

# **School of Human Ecology University of Wisconsin-Madison**

## **Assessment Plan**

### **Overview**

The School of Human Ecology's mission is to advance understanding of complex relationships of humans and their environments in order to enhance the quality of people's lives. This is done through research, creative innovation, teaching, learning and outreach. The School has a long history of outreach and action research involving various public, private, for-profit and not-for-profit and professional communities. Committed to an interdisciplinary approach to academic study and scholarship, the School's four departments offer baccalaureate degrees (B.S.) in six majors:

Consumer Affairs	Textile & Apparel Design
Retailing	Human Development & Family Studies
Interior Design	
Family, Consumer & Community Education (with options in teacher certification & community leadership)	

In addition, majors in community and nonprofit leadership and personal finance have been developed and will likely begin enrolling students in the near future.

At the graduate level, the School provides masters and doctoral degrees in Human Ecology with three program concentrations: consumer behavior and family economics, design studies, and human development and family studies.

### **Administrative Structure, Audiences & Resources available for assessment**

The School's Academic Planning Council (APC) with input from the Graduate Program Council, Undergraduate Program Council, and departmental committees has responsibility for academic program assessment plans and directives. The APC sets the schedule for program reviews and hears the reports from those reviews prior to making recommendations. The APC also reviews and acts upon specific topics that impact programs, such as the School's recent plan for enrollment management controls, service learning, work and learning climate and other issues that impact the educational experience.

Departments have the responsibility for preparing, implementing and revising their assessment plans as well as reporting annually on assessment activities and related programmatic/instructional changes that result. Departments must also meet accreditation requirements where applicable. The following programs are currently accredited by outside agencies:

Textile & Apparel Design – accredited by FIDER

Family, Consumer & Community Education – accredited by state of WI through DPI

Personal Finance – holds registered status with the Certified Financial Planner Board

### **Audiences**

School Level: Each department reports annually to the School UPC, GPC and APC on its assessment activities, including the data collected and what changes resulted in connection with a review of the data. In addition, all departmental assessment plans are updated annually and forwarded to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs or Graduate Programs for review.

Department Level: Departments, on an annual basis, share assessment information with faculty to facilitate informed instructional decision making. Department undergraduate and graduate planning committees meet regularly to analyze assessment data collected, discuss possible changes to programs, and present program change requests formally to the School UPC or GPC.

### **Overview of Current Policy & Practice**

As noted under administrative structure, departments are charged with being primarily responsible for the assessment of undergraduate and graduate programs. All undergraduate programs have established a set of learning outcomes specific to each major. At its May 2008 meeting, the GPC voted to approve a set of learning outcomes for graduate students in SoHE. These learning outcomes serve as the basis for the assessment plans developed by each department for each major within the department.

- Departments evaluate their programs based on the stated learning outcomes and use assessment instruments appropriate for each outcome to collect data.
- Department committees (UPC & GPC) then review this data and then make recommendations for any needed programmatic and/or instructional changes.
- Departments annually update their assessment plans and provide an annual report on assessment activities to the School UPC or GPC and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate or Graduate programs.
- Departments initiate program self-studies at least every ten years. The purpose of this review is to critically revisit the program's goals, analyze resource usage, and study the success of graduates of the program. The results of these studies are shared with the School UPC or GPC, the APC, the Associate Dean and Dean.

#### **At the School level:**

*Undergraduate Planning Council (UPC):* The UPC acts on and/or provides recommendations or review upon request of the School's APC or academic departments regarding program reviews, program assessments, major program changes, or other significant undergraduate program matters. The UPC also assists programs and the School in acquiring student assessment data and accesses and uses assessment data for continuous program improvement.

*Graduate Planning Council (GPC):* The duties of the GPC related to assessment include assisting with graduate program reviews, reviewing graduate curriculum and courses, and approving new courses and revised course proposals. In addition the GPC accesses and uses student assessment data forwarded by departments for continuous program improvement.

*Academic Planning Council (APC):* The APC advises the Dean, administration and faculty on the long range processes of the School, including strategic program directions and priorities of the School.

*Associate Deans for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs:* Coordinate the academic program review process and assessment reporting activities. In addition, they provide staff support to the School's UPC, GPC and APC. Wendy Way, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, serves on the University Assessment Council.

*SoHE Student Academic Affairs Office (SAA):* SAA provides necessary statistics and information from queries. They distribute, collect and code alumni surveys and counsel and assist departments with evaluations on a variety of issues. In addition, SAA has taken responsibility for career advising and placement services after SoHE's recent alumni survey indicated this as an area in need of improvement. Beginning in fall 2008, SAA will provide departments with assessment data by forwarding internship site supervisor ratings on student performance relative to learning outcomes to each department.