Animal and Range Sciences
Graduate Program Assessment Plan

October 2016, Pat Hatfield

Program Learning Outcomes

For masters' students:

1. Conduct research or produce some other form of creative work
2. Demonstrate mastery of subject content knowledge and research/critical inquiry methodology
3. Demonstrate effective written communication of substantive content
4. Demonstrate effective oral communication of substantive content
5. Be able to conduct scholarly or professional activities in an ethical manner

For doctoral students:

1. Produce and defend an original significant contribution to knowledge
2. Demonstrate mastery of subject content knowledge and research/critical inquiry methodology
3. Demonstrate effective written communication of substantive content
4. Demonstrate effective oral communication of substantive content
5. Be able to conduct scholarly and professional activities in an ethical manner
6. Professionalization into the field of study (publications, presentations, funded fellowships, professional association activities, professional experience, etc)

Student Performance: Data Sources

Masters' Programs with Thesis

Data Source		Outcomes				
		1	2	3	4	5
Departmental Records[1]		X				

				X	X	X	
Thesis/thesis defense[2]				X	X	X	
Ethics training in responsible conduct of research[3]							X

Doctoral Programs

		Outcomes					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Departmental records[1]		X					
Dissertation/dissertation defense[2]			X	X	X		
Ethics training in responsible conduct of research[3]						X	
C.V.[4]							X

[1] Program will track thesis/dissertation defenses and calculate success rates.
[2] The rubrics for outcomes 1-4 are to be completed at the thesis/dissertation defense. If departments prefer, they may use comprehensive exams rather than the actually dissertation, thesis, or paper. These rubrics will not be used to assess or evaluate individual students and will not inform the decision regarding whether a student passes a defense or course. The data will be aggregated for all students in the program over a two-year period in order to assess the success of the program in meeting its program learning outcomes (see sample rubric attached).
[3] The rubric for outcome 5 is the completion of some ethics training.
[4] C.V.s of students will be collected as they complete their degrees. The C.V. will be used to provide evidence of appropriate professional activities to the particular field of study (these may be published papers, research training, teaching development, presentations at conferences, etc. as is appropriate for your discipline or program and as was identified in learning outcome 6 above).

<u>Response Threshold</u>

All programs:
AT LEAST 80 PERCENT OF STUDENTS WILL BE RANKED AT A 4 OR 5 LEVEL IN SUBJECT CONTENT KNOWLEDGE, WRITTEN COMMUNICATION, AND ORAL COMMUNICATION

100 PERCENT OF STUDENTS WILL SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE ETHICS TRAINING.

AT LEAST 80 PERCENT OF STUDENTS WILL PASS THEIR DEFENSE ON THEIR FIRST ATTEMPT

Doctoral programs:
AT LEAST 100 PERCENT OF STUDENTS WILL DEMONSTRATE
PROFESSIONALIZATION INTO THE FIELD OF STUDY

AT LEAST 80 PERCENT OF STUDENTS WILL PASS THEIR DEFENSE ON THEIR
FIRST ATTEMPT

AT LEAST 80 PERCENT OF STUDENTS WILL BE RANKED AT A 4 OR 5 LEVEL IN
SUBJECT CONTENT KNOWLEDGE, WRITTEN COMMUNICATION, AND ORAL
COMMUNICATION

100 PERCENT OF STUDENTS WILL SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE ETHICS
TRAINING.

Schedule of Assessment

- Assessment reports for Masters and graduate certificate programs will be
  submitted in September of even-numbered years.
- Assessment reports for Doctoral programs will be submitted in September of
  odd-numbered years.

Process for Assessing the Data

Data is collected from students as they complete the certificate or degree programs.
The graduate assessment coordinator will tabulate the scores from the rubrics and
the data on defenses/program completion. They will also prepare lists of students
taking comprehensive/qualifying exams and the results (pass or fail) of such exams.
For doctoral programs, the coordinator will also identify, based on an analysis of
C.V.s, the percent of students demonstrating acceptable professionalization into the
field of study. The coordinator will write up a brief summary of the assessment
results and this will be presented to the faculty members working with graduate
students. The faculty will review the assessment results and make decisions about
how to respond.

- If an acceptable performance threshold (as outlined in the plan) has NOT
  been met, a faculty response is required. It should include some strategy for
  addressing improving areas where the threshold has not been met.
    - Gather additional data next year to verify or refute the result.
    - Change something in the curriculum or program to try to improve
      performance.
    - Change the acceptable performance threshold (must provide
      reasoning behind such a strategy).

- If faculty members identify new strategies for meeting the learning outcomes, they may respond to assessment results even if the acceptable performance threshold has been met.
- It is also okay to decide that changes are not needed when students are demonstrating proficiency with each learning outcomes. In this case just note that the faculty are satisfied, based on the assessment, that the program is achieving its goals.

A summary of the year's assessment activities and faculty decisions is reported to the Provost's office in your Department's annual Graduate Program Assessment Activities Report.

The assessment report due on September 15 must include the following:

1) A list of students taking comprehensive exams/qualifying exams and defending theses/dissertations or completing program requirements in the past two years.
2) The results of those examinations and defenses summarized into the numbers of passes and failures.
3) A record of the completion of ethics training.
4) A statement on the assessment of the program indicating if the program outcomes are being met, and identifying any program changes needed to better prepare students to meet the program learning outcomes.