Quality Initiative Institutional Proposal
IU South Bend: Vision 2020 Grants Program

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a title and brief description of the Quality Initiative. Explain whether the initiative will begin and be completed during the Quality Initiative period or if it is part of work already in progress or will achieve a key milestone in the work of a longer initiative.

IU South Bend's Quality Initiative is a small grants program that focuses campus attention, creativity, and resources on increasing student success. The Vision 2020 grants program serves as an incubator that will provide resources, information, and encouragement to project teams who have good ideas for increasing student learning, engagement, and other predictors of student persistence, retention, and timely graduation. Projects are funded for a pilot year and for up to two years of implementation. After that point, successful projects will seek internal funding as a line in the base budget, or external funding. These successful projects will have several years of outcome data, which should help them make a strong case for funding as a line in the base budget, or external funding. Vision 2020 grants will also increase the use of assessment data in making programming decisions and increase collaboration across campus units. We will build on our previous experiences with an internal grants program for faculty initiatives, but the focus on student success is entirely new and accountability strengthened.

IU South Bend is one of eight campuses of the Indiana University system, and the largest of the regional campuses. We are a Carnegie Master's level institution with a strong teaching mission. We have a student body of over 8000 and a faculty of over 300 full-time (tenure track and lecturers) and nearly 300 part-time people. IU South Bend offers nearly 100 degree and certificate programs in liberal arts and sciences; education; communications, fine and performing arts; business and economics; and nursing, dental and allied health.

Although our student body is increasingly traditional in some ways (beginning freshmen in 2012 were 83% full-time, 63% female, and 94% traditional age), they vary significantly from students at flagship campuses in other ways (45% first generation, 20% special needs, 35% working off-campus over 20 hours/week, and around 58% caring for dependents in the home). Our students also lag behind the core campus (IU Bloomington) in SAT scores, high school class rank, and Honors diplomas. Indiana's funding formula now includes a growing percentage tied to retention, persistence, and timely graduation metrics. In addition, some state funding to students includes an incentive for timely graduation. Currently our retention rate is 62%, and our timely graduation rate (6 years) is 22%.

We have all the elements in place to be an excellent public regional campus with a broad impact on the surrounding community. We have an excellent faculty, a tradition of caring deeply about our students, a sense of mission related to the specific geographic region and a student body that imagines a better future for themselves. Vision 2020 will allow us to increase the depth and breadth of our support for our particular student body.

The year 2020 is the bicentennial of the founding of Indiana University. Our Chancellor has set a strong agenda for student success, asking the campus to set goals for 2020. Our Campus Directions Committee has surveyed faculty and staff and will develop a plan that will be shared with the campus by December 2013. That plan will include several major initiatives, such as a summer bridge program, and will designate the Vision 2020 program as a means to support and assess smaller and more experimental programs.

The Vision 2020 program will begin in November 2013 with a Request For Proposals (due February 1, 2014) to fund projects beginning in the summer of 2014. Funding for projects may be renewed for two subsequent years if assessment data indicates that they are making progress toward their goal. Teams will also use assessment data to improve their projects in successive years. There will be an RFP for new and continuing projects every year. In the first four years, this program will be funded by money from one-time savings and campus reserves. In future years, a portion of program funding will come from income generated by increased student success, via higher student enrollment and increased state appropriations based on performance. This grants program will become a permanent process for our campus, but we will use the occasion of our Spring 2017 HLC QI report as a significant marker to gather evaluation data.

The fundamental requirement is that Vision 2020 projects are likely to improve student success and that they will include an effective assessment program. Beyond that, projects may be large or small in scope, targeting a large group of students (e.g. all freshmen) or a smaller group (e.g. parents, or minority students). Projects could directly target student retention (e.g. calls to students who have not enrolled for the next semester) or could target a variable that is known to lead to retention (e.g. learning communities or active learning strategies).

We expect that some projects will be modeled on successful programs from other schools, but tailored specifically to our student body, and we will provide information about many programs through our Vision 2020 website. Other projects may be innovative, grounded in the literature on student success but not modeled on previous programs.

Although most initiatives will require funding, it is anticipated that some may not. Those project teams will be encouraged to submit a proposal describing their activities and assessments anyway, so that they may be included as a Vision 2020 project and provided with resources, encouragement, and assistance with assessment.

Sufficiency of the Initiative's Scope and Significance

2. Explain why the proposed initiative is relevant and significant for the institution.

Our initiative's focus on student success is relevant to IU South Bend because as the only public institution of higher education in our area, our mission is to serve North Central Indiana, primarily by providing residents of this region with access to high-quality Indiana University degrees. Many of our students are place-bound, and if they don't succeed at IU South Bend, they may be unable to attain college degrees. Moreover, because about 70 percent of our graduates stay in the area, the success of our students is a significant component of the broader success of North Central Indiana.

Our initiative's process for selecting Vision 2020 projects articulates key elements of our strategic planning process. Results of a recent campus survey of vision, strategic and measurable goals will guide the proposals and their review. We are working with our Campus Directions Committee so that Vision 2020 is consistent with the overall campus plan.

Our initiative at IU South Bend responds to the calls for greater student success from President Obama, Indiana's higher education commission and state legislators, and from Chancellor Allison. Increases in particular measures of student success at IU South Bend may mean more federal financial aid for our students, more state appropriations for our campus, and stronger enrollments in the future.

3. Explain the intended impact of the initiative and its academic quality.

Our success as a university depends in large part on student success. We can define student success in several ways, including retention, persistence, and timely graduation. We can also define success much more broadly as post-graduation job placement, number of students enrolled in graduate programs, leadership positions in employment, civic engagement, and evidence that alumni are living satisfying and self-aware lives.

The Vision 2020 grants program will support projects that promise to impact such aspects of student success as persistence, retention and/or timely graduation. The literature on student success provides evidence about the effectiveness of a number of strategies, such as high impact practices (Kuh, 2008). For example, projects might use more immediate measures of indicators of engagement and learning, such as grades, attendance, and participation in campus activities.

Increased attention to assessment for both academic and non-academic units is a second intended impact. Successful proposals will only be eligible for additional funding if they have included measurable outcomes and if the outcome data is then used to improve the program.

A third impact will be the unification of the IUSB community around a common goal of collaborating to improve student success. This type of work is already encouraged through our general education program, several interdisciplinary programs, and our centers in areas such as political activism, civil rights, global education, economic education, and sustainability. The Vision 2020 program will encourage more collaboration across units and positions (faculty, staff).

Clarity of the Initiative's Purpose

4. Describe the purposes and goals for the initiative.

The primary purpose of the Vision 2020 grants program is to improve student success at IU South Bend. The goals for this purpose are to increase student retention, persistence, and timely graduation. In some cases, it may be possible to directly measure the impact of a project in terms of those goals. In other cases, teams may assess intervening variables such as grades, critical thinking skills, or engagement, but they must cite the literature on student success to support the link between their variables and our success outcome variables. One key goal will be to increase the first semester gpa of our beginning students. About 20% of our beginning students have a first semester GPA under 2.0, and this has proven to be the strongest predictor of student retention for our campus. A second example of a campus goal for student success is a timely graduation rate. According to Washington Monthly's college edition's calculations (which take into account Pell grants, residential housing, and other predictors), our predicted timely graduation rate is 32%, so this is an obvious area for improvement. At this time (fall 2013), our Campus Directions Committee is working with the Chancellor to set goals for retention, persistence, and timely graduation for the year 2020. We will adopt those goals, and interpolate goals for the 2017 HLC report on our Vision 2020 grants program.

A second purpose of the Vision 2020 program is to increase the use of assessment data by faculty and staff as they make decisions about campus pedagogy, curriculum, and student support. Informed decision-making should be at the heart of campus efforts, but evidence is too often anecdotal rather than research-based. Every Vision 2020 proposal must include plans for assessing the effectiveness of the project, and teams must submit assessment results at the end of each funding cycle. The HLC committee will collaborate with Academic Affairs and the University Center for Excellence in Teaching (UCET) to provide workshops in assessment methods for team members. The goal of the Vision 2020 grant program is to have 100% of the funded proposals include appropriate assessment and include discussion of how their assessment data affects their renewal proposal.

A third purpose of the Vision 2020 program is to increase the collaboration of faculty and staff across units and roles so that projects can benefit from multiple perspectives. Many current programs are housed in one unit (such as College of Liberal Arts and Sciences) or staffed by members of one classification (such as staff in student affairs.) Although such targeted efforts have their place, we will encourage more diverse viewpoints by giving credit on the proposal rubric for teams that include members from different ranks and different units. Our goal is for 50% of the project teams to include members from two or more units (academic units or non-academic), or two or more ranks (faculty, staff, students).

5. Describe how the institution will evaluate progress, make adjustments, and determine what has been accomplished.

The Vision 2020 grants program will be evaluated in terms of three outcomes—student success, assessment culture, and collaboration between units and ranks. This evaluation will be coordinated by the Vision 2020 Assessment Committee, in collaboration with the Resources Committee and the Grants Committee.

To evaluate the student success agenda, we will:

- compile data from the annual assessment reports from each project to determine how student success is being impacted
- continue to collect campus-level assessment data on student retention and persistence, and timely graduation, including data on intervening variables such as GPA and number of credit hours attempted each semester.

To evaluate the promotion of a culture of assessment-driven programs, we will:

- track the number of proposals submitted and funded at each RFP,
- examine the rubric scores of successful and unsuccessful proposals to determine how well they meet the objectives of assessing student success outcomes

To evaluate the collaboration between units and ranks, we will:

- track the number of faculty, staff, and students involved in projects, as well as their diversity in unit and position.

Each spring, after new grants are awarded, the three committees (Resources, Grants, and Assessment) will meet to discuss our own evaluations of the program. Based on this data, we will make adjustments in the Vision 2020 grants program, such as revising the RFP or grants rubric, or providing more or different resources for the teams.

Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative

6. Describe the level of support for the initiative or external stakeholders.

Support for this initiative has been strong campus wide.   After the initial announcement of this initiative at a faculty meeting, a number of faculty and staff have asked for more information about proposals. Chancellor Terry Allison, has expressed his support for this initiative. One of his major goals is to increase student success on our campus, and he is eager to use strategic budgeting of our available reserve funds to achieve this goal. The Vision 2020 grants program provides a means to target funding to projects that show promise of increasing student success.

7. Identify the groups and individuals that will lead or be directly involved in implementing the initiative.

The HLC Co-chairs, Gwynn Mettetal, Linda Fisher, and Dave Vollrath will oversee the Vision 2020 program implementation. These senior faculty members have experience in strategic planning, faculty development, and administration. Linda Chen, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Elizabeth Dunn, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, join them to form the Administrative Leadership Team. Biniam Tesfamariam, Director of Institutional Research, and Michelle Bakerson, Interim Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and chair of the campus Assessment Committee, assist with data collection and analysis.

Much of the implementation will come from the HLC Steering Committee, which includes over 25 faculty and staff. Three subcommittees have been created to handle various aspects of the initiative. The Resources Committee coordinates the resources needed for successful projects, such as workshops, consultations and scholarly resources on student success and assessment of student learning. They are working with the Schurz Library, Student Affairs staff, the Senate Assessment Committee, academic units, and others to identify and collect scholarly literature on student success and strategies for assessment. The Grants Committee will issue the RFP each year and will determine the grants awards. The Assessment Committee will gather data to assess the Vision 2020 grants program itself and monitor student success from the Vision 2020 projects as well as overall campus retention and graduation rates.

8. List the human, financial, technological, and other resources that the institution has committed to this initiative.

The resources committed to this proposal include:

-   Standing line item in the budget to fund accreditation activities by the steering committee;
-   Yearly grants budget of at least $100,000 for Vision 2020 project grants which will fund approximately 7 grants of $5000 for three years each;
-   Reassigned time for three faculty leaders: a total of 24 credit hours per year;
-   The assignment of a Dean and an Interim Associate Vice Chancellor to the project;
-   Services of the Director of Institutional Research to provide data and reports;
-   Services of the Interim Assistant VCAA for assessment needs;
-   Administrative assistance to maintain a robust and up to date website for the initiative; and
-   Services of the University Center for Excellence in Teaching for faculty development needs.

Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative (The institution may include a brief implementation or action plan.)

9.   Describe the primary activities of the initiative and timeline for implementing them.

The primary activities of the Vision 2020 program are to implement a small grants program for projects on student success, provide resources on student success and assessment strategies, and monitor effects of the projects on student success outcome measures.

An early draft of the program was presented to the Faculty Senate in May 2013 and was received very positively. During the summer of 2013, the Administrative Leadership Team refined the Vision 2020 program and proposal. Our original plan was to wait for HLC approval of the Quality Initiative proposal before officially launching Vision 2020. However as we worked on this program, campus enthusiasm built. We were approached by faculty and staff who were eager to get details so that they could begin working on a grant proposal. We also realized that we needed to put into place the infrastructure that would help teams with their proposals well in advance of the proposal deadline. We decided to move ahead with the project, realizing that the HLC response might prompt us to make some changes before the February proposal deadline.

Fall 2013 will be devoted to getting the Vision 2020 grants structure and support into place. In September, members of the HLC Steering Committee were asked to join one of three subcommittees: Grants, Assessment, or Resources. A new campus website was built for the Vision 2020 program, to provide access to information about the Vision 2020 grants program and resources. The redesigned website will also provide a place to showcase Vision 2020 projects and their assessment results. The current campus HLC website will be updated with information about the new HLC process and linked to the Vision 2020 site.

The Vision 2020 program will go through a yearly cycle of events. Each fall, the RFP for Vision 2020 grants will be publicized. Between the RFP and the February 1 deadline, workshops on assessment methods and student success strategies will be held at UCET. The Grants Committee will review proposals using the Vision 2020 proposal rubric, which will identify projects that impact student success outcome measures. Projects must have an assessment component, and continued funding will require evidence of the use of those assessments in a feedback loop to improve the project. Much of the impact of this grants program will come from the application of these criteria.

As part of their proposal, renewing teams must include an assessment of their project effectiveness to date. (If the prior year was a pilot year, the data may be limited but should still be presented.) Proposals will not be considered without a full report on the prior year's assessment data. The Grants Committee will communicate their decisions to teams by March 1, giving formative feedback on all projects.

In March, information about each funded pilot project will be added to the Vision 2020 website. The site will be updated frequently with descriptions of project activities and summaries of assessment data.

In March through June, the Assessment Committee will use the data from the project reports, the proposals, the rubrics, as well as data from the Office of Institutional Research to assess the Vision 2020 program itself as well as the overall impact of projects on student success. This information will be reported to the campus in various venues including the All-Campus meetings and on the Vision 2020 website.

In June, the HLC steering committee will meet to review the year's activities, leading to adjustments in the offerings of the Resource Committee, the RFP and rubric of the Grants Committee, and the data requested by the Assessment Committee.

Appendices

Vision 2020 Grants Program Timeline

Time	Activity
PLANNING STAGE	
Spring 2013	Campus conversations on HLC, the new process, and possible projects
April 2013	Attend HLC conference
Spring, summer 2013	Work on proposal for Vision 2020
September 2013	Committees formed
October 2013	QI Proposal submitted to HLC
Fall 2013	Work with campus units on resources for projects
Fall 2013	Develop HLC website and Vision 2020 website
ACADEMIC YEAR CYCLE	
August	Update at the All-Campus meeting
October-January	Workshops at UCET on student success; assessing outcomes
November	RFP goes out Publicize grants program widely through web, bulletin board, and visits to units
December	Get update of funding available from Chancellor
January	Update at the All-Campus meeting
February 1	Receive proposals for new and returning projects. Assessment reports from non-continuing, as well.
March 1	Announce and celebrate proposal winners. Feedback to all who submitted.
March	Update Vision 2020 website per new projects.
March-June	Use data from proposals to refine rubric, adjust workshops and resources. Use data from assessment reports, combined with OIR data, to assess Vision 2020 program and student success overall.
June	HLC Steering Committee meets, evaluates progress, makes adjustments. New committee assignments as needed.
May-August	Projects begin or continue
HLC VISIT	
March-April 2017	Gather summary data on grants program and student success for HLC report
June 2017	File QI report
Fall 2017	HLC team visits campus for Assurance Review and Comprehensive Evaluation

Vision 2020 Grants
Request for Proposals

Objectives
This RFP solicits applications for projects designed to increase student success at IU South Bend, defined as student persistence, retention, and timely graduation. Projects may target practices and skills that are linked to student success by the scholarly literature, such as engagement, critical thinking or study skills. Projects are expected to last at least two years (a pilot year and an implementation year), and may be extended a third year if shown to be effective, but teams must re-apply every year. Grants may range from $0 up to $5,000/year, depending on the projected impact on student success.

Eligibility
All faculty, staff, and students are eligible to be members of teams. Teams may also include community partners. All teams must include at least one fulltime IUSB faculty member who will serve as the team leader and liaison with Vision 2020.

Specific requirements
Projects must focus on improving student success, primarily defined as improved retention, persistence and timely graduation. Projects may target behaviors that are linked to student success by the scholarly literature, such as engagement, critical thinking, study skills, or mentoring.

Projects must include methods of assessing whether goals were met.

Criteria for selection
The primary criteria for funding will be based on how much it will <u>cost</u> to <u>improve success</u> for <u>how many students</u>. Preliminary funding will depend on predicted impact; continued funding will depend on assessment data.. If assessment results indicate weak impact, teams are encouraged to use their data to revise their project for the following year. See the rubric for other considerations.

Content and form of proposal
Proposals should be in a single PDF emailed to the Vision 2020 Committee at <u>vision20@iusb.edu</u>. The file should be named with the project title (may be shortened) and last name of the team leader.

Proposals for Pilot Year (Y1) should contain:
- **Team**: Name, unit affiliation, position, and contact information of <u>all</u> team members, indicating team leader as the contact person

- **Abstract:** 150 words or less

- **Narrative** (less than 2000 words) including:
    - **What are your goals?** What are the student outcomes that you expect to impact? Give an estimate of the impact. (e.g. reduce the number of late enrollments in W131 by 10%)
    - **How will you assess whether you reach your goals?** Description of methods for assessing the impact of the project on students. Multiple methods, including both quantitative and qualitative, are encouraged.
    - **What will you do to reach those goals?**
      Description of the project activities in detail. Citations to relevant literature are expected. (See the Vision 2020 Resources webpage for ideas.) Estimate of the impact of the project on students.
    - **To whom?** Estimate of how many students will be affected each year, and a description of those students (e.g. class, major, gpa, gender). If fully implemented, how many students could participate each year? (e.g. all female freshmen, about 800 students)

- **Budget** for pilot year (Y1) (academic year) and implementation year (Y2). Please see the Vision 2020 Resources webpage for budget guidelines. You may also contact Erika Zynda (<u>ezynda@iusb.edu</u>) in the Office of Research for assistance.
- **List of any current and future funding sources**
- **Timeline** for pilot year (Y1) and implementation year (Y2) of project.
- **Letter(s) of support** from administrators (director, dean, or chair) of units that will be affected by the project.

Proposals for Implementation (Y2 or Y3) should contain:
- **Team:** as above
- **Abstract**: as above
- **Narrative**:
    - **What were our goals**
    - **How we assessed them** (tools)
    - **What we found** (assessment results)
    - **What it means** (interpretation)
    - **What we are going to do next** (Action. Will you change your project activities for the coming year?)
- **Budget** from the past year.
- **Budget** for the coming year(s) (May be the same as the Y2 or Y3 budget.)
- **List of any current and future funding sources**
- **Timeline** for the coming year
- **Letter(s) of support** from administrators (director, dean, chair) of units that will be affected by the project.

Application Due Date: February 1
Notification Date: March 1
Project start date: between May and August

Note: Most projects will require IRB approval before the project is implemented. Please see the Vision 2020 Resources webpage for more information. You may also contact Erika Zynda (ezynda@iusb.edu) in the office of Research for assistance.

Vision 2020 Grants
Rubric for Proposals

Points	Area	Low	High
15	Potential impact on student success	Modest (e.g. 1% gain in retention or timely grad)	High impact (e.g. 10% gain)
10	Relationship to retention, persistence, and/or timely graduation	No relationship is described	Directly impacts one or more of those variables
15	Number of students affected	Small group (under 20)	Large group (e.g. most Freshmen)
10	Assessment measures (may be quantitative or qualitative)	One weak measure	Several strong (reliable and valid) measures
10	Plan to "close the loop"	No plan to use data to fine tune	Clear plan to use data collected to fine tune the project for future
10	Start-up costs 1 yr (includes release time)	$5000	Under $1000
10	Sustainability	No chance for line item in base budget or external funding	Could become base budget or secure external funding if effective
5	Number in project team	1 or 2	8 or more
5	Diversity of project members	All one unit (e.g. English faculty)	Very diverse (e.g. Eng. and Arts faculty, student services, SGA, community)
5	Timeline	Vague and/or unrealistic.	Detailed and realistic.
5	Budget	Vague and/or unrealistic	Detailed and realistic