

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in _FY13_ Annual Reports
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT: English **DATE** April 14, 2014

PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW Bachelor of Arts (BA)

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Kyle Thorson, Bradley Myers, Deborah Worley

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 goals for the undergraduate program are clearly stated and are explained in detail. Stated goals include the ability to understand and interpret literary texts, produce quality academic writing, and using interpretive skills to think critically and diversely about literature and the world.

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.

- ☒ 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 program goals and alignment with institutional and Essential Studies goals:

The stated goals and the related paragraphs reference the desire to impart strong written communication that blends critical and creative thinking about literary texts and academic writing. The assessment plan also notes that “students...are prepared for lives of public citizenship as they learn to analyze texts within complex cultural situations, to write and to think rhetorically, and to engage with diverse perspectives (Assessment plan 2013).”

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:

Assessment methods are referenced in the plan. Specifically, there are multiple surveys done to assess students. Students in 415 are asked to fill out a self-assessment regarding their own achievements(indirect method), and a faculty member will review and assess the students’ work related to goals and fill out the “BA direct assessment form”(direct method). There are also multiple references to surveys across a few classes and a senior level focus group. A senior narrative is also used to assess level of proficiency.

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__	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_X__	NO__	QUALIFIED Y/N __

Comments:

The assessment report details a few of the results from the indirect and direct methods done by the department. For the indirect method, they report students' responses to the self-assessment on the three listed learning goals. For the direct methods, faculty made a number of suggestions related to three learning goals. The direct method indicated that there were a number of areas that students could improve upon, especially related to the ability to relate coursework across the major. While results from assessment were given, it may be helpful to further elaborate on other metrics that show success or achievement of goals. It was unclear on whether or not a rubric was used to assess the information on the direct assessment.

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:

Assessment data provided mirrors the three program goals indicated above, so the results also address the same ES goals as before. The exception is service/citizenship which is stated in a paragraph outside of the stated goals and not included in the assessment results.

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_x__	QUALIFIED Y/N __

Comments:

Improvements were related to finding a different survey method and clarifying the goals for the program. Students provided feedback that the goals for the English program were unclear and difficult to understand so they added a few statements to further elaborate. The assessment plan was recently revised (2013) and have only had one opportunity to collect data and no loop closing activities have taken place related to the major or goals.

SUMMARY

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Areas for Improvement</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A specific plan for assessment is in place.	<input type="checkbox"/> No specific plan for assessment is in place.
<input type="checkbox"/> Student learning goals are well-articulated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are clearly described.	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are not clearly described.
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are not 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.)

☐ 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:

Overall the assessment plan and report for the BA in English were able to communicate the learning goals for students and the results from the surveys. As the revised method for assessment continues, it would be important to see how that data is being used to make decisions within the department to improve student learning. It may also be important to consider other metrics for assessing the goals rather than asking if students feel the program achieved the goals; this is done in part by the direct method, but there seems to be a disconnect with what students are reporting and what faculty are finding in the direct assessment. Additionally, it was unclear on whether or not a rubric was used to assess the information on the direct assessment; this would help to create a more objective assessment.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

☒ Assessment plan (as posted)
☐ Previous assessment review

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Section 1: ☐ Y ☐ N Section 2: ☐ Y ☐ N Section 3: ☐ Q ☐ N Section 4: ☐ Q ☐ N

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 __FY13__ Annual Reports
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT English **DATE** April 14, 2014

PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW MA, Ph.D

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Kyle Thorson, Bradley Myers, 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>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 addressed for each of the graduate programs that are succinct and easy to understand. The goals are initially laid out for each individual program, but later combine the two programs into one plan.

MA: 1) students will develop the skills and tools to independent, analytical, or creative work in English Studies and 2) students will use techniques integral to the production of writing in English studies.

Ph.D.: 1) students will produce significant, independent work in English or creative studies and 2) students will demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge related to disciplinary subfields, major works, and influential critical approaches in English studies

The assessment plan also details goals specifically for Graduate teaching assistants to be able to teach effectively.

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:

Two primary methods of assessment are noted for both degree programs: exit surveys where students self-assess the outcomes of their education related to program goals (indirect), and examination of thesis by faculty who assess achievement related to goals and then fill out the direct assessment survey. Ph.D. candidates will also have another direct assessment based on an assessment of the Ph.D qualifying exam. It was unclear on whether or not a rubric was used to assess students in the direct method.

A combination of observation, student evaluations, teaching materials, and reflections are used to evaluate GTAs.

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___ | NO__x_ | QUALIFIED Y/N ___ |
| • Were the results tied to goals for student learning? | YES___ | NO__x_ | QUALIFIED Y/N ___ |

Comments:

The results reported were very general and did not provide any specific results from the surveys. The feedback from the direct assessment methods was lacking as well, stating in the MA results discussion that the faculty ranged from weak agreement to “strongly agree[ing]” that the student demonstrated program goals in portfolio/thesis projects. It was identified that MA students need work tying work to larger debates in English studies. The Ph.D. program graduated one student during the assessment period and faculty “strongly agreed” that the student demonstrated goals.

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__x_ | QUALIFIED Y/N ___ |

Comments:

The department indicates the creation of new goals to distinguish between the two graduate programs and some clarifying of the language in program goals due to a previous assessment review. Because of this, the program has not collected enough data since the change in the assessment plan to engage in loop closing activities. It is noted that one potential feedback that may improve the Master’s program is that students need to better connect their work to the larger English Studies field.

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 assessment plan seems to be significantly improved from previous years with separate goals addressed for each program. There was some confusion related to the separate learning goals for the Master’s program and the Ph.D. program, as at the end of the assessment plan used a combined chart; the creation of new, separated goals for the programs are helpful, but beyond the goals it was difficult to interpret how the plan fit together. It may be helpful for department to identify or otherwise report some other metrics related to the success of programs other than simply whether or not students are meeting the goals; it might be useful to find other questions that reaffirm success.

There was little data reported, which may be as a result of the change in plan in 2013. As the department continues using these new goals, they should be sure to solidify how assessment data will be disseminated.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

_____ Other (please describe)

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Section 1: _Y_____ Section 2: _Y_____ Section 3: __Q_____ Section 4: __Q_____

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