**Helping Students Become Knowledge-Able Through Assessment**

**2013 Teaching & Learning Symposium**

**Illinois State University**

Mr. Derek Herrmann, University Assessment Services

Dr. J. Cooper Cutting, Department of Psychology

Dr. Nancy Latham, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Daniel Wilson, Department of Technology

Dr. Ryan Smith, University Assessment Services

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Academic Program Assessment at Illinois State University

* University Assessment Services works with the Assessment Advisory Council to review program assessment plans two years before Program Review, and University Assessment Services provides the feedback to Departments/Schools
* Program goals and intended student learning outcomes
  + Goals – broad statements concerning knowledge, skills, or values that faculty expect graduating students to achieve
  + Learning outcomes – describe the kinds of things that students know or can do after instruction that they did not know or could not do before
  + Curriculum mapping – analyze learning opportunities by mapping learning goals against courses
* Systematic assessment of student learning (direct evidence)
  + Tangible, visible, self-explanatory, and compelling evidence of exactly what students have and have not learned
  + Effective assessment formats
    - Paper/thesis – students develop an argument and support it with information or data they have gathered
    - Project – students complete an assignment over a prolonged period of time
    - Development of a product – project whose focus is on the development of a tangible product
    - Performance – students prepare and present a performance of a valued activity
    - Exhibition – a project, product, or performance that is presented to judges and defended or debated with them
    - Case study/critical incident – students are given a realistic example of an application in their field
    - Clinical evaluation – students perform a professional service in a real-life setting
    - Oral exam – students answer spontaneous questions put to them by experts
    - Interview – similar to an oral exam but the forum in which it is carried out may not be as public or involve as many questioners as an oral exam
    - Comprehensive exam – students complete a time-limited essay test that requires them to organize and present central ideas, facts, and concepts in response to questions
    - Portfolio – students gather examples of their work, write about aspects of their learning and achievement, and include their written reflections
  + Curriculum mapping – involves clarifying the relationship between what students do in their courses and what faculty expect them to learn
* Feedback from key stakeholders (indirect evidence)
  + Proxy signs that students are probably learning
  + Stakeholders
    - Students – fundamental source of assessment information
    - Faculty – continually observe and reflect on student learning
    - Field experience supervisors – can be a fountain of information on how well students are demonstrating key goals, including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions
    - Alumni – can describe their post-graduation experiences and their views of their education
    - Employers – can provide valuable information about employer needs and how well a program or college prepares students for careers in their businesses
  + Techniques
    - Surveys – elicit information about people’s beliefs, experiences, or attitudes
    - Interviews – provide an opportunity for interaction between interviewer and interviewee
    - Focus groups – planned discussions among small groups of participants who are asked a series of carefully constructed questions about their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences
    - Reflective essays – invite students to reflect on some aspect of their university experience
    - Others
      * Retention and graduation rates
      * Quality and reputation of graduate programs
      * Placement rates
      * Student participation rates
      * Honors, awards, and scholarships
* Feedback mechanisms and response (use of the results)
  + Who is involved – Chairperson/Director (or Assistant/Associate), Program Coordinator, Faculty (individuals or committees)
  + Where it is done – Department/School meetings, retreat (general or assessment), informal conversations
  + Examining the data
    - Rubric – a scoring guide; a list or chart that describes the criteria used to evaluate completed student assignments
    - Content analysis – summarize common themes and the extent of consensus concerning those themes
  + Establishing standards – can set expectations based on the relative performance of their students
  + Summarizing the results
    - Frequency table – a visual depiction of data that shows how often each value occurred
    - Measures of central tendency
      * Mean – arithmetic average
      * Median – 50th percentile
      * Mode – most common score
    - Qualitative summary
  + Sharing the results
    - Celebrate good results
    - Address areas needing improvement
    - Incorporate results in planning and decision-making processes

Guiding Questions for Panel Presenters

* What are the processes of and procedures for program assessment in your Department (with particular attention to goals and learning outcomes, direct and indirect evidence of learning, and use of the results)?
  + Who is involved?
  + What is used?
  + How often is it done?
* What benefits have you discovered in doing program assessment?
* What difficulties have you encountered in doing program assessment?
* How has your program(s) improved from assessment?
* What are some of the things that you have learned about program assessment?

Information on Presenters’ Academic Departments

* Department of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences
  + Programs
    - Undergraduate – B.A., B.S. in Psychology
    - Graduate
      * M.A., M.S. in Psychology (4 sequences)
      * M.A., M.S. in Clinical-Counseling Psychology
      * S.S.P. in School Psychology
      * Ph.D. in School Psychology
  + Students
    - Undergraduate – 557
    - Graduate
      * Master’s – 70
      * Specialist – 18
      * Doctoral – 38
  + Faculty
    - Full-time – 37
      * Professor – 17
      * Associate Professor – 17
      * Assistant Professor – 2
      * Other (NTT) – 1
    - Part-time – 8
* Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education
  + Programs
    - Undergraduate
      * B.S., B.S.Ed. in Early Childhood Education
      * B.S., B.S.Ed. in Elementary Education (2 sequences)
      * B.S., B.S.Ed. in Middle Level Teacher Education
    - Graduate
      * Post-Baccalaureate Graduate Certificate in School Librarianship
      * M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction
      * M.S.Ed. in Reading
      * Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction
  + Students
    - Undergraduate – 1,517
    - Graduate
      * Certificate – 12
      * Master’s – 138
      * Doctoral – 51
  + Faculty
    - Full-time – 53
      * Professor – 9
      * Associate Professor – 10
      * Assistant Professor – 19
      * Other (NTT) – 15
    - Part-time – 59
* Department of Technology, College of Applied Science and Technology
  + Programs
    - Undergraduate
      * B.S. in Construction Management
      * B.S. in Graphic Communications (2 concentrations)
      * B.S. in Industrial Technology (2 sequences)
      * B.S. in Renewable Energy
      * B.S. in Technology and Engineering Education
    - Graduate
      * Graduate Certificate in Project Management
      * Graduate Certificate in Training and Development
      * M.S. in Technology (3 sequences)
  + Students
    - Undergraduate – 496
    - Graduate
      * Certificate – 3
      * Master’s – 66
  + Faculty
    - Full-time – 18
      * Professor – 7
      * Associate Professor – 4
      * Assistant Professor – 4
      * Other (NTT) – 3
    - Part-time – 17

---

Information on students and faculty (except Curriculum and Instruction faculty) was obtained from Fall 2012 Program Review data, available on the Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis website at

<http://prpa.illinoisstate.edu/program-review/Fall%202011.shtml>;

Information on Curriculum and Instruction faculty was obtained from Fall 2011 Program Review data, available on the Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis website at

<http://prpa.illinoisstate.edu/program-review/Fall%202010.shtml>;

Program information was obtained from the Undergraduate Catalog 2012-2014 and the Graduate Catalog 2012-2013, both available at <http://illinoisstate.edu/catalog/>.