DEPARTMENT_Humanities and Integrated Studies_____DATE ___March, 2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW __Barbara Combs, Eric Johnson, Raina Urton_

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- Were any goals referenced?   YES_X__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ___
- If so, were goals well articulated?   YES____   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N X__
- Do goals address student learning?   YES_X__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ___

Comments:
Two general goals were provided: 1.) Developing Students' Thinking & Reasoning Skills and 2.) Developing Students' Interdisciplinary Integration Skills. A brief explanation of each of the goals was provided in the annual report along with a definition of each sub-goal for goa1, specifically definitions for critical thinking and creative thinking skills. Sub-goals and benchmarks were listed for each of the broader goals. For example, Goal 1 was divided into two sub-goals, critical thinking and creative thinking and 5-6 benchmarks were listed under each of these sub-categories.

The goals as stated and described in the annual report are significantly different from the 2005 Assessment Plan (posted on the web-site) and it is not clear how, when or why the changes were made. There are six goals in the 2005 plan and critical thinking and creative thinking seem to be embedded in several of these.

In addition to the Departmental goals, please also consider UND's Institutional and Essential Studies goals for student learning (shown in alignment within parentheses).
__?___ 1 Communication – written or oral ("able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience")
__X___2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or "be intellectually curious"; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
__X___ 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 departmental goals and alignment of departmental goals with institutional and Essential Studies goals:

The goals stated in the annual report relate directly to learning goals 2 and 4 above.

The goals in the 2005 assessment plan, if it is still the guiding plan for the department, might also relate to the goals " communication" (ISP goals 5 & 6), "Information literacy" (ISP goals 1,3, and), "Diversity (ISP goal 3), and "Life-long Learning" (ISP goal 7).

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

Comments:

Goal 1 was the focus of assessment activities reported in the 2010 Annual Report; although, the author of the report indicated that new methods for Goal 2 had been developed and were currently being applied. A pre-post writing assignment, a direct measure, was used to assess student growth in the areas of critical and creative thinking. The writing tasks were conducted during class during weeks 1 and 16 and the same prompts were used for both tasks. Rubrics were used that seemed to tie to the definitions the program adopted for critical and creative thinking in that both definitions and rubrics were drawn from the same sources (AAC&U). There was a generic reference made to the analysis of additional assessment data in the annual report , but it is not known what these other assessments were or whether they were direct or indirect.

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_X__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____
- If so, were the results clear in terms of how
  they indicate need for improvement?   YES_X_   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____
- Were the results tied to goals for student
  learning?   YES_X__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments:

The annual report provided assessment results for each benchmark for each of the sub-goals of Goal 1 . The program anticipated some growth in each of the benchmarks from the pre to the post-test with most first-year students moving from the initial rubric category scores of <.5 to 1="Benchmark " level towards the 2 & 3 "Milestones" levels. (There was some confusion in the report however. The author indicated an end semester score of 1.2 as sufficient but labeled this as within the "Milestones" level which begins with a score of 2). For the sub-goal, "Critical Thinking", students' scores across the areas of Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences tended to meet the program's expectations with exceptions in the area of science (overall lower scores) and the benchmark: "influence of context & assumptions" which was below the anticipated end semester score of 1.2. For the sub-goal, "Creative Thinking", students' scores across the areas of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences tended to meet the program's expectations in all areas.

In addition to departmental goals, some assessment results may be applicable to institutional and Essential Studies goals. Use 'U' (undergraduate) or 'G' (graduate) 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")
___X___ 2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or "be intellectually curious"; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
___X___ 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:

Results tied directly to goals 2 & 3 above.

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____   QUALIFIED Y/N _x_

Comments:

For the sub-goal "Critical Thinking ", the author reported satisfaction in the overall growth of students in all areas (Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences) while acknowledging weaknesses in the Sciences area and providing possible reasons "The overall lower scores in the sciences may reflect, we believe, the lack of suitability for the assessment prompts to the discipline. They may also indicate the lack of science literacy among our self-selecting group of students." There was a statement noting a change in the direct assessment process to make the data easier to extract and more reliable, but no additional details were provided.

For the sub-goal "Creative Thinking", the author reported satisfaction with results in all areas (Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences) adding that this was not surprising since the programs pedagogical practices related strongly to this sub-goal.

SUMMARY

Strengths	*Areas for Improvement*
____ A specific plan for assessment is in place.	____ No specific plan for assessment is in place.
____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.
____Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
_X_Assessment methods are well-implemented.	____ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
____Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	____ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
_X__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 annual report clearly ties goals, sub-goals and related benchmarks to Institutional and Essential Studies goals as well as to assessment methods and results. A single direct measure was used in the last academic year to assess Goal 1 with plans in place to assess Goal 2 in the next year. Although lacking in details, it appears that the program does analyze the data and use it to make improvements in program and student learning.

The Assessment Plan on the web has not been updated and based upon the annual report it appears that there have been significant changes. We encourage the program to update the plan as soon as possible so that there is a direct match between the plan as written and as implemented.

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: _?__

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