

## Program Review and Assessment Committee

**Thursday, September 08, 2005**

University Library, UL 1126

1:30-3:00 p.m.

Karen Johnson, Chair

Joshua Smith, Interim Vice Chair

### AGENDA -

1. Approval of May 12, 2005 Minutes ..... K. Johnson
2. Introduction of New Members ..... K. Johnson
3. Election of Vice Chair ..... K. Johnson
4. Review of Faculty Council Discussion of PUL Revisions ..... K. Johnson
5. Discussion of Responses to Questionnaire Designed to Evaluate PRAC ..... T. Banta  
(completed by PRAC members in May 2005)
6. Article Written for /by Trudy Banta ..... T. Banta  
(information item only)
7. Adjournment ..... K. Johnson

### MINUTES -

**Members Present:** W. Agbor-Baiyee, R. Applegate, K. Baird, T. Banta, K. Black, D. Boland, J. Brown, K. Busby, J. Fulton, A. Gavrin, K. Johnson, S. Kahn, H. Kim, J. Mac Kinnon, A. Martin, H. Mzumara, W. Potter, I. Queiro-Tajalli, I. Ritchie, K. Schilling, J. Smith, C. Souch, J. Thompson, R. Vertner, G. Whitchurch, D. Winikates, C. Yokomoto, N. Young

**Minutes** of the May 12, 2005 meeting were approved.

**Introductions:** Committee members introduced themselves. New members attending the meeting included: Janet Fulton, School of Nursing; Hea-Won Kim, School of Social Work; Allison Martin, School of Law; William Potter, Herron School of Art and Design; and Joe Thompson, School of Science.

**Election of Vice Chair:** K. Johnson explained that, in order to return to the normal PRAC election cycle, the committee would elect an Interim Vice Chair now and a permanent one in January. Josh Smith, School of Education, was elected by unanimous vote.

**Review of Faculty Council Discussion of PUL Revisions:** Johnson summarized the presentation and discussion of the proposed revisions to the Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PULs) at the September 6 Faculty Council Meeting. At that meeting, Betty Jones, recent member of PRAC and current Chair of the Faculty Council Academic Affairs Committee, explained the rationale for the proposed changes; they are intended to make the PULs more readable and understandable for the general reader

(and students, in particular), to update some of the language, and to remedy what some perceive as omissions in the original version of the PULs approved in 1998. For example, in the revision visual and aural literacy were added to “Core Communication and Quantitative Skills,” PUL 1.

Concerns expressed at the meeting included: a need to make it clearer that particular PULs will be more relevant to some disciplines than others; a need to include in the PUL language the idea that competence in the PULs develops over time; and an objection to including ethics and aesthetics in the same PUL. Also discussed was the importance of disseminating and clarifying the PULs for faculty and staff who are not familiar with their history. The Academic Affairs Committee will gather additional input and bring a revised proposal back to the full Faculty Council at a later date.

In the course of a lively discussion, PRAC members agreed that while some who were involved with developing the proposed revisions would like to see this process progress more quickly, it is heartening that faculty leaders feel that the issue is important and worthy of serious discussion and consideration. Faculty Council members need to consider that faculty members in each department and program must do the work of articulating how the PULs apply in their disciplinary contexts. At the same time, the process has revealed widespread lack of understanding of the PULs as well as some ambiguity about the role of PRAC, which is perceived differently by different groups. It might be helpful for PRAC members to discuss the proposed revisions with the Faculty Council Representatives in their schools.

**PRAC Evaluation:** At the May PRAC meeting, members were asked to complete a questionnaire about the usefulness of PRAC to them, its size, representation, and focuses, and perceptions of PRAC among their colleagues. T. Banta distributed a summary of the responses, noting that members were generally satisfied that PRAC was fulfilling its purpose and included the “right” representation. Members were less satisfied with the size of the committee—some thought it too large—and with awareness of PRAC in their schools. In the ensuing discussion, members suggested several actions that might increase awareness of PRAC’s work and enhance its usefulness to the campus:

- Members can explore within their own schools the kinds of help PRAC might most usefully provide.
- We might make use of campus media like *Inside IUPUI* to spread the word about PRAC.
- We might develop products that help units with assessment and with development of the annual PRAC report. Some faculty members lack a basic understanding of assessment and don’t know where to start or what questions to ask. An assessment “toolkit” geared to the needs of faculty new to assessment could be extremely helpful.
- Over the course of this year, each school could provide a good practice idea, describing what it is, why it is important, and how it is helping the school to improve. If we collect two of these ideas at each monthly meeting, by the end of the year we will have a toolkit, which could provide the basis for a Web page that links to assessment resources and campus experts.

Members also discussed the issue of whether PRAC should address undergraduate education only or continue to address both graduate and undergraduate education.

Because of the strong focus on the PULs recently, some members perceive PRAC as primarily concerned with undergraduate education. Other members pointed out that the committee is concerned with assessment and program review more broadly and that these cut across undergraduate and graduate education.

Banta noted that PRAC has emphasized assessment of undergraduate learning in an effort to stimulate the development of assessment programs at some level and then spread those programs to other levels. Nonetheless, some graduate programs at IUPUI are engaged in sophisticated assessment approaches, particularly professional programs that emphasize competence-based assessment. Smith added that professional accreditors are beginning to go beyond the “database” approach—tracking the percentage of students who pass licensure examinations, for example—and asking for products of student work that serve as evidence that students are prepared to enter the top tiers of their fields. C. Souch commented that non-professional schools need to think of assessment comprehensively—not just as an end-of-year report—and asked whether PRAC could extend its focus to assessment of research and civic engagement.

Banta agreed that as we pursue the suggestions made over the course of the discussion, we can bring in guest speakers and ask committee members to invite interested colleagues to attend those presentations. A number of members also expressed an interest in revisiting program review, beyond the periodic reports we’ve had on the outcomes of specific reviews.

Banta wrapped up the meeting by inviting members to register free for the Assessment Institute on October 23-25 and to register through PAII for one of two presentations on September 12 and 13 on the StudyTRAX system, a Web-based assessment tracking system. She drew the group’s attention to an interview with her published in *BizEd*, an AACSB periodical, and asked for members to e-mail comments to her.

Johnson adjourned the meeting at 3:00.