The Graduate School
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY™

APPENDIX D: Assessment feedback from the Dean of the Graduate School

TO: Dr. Jim Painter, Chair
Dr. Lisa Taylor, Coordinator

FROM: Robert M. Augustine, Dean

RE: **2010-2011** Graduate Assessment Plan
MS in Family and Consumer Sciences

DATE: February 20, 2012

Part 1 Center for Academic Support & Achievement Review
The CASA Director documented that the program achieved Level 2 and Level 3 performance for its assessment plan. The Director also verified that the program used both direct and indirect measures to assess student learning.

Part 2 Graduate School Review
According to the 2010 record, an assessment plan for the MS in FCS was not available; so the last published Assessment Plan was in 2009 indicating a break in the use of assessment to guide this program. The Graduate School documented the submission of a comprehensive plan for 2011, but noted that some of the suggestions from the 2009 review were still applicable. For example, critical thinking and problem solving appear to be imbedded with the assessment of research and scholarship. All other graduate programs have developed distinctively different goals in these categories to insure they address the guidelines developed by CGS in 2006. The CGS required assessment areas are depth of content knowledge, critical thinking and problem solving, oral and written communication, and research. Below is my own organization of the CGS objectives based on the 2011 report.

- Depth of Content Knowledge was assessed in Objectives 4, 5, and 6. Assessment spans public policy, global applications, ethics, and technologies and includes direct (rubrics on exams) and indirect (exit survey) data. Candidates met expectations.
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving was assessed primarily in Objective 2. Direct and indirect measures were included and candidates met the learning expectations in this area.
- Oral and Written Communication was assessed in Objective 1. The assessment plan noted that performance on the oral exam did not meet expectations. In other areas of the report, the author noted that some faculty have invited graduate candidates to take an additional English course and this has improved written communication. Some graduate programs are doing an incoming assessment in high-risk areas that provides the faculty with guidance on which candidates require interventions to improve performance. Candidates are advised to engage in the intervention if they wish to matriculate. This may be an approach to use with the written communication concerns expressed by the faculty.
- Research and/or Creative Activity were assessed primarily in Objective 3. The report indicated student learning goals for research were met.

As noted above, clearly defining which goals address the 4 CGS areas established in 2006 (depth of content knowledge, critical thinking and problem solving, oral and written communication, and research) will enhance this plan. I agree with the CASA Director that expectations should be high. I also suggest that some assessments be used as a tool to guide candidates toward interventions that may help improve student learning.

C: Dean Mayhar Izadi
Dr. Karla Sanders

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TO: Dr. Karla Kennedy-Hagen, Chair
Dr. Lisa Taylor, Coordinator

FROM: Robert M. Augustine, Dean

RE: **2011-2012** Graduate Assessment Plan
MS in Family and Consumer Sciences

DATE: September 14, 2012

Part 1 Center for Academic Support & Achievement Review
Consistent with past reviews, the CASA Director documented that the program achieved Level 2 and Level 3 performance for its assessment plan. The Director also verified that the program used both direct and indirect measures to assess student learning. The Director offers some specific advice for advancing the plan in 2013 and I support her recommendations. Add additional direct measures to complement the exit survey data, develop a clearer plan or better tools or rubrics to assess written communication, and strengthen the way feedback is shared and used to advance the learning outcomes.

Part 2 Graduate School Review
I congratulate the Coordinator for acting on many of the suggestions outlined in the 2011 review of the assessment plan. In particular, I am glad to see all of the goals identified by the Council on Graduate Studies now clearly reflected in the assessment plan. It was also good to learn that the program continues to increase the learning outcome expectations for its candidates and to see that the candidates are meeting that expectation.

Other strengths with the 2012 plan include:

- Improvements with gaining responses by implementing new exit procedures that allow for confidential responses from the candidates
- Use of important direct measures: the comprehensive exams, thesis defense, research projects in courses, core competencies in courses
- Use of the exit survey as an indirect measure
- Use of formative assessment resulting in remediation for some candidates
- Development of rubrics for the comprehensive exams

Continuing to advance the quality of the assessment plan as outlined by the CASA Director and providing continued evidence that the assessment data is driving curricular changes are ways to further strengthen this program.

C: Dean Mayhar Izadi
Dr. Karla Sanders