

**UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT OFFICE
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
ANNUAL REPORT 2000-2001**

OVERVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTS

Mission Statement

The University Assessment Office is responsible for conducting a variety of assessment activities related to student learning outcomes using qualitative and quantitative research techniques, providing support services to other units engaged in such assessment, and sharing best practices for and results of assessment activities.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: To plan, implement, analyze, summarize results, and write reports for institution-wide surveys including, but not limited to: CIRP (Cooperative Institutional Research Program) - entering freshmen; Second Year Student Survey – sophomores; CSS (College Student Survey) – seniors

Goal 2: To serve as co-researchers on select assessment projects of college and university programs, such as: Foundations of Inquiry, General Education, University College

Goal 3: To advise faculty and staff on purpose, design, methodology, and use of formative assessment projects at all levels of the university, in cooperation with the Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT), the Office of the Provost, and the office of Institutional Research:

- a. Classroom level assessment
- b. Departmental projects
- c. Interdisciplinary approaches
- d. Student affairs and developmental learning outcomes
- e. Accreditation activities

Goal 4: To engage in outreach activities, including:

- a. Publish and distribute widely an assessment newsletter at least four times per year
- b. Create and maintain an assessment web site
- c. Co-sponsor workshops on assessment project development and implementation
- d. Present results of assessment research to appropriate campus constituencies
- e. Manage an annual grant program for assessment project as funds are available

Goal 5: To work with other units to increase cooperation and coordination of assessment on campus.

- a. Serve on appropriate campus committees related to assessment
- b. Disseminate data from assessment projects to campus constituencies

- Goal 6.** To maintain a level of expertise in higher education assessment through staff development activities.
- Read current literature in the area of higher education assessment
 - Attend appropriate assessment conferences and skills workshops, as budget permits
 - Present and/or publish assessment-related research in regional or national conferences and publications

Significant Outcomes in 2000-2001

(Please see the detailed and complete list of UAO services and activities for 2000-2001 in the Appendix after the Summary portion of the annual report.)

1. A major outcome this past year was expansion of UAO services to the campus community and for assessment activities (e.g., more useful newsletter, a new UAO web site, sharing of data, consulting). These outcomes support all goals.
2. Another significant accomplishment was our involvement in the assessment of the General Education curriculum. *Expand* This service work supports goal #2.
3. Involvement in two national pilot projects: the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Your First College Year (YFCY) survey. *Expand* This national benchmarking activity supports goal #1.
4. This past year we developed and implemented a Graduate Student Practicum Program at the UAO. *Goal 3*
5. We made significant improvements (materials, presentations, participant involvement) in our First Year Faculty Summer Teaching Institute. The institute, which focused on classroom assessment and research, involved 13 new faculty from all over the institution. This institute supports goals #~~2~~³ and 4.
6. Finally, in support of goal #3- "advise faculty and staff on purpose, design, methodology, and use of formative assessment projects at all levels of the university" we offered many other programs and services, often cosponsoring these with other units on and off campus. We assisted other units by advertising their related development activities. Details can be found in the appendix.

Ideas for 2001-2002

The following are **major objectives for FY02**. These objectives **expand upon and compliment the FY01 objectives** of building peer collaboration and support for teaching on campus and increasing the support for and, thus, the quantity and quality of classroom and program assessment. In addition, the objectives support the more general goals stated above.

1. Increase development and support for the scholarship of teaching and learning, including classroom assessment and research, at Illinois State University.

2. Increase breadth of users of CAT and UAO services (from more disciplines, more senior faculty, more TAs, more staff).
3. Increase the visibility, value, and support of teaching and assessment on campus.
4. Increase the extent to which students are actively involved in the planning and use of assessment-related activities and results.
5. Conduct a needs assessment of faculty and staff members to better determine the type and scope of services offered by the UAO.
5. Organize and co-sponsor an event with a nationally or regionally recognized speaker (assessment-related topic for faculty & departmental representatives).
6. Mount all institutional summary reports from the campus-wide surveys and department assessment profiles, and explore the development of a data query system on the UAO web site.
7. Initiate and implement a graduate internship program in UAO.

These major objectives for FY02 will directly **assist in the achievement of the Educating Illinois goals** of building a distinctive research agenda and providing essential support for faculty and staff, and indirectly contribute to improving commitment to general education and strengthening the junior/senior experience.

Productivity measures will include external recognition of our efforts (awards, write-ups, compliments from outside sources, outside funding), increases in the number of Scholarship of Teaching/Learning and assessment presentations/publications by faculty and staff, involvement of faculty/staff in CAT and UAO services who have not been involved previously, and changes in teaching behaviors (interviews, surveys).

Long-term Plans

1. In collaboration with the Center for the Advancement of Teaching, increase development and support for the scholarship of teaching and learning.
2. Become a national leader in the breadth of services offered by the University Assessment Office as a faculty development unit.
3. Increase breadth of users of UAO services (from more disciplines, more senior faculty, more TAs...).
4. Increase the level of innovation, value, and use of assessment activities on campus.

Administrative Structure

Staff

In 2000-2001 the staff at the center consisted of Dr. Wendy Troxel, full time coordinator; Jamie Young, full time Research Associate, Aleda Diggins, full time Secretary IV, and Annie Chang, UAO graduate assistant.

APPENDIX- DETAILS OF SERVICES, EVENTS, ACTIVITIES

Services

Support for Special Groups

A variety of services are targeted at members of specific campus groups as part of our effort to enhance the teaching of individual members of the instructional community.

Chairpersons and Departments. The UAO coordinator and research associate are available to meet with faculty and staff to discuss and develop assessment plans and activities.

Division of Student Affairs. The UAO coordinator and research associate led two major retreats . . . Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) Self-study Project. . . . and . . . “Going Home” survey

Individual Consultations

All requests for individual assistance are voluntary and confidential. In academic year 2000-01, the coordinator and research associate consulted with more than 30 faculty and staff members either once or on a longer-term basis about their assessment-related activities. *Some instructors were interested in help planning for new pedagogies and programs, others sought help interpreting student course evaluations. Other instructors wanted help reflecting on their teaching in such areas as managing classes, structuring learning, assessing what was going well and what needed improvement, etc. CAT staff collected data for use in some consulting cases through observing and/or videotaping, and leading student focus groups.*

Electronic Support

We maintain and expanded our web site at <http://www.assessment.ilstu.edu>.

Events

First-Year Faculty Summer Institute

This year’s institute for first-year tenure track faculty was held on May 29-31, 2001. Titled “Classroom Assessment and Classroom Research” the sessions focused on what faculty can do to better assess and research student learning, how faculty can receive more formative feedback from students, and other topics related to student learning. The institute was limited to fifteen faculty members, who received advice from several on-campus experts and participated in roundtable discussions during the three-day workshop. All participants received a packet of materials, including the book Classroom Assessment Techniques.

Campus-Wide Workshops, Panel Presentations, Brownbags, and Discussion Hours

Assessing Individual and Group Work in Group Projects. November 1, 2000. This session was co-sponsored with CAT (Kathleen McKinney) and explored multi-method approaches to assessment of group projects. Approaches included: peer review, self-assessment, and instructor evaluations.

Survey Planning and Methodologies for Assessment. December 19, 2000. This session focused on the major issues and steps involved in using survey methodology. Focus group methodologies were briefly touched on. Participants expressed further interest in focus group sessions.

The Use of Longitudinal Data for Assessment and Planning. January 25, 2001. This session examined longitudinal data available from institution-wide surveys. Ways in which departments and unit on campus could use these data were explored. Discussion centered on ways in which the UAO could better serve the needs of campus constituencies.

Writing Goals and Objectives for Programs and Courses. February ?, 2001. This workshop was requested by a number of faculty and chairpersons. Information, suggestions, and worksheets were presented to help faculty and staff write goals and objectives for their courses or programs.

Multi-Method Approaches to Disciplinary Assessment. February 22, 2001. During this workshop, featured speakers Tami Martin and Roger Day from the Department of Mathematics shared their multi-method, multi-level assessment plan for students in the Teacher Education program in mathematics.

'You Were Saying?' The Use of Focus Groups for Program Assessment. March 8 and 9, 2001. These workshops provided participants with a thorough overview of the steps involved in planning, conducting, and analyzing focus groups and how the data can enhance the scope of assessment results. Guest Speaker March 8: Mike Humphreys, Assoc. Professor of Marketing, College of Business; Guest Speaker March 9: Lucinda Beier, College of Arts and Sciences Research Office and the Applied Social Research Unit

Closing the Loop: Using Assessment for Change. March 29, 2001. This workshop highlighted several examples of best practice on campus where assessment results have been used at the classroom, department/unit, program, and institutional levels to improve the quality of the educational experience at Illinois State University. Featured Speakers: Betty Chapman, Provost's Office, Gail Russ, Asst. Professor and Team Leader of the Constituent Satisfaction Team, College of Business, Helen Mamarchev, Student Affairs.

Strengthening First-Year Seminars: A Foundation for Student Success (National Teleconference). April 5, 2001. Co-sponsored by the University Assessment Office, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching, Undergraduate Studies, and the Central Illinois Higher Education Consortium. This national teleconference was presented by the

National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. Practitioners from a variety of institutions nation-wide examined the challenges, rewards, and intended outcomes of administering new student seminar programs.

Cosponsored Events & Partnerships

Carnegie Foundation

The staff from the UAO assisted CAT in the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) Campus Program, and ISUs study of student engagement through secondary analysis of data from our freshman, sophomore, and senior surveys looking at variables related to engagement over time.

Illinois State University Units

Graduate Student Practicum Program. The UAO initiated a new program designed to support the experience of graduate students planning a career in college administration or teaching. The practicum is a partnership between the UAO, the student's department, and the student. The UAO agreed to facilitate individual meetings with the practicum student(s), to assist with a learning contract, and to oversee the development and completion of a major project related to an assessment activity. During the 2000-2001 academic year, the UAO partnered with the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations to offer a graduate practicum experience to a College Student Personnel masters student.

Colleges and Universities in Central Illinois

Strengthening First-Year Seminars: A Foundation for Student Success. April 5, 2001. Cosponsored with the Central Illinois Higher Education Consortium, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching, and the Office of Undergraduate Studies, this teleconference focused on a number of topics related to first year seminars and methods used to assess their effectiveness. The panel featured nationally recognized speakers John Gardner, Mary Stuart Hunter, Betsy Barefoot, and Randy Swing. Forty-three people attended this teleconference, including representatives from Lincoln College, Heartland Community College, Normal West Community High School, Normal Community High School, and University High School.

Funding Opportunities

[Sue- we need brief descriptions (see last year) of the T-L deve, Supplem Travel, and Assessm small grant programs WITH the recipients for all for this past year. We did not have Undergraduate Enhancement program grants this time.]

Grants to the UAO

Grants Received and Administered

"*name of teleconference*" Special Projects Award (\$325) from the Central Illinois Higher Education Consortium (CIHEC), effective spring 2001.

Requests for assistance are informal in nature and are handled through informal conversations, e-mail, and referrals to resources in the CAT resource center. The following are examples of the types of requests for assistance the center received in the 1999-00 academic year:

Publications

[Sue, copy and update this from last year. Are we missing anything?]

Public Relations Efforts

[Sue, copy and update this from last year. Are we missing anything?]

Requests for Assistance

Requests for assistance, as opposed to consultations, are informal in nature and are handled through informal conversations, e-mail, and referrals to resources in the CAT resource center. The following are examples of the types of requests for assistance the center received in the 1999-00 academic year:

- provide links to other faculty as resources
- provide informational resources to internal constituencies
- provide informational resources to external constituencies
- input and editing of written work (e.g. surveys, syllabi, grant proposals, articles, tests, and forms)
- review teaching portfolios
- write letters of support or letters documenting observable teaching behaviors
- interpret surveys and other forms of feedback
- provide orientation to professors' expectations to incoming students
- suggest potential sources of funding
- question & provide information to candidates for campus-wide positions during open sessions
- gave presentations on CAT services and resources to various individuals or groups
- gave presentations on teaching-related issues (e.g., to specific departments)
- provided information on starting teaching centers

Staff Service Related to Center Activities

Kathleen McKinney, Center Director, served as a member of the following committees at

II. Events

- A. First-Year Tenure Track Faculty Summer Institute
- B. Campus-wide Workshops, Panel Presentations, Brownbags, and Discussion Hours

III. Services

- A. Support for Special Groups
- B. Data Support

- C. Individual Consultation
- D. Primary Research Support
 - 1. CIRP
 - 2. Sophomore Survey
 - 3. CSS
- E. Co-research Support
 - 1. FOI
 - 2. CONNECTIONS
 - 3. Others
- IV. Funding Opportunities
 - 1. Small Grant Program
 - 2. ?
- V. Publications and Correspondence Efforts
 - 1. *Assessment Effects*
 - 2. UAO Website
- VI. Related Contributions
 - 1. Committee Duties
 - 2. Conferences Attended
 - 3. Presentations and Publications
 - 4. University Service
- VII. Goals for 2000-2001 Academic Year

Appendix

Institution-wide Research Projects

- Second Year Student Survey

In the fall of 1999, the UAO began administration of an institution-wide survey of students who were just beginning their second year at Illinois State or had attended the prior year but did not re-enroll for their second year. The survey instrument was locally developed but mirrored many of the items on the entering freshman survey (CIRP) this population had taken a year earlier. The corresponding items were used with the consent of the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA.

The surveys were distributed to the sophomores living on-campus through the Resident Assistants in each residence hall. Incentives for distribution included money contributed to the RA retreat fund, a raffle, and a floor pizza party. Surveys were mailed to enrolled students living off-campus and non-returning students. Incentives included a rebate of \$2 for each returned survey, \$25 for the first five responses from central Illinois, and \$25 for the first five responses from outside of central Illinois.

The total population (approximately 3,050) was surveyed. Response rates were as follows:

On-campus students	1089
Off-campus students	33
Non-returning students	83
TOTAL	1205 (40%)

- **College Student Survey (CSS)**

Administration of the College Student Survey (CSS) for Illinois State seniors began in the spring of 2000. Distribution was arranged with the Office of the Registrar and was intended to coincide with the application for degree process. Seniors who picked up the application for degree were to be given a survey with instructions to return the completed instrument to the accounting office along with their payment for the graduation fee.

However, due to a delay in the IRB approval process the window of opportunity for distribution through the planned procedure was missed and as a result only about 50 completed surveys were returned. Revisions for distribution were approved through IRB and subsequently the UAO mailed approximately 3,000 surveys to the campus address of the seniors who had not responded through the initial procedure. Return address envelopes were included along with the survey and cover letter.

The total population (approximately 3,000) was surveyed. Response rates were as follows:

Responses to accounting	52
Responses by mail	480
TOTAL	532 (18%)

It is surmised that the problem with the distribution procedure significantly impacted the response rate. (A much higher response rate was achieved the year before using the original procedure.) The completed instruments were sent to HERI for processing; data files and institutional summaries are expected in early September 2000. Upon receipt of the data files, staff of the UAO will examine the extent to which the sample represents the population. Additionally, the records will be merged with existing data from that cohort's responses from the CIRP and sophomore surveys to determine the sample for which we have longitudinal data.

- **Entering Freshman Survey (CIRP – Cooperative Institutional Research Program)**

Data collection for the CIRP survey began in June 2000 as time was allocated during the second morning of every Preview session (freshman orientation). A total of 3,101 surveys were partially or fully completed, representing about 98.5% of the incoming freshman class. The completed surveys will be mailed to HERI in California, with results to be received in early November of 2000.

Just finished:

CAPS (Consortium for Assessment & Planning Support) Annual Conference in Northern KY (Cincinnati)

Presentation: "Window of Opportunity: Assessment of the New General Education Program at Illinois State University"

May 11: IL Assoc. of College & Research Librarians Assessment Conference in Wheaton, IL
Two Presentations: "Locating and Using Data Sources for Library Assessment" and "Writing Measurable Objectives"

May 21 & 22: IL Staff and Curriculum Developers Assoc. Summer Institute - My Presentation
9:00 - 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday: "Double Dipping: A Toolbox for the Assessment of Multicultural Awareness in the Classroom"

May 29-31: FY Faculty Institute

June 4: 1/2 day follow-up retreat for Student Affairs self-study

June 23-26: AAHE Assessment Forum in Denver (we're taking Lorie, Lou, and Jan)

July 2: American Assoc. of Family & Consumer Scientists (or something): presentation with Jan Shane . . . she's paying all expenses

Here are also the hot topics going on right now for other assessment stuff here on campus:

- preparing Helen Mamarchev for presentation of the results of the "Going Home" project to the Board of Trustees on May 11 (Jamie and Dimple are spearheading this, then we'll prepare reports for campus-wide dissemination)
- still meeting with Chairs to nail down their departmental learning objectives by June 1
- met with Mark Troester to discuss: 1) TracDat hardware issues, 2) developing an "institutional portfolio" web page, 3) creating a data mining tool for the UAO site for survey results, 4) working with them to develop a web "portal" for different and appropriate "dashboards" for assessment results and activities for students, faculty, and staff
- putting out one more Assessment AEffects next week (Aleda's pushing us on this)
- setting up further demos and possible pilot group for TracDat (Nursing and Health Sciences are on board, Education is very interested)
- assisting Mary Jo Fabich on planning for assessment and revision of CONNECTIONS (Jamie's the point person for us)