Minutes
University Assessment Council
October 16th, 9am, Federal Hall 222

Members Present: Anderson, Arvin, Ball, Ballard, Bernard, Bhowmick, Bunnett, Hampton, Hare, Herrington-Perry, Myers, Peterson, Pitner, Tuttle

Members Absent: Baker, Lentz, Powers, Protz

I. Welcome from the New Chair
Chair Molly Hare welcomed members of the committee, including the new student member, Brittany Bernard.

II. Approval of the September 14th Minutes
Ball moved and Pitner seconded the move to approve the minutes. The Council approved the minutes with one abstention.

III. Conceptual Framework
Hampton moved to approve the framework; Ball seconded the motion. Discussion included a request to change “Faculty/Instructors” to “Faculty/Staff” in Appendix B, Roles and Responsibilities, so that it more clearly included non-instructional personnel. The attached proposal was unanimously approved as amended.

IV. Council Bylaws for the University Handbook
Arvin moved and Peterson seconded the motion to approve the framework. The attached proposal was unanimously approved. It will be forwarded to the Provost for transmission to the President/Board of Trustees.

V. Proposal to Streamline the Assessment Process for Programs with Specialized Accreditation
Ball moved and Peterson seconded the motion to approve the proposal. Discussion included changing references from “department” to program. The attached proposal was unanimously approved as amended.

VI. Update from the Coordinator of Assessment and Accreditation
Herrington-Perry reported on the Multi-State Collaborative (MSC) assessment project. ISU participated in the pilot project, which entailed collecting student artifacts that were assessed using the AAC&U VALUE rubrics. Because the Higher
Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy project duplicates the MSC but is of higher priority, the university will not continue its participation in the MSC.

ISU developed a multi-year assessment project for the HLC Assessment Academy in 2012. Its goals are to assess and improve student learning with regard to four Foundational Studies’ objectives: Written communication, oral communication, critical thinking, and quantitative literacy. Recently, responsibility for this project was assumed by the Foundational Studies Council and its assessment subcommittee. Like academic program assessment, general education assessment will be an ongoing process aimed at continuous improvement.

Last, to increase service related to assessment, the Coordinator now is sending monthly reports to the deans on their units’ assessment progress and has established regular “office hours” (Wednesdays from 2pm to 4:30pm) for individuals who need assistance with assessment or with Taskstream. Assistance also is available by phone, email, or appointment. These opportunities will be advertised on the assessment website. New program coordinators in particular are encouraged to take advantage of them.

VII. Future Business

- Assess for Success Conference: Bunnett requested a debriefing on last spring’s conference. Hare indicated that information would be provided. Discussion continues at Assessment Leadership Council meetings about the form the next conference will take.
- Peterson requested consideration of requiring units offering stand-alone minors (i.e., minors that are not a subset of a major) to develop assessment plans. The Council will continue discussion of this issue at its next meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:45.

The next meeting will be at 9am on Friday, November 13th, in Rankin Hall 303.
Assessment at Indiana State University:
A Conceptual Framework

Approved by the University Assessment Council 10.16.15

The mission of the University Assessment Council is to guide and support ongoing assessment activities that promote and support continuous improvement of programs across the university, with the goal of improving student learning and support services. The Council is charged with identifying assessment issues, developing policy recommendations, facilitating and monitoring assessment activities, and promoting the adoption of best practices in assessment.

Assessment
Assessment is defined as one or more processes that identify, collect, and prepare data to evaluate and improve the attainment of student outcomes and program/unit objectives. Effective assessment uses relevant direct, indirect, quantitative and qualitative measures as appropriate to the objective or outcome being measured. Appropriate sampling methods may be used as part of an assessment process.

Guiding Principles
ISU is committed to realizing a culture of assessment that includes:

• A unified, coherent and systematic program that includes clearly defined objectives and outcomes developed by the faculty and staff and is consistent with the institutional mission.
• A recognition that responsibility for the development of assessment procedures, methods, and intervention/alterations based on results is held by the faculty and staff of ISU and should be consistent with and complementary to broader institutional efforts.
• A recognition that assessment is intended to assess student learning, not individual faculty and staff performance.
• An emphasis on continuous improvement through a process of gathering, interpreting and using information to improve student achievement and support services.
• Assessment efforts are expected to focus on program quality as well as related activities that contribute to the development of students
• Data-driven feedback for academic and student support programs, while recognizing the need for different approaches.
• For example, individual classroom assessment provides information that is useful in understanding the instructional environment and may contribute and help inform broader departmental assessment efforts.
• Assessment data aggregated at the program/office level will form the most basic unit used for quality assessment and improvement.
• Attention to cultural diversity and cultural sensitivity.

Purposes of Assessment
Indiana State University has established the following statement of purposes to support a shared understanding of student outcomes assessment. The purposes of assessment include,
but are not limited to, the following:

• To increase student achievement in both curricular and co-curricular areas.
• To ensure the integrity of awarded degrees.
• To evaluate and document the competence of graduates of Indiana State University, with competence defined not only as expertise within a discipline, but also defined as the attainment of learning outcomes defined in the University’s program of Foundational Studies (undergraduate) and Graduate Council Student Learning Outcomes (master’s and doctoral).
• To focus the institutional mission on quality and level of student achievement.
• To improve instruction, curriculum, and other teaching-related activities.
• To improve service delivery, effectiveness, and other operational activities.
• To promote faculty and staff development and to improve programs, program planning, and development.
• To facilitate articulation of the University’s core learning outcomes.

**Stages of Assessment**

The Assessment Council has established four categories to describe the various stages of assessment development in order to evaluate program progress and determine how best to provide support:

1. Formative – the program/office is in the early phases of assessment: the unit may or may not have learning objectives documented; the unit has assigned assessment efforts only to an individual; assessment work has been limited to episodic activity, typically in response to external demands.
2. Emerging – the program/office is working on assessment: the unit has created learning objectives and mapped courses or activities to those objectives; the unit has identified the types of evidence to be collected and may have collected some data; assessment work involves only a couple of faculty or staff members.
3. Mature – the program/office has been working on assessment for some time: the unit has identified and is collecting evidence; there is some indication of using findings to make changes; assessment work involves multiple faculty or staff; the program/office is moving toward a culture of assessment.
4. Exemplary – the program/office has a well-established and effective assessment process: assessment data are being used to refine and improve programs and activities; assessment work includes all or most of the faculty or staff members; there is clear indication of a culture of assessment.

**Assessment Goals and Instruments**

• Programs and offices will be responsible for the development of individual mission statements and statements of program goals and student learning objectives.
• Programs/offices should employ appropriate measures of student achievement that will yield information its faculty or staff can use to evaluate and improve its program.
• Programs/offices will be the sole arbiter of which data and/or instruments will be used to
establish the quality of their respective units.

- Academic programs are encouraged to use both direct measures (performance appraisals, portfolios, exams, etc.) of student learning as well as indirect measures (student satisfaction, retention, grades, etc.). Student support units are encouraged to use both direct measures (e.g., usage statistics) of program effectiveness as well as indirect measures (e.g., user satisfaction surveys).

- As a general statement such data/instruments may include, but are not limited to, the following: surveys of or interviews with employers of recent graduates; rates of admission to graduate or professional schools; student portfolios; capstone courses; senior theses or projects; and visits by external committees. Data/instruments for nonacademic units may include skill development inventories; cost/benefit analyses; and external reviews.

**Appendix A Terms and Definitions**

Recognizing the need for a common language to facilitate discussion on, and work related to, assessment, the following terms have been defined:

- **Assessment** - one or more collaborative processes that identify, collect, and prepare data to evaluate the attainment of student outcomes and program objectives. Effective assessment uses relevant direct, indirect, quantitative, and qualitative measures as appropriate to the objective or outcome being measured. Appropriate sampling methods may be used as part of an assessment process.

- **Evaluation** – One or more processes for interpreting the data and evidence accumulated through assessment processes. Evaluation determines the extent to which student outcomes and program objectives are being attained. Evaluation results in decisions and actions regarding program improvement.

- **Performance Criteria** – Specific measurable statements identifying the performance(s) required to meet the outcome; confirmable through evidence.

- **Program Educational Objectives** – Broad statements that describe what graduates are expected to attain within a few years after graduation.

- **Student Outcomes** – A description of what students are expected to know and able to do by the time of graduation. These relate to the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that students acquire as they progress through the program.

**Appendix B Roles & Responsibilities**

All university constituents contribute to improving student learning. Their roles and responsibilities are delineated below:

- **Students**
  - Be aware of the expectations for learning in their courses and programs
  - Participate in institutional and course/program-specific assessment activities
• Provide feedback on assessment practices and processes through the student representative to the Assessment Council.

Faculty/Staff
• Identify student learning outcomes for courses in their discipline/area
• Devise and assess activities that enable students to demonstrate mastery of course outcomes
• Use the results of assessment to continuously improve student learning
• Communicate course and program outcomes to students (by, for example, including them in syllabi, handbooks, websites, and so on).
• Participate in the development and implementation of assessment plans for their programs, including the activities listed as “Assessment Committee” responsibilities

Department/Unit Assessment Committee
• Develop and implement the assessment plan for their respective discipline/area, including:
  • Identifying appropriate student learning and other outcomes for programs in their discipline/area
  • Determining the schedule for assessing each outcome
  • Devising and assessing activities that enable students to demonstrate mastery of the outcomes
  • Analyzing the results of these activities and using them to devise means to continuously improve student learning/the student experience
  • Ensure that required information is entered into Taskstream by established deadlines
  • Communicate assessment findings to all members of the department/unit

Department/Unit Chairs
• Facilitate regular conversations about student learning, including success stories and best practices, as well as actions to improve performance
• Ensure that student learning outcomes link to departmental goals and to the university mission and priorities
• Ensure that expectations for student learning are accessible on departmental websites and in appropriate publications
• Identify a point person(s) who can provide assessment assistance to faculty/staff, ensure that activities are completed in a timely manner, and ensure that all required information is entered into Taskstream by established deadlines
• Communicate assessment findings to all members of the department/unit
• Monitor the assessment requirements of any specialized accreditors

Deans/Directors
• Request regular updates on efforts to assess and improve student learning
• Ensure that student learning outcomes link to college goals and to the university mission and priorities
- Ensure that expectations for student learning are accessible on college websites and in appropriate publications
- Identify a point person(s) who can provide assessment assistance to chairs, ensure that activities are completed in a timely manner, and ensure that all required information entered into Taskstream by established deadlines
- Develop and implement a recognition program to encourage attention to improving student learning
- Ensure that processes are in place to meet the needs of any specialized accreditors.

**Assessment Coordinator**
- Help cultivate a culture that embraces assessment as a key to improving student learning
- Provide assessment guidance and support to the campus community
- Provide regular and accessible communications about assessment requirements, deadlines, resources, and progress
- Oversee the Taskstream repository of assessment reports
- Assist the university in understanding and meeting accreditors’ requirements for the assessment of student learning

**Vice Presidents**
- Hold units accountable for developing and implementing assessment plans in the major/program and Foundational Studies by established deadlines
- Ensure that outcomes link to division goals and to the university mission and priorities
- Request regular updates on efforts to assess and improve outcomes, particularly those related to student learning
- Provide necessary resources to faculty and staff so they may accomplish the work of assessment
- Develop and implement a recognition program to encourage attention to improving outcomes

**President**
- Provide regular opportunities for vice presidents to discuss outcomes in their areas, particularly those related to student learning
- Hold direct reports accountable for having appropriate assessment processes in place, for collecting reliable evidence of performance, and for continuously improving assessment results
- Disseminate information about student and institutional performance to the university’s constituents

**Board of Trustees**
- Facilitate regular conversations about academic quality, including student learning outcomes
- Hold the university accountable for having processes in place to improve learning and other outcomes
Bylaws of the University Assessment Council (Approved 10.16.15)

Current

270.10 Assessment Council. Recognizing the need for organized and ongoing assessment of student academic achievement, Indiana State University (ISU) has developed and adopted an assessment plan. The ultimate responsibility for academic assessment belongs to the faculty; the responsibility for assessment of non-academic units resides with the administrators and managers. The Assessment Council is charged with the responsibility of developing, monitoring and guiding the ongoing institutional assessment activities to assure a process of continuous improvement exists with the ultimate goal of improving learning and student support services.

270.10.1 Membership.
The Assessment Council will be composed of 20 members. An eight-member core leadership team will serve as the executive group to provide general leadership to the Council as well as support and facilitate the work of the larger Council membership. The members of the Assessment Council will be appointed as follows: Five (5) Faculty representatives appointed by each College; two (2) faculty-at-large appointed by Faculty Senate; one (1) Library representative; the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs; the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment; two (2) Associate Deans, which will be subject to annual rotation with 2-year renewable, staggered terms; two (2) student representatives, one undergraduate and one graduate student, both to be appointed by the Student Government Association, two (2) representatives from Student Affairs; one (1) representative from Business Affairs; one (1) representative from Enrollment Management; one (1) representative from Graduate and Professional Studies; and one (1) assessment coordinator, which shall be an ex-officio representative with a speaking role.

Proposed

Assessment Council.

270.10 Purpose. The mission of the University Assessment Council is to guide and support ongoing assessment activities that improve student learning and support services and promote continuous improvement of programs across the university. The Council is charged with identifying assessment issues, developing policy recommendations, facilitating and monitoring assessment activities, and promoting the adoption of best practices in assessment.

270.10.1 Membership and Nomination.
The Assessment Council will be composed of 20 members who will meet monthly. A nine-member core leadership team will serve as the executive group to provide general leadership to the Council as well as support and facilitate the work of the larger Council membership. The members of the Assessment Council will be appointed as follows:

- Five (5) faculty representatives, one appointed by each college dean;
- two (2) faculty-at-large, appointed by Faculty Senate;
- one (1) Library representative, appointed by the Dean of Library Services;
- the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment;
- two (2) Associate Deans, appointed by the Council of Deans, which will be subject to annual rotation with 2-year renewable, staggered terms;
- one (1) representative from the College of Graduate and Professional Studies, appointed by the dean;
- two (2) (one) representative from Student Affairs, appointed by the Vice President;
- one (1) representative from Business Affairs, Student Success, appointed by the Vice President;
- one (1) representative from Enrollment Management, appointed by the Vice President;
270.10.1.1 Core Leadership Team. The following members of the Assessment Council will be
members of the Core Leadership Team: The five (5) faculty members appointed from each College; the
Library representative; the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs; and the Director of
Institutional Research and Assessment.

- two (7) student representatives, one undergraduate and one graduate student, appointed by the Student Government
  Association;
- the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs;
- and the Coordinator of Assessment and Accreditation.

270.10.1.1 Core Assessment Leadership Team. The following members of the Assessment Council will
be members of the Assessment Leadership Team: The five (5) faculty members appointed from the
Colleges; the Library representative; the Graduate College representative; the Associate Vice
President for Academic Affairs; and the Coordinator of Assessment and Accreditation. The
Assessment Leadership Team meets twice monthly.

270.10.1.2 Terms of Office. Faculty and administrators will serve staggered, three-year
terms. Those who have completed one term of service may be eligible to be nominated for a
second three-year term. Students serve one-year terms and are eligible to be nominated for
additional terms as long as they retain full-time status. Terms run July 1 through June 30.

270.10.1.3 Voting. All members of the committee have voting rights.

270.10.1.4 Leadership and Oversight. Members of the Assessment Leadership Team will select a chair
and vice chair annually. The Committee reports to the President through the Provost and will provide
them with an annual report of its meetings, attendance of members, agendas, and matters
acted upon by June 30th of each year.
To reduce duplicative reporting for programs that have earned specialized accreditation, we approve the following revision to current assessment plan guidelines:

A program that has attained specialized accreditation must meet university guidelines for assessing student learning outcomes. This includes reporting on efforts to identify, measure, and continuously improve a minimum of three learning outcomes for each learning objective (minimum of three objectives). The program need not identify nor report on every outcome required by the specialized accreditor so long as it is in good standing with that agency, students’ licensure/exam pass rates (if applicable) are at or above the statewide average, and it has the approval of the college dean.

Under the dean’s guidance, a program may select those outcomes it deems to be most illustrative of the knowledge, abilities, and dispositions graduates should possess. The dean may direct programs to assess specific college-wide student learning outcomes as well. All graduate programs must address the Assurance of Student Learning standards required by the Graduate Council. Finally, any outcome in which student performance does not meet standards set by the program or the accrediting agency must be included in the plan.

A program that elects to streamline an assessment plan in accordance with the guidelines above must provide links to its most recent accreditation/reaccreditation approval document and to any examination pass rates.