

School of Arts and Sciences
Graduate Program in Early Christian Studies
Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements

1. Master's Program

The Center for the Study of Early Christianity (which administers this Program) uses the following measures, applied at key moments in a student's career, to assess student learning outcomes. Unless otherwise specified, the measures are applied by the Associate Director responsible.

- Interviews and reviews semester by semester (data here consist of grade results and instructors' comments).
 - Interview at the beginning of each semester, designed to check:
 - that courses taken in the previous semester have conformed with earlier advice and received an appropriate grade (B or higher);
 - that anticipated course enrollment continues to fulfill curriculum expectations.
 - Consultation (conducted in writing according to a standard form) at the end of each semester with faculty teaching courses that include Early Christian Studies students, designed to ensure:
 - that the student's overall performance has conformed to Program expectations;
 - particular attention being paid to grade level, research skills, and writing style;
 - that the student has made adequate use of and has improved mastery of the ancient languages required in each course taken.
- Consultation within the Executive Committee of the Center, and subsequent "colloquy" with each student, at least one semester in advance of comprehensive examinations (data here consist of accumulated semester reports and minutes of colloquies); this process designed to:
 - check that all necessary coursework has been or will be completed, and language qualifications adequately assessed;
 - check that primary and secondary material on the reading lists has been fully perused;
 - determine whether the student is likely to qualify for advance to Ph.D. level;
 - criteria to include accumulated semester reports, as described in the previous item.
- Written reports on comprehensive examinations.
 - The Associate Director assigns to particular colleagues the setting and assessing of each paper, receives from them a brief written report of some 250 words on that paper (which report should include a pass/fail judgment), and reaches an overall judgment that is then communicated to the student in pass/fail terms. The completed papers and written reports are kept in the student's file.
 - Particular attention is paid to the following:
 - the clarity, polish, and logical cohesion and sequence of an argument that responds directly to a specifically worded question;
 - evidence of familiarity with ancient languages;
 - evidence of familiarity (allusion, quotation, and criticism) with texts, both primary and secondary, specifically demanded in the set reading lists;
 - easy application of multi-disciplinary skills, where relevant to the question being discussed.

2. Doctoral Program

The Center for the Study of Early Christianity (which administers this Program) uses the following measures, applied at key moments in a student's career, to assess student learning outcomes. Unless otherwise specified, the measures are applied by the Associate Director responsible.

- Interviews and reviews semester by semester (data here consist of grade results and instructors' comments).
 - Interview at the beginning of each semester, designed to check:
 - that courses taken in the previous semester have conformed with earlier advice and received an appropriate grade (B or higher);
 - that anticipated course enrollment continues to fulfill curriculum expectations.
 - Consultation (conducted in writing according to a standard form) at the end of each semester with faculty teaching courses that include Early Christian Studies students, designed to ensure:
 - that the student's overall performance has conformed to Program expectations;
 - particular attention being paid to grade level, research skills, and writing style;
 - that the student has made adequate use of and has improved mastery of the ancient languages required in each course taken.
- Consultation within the Executive Committee of the Center, and subsequent "colloquy" with the student (with the likely director of the student's dissertation in attendance), at least one semester in advance of comprehensive examinations (data here consist of accumulated semester reports and minutes of colloquies); this process designed to
 - check that all necessary coursework has been or will be completed, and language qualifications adequately assessed;
 - check that the compilation of primary and secondary reading lists is well under way;
 - determine whether the student is likely to complete with due expedition a successful Ph.D. dissertation.
- Written reports on comprehensive examinations.
 - The Associate Director assigns to particular colleagues the setting and assessing of each paper, receives from them a brief written report of some 250 words on that paper (which report should include a pass/fail judgment), and reaches an overall judgment that is then communicated to the student in pass/fail terms. The completed papers and written reports are kept in the student's file.
 - Particular attention is paid to the following:
 - the clarity, polish, and logical cohesion and sequence of an argument that responds directly to a specifically worded question;
 - evidence of familiarity with ancient languages;
 - evidence of familiarity (allusion, quotation, and criticism) with texts, both primary and secondary, specifically demanded in the set reading lists;
 - easy application of multi-disciplinary skills, where relevant to the question being discussed.
- The preparation and approval of the student's dissertation proposal.
 - The proposed director of the dissertation discusses with the student the drawing up of a proposal.
 - Provided the student has passed the comprehensive examinations, the final draft of the proposal is presented to the Director of the Center, who forwards it to the other readers on the dissertation committee (chosen by himself).
 - Following agreement among these parties, the proposal is forwarded to the graduate office of the School.

- Once the proposal has been accepted by the graduate office, all responsibility for the student's progress devolves upon the dissertation director, who should be guided by the following expectations:
 - The student will present the director with drafts of the dissertation chapter by chapter.
 - The director will offer detailed comment upon each chapter within, ideally, three months of receipt.
 - The student may ask the other two readers for similar intermittent comment, copies of which should normally be forwarded to the director.
 - The other readers are not obliged, however, to undertake this task: they may agree only to read the final draft of the dissertation and attend its defense on an agreed date.
- The successful completion of the dissertation defense.
 - When a final draft of the whole dissertation has been completed to the satisfaction of both the student and the director, the Director of the Center is notified and is then responsible
 - for sending the draft to the other two readers, inviting their written judgment that the dissertation is ready for defense;
 - for arranging a date for the defense.
 - Once the defense has been successfully completed, a record of the committee's decision is kept in the student's file.

School of Arts and Sciences
Master's and Doctoral Programs in Early Christian Studies
Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements

1. Assessment Findings

Preliminary Observations

- The Program does not teach, and therefore cannot directly assess, the courses in which its students enroll.
- The cohort of ECS students in any given year is comparatively small, which makes it difficult to set out significant statistics:

	2000-1	2001-2	2002-3	2003-4	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8
Completing Courses	4	4	2	3	2	2	1	1
Passing Ph.D. Comps	1	1	4	1	0	1	1	0
Defending	2	2	3	0	0	2	0	1
Total Cohort	10	9	12	9	9	9	7	8

Figure 1. Cohort size and stages of achievement, 2000-2008
 Aggregate number of students enrolled over the whole period: 16

Overall Pattern

- Figure 1 above gives, we believe, an impression of the size and vitality of the student body. The pattern is of a steady flow of enrollments and examinations across the period, with an average of 1-2 graduations p.a. We expect two more graduations in 2009.
- Since 1993, 18 students have gained a Ph.D. in the Program, of whom 14 hold academic positions.
- Since 2000, only one student has failed to complete a Ph.D. (he left the Program without graduating); and we have one other student, not taken into account in any of our calculations, who is part-time and enrolls for courses very rarely (recently, not at all).
- In the past five years, we have gone through two changes in our funding structure. This means that for three years we admitted no new students, and have only just begun to do so again (2007-8 onwards) and still – in cautious response to the economic downturn – in reduced numbers.

Course Enrollment Patterns, and Grades Achieved

- Appendix 1, attached, shows the courses in which ECS students have enrolled between 1998 and 2007, the grades those students achieved, and the numbers of students who achieved each grade.
 - This table will enable us to assess where our students are for the most part finding their niches, and with what success.
 - The impression received may affect the advice we give as to where (in what departments and in what courses) our students might best fulfill their curricular requirements.
- We find at the moment no cause for disquiet, in the face of this information.
- We anticipate that, once we begin to collect and store data more closely modeled on the patterns recommended in the accompanying “Assessment Procedures” document, we shall gain an even more sophisticated impression of how the Program is operating.

2. Curricular Improvements

Our curriculum was fundamentally redesigned in 1998, when the Center for the Study of Early Christianity was established, and again in 2005, when we changed our funding structure. The 1998 curriculum was substantially reviewed, when we started admitting students once again in 2007.

Our Statement of Goals allows for a curriculum review every five years, and we therefore anticipate further curricular modifications, if deemed necessary, in 2012.

Appendix 1: ECS Course Enrollment and Grade Distribution, 1998-2007

Beside each course and under each year are the grades obtained and the number of students who obtained them

Course	Year										Number of Students	
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007		
BBSD												
502			A1									1
603			A-1									1
			2									2
CHST												
664			A-1									1
821				A2								2
			1	2								3
CLAS												
561					A1							1
572		A-1	A1		A2 B+1							5
		1	1		4							6
ECST												
500				A2 A-1 B+1								4
600								A1				1
765	A1 A-2	A2 A-1			A1 A-1							8
767		A2 A-2										4
768			A1 B1									2
769			A1									1
770				A3 A-1								4
771				A1 A-1 B-1								3
773					A1 A-1							2
774						A1 A-1						2
776	A-1											1
779									A1			1
994						A1				A1		2
	4	7	3	11	4	3			1	2		34
GL												
703		A-1										1
705	B+1											1
755				A2								2
	1	1		2								4
GR												
103	A-1											1
104	A-1											1
510						B+1						1
518								A1				1
565									A1			1
595						A1						1
618		A1										1
705			A1 B+2	A1 A-1								5
706					A1	A-1 B1						3
	2	1	3	2	1	4			1	1		15
HIST												
643					A1							1
823									A1			1
					1				2			2

LAT												
100	B-1											1
510									A1			1
595		A1 B+1										2
706			A-1									1
	1	2	1						1			5
PHIL												
720		C2										2
747	A1											1
816								A1				1
853				A-1								1
	1	2		1				1				5
SEM												
503	A1	B+1		A1								3
531	A1	A1	A1		A1				A1			5
533		A1										1
551							B+1					1
552	B+1						A-1					2
631		A1 B+1			A1					A1		4
632		A2			A1				A-1	A1		5
641		A1										1
642	A1											1
681	A1											1
731					A1		A1					2
732					A2	A1						3
781					B+1	A-1			A-1	A-1		4
782					A-1	A-1			A-1			3
	5	8	1	1	3	5	5	1	4	3		36
THEO												
632					A1	A-1						2
663	A1			B+1	A2							4
739		A1										1
751	A-1											1
753	A-1											1
846		A1 A-1										2
848	A2											2
852	A2											2
853		A2 A-1										3
855				A3								3
860			A3									3
861			A2									2
871			A1 A-3									4
												30
TRS												
540								A1				1
661						A-1						1
720C									A1			1
721							A1					1
722B							A1					1
722C							A1					1
723B								A1				1
727A								A1				1
740							A1					1
820A						A-2						2
	7	6	9	4	3	4	4	3	1			11
Total Individual Enrollments											153	
A93 = 60.7% A-41 = 26.7% B+13 = 8.4% Less than B+6 :												