

# **Program Review and Assessment Committee**

**Thursday, October 24, 2002**

2:00- 3:30 p.m. UL 1126

Trudy Banta, Presiding (in the absence of I. Ritchie and J. Mac Kinnon)

Linda Durr, Recorder

## **AGENDA**

1. Approval of September Minutes
2. Updates and Announcements
3. Strategies to Move Assessment Forward
4. Nominations for Vice Chair

## **MINUTES**

Present: W. Agbor-Baiyee, D. Appleby, S. Baker, T. Banta, K. Black, P. Boruff-Jones, C. Dobbs, K. Duckworth, E. Gonzalez, L. Haas, S. Hamilton, S. Kahn, J. Kuczkowski, J. McDonald, S. Milosevich, H. Mzumara, M. Plummer, E. Sener, C. Souch, K. Stanton, R. Vertner, C. Yokomoto, and N. Young

### **Agenda Item 1. Approval of September Minutes (T. Banta)**

- Minutes were approved.

### **Agenda Item 2. Updates and Announcements**

#### **Grants Subcommittee Update (K. Black)**

- K. Black reported that the Grants Subcommittee met to discuss the one proposal that was submitted from Margaret Adamek, Monique Busch, and Ann Kratz. K. Stanton will be requesting clarification from them on some aspects of the proposal; following that, we should be ready for a vote at the December meeting.

#### **Announcements (T. Banta)**

- T. Banta reminded the committee that the NCA Review Team will meet with the PRAC members at 2:45 p.m. on Monday, November 18 in UC 115. The meeting will be conducted as a question and answer session. Please review the self-study/portfolio Web site at [www.iport.iupui.edu](http://www.iport.iupui.edu) before the meeting and come prepared to talk about what your school has done in terms of initiatives and innovations in teaching, learning, and assessment. Come late and leave early, if you have to, but please come.

### **Agenda Item 3. Strategies to Move Assessment Forward (T. Banta)**

Much of the last year has been spent examining our progress on institutionalizing assessment and using assessment findings to improve. Last year's reports and discussions resulted in a series of recommendations. Banta distributed the document we developed last spring, entitled "Suggestions from 2001-02 PRAC Presentations for Moving Assessment Forward." We will be asking the review team for their perspective on this topic.

Banta mentioned that she had an opportunity to meet with members of the ABET accreditation team during their recent visit to the School of Engineering and Technology to review the Computer Engineering program offered by the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering. At their exit meeting, the team commented that the department has one of the best assessment programs in the country for this discipline. The one suggestion for improvement they made was that students, as stakeholders, need to be more involved in the assessment process.

Banta noted that D. Appleby has some excellent ideas on how to involve students in assessment. Appleby has found that students are generally not aware of the learning outcomes they are expected to achieve; when they are made aware, they are more enthusiastic about getting involved in assessment. He distributed a packet that describes a capstone course he is teaching in which students are conducting a research project and developing an assessment report for the School of Science, based on the results of the school's Graduating Student Survey and Senior Reflections exercise. Early in the semester, J. Kuczkowski talked with the class about the learning outcomes the school is seeking and the information he hoped to get from the project. This type of project has never been done before in the School of Science--probably because it involves a lot of work. Through this process, the students are learning about the IRB process, confidentiality, and so on. Students can potentially learn a lot from this experience and so can the school.

In response to a question about how the Psychology students' assessment findings will be used, Kuczkowski explained that they will meet with him to report on and discuss the findings. The information will also be presented to the school's Teaching and Learning Committee and the Chairs' Council. Depending on the success of this experiment, Appleby and Kuczkowski hope that this capstone will be offered regularly in the future.

Suggestion: Could we consider asking these students to make a presentation at a future PRAC meeting?

Following is a list of concerns, comments and questions that came out of the discussion on moving assessment forward:

- There needs to be dialogue between students and faculty. What will the dialogue sound like?

- We need to consider people in the organization as clients. Drew's sample engages the students. We need to do more of this.
- ABET suggested that students get involved in the process of deciding what the outcomes should be. Students don't have to be only subjects of assessment, but can also be developers of assessment approaches and investigators of learning outcomes.
- Why not do this in other capstone courses? Not all departments are doing this. Not all are interested.
- What is the role of the student--client or customer? Do students know what problem they are trying to solve? Doing assessment with students is fine, but we must give them all of the necessary information at the outset.
- There is concern that not all students are aware of the PULs. The PULs need to be introduced early, often, and at every level. The PULs were adopted in 1998, so we just now have seniors who have gone through an entire undergraduate program with the PULs in place. The student ePort will help increase awareness of the PULs among both students and faculty. As students work on their portfolios, they will explicitly demonstrate their learning of each PUL.

Banta asked whether other schools have attempted to involve students in assessment and what outcomes came out of these efforts.

- L. Haas noted that in the Sociology Department, students have been involved in assessment through research methods classes, service learning, and studies of college retention. She offered to make examples of these projects available to the group.
- The School of Dentistry introduced a new curriculum a few years ago. J. McDonald commented that the students have shown great professionalism in contributing to assessment efforts. Several of their suggestions have been implemented and have led to positive changes in the curriculum.
- M. Plummer commented that the Herron School has used a modified version of the SOS survey of graduating seniors.
- The School of Liberal Arts has restructured its graduating senior assessment package, partly modeled on the SOS approach. They have not yet tried asking students to do an assessment project similar to Appleby's.
- Students in the School of Physical Education and Tourism Management have formed their own task force on assessment. One of the things that they learned is that they are not as prepared for careers as they should be. They are planning

to present their findings to the dean and to the chairs.

- S. Hamilton noted that one of the faculty learning communities sponsored by the Office for Professional Development is examining the capstone experience in relation to the PULs. She has found that students have tended to see reflection on the PULs in her capstone as extra work; this semester, she is asking students to complete a project, and then reflect on it in relation to the PULs. She hopes that students will see reflection as more meaningful when tied to a specific learning experience.
- S. Milosevich suggested that we consider how to frontload assessment of the PULs by providing a thorough introduction to them at the outset of students' education at IUPUI. Then, we need to consider how to help graduating students link their learning back to the PULs. Such a strategy would help make assessment of the PULs formative as well as retrospective.

### **Additional Suggestions for Involving Students in Assessment:**

Banta asked for additional suggestions for how faculty might be encouraged to include students in assessment efforts. Suggestions and comments included the following:

- Faculty development to help people understand that students are partners in this process.
- A Best Practices Fair in the spring. Students could provide poster sessions or presentations to demonstrate how they are involved in assessing the PULs.
- Brown bag luncheons that address one or two of the PULs per session; feature speakers who have worked successfully with specific PULs. (One comment was that it would be difficult to attract faculty to yet another brown bag series.)
- Bring chairs together to talk about this issue.
- How many faculty are really involved with assessment and are really familiar with the PULs?
- Explain the PULs and assessment more clearly to students. Most freshmen do not yet understand why these skills are important and what the purposes of assessing them might be.
- What does ABET mean by involving students? Some faculty object to this.
- How can we get this information to part-time faculty?
- Are there good models for involving students in assessment?

- With the Student ePort initiative, we are committing IUPUI to engaging students more deeply in assessing the PULs. Is there some way to take this engagement a step further?
- We need to align the PULs more explicitly with learning outcomes in specific disciplines and courses. Students can then understand more clearly why they are asked to do certain kinds of work.
- Form student advisory boards.
- Suggest that each school replicate Appleby's model.

#### **Assessment Findings and NCA Visit:**

Banta noted that our NCA team is likely to ask what all of our assessment work adds up to—what has been the impact of this work on teaching and learning? She explained that, in anticipation of such questions, PAII has developed a matrix, drawn from the annual PRAC reports, that summarizes assessment approaches, changes resulting from assessment findings, and the impact of those changes since 1998. This matrix, "Changes Based on Assessment Findings at IUPUI," will be sent to everyone via email, along with instructions for adding information where there are blanks.

#### **Agenda Item 4. Nominations for Vice Chair (T. Banta)**

Banta reminded the committee that J. Mac Kinnon, current Vice Chair, will become Chair of PRAC in January. We are now requesting nominations for a new Vice Chair. The Vice Chair will take over as Chair in a year or two, depending on Mac Kinnon's preference for tenure.

K. Johnson was nominated. Trudy asked that other nominations be sent to her via email.

#### **Next meeting:**

**Monday, November 18, 2002**

**2:45 - 4:00 p.m. in UL115**