

**UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in FY2012 Annual Reports**  
**GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

**DEPARTMENT** Educational Foundations and Research **DATE** April 1, 2013

**PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW** PhD in Educational Foundations and Research

**COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW** Ken Ruit, Krista Lynn Minnotte, Wayne Barkhouse

**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 current Departmental Assessment Plan, dated 9-21-07, includes one overarching goal that is addressed by five distinct objectives. The goal (GOAL 1), as stated in the FY2012 assessment report, is identical to the GOAL stated in the current assessment plan. Based on a review of the goal and its objectives in FY2012, the faculty concluded that they remain "consistent with....expectations" and no changes were made.

**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:* A number of assessment methods were referenced such as comprehensive examinations, dissertations and oral defenses; the faculty have noted that comprehensive exam rubrics need to be reviewed and rubrics for oral defenses need to be developed in order to more reliably determine student learning outcomes using these methods. Other methods such as "summative artifacts from coursework and elsewhere (presentations, publications, scholarly fora, collaborations, etc.)" are also referenced but are much less specific in terms of how each provides a measure of student learning in the context of the stated goal and its objectives. The faculty is planning the implementation of external review of dissertations and the use of an alumni survey, but resources have not yet been identified to support those efforts.

**3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

- |  |                 |                |                           |
|--|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Were any assessment results reported?  | YES <u>    </u> | NO <u>X</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>    </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>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • Were the results tied to goals for student learning?   | YES <u>    </u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |

*Comments:* No results of assessment methods were reported. Any reference to "results" in the FY2012 assessment report were conclusions reached by the faculty on the basis of programmatic review/evaluation rather than specifically-referenced outcomes of direct/indirect assessment of student learning.

**4. CLOSING THE LOOP**

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

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ QUALIFIED Y/N X

- 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 'qualified yes' for the Closing the Loop portion of this review is on the basis of the fact that the faculty has indeed identified action items that emerged from their work at their assessment retreat. Importantly, the faculty has determined that a revision of the department/program mission statement is necessary (there is no mission statement provided on the current assessment plan). There are clear curricular elements, (e.g., balances in emphasis between theory and practice in coursework, on-campus versus distance education, student advisement, visibly incorporating the overarching goal and its objectives into course syllabi, development of meaningful rubrics for comprehensive examinations and oral defenses) identified in the action items that address the overarching programmatic goal and its objectives.

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

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

**OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The goal and its five measurable objectives for the PhD program in Educational Foundations and Research reflect the consensus expectation of the faculty in terms of student learning outcomes. The faculty understands assessment of student learning and has articulated methods (direct and indirect) that have the potential of providing data that can be used for ongoing evaluation and improvement. The emphasis is on "potential" because no actual student learning outcomes data was referenced in FY2012; this observation is identical to findings of the University Assessment Committee's review of this program's annual assessment report dated 4/8/10. Rather, the faculty identified 'action items' on the basis of programmatic review/evaluation that was anecdotal at best; how (if) outcomes of direct/indirect assessment of student learning informed the identification of 'action items' was not specifically referenced. That said, two specific items referenced in the annual assessment report will be important to the department in moving forward: 1) articulating a mission statement for the department/program; student learning goals emerge naturally from a well-articulated mission statement and the faculty may find that rather than having only one stated goal for the program (which is unusual) additional goals and objectives may likely emerge from the mission, and 2) assessment retreats conducted by the faculty create an environment in which positive change and improvement can happen; the faculty are commended for their efforts in that regard and are encouraged to seek any guidance or assistance that the University Assessment Committee can provide.

The faculty needs to update and submit a current assessment plan.

**MATERIALS REVIEWED**

- X Annual report
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appendices (cited in annual report)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please describe)

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

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Section 1: Y    Section 2: Y    Section 3: NA    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 available
- ?    = action or progress is apparent; however, evidence is lacking that this is completely and appropriately done

*Revision 10/11/12*