

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Non-Academic Units on Assessment Activities Reported in 2009-10 Annual Reports
NON-ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT **Division of Continuing Education**

DATE **Jan 25, 2011**

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW **Dexter Perkins, JoAnne Yearwood**

1. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| • Were any goals referenced? | YES <u>x</u> ___ | NO ___ | QUALIFIED Y/N ___ |
| • If so, were goals well articulated? | YES ___ | NO ___ | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>x</u> ___ |
| • Do goals address student learning? | YES ___ | NO ___ | QUALIFIED Y/N <u>x</u> ___ |

Comments:

The information DCE has submitted is an assessment plan (not really an assessment report) that focuses on assessing the functionality of their program, with minimal emphasis on student learning. No assessment results are included, and, there is no indication what they do in response to the data they gather.

The plan lists the following goals:

1. To help students, clients, and participants complete admission and registration for individual courses, workshops, events, or full degree programs. Students, clients and participants will be able to make informed decisions and have the necessary forms and information to complete the process. They will know what is expected of them and what they are will be responsible for, including polices (sic) and procedures.
2. Online courses developed by the Division follow a course design process based on a course design matrix. The matrix identifies the learning objectives for each unit/lesson in the course; identifies the material presented to cover the learning objective, including readings, instructor notes, interactions, resources, etc.; and identifies the assessments/assignments used to determine if the learning objective has been meet. This matrix is also offered to faculty or content experts of any course administered by the Division as a tool to design and align their course materials.
3. Provide support to our customer during the process of completing their course, workshop, event or degree program. Where possible, gather information about the learning outcomes of the event or course.
4. Where possible, technology will be used to gather supporting information for student learning outcomes.

These goals are technical/administrative goals, not learning goals, for the most part. But they do reference learning goals. So, indirectly they address student learning.

In our opinion, a major shortcoming is that the report from DCE gives little specific information about learning goals in particular classes or programs that the division sponsors. So, it is not possible to determine if the programs/classes are successful, if the division gathers feedback that is valuable, or what is done with the information that is collected.

If time and person-power permit, the division might consider assessing learning in particular classes/programs. It may be impractical to do this for all division functions, however.

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:

The information given does not give evidence that the division goals are aligned with any of the above ES goals, but it is likely that specific courses/programs do. The Television Center (evaluated separately), for example, surely contributes to communication goals.

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

Were any specific assessment methods referenced?	YES_____	NO_____	QUALIFIED Y/N <u>x</u> _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, were specifically chosen assessment methods appropriately aligned with individual goals? 	YES_____	NO <u>x</u> _____	QUALIFIED Y/N _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were both direct and indirect assessment methods used as components of a “multiple measures” approach? 	YES_____	NO_____	QUALIFIED Y/N <u>x</u> _____

Comments:

Assessment methods are listed in quite general terms, often referring to the Kirkpatrick Model of learning assessment. In some cases, however, what is listed as an assessment method does not appear to be a description of an assessment method. Rather it is a description of procedures that are followed that might be used to gather data.

Referring to the four goals listed above:

Goal 1: Surveys (Kirkpatrick level 1) are administered to students “at the beginning and/or end of each course” to gather feedback regarding program administration and technical aspects of the programs. Additionally, DCE reports that unsolicited feedback is received and considered.

Goal 2: A survey (Level 1) is administered at the end of each course to obtain customer feedback, but no specifics are given regarding what kind of feedback. The report also says that Level Two information (measurement of learning outcomes) is obtained by way of the planning matrix, but no data is provided to support this contention. Additionally, DCE reports that unsolicited feedback is received and considered.

Goal 3: “A Level One and/or Level Two (Kirkpatrick Model) survey is administered at the end of each course to request the customer’s perspective.” Completion rates are calculated. Face-to-face meetings between students and faculty “gather information about all aspects of the learning experience, including content, presentation, customer service, support, etc.” Level Three (behavior changes/improvements) are sometimes “conducted six to nine months after the completion of a course, workshop, training event, or degree program . . . to determine and document the amount of new knowledge and/or skills that have been implemented at the worksite, as a result of the training provided by the Division.” Additionally, DCE reports that unsolicited feedback is received and considered.

Goal 4: The report says that “UND is using Blackboard tracking systems, student surveys, and LivePerson data to track student use and engagement with these technology elements to determine their value and benefit.”

3. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Were any assessment results reported?	YES_____	NO <u>x</u> _____	QUALIFIED Y/N _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they specifically affirm achievement of goals? 	YES_____	NO_____	QUALIFIED Y/N _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement? 	YES_____	NO_____	QUALIFIED Y/N _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the results tied to goals for student learning? 	YES_____	NO_____	QUALIFIED Y/N _____

Comments:

No assessment results are reported. The descriptions of procedures are, however, loosely tied to the four division goals.

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”)
- _____ 6 Diversity (“demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...”)
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Comments regarding results and the application of results to grammatical, institutional and Essential Studies goals:

This report and the assessment activities it describes are strongly directed at grammatical goals. The information is undoubtedly of great value to DCE in this regard.

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 x _____ QUALIFIED Y/N _____

Comments:

There is no description of specific actions that were taken, but there are multiple places where the report says that the information gathered is used to make changes to improve the program. It seems likely, however, that the changes are not directly tied to student learning but, instead, are directed toward improved product delivery.

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.
- x Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
- _____ Assessment methods are not clearly described.
- x 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 information DCE has submitted is an assessment plan that focuses on assessing the functionality of their program, with minimal emphasis on student learning. However, few specifics are given. And, there is no indication what they do in response to the data they gather.

We suggest that DCE do three things:

1. Begin to collect information about learning outcomes for some specific classes/programs in order to determine the best way to collect and use such data.
2. Develop a matrix that specifically ties programmatic goals with specific assessment techniques, and that describes what is done with the outcomes.
3. Include assessment outcomes in future assessment reports.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

_____ Annual report
_____ Appendices (cited in annual report)
____x____ Other (please describe) Report titled "Division of Continuing Education FY 10 Assessment Plan and Report"

_____ Assessment plan (as posted)
_____ Previous assessment review

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Section 1: __N__ Section 2: _N____ Section 3: _N____ 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 reported
- ? = action or progress is apparent; however, evidence is lacking that this is completely and appropriately done