

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2008-09 Annual Reports
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT__Biochemistry and Molecular Biology_ **DATE**__April 12, 2010

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Kirsten Dauphinais and Wayne Swisher

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|------|-----------------|
| • Were any goals referenced? | YES__X__ | NO__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__ |
| • If so, were goals well articulated? | YES__X__ | NO__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__ |
| • Do goals address student learning? | YES__X__ | NO__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__ |

Comments: The program reports that for the current annual report, they had written and accepted a Mission Statement and student learning goals for the M.S. degree program, something that had been missing in previous years (only the Ph.D. was referenced in previous years). The Mission Statement and goals were presented in this annual report.

The program reported assessment results for the Ph.D. degree that had been completed for this annual report, specifically for Goal 1 Objective 1.1 in their assessment plan.

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__X__ | NO__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__ |
| • Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach? | YES__ | NO__X__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__ |

Comments: In the information presented for the Ph.D. degree assessment, the department indicated that this year they were only reporting on one of their assessment activities, specifically, Goal 1, Objective 1.1. Also, it appears that only direct assessment data were discussed. The direct data came from the assessment of student's performances on the comprehensive examination.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

- | | | | |
|--|----------|------|--------------------|
| Were any assessment results reported? | YES__ | NO__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__X__ |
| • 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__ | NO__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__X__ |
| • Were the results tied to goals for student learning? | YES__X__ | NO__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__ |

Comments: The annual report discusses the faculty's evaluation of the comprehensive examination results and report that of the four students who took the exam, "three of the four were marginal passes." The results of this assessment activity is clearly tied to Goal 1, Objective 1.1.

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: Based on the results of the comprehensive examination assessment, the annual report describes changes that were made in the curriculum that prepares students to take the comprehensive examination, and the revisions made to the comprehensive examination itself. The changes made were communicated to the students as well.

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.
- ☐ Assessment methods are well-implemented.
- ☐ Direct and indirect methods are implemented.
- ☐ 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.
- ☒ X 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 Biochemistry and Molecular Biology graduate program has a well designed and articulated assessment plan for its Master's and Ph.D. programs. The Master's program assessment plan is relatively new, being implemented within the past 2 years. The student learning goals are clearly stated and reflect the mission statement for each degree program. In this Annual Report, the program describes changes made in the curriculum that directly impacts student learning outcomes and states that the comprehensive examination was modified to help make it a better assessment instrument. However, the department only states that assessment was done and what changes were made as a result, but none of the data used in the assessment was presented.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

- ☒ X Annual report
- ☐ Appendices (cited in annual report)
- ☐ Other (please describe)

- ☒ X Assessment plan (as posted)
- ☐ Previous assessment review

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Section 1: ☒ Y ☐ Section 2: ☐ ? ☐ Section 3: ☐ ? ☐ 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