

Program Review and Assessment Committee Grant Proposal

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Project title: Assessing the Humanistic Culture and Learning Environment of the Indiana University School of Dentistry

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Simple budget: page 9

IRB approval: submitted upon selection

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this initiative is to assess the humanistic culture and learning environment of all academic programs at the Indiana University School of Dentistry (IUSD). An instrument to assess humanistic behaviors of IUSD students, staff and faculty will be developed to use in a multi-source feedback system. Data will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis and summary reports will be distributed to IUSD Deans and Department Chairs to assess the humanistic environment of their academic units and the entire school. Ultimately, this information will be used to:

- 1) assess personal strengths and weaknesses with regard to humanistic behavior of IUSD students, staff and faculty;
- 2) inform action plans for promoting a humanistic culture and learning environment at IUSD;
- 3) provide evidence of regular evaluation of humanism in connection with preparing the self-study document for program review.

PURPOSE

Beginning in 2013, a standard of all accredited dental education programs will be a “stated commitment to a humanistic culture and learning environment that is regularly evaluated (Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs, Standard 1-3, 2010).” The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), the accrediting body of IUSD, intends for schools to “ensure collaboration, mutual respect, cooperation, and harmonious relationships,” as well as to “support and cultivate the development of professionalism and ethical behavior (Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs, Standard 1-3, 2010).” On November 14, 2011, to support compliance with this standard, the Faculty Council of IUSD approved the humanistic values of integrity, competency, learning, respect, and excellence to serve as guiding values for all educational programs. These values were chosen by the students, staff and faculty from a survey developed by members of the IUSD Faculty Council.

Approval of the guiding humanistic values was an important step in the school’s commitment to promoting a humanistic culture and learning environment. Moreover, the guiding humanistic values further align IUSD with IUPUI’s Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PUL), for the Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting programs, and Principles of Graduate and Professional Learning (PGPL), for the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) and Graduate programs. Specifically, for the Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting programs, the IUSD humanistic values of competency, learning, and excellence are congruent with:

- **PUL # 3: Integration and Application of Knowledge** with regard to students’ ability to:
 - a. enhance their personal lives;
 - b. meet professional standards and competencies; and
 - c. further the goals of society.

Additionally, the humanistic values of integrity and respect are congruent with:

- **PUL #5 Understanding Society and Culture** with regard to students’ ability to:
 - c. operate with civility in a complex world.
- **PUL # 6 Values and Ethics** with regard to students’ ability to:
 - a. make informed and principled choices and to foresee consequences of these choice;and

- c. understand ethical principles within diverse cultural, social, environmental and personal settings.

Similarly, for IUSD's DDS and Graduate programs, the humanistic values of competency, learning, and excellence are congruent with:

- **PGPL #1 Demonstrating mastery of the knowledge and skills expected for the degree and for professionalism and success in the field and**
- **PGPL #3 Communicating effectively to others in the field and to the general public.**

And, the values of integrity and respect are congruent with:

- **PGPL #2 Thinking critically, applying good judgments in professional and personal situations and**
- **PGPL #4 Behaving in an ethical way both professionally and personally.**

A critical component in complying with the new CODA humanistic environment standard is providing evidence of regular assessment of the school's stated commitment to the guiding humanistic values. Therefore, the purpose of this initiative is to develop an instrument that can be used in a multi-source feedback system to regularly assess the humanistic culture and learning environment of IUSD. This process will involve:

1. Development and piloting of an instrument
2. Development of an assessment plan
3. Analysis of assessment data
4. Dissemination of findings for:
 - a. School use by Deans and Department Chairs
 - b. University use by the Program Review and Assessment Committee
 - c. Professional use through scholarly presentations and publications
5. Creation of action plans based on assessment data to promote humanism in deficient areas
6. Re-evaluation of action plans for improvement or additional corrective action
7. Ongoing assessment of the humanistic environment

INTENDED OUTCOMES

The intended outcomes of this initiative are twofold: 1) the development of a process for the regular and ongoing evaluation of the humanistic culture and learning environment of IUSD, and 2) the evaluation of the assessment data generated by this process in order to create appropriate action plans and monitoring.

First, a literature review will be conducted in order to compile information on other academic health institutions that have implemented assessments of professional qualities such as, but not limited to, humanism or civility. This information will be used to guide the development of IUSD's instrument, and also to assess face validity. Additionally, face validity will be established by involving a small group of IUSD faculty in the creation of the instrument. Content validity will be assessed by involving a larger group of IUSD faculty to determine a content validity ratio. Finally, the instrument will be piloted on a small group of students, faculty and staff. The pilot data will be analyzed and the instrument will be adjusted as needed.

Once the instrument is developed, IUSD faculty and administration will determine the logistics for implementing a multi-source feedback system (MFS). The intent of this assessment strategy is to gather self, peer, superior, and subordinate information on how well an individual meets items related to the guiding humanistic values supported by the school. Students will be the foundation for this assessment as they will assess themselves, their fellow classmates, and the faculty and staff they interact with on a daily basis. Likewise, faculty and staff will assess students, their peers, as well as their supervisors and supervisees.

The intent of this process, at the individual level, is to have students, staff and faculty:

1. Identify personal strengths and weaknesses related to IUSD's guiding humanistic values.
2. Identify the strengths and weaknesses related to IUSD's guiding humanistic values of their peers.
3. Identify the strengths and weaknesses related to IUSD's guiding humanistic values of their supervisors (faculty and staff for students) and supervisees.
4. Create personal action plans to improve weaknesses in areas related to IUSD's guiding humanistic values.

At the organizational level, the intent of the assessment process is to:

1. Assess the strengths and weaknesses related to IUSD's guiding humanistic values of the entire school through aggregate analysis of student, staff and faculty data.
2. Create institutional action plans to improve weaknesses in areas related to IUSD's guiding humanistic values.
3. Monitor the ongoing validation of the school's commitment to a humanistic environment.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Multi-source feedback systems (MFS), or 360° assessments, have been used within and outside of academic health settings as a reliable method for assessing aspects of professional behavior (Zijlsra-Shaw, Robinson, & Roberts, 2011; Massagli & Carline, 2007; Rees & Shepherd, 2005; Whitehouse et al., 2005; Lockyer, 2003; Rodgers & Manifold, 2002). According to a literature review by Wood, Hassell, Whitehouse, Bullock, & Wall (2006), six purposes of MFS include:

1. Developing insight into strengths and weaknesses, for the individual and the organization to act upon.
2. Enhancing culture change by making organizational values explicit.
3. Summative assessment of performance.
4. Evaluating the potential of individuals, for instance to use in career advice or selection.
5. Enhancing team effectiveness by allowing opportunity to comment.
6. Identifying training needs for the system as opposed to the individual.

A MFS is an appropriate assessment strategy for this initiative, because the intended outcomes of the assessment align well with the purposes outlined by Wood et al. (2006). The intended outcomes reformulated to fit the purposes of MFS would be written as follows:

1. Developing insight into strengths and weaknesses, for individuals and the school to act upon.
2. Enhancing culture change by making the guiding humanistic values explicit.
3. Promoting harmonious relationships between students, staff and faculty by allowing opportunity to comment.
4. Identifying training needs to promote a humanistic culture and learning environment.

A MFS will be developed using Wood et al.'s (2006) 10 recommendations for the development of multi-source feedback systems:

1. Develop a positive culture
2. Be clear about the purpose
3. Clearly express any desired behaviors
4. Keep the number of items to be scored few
5. Keep the scale simple
6. Use 6 to 10 raters
7. Compare results with self-assessment
8. Train those giving feedback
9. Involve the assessees
10. Incorporate development

Once the MFS is developed, students, staff, and faculty will complete a self-assessment and a determined number of assessments for peers, professors, staff, supervisors, and supervisees. The assessment data will be entered into an appropriate data management system as determined by IUSD faculty and administration. IUSD faculty and administration will determine the appropriate interval for regularly evaluating the humanistic culture and learning environment of the school and implementing corrective action when deemed appropriate.

DATA ANALYSIS

The IU Division of Biostatistics will be consulted for recommendations on data analysis. Analysis will include, but will not be limited to, descriptive statistics, reliability analyses, tests of differences between student, staff, and faculty groups, tests of differences between self and peer/faculty/staff/supervisor/supervisee assessments, item analysis, and factor analysis. A consultant from the IU Division of Biostatistics will assist with all data analysis.

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Summary reports generated from the data analysis will be distributed to Deans and Department Chairs. Deans and Department Chairs will be responsible for distributing the results to the appropriate supervisors for review and for discussing results with individuals in their academic unit. Students identified as having weaknesses in humanistic behaviors through analysis of the self, peer, and faculty/staff assessments, will meet with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in order to create an action plan to improve the weaknesses. Faculty and staff identified as having weaknesses in humanistic

behaviors will meet with their supervisors to create an action plan to improve the weaknesses. The Dean, the Executive Associate Dean, and the Associate Deans of IUSD will assess the aggregate results from student, staff and faculty assessments in order to identify institutional training needs and areas for professional development. These areas will be reassessed and monitored in order to determine the impact of the corrective actions.

A summary report of the initiative will be submitted to the Program Review and Assessment Committee (PRAC). Additionally, results from the initiative may be presented at appropriate academic conferences or published in appropriate academic journals.

INTENDED USE OF FINDINGS

The intended uses of the findings from this initiative are to:

1. Provide evidence for compliance with CODA standard 1-3: The Dental education program must have a stated commitment to a humanistic culture and learning environment that is regularly evaluated.
2. Develop student, staff and faculty insight into humanistic strengths and weaknesses, for the individual and the school to act upon.
3. Identify training needs and areas of professional development for students, staff and faculty in order to address personal and institutional weaknesses in promoting a humanistic culture and learning environment that is regularly monitored and reassessed.
4. Disseminate results and assessment materials to the PRAC, IUPUI, and the academic community through generating reports and scholarly presentations and publications.

SIMPLE BUDGET

| Item | Description | Estimated Cost |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Instrument development | Costs associated with printing, focus groups, and electronic development | \$1000.00 |
| Data management | Costs associated with developing/purchasing data management program/software | \$1000.00 |
| Statistical analysis | Costs associated with statistical consultation and data analysis | \$500.00 |
| Total | Total costs associated with project | \$2500.00 |

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