

**Senate University Assessment Committee
Annual Report for
Academic Year 2015-2016**

The Senate University Assessment Committee (UAC) provides faculty guidance and oversight to the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost in developing and implementing the University Assessment Plan. In addition, the committee analyzes and interprets assessment results, develops appropriate reports, and disseminates assessment results to the Office of Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost, the University Senate, and the community.

The University Assessment Committee was able to accomplish the tasks and responsibilities charged to it by the University Senate, in part due to the support provided by Joan Hawthorne, Director of Assessment & Regional Accreditation. The Committee is grateful for her continued support and expertise.

Much of the work of assessment has been, and is, conducted outside the University Assessment Committee. The UAC wishes to thank the Essential Studies Committee, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR), and the University community for their assessment efforts. Every contribution is vital to the assessment process at the University of North Dakota. Special thanks are also offered to Carmen Williams and Jodi Steiner who willingly shared their research expertise and UAC experience with the University Assessment Committee on an ongoing basis.

The Senate University Assessment Committee for the 2015-2016 academic year was chaired by Shari Nelson (VPSA Designee). Committee members for the 2015-2016 year included:

Mary Askim-Lovseth (BPA)
James Casler (JDO)
Kenneth Flanagan (Nursing & Professional Disciplines)
Surojit Gupta (CEM)
Devon Hansen (A&S)
Debra Hanson, MED
Joan Hawthorne (Director of Assessment & Regional Accreditation)
Bradley Myers (Law)
Shari Nelson (VPSA Designee)
C. Casey Ozaki (Graduate Studies Designee)
Deborah Worley (EHD)
Ryan Zerr (Director, Essential Studies)
Joseph Appianing, Graduate Student
Jodi Steiner (Recorder; Institutional Research)
Carmen Williams (VPAA Designee; Institutional Research)

One undergraduate student was asked to serve on the Assessment Committee but he did not participate.

Functions and Responsibilities of the University Assessment Committee

The University Senate has identified six areas of responsibility for the University Assessment Committee. The responsibilities of the Committee and its accomplishments during the 2015-2016 academic year are addressed as follows:

- I. Address all issues regarding assessment of student achievement and development.

The University Assessment Plan recognizes the role of the Academic Curriculum (implicit and explicit) in student learning and development. Through a review process of annual assessment reports, assessment plans, previous assessment reviews, and departmental documents, the assessment activities of departments and programs within the College of Education & Human Development, College of Nursing & Professional Disciplines, School of Medicine & Health Sciences, and School of Graduate Studies were reviewed in 2015-2016. The results were communicated to the department chairs through the Assessment Director.

The University Assessment Committee also conducted reviews of six non-academic units including: Dean of Students Office, Disability Services for Students, McNair Program (TRiO), Student Success Center,

Women's Center, and Writing Center. The Committee recognizes their contributions in the achievement of Institutional, Essential Studies, and Program goals relative to student learning and development. Finally, the committee reviewed four OIR (Office of Institutional Research) tools regularly used by various University stakeholders: (1) EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR) Undergraduate Students and Information Technology Survey, (2) ECAR Faculty and Information Technology Survey, (3) First Year Seminars Survey, and (4) the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

- II. Develop, review, and evaluate the University Assessment Plan in conjunction with the Assessment Director.

This document is to be reviewed every other year. The University Assessment Plan was reviewed in fall 2015. Minimal revisions were made to the document at that time. The plan should be reviewed again in fall 2017. To access the most recent version of the University Assessment Plan (November, 2015), please visit: http://und.edu/university-senate/committees/assessment/_files/docs/univ-asmt-plan.pdf

- III. Oversee and evaluate the implementation of the University Assessment Plan, evaluate assessment activities and the interpretation of assessment results, and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Plan.

Assessment of Student Learning and Development: Program Level

As previously indicated, the UAC reviewed the assessment documents for the departments and programs within the College of Education & Human Development, College of Nursing & Professional Disciplines, School of Medicine & Health Sciences, and School of Graduate Studies in Spring, 2016. The committee reviewed assessment plans and reports for 17 College of Education & Human Development programs, 4 College of Nursing & Professional Disciplines programs, and 16 School of Medicine & Health Sciences programs, including certificate, undergraduate, and graduate degree programs. The School of Graduate Studies was reviewed as a whole, as individual programs are reviewed when their host department is reviewed. Findings were documented and forwarded to departments through the Assessment Director.

The Assessment Director and the UAC continue to provide guidance to departments as they develop, implement, and make use of their assessment plans. Taken collectively, the reviews help determine the state of assessment for the University as a whole. In general, departments and programs have specific plans for assessment in place, and there are many programs where student learning goals are well-articulated in those assessment plans. Moreover, appropriate methods of assessment are implemented. However, the committee reviewed several programs where assessment methods need further description. A small number of programs did not provide any results of assessment activities or evidence of actions taken on the basis of assessment results.

Assessment of Student Learning and Development: Institutional Level

The University has many assessment tools at its disposal. As noted in section I, four tools were reviewed in the 2015-2016 academic year.

Tools that are administered by the Office of Institutional Research are a combination of national surveys, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and surveys that have been developed by UND for internal purposes, such as the First Year Seminars Survey. Many of the surveys do not directly measure student learning; they do address the infrastructures, conditions, and environmental components that promote and enhance student learning. Thus, even though survey findings are of special importance to administration, academic departments may also find results noteworthy in further understanding student learning.

Full reports of the OIR tools were directed to the Office of Institutional Research. UAC reviews were also forwarded to the respective administrative or academic departments via the Assessment Director and/or the Office of Institutional Research. Departmental chairs and individual faculty are encouraged to access survey results at <http://und.edu/research/institutional-research/survey-timelines.cfm> or by contacting the Assessment Director or the Office of Institutional Research.

In addition, information specifically for students about the findings of the surveys is available online: <http://und.edu/university-senate/committees/assessment/for-students.cfm>

Assessment of Non-Academic Units

It is recognized that many non-academic units have a direct involvement in student learning and development. As noted in section I, six non-academic units were reviewed during the 2015-2016 academic year. UAC committee members noted that non-academic programs do have assessment plans in place, and some programs include student learning goals in their plans. More and more non-academic departments are including student learning goals but there is still room for improvement. For many programs, a single type of assessment method also predominates. Strides are being made to tie the results in annual reports directly to decision-making within the unit. UAC reviews were forwarded to the respective units via the Assessment Director.

- IV. Make recommendations regarding how to address any deficiencies that are revealed by assessment activities.

A process for providing feedback from the Committee to administrators and departments continues to be provided by the institution's Assessment Director. Changes in the process continue as appropriate.

Additionally, a luncheon for Department Chairs and the Deans of those schools and colleges being reviewed is traditionally held during May of each year. Many members of the Assessment Committee attend and provide general comments about the assessment plans that were reviewed. Typically, three selected departments make brief presentations on developing and/or maintaining successful assessment systems. This year, however, due to budget constraints, this event did not occur. Attendees find this luncheon particularly helpful and it is hoped that funding will be reinstated in the near future.

It should be noted that the Assessment Committee review is viewed as advisory to departments and programs. Program review is the place where action should occur if deficiencies noted in the Assessment Committee reviews are not addressed.

- V. Review University Accreditation Report when issued and advise the Senate regarding the Report and its implications.

The Assessment Committee continues to support institutional efforts related to accreditation and will contribute as needed to help the institution prepare for the HLC focused visit in 2017.

- VI. Work with Institutional Research to keep the Assessment Committee's website current.

The Office of Institutional Research continues to maintain the Assessment Committee's website. Several key features of the site include: a section on the basic steps of writing an assessment plan, a section for students that describes key findings from OIR tools, resources for campus constituents about assessment, and resources for committee members who conduct reviews of assessment plans, including posting of the most up to date assessment review templates. In addition, the assessment plans of academic departments and non-academic units that attend to student learning and development are available to the campus and to the public on the Assessment Committee website. For more information, please visit: <http://und.edu/university-senate/committees/assessment/>

Summary: During 2015-2016, the University Assessment Committee fulfilled its purpose, function and responsibilities including annual reviews of academic and non-academic assessment activities, and OIR (Office of Instruction Research) tools, and a review of templates for assessment reviews.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shari Nelson University Assessment
Committee

October 11, 2016

