

To: Susan B. Hannah
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
From: Steven T. Sarratore, Chair
Assessment Council
Date: August 28, 2003
Subject: Annual Report of the Assessment Council for 2002-2003

I. Introduction

Significant changes were undertaken to improve the assessment climate at IPFW during academic year 2002-2003. Over recent years, it had become increasingly clear that the campus-wide assessment was only marginally effective. It was the perception of the Assessment Council that although there were many programs which could boast of effective assessment plans, there were at least an equal number where assessment was either ineffective or nonexistent. In addition, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association had pointed out that the general education program at IPFW was inadequately evaluated, and required the institution to review its general education assessment plan and file a progress report at the conclusion of academic year 2003-2004. With these issues in mind, an assessment task force was appointed at the end of academic year 2001-2002.

II. The Assessment Task Force

At the behest of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Educational Policy Committee, and the General Education Subcommittee, the task force was charged to make recommendations to improve the climate of assessment at IPFW. Members of the task force were:

- Yvonne Zubovic, Associate Professor of Mathematics
- Bill Bruening, Professor of Philosophy and Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences
- Jeanette Clausen, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- Steve Sarratore, Associate Professor of Theatre
- Susan Hannah, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

The task force attended a working conference, sponsored by AAHE and HLC, in Kansas City during June of 2002. During the course of the conference, the task force developed an Assessment Action Plan (attached). The plan was focused in two primary areas: the enhancement of the assessment infrastructure at IPFW and the assessment of general education at IPFW.

III. The Assessment Action Plan

The principal elements of the plan and the progress made during the past year are enumerated in the

chart below.

Plan Element	Accomplishments during 2002-2003	Actions in progress	Actions scheduled
A. Strengthened Assessment Infrastructure			
1. Restructure Assessment Council	a. Revisions were approved to SD 98-22 changing the membership of the council to consist of faculty responsible for assessment in their units.	a. Additional revisions have been proposed by the assessment council to include ACCS and General Studies representation on the council.	
2. Create and appoint Director of Assessment position	a. After internal efforts to identify an Assessment Director failed, a national search was undertaken to identify an Assessment Director.	a. Interviews have been conducted, and the appointment is imminent.	a. Integrate the new assessment director into all IPFW assessment activities.
3. Establish needed institutional assessment processes and supports	a. An Assessment web site was developed to highlight institutional policies and processes. See http://www.ipfw.edu/vcaa/Assessment/assmnthome.html b. A program of Assessment Mini-grants was established. Four departments were awarded grants and used the funds to enhance department assessment activities.	a. The web site will be updated and enhanced. b. The mini-grant program will be continued in 2003-2004.	

B. An Effective General Education Assessment Program/Process			
1. Recast GE goals as learning outcomes	The task force drafted this document which has been revised slightly by the Area I-III committees	Area IV-VI committees will revise their outcomes during 2003-2004.	
2. Develop GE assessment principles	Principles were developed by the task force.		
3. Appoint and charge Area Committees	Area I-III Committees appointed and working.	Area IV-VI committees scheduled to work during 2003-2004.	
4. Implement assessment measures		Area I-III measures to be piloted during 2003-2004	Area IV-VI measures to be piloted during 2004-2005
5. Draft NCA Monitoring Report			Report to be drafted 2003-2004. Due June 2004.

IV. The Assessment Council

Assessment Council membership for 2002-2003 included: S. Sarratore (OAA), James Moore (BMS), Rhonda Meriwether (ACCS), Solomon Isiorho (A&S), Hal Broberg (ETCS) Connie Kracher (HSC), Nancy Mccroskey (VPA), GERALYN Miller (SPEA), Beverly Parke (GES), and Dick Cochren (EDUC).

In addition to the restructuring of the Assessment Council mentioned above, significant changes were made in the role and responsibility of the council. The review of department reports became the responsibility of the appropriate school committee. The school committees then made their recommendations and suggestions directly to the departments. The council then served to review school-level reports. This change allowed the council to serve an advisory and consultative purpose that it had been largely unable to fulfill due the prior perception of the council as the "assessment police." Council members found this new direction to be very useful. The school reports, as noted in the chart below, are appended.

Unit	Status
------	--------

Health Sciences	Report Appended
Visual and Performing Arts	Report Appended
Public and Environmental Affairs	Report Appended
Arts and Sciences	Report Appended
Education	Report Appended
Business and Management Sciences	Report Appended
Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science/Organizational Leadership and Supervision	Report Appended
ACCS	Report Appended
General Studies	No report received
General Education	No report received--Plan under revision
Honors Program	No report received--Plan under development

The council also approved changes in SD 98-22 concerning council membership and the model for program assessment plans. The first of these changes is to add members representing ACCS and General Studies. Previously, these units were required to file reports, but had no representation on the body. Additionally, the council has proposed that it elect its own chair. The second major proposed change was to eliminate the "one interim and two exit measures" model and replace it with a more flexible "multiple measures, of multiple constituencies, taken at multiple times" model. This model will allow, but not mandate, departments and programs to create more flexible and useful assessment plans and will help units with outside accrediting agencies to align their plans with accreditation requirements. These changes will arrive on the Senate floor during the fall of 2003.

The council also reviewed the school report format and made several minor modifications.

V. The Assessment Director

The major component of the Assessment Action Plan not implemented during 2002-2003 was the hiring of an assessment director. The task force's initial plan to offer the position as a half-time administrative appointment for a faculty member was unsuccessful as no applicants met the stated qualifications. A direct recruiting effort, targeting qualified faculty members, was also unsuccessful. After considerable discussion with OAA staff, the Assessment Council, and faculty members, a national search was undertaken for a full-time fiscal year administrative staff assessment director. The position description stated that the assessment director would provide consultation and support for departmental, school, and institutional assessment efforts.

A search committee was appointed and more than 30 applications were received. Interviews were conducted during the summer of 2003. The committee has made a recommendation and is hopeful that the selected individual will accept the position and begin in September.

VI. The Assessment Workshop

An assessment workshop was held on March 21, 2003, featuring presentations by Gloria Rogers, Vice President for Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. Her topics were "Using Direct and Indirect Assessment Measures" and "An Introduction to Electronic Portfolios." More than 65 faculty and administrative staff attended all or part of the workshops. Assessment Council members have discussed the advisability of another workshop for 2003-2004. Input will be solicited from faculty to help determine what topics would be most welcome and useful.

VII. The Assessment COQ

As part of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs "Conversations on Quality" initiative, an Assessment COQ was developed. Its stated purposes were fivefold:

1. Increase understanding of campus program assessment
2. Inform faculty of changes to the assessment infrastructure and of resources available to enhance assessment
3. Develop awareness of the General Education Assessment process
4. Enhance awareness of assessment measures used by various programs on and off campus
5. Help move IPFW to the mature stage of assessment.

The COQ's core membership was the members of the Assessment Council. The group assisted in the development of the website and in planning the Assessment Workshop. The COQ also sponsored two open forums on assessment on January 29 and 30 for faculty, administrators, staff, and students. Approximately 60 individuals attended the two sessions. The open forums helped accomplish the "spreading the gospel" goals of the COQ, while allowing faculty and others to air their concerns and complaints. Several "mantras" emerged from the open forums, including:

"Assessment is formative; Program Review is summative."

"If your assessment plan isn't useful to you, do something else."

"Make assessment work with accreditation."

"We're the assessment office, and we're here to help."

The forums and the COQ were instrumental in helping the assessment council to shape its recommendations.

VIII. Assessment Conference Presentations

A team, including Bill Bruening, Yvonne Zubovic, and Steve Sarratore gave a presentation at the AAC&U General Education Conference in Philadelphia. The session was entitled "Enlisting Faculty in General Education Assessment." Approximately 90 individuals attended the session. Jeanette Clausen, who drafted the presentation proposal, was unable to attend the conference due to a scheduling conflict.

Another team, including Jim Moore, Jeanette Clausen, Yvonne Zubovic and Steve Sarratore, has been invited to present at the IUPUI Assessment Conference. The presentation focuses on the improvements to the Assessment Council and is entitled “The Campus Assessment Council: What Works(?)”

IX. Conclusion

As detailed in this report, many significant steps were taken during the past year to enhance the campus assessment climate. Several important steps remain as IPFW moves toward its goal of reaching a mature stage of assessment. During the upcoming year, the following activities are planned:

1. Continue to develop and implement a new general education assessment plan.
2. Continue the assessment mini-grant program.
3. Integrate new assessment director into the campus assessment climate.
4. Attain approval of SD 98-22 revisions
5. Issue an invitation for revised program assessment plans in accordance with SD 98-22 revisions.
6. Plan the 2004 assessment workshop.
7. Offer presentations on successful aspects of the assessment program at appropriate conferences.
8. Update the assessment web site.