

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2006-2007 Annual Reports

DEPARTMENT_ Geography _____ DATE_ December 2007 _____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW_ Seelan & Gerhardt _____

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| • Were any goals referenced? | YES_ <u>X</u> _____ | NO_ _____ | QUALIFIED Y/N _____ |
| • If so, were goals well articulated? | YES_ <u>X</u> _____ | NO_ _____ | QUALIFIED Y/N _____ |
| • Do goals address student learning? | YES_ <u>X</u> _____ | NO_ _____ | QUALIFIED Y/N _____ |

In addition to the Departmental goals, please also consider UND's Institutional and General Education goals for student learning (shown in alignment within parentheses). Use 'U' (undergraduate) or 'G' (graduate) to identify UND/General Education goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.

_____ 1 Communication ("communicate effectively, both orally and in writing")

U G 2 Critical/creative thinking ("think critically and creatively" and "be intellectually curious and creative")

U 3 Informed choices ("make informed choices")

_____ 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")

_____ 5 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")

U 6 Cross-cultural appreciation ("develop some familiarity with cultures other than their own")

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:

In their annual report, the Geography Department notes that their Strategic Plan has not been revised since November 2004 and that "it is in need of revision since many of the goals and actions statements have been completed". In the 2004 Strategic Plan, six 'Vision Points' were identified and detailed evidence of progress toward achieving those goals is provided.

Undergraduate: Learning goals are identified specific to students majoring in Geography. The department focused their assessment efforts on two of the four goals this past year.

Graduate: Five learning goals are discussed and the department focused their assessment efforts on three of the goals this past year.

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

Were any specific assessment methods referenced? YES_ X _____ 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_ <u>X</u> _____ | NO_ _____ | QUALIFIED Y/N _____ |

Comments: While the 2006-2007 annual report addresses some assessment methods, a more detailed description of the department's assessment methods is included in their most recent assessment plan (2004-2005).

Undergraduate: In assessing the identified goals, the department engaged in a transcript review of their graduating seniors. Through the transcript review, the department identified which courses faculty thought students should take and which classes students were actually taking. Additional assessment methods identified in the 2004-2005 assessment plan include laboratory assignments, student projects, examinations, oral presentations, and numerous others.

Graduate: The department utilizes capstone rubrics to measure each goal of the graduate program. Specifically, there are rubrics for the following student products, (1) thesis, (2) thesis defense, (3) independent study, and (4) Geography 578 research proposal.

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 __

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. Use 'U' (undergraduate) or 'G' (graduate) to identify those results which are applicable to Institutional/General Education goal achievement. For these items, please describe findings in the appropriate section below.

- _____ 1 Communication ("communicate effectively, both orally and in writing")
- _____ 2 Critical/creative thinking ("think critically and creatively" and "be intellectually curious and creative")
- _____ 3 Informed choices ("make informed choices")
- _____ 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")
- _____ 5 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")
- _____ 6 Cross-cultural appreciation ("develop some familiarity with cultures other than their own")
- ___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: Through the review of students' transcripts, the department recognized that they have 'significant room for improvement' as students are not enrolling the range of courses they anticipated.

Graduate: The rubrics utilized to assess the graduate capstone products indicate that all students are at level II (Student demonstrates competence of program goal, at a level similar to what is expected of an MS/MA (thesis) recipient) out of a four scale rubric.

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: Faculty will continue to modify the lists of courses they believe student should take in other departments and will make the list available to all faculty in order for them to use in their advisement of students.

Graduate: The rubric for the Geography 578 research proposal will be implemented to serve as a mid-point assessment tool. This will provide feedback to students and enable faculty to determine students' progress.

SUMMARY

Strengths

- ☒ Y A specific plan for assessment is in place.
- ☒ Y Student learning goals are well-articulated.
- ☒ Y Assessment methods are clearly described.
- ☒ Y Assessment methods are appropriately selected.
- ☒ Y Assessment methods are well-implemented.
- ☒ Y Direct and indirect methods are implemented.
- ☒ Y Results are reported.
- ☒ Y 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 Geography department is clearly engaged in assessment activities in both their undergraduate and graduate programs. As they look to revise their strategic plan and assessment plan, they might consider identifying goals related to UND's General Education/Essential Studies.

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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