

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

**DEPARTMENT:** Pharmacology, Physiology and Therapeutics **DATE** 02/25/2010

**COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW:** Barbara Combs and Jo-Anne Yearwood

**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:***

Four learning goals and two objectives are listed for each goal. Goals are well articulated and connected to student learning. Goal 1 may be too broad to assess successfully.

**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>    </u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>X</u>    |
| • Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach? | YES <u>    </u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>X</u>    |

***Comments:***

Assessment methods included written exams, oral presentations and discussions, experimental protocols, and student course evaluations surveys. These assessments were listed in the annual report but were not aligned to particular goals; however assessments were tied to individual goals in the assessment plan. Both direct and indirect measures were listed, but it was not clear whether the course evaluation surveys referred to the USATs or a departmentally developed survey.

**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:***

In the annual report, a statement that student performance has met or exceeded goals was included, but no specific results were reported.

**4. CLOSING THE LOOP**

- |   |                 |             |                           |
|---|-----------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported? | YES <u>    </u> | NO <u>X</u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • If so, do curricular or other improvements/                       |                 |             |                           |

changes arising from assessment results  
directly address goals for student learning?

YES\_\_\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_\_ QUALIFIED Y/N \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

There was a comment in the annual report indicating that a plan for an assessment retreat to be held in 2008 was in process. No further information was provided, and so we do not know whether a retreat was held. We are wondering whether the author of the report actually meant to write that the assessment retreat planning was for 2009 given the academic year of the annual report.

**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 department has further specified student learning goals since the last review. Timelines, responsibilities, use of results and decision-making procedures are outlined in the plan. The annual report indicates that student performance is being tracked. While it appears they have made gains in assessment processes and procedures since the 2004-05 review, it is not clear that they are routinely analyzing assessments for the purpose of making decisions to improve student learning or the program.

Goal 1 state that students will acquire discipline-based knowledge “based upon” the learning objectives of the professions of Pharmacology and Physiology. After previewing the websites listed in the report and assessment plan the sheer volume of information and large number of goals seem overwhelming. It may be helpful to describe how the department ensures that students meet all the goals articulated or further refine the department goals and objectives to explicitly state what learning is expected.

A number of assessments are listed under each learning goal in the assessment plan. We encourage the department to more fully describe the assessments and the process for using all of these measures to analyze student outcomes and complete the findings (reporting of results) and closing the loop steps.

**MATERIALS REVIEWED**

- ☒ Annual report
- ☐ Appendices (cited in annual report)
- ☒ Other (please describe) previewed websites listed in annual report.
- ☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
- ☒ Previous assessment review

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Section 1: \_Y\_\_    Section 2: \_?\_\_    Section 3: \_?\_\_    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