



Written over seventeen years ago, the current Liberal Studies goals were written with evaluation strategies in mind, but the plan for assessment was not comprehensive enough to meet the current expectations for assessment, and the measurement tools relied too heavily on self-reported data. In fact, a lack of direct evidence about student learning was mentioned in the recommendations from the 1995 Middle States site visit. At that time, it was recommended that we move towards more direct measures that provided evidence of students meeting LS goals.

In summary, a universitywide assessment plan for determining whether IUP undergraduates achieve the proficiencies associated with what is expected of a liberally educated person is not in place, and the current plan we follow fails to adequately meet the requirements for outcomes assessment—that is, that academic decisions be based on evidence, not whim. To attempt to impose an assessment plan on the existing liberal studies program would not be the best use of faculty time and energy, especially when there are areas of the curriculum that need revisited and revamped, and some areas that need to be added.

**A revised curriculum will be designed with an associated assessment plan. The revised curriculum and assessment plan will be faculty driven rather than imposed from above or outside.**

Assessment is an activity that all faculty members conduct in every course they teach; a systematic plan that is designed to examine student learning more broadly across the curriculum rather than in isolated courses is a concept that we trust faculty members will embrace rather than reject. Feeling coerced to conduct specified assessment activities often leads to invalid assessment data and an attitude that negates the primary purpose of assessment. It is the belief of the LSRSC that the collective faculty at IUP can create and endorse an assessment plan that is reasonable and feasible. It is a worthy goal to develop a plan that examines authentic student work at various points across the curriculum for the purpose of understanding where students are in relation to the overall outcomes expected at graduation.

**A new curriculum provides an opportunity to create a relevant and coherent program in liberal studies with an assessment plan that makes sense and is useful to faculty and students.**

It has been suggested that “tinkering with” or “tweaking” the current curriculum should be sufficient. The problem with this approach is agreement on which components require change and which ones stay intact. Such an approach is destined to misdirect faculty energy from creating something new and fresh to turf protection and defending why their contributions to the current curriculum should remain untouched. A piecemeal approach to curriculum revision is likely to create division rather than synergy and result in winners and losers.

**A fresh, innovative curriculum with everyone re-examining expected student learning outcomes, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment will take IUP forward with a renewed commitment to ensure a liberal education for all students, regardless of major.**

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**In the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Accreditation standards as well as in the current literature on higher education, it is clear that faculty cannot assume to graduate liberally educated students by having these students complete a selection of courses in the arts, humanities, and sciences; a truly liberal education occurs across the span of the curriculum. A set of overarching University Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes provides a road map for all faculty members as to what we espouse for all graduates. If adopted, programs (majors) could then focus their assessment**

**Outcomes are addressed within their own outcomes. This exercise is beneficial not only because it articulates how a particular curriculum builds on prior learnin**

- Revise report in response to feedback

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