

**HPER Department Assessment Plan**

**Draft**

**December 2000**

**Illinois State University**

**Normal, Illinois**

## Purpose

The purpose of this planning document for student outcome assessment is to provide background information and allow the faculty and staff in the Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER) the opportunity to craft their own student learning outcome assessment protocol. The document is divided into two major portions: (a) Background Information, and (b) Decisions Points. The Background Information section includes the University, College, and Department mission statements, as well as some foundational information from the University Wide Assessment Committee. The Decision Points section is intended to assist the HPER faculty and staff in determining the logistics of their assessment collection and dissemination system. The final result from using this document should be a collective consensus on the purpose, design, and outcomes of the Department's student learning outcome assessment activities.

## Background Information

### Definition of Student Outcome Assessment at Illinois State University

“Assessment is the continuous process at all levels of the institution of systematically collecting, interpreting, and using qualitative and quantitative information to guide the improvement of student learning and development, as well as the formation and achievement of institutional priorities” (UWAC Assessment Report, 2000, p. 2)

### Illinois State University Mission Statement (from ISU Academic Plan, 2000-2005)

Illinois State University is a student-centered, multipurpose institution committed to providing undergraduate and graduate programs that are of the highest quality in the state of Illinois. The central mission of the University is to expand the horizons of knowledge and culture among students, colleagues, and the general citizenry through teaching and research.

Illinois State University recognizes that teaching and research are mutually supportive activities. Therefore, while developing student potential through superior teaching is the first priority of the University, the promotion of research that is recognized at national and international levels is also a high priority. Illinois State University is committed to public service activities that complement the teaching and research interests of the faculty. The University is committed to expanding student involvement in learning through the provision of outstanding campus-life programs and activities.

The goals of Illinois State University are to:

- Provide the premier undergraduate education in Illinois.
- Provide premier graduate education in selected areas.
- Provide an academic atmosphere that nurtures intellectual activity within the University community.
- Support research and creative activities that are recognized at national and international levels.
- Engage in public service and economic development activities that complement the University's teaching and research functions.
- Expand and strengthen graduate programs in areas which build on the strengths of undergraduate programs and/or which have a unique educational focus.
- Provide opportunities for students to increase their capacity for inquiry, logical thinking, critical analysis and synthesis and to apply these abilities in the pursuit of one's discipline.
- Increase understanding of global and national interdependence and expand knowledge and understanding of other cultures in the context of a multicultural society.

- Provide co-curricular activities, programs and services that augment the formal education of students and maximize their involvement in the educational process.
- Provide access and services for students from underrepresented groups and students with special talents.
- Encourage academic diversity by supporting the unique missions and strengths of each of the colleges.

### **Mission of the College of Applied Science and Technology (ISU Academic Plan, 2000-2005)**

The College of Applied Science and Technology has the primary mission to provide high quality educational programs that emphasize the relationship between theory and practice. It is the intent of the College to:

- Relate theory and principles drawn from the basic sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities to areas of application within each of the College's academic programs.
- Foster development of analytical skills necessary to solve real-world problems through appropriate applications of modern technology.
- Provide an appropriate professional or career orientation to the application of knowledge in each of the respective disciplines
- Focus service, research, and curricular endeavors in each discipline toward the applied aspects of that particular body of knowledge.
- Provide course offerings and internship experiences that are commensurate with the needs of graduates for professional growth and advancement.
- Offer courses that stress applications of technology to students in other disciplines throughout the University.

Within the College mission statement is the reflection of the primary advantage that makes its activities particularly significant to Illinois State's future, i.e., the applied nature of the disciplines within the college. As the larger community increasingly looks to the University for the resolution of its real-world problems, the College is well positioned to respond with education, research, and other public services.

### **Vision and Mission Statements of the Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation**

#### **Vision Statement**

The Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation envisions a society that pursues a physically active lifestyle and a healthy use of leisure.

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation is to promote physically active lifestyles and a healthy use of leisure through exemplary teaching, focused scholarship, and professional service. By providing the highest quality educational experiences to undergraduate and graduate students preparing for careers in athletic training, exercise science, physical education, and recreation, our graduates positively impact professional practices and policies and, thus, contribute to the overall wellness of society.

## Departmental Goals

- Goal 1 Provide the premier undergraduate program in Physical Education and Recreation and Park Administration in Illinois.
- Goal 2 Provide an exemplary graduate program in HPER that builds on the strengths of undergraduate programs.
- Goal 3 Deliver a dynamic, contemporary physical activity elective program designed to promote and educate students about the benefits of an active lifestyle.
- Goal 4 Nurture a positive, dynamic teaching-learning environment that develops critical thinking skills, promotes student achievement, and encourages lifelong learning.
- Goal 5 Support faculty and student research and scholarly activities that are recognized at state, regional, national, and international levels.
- Goal 6 Engage in service activities that complement the teaching and research mission of HPER.
- Goal 7 Offer co-curricular activities that foster student independence and self-determination through organized and informal interactions with faculty, alumni and professionals.

## ISU Board of Trustees Resolution (Proposed by UWAC in April 2000)

Assessment is and shall continue to be a high priority for Illinois State University. The institution is committed to valuing, supporting, and rewarding assessment-related activities that are led by the complementary and collaborative activities of university faculty, staff, and students. The actions of assessment, specifically defined below, are complementary to institutional goals and those established by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Assessment is a continuous process at all levels of the institution of systematically collecting, interpreting, and using qualitative and/or quantitative information to guide the improvement of student learning and development, as well as the formation and achievement of institutional priorities.

Moreover, the basic purposes of assessment are improvement (formative) and accountability (summative). When the intent is improvement, assessment efforts involve gathering and using information about student learning and other outcomes. When the intent is accountability, assessment is the collection and use of information to demonstrate the extent to which the institution is achieving its mission and priorities.

## Key Notions about Assessment

- It must be do-able;
- Triangulation of sources and data collection techniques improve confidence in results;
- It must be sustainable over a significant period of time;
- It must be continuous;
- It must be economic and feasible;
- It must be used to further improvement of the department and student learning outcomes;
- It must be rewarded.

## Summary of Best Practices in Assessment (AAHE)

- Assessment of student learning begins with educational values. Educational values drive not only what is chosen to assess but also how it is done.
- Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement.

- Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance.
- Learning entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities, but values, attitudes, and habits of the mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time, so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore provides firmer bases for improving our student's educational process.
- Assessment works best when the program it seeks to improve has a clear, explicitly stated purpose.
- Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations--these derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards apply; assessment prompts attention to where and how program goals are taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.
- Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
- Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.
- Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative . . . improvement is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.
- Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved. Assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.
- Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results;" it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.
- Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.
- Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.

## **Decision Points**

### **The HPER Departmental Assessment Plan**

The Decision Points section is intended to assist the HPER faculty and staff in determining the logistics of their assessment collection and dissemination system. The final result from using this document should be a collective consensus on the purpose, design, and outcomes of the Department's student learning outcome assessment activities. The following nine questions will aid in determining the purpose, design, and intended outcomes of the assessment process.

## Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Development Plan

1. What is the program's/ sequence's mission? How is it linked to the department's mission?
2. What information do you want to know about student learning? What learning outcomes are important? What should students do, know, value, be able to perform, etc. at the completion of the degree? How are the student outcomes linked to the program's/sequence's mission? (See Appendix A.)
3. What or who is the best source(s) of information to evaluate whether those outcomes have been achieved? (See Appendix A.)

### Types of Information Sources:

- Prospective Students;
  - Current Undergraduate and Graduate Students;
  - Recent Graduates and Alumni;
  - Internship and Student Teaching Supervisors;
  - Employers of Current and Prospective Alumni;
  - Departmental Faculty and Staff;
  - Student-Produced Documents;
  - Departmental Documents;
  - Departmental and University Databases; and
  - Statewide and National Databases.
4. What data collection methods will be used to gather this information? Explain how this information will be gathered and who is responsible.

### Types of Traditional Student-Outcome Assessment Activities/Tools

- Achievement: (objective, content-oriented, knowledge-based tests such as those given for capstone courses, internships, and certification exams, but sometimes given at multiple points during college career);
- Student Internship or Student Teaching Assessment: (oral or written information gathered about performance of student interns or student teachers);
- Alumni Surveys: (surveys administered to alumni to help assess outcomes post-graduation, such as employment, further education, and/or satisfaction with program);
- Accreditation Status: (indicating that external sources validate department activities);
- Oral Program Evaluations: (exit interview focus groups with students);
- Written Program Evaluations: (written surveys given to exiting students);
- Student Self-Assessment: (questionnaires or tools that ask students to evaluate their skills, knowledge and attitude toward discipline);
- Writing Samples: (includes assignments used to assess writing and analytical skills);
- Student Portfolios: (generally representative sampling of student's work as he/she progresses through coursework);
- Employer Surveys: (surveys sent to employers of alumni to assess employee skills and preparation - may be criteria-referenced or norm-referenced); and
- Advisory Boards: (individuals external to the university who give advice on skills needed by entry-level employees and trends in the field).

5. What procedure(s) will you use to make sure the information you are collecting is valid for its purpose? Who is responsible?
6. How will you make sure the administration of your student learning outcome assessment process is dependable, accurate, and reliable every time data is collected? (Develop administrative protocols.) Who is responsible?
7. At what points in the student's career will information be gathered? How many times, and on what time-line is this information best gathered? Who is responsible? (For an example, see Appendix B.)
8. How will the information be used systematically to improve student learning? How do the results get fed back into the system to improve student learning? How soon after you collect it will it be fed back to improve student learning? How will you know if the information leads to improved student learning outcomes?
9. With whom will the information be shared? How will this information be shared?

Types of Stakeholder Audiences:

- Prospective and Current Students;
- Alumni and Friends of the Department;
- Current and Emeriti Faculty;
- College and University Administrators;
- Illinois Board of Higher Education;
- Accreditation and Certification Bodies;
- Members of the Disciplines; and
- Members of the Community.

