

## UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

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

DEPARTMENT Philosophy and Religion DATE October 2007

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Renee Mabey; Gaye Burgess

#### 1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

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

#### *Comments:*

**Undergraduate:** Five goals with objectives are stated.

**Graduate:** N/A (Only BA Degrees are offered)

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.

- X   1 Communication ("communicate effectively, both orally and in writing")  
  X   2 Critical/creative thinking ("think critically and creatively" and "be intellectually curious and creative")  
  X   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")  
  X   6 Cross-cultural appreciation ("develop some familiarity with cultures other than their own")  
     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 for student learning and development address four of seven Institutional and General Education Goals. However, in reading the annual report, the author indicates most Philosophy and Religion courses (22 of 26) fulfill General Education requirements. The reviewer wonders if additional department goals could easily be articulated, such that the suspected alignments are easily evident.

#### 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:** The Assessment Plan identifies direct measures for assessing student learning, specifically evaluations of course assignments. Indirect measures, including interviews, student surveys, focus groups, and alumni surveys are also identified. If specific content questions are included in the interviews and surveys, these items may be considered direct measurements also.

### 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 <u>X</u>
• 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 ____	NO ____	QUALIFIED Y/N <u>X</u>

#### *Comments:*

**Undergraduate:** Data has been collected and is being analyzed. Preliminary results are reported. With indirect assessment, students perceive an increased ability in critical reading and thinking, and an improved awareness and understanding of diverse approaches to questions. Students would like to see more choices in upper level courses. With direct assessment, students are developing critical thinking skills and some are achieving departmental goals. The assessment practices ‘encouraged us in the belief that we are fulfilling most of the goals of our department.’

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”)
- X 2 Critical/creative thinking (“think critically and creatively” and “be intellectually curious and creative”)
- X 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”)
- \_\_\_\_ 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:** Goals 2 and 3, as above.

### 4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported?	YES _____	NO <u>X</u>	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:** Data is still being analyzed and disseminated to faculty. The departmental response to the students’ request for additional courses will be dependent upon the availability of faculty.

## 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 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 departmental Assessment Plan is clearly articulated, with goals and objectives, methods, timelines, and duty assignments for data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Some assessment data has been collected and analyzed, and the results reported. Other data is yet to be compiled and shared with all departmental faculty. Closing the loop activities are not reported; due to the limited number of faculty in the department, not all desired additions and changes may be accomplished.

In the annual report, it is noted that faculty are considered to be excellent teachers, with several actively engaged in improving their teaching via self-reflection, research on learner-centered approaches to teaching, attendance at a course development workshop for on-line teaching, an OID grant, and a Summer Professorship. These activities demonstrate 'the department's commitment to students;' the students will benefit from faculty engagement in teaching processes.

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Section 1: Y    Section 2: Y    Section 3: ?    Section 4: NA

### 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