Assessment Plan – William H. Darr School of Agriculture
Update – 2012

Activity: Assessment of the Public Affairs Mission and each of the Degree Programs to facilitate program improvement.

Components:

I. Statement of purpose for the Degree Programs

“To prepare students with professional expertise leading to successful careers in business, government agencies, and educational institutions while experiencing fulfilled lives and meeting mature responsibilities in a constantly changing society; and to be a source of agricultural knowledge that is obtained through study and research that may be utilized for the improvement of the quality of the citizens of the United States.”

II. Assessment methods appropriate for measurement of progress toward goals.

A. Degree Program Assessment  (Revised process, August 2012)

Assessment of the achievements made while at Missouri State is accomplished by utilizing the Pre and Post Test method. Analysis of comparative population data (not on an individual student basis) will be utilized to modify future classwork and related academic activities.

Assessing Public Affairs

All entering students who are enrolled in the Agricultural Sections of GEP 101 will take a test prepared for assessing the knowledge of Public Affairs at MSU. The population’s mean score will be compared with the same test that is given in the required Senior Seminar Class.

Assessing Each Degree Program in the School of Agriculture

1. A test covering the essential goals for each of the majors are to be administered at the beginning of the introductory class for that major and again during Senior Seminar. The test will be prepared by the MSU Agriculture Faculty.

2. A self assessment by students of their perception of what they understand of the essential goals for the majors. Both, the test and the self assessment will be given in the first weeks of the GEP beginning Agriculture class of each major. The population’s mean score will be compared with the same test that is given in the required Senior Seminar Class.

3. An assessment of students returning from Internships will be given, and it will cover the self assessment of preparedness for the experience and for employment.

B. Other Assessment Activities  (Past and Present Processes)

1. Pre and Post test in Individual classes within the major
2. Regular feedback from meetings with 14 student clubs
3. Summary of (oral and/or written) reports of students on internship.
4. Employer evaluations – Informal Evaluations
5. Advisory Committees- School will continue practice of holding annual advisory committee meeting to review critical issues including Student Success
6. School Director leads discussion of assessment issues with Faculty on an annual basis.
7. Graduate Student Masters Degree Research on Perceptions of Graduates with Courses and Degree Program Relevance to Industry Needs.

III. Results of Previous Assessment Activities
A. Identified the need to aid the increasing population of transfer students.
B. Identified the need for a capstone class to serve degree program
C. Identified the need to include more classes having computer applications
D. Encouraged the consideration of adding an international animal science study
E. Encouraged the need to consider an international experience for all students
F. Encouraged to constantly evaluate the need for additional club activities to serve students
G. Encouraged to constantly evaluate the need for more hands-on experiences with animals
H. Encouraged the continuation of the freshmen leadership class
I. Encouraged to expand the efforts to deliver classes in nontraditional formats
J. Encouraged the revision of horticulture program to reflect the science, business emphasis areas as well as a specialty in golf course management.
K. Encouraged the expansion of class offerings and a degree program through ITV and the internet.
L. Encouraged to continue making agriculture materials available to elementary teachers now through web based instruction.
M. Continue increasing graduate student accessibility to MSU particularly in Ag Education.
N. Continue monitoring needed changes to better educate the offerings we have available in courses and programs.
O. Continue efforts to improve visibility of the department through faculty service roles and the Salute to Agriculture program.
P. Continue emphasizing public affairs programs through faculty participation and the hosting of the Agriculture Forum program.
Q. Continue recruitment efforts by hosting a high school visitation day
R. Consider reenergizing an “outreach” group of students – Agricultural Ambassadors.
S. Constantly monitor ways to modernize facilities for teaching
T. Constantly monitor the use of animals for efficiency and care that meets or exceeds all approved regulations.

IV. Documentation of accomplishments that relate to assessment process
A. Development of a transfer orientation program – discontinued due to teacher availability.
B. Development of a capstone class available for each degree program – continuing efforts.
C. Changed curriculum to include more classes having computer applications – continuing efforts.
D. Development of an international animal science study eliminated international portion due to cost and security issues but continue with national study.
E. Developed an international class to Costa Rica for all students. Changing to Belize due to faculty interest and language/cost issues.
F. Formation of the Farm Bureau Club, Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity and Sigma Alpha Sorority – continuing efforts along with 12 other clubs.
G. Incorporated more hands-on experiences with animals in the courses – continuing efforts.
H. Developed a freshmen leadership class - continuing efforts.
I. Offered classes in nontraditional times and formats (weekends, intersessions, and in one hour offerings) - continuing efforts.
J. Revision of horticulture program to increase the number of business classes
K. Revision of Agricultural Business Program to include Agricultural Enterprise Management Option.
L. Obtained a USDA Challenge Grant “Pathways” that offers classes and a completion Bachelors of Applied Sciences degree in Agriculture for students at West Plains Community College and at Crowder College.
M. Provided courses and materials to elementary teachers on food, fiber, and natural resources
N. Provided graduate education opportunities in soils, plants and animal science
O. Changed the prefixes for courses offered by the department to better reflect the subject matter to the users – continued efforts
P. Initiated the “Salute to Agriculture” program to enhance visibility of department – continued efforts.
Q. Initiated the “Agriculture Forum” program to involve students, staff, faculty, and public in public affairs issues concerning agriculture – continued efforts.
R. Initiated “Ag Fest” (a high school student visitation day) – continued efforts.
S. Initiated the “Agriculture Ambassadors” (a group of students involved with public relations for the Department) – continued efforts
T. Construction and remodeling of an expanded Karls Hall that has the requested spaces for: greenhouses, meats lab, research labs, computer labs, student activity areas, distance learning classroom, modern teaching laboratories and lecture halls.
U. Completion of the Darr Agricultural Center which will aid the instruction in particularly the animal sciences classes.
V. Addition of Journagan Ranch for instruction and internships in animal science, natural resources, and crop production.