

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2011-12 Annual Reports
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT Nutrition and Dietetics **DATE** 3/24/13

PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW B.S. in Dietetics

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Mary K. Askim-Lovseth and Deborah Worley

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 Department of Nutrition and Dietetics has two undergraduate programs, a B.S. in Community Nutrition and a B.S. in Dietetics. The Coordinated Program in Dietetics has a 2011-12 Assessment Plan posted.

The Dietetic Program has four goals and 11 objectives that relate to student learning. As a result of a recommendation from the last review, the Department developed objectives for the student learning goals to denote outcomes. Though the goals are well articulated, some of the objectives address multiple skills and concepts. For example,

- *“Conduct projects using appropriate research methods, ethical procedures, and data analysis.*
- *Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, considering life experiences, cultural diversity, and educational background of target audience, with particular emphasis on rural populations.*
- *Demonstrates professional attributes within various organizational cultures, including but not limited to time management, priority setting, critical thinking, decision making, leadership, and collaboration.”*

Since the outcomes are multidimensional, it becomes more difficult to determine if an objective is achieved. It would be best if the outcomes were distinct in order to align learning with expectations.

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)
 X 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”)
 X 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:

Almost all of the Institutional and Essential Studies goals are addressed within the Dietetics program, either as an overall goal or as a stated objective. Other than the objectives noted above, some additional ones that correlate include “Integrate scientific information and research into practice” and “Participate in professional and community organizations.”

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:

Multiple direct and indirect measures were noted in the Assessment Plan and both types of measures were used in assessing student learning during 2011-12. Direct measures included case studies, research papers, a therapeutic menu project, and preceptor evaluations; and the indirect measure of student self-evaluations was noted. Each measure was aligned with a respective goal or objective.

Several of the benchmarks identified in the Assessment Plan are related to a percentage of the students receiving a B or better grade on the artifact/measure. Grades should not be used to assess student achievement of a learning outcome as they do not provide specific information where improvements can be made concerning the criteria. Rubrics are helpful in this regard. It appears a global statement was also used as an indirect measure for preparedness for an entry level registered dietitian position (included in student, alumni, and employer surveys). Again, there are many facets and competencies to preparedness that would be helpful having specific feedback.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?	YES____	NO____	QUALIFIED Y/N __X__
• 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____	QUALIFIED Y/N __X__

Comments:

It is apparent that data (i.e., grades) were collected but no specific data were provided in the Annual Report; only subjective statements were made to support achievement, or not, of the goals and objectives. It was noted that minimum benchmarks were not met, met, or exceeded but grades provide no delineation of specific competencies.

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

No specific results were provided for any of the seven goals identified earlier (see Section 1).

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported?

YES ☒ 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 ☒

Comments:

Changes for Fall 2012 were made to Medical Nutrition Therapy I and II to address improving student performance in “developing nutrition care plans, using standardized nutrition language, applying evidence-based practice standards and writing nutrition diagnosis statements.” All could not directly be linked to specific objectives. Changes to the courses included adding more examples and in-class activities.

Other changes were noted that were implemented during the 2011-12 year but no assessment had been done as of yet. These included adding an exam early in the program to reinforce earlier course content, better alignment of comprehensive exams with the Registration Examination for Dietitians, peer teaching when reviewing for exams, and more emphasis being placed on critical thinking and professional skill development by the inclusion of more practice-application questions.

The Department noted it would be making changes to the Assessment Plan as “more specificity in some assessment data criteria are needed.” After only one year of implementation, the Department is to be commended for recognizing the deficiencies of grades and global assessment measures.

SUMMARY**Strengths****Areas for Improvement**

- ☒ 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.)

- ☐ 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 2011-12 Assessment Plan represented a major revision for the Dietetics program and already in one year, the Department noted limitations and weaknesses regarding its effective implementation to assess student learning. This speaks to being attentive to collecting the most appropriate data for effective assessment. When considering these revisions, it is recommended to address singular competencies for the objectives, developing rubrics to identify the relevant criteria for competency achievement, and identifying benchmarks based on meeting or exceeding expectations as denoted in the rubrics (rather than using grades).

MATERIALS REVIEWED

- ☒ Annual report
- ☐ Appendices (cited in annual report)
- ☐ Other (please describe)

- ☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
- ☒ Previous assessment review

Reviewer(s):	Name	Mary K. Askim-Lovseth	Deborah Worley
	Department	Marketing	Educational Leadership
	Phone Number	777-2930	777-3140
	e-mail	maskim@business.und.edu	deborah.worley@und.edu

Section 1: __Y__ Section 2: __Y__ Section 3: __?__ Section 4: __?__

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)
- N = no, this is not done at all, or it is not done in relationship to student learning
- NA = no information reported
- ? = action or progress is apparent; however, evidence is lacking that this is completely and appropriately done

Revision 10/11/12