

## **IU South Bend ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Annual Report for the 2014/2015 academic year**

The IU South Bend Assessment Committee, in existence since 1995, is responsible for promoting, supporting and monitoring departmental assessment programs. The Assessment Committee is currently a joint committee of the Academic Senate and Academic Affairs. Five members are appointed by the Academic Senate and four members by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. From the membership, the Committee selects a Chair who is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor. In addition there are ex-officio representatives, one from Academic Affairs, and the Institutional Researcher.

### **Committee Activities:**

**Consultation with Barbara Walvoord** – In September of 2015, the assessment committee hosted Barbara Walvoord for a multi-day consultation. The purpose of her visit was to engage all of the key players in the campus assessment process in order to prepare for the assessment components of the upcoming accreditation visit, as well as to envision how the assessment process should function in order to most effectively take advantage of resources and expertise on campus. She met with several groups of faculty and administration including: Deans and Chairs, Academic Affairs, General Education, First Year Experience, HLC Committee and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. After these discussions, Dr. Walvoord outlined a new system incorporating many campus groups into an effective and efficient assessment reporting structure. On her final morning she led an open faculty workshop on academic program assessment. Altogether, over 80 faculty members participated in this consultation

**Campus assessment structure** - In response to Barbara Walvoord's visit, the assessment committee reorganized the assessment reporting relationship between many of the committees with oversight of various aspects of assessment. A diagram of the new reporting system is attached.

**Assessment Review Team (ART)** – In December of 2014, an assessment review team was formed to provide individualized feedback to all of the entities in Weave. This team consisted of four faculty with experience and training in academic assessment. They provided lengthy, detailed feedback on all steps of the assessment process.

**Annual Assessment Summary for Academic Affairs/ Writing Taskforce** – As part of the new reporting system, the campus assessment committee submitted an annual summary report to Academic Affairs, summarizing information from Weave, and reports from other campus committees and groups involved with student assessment. The extensive effort the committee put in to this document provides a useful template for years to come, and will serve as another record of assessment action on campus. The assessment summary identified common issues and made recommendations for campus action. In response to the report, Academic Affairs established a campus task force to recommend action on writing, one of the main concerns identified in the annual assessment summary. The task force will meet during the summer of 2015, with recommendations to be implemented in the fall.

**Workshop with Dr. Peter Doolittle** – In March 2015, the Assessment Committee hosted Dr. Peter Doolittle, the Director of the Center for Instructional Development and Educational Research at Virginia Tech. He led workshops on *Fair and Defensible Grading: Strategies for Enhancing Student Learning and Assessment* and *Teaching Large Classes: Strategies and Course Design*.

**Cooperative outreach with UCET** - The assessment committee offered three *Assessment Study Halls* during October of 2014 to help prepare academic programs for the Weave deadline submission on November 1. At these sessions, faculty received one-on-one help with Weave and assessment questions. The committee and UCET also jointly led a departmental assessment retreat for the Communications department. Nearly the entire Communications faculty participated. The retreat offered an intensive and individualized opportunity to explore assessment topics and issues. Based on the positive feedback, more of these retreats will be offered in the fall. Each participating department will receive a copy of Barbara Walvoord's book, *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments and General Education*.

### **Program Assessment Reporting and Feedback:**

The 2013-14 assessment cycle in Weave closed on November 1, 2014. Feedback was provided to all programs by the ART team. The 2014-15 academic year marked the 3<sup>rd</sup> full year of using the Weave program. New assessment software is set for release during the summer of 2015. Many programs continue to have delays and difficulties completing a full assessment cycle in Weave. This is the official record of assessment on our campus, and will be used by the accreditation team as evidence for a culture of assessment. It will be critical for a successful accreditation that all programs have complete information for multiple cycles. Programs have also been asked to link their outcomes to the general education outcomes on campus.

A summary of submission status of assessment reporting at the close of the assessment cycle in Weave is attached.

### **Assessment Grants:**

- **World Languages:** A World Language Studies team, led by Oscar Barrau, was awarded an assessment grant to pilot the Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) assessment tool to evaluate the skills of world language students at two points in their academic course. This test is used by a wide range of colleges and universities to assess language students and majors in listening, reading speaking and writing.
- **Business:** The School of Business piloted a test of CAT (Critical Thinking Assessment Test). This NSF supported instrument assesses critical thinking and real world problem solving. Faculty administered and scored the results from 325 business students. The results should provide rich feedback on student learning outcomes, and suggest ways to improve the student learning experience.

## Workshops and Conferences

- **Barbara Walvoord:** As part of her consultation with the campus, Barbara Walvoord led a faculty workshop on *Academic Program Assessment*.
- **Peter Doolittle:** An in-demand speaker on academic assessment presented two faculty workshops Friday March 27, *Fair and Defensible Grading* and *Large Class Pedagogy*. Thirty faculty members participated. Additionally he met with the assessment committee to discuss the upcoming accreditation and other issues related to program level assessment on campus.
- **Assessment Institute:** The assessment committee sponsored attendance of two faculty members at the Assessment Institute in Indianapolis in October.
- **HLC conference:** Two assessment committee members attended the HLC conference, which always has a strong focus on assessment.
- **Assessment Study Halls:** During October, members of the Assessment Committee offered three assessment study hall sessions to help programs enter information into Weave prior to the report deadline. All of the twelve participants reported finding these sessions to be very helpful. The committee plans to offer Study Halls again this fall prior to the assessment report deadline.

## Other Activities

- The committee continued development of an interactive online handbook that will be available from the assessment websites to assist programs in improving their assessment plans and reporting.
- Provided updates, announcements and reports for the assessment website
- Continued to collect books for the assessment library, and to make them available through the Schurz Library.
- Moved materials documenting the assessment committee history to the University Archives at the Schurz Library.

## Looking Ahead:

- The Assessment Committee will benefit from closer integration with the Institutional Research Office. The information collected by both groups should be mutually useful.
- The current version of Weave has been retired, and will be replaced in the summer of 2015. UCET will provide training for the campus on the new software.
- Starting Fall of 2015, the committee will welcome Susan Cress to the committee as the Academic Affairs Assessment Coordinator. The committee will nominate a Chair from its membership.
- The work of the committee will continue to focus on preparations for the upcoming accreditation. The assessment committee goal is that 100% of programs complete a full

assessment cycle for the 2014/15 academic year by November 1, 2015. Committee members will assist programs individually in this process by offering several open study halls during the month of October and by appointment.

- The committee will continue to award assessment grants, conduct workshops and sponsor attendance at assessment conferences
- The Committee will continue development of an online assessment handbook to assist programs in improving their assessment plans and activities.
- The committee will consider ways to improve the quality and quantity of assessment data available for inclusion in their annual assessment summary. This will ensure the campus can make well-informed decisions about investing resources in the areas where it is most needed.

**Attachments:**

IU South Bend Assessment Reporting Diagram 2014

Assessment reporting submission status at the end of the 2013/14 assessment cycle.