

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Feedback to Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2005-2006 Annual Reports

DEPARTMENT: Counseling (M.A. & PhD)

DATE: 2/8/07

COMMITTEE MEMBERS CONDUCTING REVIEW: Barbara Combs and Barbara Voglewede

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> |

In addition to the Departmental goals, please also consider UND's Institutional and General Education goals for student learning (shown in alignment within parentheses). For each goal, use a Y (yes), N (no), or ? (qualified y/n or uncertain) to indicate whether this department has a similar or related goal.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| <u>Y</u> | 1 Communication ("communicate effectively, both orally and in writing") |
| <u>Y</u> | 2 Critical/creative thinking ("think critically and creatively" and "be intellectually curious and creative") |
| <u>Y</u> | 3 Informed choices ("make informed choices") |
| <u>Y</u> | 4 Understanding across disciplines ("understand how conclusions are reached in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and sciences" and "acquire knowledge over a broad spectrum of subject areas") |
| <u>Y</u> | 5 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning") |
| <u>Y</u> | 6 Cross-cultural appreciation ("develop some familiarity with cultures other than their own") |
| <u>Y</u> | 7 Service/citizenship ("commit themselves to...the service of others," and "share responsibility both for their communities and for the world") |

Comments regarding Departmental goals and alignment of Departmental Goals with Institutional and General Education Goals:

Undergraduate:

Graduate:

The overall plan for departmental assessment reflects a thoughtful and thorough analysis of program goals, with goals designed to meet the department's mission.

The goals for the M.A. program are stated in 7 main categories, with the first of those categories further specified by 8 areas of knowledge competencies. The plan states an intention to some day specify objectives for each of those goals, giving an example of how one goal's objectives might be identified. In terms of correlation to UND goals, it seems fairly apparent that all but one of those broader UND goals are reflected within this plan's goals – the only possible omission being the UND goal of commitment to lifelong learning.

The goals for the PhD program are extensively examined and further refined by two layers of objectives. The goals are set out into two main categories, each of which is then parsed into specific objectives and then subsets of those objectives. The first goal (knowledge and competency preparation for practice) is broken down into four main objectives, and then 29 subsets of those objectives. The second goal (leadership and service preparation for practice) is broken down into two main objectives, and then 10 subsets of those objectives. It is clear from these descriptions that the student learning goals are in fact correlating to each of the broader UND goals.

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

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|--|--------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 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 ____ | QUALIFIED Y/N ____ |
| • Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a “multiple measures” approach? | YES <u>X</u> | NO ____ | QUALIFIED Y/N ____ |

Comments:

Undergraduate:

Graduate:

Both of the program plans indicate a variety of educational experiences and assessment methods focused on the stated student learning objectives.

The M.A. program utilizes both direct and indirect assessment, using (I) an annual evaluation of all students by program faculty, (II) a national standardized test, and (III) student self-evaluation. The plan also contemplates (IV) future use of faculty-evaluated independent writing projects as a means for assessment. Combined, these four methods measure across six aspects of professional expression, and are apparently aimed at covering all, or almost all, of the learning objectives comprehensively. Method II is described as directly correlating to many of the program’s learning goals. Method IV is described as (in the future) correlating to three of the learning goals (critical thinking, multicultural sensitivity, and independent research and writing) – however, this assessment method only applies to a select group of students (outstanding students chosen by the faculty), rather than all students in the program. Methods I and III are not explicitly described as correlating to the learning goals, but a connection could be implied.

The PhD program utilizes a large variety of assessment methods, both direct and indirect, including alumni surveys, employer surveys, extensive faculty evaluation of student performance throughout every component of the curriculum, national licensure exams, student self-evaluation, and “town hall” meetings structured to solicit public input. Significantly, the plan specifies the methods used for each of the 29 defined subsets of the program’s learning objectives, how regularly those assessments are made, and how the methods actually measure each of those particular subsets.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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|--|--------------|---------|--------------------|
| 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 <u>X</u> | NO ____ | QUALIFIED Y/N ____ |
| • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement? | YES <u>X</u> | NO ____ | QUALIFIED Y/N ____ |
| • Were the results tied to goals for student learning? | YES <u>X</u> | NO ____ | QUALIFIED Y/N ____ |

In addition to departmental goals, some assessment results may be applicable to Institutional and General Education goals. A list of the latter goals is included below. Please indicate with a Y, N, or ? whether results reported are applicable to Institutional or General Education goal achievement. For items with a Y or a ?, please describe findings in the appropriate section below.

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|----------|---|--|
| <u>Y</u> | 1 | Communication (“communicate effectively, both orally and in writing”) |
| <u>Y</u> | 2 | Critical/creative thinking (“think critically and creatively” and “be intellectually curious and creative”) |
| <u>Y</u> | 3 | Informed choices (“make informed choices”) |
| <u>Y</u> | 4 | Understanding across disciplines (“understand how conclusions are reached in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and sciences” and “acquire knowledge over a broad spectrum of subject areas”) |
| <u>?</u> | 5 | Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”) |
| <u>Y</u> | 6 | Cross-cultural appreciation (“develop some familiarity with cultures other than their own”) |
| <u>Y</u> | 7 | Service/citizenship (“commit themselves to...the service of others,” and “share responsibility both for their communities and for the world”) |

Comments regarding results and the application of results to Departmental, Institutional and General Education Goals:

Undergraduate:

Graduate:

Both the M.A. program and the PhD program have a plan in place to regularly and frequently collect data using their identified assessment methods, and their plans indicate specific results from recent assessment. Reported results from the M.A. program are limited to those from one assessment tool (the national standardized test), while the PhD plan reports results from each of the assessments on each of its 29 defined subsets of its learning objectives. Based on the explanations in the PhD plan, it is clear that the program is collecting outcomes on all or virtually all of the broader UND student learning goals.

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 X NO QUALIFIED Y/N

Comments:

Undergraduate:

Graduate:

The M.A. plan indicates the possibility of adding other methods of assessment, but does not indicate whether assessment results were the reason for considering that change. It appears as though one additional tool is being considered to further ensure assessment of research and writing. The plan also indicates an ongoing analysis of results from at least one measurement tool (the national standardized test), in efforts to keep current on the program's relative success. A program coordinator collects, interprets, and reports the results of assessment, then provides feedback to the students and all program faculty. The plan contemplates future review of assessment methods and incorporating feedback from the Dean and the Assistant Provost.

The PhD plan identifies the process first – a formalized process of how outcomes are regularly analyzed by program faculty, shared with the students in the program, and then discussed with all departmental faculty in efforts to get an entire departmental view of assessment. Changes to the program are then considered in efforts to respond to perceived needs. The resulting substantive changes that have already been made to the program based on assessment have included modifying the admissions requirements, modifying content in several of the program's courses, and adding a summer seminar series to the program. The plan also identifies additional changes intended for Summer or Fall 2005, including modifying the content of one course, restructuring another course, and adopting new competencies in fieldwork evaluations.

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:

While the M.A. plan still appears to be in progress in terms of gathering and responding to outcomes and tying those outcomes to specific programmatic objectives, it is nonetheless clear that assessment efforts are being made and the plan will be

supplemented in the future. The PhD plan is comprehensive, thoughtful, specific, and responsive. In short, it is a model plan that embodies a spirit of assessment ably targeted at improving student learning.

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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