Annual Academic Assessment Report Cover Sheet

Assessment reports are due the 1st Wednesday after the Fall Term
Email to: assessment@unlv.edu

Program Information:

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<th>Program Assessed</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary Health Sciences PhD</th>
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<td>Department</td>
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<td>Department Chair</td>
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<td>Date Submitted</td>
<td>06/04/2018</td>
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Please attach a narrative (not to exceed 4 pages, excluding appendices) addressing the following:

- What are the student learning outcomes? Please provide a numbered list.
- Which learning outcomes were assessed?
- How were they assessed? (Programs must use at least one direct assessment of student learning.)
- Undergraduate programs should assess at least one University Undergraduate Learning Outcome (UULO) each year, which may or may not overlap with a program learning outcome.
- Graduate programs should assess at least one outcome related to one of the following graduate level requirements each year:
  - student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.
  - activities requiring originality, critical analysis and expertise.
  - the development of extensive knowledge in the field under study.
- What was learned from the assessment results?
- How did the program respond to what was learned?

Please limit the narrative portion of your report to no more than four pages. You may attach appendices with data, tables, charts, or other materials as needed. Please explain the relevant conclusions from any appendices in your narrative. Please contact the Office of Academic Assessment if you have questions or need assistance.
What are the student learning outcomes? Please provide a numbered list.
The Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Health Science has three stated program outcomes:

1. Research outcome: Independently produce sound translational research by generating innovative research questions, developing appropriate designs, implementing study protocols, analyzing data, and critiquing the results in written form.

2. Interdisciplinary outcome: Identify external funding sources that are relevant to the research focus area and generate an interdisciplinary grant proposal that is appropriate for that funding announcement.

3. Expertise outcome: Disseminate translational research findings orally and critique the scientific literature in area of specialty with sufficient depth to be considered an expert.

Which learning outcomes were assessed?
Each learning outcome was assessed.

1. Research Outcome deliverable: Submit a 3 article dissertation as primary author from data generated during the Ph.D. program or submit a large scale study resulting in a traditional dissertation.

2. Interdisciplinary outcome deliverable: Submit one external interdisciplinary grant proposal to the committee as part of the comprehensive examination.

3. Expertise outcome deliverable: A) Present at least one national/international presentation as a podium (oral) or a poster from research generated during Ph.D. program, and B) Orally defend dissertation.

How were they assessed? (Programs must use at least one direct assessment of student learning.)
Learning outcomes were assessed through a Qualtrics survey disseminated to the IHS students during the end of the Spring 2018 semester. Questions included the following:

Demographic information: Name, contact information, program of study, advisor, committee members, start date (semester-year), semesters completed, credits earned

Research outcome: Number of manuscripts submitted and status of these manuscripts what is the number that were 1) accepted (provide reference information), 2) in press (provide citation), 3) submitted (provide author list, title and journal).

Interdisciplinary outcome: Has the student started compiling information for the grant that will become the interdisciplinary comprehensive exam? Has the comprehensive examination been completed and defended? Number of other grants submitted (provide title, investigator status information and program), of these
grants what is the number that were funded (provide title, program, investigator status information and dollar amount).

Expertise outcome: Number of abstracts submitted for oral presentation at national/international conferences. Number of abstracts submitted for poster presentation at national/international conferences. Number of abstracts accepted for oral presentation at national/international conferences (provide name of conference and title of work, and authorship information). Number of abstracts accepted for poster presentation at national/international conferences (provide name of conference and title of work, and authorship information). Has the student successfully defended their dissertation?

**Graduate level requirement**
We believe that the new proposed student learning outcomes outlined above satisfy each of the graduate level requirements: 1) student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression and/or appropriate high-level professional practice, 2) activities requiring originality, critical analysis and expertise, and 3) the development of extensive knowledge in the field under study.

**What was learned from the assessment results?**

**Research Outcome:** There is a trend for students to be increasingly productive in submitting manuscripts and having them be accepted as they progress through the degree plan. The difference in the success rate between second and third year students may be in the nature of the journals to which they are submitting.

*Submitted Manuscripts*
First year students: 3 (one of four students had submitted)
Second year students: 8 (three of three students had submitted)
Third year students: 11 (three of four students had submitted)

*Accepted Manuscripts*
First year students: 1 (33% of submissions)
Second year students: 5 (63% of submissions)
Third year students: 4 (36% of submissions)

**Interdisciplinary Outcome:** With respect to the comprehensive examination there appears to be the greatest room for improvement. First year students can be encouraged to begin compiling information earlier, second year students can be urged to schedule the comprehensive exam sooner, and third years students should be well into the process. There is a trend for students to be increasingly productive in submitting grants and having them be accepted as they progress through the degree plan. The nature of the grant submissions should progress from internal mechanisms to appropriate external opportunities.

*Comprehensive Exam*
First year students: None of the four first year students have started compiling information for the comprehensive exam (or completed and defended)
Second year students: All three of the second year students have started compiling information for the exam, but none have completed it.

Third year students: Two of three third year students have started compiling information for the examination; while one has completed the exam and defended.

Other Grants

First year students: Four submitted grants (all from one student) and one that received funding (source not identified).

Second year students: Seven submitted grants (all second year students submitted) and three received funding (departmental and GPSA) with one still under review.

Third year students: Eight submitted grants (three of four students submitted) and three received funding (GPSA, community foundation grant).

**Expertise Outcome:** Students in the first and second years submit and present poster/oral presentations at national and international conferences to a greater extent than third year students. It is possible that presentation production declines because third year students are concerned with defending their dissertation and interviewing for employment opportunities. Additionally, funding mechanisms for travel that were available during the first and second years may not be available as students get closer to graduation (this is the case for GPSA travel funding). It appears that students are on track for defending their dissertation.

**Abstracts submitted for oral/poster presentation**

First year students: 0 oral; 4 poster
Second year students: 1 oral; 4 poster
Third year students: 1 oral; 1 poster

**Abstracts accepted for oral/poster presentation**

First year students: 0 oral; 4 poster
Second year students: 1 oral; 4 poster
Third year students: 1 oral; 1 poster

**Defended Dissertation**

First year students: 0/4
Second year students: 0/3
Third year students: 2/4

**Open-ended comments**

**Strengths of IHS degree**

- Expertise in more than 1 discipline
- The close-knit environment that is displayed throughout the program. The willingness of all involved who enjoy helping each other achieve newer heights.
- Knowledge and expertise of faculty. Library resources. Challenging courses.
- The opportunity for independent study/special problems research.
- Flexibility in courses that can be taken (there has been improvement in this area this year)
- Good mix of class work topics.
- Flexibility in elective courses (obtain foundation in two disciplines).
Core IHS classes are relevant for future training/work.

- An emphasis on clinical application of the kinesiology field.
- I like having experts in such a wide variety of settings and specialties. Everyone has been more than welcoming with questions and we have had guest lecturers from all disciplines helping us to understand their fields and opening us up to research opportunities to include a multidisciplinary approach.
- The IHS program allows for a large amount of flexibility in coursework to be taken (i.e. taking courses outside of current dept). The amount of Special Problems and Independent study credits allowed assist in limited actual coursework needing to be completed.

Recommendations for improvement

- More classes
- 4 year plan rather than 3 (not enough time to take as many classes as I’d like)
- More classes that are closely related to the degree focus at hand
- Improve organization for course progression and then disseminate properly to IHS doctoral students. Increased transparency regarding student expectations, progress within the department, outcomes of department/student body, etc.
- 3 units of Senior Seminar seems redundant.
- Improve the sense of community within the program.
- Greater selection of core.
- Ability to include a minor (in related discipline) with the degree.
- Offer emphasis in health psychology and medical to complete the healthcare facets.
- Add a professional development focus to graduate seminar discussing current application of interdisciplinary health in private, healthcare and educational settings.
- The only thing to mention is to solidify the class schedule. I realize that I was in the first cohort and things have probably gotten better, but it was a little unsettling to not be sure if some classes were going to be offered when they were originally planned to be offered. I know that was due to the small class sizes, but hopefully those issues will work themselves out as more students are admitted.
- Construct strict guidelines for comprehensive exams, documentation, and dissertation defenses. Being that the program is in its infancy, I feel there were many issues with expectations between students and mentors. This leads to a large degree of confusion among and between students and mentors. Further, having strict expectations keeps all involved (esp from different depts) on similar pages.
- The core IHS classes need to be offered on a regular basis. Some students still do not know when specific courses are going to be offered, which presents challenges in created degree plans.
How did the program respond to what was learned?

- Set an updated schedule of Core Class offerings, which is given in the Program Handbook. As (or if) course rotations change, the Handbook will be updated to communicate changes.
- Specific expectations are now in the Grad Catalog relative to Dissertation requirements. This information was previously in the Program Handbook.
- Comprehensive exam requirements are in the Program Handbook.

- In the Rehab Sci track we created a shared google doc for class schedule updates that program students could see at any time and ask questions.
- We also held a meeting once a semester, providing food to encourage attendance, in which student progress, class schedules, and other issues could be discussed as a groups and help to build camaraderie among students and faculty.

- In KNS, two students-Grad Coordinator meetings are held annually.
  - The first is during orientation week. Advisors are asked/encouraged to attend.
  - The second is during Spring semester around (pre- or post) Spring Break but separated/before finals. This is a student-advisor-Grad Coordinator joint meeting.