

**UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Reports**  
**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS**

**DEPARTMENT:** B.A. in English and Certificate in Writing and Editing **DATE:** 5/2/11

**COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW:** Ruth Paur and Cassie Gerhardt

**1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS**

- |                                       |                   |                  |                             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Were any goals referenced?          | YES <u>  √  </u>  | NO <u>      </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>      </u> |
| • If so, were goals well articulated? | YES <u>      </u> | NO <u>      </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>  ?  </u>  |
| • Do goals address student learning?  | YES <u>  √  </u>  | NO <u>      </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>      </u> |

***Comments:***

The undergraduate goals and objectives are the same for the BA in English and the Certificate in Writing and Editing – but it seems unlikely that a student who completes that certificate will have achieved the same outcomes as a BA earner. It might be helpful to consider whether it's possible to identify differences in goals or in level of achievement for goals, and, if that's the case, to revise goal language to clarify the distinction between the two programs of study. You might also want to review the verbs in your goals to ensure they are clear enough for use. Verbs like to “know,” “know how,” and “understand,” e.g., are sometimes difficult to interpret. If you find that is an issue, it might be helpful to look for language that describes what students who “know” or “understand” can DO as a result of that knowledge and understanding, e.g., “analyze,” “apply,” “produce,” evaluate,” etc.

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>  √  </u>  | 1 | Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”) |
| <u>  √  </u>  | 2 | Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)       |
| <u>  √  </u>  | 3 | Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or “be intellectually creative”; explore, discover, engage)          |
| <u>      </u> | 4 | Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning (“apply empirical data...analyze graphical information”)         |
| <u>  √  </u>  | 5 | Information literacy (“be able to access and evaluate...for effective, efficient, and ethical use”)              |
| <u>  √  </u>  | 6 | Diversity (“demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...”)                               |
| <u>      </u> | 7 | Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”)   |
| <u>      </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:*** Five Essential Studies goals are similar to the referenced departmental goals.

**2. ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- |  |                  |                  |                             |
|--|------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Were any specific assessment methods referenced?   | YES <u>  √  </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>      </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>      </u> |

***Comments:*** Assessment methods listed included specific course surveys with the faculty responsible, focus groups with consultants responsible, and narrative with the faculty responsible. The report titled Direct Assessment of Undergraduate Work (400 –level classes) was included in the documentation submitted and is directly related to the program's student learning goals.

### 3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?	YES___	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_?___
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?	YES_√_	NO___	QUALIFIED Y/N___
• Were the results tied to goals for student learning?	YES_√_	NO___	QUALIFIED Y/N___

**Comments:** Direct assessment narratives by the faculty and program discussions at English Department Curriculum committee meetings are reported, but the direct assessment results are not themselves reported. This makes it difficult to tell if the report is based on intuitive “here’s how the students seem to be doing” reports or on a more systematic analysis of student work products conducted by individual instructors and reported to the committee and the department. Problems identified through the narrative discussing assessment activities in the undergraduate English department identified the need to address the lack of student preparation and the lack of coherence noted by majors. However, some problems identified are more clearly aligned with specific learning goals, e.g., the difficulties with close reading (related to goal 1) and the inability to integrate critical sources into the students’ own writing (goals 1 and 2).

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. .

- ☒ 1 Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”)
- ☐ 2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
- ☐ 3 Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or “be intellectually creative”; explore, discover, engage)
- ☐ 4 Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning (“apply empirical data...analyze graphical information”)
- ☐ 5 Information literacy (“be able to access and evaluate...for effective, efficient, and ethical use”)
- ☐ 6 Diversity (“demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...”)
- ☐ 7 Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”)
- ☐ 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:** see above.

### 4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported?	YES_√_	NO___	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:** Significant curricular changes occurred as a result of previous assessment data in 2007. It was stated in the documentation provided by the department that regular assessment activities occurred in the Spring of 2008 but were suspended in 2009. The documentation noted that the focus group and 400-level narratives would occur again in the Spring of 2010 when most of the graduating seniors would have experienced the new curriculum. The development of the Direct Assessment of Undergraduate Student Work (400-level classes) will be implemented in 2010-2011 and will assist in the direct link of the data to the student learning goals in closing the loop activities. Additional curricular changes, if they prove necessary, may occur after that more cumulative assessment cycle is completed.

## 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:** Goals and objectives might be strengthened by using more measurable, higher level verbs. The department includes course surveys, focus groups and consultants as assessment methods. It is difficult to tell if the report is based on intuitive reports or on a more systematic analysis of student work products. The new Direct Assessment of Undergraduate Student Work (400-level classes) which is being implemented in 2010-2011 will assist in the collection of data that can be directly tied to the student learning goals. The program has been in the process of closing the loop from previous assessment data and suspended formal assessment in 2009 while the students progressed through the extensively revised curriculum. The Department of English stated that all of the assessment methods would again be fully implemented in 2010-2011 and results will be included in the next annual report.

## MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

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

- Report of Assessment of Undergraduate English Major, Spring 2010, supplied by the Department of English
- Narrative of Assessment Activities by Dr. Robison, Assessment Coordinator for the Department of English

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Section 1: ☒ Y ☐ N    Section 2: ☒ Y ☐ N    Section 3: ☐ ? ☐ NA    Section 4: ☒ Y ☐ 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

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

**DEPARTMENT:** M.A. and Ph.D in English

**DATE:** 5/2/11

**COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW:** Ruth Paur and Cassie Gerhardt

**1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS**

- |                                       |                  |                  |                             |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Were any goals referenced?          | YES <u>  ✓  </u> | NO <u>      </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>      </u> |
| • If so, were goals well articulated? | YES <u>  ✓  </u> | NO <u>      </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>      </u> |
| • Do goals address student learning?  | YES <u>  ✓  </u> | NO <u>      </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>      </u> |

**Comments:** In the departmental assessment plan dated 2004-2005 and posted on the assessment website, the student learning goals and objectives were the same for both the M.A. and the Ph.D. programs in English. The programs have three goals that are well articulated. Two are student learning goals and the third is a performance goal (“demonstrate the ability to teach effectively”). Some of the learning objectives may be difficult to measure such as the following: 1.1 demonstrate the ability to understand, or 3.2 demonstrate an awareness. The use of measurable verbs such as “analyze”, “synthesize”, “evaluate”, and “create” may yield clearer findings.

Because the department’s assessment system appears to be in flux, it is not clear whether the goals and objectives in 2004-05 assessment plan are still being used.

**2. ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- |  |                  |                  |                             |
|--|------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Were any specific assessment methods referenced?   | YES <u>  ✓  </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>      </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>      </u> |

**Comments:** The graduate English Programs are in the process of major changes as a result of assessment retreats in 2004, 2006, and 2008 and no formal graduate assessment materials were collected in 2008-2009 or in 2009-2010. A comprehensive exam and thesis portfolio have been developed and a rubric has been created to score this student work.-The Direct Assessment of Graduate Student Work document is directly related to goals one and two and uses a 1-5 Likert scale (strongly agree-strongly disagree). The Survey of Graduating MA and PhD students, an indirect assessment, was also developed and aligns with the three student learning goals. These assessment tools will be implemented this spring.

**3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

- |  |                   |                  |                             |
|--|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Were any assessment results reported?  | YES <u>      </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>      </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>      </u> |
| • Were the results tied to goals for student learning?   | YES <u>      </u> | NO <u>      </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>      </u> |

**Comments:** New data is just beginning to be collected in 2010-2011. Suspension of formal assessment occurred in 2008-2009 and in 2009-2010 while students began experiencing the newly developed changes in the curriculum.

#### 4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported?

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO ☒ 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:** The graduate faculty acted on prior assessment data and in 2008-2009 began closing the loop by developing and implementing new curriculum. The first students are completing the new curriculum in 2010-2011 and the new assessment tool (Direct Assessment of Graduate Student Work) will be utilized for the first time in this academic year and the data collected will be included in the next annual report. It is unclear how specific assessment results directly lead to creating and implementing the curriculum changes.

#### 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 been in the process of closing the loop from previous assessment data and suspended formal assessment while the students completed the revised curriculum. The Direct Assessment of Graduate Student Work and graduate survey are being implemented in 2010-2011 and results will be reported in the next annual report. These tools are broad in scope and the goals assessed within may need to be unpacked in order to inform the need for specific program change.

#### MATERIALS REVIEWED

- \_\_\_\_\_ Annual report
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appendices (cited in annual report)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please describe)
  - Direct Assessment of Graduate Student Work
  - Narrative from Dr. Robison, Assessment Coordinator for the Department of English
- ☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
- ☒ Previous assessment review

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Section 1: ☒ Y Section 2: ☐ ? Section 3: ☐ N Section 4: ☐ N

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