

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
Feedback to Non-Academic Units on Assessment Activities Reported in AY09 & 10 Reports

NON-DEGREE GRANTING PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT Essential Studies DATE 12/08/11

COMMITTEE MEMBER(S) CONDUCTING REVIEW Roxanne Hurley & Paul Drechsel

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 University Plan for Assessment of Student Learning (2010) includes the ES goals and student learning objectives and provides a very detailed explanation of the university assessment process. 2011 Goals of Essential Studies at UND are posted on the Registrars website. There are four overall goals (thinking & reasoning, communication, information literacy, diversity) with specific student learning outcomes clearly identified for each goal.

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.

- X 1 Communication – written or oral (“able to write and speak in various settings with a sense of purpose/audience”)
- X 2 Thinking and reasoning – critical thinking (or “be intellectually curious”; analyze, synthesize, evaluate)
- X 3 Thinking and reasoning – creative thinking (or “be intellectually creative”; explore, discover, engage)
- X 4 Thinking and reasoning – quantitative reasoning (“apply empirical data...analyze graphical information”)
- X 5 Information literacy (“be able to access and evaluate...for effective, efficient, and ethical use”)
- X 6 Diversity (“demonstrate understanding of diversity and use that understanding...”)
- X 7 Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”)
- X 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 University Assessment Plan is very well developed and clearly articulates student learning goals & objectives related to Essential Study goals for the institution.

2. ASSESSMENT METHODS

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

Comments: To be part of the ES program, faculty must have the course validated by the Essential Studies committee and the course must be revalidated every four years. Faculty are required to explain how the course activities/assignments help students practice the ES goal and what assessment methods (direct & indirect) are used to determine if students are meeting the ES objectives. UND USAT forms which students complete at the end of each course include questions about each of the Essential Studies goals & meeting of the learning objectives. Direct assessment data will be compiled by the ES Committee during the revalidation process (which will begin in 2012). Direct assessment of student-generated materials produced within the Capstone courses, (generated near the time of graduation) is being reviewed on a rotating base. Indirect measures (transcript analysis) are planned for every four years to provide information about the degree to which university graduates are enrolling in courses designed to aid learning related to the ES goals. Other data from annual reports of academic department, student services, and surveys administered by the office of Institutional Research also will provide indirect evidence regarding achievement of ES goals.

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___	QUALIFIED Y/N ___X___
• If so, were the results clear in terms of how they indicate need for improvement?	YES___	NO___	QUALIFIED Y/N ___X___
• Were the results tied to goals for student learning?	YES___	NO___	QUALIFIED Y/N ___X___

Comments: *Currently there is little data available to analyze. 2010-11 saw the first students under Essential Studies graduate and 2011-12 is the first year that a majority of graduates are under ES and Capstone courses are in place for all students. The first cycle of course revalidations will be completed in spring 2012. Direct assessment of student generated materials from capstone courses is currently being conducted. A summary of all USAT Responses by Essential Study Area (Spring 2011) was reviewed.*

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...”)
- 7 Lifelong learning (“commit themselves to lifelong learning”)
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Comments regarding results and the application of results to programmatic, institutional and Essential Studies goals:

The Summary of Spring 2011 USAT Responses by Essential Study Area reported an overall mean score of 3.2 (scale: Not at all (1) to greatly (4) with a range of scores between 2.8 – 3.3. It was noted that a large number of students responded N/A or no response to these questions.

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 ES Office Director reports for AY 09 & AY 10 were reviewed which discussed program accomplishments, challenges and goals. The ES Committee annual reports for AY 09 & AY 10 were reviewed which discussed the committee work and how the program has changed based on course validations, revalidations and petitions from students.*

SUMMARY

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Areas for Improvement</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A specific plan for assessment is in place.	<input type="checkbox"/> No specific plan for assessment is in place.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student learning goals are well-articulated.	<input type="checkbox"/> Student learning goals are not well-articulated.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are clearly described.	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are not clearly described.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are appropriately selected.	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are not appropriately selected.
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are well-implemented.	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods are not well-implemented.
<input type="checkbox"/> Direct and indirect methods are implemented.	<input type="checkbox"/> A single type of assessment methods predominates.
<input type="checkbox"/> Results are reported.	<input type="checkbox"/> No results are reported.
<input type="checkbox"/> Results are tied to closing the loop. (Decision-making is tied to evidence.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Results are not clearly tied to closing the loop. (Decision-making is not directly tied to evidence.)

OVERALL SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: *We would like to acknowledge the exceptional work completed to develop this program and move the university to the new ES system. It is apparent that much work has been*

done to develop an assessment plan and in the near future data collection can be analyzed to inform closing the loop activities. The ES Office is planning to complete a full program review in AY 2012 and then on a 5 year cycle. It is recommended that some type of annual report be completed for the office of ES to include assessment analysis and closing the loop from the institutional perspective of student learning& goals related to ES. We further support the need to continue educating faculty and students about the importance of completing the ES questions on the USAT forms or revise the format of the questions on the USAT forms to improve the student response rate.

MATERIALS REVIEWED

- Annual report (ES Committee, AY 9 & 10)
- Appendices (cited in annual report)
- Other (ES Director Reports, AY 09, 10)
- Assessment plan (as posted)
- Previous assessment review

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Section 1: _Y_ Section 2: _Y_ Section 3: _Y_ Section 4: _?_

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