Central Washington University
Assessment of Student Learning
Department and Program Report

Academic Year of Report: 2012-13       College: COTS
Program: Primate Behavior & Ecology (Degree MS in Primate Behavior)

Check here if your assessment report covers all graduate degree programs: [X]

1. What student learning outcomes were assessed this year, and why?
The complete list of program goals and SLOs are attached to this report, with SLOs/goals assessed in 2012-13 highlighted in yellow. We assessed SLOs related to Goals 4 (three SLOs) and 6 (three SLOs). We assessed these particular goals because they: 1) enabled us to explore skill-related program goals; 2) revealed the potential impact graduates of the program are having on the broader profession through their research; and 3) indicated whether the program has been designed so that students can complete it in two years.

2. How were they assessed?
   2a. What methods were used?
   We assessed the SLOs related to Goals 4 and 6 using assessment data taken from an annual evaluation form submitted by thesis committee chairs, with one evaluation form filled out for each student; Safari; and IACUC/HSRC review letters sent to the program director.

   2b. Who was assessed?
   2011 Primate Behavior student cohort, which totaled seven students.

   2c. When was it assessed?
   Both goals were assessed during spring 2013 when faculty submitted an annual evaluation form for each graduate student. Additional data were collected in fall 2013 using Safari to check when degrees were posted.

3. What was learned?
   Goal 4, SLOs 1, 2, 3: Every student will participate in at least one professional activity before graduating (grant, presentation, peer-reviewed article).
   The goals set in SLOs 1, 2, and 3 were met. The 2011 student data were added to records being kept on previous cohorts as a point of comparison. Every student had an opportunity to participate in professional activities, and this was true across the range of program advisors; indeed, many students participated in more than one such activity (two students in the 2011 cohort participated in four professional activities, three in three activities, one in two activities, and one in one activity.) The majority of students’ professional activities took place at regional conferences such as Northwest Anthropology Association annual meetings and at SOURCE (N=17 for the seven 2011 students). One student was a co-author on a peer-reviewed publication, and one student obtained a research grant from Graduate Studies. Professional collaborations with the students are ongoing, so the numbers of peer-reviewed publications are expected to increase.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Cohort Size</th>
<th>No. of Students Who Completed 1+ Professional Activity Before Graduating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008 cohort</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 cohort</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7 (78%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 cohort</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9 (82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 cohort</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 (100%)</td>
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Goal 6, SLO 2: Each student will successfully defend her or his research proposal, as indicated by the thesis committee members signing the graduate Committee and Option Approval form, by the end of the student’s first year in the program.

**The goal established in SLO 2 was not met.** Three of the seven students (43%) had completed this step by the end of the first year; an additional three students (43%) reached this benchmark sometime in year 2, and 1 student (14%) has not yet achieved it going into her third year in the program.

Goal 6, SLO 3: Each student’s IACUC/IRB form will be submitted and approved by the end of the student’s first year in the program.

**The goal established in SLO 3 was not met.** Three of the seven students (43%) had completed this step by the end of the first year with four more students (57%) reaching this benchmark in year 2.

Goal 6, SLO 5: 80% of student theses submitted will be accepted by the Graduate Studies office without being returned to the committee for additional revisions.

**The goal established in SLO 5 was met.** Of the three students in the 2011 cohort who have submitted the thesis, all three (100%) were successful in completing Graduate Studies’ requirements without the document being returned to the committee for additional review. It appears that, while we are falling short of our goal of having more students finish the program in two years, the theses submitted are meeting established standards and are progressing smoothly through the final stages.

4. What will the department or program do as a result of that information?
This assessment report has been provided to all program faculty. We will meet during winter quarter 2014 to discuss the results and to lay the ground work for assessing other goals, particularly knowledge goals. I think that more students will move through the program on a two-year schedule now that CWU no longer house chimpanzees on the campus. Students’ time and attention was diverted to caregiving, a skill students needed to acquire, but one that sometimes took focus away from their theses. However, it seems likely that there will always be a few students who move at a slightly slower pace through the program.

5. What did the department or program do in response to last year’s assessment information?
- We had a fall program faculty retreat during which we discussed the progress of each student and what we could do to support that student and her or his advisor. We have
three “long term” students who appear unlikely to complete the degree; however, all are still within the six-year time frame established by Graduate Studies. Based on our discussions, there does not appear to be a programmatic or advisor issue impeding the progress of these students.

- We did not create a Facebook page (referred to previous assessment report) to communicate with current and former students, but we did redesign the program webpage, which is now being maintained more regularly and is being used to communicate with students about meetings, curriculum changes, etc. We are also in the process of creating new brochures.
- We are revised the program curriculum to replace PSY 550 Research in Natural Environments with PRIM 598 (soon to be PRIM 513) Research Methods in Primatology. This change was necessitated by the addition of pre-requisites to PSY 550 that most PBE students lack; additionally, program faculty agreed that students would be better able to develop their research projects if they took a methods course specific to the field of primatology by the second quarter of enrollment. Paperwork for this course was submitted in FA 13, and it will be taught for the first time during WI 14. This course may also increase the number of students completing the degree in two years.

6. Questions or suggestions concerning assessment of student learning at Central Washington University
None.

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Core Courses
- PRIM 501 Introduction to Primatology (presentation of interdisciplinary nature of the field)
- PRIM 503 Current Issues in Primatology
- PRIM 504 Culture and Cognition
- PRIM 505 History of Primate Interconnections

Goal 1 (Knowledge): PB MS students will demonstrate knowledge of the field of primatology, including current issues, methods, theories, and topics of study.
1. On written papers in PRIM 503, 80% of students will earn 80% of points from grading rubric.
2. On oral presentations in PRIM 504, 80% of students will earn 80% of points from grading rubric.
3. On written papers in PRIM 505, 80% of students will earn 80% of points from grading rubric.

Goal 2 (Knowledge): PB MS students will understand the interdisciplinary nature of primatology and how biologists, psychologists, and anthropologists approach the study of primates.
1. On discussion leader sessions in PRIM 501, 80% of students will earn 80% of points from grading rubric.
2. Student performance as discussion leader will improve during the quarter as she or he becomes more aware of the interdisciplinary nature of primatology.

Goal 3 (Value): PB MS students will value biodiversity.
1. During oral presentations in PRIM 511, 80% of students will accurately identify the major causes of primate endangerment.
2. During oral presentations in PRIM 511, 100% of students will be able to describe biodiversity and cite biological and societal reasons explaining why biodiversity is important.

Goal 4 (Skill): PB MS students will engage in professional activities. All students will engage in at least one professional activity before graduation.
1. The student’s thesis advisor will document on an annual evaluation form the number of student presentations submitted, rejected, and accepted.
2. The student’s thesis advisor will document on an annual evaluation form the number of student publications submitted, rejected, and accepted.
3. The student’s thesis advisor will document on an annual evaluation student grant proposals submitted, rejected, and accepted.

Goal 5 (Skill): PB MS students will be able to effectively communicate.
1. On oral presentations in PRIM 503, 80% of students will earn 80% of points from grading rubric.
2. On written papers in PRIM 504, 80% of students will earn 80% of points from grading rubric.

Goal 6 (Skill): PB Students will be able to design and carry out an independent research project of significance to primatology.
1. In PSY 550, students will demonstrate the ability to operationalize behaviors to facilitate data collection, as indicated by a score of 80% or better on ethogram assignment.
2. Each student will successfully defend her or his research proposal, as indicated by the thesis committee members signing the Graduate Committee and Option Approval form, by the end of the student's first year in the program.
3. Each student’s IACUC/IRB form will be submitted and approved by the end of the student’s first year in the program.
4. The student will successfully defend her or his thesis, as indicated by the committee members signing off on the thesis.
5. 80% of student theses will be accepted by the Graduate Studies office without being returned to the committee for additional revisions.