

December 9, 2009

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Non-Academic Units on Assessment Activities Reported in 2008-09 Annual Reports
NON-ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT McNair Program DATE 11/25/09

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Jo-Anne Yearwood, Joan Hawthorne

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

Comments:

In addition to Program goals, please also consider UND's Institutional and Essential Studies goals for student learning (shown in alignment within parentheses). Identify UND/Essential Studies goals which are similar to the referenced program goals.

- 1 Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”)
- 2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
- 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 departmental goals and alignment of program goals with institutional and Essential Studies goals:

We looked at the four goals cited in the McNair assessment report and noted that one goal aligns very closely with the ES information literacy goal.

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:

The assessment for the teamwork goal (evaluating involvement with a faculty mentor and a research project) seemed aligned with the goal language, e.g., but the information literacy goal language does not seem clearly aligned with the grad school information collected.

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

- Were any assessment results reported? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N
- If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N
 - If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N
 - Were the results tied to goals for student learning? YES NO QUALIFIED Y/N

Comments:

For the goals with a clear method alignment (teamwork and technology goal), results are also aligned and relevant in terms of goal achievement. Where the method alignment is less evident, it's more difficult to see the relevance of the

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results. Also, in regards to the information literacy goal, for example, the meaning of a 60% success rate (in achieving grad school enrollment) is unclear. Does this indicate a need for program change? Do McNair program staff consider this a satisfactory outcome? Any possible areas for improvement are not specified.

In addition to program goals, some assessment results may be applicable to institutional and Essential Studies goals. Please identify those results which are applicable to institutional/Essential Studies goal achievement. For indicated items, please describe findings below. .

- 1 Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”)
- 2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
- 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”)
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Comments regarding results and the application of results to programmatic, institutional and Essential Studies goals: Given that this was an area for which the method alignment was unclear, it is difficult to know how to interpret the findings.

4. CLOSING THE LOOP

Were any actions taken on the basis of assessment results reported?

YES _____ NO QUALIFIED Y/N _____

- If so, do curricular or other improvements/ changes arising from assessment results directly address goals for student learning?

YES _____ NO QUALIFIED Y/N _____

Comments:

We know data were collected but the report does not specify conclusions drawn from the data or any actions taken on the basis of it.

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:

We understand that the McNair program does have an assessment plan and we can see what appear to be program goals within the assessment report. However, the plan is not yet posted and therefore was unavailable to us at the time of review. Without that plan it is difficult to offer comments on the plan and methods beyond those earlier in this report. We do note that McNair staff are conducting assessment, which is very good to see. We mentioned that indirect assessment predominates. Although this is typical for non-academic programs, it is always worth considering whether there are means of expanding the types of data collected and considered. Perhaps after data have been collected for a longer period of time, evidence of program changes resulting from assessment will become available.

We note significant progress in assessment since the time of the last review (2006-07) – we’re happy to see staff are working on this!

MATERIALS REVIEWED

Annual report

Assessment plan (as posted)

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_____ Appendices (cited in annual report)
_____ Other (please describe)

___x___ Previous assessment review

NOTE: We learned at the end of our review that some information about assessment within the McNair program can be found under the Enrollment Management plan. However, the annual report seemed to include a clearer description of goals and, based on what we saw there, it appears that it might be worth fleshing out the McNair plan to reflect the program goals cited within the annual report.

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Section 1: ___Y___ Section 2: ___?___ Section 3: ___?___ Section 4: ___N___

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