

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

DEPARTMENT LAW DATE 4/26/10

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Darla Adams and Shane Gerbert

**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> |

**Comments:** The Law School outlines 10 specific goals that students are expected to have mastered by program completion. They are well written, straightforward.

**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" <u>approach</u> ? | YES <u>X</u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |

**Comments:** The law school reported a significant increase in the amount of assessment activity performed by faculty during the 2008-2009 AY. As a whole, the Law School primarily relies on the bar exams of Minnesota and North Dakota as a methodology. Other methodologies include intake questionnaires, mid-semester conferencing and formative evaluation of student writing skills.

**3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

- |  |                 |                |                           |
|--|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Were any assessment results reported?  | YES <u>X</u>    | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals? | YES <u>X</u>    | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?            | YES <u>    </u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>N</u>    |
| • Were the results tied to goals for student learning?   | YES <u>X</u>    | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |

**Comments:** Results reported are primarily from the Minnesota and North Dakota bar exam results. Although other methods of assessment are utilized, the results were not clearly identified. Methodology used by individual instructors is discussed and results are utilized to inform decisions, but the results themselves are either not provided or not clearly indicated.

#### 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:** The law school formed a “Bar Passage Working Group” to examine the law school’s curriculum and pedagogy and to determine how improvements in student learning could be made and ultimately impact student Bar score results. Additionally, individual instructors have made improvements to their courses based on assessment results.

#### SUMMARY

##### *Strengths*

- X A specific plan for assessment is in place.
- X Student learning goals are well-articulated.
- \_\_\_\_ Assessment methods are clearly described.
- X Assessment methods are appropriately selected.
- \_\_\_\_ Assessment methods are well-implemented.
- X 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:

In general, the Law School clearly values assessment and is making great efforts at incorporating assessment of student learning into all aspects of their curriculum. “Buy In” from individual instructors is apparent. Significant progress has been made within the school when compared to the 2007 evaluation. Of note is the law schools continued “self-reflection about our curriculum and student learning in response to our sabbatical site visit by our accrediting body” that included a faculty assessment retreat, and the effective use of a school member on the University Assessment Committee that lead to a “commitment to revising the law school assessment plan and activities as an integral part of our ongoing curricular review”. In short, the Law School has resources for assessment and makes use of them appropriately and effectively.

#### MATERIALS REVIEWED

- X Annual report
- \_\_\_\_ Appendices (cited in annual report)
- \_\_\_\_ Other (please describe)

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

Reviewer(s):	Name	<u>Darla J. Adams</u>	____	<u>Shane Gerbert</u>	____
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Section 1: Y Section 2: Y 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