

SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST:

- “Institutions can focus on assessment for...” - Dr. Ikenberry (p. 4)
- 96% of alumni survey respondents are satisfied with the quality of... (p. 11)
- 90% of ISU faculty respondents believe... (p. 13)

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From the Director

Greetings!

My name is Ryan Smith, and I am the new Director of University Assessment Services. In my four months at ISU, I have had the pleasure to meet many wonderful, engaged, and dedicated people. It is a pleasure to work at a university that is moving in a positive direction!

The goal of *Progressive Measures* is to share information and highlight learning outcomes activities at ISU. To that end, this issue includes an interview with Dr. Stanley Ikenberry, the retired president of the University of Illinois and current Co-Principal Investigator of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. An article from the Communication Sciences and Disorders department highlights how a program used quantitative and qualitative information to improve teaching and learning efforts. There is also a summary of our General Education Institutional Artifact Portfolio (IAP) assessment process, an overview of the results from the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), and highlights from the 2011 Alumni Survey.

The scholarship of student learning outcomes is undergoing a transformation. Historically, assessment focused on creating a culture of evidence, or one based on measuring performance. A culture of evidence is



certainly valuable, but assumptions about what it means could at times conflict with the culture of inquiry that is the hallmark of academic culture. Inquiry involves asking questions and creating shared meaning through dialog focused on learning and engagement. It is clear that, through the hard work and dedication of faculty and staff, ISU has a culture that fosters student learning. One of our goals will be to continue substantive conversations about learning through listening and dialog.

I would like to thank Dr. Renée Tobin, Dr. Jan Murphy, Dr. Mardell Wilson, and the rest of the Provost Senior Staff for their support of student learning assessment and for their leadership of UAS. They have certainly made my transition an easy one!

Again, it is a pleasure to serve ISU. If I have not met you, I hope to see you soon!

Ryan Smith



**UNIVERSITY
ASSESSMENT SERVICES**
Illinois State University

The Mission of UAS:

“University Assessment Services is responsible for conducting a variety of assessment activities related to student learning outcomes using qualitative and quantitative research techniques, providing support services to other units engaged in such assessment, and sharing best practices for and results of assessment activities.”

Background on the New Director of UAS, Ryan Smith

Ryan joined UAS in July 2011. He moved to the Bloomington-Normal area after living in Channahon, IL for eight years. Ryan has served at Drake University, the University of Missouri-Kansas City, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Joliet Junior College, where he just served as Vice President of Institutional Advancement & Research. Ryan has spent the last 15 years working in a variety of fields in higher education, including admissions, financial aid, advancement, planning & budgeting, assessment, and institutional research.

In addition to living in the Midwest his entire life, Ryan also attended three universities in three different Midwestern states, including the University of Missouri at Columbia, where he majored in art history & archaeology, Drake University (IA), where he received his masters degree in higher education, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he received his Ph.D. in higher education. His dissertation examined the economic impact of individuals migrating to other states to attend college.

Ryan's research and professional interests include assessment, higher education research, and policy analysis. Ryan's research has been published in journals

such as the *Journal of Education Finance* and *New Directions for Community Colleges*. He has also published several policy studies through the Illinois State University Center for the Study of Education Policy and the Southern Illinois University Illinois Education Research Council. Ryan has presented at several national and regional conferences, including the Association for Institutional Research (AIR), the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP), and the University of Illinois O'Leary Symposium on Education Finance.



In his spare time, Ryan enjoys spending time with his children, fishing, spending time outdoors, walking, listening to music, watching movies, and reading—his favorite book is *My Antonia* by Willa Cather. Ryan lives in Bloomington with his wife, Angie, and two children, Jenna and Jake. Angie also works here on campus as a staff pharmacist for the ISU pharmacy. They are both very happy and excited to be a part of the ISU family!

UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT SERVICES IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE OUR 2011 ALUMNI SURVEY DRAWING WINNER, BRANDON RUTLEDGE, A 2006 AGRICULTURE MAJOR!!



Brandon won the Homecoming MVP Package, which included:

- * 2 nights' accommodation for two at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Uptown Normal
- * 2 tickets to the football game
- * Tailgating opportunities
- * ISU gear, including two Homecoming T-shirts

Thank you to all alumni who participated in the survey!!

UAS Interviews Dr. Stanley Ikenberry

Kelly Whalen, Graduate Assistant, University Assessment Services

I recently accompanied UAS Director Dr. Ryan Smith and Coordinator Derek Herrmann on a brief road trip down Interstate 74 to interview Dr. Stan Ikenberry, former President of the University of Illinois and of the American Council of Education. Dr. Ikenberry agreed to meet with us and share some of his insight into the world of assessment gained through a long and distinguished career in higher education. Our interview with him and Ms. Natasza Jankowski, Associate Project Manager for the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA), took place on September 16, 2011.

Our conversation began with assessment and ended with presenting Dr. Ikenberry with the second gift he has ever received from ISU (the first was a product of losing a friendly wager with ISU students but more on that later).

Q: After our preliminary greetings, Dr. Smith started the conversation with the broad question: Why should any university engage in assessment – what value does it bring?

▶ Dr. Ikenberry asked us to consider what happens when there is a quality failure that goes unnoticed. From a big-picture perspective, students are promised a quality education, and assessment lets us know if the promises are being kept. For example, say a student were to take an introductory course and pass with flying colors but enroll in the next course sequentially and fail. If students are not adequately prepared for the material in previous courses, they may be set up for failure.

Dr. Ikenberry also reframed this situation as one that targets equality of opportunity and fairness. It tends to be the underprepared students (e.g., low income, minority, first generation students) who are vulnerable when performance breakdowns occur. When viewed from this perspective, assessment provides an opportunity to address inequality issues. He suggested that the true value of assessment lies in its ability to help both the students and the institution.

Assessment allows for a confirmation on where the student is in his or her higher education development, which can then be used to improve the overall quality of the education provided. In essence, assessment provides the checks and balances needed by higher education institutions and students.



Q: I continued the dialogue by asking Dr. Ikenberry where he thought the future of assessment would (or should) be going. Are there any trends or areas to focus on?

▶ Dr. Ikenberry brought up two major points in his response to this question. He first explained that institutions need to become better equipped to deal with complexity. The closer the information gets to the actual classroom, the easier it will be to make practical improvements. In his own words, he explained, “We need to get away from thinking that one statistic, one test score, will solve all of our problems. We need to think in a multivariate way.”

He then went on to say that assessment must start with a question. “The biggest single failure in assessment today is the lack of focus on use.” He believes that, too often, assessment begins with a process, not a problem. The goal should be to focus on using the information to solve institutional problems.

Interview with Dr. Ikenberry (cont'd)

Q: Mr. Herrmann posed the next question for discussion: Is there anything that accreditation and state agencies can do to foster an environment of improvement, while still ensuring accountability?

▶ Dr. Ikenberry suggested that, “Institutions can focus on assessment for problem-solving and improvement.” He feels that institutions need to shake off the compliance mentality and focus on problem-solving. Accreditation should focus on how the assessment is used, as opposed to focusing on the process or results of an initiative.

Q: The topic of problem-solving and use transitioned our discussion to concerns regarding the current economic state. Questions regarding budget constraints and how they may re-shape the way higher education measures goals/objectives were posed for the next topic of discussion.

▶ Dr. Ikenberry does not foresee the need for trimming assessment because of budget constraints. Instead, he argued the opposite and suggested that there is a stronger case to be made for assessment when resources are scarce. He remarked, “If [an institution] is concerned about budget, then making decisions with the benefit of evidence...” He nodded his head “Yes.” In other words, assessment can help institutions allocate their budgets by articulating the value of investments in learning. Assessment provides evidence, which can then be utilized to

make more informed decisions that leverage scarce resources.

Q: How, then, should institutions judge when to be transparent with assessment?

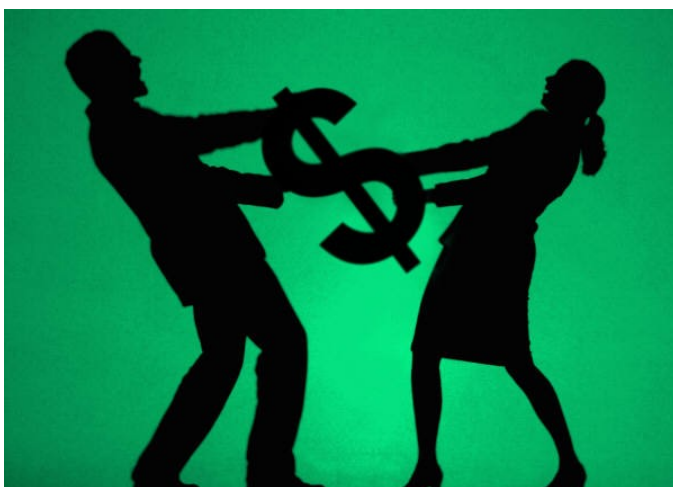
▶ Dr. Ikenberry’s advice regarding transparency was centered on the use of the information. When disseminating information, there should be a focus on the story that the information presents. This focus should take into account what the public will find useful or interesting. Sometimes the information some people think should be transparent is not that useful, so why share it? The less useful it is, the lower the case for transparency. He laughingly added that we should remember that in most public universities, there are rarely any secrets.

Ms. Jankowski added to the conversation by advocating that institutions depend on their good judgment in terms of what information to use. She suggested that it is okay to be transparent about the potentially negative information, as long as it is framed in a proactive and improvement-oriented manner. Dr. Ikenberry agreed, and suggested that, “Candor can add to your credibility.”

Q: The conversation about transparency evolved into a discussion regarding unresponsive units. Dr. Smith asked Dr. Ikenberry if he had any tried-and-true methods for establishing buy-in with units that were unconvinced about the value of assessment.

▶ His first comment focused on the need for assessment to be an integrated part of the department. A major issue with establishing buy-in can be traced back to the way in which the process is framed. If assessment is presented as an evaluation of faculty, then faculty will naturally respond by feeling threatened. On the other hand, if assessment is shaped around an issue or a problem that is of interest to the faculty, the level of threat decreases.

The type of problem that the assessment explores can also impact how faculty members react to



Interview with Dr. Ikenberry (cont'd)

the process. If assessment is used to fix a problem that is not perceived to exist, then it is seen as an administrative mandate. When this happens, “Faculty often think this is just a great big bureaucratic boondoggle.” They may view assessment in these instances as just going through the motions, and that administration is spending precious resources on unnecessary things. Hardly the environment for establishing buy-in!



A third point that this discussion covered was the impact of language on how faculty view assessment. As Dr. Ikenberry explains, “Learning outcome assessment seems to be the jargon of the moment.” The word ‘assessment’ can be a turn-off to some, and assessment jargon can be a barrier to real communication. Often, faculty members are already doing some form of assessment, but they call it by a different name. Integrating assessment into what the department already does may be your solution for success. Weave it in, because once it is established, assessment is self-sustaining. Dr. Ikenberry concluded by saying, “You’re analyzing the facts, reviewing the data, and improving something...how can you [faculty] disagree with that?” If a switch from ‘assessment’ to ‘gathering evidence’ is necessary for establishing buy-in, then make the change!

Q: What about those who consider the assessment of learning outcomes to be impossible? How should assessment be approached in these situations?

► Broad-level assessment can prove to be a challenge. Dr. Ikenberry pondered, “Is it difficult? Yes. But breaking it down into smaller chunks may make it a little easier.” Ms. Jankowski added that one of the biggest tasks of an assessment office is to ask the question. Dr. Smith commented that our job at University Assessment Services is to make the time to ask what assessment means to various units and keep the conversation alive.

Dr. Ikenberry also challenged those who criticize assessment as impossible with the comment that, if it is too large and complex to assess, then he would be interested in how it was taught to students. He added that, “We don’t want to dumb-down a college education to the point where it is easy to measure.” Instead, we need to provide a structure for instructors to gather evidence when they answer the question, “How do you know when they [the students] *get it?*”

In regard to how assessment offices can team up with other units, such as student affairs and facilities, he commented that, “The truth is, they’re probably doing more than they recognize.” The hard part is developing a comprehensive approach to learning outcomes assessments that is captured by institutional research or assessment offices.

Q: As our conversation shifted to discuss how we should coordinate with other units on campus regarding the goal of assessment, the role of institutional leadership was considered.

► There was a general consensus that the role of leadership is to raise thoughtful questions that can be answered with evidence. Dr. Ikenberry suggested that part of leadership was, “...making sure that the work going on is responsive to the question.” In a way, academic leaders should be the prime audience for student learning assessment.

Interview with Dr. Ikenberry (cont'd)

Q: With time left for one more topic, we turned our attention to the work that Dr. Ikenberry and Ms. Jankowski do with the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) <http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/index.html>.

► NILOA is an organization that supports and assists colleges and helps them to gauge what students know through publications, research, workshops, activities, conferences, papers, etc. The primary goal of NILOA is to be a resource for institutions, although the secondary goal is to assess the assessment movement. Ms. Jankowski noted that, “In a way, we [NILOA] are the assessors of assessors...a friendly critic.” Currently, NILOA is receiving 5-6 thousand hits a month, with 40% of those visits coming from returning visitors. Ms. Jankowski and Dr. Ikenberry both appeared very proud of the work they do at NILOA, and it was evident that they held high hopes that this work will be help-

ful to institutions trying to improve their assessment practices. Based on the number of visitors that the site receives, we all had to agree with their enthusiasm!

Concluding Remarks

As we shook hands and thanked Dr. Ikenberry and Ms. Jankowski for their time we offered them both a small gift from Illinois State University. Dr. Ikenberry remarked that the glass ISU mug was the second gift he had received from our university. The first, as it turned out, was an ISU Redbirds sweatshirt presented to him by a group of students when he was the President of the University of Illinois. The stipulation of that bet was for him to wear the sweatshirt on the U of I quad if our students beat his students in a blood drive. ISU won, and Dr. Ikenberry laughingly admitted to sporting the Redbirds' red for a day.

Thank You, Renée!

We would like to bid a fond farewell and best wishes to Renée M. Tobin, Ph.D., who served as Acting Director of University Assessment Services from September 2009 to June 2011. She has returned to her faculty position as an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology. During her two years at University Assessment Services, Renée continued to oversee the administration of the General Education Institutional Artifact Portfolio (IAP) and helped to streamline the process making it more faculty-friendly. She also developed and implemented a themed Homecoming weekend package as an incentive for the annual Alumni Survey and oversaw the administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in 2010 and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) in 2011. In addition, she reinstated the Program Assessment Small Grants for Academic Units (now called the Assessment Initiative Awards), chaired

the Assessment Advisory Council, and represented University Assessment Services on several campus committees and at several assessment-related workshops and conferences. But one of her most important contributions to the unit was changing our name from *University Assessment Office* to *University Assessment Services* to better emphasize that we are here to help and serve the campus community.

Renée continues to remain active by providing leadership and making valuable contributions to assessment by serving on the General Education Task Force, and more specifically as she chairs its Assessment Subcommittee, as well as serving on the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy Team. We thank Renée for her hard work and dedication both to University Assessment Services and to assessment here at Illinois State University!

Program Assessment: A Positive Way to Improve Program Quality in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Dr. Rita L. Bailey, Assistant Provost and Associate Professor;

**Ms. Julie Burns, Clinical Supervisor; Dr. Megan Kuhn, Clinical Supervisor;
& Ms. Teri Tyra, Clinical Supervisor**

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) has established the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) with the responsibility of oversight of ASHA accredited graduate programs that prepare entry-level professionals in audiology and speech-language pathology. In accordance with CAA's purpose, a formal review of accredited programs occurs every eight years after initial accreditation. The Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) at Illinois State University must submit a formal application for reaccreditation in August, 2012. This application is extensive and, among other requirements, required that 2011 be a year of self-study. As described by ASHA (<http://www.asha.org/academic/accreditation/accredmanual>), self-study is a procedure whereby an education program describes, evaluates, and subsequently improves the quality of its efforts. Assessment must involve the institution's administration, instructional staff, student body, governing body, program graduates, employers of program graduates, and other appropriate constituencies. The self-study goes beyond data collection by requiring that a program evaluate the procedures it will use and examining problem-solving procedures. A departmental Assessment Committee (AC) was formed in order to facilitate the self-study, evaluate the data collected, and disseminate the information to department members. Together, members of the department have undergone a process of making substantive changes in order to respond to the data to improve the program.

Method

The research employed was qualitative focus group research and survey design research. This required development of a prospectus, which was approved following ASHA review prior to initiation of the year of self-study. The prospectus specified various

components of the program to be assessed, methods for how data were to be collected, delineation of the review procedure, how progress was to be measured, how decisions were to be reached, who would have the responsibility for each task, and what the general guidelines would be for self-study completion.

To this end, the AC was charged with completing several activities described in the prospectus. The goal of these activities and structures was purposed to strengthen relationships and provide improved pathways for information sharing between students, graduates of the program, and employers of program graduates.



Qualitative Assessment of Student Perceptions about Departmental Programs

All students in CSD attend monthly clinic meetings as a requirement of their clinical training. Students in both departmental graduate programs (speech-language pathology and audiology) participate in these meetings, although the groups often meet separately due to differing clinical education needs. For purposes of completing a qualitative assessment of all students' perceptions, it was determined that the groups would

CSD Program Assessment (cont'd)

also meet separately for the qualitative part of the program assessment. Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan, Director of ISU's Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology, was asked to lead the meeting without CSD department members present. This was done in order to facilitate an objective assessment session in an environment where students were encouraged to openly express their opinions with an understanding that their names would not be associated with specific comments. Queries about the programs were open-ended in nature and included questions such as "What do you like about the program?" and "What concerns do you have about the program?" The responses to this open forum were then analyzed and summarized by Dr. O'Sullivan, and a report of findings was provided to the members of the CSD department.

Surveys of Alumni and Employers of Alumni

Another method of assessment occurred in collaboration with University Assessment Services (UAS) at ISU. A survey was created for CSD alumni and employers of alumni that included both open-ended and Likert-type response items. Demographic information was requested, including major, graduation year, years of professional practice, primary practice settings (i.e., hospital or school), first and last employer names, and their email addresses. The first and last employer names and email addresses were requested for the purpose of sending a separate survey to employers of CSD alumni. The survey was administered via email by UAS using SelectSurvey™. Results were analyzed by UAS.

Results and Discussion

Several areas of student concern were identified and then addressed. One such concern was a perceived lack of ability to provide input into department decisions that impact students. In order to address this concern, a Student Advisory Group (SAG) was initiated. Students were asked to nominate and then elect graduate and undergraduate representatives from both speech-language pathology and audiology majors. This group met monthly during the Spring 2011 semester, and the group's discussions were facilitated by two advisors, one from audiology and one from speech-language pathology department staff. Students also identified perceived strengths of the department, which were also shared with department members. Election

of SAG members will continue on a yearly basis for continuous assessment and program improvement purposes.

Qualitative Assessment of Student Perceptions about Departmental Programs

The qualitative assessment facilitated by Dr. O'Sullivan resulted in several large and small departmental changes. For example, students indicated that they perceived a lack of study and non-clinic/classroom space for students within Fairchild Hall, where the department is located. In order to respond to this concern, several changes within the space occupied by CSD were made in order to provide a dedicated non-clinic/class room for students. Then, with SAG input, the room was remodeled with new carpet, paint, and window blinds. Several computer stations were moved into the space for student use. The student group identified their preferred room arrangement, type, and amount of furniture. Next, trips were made to the ISU storage facility to find these items and set up the room as closely as possible to SAG preferences. One by one, concerns identified through the qualitative assessment were discussed by CSD department members, and attempts were made to address each of the student concerns in which it was judged that changes were possible.



Surveys of Alumni and Employers of Alumni

The results from this survey have caused substantive changes within the department. For example, an Alumni Advisory Committee has now been formed, clinic and class scheduling procedures and methods for communicating with students have changed, and class and curricular recommendation discussions are ongoing.

Concluding Remarks

The overall results of these program assessments have been very well received and are considered highly positive throughout the CSD department. Both CILT and UAS were instrumental in assisting with these program evaluations, and they were highly appreciated by department members.

Summary: Tobin, Herrmann, and Whalen (2011, May). The Institutional Artifact Portfolio Process: An Effective and Nonintrusive Method for General Education Assessment

Kelly Whalen, Graduate Assistant, University Assessment Services

UAS staff traveled to Toronto, Ontario, Canada in May, 2011 to present at the annual Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Forum. The following summarizes our presentation, which outlined the process for general education assessment that we use here at ISU.

Background

General Education Program – Historical Facts

- The Gen Ed program at ISU received Senate approval in 1992 and was fully implemented in 1998.
- The original Gen Ed program was designed to accomplish 12 goals and 40 distinct skills and abilities. Illinois State students select among the 190 Gen Ed courses in order to fulfill 42 Gen Ed credit hours.
- These courses are divided into three “Cores”: Inner, Middle, and Outer. Ideally, students begin the program by taking the Inner Core courses, where the subject matter is broad. The material covered becomes more specific as the student progresses to Middle and Outer Core courses, which prepare students for their major-specific courses.

Assessing ISU’s General Education Program

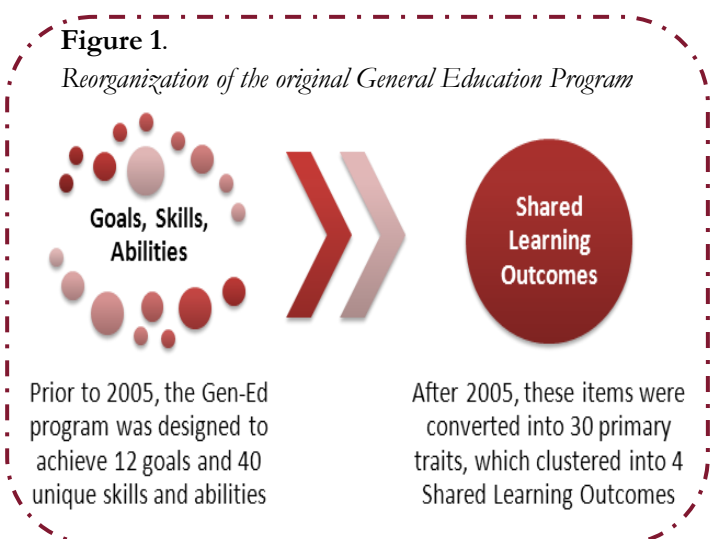
Unfortunately, an assessment process was not built into the original Gen Ed program. The General Education Assessment Task Force was formed in 2005 to develop an assessment process for the program. The method was to be non-intrusive, cover the 12 goals of the Gen Ed program, and remain institution-focused. In addition, the process needed to be both comprehensive and manageable.

After much deliberation, the Task Force selected Seybert’s Institutional Portfolio method as a model for assessing the Gen Ed program. This process, which

was adapted to fit ISU’s unique needs, was fully implemented in 2008 and has been in use since that time. In order to implement this assessment program, the original Gen Ed program needed to be re-organized.

Re-Organizing ISU’s General Education Program

To simplify the assessment process, the 12 goals and 40 skills and abilities were converted into 30 Primary Traits and clustered into four Shared Learning Outcomes (SLOs, see Figure 1.) The four SLOs have common and integrated elements of the established goals of the Gen Ed program and helped to eliminate some of the division that was present between the courses students took for Gen Ed and major requirements.



The four Shared Learning Outcomes are:

- Critical Inquiry and Problem Solving
- Public Opportunity
- Life-Long Learning
- Diversity and Global Perspectives

Gen Ed IAP Presentation (cont'd)

Gen Ed Institutional Artifact Portfolio (IAP) Assessment Process

Overview

The Gen Ed IAP assesses artifacts, which are any type of student work (e.g., papers, exams, presentations, online assignments) that map onto the particular SLO assessed in a specific semester. The current schedule enables a full cycle of assessment to occur every two years. The focus of the assessment is the Gen Ed program, not any specific course or department/school. All participation is voluntary, and the artifacts collected have all identifying information removed prior to assessment. As such, graded artifacts cannot be accepted.

Phase One: Obtaining the Artifacts

Early each semester, letters and emails are sent to instructors who are teaching a course within the target SLO, requesting instructors to identify an artifact that addresses at least one of the Primary Traits for that SLO. Instructors are then asked to follow a link online to complete the Intent to Participate form. This form asks for information about the artifact, as well as a time, date, and location for UAS staff to retrieve the artifacts and have access to them for up to 24 hours.

Phase Two: Sampling the Artifacts

Each SLO is assessed using 300 randomly sampled artifacts (100 artifacts per Core) from the courses that participated. To ensure that this happens, the following steps are taken:

- 1) The number of artifacts needed from each “pickup”, or unit of artifacts, is calculated so that the number of artifacts sampled for each Core are proportionate to the total number of students in the course. For example, if a combined total of 1,000 students are signed up for Inner Core courses, a class with 300 students would represent 30 of the 100 artifacts (i.e., 30% of the total) assessed for the Inner Core.
- 2) UAS staff retrieve the artifacts on their assigned day and randomly sample them and copy twice the needed number (to achieve an oversampling of arti-

facts). The artifacts then are returned within 24 hours.

- 3) At the end of the semester, the proportions for each Core are recalculated based on the number of artifacts actually turned in, and the number of artifacts needed per course are adjusted to achieve 300 artifacts per SLO.

Phase Three: Reviewing the Artifacts

Each spring, faculty members are solicited to apply for a week-long position to review the two SLOs that were targeted during that academic year. The review session occurs the week after Spring semester finals, and the reviewers receive a stipend and complimentary lunches for their work.

The faculty reviewers are divided into interdisciplinary two-person teams (six reviewers per SLO and one alternate reviewer) and trained on their respective SLO rubric. The rubrics are comprised of the Primary Traits that correspond to their specific SLO (see Figure 2). After training, each team goes into separate rooms and is responsible for turning in a completed rubric for approximately 110 artifacts. The rubrics identify whether each primary trait is Not Present, Developing, Established, or Advanced.

Upon receiving the completed rubrics, UAS analyzes the results and generates a separate report for each SLO that was assessed. The results then are reported to the Council on General Education to formulate commendations and recommendations.

Figure 2.

Excerpt from the Public Opportunity rubric

Primary Traits	Not Present	Developing	Established	Advanced	Gen Ed Goal
Critically informed position on civic life		Describes the value of contributions to civic life in the dimensions of their own life	Compares the value of contributions to civic life from multiple, critically informed perspectives	Defends or refutes the value of contributions to civic life	7.c
Influence of civic participation on the social and collaborative nature of knowledge		Identifies how civic participation can change the social and collaborative nature of knowledge	Explains how civic participation can change the social and collaborative nature of knowledge	Applies new knowledge in the context of civic participation	12

Highlights from the 2011 Alumni Survey

Kelly Whalen, Graduate Assistant, University Assessment Services

Every year, UAS administers the Alumni Survey to all alumni who graduated during the past calendar year and five calendar years ago. This past year, all alumni who graduated in 2010 and 2006 were invited to participate by completing the survey online between the dates of April 14 to May 31, 2011. The overall response rate was 11.5%, with a total of 1,030 surveys received from the 8,994 distributed. The number of 2006 graduates (502 respondents) and 2010 graduates (528 respondents) was very similar. Below are some of the results:

Employment

- ◆ **79%** of total respondents who sought jobs upon graduation were **employed within 6 months**.
 - ◇ **69%** of the class of 2006 respondents who sought jobs upon graduation were employed within 6 months
 - ◇ **89%** of the class of 2010 respondents who sought jobs upon graduation were employed within 6 months
- ◆ **73%** of employed respondents are *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with their current jobs
- ◆ **81%** of respondents who are employed full time earn \$31,000 or more a year

Further Education

- ◆ **14.7%** of respondents went on to pursue a post-ISU degree.
- ◆ Of these respondents, **79%** believed that ISU prepared them for their additional degree(s) *well* or *very well*.

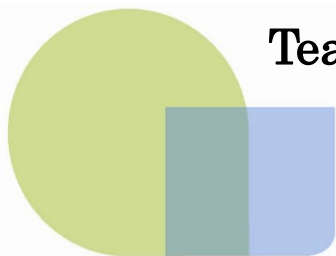
ISU Education and Degree Programs

- ◆ **96%** of respondents were *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with the quality of instruction that they received in their respective degree programs
- ◆ **68%** of respondents reported that they were *well* or *very well* prepared by their degree program for their career.
- ◆ **83%** of alumni with jobs consider that job to be *closely related* or *somewhat related* to their degree program

ISU Attitudes

- ◆ **76%** of respondents indicated that the quality of education that they received was *above average* or *superior*
- ◆ **90%** of respondents have *strongly positive* or *positive* attitudes towards ISU
- ◆ **84%** of respondents have *strongly positive* or *positive* attitudes towards their degree program

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Creating Climates
for Teaching & Learning

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

The Marriott Hotel & Conference Center,
Normal, IL

Organized by the Center for Teaching,
Learning, & Technology

Registration forms available at: <http://www.teachtech.ilstu.edu/programs/tlsymp/regFormJan12.php>

FSSE 2011: An Overview of the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement Results

Derek Herrmann, Coordinator, University Assessment Services

During the Spring 2011 semester, all full-time faculty members were invited to complete the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE). This instrument measures the expectations and perceptions of faculty members regarding educational activities and practices that are connected with student learning and development. In addition, the FSSE consists of items concerning how faculty members allocate their time to different activities and what they perceive as being emphasized by their institution. This instrument is administered by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and is a counterpart to the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) that are administered to Illinois State University students. Many items on these three measures are similar, especially between the NSSE and the FSSE (e.g., student and faculty perceptions about institutional emphasis). Items on the FSSE include:

- Importance of out-of-class experiences
- Quality of student relationships with others
- Institutional emphasis
- Hours spent doing activities during a typical week
- Questions centered around a particular course section taught/currently teaching during 2010-2011 academic year

Out of the 787 faculty members invited to participate, 314 completed the survey (40% response rate). Table 1 includes demographic information for the sample. Some of the results are presented below.

Respondents' opinions regarding the importance of out-of-class experiences...

- 50% consider it important for students to work on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements
- 79% consider it important for undergraduates to complete a culminating senior experience
- 85% consider it important for undergraduates to complete a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment

Table 1.

Demographic information for the participating faculty members

Respondent Demographics for 2010-2011 Academic Year	Percent (%)
Academic rank:	
Professor	23
Associate Professor	32
Assistant Professor	35
Instructor	5
Lecturer	1
Other	4
Tenure status:	
Tenured	56
Tenure-Track	31
Non-Tenure Track	13
Number of courses taught this year:	
1-3	15
4-6	60
7 or more	25
Total number of years teaching:	
4 or less	14
5-9	18
10-14	24
15 or more	44

Respondents' opinions regarding the quality of student relationships with others

- 53% believe that students perceive their relationships with administrative personnel and offices as helpful, considerate, and flexible
- 84% believe that students perceive their relationships with faculty members as available, helpful, and sympathetic
- 85% believe that student relationships with other students are friendly, supportive, and support a sense of belonging

Respondents' opinions regarding institutional emphasis

- 65% believe that ISU places an emphasis on encouraging students to attend campus events and activities

FSSE 2011 Overview (cont'd)

- 67% believe that ISU places an emphasis on encouraging students to participate in co-curricular activities
 - 82% believe that ISU emphasizes providing students the support they need to help them succeed academically
- Each week, respondents spent an average of...**
- 9-12 hours teaching undergraduate students in class each week
 - 5-8 hours grading papers and exams each week
 - 5-8 hours giving other forms of written and oral feedback to students each week
 - 5-8 hours preparing for class each week
 - 5-8 hours on research and scholarly activities each week

Respondent experiences teaching 2010-2011 courses...

Frequency of activities

- 38% reported that students in their courses often had class discussions or writing assignments that included diverse perspectives
- 42% reported that students in their courses often used an electronic medium to discuss or complete assignments
- 55% reported that students in their courses often worked with other students on projects during classes

Importance in their selected course section

- 60% believe it is important for students in their specific courses to put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions
- 67% believe it is important for their students to examine the strengths and weaknesses of their views on a topic or issue
- 79% believe it is important for their students to work on a paper or project that requires integrating ideas or information from various sources
- 90% believe it is important for students in their courses to learn something that changes the way they understand an issue or concept

The results of the 2011 FSSE gives the campus an opportunity to view student engagement from the perspective of the ISU faculty. The responses indicate that ISU faculty members believe that students have positive relationships with university personnel. Many faculty members also feel that ISU places a strong emphasis on encouraging students to be involved in campus activities and/or co-curricular activities, as well as supporting students in their academics.

In terms of weekly responsibilities, the largest proportion of faculty members' time each week is spent teaching undergraduate students, although preparation for classes, grading students' work, and conducting research/scholarly activities are all tied for the second most time-consuming tasks. Many faculty members encourage student engagement in their courses by including diverse perspectives in their assignments, using an electronic medium in their assignments, and having some sort of group project. In addition, many faculty members feel that critical thinking, such as connecting concepts from different courses, examining their own arguments, and learning a new way to understand a concept, is an important part of their courses.



In the future, UAS staff members will be comparing the student responses to items from the NSSE with the faculty responses to corresponding items from the FSSE. The similarities and differences between these two sets of perceptions are sure to provide fruitful discussions across the campus!