

**UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in FY13 Annual Reports**  
**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS**

**DEPARTMENT** Humanities and Integrated Studies **DATE** May 5, 2014

**PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW** Integrated Studies Program

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

**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 unit has an assessment plan that was updated in 2013 with a full revision of the assessment process. The learning goals identified by the plan "involve the development of Critical and Creative Thinking skills." Specifically, they are looking for evidence of student ability to: 1) make connections; 2) draw conclusions; 3) take risks with ideas and thinking; and 4) raise ideas that move beyond topics.*

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.

- |             |   |  |
|-------------|---|--|
| <u>X</u>    | 1 | Communication – written or oral ("able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience") |
| <u>X</u>    | 2 | Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or "be intellectually curious"; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)       |
| <u>X</u>    | 3 | Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or "be intellectually creative"; explore, discover, engage)          |
| <u>    </u> | 4 | Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning ("apply empirical data...analyze graphical information")         |
| <u>    </u> | 5 | Information literacy ("be able to access and evaluate...for effective, efficient, and ethical use")              |
| <u>X</u>    | 6 | Diversity ("demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...")                               |
| <u>    </u> | 7 | Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")   |
| <u>    </u> | 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:**

*As indicated above, the student learning goals for Humanities and Integrated Studies are focused on developing students' critical and creative thinking skills. In the 2013 annual report, the unit also includes Diversity and Advanced Communication as student learning 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:**

*Both Thinking & Reasoning and Diversity were assessed using a pre and post analysis. Both assessments used randomly selected students. Assessment for Advanced Communication was conducted through the grading rubrics for formal papers produced by students. The units added paraphrased elements from the UND Essential Studies rubric for critical thinking. A statistical analysis was then used to track improvement across the semester. Indirect assessment is conducted using data sourced from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). H&ISP students are compared to the UND general student population and also to students at peer institutions. The assessment plan also provides for the use of "student letters" to gauge student understanding of Essential Studies goals and "where they feel they have or haven't met these goals in their H&ISP coursework". The letters are produced as part of two seminar courses.*

### 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_X | NO | QUALIFIED Y/N |
| • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?            | YES_X | NO | QUALIFIED Y/N |
| • Were the results tied to goals for student learning?   | YES_X | NO | QUALIFIED Y/N |

#### Comments:

The annual report provides results for nine classes for Thinking & Reasoning (although the “results” for HUM 408 only appear in narrative conclusion that “learning goals are being met”), two classes for Diversity and one class for Advanced Communication. For the Thinking & Reasoning assessment, although student scores generally showed increased, the report only indicates statistical significance for the results in HUM 300. The annual report does not speculate as to the potential reason for the lack of statistical significance. The results for the two classes assessed for Diversity generally showed a statistically significant improvement. HUM 408 was the one class assessed for Advanced Communication. The exact same narrative is included here as for the assessment of the students for Thinking & Reasoning. So while the conclusion is reached that students are meeting the learning goal, no discussion of how that conclusion was reached is included. A comparison table of NSSE scores of first year H&ISP and non-H&ISP students on questions related to how much their current coursework emphasized five mental activities.

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.

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1 | Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 | Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 | Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or “be intellectually creative”; explore, discover, engage)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4            | Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning (“apply empirical data...analyze graphical information”)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5            | Information literacy (“be able to access and evaluate...for effective, efficient, and ethical use”)              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6 | Diversity (“demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...”)                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7            | Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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:

The overall assessment of student learning mirrors the Essential Studies goals of communication, thinking and reasoning (critical thinking and creative thinking) and diversity. Thus, the reported results are also aligned with these four specific Essential Studies goals.

### 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 unit concludes that “all assessment data indicates that current pedagogical methods are successful and that students are making progress in the areas of Thinking & Reasoning, Communications, Diversity, and Engagement.” They thus plan to continue with the same types of assignments and approaches currently used. So the unit did use its assessment results in deciding whether to make changes, concluding that they should not.

### SUMMARY

#### Strengths

|   |
|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A specific plan for assessment is in place. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student learning goals are well-articulated.           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are clearly described.   |

#### Areas for Improvement

|   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No specific plan for assessment is in place.     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student learning goals are not well-articulated. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are not 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.)

☐ 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:

*Humanities & Integrated Studies has taken great care in the development and evolution of its assessment plan. The assessment plan identifies the challenges in assessment for a program that largely sees only first-year students. Despite that limitation, the unit is clearly making strong efforts to what is students are learning in the short time they have them. In addition to reporting the raw numbers of statistical results, it would be helpful to provide some discussion on how the unit has tried to draw conclusions based on data that does not show statistical significance.*

## MATERIALS REVIEWED

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

☒ Assessment plan (as posted)  
☒ Previous assessment review

|              |              |                   |  |                            |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Reviewer(s): | Name         | Bradley Myers     | Deborah Worley   | Kyle Thorson               |
|              | Department   | Law School        | Educational Leadership   | Graduate Student           |
|              | Phone Number | 7-2228            | 7-3140   |                            |
|              | e-mail       | myers@law.und.edu | <a href="mailto:deborah.worley@und.edu">deborah.worley@und.edu</a> | kyle.thorson@email.und.edu |

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