Human Development and Family Studies, PhD
Assessment Report, 2012

Expected outcomes: Specialized Knowledge, methods, and application

Doctoral students will demonstrate their progress toward learning objectives through career related activities/products.

Assessment Methods

Method: 2012 annual reviews of PhD students

HDFS graduate students participate in an annual evaluation through which progress in the program is monitored. Students with different career goals receive feedback about activities on which they should be focusing attention to enhance their competitiveness. Students state their career goals and present information regarding their activities of the previous calendar year. They also provide their curriculum vita, on which publications in print or in press, manuscripts under review or in preparation, and conference presentations made at regional, national or international conferences are listed. In addition, their teaching experience is recorded. This evaluation focuses on these activities and products because they are the evidence used by hiring entities to document specialized knowledge and the ability to utilize and advance that knowledge. Since students whose professional goals emphasize teaching should have a different profile than students whose goals emphasize research, this evaluation addresses the effectiveness of the annual review process in steering students’ career preparations in ways that are consistent with their goals.

Findings:

This analysis focuses on the 20 students with 1 full year or more in the PhD program during the 2011-2012 academic year, including 7 that graduated. The 20 had a total of 66 student-years in the program (M=3.3 yr/student). They reported a total of 52 publications (2.6/student), 57 manuscripts in preparation (2.9/student), 194 conference presentations (9.7/student) and had served as the instructor of record in 35 classes (1.75/student). Students could specify their goals as teaching, research or both. Six said teaching (and had a total of 24 students-years in the program), 4 said research (and had a total of 12 student-years in the program) and the other 10 (with a combined 30 students-years in the program) said both. Since the students who said “both” would be included in teaching and research profiles, to maximize the sensitivity of the analysis only those stating a specific interest in teaching versus research were compared. Adjusting for the number of years in the program, we find that future teachers produced publications at the rate of 0.38/student/year compared to future researchers at 1.33/student/year (over 3 to 1 favoring researchers). In terms of manuscripts in preparation, future teachers reported 0.50/student/year and future researchers 0.92/student/year (~2 to 1
favored researchers). Conference presentations for future teachers occurred at 2.04/student/year and for researchers at 3.75/student/year (~2 to 1 favoring researchers). Experience as instructor of record favored future teachers, at 0.88/student/year compared to 0.17/student/year for future researchers (over 5 to 1 favoring teachers). In sum, future researchers were producing more research products whereas future teachers were acquiring more teaching experience.

How did you use findings for improvement?

The findings support the general effectiveness of the review process in steering students toward emphasizing the types of activities and products that will maximize their competitiveness on the job market. However, the data also reveal individual cases that do not fit the mold. These individual findings will be used for improvement by being entered as data for the specific students in the next round of reviews that will take place Spring of 2013.

Additional comments:

None.