I. Program goals for student learning

The graduate from American Indian Studies
1. Has the skills to think critically, to write carefully, and to apply knowledge in diverse, complex situations.
2. Understands variability within and between social and cultural classifications and categories, for example “tribes”.
3. Understands the realities of Native cultures, histories, and experiences.
4. Understands the importance of alternative voices and the necessity of being attentive to others.
5. Has an awareness of social justice issues facing American Indians and ways to address them.
6. Recognizes stereotypes, ethnocentrism, and racism and acts in culturally appropriate ways to counteract them.
7. Is able to work with diverse, appropriate sources
8. Communicates in a professional manner orally and in writing.

II. UND’s institutional and Essential Studies goals addressed at department level

1. Gathering, Diversity, Collaboration
2. Communication
3. Thinking and Reasoning – Critical Thinking
4. Information Literacy
5. Lifelong Learning
6. Informed Citizenship

Most courses in the curriculum cover multiple goals of Essential Studies; however, the faculty members have chosen various emphases for their courses.

III. Means by which each goal will be assessed

Indirect assessment
American Indian Studies classes are regularly assessed by means of the Student Evaluation form, a qualitative instrument that the faculty of the American Indian Studies Department developed approximately twelve years ago and have updated periodically, most recently in the spring of 2013. Tenured faculty members administer the form to all their classes at least once every academic year while untenured and temporary faculty members do so at the end of both semesters of
the academic year. These Student Evaluation forms are reviewed by the faculty members and the chair; a summary of these forms is included in all college and university evaluations.

In the past the Department has used the GER (General Education Requirement) questions at the end of the USAT form for direct assessment. However, some of the questions on the departmental Student Evaluation form serve the same purpose, to assess the students’ perception of their learning, and have the added advantage of providing more detailed information than the Yes/no questions of the USAT form. The following questions will be used for direct assessment:

1. Did this course change your thinking? Why or why not?
2. What general knowledge will you take away from this course?
3. Did the students engage in this course? Why or why not?
4. Were the materials used appropriate for the course topic? If not, why not?
5. Did the instructor present the materials effectively? What could be improved?
6. Would you recommend the course to a friend? Why or why not?

A summary of the students’ responses will be part of the assessment process and will be a part of the faculty’s discussion on effectiveness of teaching and the success of the course in general.

**Direct assessment**
The American Indian Studies faculty decided to use the same process to do assessment in all courses. The process consists of two peer interviews conducted during the first and last weeks of the semester. During the first week of the semester students are randomly paired to interview each other about the course’s subject matter. For example, in *Introduction to American Indian Studies* the students find out what their partner knows about American Indians; in *History of the Anishinabe* the students ask about their partner’s knowledge of the Chippewa and their history, in *Federal Indian Law and Policy* the students query their partners on the relationship of American Indians with the federal government, etc. The interview process is limited to 15-20 minutes. Each student then writes a paper for the next class period about what the other person knows (approximately 2 pages). The students bring the papers to class. There should be a general discussion: What did their partner know about American Indians? What does that mean? How do we learn about American Indians and their cultures? Etc. [Experience has shown that there are two side benefits to the first part of the assessment: first, students are more relaxed with each other and, secondly, the discussion of their findings encourages class discussions.] After the class discussion the instructor collects and keeps the papers; they are not graded but receive a check or a minus that reflect the effort the students have put into them. At the end of the
semester, preferably during the last two weeks, the peer interview process is repeated, and the students hand in a second paper that also receives a check or a minus. These papers will also not be returned. The second discussion should focus on the interviewees’ knowledge at the end of the semester. The two sets of papers will provide the data for the direct assessment. During the week of final examinations the American Indian Study faculty will meet and look at students’ first and second responses. The faculty members will use the diversity rubric offered by Essential Studies and modify the rubric slightly to meet their needs. They may decide to conduct direct assessment only once a year, since the process is quite time consuming.
Indian Studies Department Assessment Plan
August 2012

I. Program goals for student learning

The graduate from Indian Studies

1. Understands variability within and between tribal groups.
2. Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the federal and state governments and Indian tribes.
3. Has an awareness of social justice issues facing American Indians and ways to address them.
4. Recognizes stereotypes, ethnocentrisms, and racism and acts in culturally appropriate ways to counteract them.
5. Locates and evaluates relevant materials.
6. Communicates in a professional manner orally and in writing.
7. Incorporates facts and ideas from American Indian history and culture into professional activities.
8. Introduce students to methodology and theory in Indian Studies.

II. UND’s institutional and Essential Studies goals addressed at department level

1. Communication – written or oral
2. Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking
3. Information literacy
4. Diversity
5. Lifelong learning
6. Service/citizenship

All courses in the curriculum cover all or multiple goals of Essential Studies; however, the faculty members have chosen various emphases for their courses.

III. Means by which each goal will be assessed

Indirect assessment

Indian Studies classes are regularly assessed by means of the Student Evaluation form, a qualitative instrument that the faculty of the Indian Studies Department developed approximately twelve years ago and has updated periodically. Tenured faculty members administer the form to all their classes at least once every academic year while untenured and temporary faculty members do so at the end of both semesters of the academic year. These Student Evaluation forms are reviewed by the faculty members and the chair; a summary of these forms is included in all college and university evaluations.
In the past the Department has used the GER (General Education Requirement) questions at the end of the USAT form for direct assessment. However, some of the questions on the departmental Student Evaluation form serve the same purpose, to assess the students’ perception of their learning, and have the added advantage of providing more detailed information than the Yes/no questions of the USAT form. The following questions will be used for direct assessment:

1. Did this course change your thinking? Why or why not?
2. List some of the things that you did in or for this class (texts, discussions, specific assignments/papers, videos, specific readings) and indicate what you thought of them.
3. Would you recommend the course to a friend? Why or why not?

A summary of the students’ responses will be part of the assessment process and will be a part of the faculty’s discussion on effectiveness of teaching and the success of the course in general.

**Direct assessment**

The Indian Studies faculty decided to use the same process to do assessment in all courses. The process consists of two peer interviews conducted during the first and last weeks of the semester. During the first week of the semester students are randomly paired to interview each other about the course’s subject matter. For example, in *Introduction to Indian Studies* the students find out what their partner knows about American Indians; in *History of the Chippewa* the students ask about their partner’s knowledge of the Chippewa and their history, in *Federal Indian Law and Policy* the students query their partners on the relationship of American Indians with the federal government, etc. The interview process is limited to 15-20 minutes. Each student then writes a paper for the next class period about what the other person knows (approximately 2 pages). The students bring the papers to class. There should be a general discussion: What did their partner know about American Indians? What does that mean? How do we learn about American Indians and their cultures? Etc. [Experience has shown that there are two side benefits to the first part of the assessment: first, students are more relaxed with each other and, secondly, the discussion of their findings encourages class discussions.] After the class discussion the instructor collects and keeps the papers; they are not graded but receive a check or a minus that reflect the effort the students have put into them. At the end of the semester, preferably during the last two weeks, the peer interview process is repeated, and the students hand in a second paper that also receives a check or a minus. These papers will also not be returned. The second discussion should focus on the interviewees’ knowledge at the end of the semester. The two sets of papers will provide the data for the direct assessment. During the week of final examinations the Indian Study faculty will meet and look at students’ first and second responses. Despite the
varied goals of the Department, the courses are validated for diversity only (with the exception of *Oral Traditions* and *American Indian Health*) within Essential Studies, since only one goal can be chosen. Therefore, the faculty members will use the diversity rubric offered by Essential Studies and modify the rubric slightly to meet their needs. They may decide to conduct direct assessment only once a year, since the process is quite time consuming.
INDIAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

I. PROGRAM GOALS FOR STUDENT LEARNING/DEVELOPMENT

The graduate from Indian Studies

1. Understands variability within and between tribal groups.

2. Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the federal and state governments and Indian tribes.

3. Has an awareness of social justice issues facing Native Americans and techniques used to address them.

4. Recognizes stereotypes, ethnocentrism and racism and acts in culturally appropriate ways to counteract them.

5. Locates and evaluates relevant material.

6. Communicates in a professional manner orally and in writing.

7. Incorporates facts and ideas from Indian history and culture into professional activities.

II. UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOALS BEING ADDRESSED AT DEPARTMENT LEVEL.

1. Critical thinking

2. Communication.

3. Recognizing relationships.

4. Recognizing and evaluating choices.

III. MEANS BY WHICH EACH GOAL WILL BE ASSESSED.

It should be pointed out that Indian Studies classes are assessed at least once a year by means of standard class evaluation forms distributed by the Office of Institutional Research. The results of these evaluations are sent to the instructor and to the department where they provide immediate feedback concerning the success of instruction.
1. The first four program goals will be assessed by means of entrance and exit essays. Students who decide to major in Indian Studies will write a short essays describing some aspect(s) of their knowledge of Indian history and culture. Since most students major in Indian Studies after taking the Introduction to Indian Studies and other courses this essay will help to serve as an immediate assessment of current teaching.

Students graduating with a degree in Indian Studies will write a final essay designed to elicit information indicating the depth and breadth of their knowledge concerning variability between and within tribal groups, understanding of the relationship between federal and state governments and Indian tribes, and social justice issues, and recognizing stereotypes, ethnocentrism and racism and acting in appropriate ways to counteract them.

2. Program goals 5 and 6 will be assessed by means of student portfolios. Following the completion of the entrance essay, each student will be instructed concerning the development of a portfolio. At the end of each semester, majors in Indian Studies will select a paper that represents their achievement for the semester.

3. Program goal 7 will be assessed by a questionnaire to be sent one year after graduation and at subsequent regular intervals to graduates of the program. This questionnaire will ask how students are using their Indian Studies degree and what suggestions they might have for changes or additions to the curriculum.

IV. HOW THE RESULTS WILL BE USED TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING/DEVELOPMENT

There is an ongoing evaluation of student learning through regular class exams and student evaluation of teaching. The additional assessment techniques proposed herein will serve to highlight specific areas that necessitate further attention.

The entrance and exit essays will be used in two ways. The entrance essay will give a basic idea of where students are in achieving the department goals. These essays can be compared to each other to determine whether the results are indicative of an individual student situation or whether they indicate success or failure on the part of a particular teaching situation. Specific student needs will be met on an individual basis, by suggesting specific courses or intense individual independent study. Indications of successful accomplishment of teaching goals may mean that instead of repeating coverage of certain ideas and issues we can redesign courses to focus on other issues. Failure to accomplish expected goals will necessitate a similar redesign of courses.

The exit essays will provide important information concerning individual student accomplishment. As with the entrance essays, indications of success or failure will be considered in developing or modifying the curriculum.
The student portfolios will be used to monitor student development in research and communication. A student who does not appear to be acquiring the appropriate skills can be counseled and tutored.

The answers to questionnaires concerning graduates will provide information concerning two different factors. One factor concerns the various ways in which an Indian Studies degree may be applied. This information can be used in recruiting and advising students about Indian Studies majors. Indian Studies does not prepare students to know how an Indian Studies degree may be used. The second factor to be considered is to what degree the respondent feels that Indian Studies has enhanced her/his life and how changes in the program might increase student involvement in Indian Studies ideas and issues.