

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S. 73-8

MEMORANDUM

To..... SENATE

From..... SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Subject..... FACULTY OF ARTS - PHILOSOPHY
300-3 REVIEW

Date..... DECEMBER 13, 1972

MOTION:

"That Senate approve the recommendation of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies that Philosophy 300-3 be continued in the calendar for one more year, and that it be further reviewed after being offered for a second time in Spring 1973 and before it is offered again."

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S.73.8

MEMORANDUM

To..... SENATE

From..... SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Subject..... FACULTY OF ARTS - PHILOSOPHY
300-3 REVIEW

Date..... DECEMBER 13, 1972

With the introduction of Philosophy 300-3, Senate required that the course be reviewed by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies before further offering.

The Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies recommends to Senate that Philosophy 300-3 be continued in the calendar for one more year, and that it be further reviewed after being offered for a second time in Spring 1973 and before it is offered again.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

SCUS 72-39

MEMORANDUM

D.H. Sullivan, Dean

Faculty of Arts

Subject: PHILOSOPHY 300

From: N. Swartz, Chairman
Undergraduate Studies Committee
Department of Philosophy

Date: November 10, 1972.

This memorandum is in response to the request sent to you from I. Mugridge, Chairman of SCUS, (2 November, with copy to this Department) for an assessment of Philosophy 300.

I would like in this regard to provide your office with the following information.

1. Dr. Mugridge's request came much earlier in the academic year than this Department had anticipated and on such short notice that we were unable to secure written assessments of the course from the students in the evening session of it.
2. The course is just now being offered for the first time; it is being offered in both the ordinary day session and again in the Continuing Education Programme. It is thus now only two-thirds completed.
3. The day-time enrolment is 11; the evening enrolment is 4. It bears remarking, however, that the low enrolment in the evening session has been explained in this way: Philosophy 300 was offered in that programme with little or no advertising; and students did not seem to receive or grasp the information that this course has no specific prerequisites. The day-time enrolment, however, would seem to be satisfactory for a course with no history.
4. The opinions of the day-time students are attached and are seen to be unanimous: the course is a challenging one, it is adapted to their greater sophistication, and it fills a genuine need in their liberal arts education.

In sum, in light of the short history and favourable response we should like to see the course continued. It does seem to be fulfilling a need of the more seasoned student who missed philosophy the 'first time round'. Whether it will prove in the long run the best way to meet this need is a question which can be answered only after the course has been offered a few more times.

Office of the Dean

NOV 15 1972

Faculty of Arts


Norman Swartz

PHILOSOPHY 300

This course is advantageous for upper level students in that it gives them an introduction to philosophy at a level better suited to them.

The class is small and therefore each student is given an opportunity to contribute to the lectures.

I think it would improve the course if it was completely a seminar course.

The textbook is difficult to understand. I often have to read sections over several times and they are still not always clear.

The lectures stimulate the students into thinking.

* * *

Pro:

- Good instructor
- Allows upper level students a look into philosophy and I feel this is valuable
- Topics are highly interesting but there must be a better book
- Good course!

Con:

- Format could be changed to seminar course - take it out of room 5030 and put it in seminar room
- The book is unintelligible!

* * *

I think the idea of the course is basically sound. It enables students to meet specific upper-level requirements in a course that requires no pre-requisites. The subject matter is perhaps slightly over-ambitious for a one semester course - especially a survey course. The textbook leaves much to be desired; it seems both too elementary and too complex at the same time. Perhaps a better idea would be to explore the same subject matter as it is presented by the people who did some of the original work in the various fields, i.e., look at some primary sources.

It is worth exploring the idea of a seminar rather than two lectures and a tutorial although the present method is adequate.

* * *

I think the idea behind Philosophy 300 is a good one. I feel that the course would be most effectively conducted as a seminar - more or less the same way that it is conducted presently.

I have a low opinion of the course text - it is very poorly written and dull.

It is too bad that a grading system requiring essays, etc. has to be used. I feel I have derived a lot of benefit from discussions in the course, but little from doing essays - little exercises in mental gymnastics.

I feel the professor has been excellent and wouldn't hesitate to recommend courses given by him. I don't think Philosophy 300 would have been so successful as it was (for me) with a different professor (from my association with out-of-philosophy department professor anyway).

* * *

I think that the basic idea of Philosophy 300 is worthwhile. I've found this the most enjoyable course I've ever taken, both in form and content. I think the emphasis on thinking process, as opposed to context, is very valuable and is all too seldom seen at the university level. I think that a lot of this is due to the instructor. The format could be changed from a lecture/tutorial to a seminar, although the course was conducted practically in a seminar fashion this semester anyway. As a basic text, the

book is a little vague, but it's all right as a background if it's supplemented and explained in the lectures. In general, I think it's an excellent course.

* * *

Since I began this course with less than a knowledge of philosophy having been misled by the likes of Tofler, I am satisfied with having my total incomprehension of philosophy exposed.

As I would prefer to under-go a purge of mind among more understanding persons than generally attend 100-level courses, Philosophy 300 has also satisfied that preference.

I have very much enjoyed the course primarily because of the instructor and the informal nature of the structure. I find the book without illumination, uninterpreted by the instructor, but not completely useless.

I haven't the faintest idea if I have learned anything. Everytime I think or assume I have moved forward, I seem to have gone backwards. The fault lies with me, however, not with the class.

I would like to see the course based upon more extensive background material that could fill in substantial gaps in the text-book.

The instructor, not being omnipotent, can't always carry the weight of explaining everything in a manner that can be readily understood by all.

* * *

Necessarily, this is based on personal reaction, and so, as a "last-semester" DML student, this course is adequate (perhaps even more than that) to my needs. It's an upper level course worth three units (outside my major!); it has touched, though slightly, on a few points covered in semantics in linguistic courses; but, best of all, to one who has had only Philosophy 102 (in the way of philosophy courses), this course, (300) has introduced me to a range of philosophical problems I had previously only imagined might exist(?), - actually, had only passed over briefly in past reading and study. Being no

deep thinker (intellectual type), I have nevertheless gotten quite a bit out of the course I believe. If this weren't my last semester, I'd give serious thought to taking another philosophy course, just for "the joy of it all".

The only problem with the course is the text, - better to have several authors, with selected readings from each, or a collection of essays, etc.

As to the Lecturer/T.A., no problem. Having had a sum total of two philosophy courses, two philosophy lecturers, one philosophy T.A., (and exposure to a substitute philosophy lecturer!), I come to the astounding conclusion that these guys are "okay" guys (except for that one substitute lecturer)!!

In all seriousness -

(Is this a perfect hallucination?)

* * *

Basically, the idea of giving an introduction to philosophy at the 300-level is a good one. However, the course might be made more enjoyable if the book were changed in favour perhaps, of a set of notes mimeographed by the lecturer. Though some grasp of technical terminology is essential to a study of any field, the course as it stands, is too cluttered up with it. Since only a clerical distinction exists at present between tutorials and lectures in this course, there is no need to perpetuate the "two-lectures, one-tutorial" concept. Instead, three seminars a week would be more suited to the spirit in which the course has been and should be given.

* * * * *

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

Dean D.H. Sullivan,
Dean of Arts

From: Ian Mugridge,
Chairman,
Senate Committee on Undergraduate
Studies

Subject: PHILOSOPHY 300-3

Date: 2 November, 1972

At its meeting of 6th December, 1971, Senate passed the following Motion:

"That Senate approve Philosophy 300-3 to be offered on an experimental basis, with review to be conducted by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies within the first year of offering with further recommendation then to be made by Senate."

This Committee will be meeting on Thursday, 9th November and Tuesday, 14th November; I would like to include a review of this course on the Agenda for the second meeting. I would therefore appreciate receiving, in time for distribution to the Committee before 14th November, a report on the effectiveness of Philosophy 300 and the desirability of continuing to offer it.

I. Mugridge

c.c. Mr. H.M. Evans, Registrar

Dr. R. Bradley,
A/Chairman, Department of Philosophy

:md

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

C. 11-124-a

MEMORANDUM

To SENATE

From SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Subject CURRICULUM AND CALENDAR CHANGES
- DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Date DECEMBER 2, 1971

The Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies approved the submission of the Department of Philosophy as set forth in SCUS 71-22, with the exception of Philosophy 300-3, and recommends approval to Senate.

The Committee recommends also that Senate approve Philosophy 300-3 to be offered on an experimental basis, with review to be conducted by the Committee within the first year of offering with further recommendation then to be made to Senate.