

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

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

DEPARTMENT: Counseling: Recreation and Leisure Services

DATE: 2/6/07

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>N</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:

Goals are broadly addressed in the Mission, then more specifically identified in 26 student competencies listed in a survey instrument sent out to intern supervisors. The plan mentions that another survey – which goes to recent alumni of the program – assesses 40 competencies, but those additional competencies are not identified in the plan. Six broader categories of competencies are identified – "conceptual foundations," "leisure service profession," "leisure services delivery system," "program and event planning," "administration/management," and "legal aspects" based on the standards of the National Recreation and Park Association and more clearly articulated in the 2006 annual report.

In terms of the more specific competencies identified in the intern survey, several may inherently embody UND goal 2 (critical thinking), although there is no direct reference to critical thinking, as such.

Graduate: N/A

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> </u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>X</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:

The program's plan identified two methods of assessment – direct assessment by intern supervisors (and via survey instruments), and indirect assessment by recent alumni of the program (also via survey instruments). No other methods are mentioned in the plan; for example, identifying the baseline performance of students when they enter the program, and tracking their performance as they are progressing through the program (other than those in internships). The annual report offers some additional detail about sources of course and program assessment (e.g., essays, portfolios, tests, written program plans, application project, and field experiences), noting that for many courses, instructors complete assessment reports, and noting that the faculty will engage in a "formal program assessment meeting" at the end of the spring semester and again in August to discuss and initiate program changes. However, it is not clear how the course products are assessed. Particularly given the type of assessment the program is already doing, it would be helpful to see whether the program is utilizing earlier assessments (of the same students) thus providing incremental data on how students are learning as they progress through the program. In addition, given that the program has been using the intern survey for several years, comparisons could be made between different classes of students, which in turn might shed further light on student learning in the program from year to year. In short, assessment from the methods and products identified in the plan and the annual report may show promise (especially considering the specificity and breadth of the competencies assessed), however those methods have limited value in assessing student learning if there is not some process in place to establish baselines of learning and comparisons of learning progress across time.

Finally, the low response rate of the alumni survey (30%) may limit its effectiveness as a method of assessment.

Graduate: N/A

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 <u>X</u>	NO ____	QUALIFIED Y/N ____
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?	YES ____	NO ____	QUALIFIED Y/N <u>X</u>
• 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.

- Y 1 Communication ("communicate effectively, both orally and in writing")
- Y 2 Critical/creative thinking ("think critically and creatively" and "be intellectually curious and creative")
- (Y) 3 Informed choices ("make informed choices")
- Y 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")
- N 5 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")
- Y 6 Cross-cultural appreciation ("develop some familiarity with cultures other than their own")
- Y 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:

Apart from the same concerns noted above in comments to section 1 and 2, there is definitely some correlation between the results of the assessment, and the UND goals. The assessment responses are clear and quantified via a numbered scale (1 to 5), which in turn allows for ease in tabulation and in drawing conclusions on individual and group learning. Results from two surveys (the 2003-04 intern supervisor survey and the 2003 alumni survey) were reported in averages, and for the six broader categories of competencies, rather than for each listed competency. But as already noted, there is no indication of incremental

progress in student learning for each class going through the program, nor any indication how the individual survey results relate to the overall progress of the program in reaching learning goals.

Graduate: N/A

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

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

YES _____ NO _____ QUALIFIED Y/N X

- 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:

The annual report indicates that for many courses, instructors complete assessment reports, and that at the end of the spring semester and again in August, the faculty will engage in a "formal program assessment meeting" to discuss and initiate program changes. The plan, however, only states that the two survey instruments will continue to be used, and gives no direction as to how the results will be used or what further response will be taken.

Graduate: N/A

SUMMARY

Strengths

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

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is clear that a significant amount of assessment is being done in the program, and that a significant amount of data is being collected. However, the assessment process and use of the data is unclear. We suggest that the program clarify (in its assessment plan) how the assessment products listed in the annual report are actually used in the assessment process – i.e., more detail about what each of those products entails, which of the student learning goals each product is assessing, how each product (with the exception of tests) will be assessed (e.g., scoring scales relating competency levels), what the results of each assessment reflect about progress toward the learning goals, and how those results will be used in terms of changing courses or the program as a larger whole. And while it appears that instructors are responsible for determining assessment of course products, it would also be helpful if the plan would indicate who is responsible for determinations at each of the other levels of the assessment process. Finally, because the program's assessments efforts seem to be generating data from across its curriculum, the program seems to be in a very good position to consider how the data is cross referencing student learning on several of its goals.

Reviewers: Name

Dr. Barbara Combs

Barbara Voglewede

Department
Phone Number
e-mail

Education & Human Development
701-777-2862
barbara.combs@mail.und.nodak.edu

Law
701-777-2261
voglewede@law.und.edu

Section 1: Y Section 2: ? 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