

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2011-2012 Annual Reports
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT: Microbiology and Immunology

DATE: April 4, 2013

PROGRAM(S) COVERED IN REVIEW: MS and Ph.D. in Microbiology and Immunology

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW: Bradley Myers and Paul Dreschel

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 department stated that it is “undergoing a period of rebuilding” and that while it is conducting evaluations of students it does not feel that they will produce any meaningful data for two to three more years. The department has a clear, well-articulated assessment plan that addresses student learning. It appears, however, that this plan is in the process of being changed

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

- | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|------------------|
| Were any specific assessment methods referenced? | YES__ | NO__ | QUALIFIED Y/N__x |
| • If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals? | YES__ | NO__x | QUALIFIED Y/N |
| • Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a “multiple measures” approach? | YES__ | NO__x | QUALIFIED Y/N |

Comments: The department reported that it had stopped collecting “individual assessment tools from each individual involved with each event, to a single meeting in which the departmental faculty discuss and grade, using the published assessment tools, the success and/or failure of the department’s objectives.” It did not identify which the various assessment tools from their assessment plans they used.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

- | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|---------------|
| Were any assessment results reported? | YES__ | NO__x | QUALIFIED Y/N |
| • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals? | YES__ | NO__x | QUALIFIED Y/N |
| • 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: Other than the slight reference discussed in Section 1 above, the report did not report any 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 x

NO ____ QUALIFIED Y/N ____

Comments: Although the report does not directly tie the changes to assessment results, the department does report that it changed its “Qualify[sic] Exam and Comprehensive Exam (2011) to further emphasis[sic] the development of critical thinking skills.” It also report that it is making unspecified changes to graduate courses to “promote the development of critical thinking skills.”

SUMMARY

Strengths

- x A specific plan for assessment is in place.
- x Student learning goals are well-articulated.
- x Assessment methods are clearly described.
- x 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

- ____ 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.
- 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 Department of Microbiology and Immunology is in the midst of a self-identified “period of rebuilding.” While the department is clearly giving careful consideration to assessment during this process, its current assessment plan is not being implemented. The department reports, however, that it is adjusting its curriculum and assessment methods in response to the assessment activities it has conducted.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

- x Annual report
- ____ Appendices (cited in annual report)
- ____ Other (please describe)

- x Assessment plan (as posted)
- ____ Previous assessment review

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Section 1: Y Section 2: N Section 3: N 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 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