

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

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

DEPARTMENT Pathology DATE 8-21-06

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Joan Hawthorne, Renee Mabey

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

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

Comments:

Undergraduate: Goals are described in terms of what the department should do (e.g., “provide instruction and evaluation based on...; provide the students with...; provide instruction in all subspecialties...” rather than in terms of student learning (e.g., “students will achieve clinical discipline competencies in X, Y, Z...; students will learn terminology, techniques, and skills in subspecialties...” etc.). It is possible to imagine intended student learning by reading the goals as written, but goals are teaching-centered rather than learning-centered. Listed goals are relatively broad (“...instruction in all subspecialties that allows student to sit for national registry examinations and be successful...”) and do not identify, either in the goal itself or in objectives, what categories of skills or knowledge might actually be necessary in order to be successful on examinations.

Graduate: Goals for the graduate and certificate program are also phrased in terms of what departmental faculty will do rather than what students will learn or be able to do. The learning goals listed under “professional” is apparently a service goal for undergraduate medical students, and it is the most descriptive in terms of implied student learning (suggesting that students will gain an understanding of “the basic pathology of all organ systems and its relationship to the function of human anatomy”).

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

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

Comments:

Undergraduate: Competencies are measured via clinical evaluations and certification exams. These methods broadly affirm that students have learned.

It is likely that clinical competencies and content areas on the examinations are well delineated. Purposefully connecting goals for student learning to assessment methods, tools, and results could help clarify and substantiate more focused decisions of curricular retention or revision.

The inclusion of indirect methods of assessment (such as employer surveys, recruitment and placement data) would assist in determining if student learning is meeting professional practice expectations.

Graduate: Comprehensive exams are being used, and additional measures are being developed.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|----|---------------|
| Were any assessment results reported? | YES <u>x</u> | NO | QUALIFIED Y/N |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|----|---------------|

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

Comments:

Undergraduate: Pass rates on national exams are very high (e.g., 28 of 29 passed, for a 97% pass rate), and the department and students are to be commended for their performances. This pass rate is directly linked to the teaching goals listed by the department; it is also evidence that students have learned principle elements.

In regard to more focused elements of student learning, the report did not identify any areas of performance (clinical) or knowledge (examinations) which showed exceptional mastery or areas where student learning could be improved. It is believed that the data is readily available, just not delineated in the current Annual Report.

Finally, the results of indirect measures would allow for triangulation of data and additional support for curricular decisions.

Graduate: No data reported.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported?

YES ☐ 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 ☐

Comments:

Undergraduate: No data-driven decisions or actions were described, although test success rate was high and likely did not suggest a need for global program change.

Decisions or actions related to minor changes which might enhance student learning were not addressed.

Graduate: No data reported.

SUMMARY

Strengths

- ☒ A specific plan for assessment is in place.
- ☐ Student learning goals are well-articulated.
- ☐ Assessment methods are clearly described.
- ☐ Assessment methods are appropriately selected.
- ☐ Assessment methods are well-implemented.
- ☐ Direct and indirect methods are implemented.
- ☒ Results are reported.
- ☐ 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 method 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:

Pathology has an assessment plan in place and is collecting data.

Departmental teaching goals are clearly delineated; student learning goals would be helpful.

Clinical performances, examinations and licensure have validated student learning in a global sense; graduates have been very successful by these measures. Goals directed toward specific competencies would identify areas of excellence and guide decisions intended to further improve learning. It would be most helpful if these goals addressed not only discipline specific criteria, but were also referenced to university and UNDSMHS student learning goals

The addition of indirect measures of learning would allow for triangulation of results and increased confidence in decisions.

While student learning goals, the alignment of learning goals with experiences and assessment strategies, and 'closing the loop' activities are not fully addressed within the Department's Annual Report the omissions may be due to a lack of clarity in the original request for information. We look forward to additional information in future reports.

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Section 1: __?__ Section 2: __Y__ Section 3: __Y__ Section 4: __?__

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