

# LANDER UNIVERSITY

## INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS SUMMARY—1999

### INTRODUCTION

Lander's procedures for assessment and planning are rooted in the University's mission and are broad based, with participation from all constituencies of the faculty and staff. Each unit establishes its assessment measures to evaluate the achievement of program goals that are consistent with institutional goals derived from the University's mission statement. Because the faculty and staff of the University are very unified in their dedication to its mission, they welcome the opportunities provided by the assessment program to improve services to the students and to the people of the region.

In 1999, components reported by Lander University are Majors or Concentrations and Library Resources and Service. Academic Advising, which was last reported in 1997, will be reported in 2000. General Education and Procedures for Student Development were last reported in 1998, and they will be next reported in 2001 and 2002 respectively.

### MAJORS OR CONCENTRATIONS

During academic year 1998-99, majors in teacher education reported assessment findings through the CHE Program Review that was a part of the NCATE accreditation process. Interim reports were submitted for Mass Communications and Theatre and for Interdisciplinary Studies. Because of the phasing in of the CHE's calendar for assessment reports based on the Program Review dates, the periods since these majors were last reported varies. Whereas the teacher education programs were previously reported in 1994, assessment of the Interdisciplinary Studies major was reported in 1995. Mass Communications and Theatre had just come into existence when it was last reported in 1993. The chart below summarizes the assessment measures used by the majors under review.

	Education	Mass Comm	IDS
Alumni Surveys	X	X	X
Questionnaires	X		X
ADEPT evaluations	X		
Content area exams	X		
Exit interviews		X	X
Auditions		X	
Capstone projects		X	
External adjudication of performance		X	
Auditions		X	
Portfolios			X

Lander University's School of Education offers baccalaureate programs in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education and Special Education and collaborates with other academic units in offering Secondary/K-12 programs. At the graduate level, an M.Ed. program in elementary education and an MAT program in secondary education with concentrations in art, English, and science are offered. The assessment program for all teacher education programs is broad based and incorporates assessment of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes. While different surveys and exams are used for initial certification and advanced programs, the overall structure of the assessment program is consistent across all teacher education areas. The disciplinary content for the Secondary/K-12 programs is evaluated chiefly in conjunction with major program assessment, which is reported separately; however, the appropriateness of those programs for teacher education is validated through the PRAXIS II area examinations.

The primary means of monitoring the content knowledge of graduates from teacher education programs at Lander is the tracking of scores on professional examinations. Although this information has been collected for years, the chart below includes results for only the past two years since scores on the PRAXIS II examination are reported for all students, whereas the old NTE scores were reported only for first time test takers. While the size of the groups tested differed greatly for the two years, in most areas, the percentages of students passing the exam were consistent.

	97-98			98-99			Two-year totals		
	Examined	Passed	% Passing	Examined	Passed	% Passing	Examined	Passed	% Passing
PKE	138	134	97.1%	67	65	97.0%	205	199	97.1%
AREA EXAMS									
Early Childhood Education	39	39	100%	17	17	100%	56	56	100%
Elementary Education	94	92	98%	42	39	93%	136	131	96.3%
Special Education	23	11	48%	10	8	80%	33	19	57.6%
Art	6	6	100%	2	2	100%	8	8	100%
English	6	6	100%				6	6	100%
Social Studies	8	6	75%	8	5	63%	16	11	68.8%
Mathematics	3	3	100%	1	1	100%	4	4	100%
Music	3	3	100%	4	4	100%	7	7	100%
Physical Education	6	6	100%	5	4	80%	11	10	90.9%
Biology & General Science	3	3	100%	1	1	100%	4	4	100%
AREA EXAM TOTALS	191	175	91.6%	90	81	90.0%	281	256	91.1%

The only areas of concern were special education and the secondary area of social studies. The School of Education faculty believe that the low scores in special education in 1997-98 resulted from problems not inherent in the program. In fall 1997, the person responsible for upper division special education courses died unexpectedly, and his position could not be filled until fall 1998. It was during this unstable period that students did not perform as well. That the problem has been resolved is reflected in the improvement in 1998-99 scores.

On the other hand, in the case of social studies, the problems were deemed to be programmatic. Both the history and the political science majors leading to teacher certification had been quite non-prescriptive so that adequate coverage of subject matter depended on the

student's choice of courses. Beginning with the 1997-98 catalog, all the 27 hours of political science required to complete the major leading to teacher certification are either specified courses or courses from distribution lists, whereas previously only nine of the thirty-six required hours in political science were designated courses. In addition, the revised political science program requires eighteen hours of history survey courses, whereas only six hours had been required previously. With the 1998-99 catalog, the history major leading to teacher certification was also revised to be more prescriptive. Whereas the program previously required only one survey course, the revised program requires three--one from world history and two from United States history--and nine of the program's remaining twenty-seven hours in history must be in non-U.S. history.

While the School of Education has conducted Alumni Surveys for many years, the survey form was substantially revised as a part of the NCATE process. Alumni were surveyed using the old form in academic years 1993-94 and 1994-95 and using the new one in 1997-98. The new survey was sent to 1995-97 graduates, and a parallel survey was sent to school administrators. These surveys have consistently resulted in positive evaluations of the teacher education program by both graduates and administrators; however, they have also produced suggestions for improvement.

Graduates and administrators expressed remarkably similar views, agreeing in giving high ratings to Lander graduates' knowledge of subject matter, instructional strategies, professionalism, and ability to work well both collaboratively and individually. They also agreed in identifying areas that needed improvement: classroom management and conflict resolution, use of technology in the teaching/learning process, and ability to address the concerns of children with special needs. In addition the graduates suggested that practicum experiences should be strengthened.

The questionnaire allowed graduates to make comments, which were overwhelmingly positive. Of the seventeen comments that were evaluative in nature, only three were negative. On the other hand, fourteen graduates praised the program, with seven noting feeling particularly well prepared. Three specifically noted the importance of their Lander experience with the ADEPT program. Graduates from the M.Ed. program also made primarily positive comments, with seven of the ten evaluative comments praising the program. Two of the remaining comments expressed the minority opinion that the master's program was too theoretical rather than practical.

In addition to information from surveys, the School of Education also collects information about its program from ADEPT evaluations of student teachers. While the primary purpose of the ADEPT evaluation is to assist the individual student in improving teaching practices, the faculty examine the evaluations in the aggregate to determine areas for improvement. In response to information derived from ADEPT observations of student teachers and from feedback from school administrators and alumni through both formal surveys and informal contacts, numerous program improvements have been made in recent years.

The strongest area of concern in all the surveys was technology. Improvements in this area have been made both before and since the 1998 survey. Increases in available hardware and software have made technology more available to teacher education students, and a course in Microcomputer Applications in Education has been revised and placed at the sophomore level to provide earlier exposure to the use of computers in the classroom. All undergraduate teacher certification students complete this course except those in a few secondary areas that provide a

content-based technology course. In addition, technology has been incorporated across the education curriculum.

Some of the changes made in response to assessment data apply to all teacher certification programs, both those offered by the School of Education and the Secondary/K-12 programs. The number of hours of clinical experience has been increased for all initial certification programs, with larger blocks of time given to fewer clinicals that are now independent courses rather than elements of methods courses. In addition, all undergraduate teacher education students are now required to take a course dealing with special-needs students and must include a philosophy course in their general education programs.

Changes were made in the general education element of programs within the School of Education in order to emphasize cultural diversity. The history requirement was increased to two courses—one in world history and one in United States history, and students are now required to fulfill the humanities requirement by taking one world literature course with non-western elements and one American literature course. In addition to these changes, majors in early childhood, elementary and special education are required to take general education courses in both art and music, and their science courses are prescribed.

Changes in major programs offered by the School of Education made in response to assessment data include a new screening process for entering the program that includes a writing sample and an interview with a faculty panel; a general pedagogy course at the sophomore level which prepares students for specialized methods courses and allows redundant presentation of general information to be eliminated from the more specialized courses; and the addition of a communication course at the sophomore level. In addition, the course in diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties has been made a required rather than an optional course, and additional reading pedagogy has been integrated into special education courses.

For secondary programs, the methods course has been increased from two to three hours, and admissions requirements have been changed to parallel those in other teacher education courses. Upper and lower elementary emphases were added to improve the M.Ed. program, and a Montessori emphasis for both undergraduate and graduate students has been developed as a result of frequently expressed requests from teachers in the field.

#### INTERIM REPORTS OF MAJOR PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

##### Mass Communication and Theatre:

While the Mass Communication and Theatre major was required only to make an interim report this year, the report was made in conjunction with an application for accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST), which was prepared in preparation for a March 1999 site visit. As a part of their assessment program, the Mass Communication and Theatre faculty receive student/graduate feedback from exit interviews and alumni surveys, but they have also incorporated assessment interviewing into pre-registration meetings with majors. They assess the quality of student work through capstone projects and post-production evaluations, including adjudication by external evaluators.

The exit questionnaire was administered to thirteen students from Fall 1997 through Fall 1998. The students praised faculty experience and accessibility, class size, availability of hands-on

experience, and preparation for careers. They were particularly complimentary about two new courses: Media 403: Camera Techniques and Media 341: Advertisement and Public Relations, which had been created in response to earlier assessment results. However, they also noted a need for more and better equipment and production facilities, and more frequent course offerings. In response to these concerns, the program is being revised to allow more flexibility in selection of courses, the faculty are offering multiple sections of some core courses and have increased summer offerings of courses that fulfill major requirements, and the division has improved the facilities available to the major. The addition of a full-time faculty member in journalism will allow courses to be offered more frequently and faculty time to be used more efficiently. A classroom that had previously been used as a greenroom has been remodeled into a black box performing space, a new editing board has been purchased, and the division is examining the feasibility of leasing new cameras.

Both the interviews and other assessment strategies have documented the success of the program. Capstone projects have allowed students to demonstrate their mastery of all elements of production, and they have brought to light no curricular concerns; nor have student auditions, which allow faculty to document student growth throughout the program. Outside evaluators, including guest artists and adjudicators for the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival (KC/ACTF), have given the program positive feedback as well. KC/ACTF honors have included student nominations for the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship competition and the student design competitions. At the state level, Lander students have been selected to represent South Carolina in the Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) auditions. Both formal and informal sources of feedback from graduates and from employers indicate satisfaction with the professional skills developed in the program. In the last four years all graduates from the program have begun careers in radio, journalism, television, theatre, or public relations. While the Mass Communication and Theatre faculty continue to seek ways to improve the program and to enhance graduates' marketability, they are well satisfied with the results of their assessment measures.

#### Interdisciplinary Studies:

The Interdisciplinary Studies program provides students with very specialized interests the opportunity to work with faculty sponsors in designing their own major programs of study from courses drawn from at least two disciplines. Each student's program must be approved by faculty sponsors from the two curricular areas and by the Interdisciplinary Studies Advisory Committee in order for the student to be accepted as an Interdisciplinary Studies major. The director of the Interdisciplinary Studies program is responsible for the administration of program assessment, and turnover in the position twice in the last four years has brought new perspectives to that endeavor. Prior to 1996, assessment of the program focused on the students' total university experience and gave more attention to general education than to the major. Since the major program was distinct for each student, that approach was understandable; nevertheless, in 1996, the plan of assessment was redesigned to focus on the major program itself. The present director, who assumed responsibility for the program in spring 1998 has continued the administration of that program; however, recognizing that the decentralized character of the program presents unique problems for assessment, he plans to ask the Interdisciplinary Studies Advisory Committee to evaluate and improve the assessment plan in fall 1999. Since the current assessment program was in place only two and one-half years prior to this report, only limited data have been collected to date.

In exit interviews, graduating seniors have been very positive about the program. However, some students commented on the need for clearer guidelines about the program's capstone project (IDS 499), on confusion about the procedures for dealing with multiple advisors, and on the absence of contact among students in the program since IDS students do not have common coursework. In response to these concerns, more detailed guidelines for IDS 499 have been developed and will be distributed in the fall to all IDS majors and their advisors, IDS workshops will be conducted each semester to promote communication within the program regarding advising, and efforts are underway to unify majors by establishing peer networks. Placement data for IDS graduates have been very positive. Since students choose the IDS major because they have very specific educational and career goals, they tend to have specific career plans in place prior to graduation. Only one student from this reporting period was employed in a field unrelated to his IDS program.

Assessment data for Interdisciplinary Studies has been limited in part by the small number of graduates in the program, so several initiatives have been instituted to give the program a higher profile, particularly among transfer students. Transfer agreements have been established with several technical colleges allowing smoother transitions for students who wish to pursue a baccalaureate degree focused on fields that are not offered as majors at Lander. Frameworks have been designed for innovative and unique programs of study that allow students to use their technical college training in interdisciplinary majors. Information specific to these frameworks has been distributed in the community, and the IDS director has held presentations at technical college campuses, at local industries, and for a regional business / education partnership. Response to these initiatives has been very positive, with over 100 inquiries regarding the IDS program being made since April 1998.

## **LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

The Jackson Library continually assesses the quality of the services it provides and responds promptly and effectively to needs that are identified. The library's assessment process, which was selected as an exemplary program in 1996, is carried out by measuring the areas being evaluated against external standards, monitoring the use of specific services in each area, and surveying constituents concerning attitudes and satisfaction. Monitoring circulation statistics, interlibrary loan requests, opinion surveys, and comparison of library holdings with standard bibliographies provides multiple-measure assessment of the adequacy of the collection, and monitoring student use of the library and bibliographic instruction assesses the responsiveness of library policies to student needs. The end product is a global program of assessment that gives focused attention to both the general operations of the library and to specialized needs.

### **CIRCULATION STATISTICS**

Circulation statistics, collected for material checked out through the automated system, are used to keep faculty members aware of use of the library in their subject areas. These statistics are also used as part of the formula for determining the division of the book budget among the various subject areas. On a regular basis, faculty members are given a summary of annual circulation statistics divided by subject area, including the average number of books checked out per student and records of the library use of graduating seniors while at Lander.

Total circulation figures in the four years prior to this report were 41,420 in 1994-1995, 39,660 in 1995-1996, 37,872 in 1996-97, and 32,685 in 1997-98. Although the decline in circulation is a disturbing trend, it is to a great extent the result of alternative means of access to information.

Periodical databases for electronic searching are popular with students, and the growing use of the Internet provides students and faculty with resources for information that previously had been gathered from books and periodicals.

#### MONITORING INTERLIBRARY LOAN USE

Records of interlibrary loan use give information about heavily requested material, identifying books and periodicals that the library needs to add to the collection. Books may be ordered because of interlibrary loan activity, and--although budgetary limitations do not allow subscriptions to be added to the current periodicals list--reels of older volumes of microfilm of heavily requested titles may be ordered. In 1993-1994, four books and one reel of back issues of a periodical on microfilm were purchased; in 1994-1995, six books; in 1995-1996, fifteen reels of five periodical titles; in 1996-1997, in 1997-1998, sixteen reels of four periodicals.

#### SURVEYING FACULTY AND STUDENTS CONCERNING ADEQUACY OF COLLECTION

As a part of a library evaluation survey, faculty are annually asked questions concerning the adequacy of the collection. They indicate in the surveys whether they feel that the book and periodical collections generally reflect and support the courses in their fields. Because of deletions of periodical titles in the last few years, it is not surprising that the surveys show greater dissatisfaction with the periodical collection than the book collection. Other questions on the survey provide faculty an opportunity to identify areas in their disciplines that need strengthening, areas they are planning to emphasize in the future, and areas for which specialized bibliographic instruction is needed. Percentages of the fall FTE faculty members who returned evaluations of the library in the four years prior to this report were as follows: 1997-98—45% (63); 1996-97—37% (51); 1995-1996—41% (53); and 1994-1995—47% (63). While the faculty show a reasonable level of satisfaction with the book collection, survey responses demonstrate a need for ongoing collection development in both areas.

#### FACULTY RESPONSES TO THE LIBRARY SURVEY

	Agreed	Disagreed	Neutral/No response
<b>1997-98</b>			
Book collection is adequate	77%	14%	8%
Periodical collection is adequate	66%	39%	6%
<b>1996-97</b>			
Book collection is adequate	81%	10%	10%
Periodical collection is adequate	73%	16%	12%
<b>1995-96</b>			
Book collection is adequate	71%	18%	10%
Periodical collection is adequate	55%	26%	18%
<b>1994-95</b>			
Book collection is adequate	66%	14%	19%
Periodical collection is adequate	51%	35%	14%

Students are asked to evaluate the adequacy of the book and periodical collections in general and of the collections in their major areas in particular. Like the faculty, students show less satisfaction with the periodical than the book collection. For both books and periodicals, they are less satisfied with the collection in the major than that in other areas. Numbers of students who returned evaluations of the library in the four years prior to this report were as follows: 1997-98—620; 1996-97—593; 1995-96—632; and 1994-95—518.

#### STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE LIBRARY SURVEY

	Agreed	Disagreed	Neutral/No response
<b>1997-98</b>			
Book collection is adequate in major	57%	19%	25%
Book collection is adequate in other areas	66%	9%	24%
Periodical collection is adequate in major	53%	18%	28%
Periodical collection is adequate/other areas	65%	9%	26%
<b>1996-97</b>			
Book collection is adequate in major	58%	15%	27%
Book collection is adequate in other areas	71%	9%	20%
Periodical collection is adequate in major	57%	19%	25%
Periodical collection is adequate/other areas	69%	10%	21%
<b>1995-96</b>			
Book collection is adequate in major	63%	14%	23%
Book collection is adequate in other areas	71%	10%	19%
Periodical collection is adequate in major	58%	18%	19%
Periodical collection is adequate/other areas	65%	10%	25%
<b>1994-95</b>			
Book collection is adequate in major	56%	17%	27%
Book collection is adequate in other areas	70%	9%	21%
Periodical collection is adequate in major	52%	20%	28%
Periodical collection is adequate/other areas	62%	10%	28%

As budgets have remained static and prices of library materials (including electronic sources) have continued to increase, it was expected that the satisfaction with the collection would decline. Full-text databases, which were made available beginning in 1998-1999, should begin to improve the rate of satisfaction with the periodical collection.

#### CHECKING STANDARD BIBLIOGRAPHIES AGAINST COLLECTION

Standard bibliographies provide external data against which the collection may be measured. Comparison of library holdings with standard bibliographies gives an idea of the strength of the collection in various areas and provides suggestions for titles to order. Each year the collection is evaluated through comparison with bibliographies in several subject areas, and information from the evaluation is forwarded to appropriate faculty members in the discipline, who use it in recommending books to be added to the collection. Twenty-eight bibliographies were checked against the collection in the two years prior to this report.



## MONITORING STUDENT USE

As a basis for decisions about staffing and services, the total number of people who enter the library is monitored by means of a counter at the entrance turnstile. The hourly count indicates patterns of use of the library, while the total number helps identify trends from year to year. Because the use of the library seems to be spread fairly evenly throughout the day, all hours--including the noon hour and evening hours--are adequately staffed. The numbers of people entering the library in the four years prior to this report were 208,730 in 1994-1995, 217,649 in 1995-1996, 212,498 in 1996-97, and 188,123 in 1997-98. The decline in 1997-98 occurred because the count includes students who enter the library to use the two computer laboratories located in the library building. The addition of new computer laboratories in the new mathematics building has reduced some of the traffic in the library.

Patterns of library use are assessed through an hourly count of students working and studying there. This information is used to determine whether there is a need to extend library hours or increase staff at times of heavy use. In 1997-1998, in response to student requests, library hours for the spring semester examination period were extended by an hour for three days. A count was taken every quarter hour to determine the use. The use did not warrant the additional hours; therefore the extension was not made permanent.

## MONITORING OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTION FOR STUDENTS

The library collects information on the number of bibliographic sessions provided during each year and the number of students taught. Knowing the number of students who have been given bibliographic instruction gives an idea of the fraction of the student population with basic library skills. By far the largest group of such students are those who receive bibliographic instruction as a part of their English 101 and 102 classes; in the four years prior to this report, those freshman classes included 867 students in 1994-1995, 942 in 1995-1996, 915 in 1996-97, and 1135 in 1997-98. (These numbers include duplicated students if they were in both English 101 and 102 during the year. The 102 orientation is more advanced and is coordinated with the class's research writing.)

Students who receive bibliographic instruction in conjunction with the English 101 classes are asked to fill out an evaluation form. The tabulated results of responses from the evaluation forms, which have been consistently positive, are circulated to the librarians and the English faculty. Typical were responses to two of the most important questions on the form, which evaluate whether the course causes students to feel comfortable asking a librarian for assistance and whether the course format, which includes lectures followed by hands-on practice helps the students to master and retain the material covered. In the last four years 98-99% of the students gave positive responses to the first of those questions, and 97% did so for the second question. While the librarians constantly seek ways to improve bibliographic instruction and to keep it current, student evaluations have uncovered no problems that need to be addressed.

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