UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2010 Annual Reports
<u>UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS</u>

DEPARTMENT_Philosophy & Religion – Philosophy Concentration___DATE___April 20, 2011_____

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW__Cassie Gerhardt & Ruth Paur_____

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

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

Comments:
The department has identified 5 student learning goals as well as 2 – 3 specific objectives for each of the goals. For example:
> **Goal 1: Students will develop the ability to think critically.**
> > **Objective 1.1 Demonstrate the skills necessary to the critical thinking process.**
> > **Objective 1.2 Demonstrate the ability to analyze complex arguments.**
> > **Objective 1.3 Demonstrate the ability to formulate and communicate arguments.**

These goals were also identified in the department's assessment plan as posted on the UND Assessment Plan website.

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.

___X___ 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")
___X___ 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 stated learning goals and objectives align with 5 of the Essential Studies 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_____   NO__X__ QUALIFIED Y/N ____
- Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach?   YES__X__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments:

The assessment methods identified in both the annual report and posted assessment plan were identical and indicate a comprehensive, multi-year approach to program assessment. Assessment methods include mid-program review/exit interviews, examples of assignments from departmental majors, surveys of departmental majors, focus groups, and alumni surveys. Each year, 3 of the 5 identified assessment methods are implemented. Neither the annual report nor the posted assessment plan identify how the stated methods align with the department's specific student learning goals and objectives.

In addition to addressing assessment methods, the annual report and assessment plan identify the specific individual(s) who are responsible for implementing the various aspects of the department's assessment plan. For example, the department chair is responsible for recruiting members to the Department Program Committee (DPC). The members of the DPC are responsible for collecting data, preparing materials for the annual departmental program meeting, and for producing a final report after the annual departmental program meeting.

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____ NO____ QUALIFIED Y/N _X___

Comments:

The assessment results reported focus on an analysis of assignments/papers from departmental majors collected during Spring 2010. The report includes the 7 factor rubric used to evaluate the papers as well the 5 point scale used to measure each factor. A total of 8 papers were evaluated and average scores for each factor are included in the report. In addition, the report includes the evaluators overall assessment of the results.

The reported results were clear in terms of how they affirm achievement of the specific factors of this rubric and method. The results also indicate the areas in which improvement is needed, but the results were not as clear in terms of how they tied to the department's stated learning goals and objectives.

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")
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Comments regarding results and the application of results to departmental, institutional and Essential Studies goals:

Based on the assessment method used and the stated results, the department recognizes that critical thinking is being achieved by students.

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:
The department notes, "We do not have specific plans for changes in curriculum based on the assessment work we did as reported above, but rather plan to expand our assessment for the coming year, and will integrate those results into future curriculum revisions".

SUMMARY

Strengths	*Areas for Improvement*
_**X**__ A specific plan for assessment is in place.	____ No specific plan for assessment is in place.
_**X**__Student learning goals are well-articulated.	____ Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
_X__Assessment methods are clearly described.	____ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
_X__Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
_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.
_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 is clear that assessment is a departmental priority. The department's student learning goals are well articulated and the identified assessment methods are appropriate and include both direct and indirect methods. The department is encouraged to tie their assessment methods to their stated learning goals and to use the results to improve their courses and overall program.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

Reviewer(s):   Name   Ruth Paur   Cassie Gerhardt
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Section 1: __Y___   Section 2: __?___   Section 3: __Y__   Section 4: __Y___

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

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Comments:
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Comments:
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- Were the results tied to goals for student learning?   YES_X__   NO____   QUALIFIED Y/N _ ___

Comments:
The assessment results reported address a focus group assessment project involving religion majors during Spring 2010. Specifically, the program focused on student learning goal #1, "students will develop the ability to think critically". Thirteen religion majors were shown a short video clip and asked to respond to a question through a written essay. Three religion faculty members scored the essays using an established rubric. The rubric and assessment results are included in the annual report.

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Comments regarding results and the application of results to departmental, institutional and Essential Studies goals:

Based on the assessment method used and the stated results, it is clear that critical thinking is being achieved by students.

In addition, the department noted opportunities to develop their assessment methodology by formulating additional and more substantive questions by which to evaluate student progress with other program goals.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

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    • If so, do curricular or other improvements/
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