

2016-2017 ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE AWARDS

Sponsored by University Assessment Services

Overview

The assessment of student learning and program effectiveness is essential to fulfilling the mission of Illinois State University. In an effort to support these important activities, the Assessment Initiative Award provides monetary and professional support to cover some or all of the costs of conducting assessment studies or program evaluations.

The award program provides three \$2,000 awards to individuals or teams proposing projects that will assess learning outcomes at the program or department/school/unit level (i.e., no single course assessment proposals will be considered). The funds may be used in any appropriate line (e.g., student help, printing, postage), but a maximum of \$700 may be allocated to faculty/staff salary. Each individual or team receiving an award will be required to share information about the project as an article in *Progressive Measures*, the UAS newsletter, and in a presentation on campus (at the CTLT Teaching-Learning Symposium or at an assessment workshop) during the 2017-2018 academic year.

Recent award recipients include:

- The development of rubrics during a faculty retreat and the collection of external stakeholder feedback through surveys, interviews, and focus groups for the recently-accredited **Public Relations program in the School of Communication** to adjust course content where needed.
- A qualitative review of student writing within a longitudinal research model for the **ISU Writing Program in the Department of English** to better document the multiple kinds of writing students complete, to better understand how students' coursework can positively influence their writing across academic, co-curricular, and workplace settings, and to improve the courses offered through the ISU Writing Program.
- A mixed methods approach to program evaluation for **Student Counseling Services'** outreach programming for international students to collect data on their needs and awareness of campus resources for program improvement and follow-up investigations.
- An assessment of the **Environmental Health program in the Department of Health Sciences** focused on designing rubrics, incorporating stakeholder feedback, and selecting a standardized tool to examine students' technical/professional communication skills, professional knowledge preparation, and critical thinking dispositions and skills.
- An examination of student learning and progress in the **Pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) sequence in the Mennonite College of Nursing** through faculty review and discussion of student assignments and reflections contained in their portfolios as a pilot study within the context of the program's established summative assessment processes.

Eligibility

Any individual or team representing an academic and/or service/support unit may submit a proposal for the program or unit. The proposal, however, must contain a supporting letter from the chairperson/director or unit supervisor (see below). In addition, only one project per unit should be submitted. Teams may include partnerships with other units.

Application Materials and Procedure

The following materials should be sent to University Assessment Services at Campus Box 2500 or assessment@IllinoisState.edu by **Friday, October 14, 2016**:

1. A supporting letter from the chairperson/director/unit supervisor indicating knowledge and approval of the project, summarizing the ability of the applicants to carry out the project, and placing the project in the context of the unit's overall assessment plan;
2. A project proposal narrative (maximum of two pages, single-spaced) including the objectives, time frame, design, procedure, and potential influence of the assessment project; and
3. An itemized budget for up to \$2,000.

Time Frame

Proposals are due Friday, October 14, 2016 and will be evaluated as soon as possible after that date. Funds will be available immediately and **must be spent by June 1, 2017, with all receipts submitted to UAS by July 1, 2017**. This will not be a "cash" award; purchases, receipt reimbursement, or requests for stipend amounts will be processed through University Assessment Services.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by members of the Assessment Advisory Council and UAS staff. The criteria for selection include the following:

- Inclusion of all required application materials;
- A project focusing on assessing and improving program outcomes;
- A project with good fit between objectives and methodology;
- A project with the potential for significant influence;
- A well-written and complete narrative; and
- An appropriate (logical and reasonable) budget.