

2023-2024 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 Awards provide financial and professional support to cover some or all of the costs of conducting assessment studies/program evaluations or attending an assessment workshop/conference.

This year, five \$2,000 awards are available to individuals or teams who plan to do one of the following:

Complete an assessment/evaluation project: These should assess learning outcomes at the program or 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 in a campus presentation during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Attend an assessment workshop/conference: These can include pre-conference sessions or stand-alone workshops and conferences that focus on assessing learning outcomes at the program or unit level. The funds may be used in any appropriate line (e.g., registration, transportation, lodging). Each individual or team receiving an award will be required to share information about the workshop/conference in a summary report during the 2024-2025 academic year.

Recent assessment/evaluation projects completed by award recipients include:

- Developing online dashboards to examine longitudinal-based student learning data in the graduate programs of the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders to assist in reviewing, interpreting, and using this information for program improvement and accreditation purposes.
- Informing faculty in the Department of Politics and Government how best to design and implement their future online courses as part of assessing the extent to which indirect measures of student learning vary by course modality and student characteristics.
- Evaluating the impact of the Voices of Discovery program offered by Student Counseling Services in reducing racial colorblindness and increasing group cohesion and appreciation for diversity to inform programming and the provision of clinical and outreach services offered to diverse students.
- Administering focus groups to supplement survey responses regarding student learning and better assess the efficacy of student participation in one-day, co-curricular community service/service learning experiences through the Center for Civic Engagement.

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 department chairperson/school director/unit supervisor. Teams may include partnerships with other units, but only one proposal per unit should be submitted.

Application Materials

The following materials should be emailed to University Assessment Services at assessment@IllinoisState.edu by Friday, November 3, 2023, at 4:30 p.m.:

1. A supporting letter from the department chairperson/school director/unit supervisor indicating knowledge and approval of the proposal, summarizing the ability of the applicant(s) to complete the proposal activities, and placing the proposal in the context of the department's/school's/unit's overall assessment processes and/or accreditation operations;
2. A project proposal narrative (maximum of two pages, single-spaced) including the objectives, design and procedure (for projects) or relevant activities (for conferences), time frame, and potential influence of the proposal; and
3. An itemized budget for up to \$2,000.

Time Frame

Proposals are due at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, November 3, 2023, and will be reviewed by members of the Assessment Advisory Council. Funds will be available immediately but must be spent by June 30, 2024.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be selected for funding based the following criteria:

- Inclusion of all required application materials,
- Focus on assessing and improving learning and/or program outcomes,
- Good fit between objectives and design/procedure or relevant activities,
- Potential for significant influence,
- Well-written and complete narrative, and
- Appropriate (logical and reasonable) budget.