**NARRATIVE STATEMENT/STUDY PLAN**

**Philosophy Majors**

The study plan is intended to aid your reflections on the nature of philosophical inquiry and how it has developed and is developing in your own life. It should be an ongoing activity and in this regard the keeping of a philosophical journal is an excellent supplement to the study plan. Such a journal may remain private and would contain your philosophical thoughts about any topics. These entries may vary in length from single sentences thoughts to reflections of several pages and could be entered on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. At longer interval it would be appropriate to enter your reflections on the previous reflections you have entered. These thoughts about your thoughts would address such issues as: what sorts of topics concern me, how has my thinking about them changed, in what direction is this type of thought lending?

The time period addressed in the study plan need not be limited to philosophical work at GVSU. In fact, reflection upon one’s very *first* thoughts of a philosophical nature is quite appropriate to the study plan. There are several questions that may be asked in this regard: what were my first thoughts of a philosophical nature, in what ways am I still concerned with the issues I first thought of philosophically, when did these early ruminations occur, what prompted them? Often people have engaged in philosophy at the high school level in a more systematic manner. Your study plan should contain a description of any such work and any philosophical thinking you did “on your own” during this time period.

Courses with philosophical content taken at GVSU (in the philosophy department or in other departments) should obviously be described in the study plan. However, the description of/reflections upon these courses, itself, should be philosophical: what was “going on” in the course, why was I intrigued, how did it affect my philosophical abilities?

You might want to put together a “portfolio” which contains all of the paper and exams for courses in philosophy. Retaining these works (even work of poor quality) provides you with documentation of your “philosophical progress.”

Throughout the course of your reflections indicate the tests and authors that have had the greatest influence on you and what that influence has been. You might want to keep a changeable and changing list of the “five most important books/authors I have read.” This need not be limited to strictly “philosophical” works by “philosopher,” but can include any works (films? Television programs?) that have had an influence on your philosophy.

Finally, the study plan can include an articulation of this philosophy of life, a “credo.”