GOOD PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING REPRESENTATION IN PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENTS

In line with the APA Strategic Plan's Objective to make the discipline "more inclusive, welcoming, and accessible" and supporting their effort to regularly "review, update, promote, and add to existing guidance and best practices to support diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the discipline" the Demographics in Philosophy project proposes the following guidelines in order to promote, within the philosophical community, practices that will, if adopted, create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for all - including women, people of color, disabled people, non-native English speakers, first generation college students, those with serious economic needs or from developing countries, LBGTQ+ people, and people with political or religious views that are under-represented in the discipline, amongst others. We hope these suggestions will act as a starting point for improving the conditions for everyone in our discipline. The following guidelines promote equal opportunities for under-represented groups in philosophy and support and encourage academic excellence of all kinds.

GUIDELINES:
- **HIRING, RETENTION, AND PROMOTION**
- **TEACHING**
- **HARASSMENT AND STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**
- **CAREGIVERS**
- **RESEARCH PROJECTS**
- **LEARNED SOCIETIES**
- **JOURNALS**

<center>**ADOPTION OF GOOD PRACTICES: PROCEDURE[1]**</center>

Where a department or organization adopts a particular Good Practice, the Head of Department or chair of learned society, lead journal editor, etc. is requested to:
(a) formally document the adoption in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is taken
(b) inform the Good Practices Secretariat (GPS) via the form at this link **[TBD]**, so that a list of subscribing departments (learned societies, journals) is publicly available on the Good Practices's website.

We recognize that some of the recommended policies are impractical in some contexts and controversial among those who agree with the overall spirit of this document. **Being formally recognized as a signatory on the Good Practices website does not require agreeing with every point in the document, as long as disagreement is adequately explained** to the Good Practices Secretariat.

<center>**WHAT COUNTS AS 'ADOPTING' A GOOD PRACTICE?**</center>

1. The recommendations vary in their degree of specificity and are open to different interpretations. In some cases, there is considerable flexibility in how the recommendation might be implemented. Where suggested courses of action are especially controversial or difficult to implement, the practice is only to *consider* a possible course of action. In such cases, adherence to this document requires only careful consideration of the advisability or feasibility of the practice.

4. Departments that *commit* to making a plan within a year will secure "commitment" status on the Good Practices Scheme. Departments will move to "adoption" status when the department alerts the Good Practices Secretariat that the plan has been created. Simply *deciding* to implement the recommendations does **not** constitute *adoption* of the relevant Good Practice. There must be a clear plan for actual implementation, including a timetable and specification of particular courses of action that will be taken (e.g., revising handbooks, adding training sessions, or assigning a particular role to a member of staff, etc. The department should deem itself to have 'adopted' the relevant practice only at the point where a clear plan has been drawn up. This must include a timetable for implementation (e.g. where information in student handbooks cannot be altered until the start of the next academic year).

5. We recommend that, where a department wishes to adopt a Good Practice in the sense

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[1] The passages of this section are taken from the BPA/SWIP Good Practice Policy General Guidance available at: https://bpa.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/General-guidance.pdf

described above, the department head takes the bullet-pointed list of recommendations and supplements each bullet point with a clear list of changes or activities that the department intends to carry out in order to implement the recommendation, together with a clear timetable for completion. (The Good Practice documents are also available as Word documents from the website and we include a checklist to help facilitate this.) They may, of course, wish to delegate this task to the chair of a sub-committee – perhaps involving student and TA representatives. The resulting document should be approved at a departmental meeting and made available to all relevant people (including administrative staff and teaching assistants where appropriate), so that it is easy to check whether the department has kept to its timetable and, thereafter, is continuing to adhere to its own policy.

6. Once everything on the timetable has been implemented, provisions should be made for an annual review to ensure that the implemented policies remain in place and have not intentionally or unintentionally lapsed. This could take the form of a standing item on a departmental meeting agenda once a year, for example.

7. We appreciate that not all groupings of philosophers have any formal status (as a 'department' or 'discipline area' etc.), and that departments are bound by their own institutions' existing policies and procedures. Hence there may be some recommendations that a particular department or group lacks the power either (a) to formally endorse or (b) to implement. In such cases, the group in question will be deemed to subscribe to the practice if (re (a)) it has ensured that the practice adopted is known and informally agreed by all members of the group, or (re (b)) it has adopted as many of the Good Practice recommendations as it reasonably can, given any impediments posed by its lack of formal status.

8. We recognize that larger interdisciplinary units sometimes contain groupings of philosophers. Either the grouping of the philosophers alone (in so far as this is possible for a non-departmental group; see (5) above) or the entire interdisciplinary unit can decide to adopt the policies. In either case, it should be made clear in all documentation.

A NOTE ON DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

Many of the recommendations involve informing relevant people about policies, procedures, etc. Wherever possible, the information should be easily accessible, and the relevant people should be directly notified via an appropriate medium. We request that departments think carefully about how the relevant information is transmitted to colleagues, students, staff, and other stakeholders. In general, including information in staff, student and teaching assistant handbooks is desirable but not sufficient. In the case

of learned societies, some information will need to be transmitted to applicants for conference funding and to conference organizers.