine and ethics, two of the more abstract aspects of religious life, areas of study for which students are increasingly ill prepared upon entry into RS classes. Subsequently, increased focus and creative efforts are needed in the learning about these dimensions to human living.

This section is intentionally blank for annual PRPs. Please click "Next" to continue.

This section is intentionally blank for annual PRPs. Please click "Next" to continue.

CAREER AND LABOR MARKET DATA

The Chancellor's Office Vision for Success stresses the importance of increasing the percent of exiting students who report being employed in their field of study. It is important for us to consider how **all** of our programs connect to future careers.

Go to this website <https://www.onetonline.org/> and enter your discipline in the bubble on the top right for ideas about potential occupations. Click on an example to see more detail.

What kinds of careers are available for people who complete your programs (and/or transfer)? (Refer to link above) Are there any new or emerging careers and if so how would the new or emerging careers impact your future planning?

Americans have an average of 7 careers over the course of their lives. In the study of religions, students learn valuable skills that can be applied to any and many fields of work. These are the abilities to think objectively, to appreciate and understand cultural diversity, to assess the influence of key human ideas, to understand different views of life's meaning, to process new information, especially to develop learning ability in contexts beyond the familiar. Moreover, Religious Studies learning provides skills and knowledge in written communication, empathetic thinking, ethical reasoning, and integrative thinking.

Courses in the study of world religions focus on those beliefs, values, and issues that have concerned humans of every walk of life. Consequently, Religious Studies courses help to prepare students person for life in general. International and historical perspectives in the study of religion provide students with a wider context for his or her understanding of all cultures, as well as provide preparation for diverse careers as almost every career requires the ability to relate to diverse people and increasingly in a global context. In today's multicultural workplace and global economy, basic knowledge about diverse cultures and religious perspectives is essential to working with quality in any vocation.

Success in a selected career is not just about interpreting information and applying specialized knowledge but is also dependent on making and maintaining connections with people. Studying religion brings a developed understanding of people and their many perspectives. Most importantly, courses in Religious Studies provide students with excellent skills and knowledge for reaching out to diverse people, the building of bridges, and for the incorporation of many perspectives in the work environment.

Majors in Religious Studies have many pathways. After graduation, religion majors do the same kinds of things that other humanities majors do, in roughly the same proportions. Majoring in the study of religion is not, for most students, a route to a religious career (although it certainly can be). The major imposes no limitations, but also lends its own particular strengths to a number of different career choices. Religion majors have successfully gone on to professional training in:

Law

Higher education

Counseling and social work

Medicine

Ministry

Business (particularly international business)

Journalism

Others have moved directly into the job market, taking up positions in:

Government, foreign service, or the Peace Corps

Non-profit agencies

Marketing and management

Museums and the arts

Publishing

According to the Pew Research Center, the highly respected research org in Washington, D.C., the global population is increasingly religious, meaning identification with traditional forms of religion (Islam, Christianity Buddhism, etc) and the rate of becoming increasingly religious is increasing. Consequently, learning about the religions of the world will be increasingly essential for communication with the majority of the global population. The study of religion provides religion literacy, being conversant in relation to communities and traditions of religion. RS and especially World Religions should be on the level of a foreign language requirement, since a religion is a kind of language. It centers on a rich set of terms associated with ritual practices, stories, beliefs, ethical guidelines, and institutions for understanding of and communication about life. Being conversant in these world languages is essential for the education of students regardless of career pathway.

What are the associated knowledge, skills, abilities (KSA's) needed for the occupations listed above? (click examples in the link above to get ideas)

The ability to think objectively and critically, to appreciate and understand cultural diversity, to assess the influence of human ideas, to understand different views of life's meaning, to process new information, to develop learning ability in contexts beyond the familiar, and to empathize with diverse people are essential abilities regardless of career pathway. Classes in Religious Studies also provide broadly needed skills in written communication, integrative thinking, and ethical reasoning also essential to diverse vocations.

How does your program help students build these KSA's?

Religious Studies classes focus on the above KSAs as foundational to the learning about diverse religious communities across the globe and particularly in the United States.

Work Based Learning

Applied and work-based learning (WBL) allows students to apply classroom content in professional settings while gaining real-world experience. WBL exists on a continuum that reflects the progress of experiences from awareness-building to training. Students often cycle back through the continuum many times throughout college and throughout their career. Faculty play a critical role in ensuring these experiences are embedded into curriculum and support learning.

Have you incorporated work based learning (work experience, internships, and/or service learning) into your program?

Yes

What have you done to integrate work-based learning?

Service learning was a key option in Religious Studies for about seven years. However, we increasingly had difficulty in finding local sponsors of the learning, particularly sponsors that were willing to maintain sponsorship and provide meaningful experiences for students.

How does your work-based learning help your students learn how to do some of the tasks associated with the potential occupations?

We no longer utilize work-based longer and have not for the past ten years or so.

How do you engage with the community to keep them apprised of opportunities in your program?

We frequently and consistently visit and interact with religious communities in the larger community. These interactions promote familiarity with the Religious Studies program at Palomar and with the diverse religious communities that are actively involved in shaping local community life.

Program Goals

In the previous sections, you identified opportunities for improvement. Using these opportunities, develop 3-year **SMART goals** for your department. Goals should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Specific. Ensure your goals align with the mission of your department and/or [the College's strategic plan](#).

Please list all discipline goals for this three-year planning cycle. [Click here for previous PRPs and goal information](#).

Goals

Goal 1

Brief Description

Excellence in teaching

Is this a new or existing goal?

Existing

Goal Status

Ongoing

How will you complete this goal?

The goal is aspirational. Pursuit of excellence is never ending, first and foremost something not be assumed as having been achieved. The way of progression to the goal involves continual assessment and refinement of teaching based on student, peer, and self input. The focus is ever on improving the quality of teaching for the next class. The aspirational approach to goals highlights the importance of aesthetical reasoning that aspires to involve every sensibility in the wholistic pursuit of an envisioned purpose. Aesthetical reasoning focuses on the marshaling of much imagination, feel, along with analytical thinking in striving for a goal. Related to teaching and the teaching of Religious Studies, I envision the near perfect or excellent teaching moment to be centered on the inspiring students to the love of learning, to the love of learning how people see life and the inter-relatedness of the diverse elements involved in living. Excellent teaching facilitates learning with ever deeper sense of why people do what they do, with growing understanding of how religiosity reaches into every aspect of living, and with sensibility for multiple dimensions of meaning for the diverse peoples of the world. I understand the excellent teaching moment to foster ever developing learning about how people are connected, as similar yet also different, and not to be reduced to preconceptions. Excellent teaching and learning inspires desire to continue learning from people of diverse religious orientations, with sense of responsibility to find ways of collaboration. Ultimately, I aspire to teaching that instills sense of how little we know about life and the people across the globe, with overwhelming sense of how so very much more we need to learn from interacting with diverse others.

Outcome(s) expected (qualitative/quantitative)

The outcome is expected, but with much trepidation and without assumption of achievement. The desired outcome is to inspire and empower students with the love of learning, the love of learning about diverse people, about diverse religions, and about the various ways in which religion influences everyday life. Excellent teaching also requires the fostering of learning the key skills and knowledge associated with becoming educated about the diverse religions of the world and about the role of religion in general. In particular, proficient knowledge of key elements for the major religions of the world and the ability to compare and contrast similarities and differences between religious communities are the outcomes of focus for regular assessment.

How does this goal align with your department mission statement, the college strategic plan, and /or Guided Pathways?

Excellence in teaching is essential to meet core elements of the mission of the department and college. I'm confident that the guided pathways program will also be driven by similar ultimate concern for quality teaching.

Expected Goal Completion Date

5/28/2027

Goal 2

Brief Description

Prepare students to be global citizens

Goal Status

Ongoing

Is this a new or existing goal?

Existing

How will you complete this goal?

We will teach and provide learning opportunities as directed by the purpose of fostering a more global, interdependent, integrated, and collaborative way of life. Religious Studies requires use of ability to listen, learn from, and interact with people from diverse communities across the globe. To further the understanding of global citizenship, we provide opportunities for students to visit and be visited by people from the diverse faith orientations under study in the classroom.

Global citizens are individuals with understanding of being a member of an international community, with sense of being interdependent with and responsibility to the diverse people from across the globe, all of it. Here, the aspirational or aesthetical goal is for ever developing sensibilities regarding connections with and differences from others, such a balanced understanding is essential for healthy living together. In the study of religion, the goal is to produce deeper and broader sense of our common humanity and our need to learn from those different from ourselves to become more well rounded in perspective. This is the orientation of global citizen, quite in contrast to people who see themselves in very narrow terms as identified with one particular locality, nation, race, class, age group, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

Outcome(s) expected (qualitative/quantitative)

The learning outcomes related to global citizenship are: critical thinking, integrative thinking, cultural literacy, sense of mutual respect, empathetic learning, holistic thinking, appreciation for and understanding of diversity. These will be assessed through multiple-choice, short answer, and essay formats. Also, proficient knowledge in core elements of major communities of religion and the ability to compare and contrast between the world's religious communities are the outcomes of focus for regular assessment.

How does this goal align with your department mission statement, the college strategic plan, and /or Guided Pathways?

The department and college remain committed to the development of students as global citizens. I expect that the guided pathways program will also be driven by the importance of this ever more important mission, as the work world of the future will be increasingly global and interdependent.

Expected Goal Completion Date

5/28/2027

Goal 3**Brief Description**

Develop in reach on campus and outreach into the larger community for collaboration

Is this a new or existing goal?

Existing

Goal Status

Ongoing

How will you complete this goal?

The plan is to continue to work with already established collaborations on campus and in the larger community in addition to efforts to find new individuals, programs, and communities to collaborate with. Religious Studies will be best supported and developed into the future through merger with and under Philosophy. This decision is the result of much work to sustain and build Religious Studies as an independent discipline, alongside in-depth research into the state of Religious Studies across the state of California. Eighty of ninety-nine California community colleges with RS classes and ten of sixteen CSU institutions with RS programs have Religious Studies merged with and under the umbrella of Philosophy.

Outcome(s) expected (qualitative/quantitative)

The expected outcomes are: improvements in the support for and participation in Religious Studies classes, expanded and improved opportunities for student learning about religion/s, and increased collaboration between people from diverse religious orientations, development of working relations with Philosophy.

How does this goal align with your department mission statement, the college strategic plan, and /or Guided Pathways?

The goal of greater collaboration to promote quality student learning intersects with the core of the college's purpose, to involve the larger community in the comprehensive education of students and in becoming globally oriented citizens. Such learning involves excellent teaching and innovative approaches, centered on learning intimately associated with developed concern for and understanding of equity, inclusiveness, diversity, mutual respect, and civic participation.

Expected Goal Completion Date

5/28/2027

RESOURCES

Congratulations! You are nearing completion. In this section, you will consider the resources you need to implement your three-year program review plan and/or address any findings from your assessment of your discipline.

The section is organized into the following four parts:

PART 1: Staffing Needs (Faculty and Additional Staff)

PART 2: Budget Review

PART 3: Technology and Facilities Needs

PART 4: One Time Request for Other Needs (NonTechnology Equipment, Supplies, Operating Expenses, Travel)

PART 1: STAFFING NEEDS

Requests for faculty will follow the prioritization process currently in place in IPC, and the IPC SubCommittee. Requests for new staff positions will be prioritized at the division level and reviewed at Exec.

Are you requesting additional full-time faculty?

No

NOTE: If you are requesting full-time faculty, you must go back to the Labor Market section of the form to complete that section. It is required when requesting additional faculty positions.

Are you requesting new Classified, CAST or AA positions?

Yes

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL CLASSIFIED, CAST, AA

Staff, CAST, AA request 1

Title of position

Administrative Assistant

Is this request for a full-time or part-time position?

Full Time

How does the position fill a critical need for current, future, or critical operations? e.g. accreditation, health and safety, regulatory, legal mandates, institutional priorities, program trend analyses of growth/stability Untitled

Our last ADA retired last year and we require a new ADA in order to complete the administrative tasks within our department. Our current ADA is responsible for Philosophy, Sociology, Alcohol and Addiction, Religious Studies, Women's Studies, Psychology, and Anthropology.

Does the position assist in establishing more efficient District Operations through either of the following: reorganization/restructuring OR use of technology?

This will increase efficiency since we do not currently have an ADA. The current workload for our ADA means that their attention is distributed over seven disciplines.

Is there funding that can help support the position outside of general funds?

No

Describe how this position helps implement or support your three-year PRP plan.

An ADA in behavioral sciences is imperative for the success of each discipline within behavioral sciences and their respective PRPs.

Strategic Plan 2022 Objective

1:5

3:5

4:1

4:3

5:1

5:2

If the position is not approved, what is your plan?

We really have no alternative. We cannot outsource the work of the ADA, which requires specific skill sets that most of the faculty do not possess.

PART 2: BUDGET REVIEW

Review your Budget/Expenditure reports for 2018, 2019, 2020. Consider your three-year PRP plan.

Click on the link below to access directions to the *Available Budget Report* to complete this section.

How to Request the Available Budget Report

Reflecting on your three-year PRP plan, are there any budget considerations you would like your dean/supervisor to be aware of for the upcoming year?

No

NOTE: PARTS 3 and 4 – TECHNOLOGY, FACILITIES AND OTHER NEEDS

This year the College is implementing two new processes related to resource needs coming from the PRP process.

1. One-Time Fund Requests. The college is implementing a process for prioritizing and allocating funds for one-time needs/requests tied to Program Review and Planning. Prioritization will take place through participatory governance in planning councils and the Budget Committee. Then, a recommendation will be made to Exec for funding of request utilizing various funding sources.

For more information about funding sources available, see **IELM BLOCK GRANT, LOTTERY, PERKINS AND STRONG WORKFORCE GUIDELINES**.

Consider submitting one-time requests only if you have verified that you cannot fund the request using your general discretionary funds or other funds.

2. Technology and Facilities Review. From now on, ALL requests for technology will go through an institutional review process. If you request technology here, you will see a description of the process below.

PART 3: TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITIES NEEDS

Will you be requesting any technology (hardware/software) this upcoming year?

Yes

Technology Request**Technology Request 1****What are you requesting?**

Funding for the World Religions infobase subscription. This infobase has provided students with the required readings for various Religious Studies courses. Usage has averaged over 17,000 articles accessed per academic year.

Provide a detailed description of the item requested. What is it, and why do you need it? Please be as descriptive as possible. Include in your description how the requested item aligns with your discipline's PRP goals, analysis of PRP data, SLO/SAOs.

The World Religions infobase provides core readings for several Religious Studies courses. This infobase will be impossible to adequately replace with much more costly and poorer quality textbooks.

Estimated Amount of Request.

\$2,000.00

Will you fund the request through your budget or other sources?

One Time Request

What PRP plan goal/objective does this request align with?

The World Religions infobase provides the quality readings and ease of accessibility for students that best facilitate the goal of excellence in teaching. Moreover, the readings and resources provided by the infobase offer an excellent supplement to teaching in fostering the goal preparing students to be global citizenship.

What Strategic Plan 2022 Goal/Objective does this request align with?

1:5

3:5

4:1

4:3

5:1

5:2

If you have multiple requests for technology and had to prioritize, what number would give this? (1 = Highest)**Do you think that your request for technology will require changes to a facility?**

No

Note about technology requests:

All technology requests will now go through a review process before prioritization.

- *Your dean/director will send you a Technology Request Checklist (aka Technology Proposal Analysis Checklist).*
 - *You must complete this checklist and return it to your dean no later than 10/30/2020.*
 - *Once the dean approves the form and the request, the dean will send the document to the Technology Review Committee to determine IS resources needed, any integration issues, and/or potential overlap with existing technology.*
 - *The results of the review will be sent to the dean and chair with feedback.*
 - *The dean will determine whether or not the request moves forward for prioritization and/or implementation.*
 - *Requests for one-time funding will move forward for prioritization.*
 - *Requests that use funding from your department budget may move forward for purchase.*

Do you have resource needs that require physical space or modification to physical space?

No

PART 4: OTHER ONE-TIME NEEDS

For more information about funding sources available, see [IELM BLOCK GRANT, LOTTERY, PERKINS AND STRONG WORKFORCE GUIDELINES](#). Please check with your department chair on the availability for this cycle.

Do you have one-time requests for other items (e.g., Non-Technology Equipment, Supplies, Operating Expenses, Travel) that your budget or other funding sources will NOT cover?

No

I confirm that the Program Review is complete and ready to be submitted.

Yes

Enter your email address to receive a copy of the PRP to keep for your records.

cforney@palomar.edu

Review

Chair Review

Chair Comments

Thank you, Craig and Jacqueline, for your hard work on the PRP! Your commitment to excellence in teaching and promoting student learning is evidenced by your goals and by advocating for students to have access to the articles they need to be successful.

Chair Name

Netta Schroer

Chair Sign Date

10/23/2020

Dean Review

Strengths and successes of the discipline as evidenced by the data and analysis:

Religious Studies is planning to be 100% online in 2020-2021 and their online student success rates are above the college average. and their efficiency rates still very high. Although the ongoing plan to move forward with a merger of Religious Studies with Philosophy was not mentioned in this PRP, that will allow the department to consolidate, and schedule classes efficiently, and refine the development of curriculum.

Areas of Concern, if any:

Recommendations for improvement:

1. Encourage faculty to use Service-Learning as much as possible in their classes as a form of work experience and coordinate students to interact with local religious communities.
2. I would recommend the department to submit the World Religions Infobase subscription request to the Library Department to be included in their next year and ongoing budget.
3. Encourage faculty to continue aligning their courses activities with the integrated SLOs within Canvas.

Dean Name

Najib Manea covering for Dean LY

Dean Sign Date

11/19/2020

IPC Review

Strengths and successes of the discipline as evidenced by the data and analysis:

Areas of Concern, if any:

Recommendations for improvement:

IPC Reviewer(s)

IPC Review Date

Vice President Review

Strengths and successes of the discipline as evidenced by the data and analysis:

tie of outcome assessment results to a focused change in learning (and instruction?); integration of WBL; goal of excellence in teaching!;

Areas of Concern, if any:

reconsider WBL beyond Service Learning; how to measure outcomes for goals set

Recommendations for improvement:

1. contact Nichol Roe re: info on WBL and Career Continuum -- the work around this is changing and may provide some of the collaboration that you're working on in Goal 3
2. discuss goal outcomes -- any way to measure in a meaningful way? how to connect to students after they leave the college?

Vice President Name
Shayla Sivert

Vice President Sign Date
12/31/2020