UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2007-08 Annual Reports

DEPARTMENT___Political Science_____DATE___4-20-09_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Cassie Gerhardt & Dan Tienter_____

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- Were any goals referenced?   YES_U & G__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ___
- If so, were goals well articulated?   YES_U & G__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ___
- Do goals address student learning?   YES_U & G__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ___

Comments:

> **Undergraduate:** The Political Science Program and the Public Administration Program share the same six goals.

> **Graduate:** The department identified the same goals for all of its programs such that the student learning goals at the graduate levels are the same as those of the undergraduate program.

In addition to the Departmental goals, please also consider UND's Institutional and Essential Studies goals for student learning (shown in alignment within parentheses). Use 'U' (undergraduate) or 'G' (graduate) to identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.
_U & G_ 1 Communication – written or oral ("able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience")
_U & G_ 2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or "be intellectually curious"; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
_____ 3 Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or "be intellectually creative"; explore, discover, engage)
_____ 4 Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning ("apply empirical data…analyze graphical information")
_____ 5 Information literacy ("be able to access and evaluate…for effective, efficient, and ethical use")
_____ 6 Diversity ("demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding…")
_U & G_ 7 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")
_____ 8 Service/citizenship ("share responsibility both for their communities and for the world")

Comments regarding departmental goals and alignment of departmental goals with institutional and Essential Studies goals:

> **Undergraduate:** The stated goals of the Political Science Program incorporate Essential Studies goals and are also specific to Political Science as a discipline. The goals clearly state the skills and knowledge that students majoring in Political Science (and Public Administration) will acquire.

> **Graduate:**

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

Were any specific assessment methods referenced?   YES_U & G__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____
- If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals?   YES_U & G___   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____
- Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach?   YES_U & G___   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments:

> **Undergraduate:** The Political Science Assessment plan (as posted on the Assessment website) outlines the specific assessment methods to be utilized for each of the six stated goals. The assessment methods include both direct as well as indirect measures.

Graduate: Assessment methods at the graduate level include comprehensive exams, independent studies, and exit questionnaires.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?	YES_U & G___	NO____	QUALIFIED Y/N ____

- If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals?   YES_U ___   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N __G__
- If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?   YES_U___   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N __G__
- Were the results tied to goals for student learning?   YES_U___   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N __G__

Comments:

Undergraduate: Assessment results from instructor reviews of students' papers and presentations are reported. The reviews were based on rubrics developed by the University. The scores included in the report addressed oral communication, written communication, and critical thinking.

Graduate: The results indicated that, during the reporting period, 5 students had taken and passed the comprehensive exams and that 10 students were working on independent studies. Assessment results did not specifically suggest a need for improvement or a tie to the stated learning goals.

In addition to departmental goals, some assessment results may be applicable to institutional and Essential Studies goals. Use 'U' (undergraduate) or 'G' (graduate) to identify those results which are applicable to institutional/Essential Studies goal achievement. For indicated items, please describe findings in the appropriate section below. .

_U_____ 1 Communication – written or oral ("able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience")
_U_____ 2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or "be intellectually curious"; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
_____ 3 Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or "be intellectually creative"; explore, discover, engage)
_____ 4 Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning ("apply empirical data…analyze graphical information")
_____ 5 Information literacy ("be able to access and evaluate…for effective, efficient, and ethical use")
_____ 6 Diversity ("demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding…")
_____ 7 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")
_____ 8 Service/citizenship ("share responsibility both for their communities and for the world")

Comments regarding results and the application of results to departmental, institutional and Essential Studies goals:

Undergraduate: The department focused its assessment efforts on the goals of critical thinking, oral communication, and written communication. The assessment results provide insight into areas in which the department can focus attention in and effort of increasing students' skills and learning.

Graduate:

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported?	YES_U & G___	NO____	QUALIFIED Y/N ____

- If so, do curricular or other improvements/ changes arising from assessment results directly address goals for student learning?   YES_U_____   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N _G___

Comments:

Undergraduate: Assessment results indicated a slight deficiency in students' oral communication skills. Based on this information, the department resolved to incorporate more oral communication exercises in classes. In developing the Essential Studies Capstone Course, the department revised the course exercises to include four oral communication exercises, and increase from the one exercise that was originally planned.

Graduate: Based on student feedback, the department created a course in cooperation with the Economics Department (POLS 503: Government and Business). Major curriculum changes have been put off until input from new faculty can be integrated.

SUMMARY

Strengths	*Areas for Improvement*
_U & G___ A specific plan for assessment is in place.	____ No specific plan for assessment is in place.
_U & G___Student learning goals are well-articulated.	____ Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
_U & G___Assessment methods are clearly described.	____ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
_U & G___Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
_U_____Assessment methods are well-implemented.	____ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
_U_____Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	____ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
_U_____Results are reported.	____ No results are reported.
_U_____Results are tied to closing the loop.	____ Results are not clearly tied to closing the loop.
(Decision-making is tied to evidence.)	(Decision-making is not directly tied to evidence.)

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Political Science Department appears to have developed a culture of assessment within their program. The department has clearly articulated goals that complement and include aspects of the Essential Studies goals. Assessment methods have been identified for each goal and include multiple measures. Assessment results are shared and are used to inform decisions and to improve programs.

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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