

**Encourage and Maintain Academic Excellence  
Task Force Recommendations**

*DRAFT*

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IUSB as a public university has an obligation to provide excellence to all its students and to promote and inspire excellence in all its employees (faculty and staff). Our task, therefore, becomes redefining how we conceive excellence such that we meet the needs of the largest possible constituency rather than promoting the careers and agendas of only a privileged few. We will achieve that goal by the following means:

- A focus on establishing and maintaining an institution within which all participants (students, faculty, and staff) are provided with a variety of opportunities that challenge them to excel in their chosen fields.
- Our focus will be consistent with the discovery criterion of the Higher Learning Commission-- to engage in a life of learning by providing an environment that supports research, scholarship, performance, creativity, applied practice, and/or other forms of discovery.
- Our focus will be consistent with the student learning and effective teaching criterion of the Higher Learning Commission--to assure and advance student learning, recognize and promote teaching effectiveness, and evaluate the currency and relevance of curricular offerings.

**Advising Recommendations:**

**A. Rationale:**

Achieving greater excellence begins with the advising process. Proper advising is critical to a student's success. Students need assistance not only in choosing the appropriate courses for general education or their major, but in developing their talents and academic abilities in all areas. They need guidance about how to connect their academic studies to their personal lives. From their first day on campus, they must be introduced to all the possible avenues they can pursue to enhance their college education and thus their career possibilities. We must provide them with clear, high expectations for their college experience. Our students will achieve greatness if we encourage them to aspire to greatness. As research has shown, when much is expected from students, they achieve a great deal (Schilling and Schilling, 1999).

IUSB will therefore develop an advising model that is holistic, comprehensive, and accessible to all our students. Good advising will begin the moment the student is admitted to IUSB. When we establish a good advising relationship with our students from the start of their college careers, that relationship will continue throughout the student's life, as they return to us for graduate study or further career development, refer their friends and family to us, and support us through alumni programs and fundraising. To accomplish this, IUSB will continue and

increase the involvement of faculty members in academic advising, who, in collaboration with professional advisors, will advise both students majoring within the academic discipline of the faculty members and students yet to declare a major. Successful academic advising benefits students, faculty members, and the campus as a whole. A strong advising program helps students to formulate academic and career goals, to feel fuller membership in the academic community, and to become successful learners. Academic advising helps faculty members broaden their vision beyond their own discipline and stay in closer touch with shifts in the nature of the student body and the campus as a whole.

### **B. Specific Objectives:**

- I. Encourage and support training of faculty and relevant professional staff to advise.
- II. Encourage and support training of support staff who work with students.
- III. Develop an ongoing program of advising workshops. Institute mechanisms that will allow the campus to continually review and update the advising process as new knowledge becomes available.
- IV. Institutionalize faculty advising as an expected faculty function, which means it must be a fully recognized and rewarded activity.

### **C. Activities:**

I-III. Appoint a broadly-structured task force whose charge will be to develop a model advising process for IUSB based on Harvard professor Richard Light's groundbreaking study of the college experience, Making the Most of College. Surveys show that six in ten high school teachers believe not all students are capable of success in a rigorous course of study (Markow, Fauth, and Gravitch 2001). We need to make sure that such lowered expectations are not also prevalent on our campus. In addition to developing faculty expectations for advising, the taskforce should also explore and develop an appropriate service model for the staff of various administrative offices on campus which interact with students. Its scope will differ from the current Campus Advising Task Force which has focused more on the mechanics of direct admits and has not focused on developing a rationale and an underlying philosophy for our advising process. The task force will be charged with considering how advising will play a role in student retention and to develop appropriate processes to intervene when students run into academic or personal difficulty. We need a revolution on campus such that we hold higher expectations for **all** our students and we actively intervene to ensure student success.

The task force will be charged with developing training modules and outlining a training program such that in two years all faculty members and staff on campus will have been trained.

We will institutionalize the training process by incorporating it into orientations for new faculty and new staff as provided by UCET.

Refresher training and support will be provided through on-line, web-based modules and mini-sessions implemented through UCET.

IV. Make the following changes in campus policies and procedures regarding faculty participation in advising:

Establish campus-wide the LAS practice of including advising as a separate section in the faculty annual report.

Encourage faculty members to itemize the kinds of advising (informal, major, new student, transfer, and undecided) and the quantity.

Write advising explicitly into guidelines as an additional commitment worthy of merit pay increases valued comparably with significant committee service.

Develop guidelines for determining at what point an advising load merits release time.

#### **D. Resources Required:**

I-III. Summer money to support faculty team developing the training modules (team of 4, \$3000 each, \$12,000).

Money to UCET to develop web-based training modules (\$10,000).

IV. None

#### **E. Benchmarks and Assessment:**

I-III. Evaluate student performance using indicators such as:

numbers of students on probation

performance of students in remedial courses

numbers of students receiving honors

numbers of students participating in research or honors program

Evaluate retention rates

Conduct exit interviews with graduating students to explore quality/relevance of advising in their college experience

Survey alumni about importance/relevance of advising to their experience

Monitor changes in alumni giving to IUSB

IV. Monitor faculty reports on advising through Annual Reports.

Track percentage of merit pay increases awarded due to advising excellence

Track number of faculty who receive release time for advising activities.

### **Program/Curriculum Recommendations**

#### **A. Rationale:**

IUSB must provide its students, both undergraduate and graduate, with a curriculum and degree programs that encourage them to become intentional learners: purposeful, self-directed, self-aware, integrative and critical thinkers, adaptive learners, socially responsible, appreciative of diversity. To accomplish this, we must provide degree and program options that give all our students a practical, liberal education—regardless of their major program of study.

## **B. Specific Objectives:**

### *I.. Remedial Programs*

Remedial programs should serve as a bridge between the level of learning expected in high school and that required in college.

Students in remedial programs should be held to rigorous expectations and encouraged to try to excel rather than simply doing what is needed to slip through the class.

There should be clear expectations of what level of accomplishment students in such courses are expected to strive for.

### *II. General Education*

As outcomes of the general education curriculum at IUSB, students should

- be able to write clearly and correctly, and to understand, construct, and analyze persuasive written arguments
- be capable of understanding, constructing, and analyzing quantitative arguments
- be capable of understanding, constructing, and analyzing arguments presented in verbal and visual form
- be able to retrieve, evaluate, and use information effectively
- understand the power and purpose of a scientific view of the natural world
- be familiar with the philosophical, literary, and political traditions of Western culture
- understand factors that shape the behavior of human beings, as individuals and as groups
- appreciate artistic achievement and develop aesthetic sensibilities
- appreciate the importance of ethical behavior and understand the ethical issues associated with a variety of academic disciplines
- understand and appreciate the variety of cultures and experiences that have contributed to American society
- gain familiarity with non-Western cultures
- value personal growth and learning

(Source: Report and Recommendations, March 2003, IUSB Task Force on General Education)

### *III. Undergraduate Major Programs*

The campus currently has no coherent process by which we make decisions concerning the introduction of new degree programs or the phasing out of degree programs. The campus needs to develop criteria for making these decisions. This process should make use of both internal program assessment reports completed for the Assessment Committee as well as external Program Review reports. Each unit should be encouraged to develop a unit-specific academic master plan on the basis of these documents.

### *IV. Graduate Degree Programs*

Graduate studies on campus must be reviewed. Some existing programs may not be viable; the desirability and feasibility of new programs should be studied. We should explore using accelerated degree programs (3-2 programs) for undergraduates where appropriate.

#### *V. Degree Enhancement Programs and Opportunities*

We already maintain a number of degree enhancement programs that serve those students whom we categorize as “excellent”: the Honors Program, scholarships, and various departmental honors activities and awards. The SMART program, Undergraduate Research Conference, undergraduate publications such as *Analecta*, *New Views on Gender*, *Undergraduate Research Journal*, and the *Preface*, gallery exhibitions by students and/or faculty, Theater, Music, and Speech performances, and internship opportunities serve some of this same population of students as well as reaching others.

We should focus on expanding the degree enhancement opportunities for all our students. The SMART program, with its lower GPA requirements, presents a unique opportunity to reach a much larger segment of our student body; this program should be expanded. We should develop other programs to encourage student excellence: leadership training, student creativity and entrepreneurship, service learning, internships, community-based research opportunities.

#### *VI. Academic Support Services*

Academic support services (Threshold Learning Communities, the Writing Center, peer mentors, Oncourse, Supplemental Instruction, Placement testing, etc.) should all be centralized. These services should be user friendly and integrated. These services have tended to stand alone. We recommend that effort be put into integrating these services more thoroughly into the academic course offerings.

#### *VII. Institutional Program Support*

The campus should embark on an aggressive campaign of institutional grantsmanship and fundraising in order to bring in the monies needed to foster program development. We should explore creating partnerships with local businesses and industries through our Development office.

### **C. Activities:**

I. We recommend the development of specialized training through UCET for faculty who teach remedial courses. There should be on-going monitoring and assessment of these courses to ensure that faculty continue to maintain high standards and to ensure that students are being adequately prepared to succeed in non-remedial coursework.

II. A new general education curriculum for IUSB was adopted by the Academic Senate in March 2003. That curriculum should be implemented as quickly as possible. Implementation arrangements should also provide for a rigorous assessment plan for the new curriculum so that it can be monitored and adapted as needed. The Implementation Taskforce should be established and given its charge as soon as possible.

III. We recommend that all units begin a conversation within the unit about what criteria would be appropriate for making decisions to introduce a new program or phase out a program. Each unit should be charged with developing their own internal process and criteria for making these decisions. This process should make use of both internal program assessment reports completed for the campus Assessment Committee as well as external Program Review reports. Each unit should be encouraged to develop a unit-specific academic master plan on the basis of these documents.

IV. The Graduate Council should be charged to review graduate education at IUSB. They should be empowered to make recommendations concerning: universal admissions standards, expectations for student performance in the program, assessment practices for graduate education, policies regarding undergraduate courses taken for graduate credit, graduate students' needs for financial support, graduate student advising, potential areas for cross-program collaboration, and new areas into which we should expand graduate level offerings.

V. Current enhancement programs should be subjected to a comprehensive review process through Academic Affairs so that we can determine the number of students served and assess the outcome of these programs, with an eye towards maintaining those programs that merit continued support.

VI. These programs should be subjected to a comprehensive review process through Academic Affairs so that we can determine the number of students served and assess the outcome of these programs, with an eye towards better integrating these programs into the academic course offerings.

VII. We recommend the campus hire a Director of Institutional Research and Planning and create an Advisory Council for Institutional Research as well as hire a Director for Grants, Research and Graduate Studies. The Director of IRP should be charged with developing a robust plan for institutional grantsmanship that includes significant faculty involvement in this process. An incentive or reward program should be developed for faculty who are major contributors to institutional grant writing.

#### **D. Resources Required:**

I. UCET will play a key role in many of our recommendations. In order for them to provide the necessary training and faculty/staff development activities, the office will need to be expanded. We recommend that they be allowed to hire for the following positions: a full-time secretary and a full time instructional design professional. We also recommend that they be given money in their budget to hire two work study students each year and they be allocated \$10,000 in money to fund internships for IUSB students who want to learn about curriculum development or instructional design.

II. Implementation of the new general education curriculum will require extensive reworking of courses. We recommend allocating additional funds (\$30-50,000 per year) for curriculum

development efforts over the next three years. The Implementation Taskforce should also explore external institutional grant opportunities.

III. None required.

IV. Work-study support for data collection.

V. Work-study support for data collection.

VI. Work-study support for data collection.

VII. Salary for two new positions, Director of Institutional Research and Planning and Director for Grants, Research and Graduate Studies.

**E. Benchmarks and Assessment:**

I.

II.

III.

IV.

V.

VI.

VII.

**Research Recommendations**

**A. Rationale:**

IUSB is committed to fostering an intellectual climate grounded in faculty and student research and achievement. It is the synergy found on this campus between our teaching and our research that makes IUSB an innovative and exciting institution. Research is also an important activity for our students. It is essential that they be able to apply their analytical skills to real problems in the world and to connect theory with practice.

**B. Specific Objectives:**

I. Provide new research opportunities for our students in our community.

II. Provide new research opportunities for our faculty that are linked to local needs.

III. Increase the levels of external funding received by faculty on this campus.

**C. Activities:**

- I. Develop research competitions for students that are funded by local corporations and institutions (Press-Ganey, Memorial and St. Joseph's Regional, TCU, etc.).
- II. Establish community sponsorship for faculty research. Solicit foundation funds that would be used to establish several faculty research grant competitions—ideally should have one for each area of the university (Fine Arts, LAS, B&E, Education, Nursing and Health Professions, SPEA, Labor Studies, General Studies). Establish a faculty internship program in cooperation with local businesses, agencies, and institutions..
- III. Change the regulations on faculty research grants: after receiving two internal awards, a faculty member cannot apply for a third internal award until they can show they have applied for external funding. They do not have to succeed in receiving external funding, but they must show that they tried to receive it. The Research & Development committee would be permitted to consider exceptions to this rule.

**D. Resources Required:**

- I. External Affairs has the necessary resources.
- II. External Affairs has the necessary resources.
- III. None Required.

**E. Benchmarks and Assessment:**

- I. Development of 3 student research competitions in the next five years.
- II. Development of 3 faculty research competitions and 5 faculty internships in the next five years.
- III. An increase of 5% in external research applications each year for the next five years.

**Teaching Recommendations****A. Rationale:**

In support of excellence in teaching, IUSB aspires to not only maintain, but also improve its status as an innovative and respected institution recognized in the Michiana area as a valued resource for the price. We will develop classroom practices that: 1) both teach knowledge and ask students to apply that knowledge to real-life situations and problems; 2) employ the diversity of the student body as a learning tool; 3) encourage both collaborative as well as individual achievement; and 4) work to develop self-directed and intentional learners who can take

responsibility for their own learning process. IUSB clearly prizes excellence and innovation in its teaching and that excellence is rewarded and encouraged. IUSB has the highest percentage of faculty who have won distinguished teaching awards of any IU campus. The concept of "scholarship of teaching" has been discussed for many years on our campus, in groups led by John Lewis and Mike Keen. In 2002, IUSB was one of the first campuses to register with the Carnegie Teaching Academy Campus Program. It is time to share our teaching expertise with the broader Michiana region.

## **B. Specific Objectives:**

- I. Develop the scholarship of teaching and learning at IUSB and in the broader region.
- II. Expand the number of IUSB faculty who are able to benefit from training in teaching innovation and course development through UCET and FACET. Encourage faculty to continually innovate in their courses by rewarding innovation and assessing it on student evaluations.
- III. Begin a conversation with the K-12 school systems in our area about the Standards for Success recommendations about what students should know and be able to do in order to succeed in entry-level university courses. Our goal will be to develop a collaborative model with the K-12 school systems in order to improve the overall educational quality and resources of our community.

## **C. Activities:**

- I. Develop JoSOTL, the electronic Journal on Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, into a premier teaching and research publication by providing the necessary institutional support to allow the journal to be published on a regular basis.
- II. Conduct a FACET-sponsored retreat for all IUSB faculty, organized through UCET. Establish a yearly teaching award for innovative teaching (\$2000). Standardize teaching evaluations across campus in order to facilitate comparison across schools/departments/disciplines. We recommend that one-third of the evaluation should be uniform on a campus-wide basis, one-third uniform across the college (school or division) and one-third should be uniform for the discipline. Evaluations should include questions on teaching innovation.
- III. [It's not clear at what level this project should begin. Need to brainstorm this more.]

## **D. Resources Required:**

- I. The journal should be allocated half-time clerical support and a full-time Editorial Associate. It should be given an institutional home in UCET and allocated a small budget to cover office expenses.

II. Innovation in Teaching award requires \$2000 yearly. The retreat should be funded to cover the costs of preparing materials and providing lunch for participants.

III. [Not clear at present]

**E. Benchmarks and Assessment:**

Set up benchmarks to measure effects of teaching

Persistence rates;

Retention rates;

Increase in number of publications;

Increase in the number of faculty presentations.

Number of IUSB faculty inducted into FACET

Attendance/Involvement in UCET activities

Number of faculty who receive TTA awards

Number of faculty who receive tenure/promotion on the basis of teaching excellence

Number of faculty publications on teaching

**Infrastructure Recommendations:**

**A. Rationale:**

As part of the overall campus mission to achieve and sustain academic excellence, IU South Bend must allocate the resources necessary to build a strong and coherent infrastructure that supports the teaching, research, advising and programmatic goals of all divisions and schools on campus.

The components of infrastructure include technology and the physical plant as well as the administrative structures of the campus. The campus needs high quality technological based classrooms and labs to support faculty and student projects, research and performance in all campus schools. Physical plant issues include classroom equipment (e.g., desks, blackboards, etc.), building maintenance, and custodial services. We need credible and reliable communications throughout the organization to instill trust as well as to increase motivation and loyalty among faculty, staff and students. We need a stable administrative structure and a process for developing the leadership capabilities of our staff and our faculty. Attention should be paid to making the campus a student-friendly environment.

**B. Specific Objectives:**

I. Stabilize the administrative structure.

II. Restore effective communication channels and build better teamwork across the entire campus.

III. Develop the leadership capabilities of faculty and staff. All leadership positions (vice chancellors, deans, directors) should have performance programs and annual performance

reviews. Establishing a regular schedule of self-assessment and external review should be considered for all senior administrators. The Director of Human Resources should continue with the development of performance programs for all professional staff.

IV. Improve classroom and lab technology.

**C. Activities:**

I. None required. The recent push to search and screen for a large number of administrative positions previously held by “acting” or “interim” hires as well as changes initiated by our new Chancellor in the administrative framework should serve to stabilize that administrative structure.

II. Maintain a centralized calendar of campus activities. Use the Preface, campus TV monitors, and mass e-mail to keep members of the campus informed. Continue the campus tradition of broadly based representation on key campus task forces and policy making bodies.

III. Implement a system of annual performance review for all IUSB employees, no matter what their level. Establish through UCET a faculty mentorship model, along the lines of that used with new junior faculty, to allow recently tenured associate professors to learn from their more senior colleagues who are nearing retirement.

IV. Continue the process, already begun, of equipping every classroom with a technology desk that provides projection, video, and web-based options for classroom instruction. Establish base budget lines for all laboratories on campus so that equipment repair and replacement can be reliably scheduled instead of relying on the use of one-time monies.

**D. Resources Required:**

I. None Required

II. None Required.

III. None Required/

IV. Tech desks? \$100,000 to establish base lines for laboratories.

**E. Benchmarks and Assessment:**

I. Rapid turnover in administrative lines has ceased.

II. Fewer scheduling conflicts. Improved campus climate to be determined through periodic unit reviews.

III. All employees are receiving annual performance reviews.

IV. In 5 years, every classroom would be equipped with either a technology desk or its equivalent in stand-alone equipment, and the use of such equipment would be routine in our courses. Laboratories on campus would be well maintained with state of the art equipment.

**Sources:**

*Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College.* National Panel Report. Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002.

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