

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

DEPARTMENT Office of Medical Education – MD Program **DATE** April 26, 2010

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Joan Hawthorne, Dexter Perkins

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:

It appears that the ACCME specifies goal content and possibly goal language. UND's Medical School has six broad goals, each of which is followed by a series of quite specific objectives regarding competencies to be demonstrated by conclusion of the degree program. Although many of the goals and objectives refer to very concrete competencies, others refer to attitudes and standards of practice which are more difficult to pin down, e.g., "Students will become physicians who use effective interpersonal and communication skills with patients, families, and professional associates," followed by the objective, "Students will develop interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange."

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:

Methods are very clearly aligned with goals in the narrative materials that we read (annual report) and in the assessment plan itself. Many different assessment methods are used, and most are directly performance based. It does appear that some indirect evidence is also collected (student survey data), but it makes sense for a competency-based program like MD training that direct performance of the intended outcome would be a primary source of assessment information. Even the less concrete goals (e.g., the communication goal and objective cited above) are accompanied by specific measures, e.g., drawn from what students are observed to demonstrate in their clinical rotations. Concrete goals have concrete assessments, e.g., demonstrating the ability to suture, start IVs, do lumbar punctures. Finally, some kinds of student learning are assessed by written exam, both SMHS-generated and nationally normed. These include, e.g., comprehensive exams over content knowledge and the licensure exam.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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

Comments:

We do know that assessment results were collected because it is clear that many of the various tests and clinical observations (the direct assessments) are built into the curriculum. However, the assessment section of the annual report did not include any results, either as raw data (e.g., scores) or as analyzed.

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 ____ NO X QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments:

Results were not included with the annual report version of the assessment report, either in raw form or as analyzed. However, one specific example of loop-closing is cited, and that example is based on survey data. As a result of findings from a recent survey of first year students, a decision was made to “completely revamp the humanities component” of the medical school curriculum. The report also indicates that a comprehensive review of the four-year curriculum is underway in 2009-10, with subcommittees examining everything from goals to curriculum to faculty development. Based on findings analyzed as part of that loop-closing process, it seems likely that additional and perhaps quite substantive changes may be made in coming years.

SUMMARY

Strengths

Areas for Improvement

- 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.
- ____ Results are tied to closing the loop.
(Decision-making is tied to evidence.)

- ____ 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.
- X 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 MD program faculty seem to be working from a well-thought out assessment plan and we presume data have been collected. If those data were not analyzed and reviewed last year, they apparently will be in 2009-10 since the previous report describes this year as designated for comprehensive program review. We would suggest that medical school faculty(1) ensure that their most current assessment plan is posted on UND’s assessment plan website (contact Joan Hawthorne, email below, for information about posting); (2) ensure that information about the year’s assessment activities is pasted into the annual report yearly; (3) provide a bit of data, although certainly not every last piece of data for every goal, in order to allow a reader to get a sense of the kind of information that’s been collected and reviewed (particularly useful in the cases where data actually fed into specific decisions); and (4) indicate examples of any changes which were made in teaching, in curriculum, or in other areas as a result of information learned through assessment activities. If you are following your plan, we are optimistic that you are doing interesting work – and it is helpful to be able to share assessment successes with faculty across the institution.

Finally, we note that it is not uncommon for faculty of a program to develop a good assessment plan and collect data – but never “find the time” for conversations about the results and their meaning. Therefore, good information gets wasted and decisions are made without the light that could be shed by the data (perhaps yet unanalyzed). In reviewing assessment reports, we often see that it is very helpful for departmental faculty to have a yearly retreat (or create some other mechanism) specifically designated for review of assessment findings, followed by any appropriate curriculum decision-making. If you are finding a gap between “what you collect” and “what gets used,” we strongly suggest considering this sort of a process—so the work you’re doing doesn’t get wasted.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
☐ Previous assessment review

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

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