UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in __2009-10 Annual Reports
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT_Languages—French_____DATE__February 18, 2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Joan Hawthorne, Krista Lynn Minnotte_____

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:
All programs in the department use the same three general learning goals which are clearly focused on learning but written at a very general level (i.e., "demonstrate knowledge of target language culture(s)." In at least some of these programs (and whether this applies to them all is unclear from the report and plan), goals are broken down into objectives. Those objectives appear to be more specific and more readily assessable (e.g., "critically read and interpret a variety of literary texts in the target language"). Even within the objectives, however, others are quite broad: "Know the history of the target language literature(s)." From an outsider's perspective, it appears that students (and faculty) within a program could easily disagree on what it means to "know the history" or "demonstrate knowledge." It might be worth considering whether individual language programs could more clearly specify what is meant by the broad departmental goals or objectives within the context of the various programs. At the least, it might be helpful if the plan indicated which objectives have been selected by each of the various programs.

The French goal of focus for 2009-10 was knowledge of literatures, and three objectives were identified.

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) or 'G' (graduate) to identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.
___x____ 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")
___x____ 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 Languages goals clearly address communication and may address diversity – although it's difficult to be certain if "demonstrate[ing] knowledge of target language culture" really addresses the same outcome as "demonstrate[ing] understanding of diversity and [being able to]use that understanding." The objective "critically analyze differences between U.S. culture and target language culture(s)," for the programs where applicable, does seem to definitely address the ES diversity goal.

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:

The general assessment plan does not specify any methods, but specific courses are identified (within each program) for assessment of the intended learning outcomes. The aim is for designated teachers of the various courses to make their own decisions about appropriate methods, as well as to collect, analyze, interpret, and document data relevant to that course. It does not appear that plans were made for program-wide (or department-wide) discussion of findings and decision-making based on findings.

Each program's report, however, does include a description of data collection methods used during 2009-10. For French, data were collected in the form of student scores on take-home exams which required them to analyze, contrast, and compare French literary works. The plan specifies four classes from which data would be collected for the literature goal, but it appears that the actual assessment focused on test scores from a single class. Three changes might make future assessments more useful:

- *Structure test questions or grading processes in such a way that they will produce information that relates specifically to an individual outcome. In this case, e.g., it appears that it would be difficult to tell language proficiency or critical thinking ability from literary knowledge (the goal of interest).*
- *If at all possible, collect work samples from across three or four of the target classes (perhaps during different semesters) and plan an assessment discussion that might even include a bit of time for rereading some of the student work samples (perhaps from classes other than one's own). Analyzing across multiple courses will make findings feel relevant to the program rather than primarily to an individual teacher and course.*
- *Consider supplementing direct assessments with indirect assessments. Just doing an every-other-year survey in a key senior course could tell you if about-to-be graduates believe they have achieved each of the goals and objectives selected for the program, thus rounding out the assessment picture.*

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

Comments:
The tests used for data collection were presumably chosen because test content was closely related to the goal of interest – but it should be possible to use a similar procedure for data collection that allows scores to be disaggregated by specific objectives or grading criteria (e.g., students may receive some credit for effort, some credit for correctness, some credit for novel ideas, etc. – all of which are of value and could conceivably count toward the grade, but not all of which demonstrate knowledge of the relevant body of literature).

No analysis, interpretation, or discussion was included to indicate what conclusions, if any, could be drawn.

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")
_____ 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:

The goal of focus this year did not align with ES.

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:

No departmental or program-wide actions were discussed as having occurred during the last year as a result of assessment findings. However, faculty in the department are engaged this year (2010-11), according to the 2009-10 annual report, in reconsideration of their assessment strategies. It sounds like this may be one component of what sounds like a re-energizing of the curriculum generally (i.e., creating a new interdisciplinary capstone, organizing lower division language courses under the leadership of coordinators).

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.
____Assessment methods are clearly described.	____ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
____Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
____Assessment methods are well-implemented.	__x__ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
____Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	__x__ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
____Results are reported.	____ No results are reported.
____Results are tied to closing the loop.	__x__ 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 appears that the department is poised to move in a productive direction with changes that have already occurred and a commitment to rethink and improve assessment, potentially paving the way for additional improvements over the next several years. Incorporating assessment activities could – and should – occur as a key component of the changes. Reviewing actual data will help faculty distinguish between anecdotal and impressionistic "findings" (i.e., "I've noted that my students usually can't….") and those that are borne out by systematically-collected data (i.e., "a review of student work samples collected from 4 sections offered during two different years showed…"). Not only will the case for change (when needed) be clearer, but it will be possible to avoid spending energy on issues which turn out to be less important, less common, or less substantive.

It is easy to focus on goals and methods when planning assessment, but it appears that the Languages Department has not been successful at using the data they have already collected. This may be because the data are not seen as programmatically relevant – but it also may be simply a lack of planning for collective analysis, discussion, and decision-making. If the latter is the case, we would strongly encourage building in processes that will ensure such collective activities occur. Without use of data, assessment feels like busywork. Once assessment gets used, it begins to be an integral part of good teaching – which is the aim of an improved plan and process.

Please note suggestions under "Methods" – and don't hesitate to contact either of us or one of UND's designated Assessment Consultants (see the Assessment site on the web) for more concrete help as you revise your assessment plan.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

___X__ Annual report   ___X__ Assessment plan (as posted)

_____ Appendices (cited in annual report)   _____ Previous assessment review
___X__ Other (please describe)
Previous annual report.

Reviewer(s):	Name	Joan Hawthorne	Krista Lynn Minnotte	_____
	Department	Academic Affairs	Sociology_____	_____
	Phone Number	7-4684_____	_7-4419_____	_____
	e-mail	joan.hawthorne@email.und.edu	krista.minnotte@und.edu	_____

Section 1: __Y___ Section 2: __?___ 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_Languages—Norwegian_____DATE__February 18, 2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Joan Hawthorne, Krista Lynn Minnotte_____

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:
All programs in the department use the same three general learning goals which are clearly focused on learning but written at a very general level (i.e., "demonstrate knowledge of target language culture(s)." In at least some of these programs (and whether this applies to them all is unclear from the report and plan), goals are broken down into objectives. Those objectives appear to be more specific and more readily assessable (e.g., "critically read and interpret a variety of literary texts in the target language"). Even within the objectives, however, others are quite broad: "Know the history of the target language literature(s)." From an outsider's perspective, it appears that students (and faculty) within a program could easily disagree on what it means to "know the history" or "demonstrate knowledge." It might be worth considering whether individual language programs could more clearly specify what is meant by the broad departmental goals or objectives within the context of the various programs. At the least, it might be helpful if the plan indicated which objectives have been selected by each of the various programs.

In the case of Norwegian specifically, the learning outcomes cited are from a second semester language course and do not directly align with the learning goals and objectives identified by the department. It is worth identifying and working with course-specific goals and objectives (for ES purposes, for course-specific purposes, and potentially to explore the basis for any problems identified at the program level), but the primary aim of assessment of learning at the program level is to understand how well our students achieve the program outcomes we work toward with them. So assessment activities should definitely include a strong focus on learning that's demonstrated near the time of program completion.

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) or 'G' (graduate) to identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.

___x____ 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")
___x____ 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 Languages goals clearly address communication and may address diversity – although it's difficult to be certain if "demonstrate[ing] knowledge of target language culture" really addresses the same outcome as "demonstrate[ing] understanding of diversity and [being able to]use that understanding." The objective "critically analyze differences between U.S. culture and target language culture(s)," for the programs where applicable, does seem to definitely address the ES diversity goal.

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:

The general assessment plan does not specify any methods, but specific courses are identified (within each program) for assessment of the intended learning outcomes. The aim is for designated teachers of the various courses to make their own decisions about appropriate methods, as well as to collect, analyze, interpret, and document data relevant to that course. It does not appear that plans were made for program-wide (or department-wide) discussion of findings and decision-making based on findings.

Each program's report, however, does include a description of data collection methods used during 2009-10. In the case of Norwegian, learning related to oral communication was examined and the tool used was scores from an oral examination. Scores on that examination were divided into points for communicative ability, grammatical accuracy, and vocabulary, all of which were identified as important components of effective oral communication. Scores from three sections of the course, conducted over two years, were examined, although the focus of assessment may not be directly aligned with the program-level goals. It would be good to also include indirect assessment, which can confirm or disconfirm findings from examination of student work products.

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 selected assessment strategy included a couple of elements of good assessment practice, i.e.,(1) use of a scoring rubric which allowed the overall oral exam score to be disaggregated into its component parts (allowing faculty to see how various criteria influenced the score and which were areas of greater strength or weakness) and (2) use of scores collected across multiple sections. The findings could be very useful in understanding how students' development of skills progresses through the program. However, collection of data from a 100 level course says little about how those students are doing by the time they complete the program. Occasional analysis of data from a lower division course may be useful within a broader program assessment effort, but information from senior level courses (as specified in the departmental assessment plan) would be more helpful in analyzing learning at the program level.

We note that there was an effort to analyze and interpret scores, but the conclusions drawn from the data are somewhat confusing. For example, a move from 85% - 90% accuracy (across years) on one criterion was interpreted as almost exactly the same, while substantive change was described for a move from 88% to 94% -- an increase only a single percentage point higher. More explanation of analysis and conclusions might clarify.

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. .
____X___ 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:

Oral communication was examined and students generally demonstrated achievement in the 85-95% range on the criteria of interest.

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:

No departmental or program-wide actions were discussed as having occurred during the last year as a result of assessment findings. However, faculty in the department are engaged this year (2010-11), according to the 2009-10 annual report, in reconsideration of their assessment strategies. It sounds like this may be one component of what sounds like a re-energizing of the curriculum generally (i.e., creating a new interdisciplinary capstone, organizing lower division language courses under the leadership of coordinators).

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.
____Assessment methods are clearly described.	____ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
____Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
____Assessment methods are well-implemented.	____ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
____Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	__X__ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
__X__Results are reported.	____ No results are reported.
____Results are tied to closing the loop.	__X__ 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 appears that the department is poised to move in a productive direction with changes that have already occurred and a commitment to rethink and improve assessment, potentially paving the way for additional improvements over the next several years. Incorporating assessment activities could – and should – occur as a key component of the changes. Reviewing actual data will help faculty distinguish between anecdotal and impressionistic "findings" (i.e., "I've noted that my students usually can't….") and those that are borne out by systematically-collected data (i.e., "a review of student work samples collected from 4 sections offered during two different years showed…"). Not only will the case for change (when needed) be clearer, but it will be possible to avoid spending energy on issues which turn out to be less important, less common, or less substantive.

It is easy to focus on goals and methods when planning assessment, but it appears that the Languages Department has not been successful at using the data they have already collected. This may be because the data are not seen as programmatically relevant – but it also may be simply a lack of planning for collective analysis, discussion, and decision-making. If the latter is the case, we would strongly encourage building in processes that will ensure such collective activities occur. Without use of data, assessment feels like busywork. Once assessment gets used, it begins to be an integral part of good teaching – which is the aim of an improved plan and process.

For Norwegian specifically, we would recommend that assessment focus on demonstration of relevant learning at the program-completion stage. We would also recommend including indirect assessment – a very easy way to double-check data

regarding student learning by checking against students' own impressions of the learning on the goals in question. As always, either of us as reviewers or individuals serving as Assessment Consultants (see list on UND's assessment website)would be happy to consult during the process of reviewing and revising current plans for assessment.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

Reviewer(s):	Name	Joan Hawthorne	Krista Lynn Minnotte	_____
	Department	Academic Affairs	Sociology_____	_____
	Phone Number	7-4684_____	_7-4419_____	_____
	e-mail	joan.hawthorne@email.und.edu	krista.minnotte@und.edu _____	

Section 1: ___Y__   Section 2: __?___   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

Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in __2009-10 Annual Reports
<u>**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS**</u>

DEPARTMENT_Languages – German_____DATE__February 18, 2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Joan Hawthorne, Krista Lynn Minnotte_____

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:
All programs in the department use the same three general learning goals which are clearly focused on learning but written at a very general level (i.e., "demonstrate knowledge of target language culture(s)." In at least some of these programs (and whether this applies to them all is unclear from the report and plan), goals are broken down into objectives. Those objectives appear to be more specific and more readily assessable (e.g., "critically read and interpret a variety of literary texts in the target language"). Even within the objectives, however, others are quite broad: "Know the history of the target language literature(s)." From an outsider's perspective, it appears that students (and faculty) within a program could easily disagree on what it means to "know the history" or "demonstrate knowledge." It might be worth considering whether individual language programs could more clearly specify what is meant by the broad departmental goals or objectives within the context of the various programs. At the least, it might be helpful if the plan indicated which objectives have been selected by each of the various programs.

In the case of the German program specifically, the goal chosen for assessment this year was the culture goal. Several aspects of culture were examined, but those aspects do not align directly with the culture objectives cited in the Languages assessment plan – leading reviewers to question whether the German program has a distinct set of objectives or whether programs in the department may already be altering assessment strategies to conform more nearly with what's actually taught rather than the originally devised goals and objectives.

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) or 'G' (graduate) to identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.
___x____ 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")
___x____ 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 Languages goals clearly address communication and may address diversity – although it's difficult to be certain if "demonstrate[ing] knowledge of target language culture" really addresses the same outcome as "demonstrate[ing] understanding of diversity and [being able to]use that understanding." The objective "critically analyze differences between U.S. culture and target language culture(s)," for the programs where applicable, does seem to definitely address the ES diversity goal.

Aspects of the cultures goal assessed this year do seem to align with the diversity goal, e.g., seeing the U.S. through the eyes of Germans and vice versa.

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:

The general assessment plan does not specify any methods, but specific courses are identified (within each program) for assessment of the intended learning outcomes. The aim is for designated teachers of the various courses to make their own decisions about appropriate methods, as well as to collect, analyze, interpret, and document data relevant to that course. It does not appear that plans were made for program-wide (or department-wide) discussion of findings and decision-making based on findings.

Each program's report, however, does include a description of data collection methods used during 2009-10. The German program submitted data collected from a single section (7 students) of a single German class, and it was not one of the classes designated for collection of cultures data in the assessment plan. However, the questions used on the assessment seem to very clearly align with the cultures aspect of language study so perhaps the curriculum or the plan has changed since the posted plan was developed.

It would be helpful to include indirect assessment as well, which can serve to confirm or disconfirm findings from other approaches.

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:

It was very helpful to see the report writer's analysis of the test items and scores, each of which was connected back to some aspect of the diversity goal. Results were compared to results from previous years, and learning demonstrated on multiple choice portions of the test (presumably demonstrating recognition more than ability to apply) was compared to learning demonstrated on essay portions. The report writer notes that most students are able to demonstrate knowledge of "facts and informational bits and pieces" but the evidence of being able to generate "well-organized and clearly delineated" essay answers (presumably a demonstration of a deeper level of learning) was less satisfactory. This type of analysis is exactly what we'd like to see applied more directly to the goals identified as program outcomes.

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")
_____ 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")
___X____ 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:
Evidence demonstrates learning around the diversity goal, although the report writer was not entirely satisfied with students' learning related to cultures.

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:

No departmental or program-wide actions were discussed as having occurred during the last year as a result of assessment findings. However, faculty in the department are engaged this year (2010-11), according to the 2009-10 annual report, in reconsideration of their assessment strategies. It sounds like this may be one component of what sounds like a re-energizing of the curriculum generally (i.e., creating a new interdisciplinary capstone, organizing lower division language courses under the leadership of coordinators).

However, the report writer for German does offer two concrete suggestions which, if discussed and implemented in some fashion, would constitute loop-closing:
- *Students need to do more reading and writing around the topic of German culture, possibly indicating a need for more program-wide conversation about where and how these topics are incorporated into the German curriculum;*
- *Students' achievement in this area is considerably greater if the student has had an opportunity to spend several months within a German-speaking country, presumably indicating that greater emphasis should be placed on study abroad experiences.*

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.
____Assessment methods are well-implemented.	____ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
____Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	__X__ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
__X_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 appears that the department is poised to move in a productive direction with changes that have already occurred and a commitment to rethink and improve assessment, potentially paving the way for additional improvements over the next several years. Incorporating assessment activities could – and should – occur as a key component of the changes. Reviewing actual data will help faculty distinguish between anecdotal and impressionistic "findings" (i.e., "I've noted that my students usually can't....") and those that are borne out by systematically-collected data (i.e., "a review of student work samples collected from 4 sections offered during two different years showed..."). Not only will the case for change (when needed) be clearer, but it will be possible to avoid spending energy on issues which turn out to be less important, less common, or less substantive.

It is easy to focus on goals and methods when planning assessment, but it appears that the Languages Department has not been successful at using the data they have already collected. This may be because the data are not seen as programmatically relevant – but it also may be simply a lack of planning for collective analysis, discussion, and decision-making. If the latter is

the case, we would strongly encourage building in processes that will ensure such collective activities occur. Without use of data, assessment feels like busywork. Once assessment gets used, it begins to be an integral part of good teaching – which is the aim of an improved plan and process.

Regarding the German program specifically, the program faculty are to be commended for including some thoughtful analysis of the data in relation to the relevant goal. However, concerns remain:
- *The reason why data regarding the culture goal were collected from a course not among those designated in the assessment plan is unclear – indicating a need to revisit that plan and possibly revise.*
- *Any time data are collected from a single course taught by a single teacher, it is worth considering whether there would be ways of collecting information that faculty would see as more representative of student learning at the time of program completion rather than representing learning in one course at one point in time –which may make the data feel less useful to faculty across the board.*
- *Indirect data could be collected by surveying students about their perceptions of learning related to program goals – a simple process but useful information.*
- *Finally, any time good information is collected, a critical step is to build in opportunities for cross-program discussion and decision-making. That would be a great next step for this and similar data which have already been collected.*

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

Reviewer(s):	Name	Joan Hawthorne	Krista Lynn Minnotte	_____
	Department	Academic Affairs	Sociology_____	_____
	Phone Number	7-4684_____	_7-4419_____	_____
	e-mail	joan.hawthorne@email.und.edu	krista.minnotte@und.edu	_____

Section 1: __Y___   Section 2: __?___   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

Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in __2009-10 Annual Reports
<u>**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS**</u>

DEPARTMENT_Languages – Chinese_____DATE__February 18, 2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Joan Hawthorne, Krista Lynn Minnotte_____

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:
All programs in the department use the same three general learning goals which are clearly focused on learning but written at a very general level (i.e., "demonstrate knowledge of target language culture(s)." In at least some of these programs (and whether this applies to them all is unclear from the report and plan), goals are broken down into objectives. Those objectives appear to be more specific and more readily assessable (e.g., "critically read and interpret a variety of literary texts in the target language"). Even within the objectives, however, others are quite broad: "Know the history of the target language literature(s)." From an outsider's perspective, it appears that students (and faculty) within a program could easily disagree on what it means to "know the history" or "demonstrate knowledge." It might be worth considering whether individual language programs could more clearly specify what is meant by the broad departmental goals or objectives within the context of the various programs. At the least, it might be helpful if the plan indicated which objectives have been selected by each of the various programs.

The Chinese program does not offer a major at UND, and the goals described in the Languages plan appear to be scaled back as a result. The Chinese program report identifies two goals: proficiency in passive skills of listening and reading comprehension, and proficiency in active skills of speaking and writing. These appear to correspond to the first goal (demonstration of language proficiency) for languages generally.

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) or 'G' (graduate) to identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.
___x____ 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")
___x____ 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 Languages goals clearly address communication and may address diversity – although it's difficult to be certain if "demonstrate[ing] knowledge of target language culture" really addresses the same outcome as "demonstrate[ing] understanding of diversity and [being able to]use that understanding." The objective "critically analyze differences between U.S. culture and target language culture(s)," for the programs where applicable, does seem to definitely address the ES diversity goal.

For the Chinese program, the primary alignment with ES appears to be regarding the Communication goal.

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____   QUALIFIED Y/N __X__

Comments:

The general assessment plan does not specify any methods, but specific courses are identified (within each program) for assessment of the intended learning outcomes. The aim is for designated teachers of the various courses to make their own decisions about appropriate methods, as well as to collect, analyze, interpret, and document data relevant to that course. It does not appear that plans were made for program-wide (or department-wide) discussion of findings and decision-making based on findings.

Each program's report, however, does include a description of data collection methods used during 2009-10. For the Chinese program, several different kinds of information were collected in the second year courses. Students take written quizzes to address understanding of Chinese grammar, participate in oral exams and interviews to address communication proficiency and grammatical adeptness, and engage in small group activities which include speaking and writing assessments. Assessments (tests, prompts, etc.) are pasted into the report.

It appears that one question on an exam also addresses student perceptions of their own learning since students are asked to describe aspects of the course which promote learning. If we saw clearer evidence that you are collecting and analyzing indirect evidence of learning in relation to program goals, we would have said Yes to the question about both direct and indirect methods.

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:
Student scores on a variety of tests and work products are included in the report. Some scores are disaggregated by criteria (e.g., grammar, delivery, comprehensibility, originality) and others are not. Most of these items relate to the general goals of passive and active communication (reading, writing, speaking, listening) but they are not directly aligned. For example, is grammar seen as part of reading or speaking? Or all four? Some may not directly relate to any of the goals (e.g., originality). Scores from other assessments (e.g., the written exam) are included but are not broken down at all, leaving it difficult to determine how the various items are intended to align with the course and program goals.

Providing enough detail for readers to understand exactly the meaning of every assessment is not the primary aim of assessment, but examining the data in that way can be exceptionally useful for program faculty themselves. Seeing which goals are best achieved and which aspects of goals are least satisfactorily achieved can help faculty make decisions about any curricular or programmatic changes which might result from assessment, and it is often difficult to see patterns until the alignment between goals, item scores, and overall results is clearly laid out.

Finally, it would be interesting to read the report writer's analysis and interpretation of scores submitted within the report. What do these numbers mean? Which areas are seen as weakest or strongest? What needs may be revealed? What next?

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. .

_____X___ 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:

Results are clearly applicable to the ES goal of communication since two of the course objectives (written communication and oral communication) align directly with the subparts of the ES goal.

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:

No departmental or program-wide actions were discussed as having occurred during the last year as a result of assessment findings. However, faculty in the department are engaged this year (2010-11), according to the 2009-10 annual report, in reconsideration of their assessment strategies. It sounds like this may be one component of what sounds like a re-energizing of the curriculum generally (i.e., creating a new interdisciplinary capstone, organizing lower division language courses under the leadership of coordinators).

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.
_____Assessment methods are well-implemented.	_____ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
_____Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	__X__ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
__X__Results are reported.	_____ No results are reported.
_____Results are tied to closing the loop.	__X__ 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 appears that the department is poised to move in a productive direction with changes that have already occurred and a commitment to rethink and improve assessment, potentially paving the way for additional improvements over the next several years. Incorporating assessment activities could – and should – occur as a key component of the changes. Reviewing actual data will help faculty distinguish between anecdotal and impressionistic "findings" (i.e., "I've noted that my students usually can't….") and those that are borne out by systematically-collected data (i.e., "a review of student work samples collected from 4 sections offered during two different years showed…"). Not only will the case for change (when needed) be clearer, but it will be possible to avoid spending energy on issues which turn out to be less important, less common, or less substantive.

It is easy to focus on goals and methods when planning assessment, but it appears that the Languages Department has not been successful at using the data they have already collected. This may be because the data are not seen as programmatically relevant – but it also may be simply a lack of planning for collective analysis, discussion, and decision-making. If the latter is

the case, we would strongly encourage building in processes that will ensure such collective activities occur. Without use of data, assessment feels like busywork. Once assessment gets used, it begins to be an integral part of good teaching – which is the aim of an improved plan and process.

Chinese is one of the Languages programs which is essentially the purview of a single faculty member. Although it is especially difficult in these cases to have meaningful cross-program discussions, it may be even more important to find means of doing so – faculty who are totally immersed, all by themselves, in a single program, can quickly lose sight of the larger picture and program-wide outcomes. Forming an advisory committee may help, or simply partnering with other faculty who work with similar programs. However this is done, the point is to collect information that helps faculty develop an oversight-level understanding (and conversations) regarding student learning across the program, and then to find ways to use that understanding of learning to drive future decision-making.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

Reviewer(s):   Name   Joan Hawthorne   Krista Lynn Minnotte   _____
                     Department   Academic Affairs   Sociology_____   _____
                     Phone Number   7-4684_____   _7-4419_____   _____
                     e-mail   joan.hawthorne@email.und.edu   krista.minnotte@und.edu _____

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_Languages – Spanish_____DATE__February 18, 2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Joan Hawthorne, Krista Lynn Minnotte_____

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:
All programs in the department use the same three general learning goals which are clearly focused on learning but written at a very general level (i.e., "demonstrate knowledge of target language culture(s)." In at least some of these programs (and whether this applies to them all is unclear from the report and plan), goals are broken down into objectives. Those objectives appear to be more specific and more readily assessable (e.g., "critically read and interpret a variety of literary texts in the target language"). Even within the objectives, however, others are quite broad: "Know the history of the target language literature(s)." From an outsider's perspective, it appears that students (and faculty) within a program could easily disagree on what it means to "know the history" or "demonstrate knowledge." It might be worth considering whether individual language programs could more clearly specify what is meant by the broad departmental goals or objectives within the context of the various programs. At the least, it might be helpful if the plan indicated which objectives have been selected by each of the various programs.

In the case of the Spanish program, the specific focus in 2009-10 was on grammar, which is one of four subcomponents of a single goal. Although it makes sense to focus on a limited portion of the assessment plan every year rather than "doing it all," it would be reasonable to ensure that learning related to all goals and objectives gets assessed within three or four years. Given the 11 objectives in the plan (if the Spanish program does indeed use all 11), one objective per year is a pace that's probably too slow to provide faculty with a useful program-wide overview of learning.

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) or 'G' (graduate) to identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.
___x____ 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")
___x____ 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 Languages goals clearly address communication and may address diversity – although it's difficult to be certain if "demonstrate[ing] knowledge of target language culture" really addresses the same outcome as "demonstrate[ing] understanding of diversity and [being able to]use that understanding." The objective "critically analyze differences between U.S. culture and target language culture(s)," for the programs where applicable, does seem to definitely address the ES diversity goal.

The grammar goal is not directly aligned with any of the ES or institutional goals.

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__X___   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments:

The general assessment plan does not specify any methods, but specific courses are identified (within each program) for assessment of the intended learning outcomes. The aim is for designated teachers of the various courses to make their own decisions about appropriate methods, as well as to collect, analyze, interpret, and document data relevant to that course. It does not appear that plans were made for program-wide (or department-wide) discussion of findings and decision-making based on findings.

Each program's report, however, does include a description of data collection methods used during 2009-10. The Spanish program collected data in one senior level class taught in four sections, and the selected tool (a final exam)was subdivided to allow faculty to see student performance on various aspects of grammar (i.e., preterite and imperfect verbs, subjunctive and infinitive verbs, gender of nouns, etc.). It is useful to examine data from more than a single class and more than a single semester, both of which the Spanish program did.

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 report writer included a detailed analysis and interpretation of the findings related to various aspects of Spanish grammar. Weaknesses are clearly identified and differences between sections and years are also noted. Indirect assessment (student perceptions of their own improvements regarding grammar) are also presented, analyzed, and incorporated in the overall results summary.

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")
_____ 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:

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:

No departmental or program-wide actions were discussed as having occurred during the last year as a result of assessment findings. However, faculty in the department are engaged this year (2010-11), according to the 2009-10 annual report, in reconsideration of their assessment strategies. It sounds like this may be one component of what sounds like a re-energizing of the curriculum generally (i.e., creating a new interdisciplinary capstone, organizing lower division language courses under the leadership of coordinators).

Within the Spanish program particularly, a number of conclusions are drawn and ideas about possible changes are presented. But there is no indication that faculty program-wide (let alone department-wide) have reviewed the results and made decisions to change aspects of the program to improve learning in the future. If these aspects of grammar are sufficiently important to be worth designating as a key learning outcome, then it seems that the findings would be worthy of discussion by faculty and curriculum review that incorporates the conclusions about needed changes in program emphases.

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.
__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.	__X__ 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 appears that the department is poised to move in a productive direction with changes that have already occurred and a commitment to rethink and improve assessment, potentially paving the way for additional improvements over the next several years. Incorporating assessment activities could – and should – occur as a key component of the changes. Reviewing actual data will help faculty distinguish between anecdotal and impressionistic "findings" (i.e., "I've noted that my students usually can't….") and those that are borne out by systematically-collected data (i.e., "a review of student work samples collected from 4 sections offered during two different years showed…"). Not only will the case for change (when needed) be clearer, but it will be possible to avoid spending energy on issues which turn out to be less important, less common, or less substantive.

It is easy to focus on goals and methods when planning assessment, but it appears that the Languages Department has not been successful at using the data they have already collected. This may be because the data are not seen as programmatically relevant – but it also may be simply a lack of planning for collective analysis, discussion, and decision-making. If the latter is the case, we would strongly encourage building in processes that will ensure such collective activities occur. Without use of data, assessment feels like busywork. Once assessment gets used, it begins to be an integral part of good teaching – which is the aim of an improved plan and process.

The Spanish program has done a great job of collecting, analyzing, and compiling evidence directly relating to one objective. Reviewers have some concern about the plausibility of spending this much time and energy on one objective out of eleven – it seems that program faculty might need to spread their energy more evenly across the four objectives under the language proficiency goal in a single year, e.g. That would necessarily mean less information about each objective, but might prove more "actionable" in the sense that program faculty would more quickly collect a program-wide overview, allowing decisions to be made about which goals or objectives require additional emphasis and where that emphasis could occur. Much though we'd like students to "know everything," they will not – so the real question is how to get the balance right amongst the various program goals. And seeing across the program is essential for that kind of decision-making.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

Reviewer(s):   Name   Joan Hawthorne   Krista Lynn Minnotte   _____
                    Department   Academic Affairs   Sociology_____   _____
                    Phone Number 7-4684_____   _7-4419_____   _____
                    e-mail   joan.hawthorne@email.und.edu   krista.minnotte@und.edu _____

Section 1: __Y___   Section 2: __Y ___   Section 3: __Y___   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_Languages – Classics_____DATE__February 18, 2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Joan Hawthorne, Krista Lynn Minnotte_____

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:
All programs in the department use the same three general learning goals which are clearly focused on learning but written at a very general level (i.e., "demonstrate knowledge of target language culture(s)." In at least some of these programs (and whether this applies to them all is unclear from the report and plan), goals are broken down into objectives. Those objectives appear to be more specific and more readily assessable (e.g., "critically read and interpret a variety of literary texts in the target language"). Even within the objectives, however, others are quite broad: "Know the history of the target language literature(s)." From an outsider's perspective, it appears that students (and faculty) within a program could easily disagree on what it means to "know the history" or "demonstrate knowledge." It might be worth considering whether individual language programs could more clearly specify what is meant by the broad departmental goals or objectives within the context of the various programs. At the least, it might be helpful if the plan indicated which objectives have been selected by each of the various programs.

No Classics report was submitted for 2009-10 and no work was completed on assessment during that year.

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) or 'G' (graduate) to identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced departmental goals.
___x____ 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")
___x____ 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 Languages goals clearly address communication and may address diversity – although it's difficult to be certain if "demonstrate[ing] knowledge of target language culture" really addresses the same outcome as "demonstrate[ing] understanding of diversity and [being able to]use that understanding." The objective "critically analyze differences between U.S. culture and target language culture(s)," for the programs where applicable, does seem to definitely address the ES diversity goal.

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   YES_____   NO__x__   QUALIFIED Y/N ____
  measures" approach?

Comments:

The general assessment plan does not specify any methods, but specific courses are identified (within each program) for assessment of the intended learning outcomes. The aim is for designated teachers of the various courses to make their own decisions about appropriate methods, as well as to collect, analyze, interpret, and document data relevant to that course. It does not appear that plans were made for program-wide (or department-wide) discussion of findings and decision-making based on findings.

Each program's report, however, does include a description of data collection methods used during 2009-10. Classics is the exception given that no assessment was conducted during that year.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?   YES____   NO__X__   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:

No assessment was conducted within Classics in 2009-10.

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")
_____ 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:

No assessment was conducted and therefore there are no ES results – although there would be if assessment occurred as described in the plan.

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:

No departmental or program-wide actions were discussed as having occurred during the last year as a result of assessment findings. However, faculty in the department are engaged this year (2010-11), according to the 2009-10 annual report, in reconsideration of their assessment strategies. It sounds like this may be one component of what sounds like a re-energizing of the curriculum generally (i.e., creating a new interdisciplinary capstone, organizing lower division language courses under the leadership of coordinators).

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.
_____Assessment methods are clearly described.	_____ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
_____Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	_____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
_____Assessment methods are well-implemented.	_X___ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
_____Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	_____ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
_____Results are reported.	_X___ 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 appears that the department is poised to move in a productive direction with changes that have already occurred and a commitment to rethink and improve assessment, potentially paving the way for additional improvements over the next several years. Incorporating assessment activities could – and should – occur as a key component of the changes. Reviewing actual data will help faculty distinguish between anecdotal and impressionistic "findings" (i.e., "I've noted that my students usually can't….") and those that are borne out by systematically-collected data (i.e., "a review of student work samples collected from 4 sections offered during two different years showed..."). Not only will the case for change (when needed) be clearer, but it will be possible to avoid spending energy on issues which turn out to be less important, less common, or less substantive.

It is easy to focus on goals and methods when planning assessment, but it appears that the Languages Department has not been successful at using the data they have already collected. This may be because the data are not seen as programmatically relevant – but it also may be simply a lack of planning for collective analysis, discussion, and decision-making. If the latter is the case, we would strongly encourage building in processes that will ensure such collective activities occur. Without use of data, assessment feels like busywork. Once assessment gets used, it begins to be an integral part of good teaching – which is the aim of an improved plan and process.

In the case of the Classics program, assessment did not occur because the single faculty member with responsibility for the program has been on long term leave. It is obviously critical to the program that the issue be resolved – and, at that time, the Classics program will benefit by joining other Language programs in assessment activities. The needs will be very similar to those in other programs under the leadership of a single faculty member, and perhaps those programs can serve as models for quickly and effectively getting assessment on track within the Classics program.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

Reviewer(s):   Name   Joan Hawthorne   Krista Lynn Minnotte   _____
                Department   Academic Affairs   Sociology_____   _____
                Phone Number   7-4684_____   _7-4419_____   _____
                e-mail   joan.hawthorne@email.und.edu   krista.minnotte@und.edu _____

Section 1: __Y___   Section 2: __N___   Section 3: __N___   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