

*Assessing Student Outcomes: A Plan for Continuous Development
(April 2000)*

**An Update of Assessment-related Recommendations
Assessment Coordinating Council
Illinois State University
April 2003**

Background:

In April 2000, the University-wide Assessment Committee (UWAC) submitted a comprehensive document to Provost Alvin Goldfarb that laid out an action plan for assessment-related policies, goals, and activities for Illinois State University. Provost Goldfarb reviewed the document and approved some items in principle, approved some items in practice, recommended further study on others, and rejected a few due to budget limitations or changing priorities.

One significant recommendation that was approved was to restructure the committee from one that was ad hoc and advisory to one that is a standing committee responsible for coordinating University-wide assessment activities. Dr. Betty Chapman, Associate Provost, chaired the Assessment Coordinating Council (ACC) from September 2000 to July 2002. A report of the activities of the ACC during those years is available. Dr. Chapman retired in the summer of 2002, and Dr. Wendy Troxel, Coordinator of the University Assessment Office was named chair of the ACC in September 2002.

Review of the UWAC White Paper:

Throughout the 2002-03 academic year, the members of the ACC reviewed the original UWAC White Paper, with particular attention to the many campus-wide initiatives that have taken place since spring 2000, including the significant impact of the implementation of the strategic plan, *Educating Illinois*. The document that follows represents the informed responses by the member of the ACC with regard to “status” and in some cases, “recommendations”.

The 2002-2003 members of the Assessment Coordinating Council (ACC):

Alferink, Larry	Undergraduate Studies
Flot, Rob	Student Counseling Services (former member)
Gould, Robin	Planning and Institutional Research
Harris, Ann Faith	Diversity and Affirmative Action
Little, Sandra	Graduate Studies
Mamarchev, Helen	Student Affairs
Manahan, Jerry	University Assessment Office
Paterson, Brent	Student Affairs
Perez, Lou	General Education
Rives, Joe	Planning and Institutional Research
Rosenthal, Jon	College of Arts & Sciences
Shane, Jan	Provost's Office
Steffen, Lynn	Council for Teacher Education
Townsend, Ruth	Diversity and Affirmative Action
Troxel, Wendy (Chair)	University Assessment Office
Young, Jamie	University Assessment Office

Executive Summary of “Recommendations”:

The ACC supports the premise that institutions of distinctiveness and excellence are those that are willing to continuously monitor impact and effectiveness of programs and services based on well-articulated goals and objectives. This “culture of assessment” should pervade all corners of campus and decisions should be made based on appropriate evidence.

The 2000 UWAC “White Paper” on assessment provided Illinois State University with a comprehensive “road map” with goals that were related to institutional priorities and objectives that were reasonable and attainable, in most cases. The members of the ACC have provided a “status report” of each individual recommendation in the original document, indicating items completed, items on-going, items not started, and often a description of challenges and barriers that were not evident at the time.

While there are many important and on-going items in the pages that follow, the ACC identified six in particular that warrant special attention. The original item number is maintained for clarity.

✓ #10 - Comprehensive review of assessment plans

10. Use information from the *Assessment Inventory* to develop and publish a combined Program Review and accreditation calendar for the University. (UWAC 2000)

- **Status: Action to be addressed as part of the NCA Self Special Emphasis Self Study on Achieving Distinctiveness through Coordinated Planning.**
- **Recommendation: Three major areas of review should be included in a comprehensive assessment inventory:**
 - **Academic Affairs Assessment: “Three-year plan” for academic departments to document their comprehensive assessment plans by June 2003 should supply the data for the *Assessment Inventory*, assisted by the UAO and under the review of a new Assessment Advisory Council (see # 33)**
 - **Student Affairs Assessment: on-going processes in place following CAS self-study, VP for Student Affairs should recommend process for submission of accountability reporting to Planning and Institutional Research**
 - **Support Function Review: new procedures and requirements being developed under the guidance of the Director of Planning**

✓ #13 – Plan for Diversity

13. Consult with the Director of Diversity and Affirmative Action to determine what assessment-related information should be incorporated into Illinois State University’s annual *Underrepresented Groups Report* and subsequent editions of Illinois State University’s *Plan for Diversity*. (UWAC, 2000)

- **Status:** The Office for Diversity and Affirmative Action, University Assessment Office, and University Planning are currently developing a diversity report card for accountability reporting purposes.
- **Recommendation:** Also have statement that articulates the goal of assessment in monitoring campus climate in diversity-related issues (assessment for improvement).

✓ **#29 – Institutional commitment to assessment (fiscal and human resources)**

29. Procedures to ensure adequate financial support for assessment efforts should be developed. (UWAC, 2000)

- **Status:** The UAO has been operating in its current configuration since January of 2000 with the charge to assist the institution in the coordination of assessment activities. Funding is allocated from the Provost's Office for both personnel and operating costs. Institution-wide assessment activities, such as administration of surveys to entering freshmen, currently enrolled students, and alumni, are supported through the UAO's operating budget. Many other assessment activities are conducted and funded at the college, department, and unit levels. Sometimes data are shared between campus entities, but too often relevant data about student learning and developmental outcomes are not used to their full extent. Additionally, the commitment to resources devoted to meaningful assessment activities is varied throughout the institution.
- **Recommendation:** With initial guidance from the UAO and the *Educating Illinois 16A* Action Team, the ACC should develop a set of recommendations for future planning and budgeting of assessment-related activities. This proposal should include all campus entities involved in formal assessment efforts, and should be consistent with institutional priorities. The overall goal is to make a commitment to formal and informal assessment practice at all levels of the institution, and to support the coordination and organization of assessment activities with both fiscal and human resources.

✓ **#30 – Institutional commitment to rewarding best practice in assessment**

30. Statements regarding the acknowledgement and reward of assessment work in faculty and staff annual evaluations should be developed. Reward includes the availability of travel funds to attend assessment-related conferences, workshops, and symposia. (UWAC, 2000)

- **Status:** Small grants are available for travel to assessment-related conferences each year through CAT/UAO, although since CAT and UAO have "separated" organizationally the UAO is no longer a part of the process.
- The UAO has sponsored two or three faculty/staff each summer to attend the AAHE Assessment Conference. The future of this activity depends on budgetary restrictions, and the results of the recommendations set forth in #29 above.

✓ **#33 – New structure for ACC, subject to approval by the Provost and according to institutional priorities**

33. At the beginning of every semester, the UWAC and the Provost should develop a list of priorities for the term. This information should be shared with members of the campus community via the web. At the end of every academic year, the UWAC should develop and disseminate a report of accomplishments. (UWAC, 2000)

- **Status: The ACC completed Annual Reports in spring 2001, priorities were established for the next year, and special topics reports were submitted in spring 2002.**
- **Recommendation: A meeting should be held with the new Vice President and Provost during Spring 2003 to discuss future structural changes and to match assessment-related priorities. The ACC's "Recommendations for the Future of the ACC" should be presented in draft form, and the results of this discussion should be included in the document as a final draft. The members of the ACC should be given the opportunity to review the revisions, make further recommendations and clarifications, and give final approval of the document (either electronically or in person).**

- **#54 – Reporting of assessment activities for accountability purposes**

54. As part of coordinated university-wide planning, divisions should submit assessment plans every three years. The report should include a summary of intended actions and a summary of how assessment is used for curricular and/or programmatic improvement. (UWAC, 2000)

- **Status: The University is currently implementing a three-year assessment plan for student learning outcomes. By 2004, all academic programs—including General Education—will have stated student learning outcomes, measurement systems in place, and document how assessment results have been used as the basis for change. In addition, the two divisions responsible for curricular and co-curricular implementation and review—Academic Affairs and Student Affairs—have systems in place to collect and use assessment data (i.e., accreditation reviews, program reviews, department-based assessment plans, and Council for the Advancement of Standards self-study recommendations, and the benchmarking activities).**

Supporting Documents:

- UWAC Definition of Assessment – Attachment 1
- Recommendation for revision of the ACC – Attachment 2

Original Memo to Provost Goldfarb

April 13, 2000

To: Provost Goldfarb

From: Margaret Haefner, Chairperson
and Members of the University-Wide Assessment Committee

David Barone	Kathleen McKinney
Robert Broad	Pat Meckstroth
Deborah Gentry	Liz Mullenix
Abiodun Goke-Pariola	Edgar Norton
Mathew Hesson-McInnis	Erika Rasch
Patricia Klass	Joe Rives
Susan Kossman	Steve Rosenbaum
Bonnie Laesch	Norma Stumbo
Doug Lamb	Wendy Troxel
Ann McGuigan	Jeff Waple

Re: Assessment Reports and Recommendations

In fall 1999, we were charged as an ad hoc group to address nine items relating to assessment at Illinois State University (copy of letter attached). Goal 5 of the Illinois Commitment requires institutions to hold students accountable to even higher expectations for learning and be accountable for the quality of academic programs and the assessment of learning. By 2004, the Illinois Board of Higher Education expects that all academic and occupational programs will systematically assess student learning and use assessment results to improve the curriculum and student learning. These are also themes for our 2003 North Central Accreditation visit.

We have surveyed all departments and units in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs and reviewed documentation from the *Academic Plan 1999-2004*, *Illinois Commitment*, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, and the American Association of Higher Education. Our research is the basis for the following documents (attached).

1. *Assessing Student Outcomes: A Plan for Continuous Development*
2. *Assessment Statements*
3. *Proposal for an Assessment Institute*

Recommendations

1. The Provost should review the document, *Assessing Student Outcomes: A Plan for Continuous Development* and prioritize the 54 recommendations made in the report (see Table 1, attached).
 - **Status: The Provost focused attention on diversity assessment, electronic portfolios for teacher education, program-based student outcomes assessment, core values assessment, and General Education assessment during academic year 2001-02. Reports were submitted and will be distributed to the appropriate campus entity with oversight responsibilities for the respective area of focus.**

2. The Provost should charge the University Wide Assessment Committee (UWAC) with implementing those recommendations that are the highest priorities.
 - **Status: See Action #1.**
3. While focusing on student learning outcomes, the UWAC should coordinate with other high institutional priorities for assessment and planning, including Distinctiveness and Excellence implementation and the identification of performance measures for the institution. Additionally, relevant actions of the UWAC should be included in annual Results Reports to the Board of Trustees and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.
 - **Status: As part of annual Results Reporting and the update to Educating Illinois, the Director of University Planning is working with campus colleagues to identify performance indicators for Illinois State University.**
 - **Annual Results Reports, prepared by the Director of University Planning, demonstrate how Illinois State University holds students to higher expectations for learning and itself accountable for the quality of academic programs and the assessment of student learning.**

We await your response to our recommendations.

**Action Items Submitted by the UWAC with Status/Recommendations Responses by
the ACC
(April 2003)**

University-Wide Assessment Committee

1. Advise members of the campus community of the availability of the *Assessment Inventory*, which summarizes assessment practices in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Similar notebooks will be housed in the University Assessment Office, Undergraduate Studies, the Graduate School, Student Affairs, and Planning and Policy Studies.
 - **Status: Last inventory completed in 2000. Materials are located in Institutional Research.**
 - **Since Fall 2000, the University Assessment Office has been working with each academic program to revise and document departmental learning objectives and the assessment activities that correspond to these objectives.**
 - **The UAO assisted the Division of Student Affairs with a full self-study process, following the structure and recommendations of the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS). All assessment activities for the division were documented and continue to be updated.**
 - **The UAO and the Office of the Provost secured initial funding for the implementation of an assessment-related software, called TracDat. Currently 12 academic departments and 2 units from Student Affairs are participating in the pilot phase of the project. If fully implemented on campus, an *Assessment Inventory* can be gathered annually through the “report” feature on TracDat.**

2. Request \$77,000 in annually renewable operating funds from the Provost for the funding of a three-year (Fiscal Years 2001 through 2004) pilot Assessment Institute. If funding is received, the UWAC will proceed with the schedule described in the Proposal for an Assessment Institute (copy attached). The UAO and the UWAC, with assistance from Planning and Policy Studies and other staff colleagues, will provide primary staff support for the organization, planning, and implementation of the Institute.
 - **Status: The Assessment Institute was not funded.**
 - **The UAO conducts a 3-day workshop in the spring for faculty who have just completed their first year at Illinois State University (First-year Faculty Institute), which focuses on Classroom Assessment, Classroom Research, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. The UAO also facilitates many workshops and presentations on assessment-related topics for faculty and staff.**

3. By April 2000, request permission to give a briefing of the UWAC at a President's Staff meeting and disseminate hard copies of this report to the President, Vice Presidents, Direct Reports, Deans, Directors, Department Chairs, and Unit Heads.
 - **Status: A briefing of the UWAC and copies of its report were given at the summer 2000 Provost's Advisory Council Retreat.**
 - **Periodic updates of the work of the ACC are presented to the Provost's Advisory Council.**
4. By May 2000, provide copies of this report, the *Assessment Inventory*, and *Assessment Statements* to members of the campus community via the web.
 - **Status: A Web site for the Assessment Coordinating Council has been developed and implemented.**
5. By summer 2000, create a home page on the University Assessment Office web site. Include historical background of the UWAC, the definition for assessment, this report, the *Assessment Inventory*, *Assessment Statements*, and a summary of current and planned projects for the Committee. After the web site is created, announce its availability via the *ISU Report*.
 - **Status: Action complete; but site should be updated to include meeting minutes, actions plans, and an institutional portfolio of assessment activities throughout the campus.**
6. Work in cooperation with the University Research Office after receipt of the Annual Report to publicize external funds received for assessment projects related to improved teaching and learning.
 - **Status: Not completed. See #32 for information on internal funding opportunities.**
7. Beginning in fall 2000, actively contribute to the University Assessment Office's existing newsletter by adding features related directly to student learning outcomes at Illinois State and nationally.
 - **Status: Action initiated and a continuing work in progress. ACC as an entity has not submitted articles for *Assessment Effects*.**
8. Have follow-up meetings with departmental chairs, directors, and unit heads to discuss the *Assessment Inventory* and information needs.
 - **Status: The UAO maintains contact with each academic department regarding assessment activities and the availability of institution-wide data for departmental use.**
9. Consult with the Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies, Research, and International Education to determine what assessment related information should be provided to the Graduate School by the UWAC and/or departmental chairs given that graduate-level assessment is decentralized.

- **Status: Action not completed by ACC, but the UAO works with the Graduate School when requested, and is in direct communication with the graduate programs at the department level.**
10. Use information from the *Assessment Inventory* to develop and publish a combined Program Review and accreditation calendar for the University.
- **Status: Action to be addressed as part of the NCA Self Special Emphasis Self Study on Achieving Distinctiveness through Coordinated Planning.**
 - **Recommendation: Three major areas of review should be included in a comprehensive assessment inventory:**
 - **Academic Affairs Assessment: “Three-year plan” for academic departments to document their comprehensive assessment plans by June 2003 should supply the data for the *Assessment Inventory*, assisted by the UAO and under the review of a new Assessment Advisory Council (see # 33)**
 - **Student Affairs Assessment: on-going processes in place following CAS self-study, VP for Student Affairs should recommend process for submission of accountability reporting to Planning and Institutional Research**
 - **Support Function Review: new procedures and requirements being developed under the guidance of the Director of Planning**
11. Infuse assessment into D&E. Assessment methodologies should link measurements of student learning and institutional progress with actions implemented as a result of priority decisions in D&E. At least one member of the UWAC should serve on any future institutional teams designed to assess the progress of D&E.
- **Status: Assessment was infused throughout Educating Illinois. The University is currently adding performance indicators to the update of Educating Illinois and the Director of the Assessment Office and the Director of University Planning represent the ACC on the Educating Illinois Coordinating Team.**
12. At each stage of the Capital Campaign, offer consultation to University Advancement in terms of planning and assessment.
- **Status: Not completed**
13. Consult with the Director of Diversity and Affirmative Action to determine what assessment-related information should be incorporated

into Illinois State University's annual *Underrepresented Groups Report* and subsequent editions of Illinois State University's *Plan for Diversity*.

- **Status: The Office for Diversity and Affirmative Action, University Assessment Office, and University Planning are currently developing a diversity report card for accountability reporting purposes.**
 - **Recommendation: Also have statement that articulates the goal of assessment in monitoring campus climate in diversity-related issues (assessment for improvement).**
14. Continue to serve on the Small Grants for Assessment Review Board.
- **Status: The Director of the UAO serves on the review board each year.**
15. Continue to advise the UAO as they help identify opportunities for external funding in the area of assessment. The identification of external funding opportunities should be done in conjunction with the University Research Office and college research offices. The information should be posted on the UAO web site.
- **Status: The UAO is working with the URO to present workshops on "Writing a Strong Evaluation Section" for faculty who apply for external grants. The UAO, the URO, and the Applied Social Research Unit are collaborating to create a series of on-line modules to assist faculty in writing their evaluation sections in order to strengthen the assessment component of grant proposals.**
16. Give formative feedback and advise the UAO regarding new and different student learning outcomes assessment projects related to the institutional mission and priorities.
- **Status: The *Educating Illinois* implementation team for action item 16A will present its report to the ACC during the 2002-03 academic year for the recommended future plan and budget for institution-wide assessment activities. Additionally, the UAO will present findings from recent projects, including implications for further study.**
17. In fall 2000, develop a resource directory of faculty and staff with expertise/interests in assessment. This information should be added to the UAO's home page.
- **The UAO web site offers monthly workshops on assessment-related topics, with presentations given by an interdisciplinary cadre of faculty and staff; "best practice" projects are featured in *Assessment Effects*; and the UAO web site offers links to both internal and external resources on a wide range of topics.**
18. Include performance-based measures from the Teacher Education Task Force on Performance Based Assessment in the *Assessment Inventory* and include a link to the Task Force's home page.

- **Status: See #5 with regard to Institutional Portfolio.**
19. Portions of UWAC meetings should be dedicated to formative feedback of the new UAO home page.
- **Status: The University Assessment Office launched a new Web site in fall 2000, with an updated format launched in fall 2002.**

Provost's Office/Academic Affairs

20. Continue to provide Program Review summaries as an information item to the Illinois State University Board of Trustees prior to submission to the Illinois Board of Higher Education.
- **Status: Annual Academic Plans, containing Program Reviews, are submitted to the Academic Senate in April and the Illinois State University Board of Trustees in May, prior to submission to the Illinois Board of Higher Education.**
21. Program Review should demonstrate how curricular and programmatic changes build upon the strengths of the program and build upon the unique mission of the college/department and the goals of the *Illinois Commitment*.
- **Status: As part of the NCA Special Emphasis Study on Achieving Distinctiveness through Coordinated Planning, Program Review will be revised to document how each department addresses national reputation and statewide and regional needs.**
22. Evaluate the advantages, disadvantages, and feasibility of tighter couplings between Program Review and discipline-based accreditation.
- **Status: Academic departments and schools now have the opportunity to link program review and accreditation reporting.**
23. Consistent with the New General Education Program for Illinois State University, adopted by the Academic Senate in 1997, the Director of General Education should be responsible for programmatic assessment in consultation with the Council on General Education (CGE), the General Education Coordinating Committee (GECC), and faculty participating in the program through the General Education Faculty Development Seminars.
- **Status: The CGE and the GECC have been conducting programmatic assessment activities at all levels of the General Education curriculum since 1998. The five-year assessment of General Education will be reported to the Academic Senate in fall of 2003.**
24. Identify UWAC committee member(s) to serve as consultant(s) and liaison(s) to the Teacher Education Task Force on Performance Based Assessment, Council for Teacher Education, Graduate Council, and other appropriate assessment-related committees. UWAC members currently

serve similar roles on the Council for General Education and General Education Coordinating Committee.

- **Status: ACC has representation from CTE and Clinical Experiences and Certification Processes. At least 2 other ACC members (the UAO Director and the Associate Dean of CAS served on multiple task force team for Performance-based Assessment. ACC has continued representation on the Council for Teacher Education and the Graduate Council. Additionally, ACC members serve on other assessment-related committees, such as the Committee for Diversity, the CONNECTIONS Advisory board.**

25. In spring 2000, expand membership of the UWAC to include a liaison from University Advancement to determine what assessment results are necessary for Capital Campaign planning and implementation.

- **Status: Not completed.**

26. Policies and procedures on student/faculty/staff access, storage, and sharing of university-level assessment data (Cooperative Institutional Research Program, Sophomore Survey, and Senior Survey) should be developed.

- **Status: The directors of the UAO, Institutional Research, and the University Registrar developed a policy for the access, storage, and dissemination of data related to students. A copy is available from the UAO. (Recommendation: post on UAO web site).**
- **All projects administered by the UAO related to students are submitted to the Institutional Review Board for approval.**

27. Policies on how assessment results and interpretations will be used in budgeting, review, etc. should be developed.

- **Status: Not completed – the ACC agrees in principle that assessment should be clearly linked to planning and budgeting at all levels of the institution.**
- **Recommendation: The matter will be explored extensively through the North Central Association Self-study process as an area of special emphasis.**

28. Procedures to ensure adequate faculty and staff development in terms of assessment should be developed.

- **Status: The UAO has developed a workshop series on assessment-related topics, and is available to departments and units to address specific needs in the following areas:**
 - **Classroom Assessment**
 - **Classroom Action Research**

- **Assessment Methodologies (direct and indirect measures)**
 - **Program Assessment**
 - **Development of rubrics for assessing student learning**
 - **Psychometrics and test design**
 - **Development of portfolios for student assessment and program assessment**
29. Procedures to ensure adequate financial support for assessment efforts should be developed.
- **Status: The UAO has been operating in its current configuration since January of 2000 with the charge to assist the institution in the coordination of assessment activities. Funding is allocated from the Provost's Office for both personnel and operating costs. Institution-wide assessment activities, such as administration of surveys to entering freshmen, currently enrolled students, and alumni, are supported through the UAO's operating budget. Many other assessment activities are conducted and funded at the college, department, and unit levels. Sometimes data are shared between campus entities, but too often relevant data about student learning and developmental outcomes are not used to their full extent. Additionally, the commitment to resources devoted to meaningful assessment activities is varied throughout the institution.**
 - **Recommendation: With initial guidance from the UAO and the *Educating Illinois* 16A Action Team, the ACC should develop a set of recommendations for future planning and budgeting of assessment-related activities. This proposal should include all campus entities involved in formal assessment efforts, and should be consistent with institutional priorities. The overall goal is to make a commitment to formal and informal assessment practice at all levels of the institution, and to support the coordination and organization of assessment activities with both fiscal and human resources.**
30. Statements regarding the acknowledgement and reward of assessment work in faculty and staff annual evaluations should be developed. Reward includes the availability of travel funds to attend assessment-related conferences, workshops, and symposia.
- **Status: Small grants are available for travel to assessment-related conferences each year through CAT/UAO, although since CAT and UAO have "separated" organizationally the UAO is no longer a part of the process.**
 - **The UAO has sponsored two or three faculty/staff each summer to attend the AAHE Assessment Conference. The future of this**

activity depends on budgetary restrictions, and the results of the recommendations set forth in #29 above.

31. Identify a Steering Committee and subcommittees for NCA Self Study and Accreditation. Membership on the Steering and subcommittees should include individuals from the UWAC and university faculty and staff who have expertise and/or experience in assessment and accreditation. NCA Self Study should begin no later than fall 2002. The Provost should allocate funds (\$5,400 for a nine-month contract) for a graduate assistant to support NCA accreditation.
 - **Status: The ACC withdraws its recommendation that a graduate assistant be funded by the Provost's Office to support the NCA accreditation process. Institutional planning for NCA Self Study began in spring 2002. The Associate Provost, the Director of the University Assessment Office, and the Director of University Planning represent the ACC on the NCA Steering Team. Many members of the ACC will be involved with the many sub-teams as part of the NCA self-study process.**
32. Support the review and continued implementation of the Small Grants for Assessment program sponsored by the UAO, Center for the Advancement of Teaching, and the Illinois State University Foundation.
 - **Status: There are no longer separate small grants available for assessment-related projects, though a strong assessment component is required for the current SoTL grants administered by CAT.**
33. At the beginning of every semester, the UWAC and the Provost should develop a list of priorities for the term. This information should be shared with members of the campus community via the web. At the end of every academic year, the UWAC should develop and disseminate a report of accomplishments.
 - **Status: The ACC completed Annual Reports in spring 2001, priorities were established for the next year, and special topics reports were submitted in spring 2002.**
 - **Recommendation: A meeting should be held with the new Vice President and Provost during Spring 2003 to discuss future structural changes and to match assessment-related priorities. The ACC's "Recommendations for the Future of the ACC" should be presented in draft form, and the results of this discussion should be included in the document as a final draft. The members of the ACC should be given the opportunity to review the revisions, make further recommendations and clarifications, and give final approval of the document (either electronically or in person).**
34. Clarify Institutional Review Board policies and faculty and staff responsibilities relevant to assessment.

- **Status: Under new leadership, the IRB clarified, disseminated, and are implementing new Classroom Research policies. The UAO consults with and assists faculty and staff on potential projects on issues of human subjects research, as requested.**

Planning, Policy Studies and Information Systems (now called Planning and Institutional Research)

35. Annual *Results Reports* should include performance measures and progress towards full implementation of the six goals of the *Illinois Commitment*. Results reported should be a function of coordinated planning, budgeting, and assessment.
- **Status: The Director of University Planning is working with the campus community in developing performance indicators for Illinois State University. Annual performance indicator reporting began with the University's Fiscal Year 2002 Results Report and performance indicator reporting will be refined for the Fiscal Year 2003 Results Report. The evidence provided in these documents will be consistent with the requirements and results from institutional processes related to the update of *Educating Illinois*, the NCA Self-study, and the mandates documented in the IBHE's *Illinois Commitment Goal 5*.**
36. Annual *Results Reports* should contain summaries of the previous year's Program Review. To document continuous, quality improvement, the summary should include measures of student learning outcomes, program strengths, areas of improvement, and actions taken.
- **Status: Annual Program Review summaries are included in annual Results Report submissions.**
37. Staff from PPSIS and UAO should continue to meet on a monthly basis to conceptualize, discuss, and implement assessment-related projects. The Offices should provide reciprocal links on their homepages.
- **Status: Staff from both offices meet on a recurrent basis. Reciprocal links are provided on each office's home page.**

Student Affairs

38. Broadly stated, assessment procedures should include institutional goals and identified student goals. Experiences inside and outside of the classroom must be assessed as they relate to student learning and development and the attainment of desired outcomes. Finally, comprehensive learning outcomes should include both cognitive/intellectual aspects as well as measures of career satisfaction and interpersonal competence.
- **Status: Actions completed as part of the Council for the Advancement of Standards Self Study in academic year 2001-02. The ACC supports the institutional initiative to make**

“Partnerships in Student Learning” a special emphasis area of the NCA Self-study.

39. Continue to use assessment tools to measure the effectiveness of services, policies, and programs.
- **Status: A benchmarking project was initiated in spring 2002 to continue throughout the 2002-03 academic year. A Comprehensive Program Review process has been established and is similar to the academic program review process used by Illinois State University.**
40. Continually assess changing student needs and develop programs and services to meet those needs.
- **Status: Results from the CAS self-study and on-going assessment activity results are being used to guide planning and resource allocation in the Division of Student Affairs.**
41. Assess programs and services in terms of user satisfaction and critical aspects of student life, learning, and personal development.
- **Status: See action #40.**
42. Utilize results from unit, division, university, and/or external assessments to improve or discontinue existing programs or services and develop new programs or services.
- **Status: The new Comprehensive Program Review process requires units to formally link planning, budgeting, and assessment.**

University Assessment Office (UAO)

43. Beginning in fall 2000, a spokesperson should provide an overview of the UWAC and the UAO at new faculty orientation sessions.
- **Status: The UAO is represented at the New Faculty Orientation information session, and the Director speaks during the program to broad assessment topics, such as General Education.**
44. In spring 2000, the UAO should develop and disseminate a resource directory to colleges and departments addressing frequently asked questions about institutional resources for assessment.
- **Status: The *Assessment Effects* newsletter provides a topical approach to assessment, the UAO distributes a Q & A sheet about UAO services and assessment in general at appropriate venues, and the UAO web site provides links to both internal and external resources.**
45. Present periodic workshops on assessment methods and activities.
- **Status: Completed and on-going.**

46. Standardized, longitudinal institutional surveys (CIRP, Sophomore Survey, Senior Survey) administered by the UAO should continue to be supplemented to address both departmental and institutional needs.
- **Status: The *Educating Illinois* implementation team for Action Item 16A completed a comprehensive review of the institutional surveys and made recommendations for future instruments and uses. The final report will be submitted to the ACC for review and approval in spring 2003.**
47. Expand collaborative efforts with institutional programs that represent interdisciplinary approaches to student learning (e.g., learning communities, Foundations of Inquiry and other General Education courses) to augment current assessment efforts.
- **Status: Completed and on-going. A new part-time (55% FTE) position was approved and filled in Spring 2002 in the UAO, with primary responsibility in the area of General Education assessment projects and support. This position was then lost due to budget cuts at the end of Spring 2003.**
48. The UAO's newsletter should be posted/archived on its web site, and include examples of best practices from comparable institutions throughout the country.
- **Status: Completed and on-going. The UAO newsletter *Assessment Effects* will be created and distributed in electronic form starting Spring 2003 in an effort of reduce production costs.**
49. With help from the UWAC, offer assistance in determining measures of progress and student learning to departments and units receiving Small Grants for Assessment.
- **Status: Individuals who receive Small Grants are required to share results with the campus community through both written reports and through presentations at campus events. Due to budget cuts, there were no Small Grants for Assessment offered during the 2002-03 academic year by the UAO, although the Center for the Advancement of Teaching included "assessment-related research" in its list of qualified topics for their small grant program.**
50. Members with particular areas of expertise should be called upon to assist the UAO in consultation with student learning outcomes assessment-related projects and workshops.
- **Status: Staff of the UAO are involved regularly with many campus projects, such as the FOI Assessment Project, the Student Phone-a-thon, the NCA self-study, core value assessment, use of portfolios for assessment, embedded assessment activities, and many workshops and presentations on these and other topics. The UAO has also collaborated with Faculty Technology Support Services (FTSS) on projects related to assessment of student learning using instructional technology.**

- **The Coordinator should continue to facilitate on-going development and assessment of a First Year Experience program at Illinois State University. During the Spring of 2003 a Task Force was established to participate in the national “Hallmarks of Excellence” project sponsored by the Policy Center for the First Year of College and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU).**

51. The UWAC and the UAO should share information regarding assessment studies, practices, conferences, etc. With assistance from the UWAC and faculty and staff, serve as the clearinghouse of assessment-related information for the campus community.

- **Status: Completed and on-going.**

Vice Presidents

52. Encourage divisions to continue to use assessment results as the basis for change. The *Assessment Inventory* lists how assessment results have been used at Illinois State University.

- **Status: The institution is now requiring inclusion of assessment results as part of the budget hearings process. Also see #54 below.**

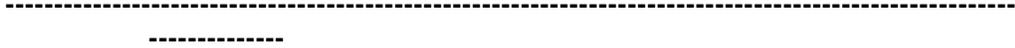
53. Support travel to regional and national assessment conferences for teams of faculty and staff.

- **Status: See #30. The ACC is concerned about the impact that budget reductions will have on the opportunities for faculty and staff to travel and present papers at regional and national conferences.**
- **Recommendation: The ACC supports opportunities for travel to assessment-related conferences by faculty and staff to enhance both professional development and institutional reputation. The fiscal commitment to assessment throughout the institution should include such funding, according to university priorities and established procedures for selection and support.**

54. As part of coordinated university-wide planning, divisions should submit assessment plans every three years. The report should include a summary of intended actions and a summary of how assessment is used for curricular and/or programmatic improvement.

- **Status: The University is currently implementing a three-year assessment plan for student learning outcomes. By 2004, all academic programs—including General Education—will have stated student learning outcomes, measurement systems in place, and document how assessment results have been used as the basis for change. In addition, the two divisions responsible for curricular and co-curricular implementation and review—**

Academic Affairs and Student Affairs—have systems in place to collect and use assessment data (i.e., accreditation reviews, program reviews, department-based assessment plans, and Council for the Advancement of Standards self-study recommendations, and the benchmarking activities).



APPENDIX A

Assessment at Illinois State University Excerpt from the “White Paper” submitted to Provost Goldfarb from the University-wide Assessment Committee (UWAC) April 2000

Definition, Philosophy, Practices, and Recommendations of Assessment for Illinois State University

After reviewing documentation from campus committees, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, *Academic Plan 1999-2004*, *Illinois Commitment*, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, and the American Association of Higher Education, we recommend that a general university statement that values, supports, and rewards assessment be developed. There are no contradictions in the documents reviewed. However, assessment is a construct that could, presently or in the future, have different meanings to different people. Therefore, we offer the following draft statement that should be shared via campus governance systems, rewritten if necessary, and presented as an Illinois State University Board of Trustees (BOT) resolution.

Assessment is and shall continue to be a high priority for Illinois State University. The institution is committed to valuing, supporting, and rewarding assessment-related activities that are led by the complementary and collaborative activities of university faculty, staff, and students. The actions of assessment, specifically defined below, are complementary to institutional goals and those established by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Assessment is a continuous process at all levels of the institution of systematically collecting, interpreting, and using qualitative and/or quantitative information to guide the improvement of student learning and development, as well as the formation and achievement of institutional priorities.

Moreover, the basic purposes of assessment are improvement (formative) and accountability (summative). When the intent is improvement, assessment efforts involve gathering and using information about student learning and other outcomes. When the intent is accountability, assessment is the collection and use of information to demonstrate the extent to which the institution is achieving its mission and priorities.

We view assessment as a continuous process of gathering and using information about student learning and development. To remain effective, student learning outcomes assessment data should be *used* internally to guide curricular, co-curricular, environmental, and institutional improvement. For both internal and external audiences

the intent *is not* evaluation of an individual or program. Instead, it is the demonstration of the extent to which the department, unit, college, division, and/or institution is achieving its mission and priorities. The beneficiaries of assessment are students; the institution's understanding of the learning process is continually enhanced.