February 10, 2012

University Studies Program Professor
University of Wyoming
Campus

Dear Professor:

Thank you for teaching a course that satisfies a USP requirement. Our students, other faculty, staff, and administration appreciate your efforts to ensure that the University Studies Program at UW is successful. Toward that end, the faculty USP committee has been charged with USP assessment. To make sure the University of Wyoming's commitment to continuous improvement in learning, to meet our obligation to the Higher Learning Commission, and to remain faithful to the proposals outlined in UP III, we are implementing a program whereby student learning will be assessed against the criteria for that category on a rotational basis in every course that has a USP designation.

Enclosed you will find two documents. The first is the “Assessment Timeline.” It lists all the USP categories and the assessment rotation schedule. Please note that we will begin our three-year rotation cycle with academic year 2009-2010. If you teach the same USP course every semester, it needs to be submitted for USP assessment only once per year.

The second enclosed document is the reporting form for USP assessment of student learning results. The first column indicates the criterion from the USP learning objectives that is being evaluated. You should select some assessment method to measure the criterion and describe that assessment method in Column 1. Feel free to select different assessment methods for different criteria. These should be assessment methods you are already using in your course. For example, you might be using a paper that could adequately measure whether students are achieving a certain criterion and using a project that could measure whether students are achieving another criterion. So, in Column 1, you would briefly describe the paper assignment associated with the criterion it is measuring and describe the project assignment associated with the criterion it is measuring. Then, in Columns 2 – 5, simply record the number of students who achieved that level of proficiency, on the criterion as measured by your assessment methods. The total of Columns 2 – 5 should equal the number of students in your course for each criterion measured. That’s all there is to it! Our desire is not to make extra work for instructors; rather we wish to understand how well students are achieving the learning outcomes set out by the USP criteria. Furthermore, we intend to have this process online by fall 2009.
Data will be aggregated across USP categories. Please do not put your name or your course number on the form. You will receive a report of the aggregated data for your own self-assessment as soon as it becomes available. To ease any confusion and to help instructors complete the recording sheets, we will be conducting a series of workshops starting the last week of March. To encourage attendance, snacks will be provided. The workshops will be held on April 7 from 3-4 pm in EN1062, April 8 from 12-1 pm in Old Main 321 (OVN available for off campus instructors), and on April 9 from 3-4 pm in EN 1062.

Thank you again for your dedication to USP. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either of us at penne@uwyo.edu or rollin@uwyo.edu.

Sincerely yours,

\[signature\]  \[signature\]

Penne Ainsworth  
Chair  
USP Committee

Rollin Abernethy  
Associate Provost  
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