2007-2008 Annual Assessment Update Graduate Results

The Annual Assessment Update was implemented in academic year 2003-2004. This assessment requires that each academic program in the university submit an Annual Update Form at the end of the academic year reporting on two assessment activities that have been undertaken that year. The format of the Annual Update Form calls for 1) an explanation of the assessment methods, 2) the student learning outcomes addressed by the methods, 3) evidence of findings, and 4) use of assessment results. In 2007, the University Assessment Panel (UAP) set the target for success in compliance with submitting the Annual Update Forms at 100 percent. Likewise, the UAP set the target for success in each section of the Annual Update Forms at 100 percent. A copy of the full 2007-2008 Annual Assessment Update Report can be found at http://www.niu.edu/assessment/annualupdate/index.shtml. As can be seen in Table 1, compliance with the Annual Assessment Update among graduate programs steadily increased over the first three years the assessment was in place and reached the UAP's target of 100 percent the past two years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Number of Submissions</th>
<th>Total Number of Graduate Programs</th>
<th>Percent Compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon their submission, the Annual Update Forms are reviewed by the Director of Assessment Services and other staff in the Office of Assessment Services (OAS). A standardized checklist for review is used to provide feedback to academic programs on their assessment efforts. Two additional criteria were added to the checklist in academic year 2006-2007 in order to encourage greater specificity in the description of methods and measurement of student learning outcomes (see Appendix A for a list of the Annual Assessment Update criteria). These changes are reflected in the results that are described in this report.

A database has been developed and maintained that includes tracking and feedback for the Annual Assessment Updates. This database allows for the reporting of summary assessment data, including the percent of criteria that were met as well as the percent of programs that met the criteria in each of the four sections. These data are presented in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Use of Results</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>99% (91%)</td>
<td>98% (74%)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>92% (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>97% (90%)</td>
<td>95% (83%)</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>90% (85%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Percent met includes both “Met” and “Partially Met” for original 13 criteria on Annual Update Checklist. Percent met in parentheses includes both “Met” and “Partially Met” for the 13 criteria on the revised Annual Update Checklist.*
As indicated in Table 2, for graduate programs across the university, the percent of criteria that were met or partially met for each of the four sections over the past five years has generally increased. The percent of criteria that were met or partially met in the Methods and Student Learning Outcomes sections significantly decreased in academic year 2006-2007 due to the two new criteria that were added to the checklist. For example, the percent of criteria that were met or partially met in the Student Learning Outcomes section decreased from 95 percent in 2005-2006 to 74 percent in 2006-2007. Without the addition of the new criteria, the percent of criteria that were met or partially met in this section would have increased from 95 to 98 percent. One of these criteria was added to the Methods section, requesting programs to include any surveys, rubrics, and/or other assessment tools that were used. The second criterion was added to the Student Learning Outcomes section, requesting programs to set specific targets in order to measure success relevant to the student learning outcomes listed.

Results indicate that for academic year 2007-2008, the only improvement in assessment practices among graduate programs across the university was seen in the development of clear and measurable learning outcomes. This was an area that was identified for improvement and has been recently emphasized in workshops organized jointly by the OAS and the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center. Dr. Stephen Zervas and Linda Suskie, two recognized experts in assessment, both addressed this topic during workshops they conducted at NIU. The only area that saw a substantial decline for academic year 2007-2008 was the Use of Results section. This decrease can be attributed to the call for more specific descriptions of the ways in which the results were used to improve the program to aid in the achievement of student learning outcomes. These results indicate the need for additional progress in each of the four sections on the Annual Assessment Updates through the provision of more thorough reporting of assessment practices in graduate programs across campus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Use of Results</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>96% (51%)</td>
<td>97% (27%)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>60% (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>92% (51%)</td>
<td>93% (58%)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>58% (32%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percent met includes both “Met” and “Partially Met” for original 15 criteria on Annual Update Checklist. Percent met in parentheses includes both “Met” and “Partially Met” for the 15 criteria on the revised Annual Update Checklist.

While the percent of criteria that were met in each of the four sections seem to indicate that a majority of graduate programs across the university are performing at a satisfactory level, the results listed in Table 3 indicate that more progress needs to be made within each of the individual programs. The percent of academic programs that have met the criteria in each of the four areas has generally increased over the past five years; however, review of the Annual Update Checklists indicated that there is still progress to be made in several areas. In addition, although several graduate programs should be commended for the vast improvement they have made in meeting the criteria for each Annual Assessment Update area over the past year (up from 15 percent in 2006-2007 to 32 percent in 2007-2008), review of the Annual Update Checklists revealed that there is a need for greater continuity across each of the assessment components. In particular, continuity needs to be improved in linking
reported results to specific student learning outcomes and describing how these results were used to improve the program to aid in the achievement of these learning outcomes.

Specific results regarding the percent of individual criteria that received met, partially met, and unmet ratings in each of the four areas for graduate programs across the total university and the Colleges of Business, Education, Engineering and Engineering Technology, Health and Human Sciences, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts are provided.
Note: Criterion 1: Two distinct assessment methods are listed; Criterion 2: All assessment methods discussed in "Evidence" are listed in "Methods"; Criterion 3: Methods are relevant to the Learning Outcomes; Criterion 4: Methods are clearly defined; Criterion 5: Methods listed are appropriate means of assessment; Criterion 6: Surveys, rubrics, and/or other assessment tools are included as appropriate.
NIU Graduate Programs- Student Learning Outcomes Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note. Criterion 1: Learning Outcomes are clearly stated; Criterion 2: Learning Outcomes are measurable; Criterion 3: Learning Outcomes include a numeric target for success.

NIU Graduate Programs- Evidence Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note. Criterion 1: A summary of the data from each assessment method is provided; Criterion 2: Data provided are relevant to the assessment method; Criterion 3: Data provided are stated in measurable terms as defined by "Learning Outcomes".

NIU Graduate Programs- Use of Results Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note. Criterion 1: Results used are relevant to findings mentioned in "Evidence"; Criterion 2: Results used are in an effort to improve/maintain the program as indicated by assessment; Criterion 3: Results used are relevant to student learning outcomes.
Note. Criterion 1: Learning Outcomes are clearly stated. Criterion 2: Learning Outcomes are measurable; Criterion 3: Learning Outcomes include a numeric target for success.

Note. Criterion 1: A summary of the data from each assessment method is provided. Criterion 2: Data provided are relevant to the assessment method. Criterion 3: Data provided are stated in measurable terms as defined by "Learning Outcomes".

Note. Criterion 1: Results used are relevant to findings mentioned in "Evidence"; Criterion 2: Results used are in an effort to improve/maintain the program as indicated by assessment; Criterion 3: Results used are relevant to student learning outcomes.
College of Education Graduate Programs- Methods Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note. Criterion 1: Two distinct assessment methods are listed. Criterion 2: All assessment methods discussed in "Evidence" are listed in "Methods". Criterion 3: Methods are relevant to the Learning Outcomes. Criterion 4: Methods are clearly defined; Criterion 5: Methods listed are appropriate means of assessment; Criterion 6: Surveys, rubrics, and/or other assessment tools are included as appropriate.
College of Education Graduate Programs - Student Learning Outcomes Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note: Criterion 1: Learning Outcomes are clearly stated. Criterion 2: Learning Outcomes are measurable; Criterion 3: Learning Outcomes include a numeric target for success

College of Education Graduate Programs - Evidence Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note: Criterion 1: A summary of the data from each assessment method is provided. Criterion 2: Data provided are relevant to the assessment method. Criterion 3: Data provided are stated in measurable terms as defined by "Learning Outcomes"

College of Education Graduate Programs - Use of Results Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note: Criterion 1: Results used are relevant to findings mentioned in "Evidence"; Criterion 2: Results used are in an effort to improve/maintain the program as indicated by assessment; Criterion 3: Results used are relevant to student learning outcomes
College of Engineering & Engineering Technology Graduate Programs- Methods Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note: Criterion 1: Two distinct assessment methods are listed; Criterion 2: All assessment methods discussed in "Evidence" are listed in "Methods"; Criterion 3: Methods are relevant to the Learning Outcomes; Criterion 4: Methods are clearly defined; Criterion 5: Methods listed are appropriate means of assessment; Criterion 6: Surveys, rubrics, and/or other assessment tools are included as appropriate
College of Engineering & Engineering Technology Graduate Programs
Student Learning Outcomes Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Criterion 1: Learning Outcomes are clearly stated; Criterion 2: Learning Outcomes are measurable; Criterion 3: Learning Outcomes include a numeric target for success.

College of Engineering & Engineering Technology Graduate Programs - Evidence Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Criterion 1: A summary of the data from each assessment method is provided; Criterion 2: Data provided are relevant to the assessment method; Criterion 3: Data provided are stated in measurable terms as defined by "Learning Outcomes".

College of Engineering & Engineering Technology Graduate Programs - Use of Results Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Criterion 1: Results used are relevant to findings mentioned in "Evidence"; Criterion 2: Results used are in an effort to improve/maintain the program as indicated by assessment; Criterion 3: Results used are relevant to student learning outcomes.
Note. Criterion 1: Two distinct assessment methods are listed. Criterion 2: All assessment methods discussed in "Evidence" are listed in "Methods"; Criterion 3: Methods are relevant to the Learning Outcomes; Criterion 4: Methods are clearly defined; Criterion 5: Methods listed are appropriate means of assessment; Criterion 6: Surveys, rubrics, and/or other assessment tools are included as appropriate.
College of Health & Human Sciences Graduate Programs - Student Learning Outcomes Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Criterion 1: Learning Outcomes are clearly stated; Criterion 2: Learning Outcomes are measurable; Criterion 3: Learning Outcomes include a numeric target for success.

College of Health & Human Sciences Graduate Programs - Evidence Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Criterion 1: A summary of the data from each assessment method is provided; Criterion 2: Data provided are relevant to the assessment method; Criterion 3: Data provided are stated in measurable terms as defined by "Learning Outcomes."

College of Health & Human Sciences Graduate Programs - Use of Results Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Criterion 1: Results used are relevant to findings mentioned in "Evidence"; Criterion 2: Results used are in an effort to improve/maintain the program as indicated by assessment; Criterion 3: Results used are relevant to student learning outcomes.
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Graduate Programs - Methods Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note: Criterion 1: Two distinct assessment methods are listed; Criterion 2: All assessment methods discussed in "Evidence" are listed in "Methods"; Criterion 3: Methods are relevant to the Learning Outcomes; Criterion 4: Methods are clearly defined; Criterion 5: Methods listed are appropriate means of assessment; Criterion 6: Surveys, rubrics, and/or other assessment tools are included as appropriate.
Note. Criterion 1: Learning Outcomes are clearly stated; Criterion 2: Learning Outcomes are measurable; Criterion 3: Learning Outcomes include a numeric target for success.

Note. Criterion 1: A summary of the data from each assessment method is provided; Criterion 2: Data provided are relevant to the assessment method; Criterion 3: Data provided are stated in measurable terms as defined by "Learning Outcomes".

Note. Criterion 1: Results used are relevant to findings mentioned in "Evidence"; Criterion 2: Results used are in an effort to improve/maintain the program as indicated by assessment; Criterion 3: Results used are relevant to student learning outcomes.
College of Visual & Performing Arts Graduate Programs - Methods Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note. Criterion 1: Two distinct assessment methods are listed; Criterion 2: All assessment methods discussed in "Evidence" are listed in "Methods"; Criterion 3: Methods are relevant to the Learning Outcomes; Criterion 4: Methods are clearly defined; Criterion 5: Methods listed are appropriate means of assessment; Criterion 6: Surveys, rubrics, and/or other assessment tools are included as appropriate.
College of Visual & Performing Arts Graduate Programs- Student Learning Outcomes Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note: Criterion 1: Learning Outcomes are clearly stated; Criterion 2: Learning Outcomes are measurable; Criterion 3: Learning Outcomes include a numeric target for success

College of Visual & Performing Arts Graduate Programs- Evidence Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note: Criterion 1: A summary of the data from each assessment method is provided; Criterion 2: Data provided are relevant to the assessment method; Criterion 3: Data provided are stated in measurable terms as defined by "Learning Outcomes"

College of Visual & Performing Arts Graduate Programs- Use of Results Section
2003-2004 through 2007-2008

Note: Criterion 1: Results used are relevant to findings mentioned in "Evidence"; Criterion 2: Results used are in an effort to improve/maintain the program as indicated by assessment; Criterion 3: Results used are relevant to student learning outcomes
Appendix A

Annual Assessment Update Criteria

Methods

1) Two distinct assessment methods are listed
2) All assessment methods discussed in “Evidence” are listed in “Methods”
3) Methods are relevant to the Learning Outcomes
4) Methods are clearly defined
5) Methods listed are appropriate means of assessment
6) Surveys, rubrics, and/or other assessment tools are included as appropriate

Student Learning Outcomes

1) Learning Outcomes are clearly stated
2) Learning Outcomes are measurable
3) Learning Outcomes include a numeric target for success

Evidence

1) A summary of the data from each assessment method is provided
2) Data provided are relevant to the assessment method
3) Data provided are stated in measurable terms as defined by “Learning Outcomes”

Use of Results

1) Results used are relevant to findings mentioned in “Evidence”
2) Results used are in an effort to improve/maintain the program as indicated by assessment
3) Results used are relevant to student learning outcomes

Note. * = Criterion added in academic year 2006-2007