

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in __2010-11__ Annual Reports
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT Economics **DATE** April 15, 2012

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Sukhvarsh Jerath and Joan Hawthorne

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

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

Comments: The goals for the MSAE described in the department's plan are not the same as those described in the CoBPA annual report for the MSAE program. It would be good to either correct the plan (if no longer accurate) or ensure that goals in the plan are addressed (if the plan is still appropriate).

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

- | | | | |
|--|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Were any specific assessment methods referenced? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |
| • If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |
| • Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |

Comments: Direct assessment is based on a final and presentation, and the indirect assessment is based on a survey.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

- | | | | |
|--|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Were any assessment results reported? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |
| • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |
| • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |
| • Were the results tied to goals for student learning? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |

Comments: Although you have useful results and interpretative comments, we note that these are in relation to the goals in the annual report rather than those in the assessment plan. It appears that the assessment plan (dated 2008-09) should be updated.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

- | | | | |
|--|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |
| • If so, do curricular or other improvements/ changes arising from assessment results directly address goals for student learning? | YES <u>x</u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |

Comments: Some changes were made in response to student satisfaction, but at least one was in response to a learning outcome (regarding math skill) that was identified through previous assessment.

SUMMARY

Strengths

- ☐ A specific plan for assessment is in place.
- ☐ Student learning goals are well-articulated.
- ☒ Assessment methods are clearly described.
- ☒ Assessment methods are appropriately selected.
- ☐ Assessment methods are well-implemented.
- ☒ Direct and indirect methods are implemented.
- ☒ Results are reported.
- ☐ Results are tied to closing the loop.
- (Decision-making is tied to evidence.)

Areas for Improvement

- ☐ No specific plan for assessment is in place.
- ☐ Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
- ☐ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
- ☐ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
- ☐ Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
- ☐ A single type of assessment methods predominates.
- ☐ No results are reported.
- ☐ Results are not clearly tied to closing the loop.
- (Decision-making is not directly tied to evidence.)

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is very important to ensure that your posted assessment plan reflects current practice, so it would be useful to review that. If you regularly include your report of MSAE assessment within the college annual report rather than the departmental report, it should be good to mention that in the Economics report.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual report – college report | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessment plan (as posted) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appendices (cited in annual report) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Previous assessment review |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe) | |

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Section 1: Y Section 2: Y 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

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2010-11 Annual Reports
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT Economics **DATE** March 9, 2012

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Joan Hawthorne, Sukhvarsh Jerath

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

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

Comments:

Goals are clearly described in the assessment plan and were identified in the 2009-10 annual report as well. The most recent annual report is not available (see explanation under "summary"), so this review is based on assessment information submitted to us as well as the plan and the old annual report.

Although the goals are clearly described and well-articulated, we did note that three different undergraduate degrees are available through the department, and we would expect that faculty would have identified some differences (perhaps minor) in expected outcomes to justify the existence of multiple degree options – and it would be good to name those differences.

In addition to the Departmental goals, please also consider UND's Institutional and Essential Studies goals for student learning (shown in alignment within parentheses) and identify which goals are similar to 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)
- 3 Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or "be intellectually creative"; explore, discover, engage)
- X 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:

There is strong alignment between program goals and ES/institutional goals.

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Were any specific assessment methods referenced? | YES <u> X </u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |
| • If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals? | YES <u> </u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> X </u> |
| • Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach? | YES <u> </u> | NO <u> X </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u> |

Comments:

The department submitted data demonstrating that some direct assessments of undergraduate learning were implemented and data were collected. However, it's hard to see how the specific methods align with the individual learning outcomes identified in departmental goals for the UG majors. In the assessment plan, alignment is identified as occurring – but it was not possible for a reader to track back from the data through the plan and to the goals. Indirect methods are specified in the plan but do not appear to have been used in 2010-11.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?	YES <u>X</u>	NO <u> </u>	QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u>
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals?	YES <u> </u>	NO <u>X</u>	QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u>
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?	YES <u> </u>	NO <u>X</u>	QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u>
• Were the results tied to goals for student learning?	YES <u> </u>	NO <u>X</u>	QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u>

Comments:

Since the annual report is not on file, results were sent separately and explanatory information was not provided.

In addition to departmental goals, some assessment results may be applicable to institutional and Essential Studies goals.

Indicate any goals for which the department presents findings, and, for indicated items, describe findings 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:

Results were not linked back to ES/institutional goals.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported?	YES <u> </u>	NO <u>X</u>	QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u>
• If so, do curricular or other improvements/changes arising from assessment results directly address goals for student learning?	YES <u> </u>	NO <u> </u>	QUALIFIED Y/N <u> </u>

Comments:

No loop closing activities were reported.

SUMMARY

Strengths

- X A specific plan for assessment is in place.
- X Student learning goals are well-articulated.
- X Assessment methods are clearly described.
- X Assessment methods are appropriately selected.
- Assessment methods are well-implemented.
- Direct and indirect methods are implemented.
- Results are reported.
- Results are tied to closing the loop.
- (Decision-making is tied to evidence.)

Areas for Improvement

- No specific plan for assessment is in place.
- Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
- Assessment methods are not clearly described.
- Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
- Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
- A single type of assessment methods predominates.
- No results are reported.
- Results are not clearly tied to closing the loop.
- (Decision-making is not directly tied to evidence.)

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is our understanding that the department chair submitted an annual report in the fall. However, as a new chair, this was his first time using the annual report (AR) system, and he failed to save the report to the system. This is not a problem without

precedent. The normal solution is for the chair to re-upload once the problem is discovered. However, in this case, the department also had some computers replaced and, by the time that anyone realized the AR had not been saved, some months had passed and the old hard drives were wiped clean – meaning that no copy of the AR remained. Some version of an AR should still be submitted, even if in abbreviated form, for that year. But with no report currently available, we prepared our review based on assessment data collected in 2010-11 and other documents which we were able to access.

The previous AR noted that faculty in the department know they have been praised for the quality of their plan, but they have not been able to implement that plan effectively. In view of that problem, we strongly recommend rethinking the plan to simplify it and develop a phase-in strategy for a newly simplified plan. Assessment is only useful when it occurs on a regular basis, and doing assessment (i.e., collecting information which provides interesting and new information about student learning, answering real questions that faculty have) that gets used is far more important than having a good plan. We encourage you to speak with the Assessment Director or one of UND's faculty assessment consultants for help in moving toward a do-able, useful approach to regular assessment of learning within the majors.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

☐ Annual report
☐ Appendices (cited in annual report)
☒ Other (please describe)
Assessment information provided to reviewers; BPA annual report for 2010-11, Economics AR for 2009-10

☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
☒ Previous assessment review

Reviewer(s):	Name	<u>Joan Hawthorne</u>	<u>Sukhvarsh Jerath</u>	_____
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