

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT ON ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEWS
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

Action Requested: Receive the annual governance report on academic program reviews, including student outcomes assessment, at the University of Northern Iowa.

Executive Summary: The Board of Regents Policy Manual (§6.07) requires that the universities review between one-seventh and one-fifth of their academic programs each year. Board policy also requires that information about student outcomes assessment, including program improvements resulting from the assessments, be an integral part of the academic program reviews and reports.

During 2006-07, there were 15 academic programs reviewed at the University of Northern Iowa:

- ➔ Computer Information Systems (B.A., M.S.)
- ➔ Computer Science (B.A., B.S.)
- ➔ History (B.A., M.A.)
- ➔ Computer Science Education (M.A.)
- ➔ Communication Studies - Communication (B.A.)
- ➔ Communication Studies – Electronic Media (B.A.)
- ➔ Communication Studies – Public Relations (B.A.)
- ➔ Communication Studies (M.A.)
- ➔ Special Education (B.A.)
- ➔ Early Childhood Education (B.A.)
- ➔ Early Childhood Education (M.A.)
- ➔ Literacy Education (MAE)

As directed in the policy, each of the academic program reviews included two external evaluators. This report addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan objective (1.1) to “offer high-quality programs through ongoing program improvement for undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree students and special school students.”

Background:

This report represents a major quality assurance effort regarding Regent university academic programs. The following are examples of program improvements that resulted from student outcomes assessments and academic program review team recommendations.

- 📖 Computer Information Systems (B.A., M.S.). “Provide classroom machines.” *Created a mobile laboratory of 28 laptops for classroom use.* “Offer more financial assistantship support to more students.” *Increased external funding for graduate assistantships and research projects, with a continued emphasis on grant writing.* “Develop clear, workable student outcomes assessment plans for the program.” *Began work on an implementable student outcomes assessment plan with meaningful outcomes as part of a department-wide SOA initiative.*

- 📖 Computer Science (B.A., B.S.). “Form industrial advisory board.” *Created industrial advisory board.* “The department must come to a consensus as to the content of each course, at least as far as major outcomes are concerned. Document decisions in syllabi and identify methods to measure outcomes.” *Developed initial draft of an implementable student outcomes assessment plan with meaningful outcomes as part of a department-wide SOA initiative.*
- 📖 History (B.A., M.A.). “Revamp the department web page.” *The department began working with Information Technology Services in Fall 2007 to develop a more user-friendly and informative website.* “Develop modest recruitment efforts in the state and the region to diversify the population of graduate students, increasing the percentage holding undergraduate degrees from institutions other than the University of Northern Iowa.” *The department hopes to strengthen its graduate program by attracting a more diverse graduate student population in the next few years, including drawing more students from outside the UNI community. The department is continuing to collaborate with the Graduate College and the Office of International Programs to recruit minority and international students and is trying to allocate limited assistantship funding to provide at least a half assistantship to a few out-of-state students.*
- 📖 Computer Science Education (M.A.). “Market the program more heavily to local professionals and area industries.” *Due to lack of student enrollment or interest, the department requested approval from the Board of Regents in May 2008 to eliminate this program. Students have chosen to enroll in the Master of Science in Computer Science Program.*
- 📖 Communication Studies: Public Relations; Electronic Media; Communication (B.A.). “The department was urged to consider a departmental core of 9-15 credit hours.” *The department head asked each division to consider what courses should be included in a departmental core. This action is related to Student Outcomes Assessment planning and results.*
- 📖 Communication Studies (M.A.). “The team recommended eliminating the two certificate programs in the department.” *In Fall 2008, the department head will report enrollment data in the two certificate programs. The department will decide whether to maintain, modify, or eliminate the certificates.*
- 📖 Special Education (B.A.) “The department should develop a comprehensive Student Outcomes Assessment that (a) documents students’ knowledge and skills across the broad theoretical foundations that undergird the teacher licensure programs; (b) gathers information on the perceptions of graduates about how well their programs prepared them for their professional roles; and (c) gathers information on the perceptions of supervisors/principals about how well the program prepares graduates for their professional roles.” *Efforts are underway to track and maintain data more effectively on students who minor in special education programs.*
- 📖 Early Childhood Education (B.A.). “Develop a shared vision and clearly defined program.” *Course-mapping has laid the groundwork for developing a shared vision and program definition. The division will undergo strategic planning beginning in Fall 2008 to determine what the undergraduate program should look like and do for students in the future, including offering the program through distance education.*

- 📖 Early Childhood Education (M.A.). “Increase participation of additional early childhood faculty.” *Early childhood education faculty are participating in the process of curriculum mapping to identify and eliminate gaps and redundancies in the existing curriculum.*

- 📖 Literacy Education (MAE). “Prepare for meeting accreditation expectations for gathering meaningful student outcomes assessment data.” *Recommendations for action will be driven by: an evolving academic knowledge base concerning literacy learning; best practices in teacher preparation and professional development; the need for a substantial increase in program specific student feedback while students are enrolled and at predetermined post-graduate intervals; preparation for meeting accreditation expectations for gathering meaningful student outcomes assessment data; market demands and state endorsement requirements and faculty resource capacity; and the need to maintain a productive and supportive work environment in which faculty efforts in teaching, research, and service are acknowledged and rewarded.*