UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in _2010__ Annual Reports
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT_____Communications_____DATE_____5/5/2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW_____ Fred Remer / Roxanne Hurley _____

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 Graduate Assessment Plan (dated 8/22/07) for the School of Communication lists goals for student learning within the Masters or PhD programs. Within each program, the learning goals are categorized as either pertaining to communication theory, communication research, or professional practice. The goals are thoughtful and articulate using active verbs to describe student outcomes.

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_____   NO__X__   QUALIFIED Y/N ____
- Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach?   YES__X___   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments:

Assessment methods were listed for both the Masters and PhD programs. The goals were not specifically aligned with the student learning goals. The methods are varied and comprehensive and use a mix of direct and indirect techniques.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?   YES__X__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____
- If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals?   YES____   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N __X__
- 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 program had two students at the Masters level and three students at the PhD level.   Assessment found that acceptable to excellent results were made in achieving all student learning goals except at the Masters level for Research Goal 4 and Theory Goal 4. The assessment did not indicate which methods indicate these deficiencies nor how they met their student learning goals.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment
results reported?   YES_____   NO__X__ QUALIFIED Y/N ____
- If so, do curricular or other improvements/
  changes arising from assessment results
  directly address goals for student learning?   YES_____   NO____ QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments:

During this time period, the School of Communications was disbanded and the fate of the graduate program is uncertain. The faculty have decided to forgo any action on the identified deficiencies until a later time.

SUMMARY

Strengths	*Areas for Improvement*
__X__ A specific plan for assessment is in place.	____ No specific plan for assessment is in place.
__X__Student learning goals are well-articulated.	____ Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
__X__Assessment methods are clearly described.	____ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
__X__Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
____Assessment methods are well-implemented.	____ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
__X__Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	____ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
____Results are reported.	____ No results are reported.
____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:

It is evident that much thought was put into the creation of this assessment plan. The student learning goals are thoughtful articulate and well organized. The assessment methods are varied and comprehensive and use a mix of direct and indirect techniques, although they are not specifically aligned with the student learning goals. It is obvious that assessment is being done in the graduate program, but the results of the assessment are not clear or complete. No actions were taken based on the assessment due to the uncertainty of the program.

Future assessments should focus on providing more information on assessment results and alignment of assessment methods with student learning goals.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

__X___ Annual report   __X___ Assessment plan (as posted)
_____ Appendices (cited in annual report)   __X___ Previous assessment review
_____ Other (please describe)

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Section 1: __Y___   Section 2: __Y___   Section 3: __?___   Section 4: __N___

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

DEPARTMENT_____Communications_____**DATE**_____4/28/11_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW_____ **Fred Remer / Roxanne Hurley** _____

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 School of Communication Assessment Plan (revised 8/20/07) lists twelve goals for student learning which are organized into three groups (Community, Information and Technology). Most of the goals are well articulated. Nine of the goals use the phrase "students understand" which is abstract and may be difficult to measure, but it is evident that much thought was put into selecting goals that relate to student learning in the 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) to identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.
___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)
___U__ 3 Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or "be intellectually creative"; explore, discover, engage)
___U__ 4 Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning ("apply empirical data…analyze graphical information")
___U__ 5 Information literacy ("be able to access and evaluate…for effective, efficient, and ethical use")
___U__ 6 Diversity ("demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding…")
_____ 7 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")
___U__ 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:

The goals are aligned with many of the Essential Studies goals for student learning. Obviously ES Communication is met by many of the programs goals. Many of the programs goals also address ES Thinking and Reasoning – Critical Thinking. One program goal describes creating and editing various types of media which incorporates ES Thinking and Reasoning – Creative Thinking. ES Thinking and Reasoning – Quantitative Reasoning is met by a goal that mandates the use of numerical and statistical information. The same program goal requires research and evaluation of information which is aligned with ES Information Literacy. ES Diversity is addressed in one program goal which is titled Diverse Identities. Finally, a whole category of goals incorporates ES Service/Citizenship.

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_____   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N _X_
- Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach?   YES_X_   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments:

The assessment plan lists two direct and seven indirect methods. The direct assessment methods (Senior Portfolio and Level D Professional Development) are specifically aligned with student learning goals. The indirect methods are not directly linked to any particular student learning goals. The methods are comprehensive and varied.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?   YES_X_   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____

- If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals?   YES____   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N __X__
- 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:

Results were documented in the 2010 annual report. A table includes data from the two direct assessments (Senior Portfolios and Internships). The data use a Likert five-point scale to assess how well the program meets the twelve student learning goals. The direct assessment indicated satisfaction with achieving Goals 1 through 11, but mixed results in meeting Goal 12 (Ethical Use).

No results are provided for the indirect assessment methods.

In addition to departmental goals, some assessment results may be applicable to institutional and Essential Studies goals. Use 'U' (undergraduate) 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)
___U__ 3 Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or "be intellectually creative"; explore, discover, engage)
___U__ 4 Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning ("apply empirical data…analyze graphical information")
___U__ 5 Information literacy ("be able to access and evaluate…for effective, efficient, and ethical use")
___U__ 6 Diversity ("demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding…")
_____ 7 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")
___U__ 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:

Each of the twelve student learning goals aligned with the ES goals. The two direct assessment methods indicated satisfaction with meeting Goals 1 through 11, and therefore satisfaction in achieving their ES goals. The assessment indicated mixed results in Goal 12 (Ethical Use) which partially met ES Goal 5 (Information Literacy).

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 actions that were proposed were changes to the collection of assessment data. The recommendations included changing the internship evaluation form and clarification of Goal 12 so that its intent is clear to the students. The clarification of Goal 12 would directly address student learning.

SUMMARY

Strengths	*Areas for Improvement*
_X_ A specific plan for assessment is in place.	____ No specific plan for assessment is in place.
_X__ Student learning goals are well-articulated.	____ Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
_X_ Assessment methods are clearly described.	____ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
_X_ Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
____ Assessment methods are well-implemented.	____ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
_X_ Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	____ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
____ Results are reported.	____ No results are reported.
_X___ 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 Communications Assessment Plan is well organized and thoughtful. The student learning goals are clear and address many Essential Studies goals. Assessment methods use both direct and indirect techniques, but only two assessment methods are aligned with student learning goals.

Assessment results are reported only for the two direct assessment methods. No results were reported for the indirect methods. Results indicate success in meeting all but one of their goals. Recommendations were made to address the inadequacies.

Recommended improvements to the assessment process should focus on the alignment of indirect assessment methods with student learning goals and the collection and analysis of indirect data. Also the program should consider using performing indirect assessment on a regular basis.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

__X___ Annual report	__X___ Assessment plan (as posted)
_____ Appendices (cited in annual report)	__X___ Previous assessment review
_____ Other (please describe)	

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