

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

Beginning in January, 2006, The Graduate School initiated a revised schedule and process for periodic graduate program evaluations. These evaluations are completed in accordance with the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education Policy 403.1.2, Institutional Instructional Program Evaluation. These evaluations, administered by the Dean of The Graduate School, were revised to make them more timely, and to incorporate what the Council of Graduate Schools refers to as “Best Practices” in graduate program evaluations. The Program Review Schedule is available on The Graduate School Web site:

<http://graduateschool.und.edu/assessment>

Please check this site at regular intervals for updates and other information related to assessment and program evaluation.

Purpose of Assessment and Program Evaluation: The assessment and evaluation of graduate programs at UND is designed to be an ongoing process that will integrate the formal self-study and peer reviewed evaluation of the graduate programs every seven years, with the ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes and program goals that can be reported annually. In a recent Policy Statement the Council of Graduate Schools stated that “...it is important that formal review and continuous outcomes assessment be seen as parts of the same whole, with a common goal of improving the quality of graduate education.” (Assessment and Review of Graduate Programs: A Policy Statement. Council of Graduate Schools, 2005, p. 9). We embrace this statement and encourage the Graduate Faculty to view assessment as a means of continuous improvement, not just data collection.

The Program Evaluation Process: The process of program evaluation involves the development of a self-study by the program. The Graduate School provides a template, including a core data set, to the program that is to be used in completing the self-study. The program is asked to provide evaluative, insightful interpretation of these data to demonstrate how well the program has been able to fulfill its mission and goals. In addition, the self-study provides the program an opportunity to report on the student learning outcomes data that the program has gathered and evaluated, as well as how the results of the assessments of student learning outcomes have been used in program modifications and reported in their annual reports.

The Dean of The Graduate School appoints two members from the graduate faculty to serve on the program evaluation team, along with the Associate Dean of The Graduate School. The evaluation team will review the self-study, interview the program’s graduate faculty and survey the program’s graduate students and

alumni. The evaluation team then will write a summary report, distribute copies to the program and college dean, present their findings to the Graduate Committee for comment, and forward a final draft with specific recommendations to the dean of the Graduate School for review. The Dean and Associate Dean of The Graduate School will schedule a meeting with Provost to present the findings of the evaluation. The Program Director, Department Chair and College Dean will be present at the meeting with the Provost. Upon acceptance of the final report the Provost will inform the State Board of Higher Education of the review and make available any information relevant to the review that the SBHE requests.

A master schedule has been established that will result in the completion of one complete cycle of graduate program evaluations by December, 2010. The master schedule for program evaluations is available on the Graduate School's Web page (<http://graduateschool.und.edu/assessment>).

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