

IUPUI Program Review and Assessment Committee
Assessment Project Proposal

Cover Sheet

Name and Rank/Title of Project Directors:

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Department/Division or School:

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Project Title:

“Comparative Assessment of Software Proficiencies Between Interior Design
Technology Students and Industry Practitioners for the Purpose of Standardization and
Certificate Creation”

Project Dates:

January 2015 through August 2015

Project Checklist:

Statement of support from the department chair or school dean by e-mail to
tbanta@iupui.edu – as a separate file not included in the proposal.

Simple budget: A detailed budget is not necessary.

IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval **if the proposal is selected**

Abstract:

This project has been designed to comparatively assess the computer software programs currently being utilized in the professions of interior design and architecture with those being taught in our classrooms to ensure that the application of knowledge presented in our program meets modern professional standards and competencies. The task will involve surveying local and national design firms to determine the specific computer skills that are most utilized and desired in the professional field with relation to software usage. This data will be examined and interpreted to determine the appropriateness of software usage within our program, and to serve as a benchmark for the development of a new certificate in Building Information Management (BIM).

Purpose of the Project:

One of many critical arenas of knowledge expected of interior design graduates is a variety of computer software competencies utilized in the production of drawings, documents and visual presentations. Without specific knowledge of industry expectations relative to computer software, it is not possible to assess whether our undergraduate education is thoroughly preparing our students for the established vocation. While our accrediting body examines our curriculum for distinct student outcomes, they do not explicitly require the use of any particular software as a specific means of achieving these outcomes, thus no evaluation of equivalency with relation to student software knowledge and practitioner expectation has ever been completed for our program.

Currently, the Bachelor of Science degree in Interior Design Technology (INTR) exposes students throughout the curriculum to a variety of software packages, including AutoCAD, Revit, Sketchup and Photoshop, among others. However, there are numerous additional software programs available within our industry as progressive technology allows for the introduction of new products annually. Building Information Modeling, for example, is an innovative model-based process that assists building professionals in planning, designing, constructing and managing buildings and infrastructure using intelligent software. We are anxious to learn more about the widespread use of this technology, and more specifically, how our program may augment our students as well as professional practice through the training of this method.

As a result of these ambitions, the purpose of this project is two-fold:

1. to clearly ascertain which software packages and skills are most used and required by architectural and design firms in an effort to determine if and where those software's are being taught within our INTR program, and to what level
2. to develop a new Building Information Management certificate which allows both students and practitioners the benefit of expanding their software knowledge to a higher level, utilizing the most current, desired and technologically advanced methods on the market

Intended Outcomes of the Project:

This assessment project will center on three major outcomes:

1. All INTR courses will be analyzed, and uniformity will be created among the software usage and instruction across our curriculum.

2. Equivalence among the skills of our students and the practicing interior design profession will be achieved, therefore increasing the placement and employability of our students.
3. A thoughtful, new BIM certificate will be created, affording both graduating students and practitioners in the areas of interior design, architecture and construction with focused skillsets relative to this innovative design methodology

Assessment Methods to be used in the Project:

The primary assessment method that will be used in this project includes the use of a survey to be distributed both local and national interior design and architecture firms to assess software preferences and BIM usage. Examination of existing INTR curriculum will be achieved by way of course syllabi and individual instructor interview. Student portfolio reviews may serve as supplemental support if necessary.

Data Analysis:

As part of the grant, the Project Directors will meticulously produce a survey, along with feedback from INTR faculty, appropriate for distribution among prominent interior design and architecture firms both in the Indianapolis area and nationally. Ideally, the results of this survey will provide specific information as to which software programs are considered standard use within professional practice, as well as the level of industry competency relative to BIM software and processes.

Examination of individual course syllabi within the INTR program will be accomplished, as well as personal interviews of the faculty to determine what software programs are being taught and used in individual courses throughout our curriculum. The results of

these discussions will provide specific information as to which software programs are being taught to our students. Data retrieved through these processes will be compared and analyzed in the form of a spreadsheet. The results of this project will be an extremely valuable addition to the self-study that we continually complete as we preserve accreditation from the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA).

Evaluation and Dissemination of the Results:

Upon completion of the project, a final report will be submitted to the PRAC. It is anticipated that the results will also be presented at a prominent event such as the International Interior Design Educators Conference (IDEC), or the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) Annual National Conference, among others.

Intended Use of Findings for Program Improvement:

The findings of this study will be used to improve the INTR curriculum at IUPUI, particularly by creating uniform course material and delivery methods and matching the professional standards and competencies of our students to the level of local practitioner expectation, as well as aid in the creation of a BIM certificate. More specifically, computer software programs are predicted to be added or removed from the curriculum, while a groundbreaking new certificate, which meets the needs of local and national designers, architects and contractors, will be established.

Budget:

It is estimated that \$2,500 will be split between investigating parties, and used for the purpose of faculty stipend.