

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

DEPARTMENT School of LawDATE April 1, 2013PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW JD – Law (Professional)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 School of Law Assessment Plan posted on the UND Departmental Assessment Plans website is labeled as '12/08/05 DRAFT'. Important to note is that the mission of the School of Law included on its filed assessment plan does not match the 'Mission of the Unit' as stated in the FY2012 Annual Report or the 'curricular mission' articulated in the *Working Curriculum Strategic Plan* dated 11/19/2010. Moreover, the assessment plan on file includes ten 'Student Learning Competencies' that established a framework for curricular design and assessment practices, whereas the *Working Curriculum Strategic Plan* now articulates five principal 'learning objectives' on which the curriculum is based.

**2. ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- |  |                 |                |                           |
|--|-----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Were any specific assessment methods referenced?   | YES <u>    </u> | NO <u>X</u>    | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |
| • If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals?        | YES <u>    </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>    </u> | NO <u>    </u> | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>    </u> |

**Comments:** The annual assessment report indicated that "We followed the same assessment procedures as last year"; no specific methods were referenced. While there are numerous assessment methods referenced in the 2005 assessment plan, there is no clearly articulated alignment between that document and current practice at the School of Law.

**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. All that is referenced are 'initiatives' by the faculty toward major curriculum revision to be implemented in Fall 2013 (which are 'closing the loop' actions rather than results), but there is no indication of what, if anything, is driving the revisions; passing reference is made to the importance of students focusing on content more deeply (such as professionalism and professional identity), addressing limited faculty resources, and how forthcoming American Bar Association standards may address 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 curricular initiatives that emerged from their work on curriculum review and revision. Importantly, the faculty has determined that new curricular requirements include mandatory writing assignments and ethics/professionalism assignments. A new required first-year course, Professional Foundations, will also be designed and implemented. The School of Law faculty has created a Curriculum and Assessment Committee charged with important responsibilities including introduction of formative assessment to the curriculum, curriculum mapping, and establishing assessment rubrics.

**SUMMARY***Strengths*

- \_\_\_\_\_ A specific plan for assessment is in place.  
X 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.)

*Areas for Improvement*

- X 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:**

While clearly important and innovative work has been done by the faculty in the major revision of the law school curriculum, especially in Year 1, there is currently no alignment between the *Working Curriculum Strategic Plan* and the School of Law's assessment plan currently posted on the UND Departmental Assessment Plans website. Importantly, since no results of assessment methods were reported in FY2012, it is difficult to discern what, specifically, is driving the reported curricular revisions; it seems some data was used to inform change, but it is not clear if the data were directly related to assessment practices. A critical next step will be to update and submit a current assessment plan that reflects the school's mission, its stated learning objectives, its curriculum, and assessment methods that will promote ongoing improvement.

**MATERIALS REVIEWED**

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

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

Reviewer(s):	Name	Ken Ruit	Krista Lynn Minnotte	Wayne Barkhouse
	Department	Anatomy & Cell Biol.	Sociology	Physics & Astrophysics
	Phone Number	777-2570	777-4419	777-3520
	e-mail	kenneth.ruit@med.und.edu	krista.minnotte@und.edu	wayne.barkhouse@und.edu

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Section 1: Y    Section 2: NA    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*