Assessment Report: July 1, 2012—June 30, 2013

Program Assessed: Applied Behavioral Science (ABS) M.A. Program

Assessment Coordinator: Karen Lahm, Program Director

Year 4 of a 5 year cycle

1. Assessment Measures Employed:

   - Our year 4 tasks were as follows:

   1) Collect and evaluate projects and theses

   2) Hold focus group (NOTE: was not able to get a focus group together due to lack of student response to the request).

2. Assessment Findings:

   Approved ABS Learning Outcomes:
   a. Students will master graduate level knowledge concerning computer based research skills.
   b. Students will master graduate level quantitative and qualitative skills as appropriate to the study of criminal justice.
   c. Students will master formal graduate writing skills appropriate for the creation of graduate theses/projects and research articles.
   d. Students will master the skills of reviewing applied programs (e.g. a program for felons whose crimes are tied to alcohol abuse) in terms of the extant literature, logical cohesion and current empirical knowledge.
   e. Students will be able to use their skills in the creation and administration of applied programs in both public and private agencies.

   *Outcomes b & c were assessed with measure 1 (thesis/project analysis)

Findings: Measure 1 (Evaluation of projects/theses): Analysis of 15 ABS projects (the total number that were completed in the above referenced time frame) revealed substantial success in the attainment of learning outcomes b and c. Specifically, the Project Evaluation Check Sheet revealed 100% attainment on indicators 1, 2, and 3. There was over 90% attainment on indicators 4 and 5. Another one in particular had very inconsistent citations. In terms of indicator 7, there were four projects that had poorly spaced and inappropriate tables (73% success). There was over 90% success regarding indicator 6. However, one project specifically contained several grammar and punctuation errors throughout it. Overall, the data indicate an extremely high rate of success in attainment of the targeted learning objectives.
3. Response to Assessment Findings:
   We need to improve our response rates on surveys and get students to show up at focus
group discussions. Perhaps having an electronic or a web-based focus group might solicit more
participation. We may need to offer a greater incentive (i.e. gift card raffle, etc.) for students to
participate in focus groups. We offered a new seminar on Sex Offenders, but we really need to
create some new seminars. We have several more students (10) involved in internships over the
past two years than in several years prior and this will help with job placement. We are also
actively monitoring internships, which we have not done in the past. We are trying to address
the student’s need for help with job placement.

4. Assessment Activities for Coming Year:
   We will be collecting projects and theses to assess learning outcomes b and c (see above)
and reviewing assessment procedures and results. We will work on improving our
response rates to surveys, focus groups solicitations, etc. We will also be working on a
rubric for assessing ABS 7120 projects (similar to the check sheet for projects and
theses). We will also be working on getting alumni involved in the ABS program via
focus group discussions (positives and negatives of the program, job placement,
community contacts, etc.). A new director started August 15th, 2013.

5. University Learning Outcome Assessment:
   We will assess University Learning Outcome #1 and #2. We will examine a sample of
projects and theses (ABS 7800 and 7910, respectively) for the specified time frame against these
outcomes.
**Appendix A: Evaluation of Thesis and Projects for ABS Program**

1. Research involves analysis of quantitative or qualitative data  
   
   ![Yes/No choice]  

   Generally acceptable in the social sciences

2. Research involves a clear and explicit research question or hypothesis related to the fields of criminal justice or social problems.  
   
   ![Yes/No choice]  

3. Contains (when appropriate) a title, abstract, literature review statement of methodology, description of data and findings, analysis and conclusions drawn from the data, and applied implications of the research. (Circle any missing or inadequate)
   
   ![Yes/No choice]  

4. Citations, notes, and references presented in style generally acceptable in the social sciences.
   
   ![Yes/No choice]  

6. Relatively error free in terms of grammar and punctuation.  
   
   ![Yes/No choice]  

7. Graphs, charts, tables are in APA or other approved style  
   
   ![Yes/No choice]  

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**Score (1 point for each yes response)**

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