

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2013 Annual Reports
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT Communication Sciences and Disorders **DATE** 3-27-14

PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW undergraduate major

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Joan Hawthorne, Paul Drechsel

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:

The influence of accreditation standards on program goals is evident. Each is written in terms of overarching goal, sub-categories of topics within the goal, and the detailed objectives regarding learning outcomes. We noted that the undergraduate goals for CSD are heavily weighted toward what might be considered lower level learning outcomes – knowledge and understanding. This may be a result of a professional program which requires graduate study as the entry standard for practice – with the result that students are expected to acquire an extensive background of information at the undergraduate level, and then, during graduate study, build on that with analytical, application, synthesis, and evaluation skills.

In addition to the program 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 program 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)
 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 program goals and alignment with institutional and Essential Studies goals:

Four ES goals are clearly aligned with CSD undergraduate program 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>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:

The assessment plan, as posted on the website, was updated in 2012. It describes assessment activities as focused on the capstone class. That class begins with an “integrated review” of knowledge from previous courses, and that portion of the class culminates in a comprehensive exam that’s structured to enable assessment of the various knowledge goals. The class also includes written assignments that are scored (using a meets expectations, exceeds expectations, fails to meet expectations rubric) for proficiency in various communication categories, research categories, and quantitative skill categories. In this

year's annual report, results of a survey (also administered in the capstone) are included, suggesting that the assessment plan may have been revised to include that survey as an indirect measure of learning as well.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

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

Comments:

This annual report contains results of a student survey although it does not contain results from any of the other assessments described in the assessment plan. Several of the survey questions are directly related to learning outcomes and the results are analyzed to describe conclusions drawn and implications for student learning. However, several of the survey results appear to focus students specifically on the learning they see occurring in the capstone class rather than across the program, which may mean that the data – although collected at a key moment in the UG curriculum – is less applicable to the program as a whole than was anticipated (and hence the “qualified y/n”).

It would be very helpful to know that the direct assessments are also occurring – and being systematically analyzed – as described in the assessment plan. Indirect assessment is an extremely useful component of a plan (students have meaningful insight regarding their own learning), but, of course, direct assessment remains critical. If direct assessment results are also being collected and analyzed, it would be helpful to have that indicated within future annual reports. Extensive detail is not necessary, but sample results/findings (especially any findings that confirm findings from the student survey, or are otherwise particularly interesting) would be a very helpful addition to the report.

In addition to program goals, some assessment results may be applicable to institutional and Essential Studies goals. Indicate any goals for which the program 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 program, institutional, and Essential Studies goals:

Results of the survey directly relate to three ES goals. Students are quite split on whether their communication has been improved – 29% indicating agreement and 29% indicating disagreement. 47% indicated their critical thinking was improved. However, 70% agreed their research skills were improved, suggesting that they perceived this as a greater focus. Since they complete the survey within the capstone class, the survey asks them specifically about their learning at that point – i.e., during the capstone class – rather than reflecting back across the entire undergraduate curriculum. It might be that answers would be different if students perceived the ES-related questions as encompassing a broader time frame, and perhaps it's worth considering a reframing of the survey to ensure that students consider the entirety of their UG curriculum.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

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

Comments:

The annual report indicates that the department intends to make changes in the writing components of the capstone course as a result of survey findings indicating that students don't perceive themselves as making significant gains in communication skills and aren't getting a lot of help in making such improvements.

SUMMARY***Strengths***

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

Areas for Improvement

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

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The plan for assessment of UG learning in CSD appears to be sound – and to align well with accreditation expectations. Ensuring that indirect data are also collected is a good addition to the plan, and perhaps this should be incorporated (although, as noted above, it would be very helpful to ensure question wording invites students to consider the UG curriculum as a whole).

It is difficult to be sure, based on the annual report, whether the direct assessments are also being implemented. The graduate portion of the report makes clear that more detailed information is available in the accreditation reports, but those appear to primarily deal with the graduate program itself. Including enough detail in the annual report to clarify use of direct assessments (clearly linked to program goals and objectives) within the UG program would be very helpful.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

- ☒ Annual report
☐ Appendices (cited in annual report)
☒ Other (please describe)
- ☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
☒ Previous assessment review

Telephone conversation with department chair.

Reviewer(s):	Name	Joan Hawthorne__	Paul Drechsel	_____
	Department	Academic Affairs__	Aviation	_____
	Phone Number	7-4684_____	7-4923	_____
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Section 1: ☒ Y Section 2: ☒ Y Section 3: ☐ Q Section 4: ☐ Y

Coding Key:

- Y = yes, this is done appropriately and well (bearing in mind the kind of program(s) reviewed and recognizing that assessment is a cyclical process, i.e., with additional kinds of data to be collected and analyzed in other years)
 Q = qualified yes as action or progress is apparent; however, evidence is lacking that this is completely and appropriately done
 N = no, this is not done at all, or it is not done in relationship to student learning

NA = no information reported and it's unclear whether it was done

Revision 9/25/13

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2013 Annual Reports
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT Communication Sciences and Disorders **DATE** 3-27-14

PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW Master's, PhD

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Joan Hawthorne, Paul Drechsel

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:

The goals are really at a very micro level and assigned to individual courses. This is not what might normally be recommended in terms of goal language for UND programs – but, in the case of CSD, the goals are provided to them by their program accreditor and program faculty are responsible for ensuring that every student who completes the program is able to demonstrate appropriate proficiency in each one of these very detailed goals (with remediation-until-success-is-achieved required for any student who fails to demonstrate proficiency on the first attempt but is retained in the program).

The program does not distinguish between goals for the master's program and those for the PhD program, largely because the PhD program has been terribly small (a single student). Although they would like the program to grow and there is some demand for the PhD, the program has no space for the clinical experiences that would be necessary for a cohort of PhD students – meaning faculty have little motivation to think in more detail about how to differentiate doctoral level goals. However, there is some conversation in the field about making a doctoral degree (perhaps a clinical doctorate) the standard for entry to practice. In view of this, it might be worth some effort on the part of faculty to begin differentiating levels. In addition, good practice would suggest that if UND's CSD department is to offer a program of study (in this case, the PhD), a first step should be to determine learning outcomes that will be associated with that program. We encourage CSD faculty to take that step.

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

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|--|---------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| 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> </u> | NO <u> </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>X</u> |

Comments:

Methods of assessment for individual goals are intended to occur largely within the individual courses associated with those goals. Results are recorded in a form required to be completed for each student (the KASA form, which aligns with accreditation standards). In addition to these “micro” methods (i.e., data collected for individual students rather than to look systematically at learning of students in the aggregate, program-wide), faculty collect data from assessments of students' clinical skills, comprehensive exams, thesis/independent studies (regarding writing and research skills), and Praxis tests. Much of the data from these assessments is broken down to provide insight regarding achievement of program standards at a less micro level.

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___ | 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___ | NO___ | QUALIFIED Y/N ___X___ |

Comments:

The annual report itself includes only summary results, e.g., KASA form completion rates indicating that none, in the most recent year, had required remediation on any of the goals; CCE forms summaries showing that certain types of questions had frequently required re-dos prior to appropriate levels of skill demonstration; pass rates for the Praxis and the CSD. This information is not directly linked to individual program goals, although a conversation with the department chair revealed that more detailed data breakdowns (of Praxis scores, e.g.) are available for discussion by faculty and are used in accreditation reports (prepared in conjunction with the accreditation cycle). Those more detailed reports, according to the chair, allow faculty to look at data in relation to goals – although a prime focus, given accreditation expectations, remains on the very detailed goals associated with individual courses.

The KASA student reports could be aggregated to allow results to be looked at in relation to individual goals. However,, because of the immense detail, they are not used in that way. Other data, however, apparently are used to shed light on (aggregated) student achievement of goals. It would be very helpful if the annual report included a few examples of that kind of aggregated data, linked to specific learning outcomes, to demonstrate the kinds of data collected that might be useful to faculty in making curricular and pedagogical decisions.

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___X___ NO___ QUALIFIED Y/N ___

Comments:

The annual report indicates that minor changes are being considered. For example, the CCE form review demonstrated that a significant number of students initially struggled with questions in particular content areas (i.e., they required re-dos to demonstrate proficiency). That information was shared with faculty as part of a conversation about whether additional coverage of knowledge areas or practice with skill areas should be included in next year's curriculum. Ensuring a very high and consistent level of student proficiency on the various outcomes is critical to the program's continued accreditation.

SUMMARY

Strengths

- ___X___ A specific plan for assessment is in place.
- ___ Student learning goals are well-articulated.
- ___ Assessment methods are clearly described.
- ___ Assessment methods are appropriately selected.
- ___X___ Assessment methods are well-implemented.
- ___ Direct and indirect methods are implemented.
- ___ Results are reported.
- ___X___ 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:

We strongly recommend that faculty consider developing specific learning outcomes for the doctoral level program if they intend to continue to offer that degree. That issue obviously goes beyond the department to a certain degree: if the program had the facilities to allow growth, there would be considerably greater motivation to focus more attention on the PhD.

Beyond that issue, virtually everything about assessment practices within CSD is shaped in response to accreditation standards and expectations. Faculty collect a tremendous amount of data, although the emphasis is virtually always on extremely detailed, micro-level outcomes, with several outcomes developed though each individual class (and spanning both the undergraduate and the master's degree programs). Findings are collected and analyzed at the level of the individual student, with re-teaching/testing until proficiency is demonstrated.

It could be extremely useful to step back from that look at detail occasionally in order to see the big picture(i.e., how are students doing, as a whole, with writing and presentation skills, how well they're doing at clinical skills in general, etc.). We encourage you to consider ways to ensure that occurs.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

☒ Annual report ☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
☐ Appendices (cited in annual report) ☒ Previous assessment review
☒ Other (please describe) *Phone conversation with department chair.*

Reviewer(s):	Name	Joan Hawthorne	Paul Drechsel	_____
	Department	Academic Affairs	Aviation	_____
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Section 1: ☐ Y ☐ Section 2: ☐ Y ☐ Section 3: ☐ Q ☐ Section 4: ☐ Y ☐

Coding Key:

- Y = yes, this is done appropriately and well (bearing in mind the kind of program(s) reviewed and recognizing that assessment is a cyclical process, i.e., with additional kinds of data to be collected in other years)
- Q = qualified yes as action or progress is apparent; however, evidence is lacking that this is completely and appropriately done
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Revision 9/25/13