**DEPARTMENT___***Interdisciplinary Studies***_____**DATE___4-29/14_____

**PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW ___***BA/BS in Interdisciplinary Studies***_____

**COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW___***Joan Hawthorne, Paul Drechsel***_____

**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:***
*IDS is working from the same assessment plan as was used during the previous review.  The goals are appropriately written, although, as previously noted, assessment might be slightly more straightforward if time was spent pinning down more precise meanings of the most abstract goals (the goal about "demonstrat[ing] enlarged horizons" might be a good candidate for such reconsideration).  However, as has previously been noted, these goals were written in alignment with national standards drawn from the scholarly literature, and that's always a useful place to begin.  The annual report notes that there is an intention to revisit goals in spring and summer of 2014, and we look forward to seeing, during the next assessment review, any updates that may be adopted.*

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")
____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)
_____ 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 IDS goal that specifies thinking "critically and unconventionally about problems" aligns with two ES program goals.*

**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:***

*As a one-person department, operating in conjunction with coursework taught in other disciplines and overseen through a (voluntary) advisory committee, IDS has unique assessment challenges.  However, they also have a number of assessment methods identified, in both the assessment plan and the annual report, that align with the IDS goals and are chosen for their capacity to yield useful information regarding student learning related to program goals.*

## 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__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:***
*Assessment results are provided, they relate to learning outcomes, and they demonstrate specific needs – and yet they weren't entirely clear. For example, the annual report says "after several years of doing focus groups," so we know the focus groups have been held. But it's not clear whether the findings in this year's report actually describe what was heard this year (or even whether any focus groups were held in 2012-13). In fact, focus group results seem to be the same as was previously reported, suggesting this conclusion may have come from analysis of old data. Direct assessment results are reported as findings "i.e., seniors "do better" but with "varied and inconsistent" results. Results "have not shown…that students are able to think across disciplinary boundaries." Findings of this sort may (or may not) have been systematically generated through data analysis.*

*On the other hand, we also see some results that definitely refer to this year's data and were generated through what sounds like a well-conceived assessment process ("the overall quality of senior projects has declined in the last year compared to previous years, as shown by the assessment of the two-faculty committee…"). Findings from that assessment are not broken down by goal, and we are unclear if they were collected that way – although they clearly could be, and a method of that sort (perhaps using a rubric to ensure some degree of consistency across scorers) would be very good practice.*

*All of the annual report comments regarding results were appropriate and useful, but, as noted, additional explanation would have made it easier for an outside reader to determine if and when comments are referring to longitudinal findings, if and when results are more impressionistic (and whether any impressions are rooted in systematic analysis), and when and how results are new information generated from the current year's assessment 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.
_____ 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)
_____ 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:***
*Students say they have become better critical and creative thinkers as a result of their coursework. We note that the reported comments seem identical to those reported in earlier years, which raises the question of whether the focus group results were collected in 2012-13, or whether these may be based on old data.*

## 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:***

*A plan to close the loop through the creation of a new course ("Research Across Disciplines") was developed with implementation planned for spring 2014 (course design and approvals) and fall 2014 (first offering of the course). The course was intended to address the identified problem students experience in learning to work across disciplinary lines (goal 3).*

## SUMMARY

| *Strengths* | *Areas for Improvement* |
|---|---|
| _x___ A specific plan for assessment is in place. | ____ No specific plan for assessment is in place. |
| _**x**___Student learning goals are well-articulated. | ____ Student learning goals are not well-articulated. |
| ____Assessment methods are clearly described. | ____ Assessment methods are not clearly described. |
| ____Assessment methods are appropriately selected. | ____ Assessment methods are not appropriately selected. |
| ____Assessment methods are well-implemented. | ____ Assessment methods are not well-implemented. |
| _x___Direct and indirect methods are implemented. | ____ A single type of assessment methods predominates. |
| ____Results are reported. | ____ No results are reported. |
| _x___Results are tied to closing the loop. | ____ Results are not clearly tied to closing the loop. |
| (Decision-making is tied to evidence.) | (Decision-making is not directly tied to evidence.) |

## OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

*We agree that it's time to rethink your program's assessment plan – not because it's such a flawed plan but because you haven't had an opportunity to do that in about 10 years and we'd guess that those years of experience have taught you a lot about the kinds of assessment information that is worth looking at and what's less useful, problematic to collect, difficult to analyze, etc. We'll be interested to see where this work takes you during the next cycle of assessment reviews.*

*As noted above, we encourage you to provide a bit more information in the results section since it's very difficult to tease out new results of assessment (as opposed to information collected in other ways or other years). It would also be useful to see a bit more detail on which methods actually yielded which kinds of data (and, in fact, to see examples of what the data looked like, e.g.: Did you use rubrics for scoring those final reports? Could we see some of the kinds of questions used in the focus group, along with a summary analysis of some of the findings?)*

*Finally, we were also pleased to see that you had considered your results and come up with a concrete plan for addressing an identified need.*

## MATERIALS REVIEWED

__X___ Annual report                                   __X___ Assessment plan (as posted)
_____ Appendices (cited in annual report)      __X___ Previous assessment review
_____ Other (please describe)

Reviewer(s):    Name             Joan Hawthorne__        _Paul Drechsel___        _____
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Section 1: __Y___     Section 2: __Y___     Section 3: __?___     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*