

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Feedback to Non-Academic Departments on Assessment Activities Reported in 2005-2006 Annual Reports

DEPARTMENT: Student Academic Services

DATE: 11/03/06

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Barbara Combs & Beth Bjerke

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- Were any goals referenced? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N
- If so, were goals well articulated? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N
- Do goals address student learning? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N

In addition to the Departmental goals, please also consider UND's Institutional and General Education goals for student learning (shown in alignment within parentheses). For each goal, use a Y (yes), N (no), or ? (qualified y/n or uncertain) to indicate whether this department has a similar or related goal.

- ? 1 Communication ("communicate effectively, both orally and in writing")
- N 2 Critical/creative thinking ("think critically and creatively" and "be intellectually curious and creative")
- N 3 Informed choices ("make informed choices")
- N 4 Understanding across disciplines ("understand how conclusions are reached in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and sciences" and "acquire knowledge over a broad spectrum of subject areas")
- N 5 Lifelong learning ("commit themselves to lifelong learning")
- N 6 Cross-cultural appreciation ("develop some familiarity with cultures other than their own")
- N 7 Service/citizenship ("commit themselves to...the service of others," and "share responsibility both for their communities and for the world")

Comments regarding Departmental goals and alignment of Departmental Goals with Institutional and General Education Goals: *The major goal as stated in the report is to "continue to provide strong programs and services to students, families, and campus constituents. The report shows clear and direct attention to this goal. While institutional and general education goals for student learning are not a focus of this department, two appear to be addressed peripherally through the programs and services this unit provides." Effective communication with advisors and families members is strongly encouraged. Also, helping students learn to "make informed choices" is a critical part of the advising process.*

Undergraduate and or Graduate, if appropriate:

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

- Were any specific assessment methods referenced? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N
- If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N
 - Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a "multiple measures" approach? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N

Comments: *This unit provided good description of general steps taken to assess programs and services offered noting that goals are first established then an evaluative instrument is created and additional methods (staff debriefings) are conducted where appropriate. Generally though, details are missing in the report that would connect assessments to goals. In the sections under Freshman Getting Started, Keep Going, and Transfer Getting Started, the report does not list the specific goals/outcomes for these program nor does it describe or provide an example of the evaluative instrument(s) or processes used. The information in Introduction to Student Life is more informative in that it stated that a pre-post instrument was piloted to determine student learning and results of student course evaluations were examined, but outcomes/goals that tie to the assessment were not listed. In the section, Academic Advisement no specific goals/outcomes are given, but the report does indicate that the evaluative instrument does identify them. There was no description of the instrument.*

Undergraduate and or Graduate, if appropriate:

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 ___	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 ___

In addition to departmental goals, some assessment results may be applicable to Institutional and General Education goals. A list of the latter goals is included below. Please indicate with a Y, N, or ? whether results reported are applicable to Institutional or General Education goal achievement. For items with a Y or a ?, please describe findings in the appropriate section below.

- ___?___ 1 Communication (“communicate effectively, both orally and in writing”)
___N___ 2 Critical/creative thinking (“think critically and creatively” and “be intellectually curious and creative”)
___?___ 3 Informed choices (“make informed choices”)
___N___ 4 Understanding across disciplines (“understand how conclusions are reached in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and sciences” and “acquire knowledge over a broad spectrum of subject areas”)
___N___ 5 Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”)
___N___ 6 Cross-cultural appreciation (“develop some familiarity with cultures other than their own”)
___N___ 7 Service/citizenship (“commit themselves to...the service of others,” and “share responsibility both for their communities and for the world”)

Comments regarding results and the application of results to Departmental, Institutional and General Education Goals: *In the area of Academic Advisement there was a very general reporting of results (“Though the return rate on the two evaluations tends to be low, the results indicate that students are pleased with the service that is provided through Student Academic services and feel prepared as they declare a major...”). The other areas did not provide an analysis of assessment results.*

The institutional and general education goals of communication and informed choices have potential and could be additional goals for this unit to address.

Undergraduate and or Graduate, if appropriate:

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 report as written does not provide the detail necessary to determine whether or not the results of an analysis of assessment methods, led to program changes. It appears that the year reporting in the document is a getting started year for assessment in Student Academic Services. There is evidence that tools of assessment were the focus of evaluation. Since the plan and commitment to assessment is clear, it is likely that next year’s report will include more information on the analysis of assessment results and program changes.*

Undergraduate and or Graduate, if appropriate:

SUMMARY

Strengths

Areas for Improvement

- A specific plan for assessment is in place.
- 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.)

- 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.
- 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:

Academic Learning Services has a commitment to assessing its programs and services in a manner that can promote continuous improvement. This report reveals a general structure that ties goals to assessments to analysis of results and action steps for positive change. The next step is to include a finer level of detail that articulates specific goals, provides at least descriptive information related to assessment tools and processes, outlines the results and provides information on specific action steps taken.

There is good potential for the inclusion of the assessment of the institutional and general education goals of "Communication" and "Informed Choices" since they seem to align well with the major goal as stated by this unit. They may wish to assess these learning goals in addition to those assessments of programs and services already in place.

It should be noted that our analysis and response is drawn from the assessment section in the annual report, and this report may not be well-designed to provide evidence in a way that clearly and completely addresses the assessment questions in this form.

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Section 1: Y N Section 2: ? NA Section 3: ? NA Section 4: ? NA

Coding Key:

- Y = yes, this is done appropriately and well
- 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