Annual Departmental Assessment Report

Department or Program: <u>PhD Program</u>
Academic Year of Report: <u>2017-2018</u>
Department Contact Person for Assessment: <u>Ryan Wilson</u>

Section 1: Learning Objectives Assessed for this Report

For each major in the department, list the learning objectives that were assessed during this period.

PhD Program

1. *Our students will acquire advanced knowledge relevant to their areas of specialization.*
2. *Our students will develop advanced research skills for their areas of specialization.*
3. *Our students will be able to assume teaching responsibilities at high-quality colleges and universities.*
4. *Our students will successfully graduate and place at high-quality, research-focused colleges and universities.*

Section 2: Assessment Activities

For each learning outcome, describe what information was collected, how it was analyzed and discussed, and the conclusions that were drawn from the analysis. In the narrative, reference all relevant means of collecting information about learning goals, including direct measures (e.g. assessment of student assignments), indirect measures (e.g. overall grade patterns in a particular course, student reflections on learning, SERU data), and qualitative information (e.g. faculty observations, student input). While the choice of which assessments are most meaningful is up to the department, a mix of direct and indirect measures is requested.

1. *Our students will acquire advanced knowledge relevant to their areas of specialization.*

Note: We will assess AY17-18 data for this goal during our Winter 2019 meeting. Information on this goal is based on discussions during the 17-18 AY with 16-17 data.

To assess this goal, we looked at the percent of doctoral students for one cohort that passed their comprehensive exams within two attempts AND those that advanced to candidacy by June of their 3rd year (which requires a summer paper submission, approval, and presentation in addition to passing comps). We gather this information through our internal tracking spreadsheet.

The data was forwarded to the PhD Committee and discussed during the Winter 2018 meeting. The committee discussed the failure of a particular student to advance to candidacy was due to not passing their paper requirement, despite efforts to counsel them through the process.

2. *Our students will develop advanced research skills for their areas of specialization.*

To assess this goal, we looked at the percent of advanced doctoral students for one cohort that have: presented their own research at major external venues, co-authored with LCB faculty, and presented their

research at *any* external venue (including regional conferences and off-campus workshops). We gather this information mainly through our Best Award program, which provides money to students for these efforts. In some cases, we reached out directly to students for information if it was unclear based on the Best Award tracking.

The data was forwarded to the PhD Committee and discussed during the Fall 2018 meeting. Though we did not meet our goals in this area, we still view the statistics as relatively successful. Last year, we changed the annual evaluations to incorporate AoL goals. While most departments used them, this information reiterates the importance of using the adjusted format. Through the annual evaluation process, we can ensure that the coordinators are putting presentation expectations on the radar of students moving into their 3rd, 4th, and 5th years. Coordinators can communicate expectations more clearly and give them suggestions for possible venues to accomplish this goal.

3. ***Our students will be able to assume teaching responsibilities at high-quality colleges and universities.***

To assess this goal, we looked at one year's worth of teacher ratings data for our PhD students, and reported: percent of students with Exceptional or Good Instructional Quality AND percent of courses with Above a 3.0 Average Instructional Quality. Data was collected through course evaluations and sent to the PhD Committee and discussed at the Fall 2018 meeting. Faculty observed that Lundquist PhD students teach much more relative to comparator schools and that could be affecting results negatively. They continue to request the teaching workload be decreased for PhD students. The committee is exploring an option for students to serve as TAs when they begin or when they receive poor teaching evaluations. By doing this, they can receive mentorship while participating in the teaching of a course from beginning to end.

4. ***Our students will successfully graduate and place at high-quality, research-focused colleges and universities.***

Note: We will assess AY17-18 data for this goal during our Winter 2019 meeting. Information on this goal is based on discussions during the 17-18 AY with 16-17 data.

To assess this goal, we looked at the percent of graduates placed in academic positions generally, academic positions at doctorate-granting universities, and academic placements at major business doctorate-granting universities. Data is collected when students are graduating or during the job market.

The committee discussed the importance of advising students through the job market and how advising plays a strong role in informing the goals students have for themselves and the decisions they make when offered jobs outside of a research university. It was concluded that more can be done to adjust the shared culture of the PhD program's focus on research and expectations for placement.

Section 3: Actions Taken Based on Assessment Analysis

For each learning goal assessed for each major, describe any actions taken as a result of assessment information, or plans to take action during the next academic year. Describe how the actions or action plans are meant to address the issues arrived at through the assessment activities in Section 2.

1. ***Our students will acquire advanced knowledge relevant to their areas of specialization.***

Advisor/student relationships were identified as a strong factor in this step and so departments within the program have worked to provide mentorship from senior advisors to less seasoned advisors. They help to measure the health of the student/advisor relationship.

2. Our students will develop advanced research skills for their areas of specialization.

We will reiterate the importance of using the updated faculty annual evaluation form for PhD students. This way, we can ensure that the coordinators are putting presentation expectations on the radar of students moving into their 3rd, 4th, and 5th years. Coordinators can communicate expectations more clearly and give them suggestions for possible venues to accomplish this goal.

3. Our students will be able to assume teaching responsibilities at high-quality colleges and universities.

The program will look into options for students to serve as TAs in their first terms of teaching or when they receive poor teaching evaluations. By doing this, they can receive mentorship while participating in the teaching of a course from beginning to end.

4. Our students will successfully graduate and place at high-quality, research-focused colleges and universities.

The PhD program modified the annual self- and faculty evaluations to include AoL goals and milestones so students can see their progress toward ideal placement; including discussion of AoL goals at new student orientation; and, providing annual department-specific data to Coordinators about their cohort's learning goals.

Section 4: Other Efforts to Improve the Student Educational Experience

Briefly describe other continuous improvement efforts that are not directly related to the learning goals above. In other words, what activity has the department engaged in to improve the student educational experience? This might include changes such as curriculum revisions, new advising approaches, revised or new co-curricular activities, etc. Describe the rationale for the change(s) and any outcomes resulting from the change(s).

- Teaching workshops, open meetings/events to solicit feedback and build community, clarification of policies including probation processes that help faculty and students move students forward, alignment of the annual evaluation process with learning goals, IT meetings/access to better software programs. We have a student representative on the PhD committee that can bring concerns from students to the meetings and engage in the discussion/decisions based on student perspectives.

Section 5: Plans for Next Year

Briefly describe tentative assessment plans for the next academic year. Which goals will be assessed and how? What actions will be taken as a result of this years' analysis of assessment information? What other plans does the department have to improve the student educational experience? What are the budgetary implications of any proposed actions? How will those be addressed?

- We assess all four goals annually and will continue to do so.

- Having PhD students reduce their courseload or serve as TAs rather than main instructors could have major budgetary implications which is why it is tasked to "explore" this option, rather than immediately implement.

- Meet with coordinators to discuss best practices in annual evaluations.

- Continue fundraising efforts to augment Best Funds. Helps current students and assists with recruitment.