

# **IU Kelley School of Business Indianapolis (KSBI)**

**2002 - 2003**

## **PRAC Report on Undergraduate Assessment Activities**

This has been an important and interesting year in the assessment efforts at our school. The KSBI Assessment Task Force started with a list of several programs carried over from the previous year, and added several more. The committee ended the year with several accomplishments and great plans for a productive fall.

### **Key Project Activities**

1. The school's assessment goals remained unchanged, technically, from the four approved by the faculty in the April 2001 meeting. However, the direction of the Task Force's activities indicates that a formal change in goals will be forthcoming. A previously stated goal that is most likely to change or be replaced is:

The use of nationally normed tests, such as the Educational Testing System's Major Field Test in Business. A replacement for this tool has been researched but a satisfactory replacement has not been identified.

Possible additional IU goals to be discussed by the Task Force are:

\* 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.

\* Task Force and faculty approval and use of a set of "Principles of Business Learning" in use for all courses. These principles will be consistent with the IUPUI Principles and will help set the stage for establishing a formal 'mission and vision' statement for KSBI.

A final revision and approval of the new goals by the Task Force and Kelley Indianapolis faculty is expected early in the fall '03 semester.

2. The Task Force decided to defer any significant discussion or evaluation of the student electronic portfolio project pending the resolution of various file security, viewing rights, recommended contents, and other issues being evaluated by other campus PRAC committees. The committee will also want to be more comfortable, prior to faculty recommendation, with assessing the value of the portfolio to the student in their

learning, and in the portfolio's ability to aid the student in demonstrating key skills when seeking employment.

3. Attitudes within the KSBI faculty remain mixed in support of using a national business skills exam as a measurement of our student's learning. As a final step of objective evaluation after several other analytical efforts, our acting dean and also a Task Force member, John Hassell, personally surveyed representatives of five business colleges who were shown as current or previous users of this test. Most school representatives felt that this test was not as valuable as they needed and would not use it if not required! So, our decision was to consider other non-testing assessment options. Several of the KSBI professional disciplines, such as accounting and finance, already have professional certification options that demonstrate learned skills.

4. For possibly the first time in Kelley Indianapolis history, an employer survey was conducted by the school. Its intention was to:

- \* gather employer assessment data on our students which they have hired, in the aggregate, not looking at any specific student
- \* more specifically, determine which business skills our students are perceived to be strong or weak in,
- \* have the employers rank the business skills we value and teach on in order of importance to the employers.

Our faculty has been given these data to review what curricular, teaching methodology, course sequencing, facilities, and technological implications it may have.

5. The Learning Outcomes project was plagued by serious setbacks this year due to student staffing, technical, and other problems. Nonetheless, as of now a database has been designed and tested, the final set of records are being entered in June. By late June, the fine-tuning of the learning outcomes descriptors should be done and reflected in a cleaner dataset of records. Our hope is that by early in the fall, we can show the faculty their initial thoughts on their stated class outcomes and assessment methods, and update them based on a "second review".

After this second review, the Task Force will be in a better position to look for duplications or gaps in school-wide learning outcomes, voids in teaching certain PULs, or other management-level holistic teaching concerns.

6. The Task Force also looked at the relationship between pre- and post-admission academic performances in KSBI. Pre-admission performance was measured by the grade point average of pre-requisite courses, while the mean of I-Core grades and overall

GPA served as indicators of post-admission academic performance. Data of 406 students from Fall 2001 and Spring 2002 were used to explore these relationships. The results showed that

- The relationships between pre- and post-admission academic performance is close to linear with a positive slope;
- Using linear approximation, raising the admission standards by 0.1 GPA would lead to an increase a little bit less than 0.1 in overall GPA and I-Core grades.

These results underlined the importance of and need for periodic checking and potentially raising the admission standards as they play an important role in improving the quality of KSBI graduates.

7. The Task Force was briefed by Dr. Drew Appleby from the School of Science's Psychology Department. His success and enthusiasm with their new school assessment initiative, called the Senior Assessment Package, convinced us that we should consider adopting a KSBI version of it for faculty feedback and approval.

This package consists of the following:

- a. The Graduating Student Survey - this covers demographic and attitudinal information on the student and their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the IUPUI and KSBI environments and course offerings.
  - b. The Faculty Mentoring Survey - this is designed to identify faculty who have played a special mentoring role for the student.
  - c. The Undergraduate Academic Advisor Survey - this is to identify any faculty or staff advisors who may have had a positive influence on the student.
  - d. The Senior Reflection - this is an essay and is intended to allow the student to reflect on their undergraduate journey. Students are asked to write two paragraphs on each of the campus PULs or KSBI Principles of Business Learning, indicating how the student experienced them while at IUPUI. (This final component was discussed but hasn't been endorsed by the Task Force yet!!)
8. Another area of accomplishment for the year was in making a significant start in thinking through our challenges as a school and drafting a charter that better defines what we do, who we are, and who we serve, as follows:

- a. Principles of Business Learning - one Task Force member, Ken Wendeln accepted the challenge of refining the campus' PULs to better fit an urban business school mandate, based on the key skills required and requested by

employers in the workplace. We have now refined the initial list, producing the following principle categories, with each having a lengthy explanation:

- \* Critical Thinking
- \* Management and Leadership
- \* Written Communication
- \* Collaboration and Oral Communications
- \* Professional Skills and Competencies

b. Mission-Vision Statements - A revised mission statement and a new vision statement were drafted, based on the vision and mission of the IUPUI campus, as well as the Kelley School of Business in Bloomington.

Our current plan is to continue working on these at our first fall meeting, then present them to the faculty for further debate and refinement early in the fall semester. If there is agreement, we hope for adoption, incorporation, and clear identification of these principles within the curriculum by the spring or fall of 2004.

9. A final accomplishment was to send delegates to the AACSB Assessment Conference in Hartford Conn., and to the 2002 Assessment Institute in Indianapolis. Good reports were brought back, and significant information was shared with the Task Force members. This information helped shape and guide several discussions and debates.

10. What have we learned or changed due to our assessment activities over this year?

a. Many respected Big Ten or other business schools do not regularly or ever use standardized tests, so our committee and faculty are divided on the wisdom of pursuing this as a measurement tool of business skills performance. We will continue to investigate our options!

b. Our committee is beginning to get comfortable with a tailored set of business principles that will be identified for our students and woven throughout our curriculum. If these principles truly represent the skills that corporate America feel are important for success in their environment, then identify and incorporate those skills will be far more relevant and valuable in the short- and long-term for their careers.

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