INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

College
of
Adult and Professional Studies
Institutional Effectiveness
Handbook

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Preface

This Handbook provides guidelines and suggestions to assist CAPS leaders in developing plans to demonstrate their effective operations and provide insights that will support data-driven decision making. It includes administrative support as well as student learning. It is intended for use by division chairs, program directors/coordinators, administrators, and faculty as they work to improve their programs and administrative functions.

Institutional Effectiveness involves not only assessment but also objectives, collaboration, purposeful review, and engagement of constituent stakeholders. It is an important part of any healthy organization. It generates data, which inform strategic plans for program development and improvement. Different departments must develop their own objectives, criteria, and means of measuring outcomes.

"Institutional effectiveness is characterized by the following:
- Describing expected results through construction of educational (student learning outcomes and administrative objectives/outcomes
- Selecting the means of assessment that will best determine the accomplishment of those outcomes and objectives identified
- Actually conducting the assessment and recording of the data (results) of that assessment
- Describing of how the data collected from the assessment activities were used to improve student learning and AES (administrative and educational support) services" (p. 19, Nichols & Nichols, 2005).

This Handbook is written from the point of view of the Higher Learning Commission of NCA, which accredits Indiana Wesleyan University as an academic institution. According to NCA guidelines, assessment must permeate the institution and be conceived, written and implemented by faculty. Each department/program must write and implement its own Assessment Plan. This Handbook is written to assist faculty and administrative personnel in using sound social scientific principles to assist in this process.

As always, the Associate Dean for Institutional Effectiveness is here to inspire, assist, and advise about assessment. The goal of this office is to provide the tools and knowledge necessary to empower others to analyze and improve the effectiveness of their organizations. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will aid in processing surveys and analyzing assessment data. We welcome your questions and concerns.

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Purposes of Assessment

- **Primary: To determine if effectiveness goals (student learning or administrative objectives) are being achieved.**
- **Secondary: Improve student learning, programs, administrative units, departments, schools, or college operations.**

Definition of Assessment

Indiana Wesleyan University recognizes assessment as a systematic and dynamic process of evaluating institutional outcomes for the purpose of improving student learning, academic programs, administrative effectiveness, and institutional planning.

What is CAUGHT
is more important than what is TAUGHT.
Tom Angelo

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Position Statement on Assessing Student Learning

(IWU's regional accrediting body)

"Assessment of student academic achievement is fundamental for all organizations that place student learning at the center of their educational endeavors."

ASSESSMENT of STUDENT LEARNING
is a participatory, iterative process that:

- Provides data/information you need on your students' learning,
- Engages you and others in analyzing and using this data/information to confirm and improve teaching and learning,
- Produces evidence that students are learning the outcomes you intended,
- Guides you in making educational and institutional improvements,
- Evaluates whether changes made improve/impact student learning, AND DOCUMENTS THE LEARNING AND YOUR EFFORTS.

Six Fundamental Questions as Prompts to Conversation

1) How are your stated student learning outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, degrees, and students?

2) What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?

3) In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?

4) How do you ensure shared responsibility for student learning & assessment of student learning?

5) How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of your efforts to assess and improve student learning?

6) In what ways do you inform the public and other stakeholders about what and how well your students are learning?

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Overview of Assessment

VALUE -ADDED LEARNING

How do we know they learned anything as a direct result of their experience at IWU?

A. Process of Faculty Driven Assessment

Process of Learning Outcome Selection: Faculty members lead the assessment process by meeting on a regular basis to set outcomes and performance measures. All of our learning outcomes flow from the mission statement and strategies of the university in addition to specific program learning outcomes.

Program and Course Learning Outcomes: Faculty members from each program specify outcomes that apply to their program.

Selection of Assessment Measures: Faculty members from each program develop measures to directly and indirectly assess how well the learning outcomes were achieved.

Performance Measures: Faculty members from each program set the performance measures which students are expected to achieve in order to demonstrate that the outcomes are being satisfied.

Collection and Analysis of Data: Assessment measures are collected and the results are analyzed.

Engaging Stakeholders: On a regular basis, program performance results will be presented to program stakeholders (alumni, current students, faculty, graduates' employers, and others) who will review information and develop program effectiveness changes.

Changes: Based on assessment data, program improvements are made. These changes are then assessed using the same process.

Comparison Study: Assessment results are compared with other colleges and other programs within schools and IWU. Longitudinal studies assess progress within the schools and the college.

B. Template for Effective New Program and Course Development

Purpose

The purpose of this template is to provide a general guide for effective new program and course development. It is not intended to limit the creativity and authority of program directors, curriculum planners, or course writers but merely a reminder of important and necessary steps that should be followed in developing new programs and courses. It focuses on new program and course development based on the particular program learning objectives. The final step, course writing, is not addressed in this document. Quality new programs depend on coordinated, researched, and effective curriculum development. The ultimate goal is to ensure that our graduates are truly prepared to change the world based on how well we have prepared them in character, scholarship, leadership, and the knowledge and skills of their respective career field.

New Program Development

1. The first step in developing a new program is to determine what a graduate of this program should be able to be (character), know (knowledge), and do (skills). These represent the program learning outcomes or objectives.
   a. The outcomes should be written to be learner-centered, specific, action oriented, and cognitively appropriate for the program. For example "Students should be able to <<*action verb*>> <<*outcome*>>" Undergraduate outcomes would define outcomes in lower division terms (Bloom's) such as knowledge, understanding, and application. Graduate outcomes should focus more on higher order skills such as application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
   b. Universities offering similar programs can provide valuable insights as well as learning objectives/outcomes based on the expectations of professional or discipline related organizations. Also included within this list should be the IWU graduate or undergraduate, mission student learning outcomes.
   c. This initial list should be reviewed and like or similar learning outcomes grouped so as to assist in assessment and course development. The composite list should be listed in the second column of the Program Development form.
2. The next step is to develop a list of courses.
   a. This requires research to determine if there are accrediting expectations for the number of credit hours and general course descriptions.

b. Another source of potential courses and general course descriptions could be found in similar programs in other universities.

c. Courses should be viewed as an academic structure or environment in which to provide assessment and learning opportunities for students. They are a vehicle of curricular conveyance but not a destination in and of themselves.

d. The course titles should be listed in the third column of the Program Development template.

e. The faculty curriculum committee or program director must carefully consider learning outcomes, assessments, and course sequencing when initially grouping learning outcomes with courses.

f. The outcomes should also be defined in terms of their level of teaching: some will be introduced, learned, and applied in the same course while others may be introduced in one course, learned in another, and finally applied in a third course. This is important since a fundamental of effective brain-based teaching is to establish learning anchor points by introducing an outcome and then later using that prior knowledge to promote learning. The more new learning can be connected with previous learning the more likely students will grasp those new ideas and concepts being taught. Those distinctions will be noted in the second column of the Course Development form by annotating where/when those steps will be taken.

g. It should be assumed that this listing is an initial draft and probably will be refined as the courses are actually written. Learning outcomes, levels of teaching, and major assessments will be entered in the respective Course Development form (one for each course). These forms will serve as a road map for course writers to follow as they develop learning activities, assessments, and data collection.

h. Course titles and descriptions should be defined in Course Development frameworks (the second form, one for each course) and should provide a framework to guide and assist program and course writers in developing curriculum that is aligned with program learning outcomes and objectives.

3. Once the learning outcomes and course structure have been established, assessments should be developed. The expectation is that assessments will, as often as possible, be performance based where students have an

opportunity to apply knowledge and skills in a realistic and credible environment.

    a. A major goal should be to enable the student to construct meaning from their learning through assessments.

    b. Major assessments such as a program portfolio or capstone project should be defined so as to be included in the respective courses and this information will be identified in the fourth column of the Program Development form and third column of the Course Development form. Curriculum committees should prepare common rubrics and define performance criteria for major assignments so that all students will be held to the same performance standard and data can be aggregated at multiple levels for the particular outcome. The method for data collection and use will be described in the last column of both forms.

    c. Non-major assessments such as quizzes or performance assessments will be listed in the third column of the Course Development form. The goal is to establish a system where all learning outcomes are assessed and a satisfactory level of competency defined for all students.

New Course Development

1. Course writers and instructional designers will use the Course Development form as a guide for course writing under the supervision of the respective program director. The completed form (one for each course) will serve as a curricular map of learning outcomes, assessments, and learning activities. It is a draft and subject to adjustments and minor changes as the course is being written.
2. Program directors and faculty curriculum committees will be certain that each learning objective or outcome can be mapped to a learning activity and performance assessment, data is generated and collected, and that this information is archived for future reference.
3. Program managers must ensure that during course revisions all learning outcomes are addressed as needed and that the program and course development forms are updated.
4. Program revisions should be guided by the Program and Course Development forms and any changes annotated accordingly.
5. Course writers cannot delete, change, or add learning outcomes or major assessments without coordination with the program director or faculty curriculum committee.

New Program Assessment Planning

Data collected from courses should provide a valuable source of information on how well students/graduates attain the prescribed program and university learning outcomes. Program directors and unit assessment coordinators should use this direct assessment data along with indirect data sources such as entrance, end-of-course, end-of-program, faculty, alumni, and employer surveys to continually monitor the effectiveness pulse of the program and unit. The program assessment plan should address the following points:

- Are effectiveness data gathered and analyzed to ensure student learning outcomes are met?
- Are the public and other stakeholders informed of how well students are learning?
- Do faculty play a major role in the assessment process?
- Is there an annual review of analyzed data that engages faculty and stakeholders?
- Are data from changes collected and included in the review process?

Date of Current Version

Program Development for …………………… (program name)

#	Learning Outcome	Course Title	Major Assessments	Data Collection and Use

Date of Current Version

Course Development for ………………………… (course title)

#	Learning Outcomes	Level of Teaching			Assessment	Workshop Number	Learning Activity	Data Collection and Use
		Introduce	Learn	Apply				

C. Checklist for Program Effectiveness Assessment:

1. **What are your graduates expected to be (character), know (knowledge), and do (skills): the program and IWU mission learning outcomes/objectives?**
   a. **Can you map the program and mission learning outcomes to course objectives?**

   b. **Do you have assessments with common rubrics that demonstrate that your students achieve your learning outcomes?**

   c. **Have you developed data/evidence collection plans that include the development of data bases for effectiveness results?**

2. **Do you have an assessment plan?**

   a. **Does it gather and analyze data to provide evidence and thereby determine if you are effective?**

   b. **Do you have an annual program review?**

   c. **Do your faculty and staff play a major role in the assessment plan and review process?**

   d. **Are your stakeholders (constituents) part of the review?**

   e. **How do you inform the public and other stakeholders about what and how well your students are learning?**

D. Checklist for Administrative Effectiveness:

1. **What are the primary services that you provide to CAPS?**

   a. **What are the measures of effectiveness for those services?**

   b. **Can you demonstrate how effectively you provide those services?**

   c. **Are there other assessments that you need to help you determine your effectiveness?**

2. **Do you have an assessment plan?**

   a. **Does it gather and analyze data to provide evidence and thereby determine if you are effective?**

   b. **Do you have a regular review?**

   c. **Does your staff play a major role in the assessment plan and review process?**

   d. **Are your stakeholders (constituents) part of the review?**

   e. **How do you inform the public and other stakeholders about results of your effectiveness review?**

E. Assessment Plans

Assessment plans should be based on the information described in the program and administrative unit check lists. Here is an outline of an assessment plan:

Program or Administrative Unit:
Date:
Goals (aligned with University Strategies and Mission):
Review period: Annual (i.e. June each year)
Listing of types of stakeholders for annual review:

Program Learning Outcomes or Administrative Objectives	Assessment(s) and Corresponding Courses	How Data is Gathered, Analyzed, and Presented	Any Changes Resulting from Previous Reviews	Comments

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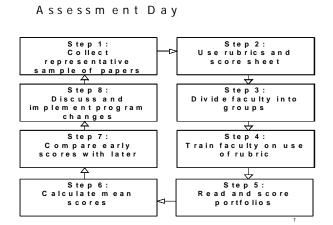
How to Prepare and Process Data

A. Student Artifacts, Work Samples, or Portfolios

➤ Authentic assessment: Student products directly tied to objectives

➤ Application of skills in real world

➤ Demonstrates actual learning

➤ Documents student growth

➤ Demonstrates value of the degree

➤ Indicates areas of program improvement

How to Develop

1. **Set program objectives:** What do you want students to learn as a result of participating in this program?
2. **Design course assignments to measure these program objectives:** Aim for one good assignment for each program objective. These will become MANDATORY assignments that all students must complete.
3. **Build in pre/post measures for some of the objectives:** Some objectives (eg. critical thinking, communication, information literacy) can be measured early in the program and then measured again later using a different assignment, to assess growth in student learning.
4. **Design a rubric (grading sheet) to evaluate student work:** How will you know if students have achieved the objective? What specific elements will you look for that will indicate that learning was achieved? Provide a copy of the rubric to the students **before** they start the assignment. Some examples of rubrics follow.
5. **Train faculty and students on the importance of authentic assessments:** Give both students and faculty a Table of Contents indicating what assignments/artifacts are expected. Motivate them by telling them about the advantages of having a professional portfolio to show current or prospective employers.
6. **Implement the assessment system and follow up, making adjustments to ensure validity and reliability.**
7. **Provide some checkpoints:** About midway into the program, have faculty collect artifacts and make sure items are being included. This can be worth a few points in students' grades for that course. Do this again at the end. Faculty are not re-grading the artifacts at this time, just checking to make sure items are being included.

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B. How to Evaluate Artifacts, Portfolios, or Major Assignments

Assessment Day

Step 1: Collect representative sample of papers	**Step 2:** Use rubrics and score sheet
Step 8: Discuss and implement program changes	**Step 3:** Divide faculty into groups
Step 7: Compare early scores with later	**Step 4:** Train faculty on use of rubric
Step 6: Calculate mean scores	**Step 5:** Read and score portfolios

The purpose of the review at Assessment Day should be to assess the inter-rater reliability of the scorers and discuss the effectiveness of the artifact or particular assignment in assessing student performance.

On Assessment Day, faculty meet to score the elements of the portfolio or assignment without knowledge of the previous scoring by faculty. They are divided into groups of three. Each group evaluates student progress on one or two objectives. They are instructed to skim each paper, make no comments on the papers, and record a score on each paper according to the rubric for that objective. To enhance reliability, the teams spend about 20 minutes reading the first few papers together, discussing how the rubric ought to be used. Then individuals score papers on their own using a scoring sheet. After scoring each paper they place their initials in the top corner and pass the paper on. Therefore all three faculty scored the same papers.

The experience is a generally cordial one. Faculty gain insights by seeing the products of students in courses outside their areas. There is a break after two hours where faculty have good conversation around a nice luncheon. They spend a total of three hours reading papers.

The Assessment Day facilitator calculates a mean score for each paper and compares that score with the original score. The Assessment Day facilitator shares the overall results at a faculty meeting wherein they discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the assessment and develop strategies to improve. Significant scoring discrepancies between original faculty scoring and Assessment Day scores are shared with individual faculty and program directors. Additional professional development should be considered when faculty demonstrate a weakness that is in need of remediation.

C. Inter-Rater Reliability

There are several methods that can be used to calculate inter-rater reliability. Academic leaders are encouraged to periodically (at least once every year) determine the inter-rater reliability of their major assessments. Since we rely on adjuncts (practitioner faculty) for much of our teaching, it is critical that we can demonstrate that our major assignments are consistently and accurately assessed. Poor inter-rater reliability scores could indicate a need for professional development in using rubrics and scoring. Low scores could also indicate that the rubric in question lacks clarity, sufficient detail, or is ambiguous. Results of inter-rater reliability assessments should be included in annual reports. Here are several sources of methods that can be used to calculate inter-rater reliability:

- Inter-Rater Reliability Calculator (http://www.med-ed-online.org/rating/reliability.html)
- Reliability Analysis (http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/PA765/reliab.htm) which includes step-by-step instructions on how to use SPSS to calculate scores.

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D. Sample Rubrics

	Critical Thinking	Christian World View	Communication
5	Frequent analysis of issues Challenges assumptions Thorough analysis	Clearly demonstrates an understanding of a Christian perspective. (Frequent references to biblical principles)	No distracting spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. Very well organized Meaning is clear
4	General connections, analysis and identification of issues	Frequently refers to a Christian perspective. Student has a reasonable understanding of Christian perspective. (Some reference to biblical principles.)	Less than one spelling, punctuation and grammatical error per page. Fairly well organized A few places where meaning is a little unclear.
3	Some analysis Vague identification of issue	Makes some mention of a Christian perspective. Student indicates some understanding of a Christian perspective. (Biblical principles referred to somewhat.)	Most spelling, punctuation, and grammar are correct, though some errors remain. Organization may detract from meaning. Some places unclear.
2	Incomplete analysis Fragmented understanding of issue	Demonstrates little understanding of a Christian perspective. (Biblical principles hardly or not mentioned.)	Spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors are distracting. Organization and meaning unclear.
1	Vague analysis Basic lack of understanding	Makes no reference to a Christian perspective. Student does not appear to have an understanding of a Christian perspective. (Biblical principles not mentioned.)	Many spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, making reader unable to follow ideas. (More than five errors per page.) Lacks organization. Meaning is very unclear.
Score			

**IWU RNBS Completion Program
Assessment Day 2007 Scoring Sheet
NUR 332 Client Assessment Paper**

Name of Evaluator _____

RNBS Outcome #1 Students should apply relevant theories and research from nursing, life sciences, social sciences, the humanities and Christian thought to the practice of nursing.

Instructions: Skim each paper and assign a score according to how well it fulfills the objective.

Outcome Criteria: 85% of a random sampling of the portfolio inclusions for NUR 332 will apply relevant theories and research from nursing, life sciences, social sciences, the humanities and Christian thought to the practice of nursing as scored by an Assessment Committee. (Three and four on the rubric represent proficiency or above.)

4 = Exemplary   Does an exemplary job of applying relevant theories and research from nursing, life sciences, social sciences, the humanities and Christian thought to the practice of nursing.

3 = Proficient   Adequately applies relevant theories and research from nursing, life sciences, social sciences, the humanities and Christian thought to the practice of nursing.

2 = Marginal   Marginally applies relevant theories and research from nursing, life sciences, social sciences, the humanities and Christian thought to the practice of nursing.

1 = Deficient   Does not apply relevant theories and research from nursing, life sciences, social sciences, the humanities and Christian thought to the practice of nursing.

Paper Number	Score Application of theories/research	Comments (Optional)

APS BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT
RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT
COURSES: MGT 425, ADM 510, ADM 525

OUTCOME TO BE MEASURED

"Students should demonstrate an understanding of decision making from a Christian worldview."

WHERE OUTCOME APPEARS IN ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTS

As Outcome #1 in all Undergraduate and Graduate degree programs

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PROCEDURE

BSBA, BSM, BSA, BSBIS PROGRAMS*: "When a sample of 50 MGT 425 papers are reviewed by three business faculty, 90% will demonstrate an understanding of decision making from a Christian worldview."*

MBA PROGRAM*: "When a sample of 50 MGT 510 papers are reviewed by three business faculty, 90% will demonstrate an understanding of decision making from a Christian worldview."*

MSM PROGRAM*: "When a sample of 50 MGT 525 papers are reviewed by three business faculty, 90% will demonstrate an understanding of decision making from a Christian worldview."*

GRADING RUBRIC

CRITERIA	POINTS AWARDED (circle one)
Clearly demonstrates an understanding of a Christian perspective. (Frequent references to biblical principles)	**5**
Frequently refers to a Christian perspective. Student has a reasonable understanding of Christian perspective. (Some biblical references.)	**4**
Makes some mention of a Christian perspective. Student indicates some understanding of a Christian perspective. (Biblical principles referred to somewhat.)	**3**
Demonstrates little understanding of a Christian perspective. (Biblical principles hardly or not mentioned.)	**2**
Makes no reference to a Christian perspective. Student does not appear to have an understanding of a Christian perspective. (Biblical principles not mentioned.)	**1**

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E. Pre/Post Testing

Why Use Testing?

Objective tests should not be the sole means of student learning however they do provide direct measures of effectiveness. Many students do not do well on objective tests. However, testing provides a good balance to other assessment measures (surveys, portfolio, and papers). An identical test can be given at the beginning and end of a program to clearly measure what a student learned as a result of attending classes. This is particularly useful in areas where there is specific content (rather than skills and dispositions).

A test at the beginning of the program could be used to indicate areas where students need special attention and other areas where they already have competency. This can inform our curriculum, to build programs that better meet students' needs.

A test at the end of the program could be used to assess learning outcomes. It will point us to areas where students need more instruction and show us what we are already doing well. If we use a test that is also used at other schools (a standardized test), we can verify the validity of the IWU degree. However, such standardized tests may not cover many of the specifics in our curriculum, and therefore, may not be very useful.

We do not recommend using a minimum score on a comprehensive examination as a graduation requirement for students, unless they are tested in a similar way throughout the curriculum. In such a situation, students would need to be informed at the beginning of the program that such an exam will occur and a minimum score will be expected for graduation.

How to Design a Good Test

1. **List the specific content you want to test.** What are the core ideas, concepts, facts, etc. that students need to know in order to perform well?
2. **Decide at what level of competency you are expecting students to perform.** Students at an Associate's level should be able to recall certain facts and understand some basic ideas/concepts. Students at a Bachelor's level should begin to integrate and synthesize material and be able to apply to a real world setting. Students at a graduate level should have well-developed critical thinking and application skills. This should influence the way the question is written.
3. **Decide on the number of questions in each content area.** This should accurately reflect your program content. Don't ask too many questions in an area that is not emphasized in your program.

4. **Write clear, concise questions.** Ideally, there should be four choices in a multiple-choice test: One clearly correct answer, one clearly incorrect answer that can be easily eliminated, and two others that are close but not exactly correct. Get all the faculty involved to submit questions in their areas of expertise. Keep these all in a test bank.
5. **Peer review the questions.** Faculty should review questions indicating degree of difficulty, suitability of all the choices, the clarity and relevancy of the question. Take care to only include questions that are actually covered in the curriculum.
6. **Construct the test.** According to your plan of content, number of questions in each area, and degree of difficulty (your test map), construct a test. More than one version of the test is preferable.
7. **Pilot the test.** Choose a class to take the test and get their feedback.
8. **Implement the test.** Choose a cross section of student groups to take the test. Include some groups at the beginning of their program and some at the end. Get a representative sampling of class locations.

Analyzing Test Results

1. **Score tests using a scanner.** Most scanning programs (such as Remark), allow you to analyze each question: How many students missed it and what answers did each choose?
2. **Analyze scores by pre or post test, by group and by location.** Find mean scores for all pre-tests, all post tests and analyze by location. Consider the test items that the high performing students missed: were those items poorly worded?
3. **List the strong and weak content areas.** What do students already know well when they enter? What do they know well when they leave? Where is the greatest growth in learning?
4. **Note location differences.** Are there locations where student learning is not as great as others? Are there locations where student learning is particularly high?

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F. Surveys We have two survey systems (Class Climate and Vovici) that we can provide to programs or administrative units seeking indirect data for a particular aspect of their operations. Each has advantages such as Class Climate has a Blackboard connection. We currently use surveys for entrance, end-of-course, faculty end-of-course, end-of-program, student satisfaction, alumni, and employer surveys.

1. Entrance
Paper survey using Vovici is currently administered to all students. It can be used by program directors to assess program learning outcomes. This could provide insights into what student already know.

2. End-of-Course
End-of-Course Surveys (EOC) are used primarily for faculty development and program assessment. It can help us verify consistency in program delivery across all sites. It can also help us assess program outcomes by asking students if they are actually using what they have learned. Surveys may be administered on site or online. Currently we use Class Climate, an online survey company which hosts our online surveys. All online and some on site students complete their surveys online, utilizing a link in Blackboard. Some on site students still receive a paper survey but we are in the process of converting all EOC surveys to online using the Blackboard link. Faculty may also design and implement their own class evaluation tool for their own development.

3. Faculty End of Course
Currently used in some programs (Vovici). This can provide some indirect measures of how faculty viewed the program, curriculum, and support.

4. End of program
Used in some programs to assess student satisfaction and program effectiveness. Could be used with the Entrance survey as a post-test of program learning outcomes.

5. Student Satisfaction Survey
All CAPS students are surveyed each spring (usually May or June) and that information is published in a report that is available on the Assessment web site. Additionally, that information is included in the annual CAPS assessment report that is published by August 1.

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6. Alumni Surveys

Alums have some valuable information about the impact of the program. Surveying them a few years after graduation can yield some good insights on the value of the program. When combined with other, more direct measures of learning outcomes (papers, tests, etc), alumni surveys can be a good assessment tool.

Developing an Alumni Survey

a. **Decide what information you want and how you will use it.** Avoid asking unnecessary questions, making the questionnaire too long and complex. A good rule of thumb: Don't ask if you really don't want to know or if you can't (or won't) do anything about it.

b. **Be sure to ask if specific program objectives have been achieved.** You may want to reword your program objectives to remove confusing professional jargon. But be sure to find out if alums feel they have the learning outcomes you want them to have.

c. **After asking specific questions about the quality and impact of the program, ask some general satisfaction questions.** Often an alum will have complaints about little details, but be generally very satisfied with the program. A good indicator of satisfaction is the question: "Would you recommend this program to a friend?"

d. **Avoid "double-barrel" questions.** Only ask one question at a time. For example the question: "Were classrooms tidy and well-heated?" doesn't tell you if the problem is the heat or the tidiness.

e. **Only ask the demographic information that is vital.** Respondents don't want to give away their identity.

f. **Leave plenty of space for comments.** Most respondents will not write anything, but a few will have very valuable comments.

g. **Get approval for your survey from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.** This office will assist you in putting the survey into a form that can be scanned (if mailed) or launched online.

h. **Consider launching the survey online.** We will place your survey on line and send email invitations.

i. **Limit the survey to about four pages.** When it is printed front to back, it looks like two pages and not too daunting to the respondent.

j. **You can choose to send the survey by email or by mail (paper).** If you choose to send email then you will need to provide us with a list of email addresses and names.

k. **Include a cover letter.** This should be written and signed by a program director, dean or vice president. Assure respondents their answers will remain anonymous. Tell them the results will be used to verify the value of their degree and inform program improvements. Make them feel their responses are very important. Include a reasonable due date to return the survey (about 2-3 weeks).

l. **Get a list of alumni from Advancement.** Have them send you an Excel spreadsheet. You can send it to the Post Office to have envelopes printed, or have the Survey and Assessment Office send email invitations with a link to an online survey.

m. **If using a paper survey include a Business Reply Envelope.** This is more economical than a self-addressed stamped envelope which probably will not be used.

n. **Get employer information separately.** Consider including a separate post card on which respondents submit their employer information and give consent to contact their employer. If using an online survey, send out a separate email asking for employer information. This keeps the alumni survey anonymous.

o. **Consider your budget.** Utilizing an online survey is very cost effective and has a better response rate than paper surveys. But if you do not have good email addresses for your alumni, you may need to mail a paper survey. It may be wiser to survey a random sampling, rather than all the graduates. It may not be cost-effective to send a follow up mailing for a paper survey, while follow up emails are free for an online survey.

p. **Online surveys, with two follow-up emails, have a response rate of 40-50%.**

Analyzing data for Alumni Surveys

a. **Online Surveys will automatically tabulate results.** The Survey and Assessment Office will send you a URL for a report that is automatically updated as new surveys are completed.

b. **Paper Surveys must be scanned.** Our system (Remark) will let you save the data as SPSS or Excel if you prefer.

c. **Summarize data.** Run frequencies only on nominal data (gender, graduation year, etc). Use mean scores and standard deviations to describe interval level data (attitude items). Running frequencies for every variable produces a bulky, less meaningful report.

d. **Use crosstabs, t-tests, and ANOVAs to test relevant hypotheses.** For example, are attitudes of later graduates different than attitudes of early graduates?

e. **Keep your report simple.** Directors, deans, and vice presidents just want to know, "Have we done a good job?"

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7. Employer Surveys

Surveying the employers of our graduates helps us to understand ways in which students' educational experience impacts their job performance. Taken together with other more direct measures (papers, tests, etc.), employer surveys can give us valuable information about learning outcomes.

There are a few options on the format for an employer study. The survey may be a mailed questionnaire or personal interview. Also a group of employers can be gathered over lunch for a focus group interview.

There are important ethical/legal guidelines for employer surveys. If you are asking about a specific graduate, you must have that graduate's permission to survey his/her employer. One way to do this is to have the graduate complete a post card with employer information and a signature giving the university permission to contact that employer. You do not need such permission when generally surveying the employers of several graduates. In this case, there must be no information about the specific job performance of any one graduate.

The procedures for developing and implementing the employer survey are similar to those guidelines already presented for the alumni survey. The alumni office has some information about the employment of recent graduates. However, the most reliable way to get a mailing list is to ask the graduates themselves.

Another approach that has worked very well is to hold a focus group with several employers over lunch. Prepare questions in advance and tape record responses. Be prepared to listen and not get defensive about the program!

Five Year Program Alumni and Employer Survey Review Schedule

College of Adult and Professional Studies

FY 2009-2010	FY2010-2011	FY 2011-2012	FY 2012-2013	FY 2013-2014
MSM BSBIS ASCJ BSCJ School Counseling	BSM ASB ASM MED Addictions Counseling	MBA BS-Marketing Ed.S. DOL	BSA TTT ELMO/ELMS RNBS	PLP BSBA ASA ASCIT Ministries Nursing (CCNE)

2014-2015
BS Addictions Counseling

Yearly
>Annual Program Report
>Department discussion about assessment data collected and how it should be used for program improvement.

Every 5 Years
>Complete program review (self-study) including:
>>Alumni Survey
>>Employer Survey (or focus group luncheon)
>>Review of a representative sampling of student work

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Annual Assessment Reports
College of Adult and Professional Studies

Associate/Assistant Deans will submit an annual assessment for each of their schools and programs by July 14 of each year to the Associate Dean for Institutional Effectiveness. The format for those reports should include sufficient information so that the reader can see the annual assessment/change process that involves appropriate stakeholders and is evidence based. The Associate Dean for Institutional Effectiveness will consolidate all reports and prepare an annual CAPS Assessment Report for the Vice President of CAPS by August 1.

A good example of an effective assessment report is from the M.Ed. program in the School of Educational Leadership:

IWU Education Unit and Program Annual Assessment Summary Report
2008-2009

Master of Education Program

Program Change	Data/Analysis	Need	Action and Stakeholder Involvement	Timeline	Reference Documentation
Title of the program change or phrase	*What led you to believe or know that there was a problem (use attachments for details as needed)?*	*Clearly define the need/problem and any relevant information (use attachments if necessary)*	*What action or solution was selected; who are the stakeholders that were involved?*	*Steps to be taken for implementation; when was it implemented?*	*Type of meeting – directors, faculty, etc-- and the date of the minutes.*
M.Ed. Disposition Assessments	1. An analysis of the data on the Disposition Scoring using portfolio and direct assessment tools yields average scores in the 3.00 – 3.46	There is a need for assessment of dispositions from more individuals just than the Instructor/Advisor and the Candidate.	M.Ed. faculty and administrators decided to include the Mentor/Observer and the EDU 556 professor when assessing	M.Ed. faculty and administrators will imbed an assessment tool in the course materials of the 559 course and the 556 course. It will also be	M.Ed. faculty meeting minutes dated June 24, 2009.

	range.		dispositions of the Candidates along with the Candidate and Instructor/Advisor.	imbedded in the mentor/observer handbook. These individuals will begin the process with the July 1, 2009 cohort starts.	
M.Ed. EDU 551 course on instruction; change of course materials	2. Candidates indicated in End of Course Surveys that the text for EDU 551 was not meeting their needs. Faculty also expressed this in the Faculty Feedback Forms.	There is a need to secure a graduate level text to address Instructional Approaches.	M.Ed. faculty and administrators decided to search for a new text and update the Instructional Approaches course, EDU 551.	The lead course writers for onsite and online delivery, Dr. Dave Arnold and Dr. Stan Frame, were contracted to choose a text and update the course materials (5/17/08 – 9/14/08). The text was approved by the M.Ed. faculty July 30, 2008. The rewrite was approved by the M.Ed. faculty September 24, 2008.	M.Ed. faculty meeting minutes dated July 30, 2008. M.Ed. faculty meeting minutes dated September 24, 2008.

Resources

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The Higher Learning Commission is the regional accreditor for Indiana Wesleyan University.   http://www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org/