

**IUSB CAMPUS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
DEPARTMENTAL THIRD YEAR REVIEW SUMMARY
2004-2005**

Introduction:

The IUSB Assessment Committee asks each degree granting department at IUSB to summarize assessment activities every three years and present the Committee with a brief written and oral report. The presentations were made in April of 2005. Representatives from the following departments gave reports: Theatre, Fine Arts, Music, Social Work, English, Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology, Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy, Undergraduate Business, Criminal Justice, Dental Education, and Counseling and Human Services

Evaluation Rubric:

The Assessment Committee used a new rubric (appended, and at www.iusb.edu/~sbassess) to evaluate the assessment programs described in the Third Year Reviews. This rubric was developed based on one from Northwest Missouri State campus. The Assessment Committee felt that this rubric would provide more detailed and more useful information to the academic programs. Seven assessment components were placed on a continuum from undeveloped to exemplary. This will allow programs to specifically address weaknesses identified by the assessment committee.

Assessment Information:

The majority of programs presenting Third Year Reviews gave strong evidence of a maturing assessment program and philosophy which is integral to its mission, strategic planning and curriculum. Four of the programs had recently undergone major reorganization and changes in leadership. These programs are in the process of re-evaluating current assessment practices, and formulating a new assessment philosophy.

The reports described a wide range of assessment techniques being used by academic programs. Standardized tests are valuable to the Psychology and MBA programs because they are able to compare to national averages. The latest assessment technology is being adopted by innovative programs at IUSB. The School of Education has introduced LiveText software, which gives immediate assessment feedback. This allows faculty to modify curriculum as they teach. It also provides a rich data-bank of information which can be used to produce statistical reports and longitudinal data. Psychology is planning to use the expanded capabilities of OnCourse to supplement standardized test data.

By contrast, Portfolios, Capstone courses and Proseminars are the predominant assessment techniques used by liberal arts programs. These techniques allow faculty to get an in-depth picture of student learning specific to the discipline, as well as demonstrating writing skills and more intangible student learning goals which are part of broader academic values. Although these techniques provide evidence of student learning which could not be collected in any other way; they are faculty and resource intensive, which has put a strain on many academic departments.

The analysis of assessment information led to many improvements and changes in academic programs. The Biology program's exemplary documentation of their assessment program showed how thoughtful evaluation of each course was tied directly to specific curricular changes. Student input and assessment information helped the History department identify Asian history as an area in which the department needed greater depth. The department hired a new faculty member with Asian expertise. Programs are also starting to realize the value of sharing assessment goals, data and results with students, faculty and other stake-holders. Several programs are including assessment components on websites and syllabi.

All of the Third Year Review reports are available on the IUSB Assessment Committee website: <http://www.iusb.edu/~sbassess>.

Assessment Plans

As part of IUSB's preparation for upcoming accreditation activities, and as part of good assessment practice; each of the academic programs presenting Third Year Reviews have been asked to submit updated assessment plans. The Assessment Committee has developed an outline containing the components of an excellent assessment plan. (Appended to report) In addition, this fall, the Assessment Committee will be hosting a workshop on writing assessment plans given by Barbara Walvoord. She is a nationally recognized expert on academic assessment and reaccreditation.

Conclusions:

A difficulty faced by many programs is the lack of resources. Many programs simply did not have the budget or faculty time available to do the kind of assessment program they would like to do. For instance, in the case of the MLS program, there is a single faculty administrator, assigned part-time to the program, and a quarter time secretary. Assessment for this program involves in-depth reading on a broad range of topics from a wide range of students. The administrator is doing an admirable job of arranging for the evaluation of student papers. However, without additional secretarial support he will not be able to do the in-depth analysis he would like of the assessment results. The situation is similar in all of the smaller programs.

The IUSB Assessment Committee strongly encourages the administration to back it's commitment to assessment with appropriate financial support for the ongoing and increasing expenses of administering an excellent assessment program. In particular, the MLS program has requested that the budget for Liberal Studies be separated from the LAS budget. The Liberal Studies director would like to make a case for tying assessment results to budgetary allocation, but this cannot be done if there is no place to allocate it.

The majority of academic programs at IUSB are doing an excellent job of assessing student learning. The programs reviewed in 2004 understand and use assessment effectively in their programs. Assessment information collected through these maturing assessment strategies has had important impacts on every aspect of academic programs.

Summary of Assessment Techniques used by Programs Evaluated in 2004

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Biology

Techniques Used – Entry Level Assessment, Threshold Courses, Mid-level Course Assessment, Capstone Course, Graduate Success, Student Instructor/Course Evaluations

Actions Taken -

- Advising changes
- Changed math prerequisites
- Increased lab component in introductory courses
- Extensive curriculum improvements in upper level courses
- Changes in prerequisites
- Laboratory equipment improvements and additions

History

Techniques Used - Portfolios, Proseminar

Actions Taken -

- Added new course requirements
- Changed composition of faculty expertise
- Improved advising
- Added components to the portfolio

Foreign Language

Techniques Used – Pre-testing, Portfolio

Actions Taken -

- Adopted new textbooks in introductory courses

General Studies

Techniques Used – Capstone Course, Alumni Survey

Actions Taken -

- Increased computer requirements

Master of Liberal Studies

Techniques Used – Graduate Projects, Proseminar

Actions Taken -

- Added pro-seminar
- Created new graduate electives
- Added a Proposal Seminar
- Increased required hours
- Started development of Public Intellectual track

Psychology

Techniques Used – Standardized post-test; Student clubs, research presentations and honors

Actions Taken -

- Changes in class scheduling
- New courses
- Increased computer usage across curriculum

School of Business and Economics

MBA

Techniques Used – Standardized Comprehensive Post-test, Alumni Survey

Actions Taken –

School of the Arts

Communication

Techniques used –Entrance Questionnaire, Formal Acceptance in to Communication Arts, Capstone Course, Exit Interview/Questionnaire, Entrance/Exit Surveys

Actions taken -

- Changed requirements for Independent Study and Teaching Assistantships
- Changed Capstone

School of Education

Education

Techniques Used – Standardized test, Portfolios, Surveys, Assessment rubrics

Actions Taken –

- Adopted LiveText assessment software for data collection
- Developed intensive assessment program for IPSB

Educational Leadership

Techniques Used – Portfolio, Peer reviews, Rubrics, Authentic application projects

Actions Taken –

- Move to authentic learning projects
- Added mentoring program

IUSB Assessment Committee Guidelines for Departmental Assessment Plans September 2003

I. Identified Measurable Educational Goals

Without identified goals, it is impossible to assess the success of academic programs. Goals must also be measurable and quantifiable. These goals should reflect campus statements and priorities, as well as the specific goals identified by your department for your students.

- A. Departmental
- B. General Education
- C. Campus

II. Methodology for Measuring the Attainment of Educational Goals

(Assessment Techniques and Procedures) – Assessment is the means by which Student Learning is documented and verified.

- A. Techniques
 1. Direct (pre and post-testing, capstone courses, oral exams) and indirect (alumni and employer surveys, graduate school success)
 2. A single assessment technique can be used to measure more than one educational goal
- B. Assessment activities measure and impact education goals

III. Process for using assessment information to improve programs

The work of assessment has no meaning unless it is used to improve student learning and teaching.

- A. Assessment information collected, collated and analyzed by department faculty
- B. Departmental resource allocation decisions are based on assessment results
 1. Budgetary and faculty resources are expended on identified weaknesses
 2. Accomplishment of goals is celebrated and rewarded
- C. Changes in curriculum, scheduling, advising and other results reported in assessment reports, and made available to students and faculty
- D. Regular revision and updating of Assessment plan, (revised plan submitted with Third Year Review)

IV. Participation of all constituencies

- A. Faculty
 - 1. All faculty involved in collecting and analyzing assessment data and making decisions about steps to be taken as a result
 - 2. Departmental assessment committee in larger programs
- B. Students
 - 1. Not just objects of assessment but active participants in identifying and measuring goals
 - 2. Participation in departmental assessment committees
 - 3. Awareness of assessment goals
 - a. Assessment information available on website
 - b. Education goals identified in syllabus
- C. Alumni, employers and community

V. Record Keeping

- A. Established departmental files, with a process for maintaining and passing on information
- B. Departmental liaison responsible for filing annual and third year reports with the Assessment Committee
- C. Website with assessment goals and data
- D. Timely submission of reports