

## UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

### Feedback to Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2004-2005 Annual Reports

DEPARTMENT Atmospheric Sciences DATE April 4, 2006

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Ginny Guido, Joan Hawthorne

#### 1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- |                                       |              |                |                           |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| • Were any goals referenced?          | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • If so, were goals well articulated? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • Do goals address student learning?  | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |

#### *Comments:*

**Undergraduate:** Goals were very thoughtfully and clearly identified. Goals for undergraduates are phrased in terms of abilities, knowledge, and affect. Goals pertaining to the University goals include ability to perform research (intellectual curiosity and creativity), ability to apply knowledge areas (making informed choices), respect for lifelong learning, and effective communications (University Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4. Goals aligned with General Education goals include ability to apply knowledge areas, ability to perform research including analysis and interpretation (critical thinking), ability to apply major skills to practical situations (understanding how natural sciences and conclusions are reached), critical thinking, and effective communication (General Education Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4).

**Graduate:** Goals are well articulated, and are mostly phrased in terms of students performances (Goal 2 and 3), although one goal is phrased in terms of course completion (Goal 1).

#### 2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

- |  |              |                |                           |
|--|--------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Were any specific assessment methods referenced?   | YES <u>X</u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals?        | YES <u>X</u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach? | YES <u>X</u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |

#### *Comments:*

**Undergraduate:** This included a classroom audit of learning outcomes, senior projects, a graduating senior exit survey, co-op and intern supervisory survey, and student conference papers and presentations. A classroom audit (survey) of faculty determined the number of "hits" on each of 8 goals within the undergrad curriculum. Senior projects (consisting of written work and a public presentation) align with goals 1 through 5. Graduating Senior Exit Survey provides indirect evidence of learning in relationship to all 8 goals. Co-op and Intern Supervisory Surveys provide direct evidence regarding 6 goals. Graduate school acceptance rate provides indirect evidence regarding 5 goals. Student conference papers and presentations provide indirect evidence regarding 6 goals. Student scholarships provide indirect evidence for 1 goal.

**Graduate:** This is still in progress as the department has developed a draft matrix that will be implemented next academic year. Analysis of data regarding programs of study (indirect) and theses and oral defenses (direct) is underway. Additionally, a number of indirect methods are in place including career placement data, student completion rates, satisfaction surveys, and exit surveys.

### 3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ QUALIFIED Y/N \_\_\_\_

- If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ QUALIFIED Y/N \_\_\_\_
- If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ QUALIFIED Y/N \_\_\_\_
- Were the results tied to goals for student learning? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ QUALIFIED Y/N \_\_\_\_

#### *Comments:*

**Undergraduate:** Assessment results were based on the outlines assessment goals as depicted in section one of the report. Writing was identified as an area of weakness for some majors. Some students identify a need for more computer skills and more opportunity for practical application.

**Graduate:** While this is yet in progress, the department did identify some results with indications for needed improvements. Low completion rate, apparently tied to shortcomings in undergraduate preparation, are being addressed. Distance education challenges need to be more fully addressed.

### 4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported? YES X NO \_\_\_\_ QUALIFIED Y/N \_\_\_\_

- If so, do curricular or other improvements/ changes arising from assessment results directly address goals for student learning? YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_ QUALIFIED Y/N X-YES \_\_\_\_

#### *Comments:*

**Undergraduate:** The department is attempting to close the loop and did identify some of their strategies. This remains a work in progress. Students are referred to the writing center and more writing is being incorporated in the curriculum; more hands-on work for students and more opportunity to use computer skills throughout the curriculum are being implemented. The department held an undergrad curriculum review workshop to discuss data, findings, and actions.

**Graduate:** Ideas for future strategies was indicated in the report. The department is looking at provisional admits for students and required undergraduate course completion for some new admits. They are also considering options for distance students and doing more study to evaluate potential options.

### SUMMARY

#### *Strengths*

X A specific plan for assessment is in place.  
X Student learning goals are well-articulated.  
X Assessment methods are clearly described.  
X Assessment methods are appropriately selected.  
X Assessment methods are well-implemented.  
X Direct and indirect methods are implemented.  
X Results are reported.  
X Results are tied to closing the loop.  
(Decision-making is tied to evidence.)

#### *Areas for Improvement*

\_\_\_\_ No specific plan for assessment is in place.  
\_\_\_\_ Student learning goals are not well-articulated.  
\_\_\_\_ Assessment methods are not clearly described.  
\_\_\_\_ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.  
\_\_\_\_ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.  
\_\_\_\_ A single type of assessment methods predominates.  
\_\_\_\_ No results are reported.  
\_\_\_\_ Results are not clearly tied to closing the loop.  
(Decision-making is not directly tied to evidence.)

## OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The department has done a very good job of involving faculty in identifying course goals leading to program goals. The department has identified student learning outcomes and is making steady progress on closing the loop. The department is to be commended on their efforts with assessment and the reporting of that assessment.

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Section 1: \_Y\_\_\_\_    Section 2: \_\_Y\_\_\_    Section 3: \_\_\_\_Y\_\_    Section 4: \_Y\_\_\_\_

### Coding Key:

- Y    = yes, this is done appropriately and well
- N    = no, this is not done at all, or it is not done in relationship to student learning
- NA   = no information available
- ?    = action or progress is apparent; however, evidence is lacking that this is completely and appropriately done