

# COLLEGE ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Assessed Year: 2015-2016

*College: College of Arts and Sciences*

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**ASSESSMENT**

INDIANA UNIVERSITY–PURDUE UNIVERSITY FORT WAYNE



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# SECTION 1: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR ALL DEPARTMENTS/PROGRAMS

## Section 1: Summary of Findings for all Departments/Programs

In fall, 2016, departments and certificate programs in COAS were asked to complete assessment reports for the 2015-2016 academic year using protocols adopted by the Assessment Council (SD 15-6) in September of 2015. The Chair of the COAS Assessment Committee solicited assessment reports from chairs and directors on September 16<sup>th</sup> with a deadline of November 11<sup>th</sup>. At its meeting on November 16<sup>th</sup>, the COAS Assessment Committee agreed to extend the deadline to November 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Chair notified chairs and directors whose departments or programs had not yet submitted a report. Eight departments submitted reports for baccalaureate degree programs and one department submitted a report for a graduate program. Two certificate-granting programs submitted reports (Table 1). Waivers, approved by the Director of Assessment, were granted to four departments and one program, while three other departments and one program requested extensions. During fall, 2016 only several departments submitted reports that were aligned with the scoring rubric. Therefore, the committee did not calculate mean scores for each metric in the rubric. However, a summary of the text from the scoring rubrics is presented below in Section 2.

Table 1. Submission of reports to COAS Assessment Committee during 2015 and 2016

<b>Department Program</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>Department Program</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
ANTH	W	R	MATH	R	R
BIOL	R	W	PHIL	R	W
BIOL Grad	N	W	PHYS	E	R
CHEM	R	R	POLS	E	R
COM	R	R	PSY	R	R
COM Grad	N	R	SOC	W	R
CSD	E	R	GENST <sup>1</sup>	E	
ENGL	R	R	GERN	W	W
ENGL Grad	R	R	INTL	R	R
GEO	W	R	LGBT	R	W
HIST	R	W	PACS	N	W
ILCS	W	W	WOST	N	W

R= Report submitted; N= Report not submitted; E= Extension requested; W= Waiver approved;  
<sup>1</sup>Joined COAS in 2015

## SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

### Section 2: Recommendations for Academic Departments

Two members of the COAS Assessment Committee reviewed each report. Reviewers used a modified scoring rubric presented in SD 15-6, Appendix D and each pair collaborated to create one rubric with scores and comments for each department/program report. The comments and recommendations were transcribed to a response letter that was sent to the chairs and directors. Because the 2015-2016 academic year was the second opportunity for departments and programs to use the new report format, review by members of the COAS committee was made easier as they could more strictly use the associated rubric for evaluation. However, during the review in fall, 2016 it was discovered that the report format outline sent to chairs and directors by the COAS committee was not specifically aligned with that of SD 15-6, Appendix B. The format outline will be edited in the solicitation letter for the 2016-2017 reporting year, so that it is correct according to the senate document and so that the department report format will be the same as the scoring rubric. The response letter template to chairs and directors will also be revised so that it is better aligned with the new scoring rubric.

The COAS Assessment Committee provided formative feedback and recommendations to each academic department and certificate program in the form of a response letter. Content in the letter came from comments that were made on the scoring rubric. The Chair of the Assessment Committee sent letters to respective departments and programs during the first week of January, 2017. Copies of the letters are appended to the current document, and the scoring rubrics are on file in the Office of Assessment. The following is a summary of responses and recommendations made to departments and programs.

#### **Summary of Results**

Seven departments and two certificate programs submitted reports for baccalaureate programs, and one department submitted a report for a graduate program. Several departments and certificate programs were granted waivers or extensions of the report deadline due to the disruption of realignment and/or changes in chairs during 2015-2016. Although improvements were made in adopting the new report format (SD 15-6) during the second year of its use, some departments did not adhere to the new report format, and/or did not appear to understand how to satisfy the content requested by the new reporting requirements.

## SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

### Baccalaureate Programs

#### Section I: Clearly Stated Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Assessment reports from five baccalaureate programs and one report from a certificate program provided SLOs that met the basic expectations reported in SD 15-6. Recommendations from the COAS committee to these departments and programs included, 1) comparisons of SLOs with those recommended by national professional associations, and 2) including SLOs for concentrations in the presentation of the assessment plan. Reports from two departments and one program presented SLOs that did not meet expectations. Recommendations for these departments and program, included, 1) better alignment of the SLO with the strategy used to assess them, and 2) Revise SLOs, so that they can be assessed quantitatively. One department submitted a report that provided assessment results from a single, introductory course, rather than an assessment of the degree program.

#### Section II: Alignment with IPFW Baccalaureate Framework

Assessment reports from five departments and two programs met the expectations of alignment between program SLOs and the IPFW Baccalaureate Framework. Minor revisions were recommended to four of these departments. Expectations of alignment between SLOs and the framework were not met by one department and extensive revisions were recommended. One department did not address this section.

#### Section III: Student Learning Outcomes Mapped to Learning Experiences in the Academic Program

Assessment reports from three departments and two programs met the expectations of mapping SLOs to learning experiences in the program. Recommendations for these departments included 1) identifying upper-level electives where SLOs are met, and 2) adding additional courses that might help satisfy achievement SLOs. Reports from three departments did not meet expectations for curricular mapping of SLOs. Recommendations from the committee for these departments included, 1) completing the map across the curriculum by including upper-level courses and learning activities, and 2) including more specificity to mapping by indicating the progression of student learning outcomes throughout the degree program. One department did not map SLOs in its report.

## SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

### **Section IV: Systematic Method for Measuring Progress Toward Accomplishment of SLOs**

Evaluations of assessment plans and results vary considerably among departments and programs. Those details are reported in the committee response letters to departments and programs that are appended to this report. Common recommendations from the committee included, 1) providing a stronger match between SLOs and assessment measures, 2) using both direct and indirect measures for each SLO, 3) improving the analysis of data, 4) enhancing the credibility of assessing artifacts (e.g. how classes/activities might have affected results), 5) creating and/or improving scoring rubrics, 6) using justifiable benchmarks for interpretation, and 7) including historical results of assessments.

### **Section V and Section VI. Reporting Results – Communication and Stakeholder Involvement**

Of the ten departments and programs submitting reports in 2016, only two specifically addressed the process of communicating results of assessment within and/or outside of the department. One department reported results to other departments that require their courses in the degree program. Only one department reported communication with stakeholders outside of the department through its Community Engagement Committee. All other departments were encouraged to identify their stakeholders and to consider communicating through channels, such as community advisory boards and alumni associations.

### **Section VII: Use of Results for Programmatic Change to Improve Student Learning, Achievement and Success**

Of the nine departments and programs that submitted reports, three departments did not address “programmatic change” and one program was unable to because of the lack of data. Four departments adequately reported how assessment results had prompted changes in program curricula, while one report addressed changes to a single course.

### **Graduate Programs**

One of three departments that offer masters degrees submitted an assessment report. The committee found that, student learning outcomes were clear and specific, but needed clarification on how they are mapped to specific courses and how students are expected to accomplish SLOs as they move through the curriculum. SLOs were clearly linked to individual measures and most are assessed using at least one direct measure. Desired results are stated and the data-collection process appears sound. Results suggest that students are consistently

## SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS

achieving the SLOs. Interpretations of results appeared to be sound, but were not reviewed in context to historical data. The current report mentions a number of ways the program reaches out to alumni and publicizes the successes of the department. However, the committee recommended identifying stakeholders external to IPFW who might benefit from the report. A change in the administration of the M.A. Exit Survey resulted in an improved response rate. Students expressed concern regarding availability of some course offerings. Thus, the department has implemented a revised rotation of course offerings in an effort to allay this concern.

## SECTION 3: RESULTS OF ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PRIOR YEAR FINDINGS

### Section 3: Results of Activities Related to Prior Year Findings

Results from student learning assessments are reported in the individual reports appended. Four departments reported assessment results that prompted changes in program curricula. However, only one department reported results of assessment to evaluate the impact of these changes.

#### **Chemistry, B.S.**

The Committee identified student performance on the written presentations in CHM 497 to be problematic and suggested a modification to advising practices within the Department to encourage that both ENG W131 and ENG W233 be taken as soon as can be scheduled. However, no metrics were analyzed for the 2015-2016 report that would assess improvement in the written presentations in CHM 497. The department does not expect the impact of this change to be realized through assessment for a few years.

#### **INTL, Certificate**

In INTL I200 during 2014-2015, 100% of the assessed artifacts scored 2 or higher, with an average score of 3.37 for all three of the program goals. In 2013-2014, 83.3% of assessment artifacts scored 2 or higher. Some of this improvement simply reflects that the classes in the 2014-2015 year had a greater number of exceptional students: some of these students have gone on to top-shelf law schools, graduate schools, etc. Likewise, classes in 2013-2014 may have had a couple of unusually unsuccessful students who skewed the average results. This argues for a multi-year approach to assessment data rather than looking only at an individual year in isolation.

However, the majority of the improved results in 2014-2015 reflect the active revision of course assignments by INTL I200 instructors after the previous year's assessment. Some faculty who previously had not used rubrics for INTL I200 assignments developed them—and importantly, provided those rubrics to students in advance so that there was no ambiguity in assignment parameters nor grading methodology. As a result, faculty and students were more likely to be on the same page with regard to course expectations.



## SECTION 3: RESULTS OF ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PRIOR YEAR FINDINGS

### **Psychology, B.A.**

Based on last year's assessment findings, the department planned to enhance students' development of their career plans by establishing a requirement for graduating seniors to meet with a Career Services counselor. In addition, we planned to request a 0.5 professional advisor for freshman and sophomore majors so that faculty can focus their advising efforts on juniors and seniors, including advising related to career paths. We have successfully accomplished both of these goals.

### **English, M.A.**

A change in the administration of the M.A. Exit Survey resulted in an improved response rate. Students expressed concern regarding availability of some course offerings. Thus, the department has implemented a revised rotation of course offerings in an effort to allay this concern.

## SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

### Section 4: Conclusions and Future Directions

During fall, 2016 eight of fifteen departments submitted reports for baccalaureate degree programs, while, one of three departments submitted a report for a graduate program. Two of six certificate-granting programs submitted reports. Waivers were granted to four departments and one program, while three other departments and one program requested extensions. In fall 2016, there were several departments and programs that were suspended, eliminated, or merged with other departments. Not only did these changes affect the ability of departments and programs to submit reports in 2016, they are also expected to be a challenge for conducting and reporting on assessment in 2016-2017.

In general, the quality of reports submitted in 2016 was good, providing solid evidence for a commitment to assessment by departments. A few departments were advised to write more effective SLOs and accurately map them to courses in the program. Several departments were advised to document how results of assessment have led (or expected to lead) to changes in curriculum. Most departments did not have a process whereby assessment results are communicated with “external” stakeholders. Only a few departments reported results from activities that were recommended from previous assessment results.

The committee expects future reports to be organized as per SD 15-6. Reports from some departments and programs were not formatted as requested, nor were aligned with the scoring rubric used by the COAS Assessment Committee. For the 2016-2017 academic year, the committee will clarify expectations in the solicitation letter, provide a report template, and return reports that have serious formatting issues. The new assessment reporting process has been in place for the past two years and it is necessary for the Assessment Committee to have reports with a consistent format that is specifically aligned with the scoring rubric presented in SD 15-6. The committee recommends providing an instructional meeting to explain the process for chairs and directors, either late in spring or early in fall. The COAS Committee will work with the Office of Assessment to arrange these sessions.

During the review in fall, 2016 it was discovered that the report format outline sent to chairs and directors by the COAS committee was not specifically aligned with that of SD 15-6, Appendix B. It was also discovered that the College scoring rubric was not consistent with that of SD 15-6. The format outline for department reports and scoring rubric used by the COAS committee will be revised for 2016-2017, so that all documents are aligned. The response letter template to chairs and directors will also be revised slightly so that it is better aligned with the

## SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

senate document and revised scoring rubric. Additionally, in an effort to provide more consistent response letters among departments and programs, the committee will work to better standardize protocols for completing responses in the scoring rubric.

As the current documents and reporting formats presented in SD 15-6 were designed for baccalaureate programs, the COAS Committee recommends that different requirements and report formats be created specifically for the three graduate programs in COAS. Until then, the committee recommends permitting graduate programs to submit reports without the constraint of the current format.

# ATTACHMENTS

## Attachments

1. Attached, are copies of response letters to chairs and program directors, copies of rubrics used to score assessment reports, copies of assessment reports, and copies of communication for waivers.