Program Review and Assessment Committee
August 18, 2011, 1:30 – 3: 00 p.m., CE 268
Minutes

Present: K. Alfrey (Chair), P. Altenburger, E. Ardemagni, S. Baker, T. Banta, W. Crabtree, M. Ferguson, Y. Fu, B. Gushrowski, M. Hansen, K. Hart, C. Hayes, S. Hendricks, J. Johnson, S. Kahn, J. Lee, K. Marrs, H. Mzumara, J. Paine, G. Pike, J. Plaskoff, S. Rice, I. Ritchie, S. Scott, J. Singh, K. Steinberg, R. Stocker, M. Urtel, K. Wendeln, K. Wills, D. Winikates, N. Young

1. **May Meeting Minutes:** approved as circulated

2. **Updates**
   - As chair, K. Alfrey welcomed members back to the new academic year and asked for introductions to help the several new members become acquainted.
   - T. Banta provided updates on progress with reaffirmation of accreditation preparations.
     - The five criterion teams have amassed large amounts of information in support of each segment of the self-study. The writing team will begin review shortly to identify high-priority evidence related to the theme of "*Excellence through Innovation and Collaboration*." Preliminary drafts will be returned to the criterion teams for modification in November. A more polished draft will be circulated across the campus community for discussion at town hall meetings planned for early spring.
     - The IUPUI liaison on the Higher Learning Commission staff will visit on September 29 to provide procedural advice and to meet with several key groups.
     - S. Baker noted that the topic will be on the agenda for every Faculty Council Executive Committee meeting during Spring 2012.
     - November 5 – 7, 2012, will be the dates for our reaffirmation visit.
   - K. Alfrey encouraged all units that have not yet submitted their annual assessment report to do so shortly.
     - She asked S. Kahn for comments on those received to date. Kahn noted a general improvement over the previous year's reports, with all reporting learning outcomes and most including findings (including PUL assessment results). She added that graduate and professional programs should be aware that they also are expected (by the Higher Learning Commission) to be assessing student learning outcomes.
     - M. Urtel thanked the team of PRAC report reviewers for the helpful feedback last spring and requested that it be earlier this year to allow more time to incorporate improvements recommended. He also asked that the report deadline be softened to allow schools, particularly those with heavy summer offerings, to close the academic year before preparing the reports. P. Altenburger seconded the request for earlier review and feedback.
     - J. Lee added thanks for the new instructions, which she reported were very helpful in revising her school's report.
   - In response to the chair's question about new assessment activities planned for the coming year, several members reported items.

- B. Gushrowski reported that the School of Dentistry has received new dental accreditation standards, so major work is planned to update and align curriculum in several areas.
- C. Hayes described further work in "curriculum 2.0" for the School of Medicine, along with office reorganization and plans for greater attention to using assessment results for improvement.
- G. Pike reported that Information Management and Institutional Research will conduct an alumni survey this fall (on a three-year rotation with surveys of faculty and staff); he hopes to have resulting reports to campus units in spring. Also, IU has determined a three-year cycle for NSSE surveys, with the next planned for Spring 2012. IMIR and others will promote participation extensively to improve IUPUI participation rates. This year, the survey will be based on a census of all first-year and senior students rather than the sampling done previously. NSSE results will probably be available in summer.

3. Spring PUL Assessment Report

- G. Pike reviewed the campus process for evaluation and reporting of PUL learning outcomes. Campus-level reports include only results from 400-level courses and for the highest-emphasis PUL in each. Reports for schools include all course levels and PULs of major and moderate emphasis. Reports can also be prepared on request for some programs. All reports are cumulative from the beginning of the PUL assessment.
- Pike also discussed how units can use these reports effectively to understand and make improvements. He suggested that schools establish performance levels that seem most appropriate for them, and then triangulate the PUL assessment results with student survey results and other information sources to gauge reliability of the information. IMIR has suggested ten steps that can help confirm results (see attachment), and he emphasized the importance of working with faculty to understand the results.
- All PRAC members should have received copies of the reports; they are also circulated separately with the September agenda. Pike invited members to call him with questions.

4. Overview of PRAC subcommittees

- K. Alfrey called on current members of the various subcommittees to add to general information circulated with the meeting agenda, and several did so. Alfrey will circulate contact information for follow-up questions and plan agenda time for conversations at the September meeting.

5. Points of interest for the coming year

- Committee members divided into small groups to discuss topics they would like to explore at upcoming PRAC meetings. Alfrey asked teams to forward their ideas to her at the end of the meeting or later via email.

6. Adjournment at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by S. Scott and respectfully submitted by M. Yard, Vice Chair

Appendix
Using the Results of PUL Assessments for Planning and Improvement

During the Spring 2011 semester faculty members teaching a variety of undergraduate courses evaluated the performance of their students on the Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PULs) identified as receiving a major and a moderate emphasis in their courses. In Spring 2011 Information Management and Institutional Research (IMIR) staff also administered the *Continuing Student Satisfaction and Priorities Survey* (CSS) to a random sample of undergraduates at IUPUI. Several questions on the CSS ask students to rate their own PUL skills. Although these assessment activities provide information about student learning for two different populations, taken together, these sources can be used in planning and improvement efforts at campus and school levels.

The following **questions** may be helpful in guiding your analysis of the PUL results:

1. Are you satisfied with the combined ratings of the PULs for your school? That is, do the ratings satisfy your standards or expectations?
2. Have you compared the results of faculty members' direct assessments (faculty ratings of effectiveness) of the PULs for 400-level classes to upper-division students' indirect assessments (self ratings of effectiveness) of the PULs?
3. Does the pattern of strengths and weaknesses on the various PULs match findings from other studies, expectations, or hunches about strengths and weaknesses?
4. Have you shared the pattern of strengths and weaknesses with students, graduates, employers? What are their observations about the findings?
5. Have you shared the PUL ratings in courses with individual students in those courses?
6. If there is a particular PUL on which the rating is disappointing, have you checked your matrix (see the PUL matrix at http://www.planning.iupui.edu/pul/matrix/) to see if there is adequate coverage of that PUL in a sufficient number of courses that students are likely to take?
7. Have faculty in your school shared best practices in teaching and assessing the PULs? Has there been any conversation about agreeing on some rubrics for use in assessment across sections of the same course or across courses in a discipline?
8. Have you made changes in curriculum or instruction (including more on-line offerings) that could affect the PUL ratings?
9. Is there improvement over time in any PUL in which there may be a student weakness, or in which you have made a curriculum or instructional change?
10. Have you considered using individual students' patterns of strengths and weaknesses in PUL achievement in advising individual students?

Faculty ratings of student performance in their classes provide direct evidence for the campus and schools about the overall performance of students taking classes in a particular school or department. These students may or may not be majors in that school. The percentage of students

performing at a given level and the mean for all students evaluated are provided in the results tables. In order to make the best use of the results of these assessments, schools should first define desired levels of performance in classes. These desired levels of performance may differ by academic discipline, course level, or by individual course. Studying the results of the assessment activities involves comparing actual levels of student performance to desired levels. For example, if the expectation for 400 level courses in the School of Liberal Arts is that 90% of students taking those courses demonstrate that they are "effective" or "very effective" in critical thinking, and nearly 90% (or more) of the students perform at that level, the students in courses that have been assessed could be said to have achieved the desired goal. However, if only 50% of the students are effective or very effective in critical thinking, additional study and/or improvement actions may be warranted.

The *Continuing Student Satisfaction and Priorities Survey* is administered to a random sample of enrolled undergraduates. Juniors' and seniors' mean self ratings of effectiveness on each PUL provide **indirect** evidence about the performance of majors in a school. The results reflect students' entire undergraduate experiences, not just learning in a given course. Comparisons of ratings by upper-division students enrolled in a particular school with the ratings of all IUPUI students or of peers enrolled in another school yields a second source of information about student learning. For example, students in the School of Engineering and Technology report greater quantitative proficiency than do students campus wide. In the 2011 report the Engineering and Technology students' mean rating for quantitative skills was 3.18, notably higher than the campus-wide average of 2.98. However, the Engineering and Technology outcome might indicate a need for further study and improvement if the school has set a goal of 3.5 on the 4-point scale.

Although the direct and indirect assessments of the PULs represent slightly different populations, the direct assessments of students in 400-level courses, and perhaps students in 300-level courses, may be comparable to the indirect assessment results for upper-division students. Comparison of these results can provide additional insights about program strengths and opportunities for improvement. In addition, comparison of the results from the PUL assessments to data from exit surveys, interviews, evaluations of capstone performance, etc. can be used to triangulate assessment results. Another way to gain additional insights into the results of the PUL assessments is to share these results with stakeholders—faculty, students, alumni, and employers. These groups bring different perspectives to the interpretation of PUL results. Their observations may help identify courses of action to improve performance on the PULs.

If the results for a particular PUL are disappointing, it may be helpful to return to the PUL matrix and identify the courses in which that PUL is taught. Perhaps the PUL in question should be emphasized in other courses. Faculty can also exchange best practices about teaching and assessing the PULs and even share rubrics for use across sections of the same course. Changes made in the curriculum should be identified and improvements in PUL performance tracked. Using the results of the PUL assessments in advising is another strategy that can lead to improved performance and help students take greater responsibility for their learning.