

2001 - 2002
IU Kelley School of Business Indianapolis (KSBI)

Report on Undergraduate Assessment Activities

This has been an interesting year in the assessment efforts at our school. Unfortunately, less progress was made than anticipated, for a variety of reasons. However the KSBI Assessment Task Force completed the year with several significant accomplishments and great plans for specific activities for the summer in preparation for a productive fall.

Key Project Activities

1. The school's assessment goals remained unchanged from the four approved by the faculty in the April 2001 meeting. Briefly stated, they are:

- a. Our faculty should commit themselves to establishing goals and measurable learning outcomes for students, for the curriculum as a whole, but also for each major.
- b. KSBI will use the ETS Major Field Achievement Test in Business as one means of monitoring the amount and quality of learning of our seniors, both amongst themselves as well as against our peer businesses schools across the country.
- c. Student electronic portfolios will be used throughout the school as vehicles where students store documents, files, tapes, etc. that act as work samples illustrating their technical business proficiency and communications skills.
- d. To better gauge employer, alumni, and student perceptions and satisfaction with our process and graduates, etc. various surveys will be utilized to provided the needed feedback.

Possible goal additions to be discussed by the Task Force will be:

- e. begin the use of the newly formed Board of Visitors advising group for KSBI to inform the Task Force on likely perceptions in the business community about our graduates, programs, facilities, etc. This semi-annual group meeting, possibly supplemented by more frequent and smaller committees, might serve well as a 'focus group' to provide detailed feedback on targeted areas of concern.

2. The Task Force decided to defer a recommendation for the faculty to look for ways to incorporate uses for the student electronic portfolio (ePort) project for the following reasons:

- a. Continuing questions over file security and viewing rights, recommended contents, possible users or recipients of the folders, curricular vs. co-curricular value, etc. These issues are being addressed by a handful of PRAC committees, resulting in substantial system changes.
- b. The Task Force Chairman wanted to have concrete examples of documents, files, video & audio tape file, etc. which our faculty would consider noteworthy for electronic filing before this was presented to the faculty for endorsement. This background work has not been done, so he sought the committee's support to delay introduction of it.

There has been substantial activity from several ePort committees throughout the academic year on the IUPUI campus to address many of these concerns. So the Task Force will re-visit this subject in an early fall meeting based on the latest decisions and ePort product release.

3. Attitudes within the faculty remain mixed in support of using a national business skills exam as a measurement of our student's learning. The benchmark provided by our first effort with the test was considered to be skewed and inaccurate. Efforts have been underway to survey two groups of college entities, other schools listed as being ETS Business Skills exam participants and Big 10 business schools. This survey is to ask such questions as:

- * Is a formal skills test a requirement for your students?
- * Do you find the questions relevant to your current curriculum?
- * What happens if the students do poorly on the exam?

Based on the ongoing surveys, conversations and analysis, a final proposal and decision will be made in the fall 2002 semester on the fate of these tests within KSBI. As a preparatory measure, review copies of the recently revised ETS Business Skills exam have been received and will be reviewed for 'adequacy' by selected faculty. The addition of supplemental questions may be a solution recommended by the reviewers.

4. Initial Task Force plans to establish measurable learning outcomes for each KSBI program were re-directed when senior school officials sensed faculty resistance. This approach would have utilized an analysis of individual course syllabi. Instead, faculty support was obtained via completion of a form which asked for learning outcomes for each class and how the achievement of those outcomes was obtained, based on a list of standard assessment tools (i.e. exams, case analysis, research papers, oral presentations, etc.)

Current plans for this summer are for these outcomes to be matched with the campus' PULs to see program- or school-wide gaps in meeting those challenges. Then attempts

will be made to create a database and analyze this data.

5. Another activity in pursuit of our stated assessment goals is the improved use of surveys. We plan a summer "phonathon" project, to be supervised by our faculty and conducted by our faculty, staff and students. This project is designed to obtain qualitative feedback from select employers who have hired several of our students to determine the overall "grade" of our school's training and preparation effort.

Other Accomplishments:

In addition to those points mentioned above, the following items also happened:

1. Gathered all KSBI Assessment Task Force and PRAC meeting minutes and agendas into a set of 3-ring binders. These annual binders will be maintained by 4th floor KSBI administrative support staff for the Task Force.

2. Although not directly suggested by the 4 approved goals, the campus' PULs for Integration and Application of Knowledge and Understanding Society and Culture support a new initiative that KSBI is a participant in. The Community Business Partnership (CBP) is a project between the Indianapolis Black Chamber of Commerce, the local chapter of the National Black MBAs, and other local professionals, as needed, to provide a 'safety net' for area small- to medium-size minority businesses.

The process will be as follows:

- a. Businesses will apply for evaluation to be considered for a wide range of discounted services provided by area minority professionals.
- b. After an extensive evaluation, several projects may be identified to strengthen the internal operation of the business. The business' leadership will decide which projects CBP will manage and analyze for a fee.
- c. Those businesses which chose to hire CBP will select the operational services that KSBI students, under close supervision of the Black MBAs, will perform, primarily as interns. Another option for KSBI student involvement will be as a class or project team in the analysis of faulty business strategic plans or implementations, as well as the introduction of a new product or service.
- d. The interns will be provided with the same employer evaluation feedback as other non-CBP interns are.

Plans are still under development, but other assessment principles and student applications may possibly be incorporated.

3. A member of our Accounting Department has had great success via the analysis of statistical data on student performance changes over time. As a result of several factors, including improved computer technology for faster scoring and better feedback and coordination with part-time instructors, more students are earning "A" grades, despite higher standards being placed on them. Faculty in other departments are being encouraged to review Accounting's data and implementation process.

4. The Task Force had two meetings with Dr. Charlie Yokomoto, from Purdue's School of Engineering and Technology to get expert advice on how to proceed with several projects, including the learning outcomes data gathering and analysis. The Task Force plans to consult with Dr. Yokomoto again in the fall.

5. In May, the Kelley School of Business Indianapolis was asked to participate in a program assessment and review. Outside campus reviewers were selected, and the review was held jointly with the regularly scheduled Board of Advisers meeting. The presentations were well received by both audiences, with several great questions and suggestions being offered. The reviewer's formal report has not yet been received, but preliminary indications are that the report is very positive with many useful recommendations.

What have we learned or changed due to our assessment activities?

In conclusion, our school's Assessment Task Force struggled with what we have learned from our year's activities and concluded that our January presentation points summarized it best:

We have learned that:

- * Our program is still too early to give many specifics on what we've learned. Key programs and initiatives are still being firmly planted and 'shored up'.
- * Good students appear to do better; average or poor students seem to not improve as significantly in some assessment-related activities.
- * It is difficult to significantly affect student motivation levels to excel.
- * The ETS national businesses test requires a lot of planing, and it is difficult to administer with any credibility on a 'volunteer' basis. More research on how other business schools (if any!) are doing this successfully will be done.

We have changed in these ways:

- * Re-confirmed our school's commitment to using technology to maximize faculty effectiveness and student learning.
- * Made several improvements in the treatment and support of part-time faculty relative to grading exams, compensation for various course or exam preparation duties, and the use of computer technology in speeding the delivery of graded

accounting exercises.

* Several courses and programs have been reviewed and changed.

The Kelley School of Business Indianapolis remains steadfast in its goals to deliver quality and relevant education to all of its students. Our leadership is committed to using the tools provided by the assessment principles to implement and monitor these goals. 2002-2003 should be a GREAT year for us!!