

Program Review and Assessment Committee

March Meeting 2018: Thursday, March 8, 1:30-3:00 pm, AD 1006

Minutes

Attending: K. Alfrey; J. Barbee; L. Bozeman; D. DeMeester; G. Durham; L. Easterling; T. Freeman; J. Gladden; S. Graunke; T. Hahn; M. Hansen; S. Hundley; C. Kacius/K. Rinker; C. Marsiglio; K. Murtadha; H. Mzumara; K. Norris; E. Ramos; K. Sheeler; A. Rao; M. Urtel; S. Weeden; J. Yan

1. Welcome and Review/Approval of Minutes (5 minutes)
 - a. T. Freeman called the meeting to order at 1:30pm
 - b. Motion made, seconded and passed to approve Feb. minutes.
2. Overview of the RISE Taxonomies — Jennifer Thorington Springer, Director of IUPUI RISE Program and Associate Professor of English; Brian Benedict, Assistant Director for Internships, DUE; Amy Powell, Director of Themed Learning Communities, DUE; Morgan Studer, Director of Faculty and Community Resources, DUE. (40 minutes)
 - a. T. Freeman welcomed guests and highlighted the recently published AACU article regarding the taxonomies.
 - b. **J. Thorington-Springer** IUPUI has gained recognition for RISE (HIPs), but there are challenges:
 - i. Fidelity – are the faculty adhering to the RISE criteria as initially intended?
 - ii. Course tags – either missing the tag, even though it was taught as such; or, tagged as RISE, but no longer taught as such
 - c. Taxonomies were created to look at quality and implementation – Created/Informed by the literature, VALUE Rubrics, how it is being implemented currently, characteristics of HIPs done well.
 - d. Intended benefits of taxonomies- quality course/program development, fidelity, assessment, resource (e.g., faculty going up on excellence in teaching, reviewing grants or courses)
 - e. Challenges of this initiative:
 - i. Instructor suspicion (e.g., fear of using this to evaluate faculty teaching). Instead, they are grounded in student success, valued as a resource/tool, facilitate a process for input
 - ii. Incentives
 - iii. Taxonomy vs rubric (rubric appears to be judgmental, so stuck with taxonomy), low/medium/high descriptors --- now high, higher, highest (to avoid “not doing it well enough”)
 - f. **M. Studer** – multiple definitions of SL and the taxonomy helps to clarify what we mean. Informed by the literature. Benefit – it illustrates what SL “looks like.” Feedback from faculty – “now I know what you want”, disproved assumptions and makes faculty feel like they are/can do SL. We use it in faculty development, a faculty learning community, national conferences – also to get

feedback so that it's useful. The 6 attributes are not all of the attributes associated with SL, but are what they narrowed down to as the core.

- g. FLC on SL Taxonomy (see objectives on slides). RISE Community of Practice also informed changes to the taxonomies as well as the support for using these.
- h. **B. Benedict** – internships taxonomy was created by looking at what others include in their course. A quick search resulted in 9 courses, only 2 of which included reflection. Discovered that there is a lot that can be done to improve the quality of internship experiences. And, there are some great practices we can consider. Relied upon 4 professional organizations for guidance (see citations – AACU, Cooperative Education and Internship Association, NACE, CAS)
- i. Starting point – every internship has value. Then, using the high/higher/highest mentality to work from there. Unique feature/challenge – you can't just hand it to people and expect them to go do it. Most like to look at examples, so we decided to create an example of our own to illustrate the levels.
- j. **A. Powell** – TLCs = a First year seminar paired with 2 gen ed courses that uses an overall theme. The TLC advisory board used the literature – “what makes a TLC different than if they just took these 3 courses by themselves?” Identified 5 attributes (see slide – these also became the rows of the taxonomy). Timeline – highlights the evolution that resulted in the current version (includes who was involved in the initial design, when feedback was given, pilot tested, revisions, finalized).
- k. To do this, support structures are really important. This spring is the “Big Wahooie” – a combined event of gateways, TLCs, FYE, Summer Bridge – this spring (Register [HERE](#)). Aligning the taxonomy with the TLC planning document. Encouraging teams to do at least one activity outside the classroom – we handle the logistics, the instructors dream it.
- l. Changes – increase the quality of TLC team plans – because we've more clearly defined what we are asking for in the plans. Increase in the # of out-of-class activities (2015=34; 2016=100; 2017=123). Teams want to do this, especially when they have the support from our office. Seen an increase in SL- study 2 years ago showed that students in an SL TLC had higher success rates and sharing those findings has resulted in an increase. The direct measures of integrative learning assessment (VALUE Rubric) improved the way that faculty wrote their assignment the following year. Working with Steve Graunke to bring this to scale.
- m. J. Thorington-Springer – what we can do moving forward...how we've gotten faculty to use this. What's the impact? S. Graunke – Idea - look at the relationship between the score on the taxonomy to a score on the rubric (ideal). If anyone is interested in doing that type of work, please let us know..great SoTL project.
- n. J. Gladden – the taxonomies are great – thanks to everyone who has contributed. The impact of these is only as good as how much they are used. The goal is to get widespread utilization, especially when scholarship comes out of it. We encourage you share – promote their availability, usability, and potential impact.
- o. T. Freeman -What have you learned about applying them in working with faculty?

- p. M. Studer – I’m surprised as to how much faculty like them. One faculty said “I only want to stay in level 1”. What that triggered for me – we know what we need to talk about. I’m not trying to push you in a direction you aren’t interested in going into. Guides faculty development and how to best work with them.
- q. T. Hahn – in our FLC we did a survey for the taxonomy – faculty were excited about hearing from the student perspective compared to how the faculty member designed the experience (see surveys).
- r. B. Benedict – my colleague always wanted to implement this, but couldn’t bring it to scale. They developed peer reflection into the course based upon the taxonomy best practices.
- s. J. Gladden – this is great for faculty overseeing internships – focus on teaching and learning. It is a pretty significant way to bring them to a HIP.
- t. M. Studer – this protects our community partners because it illustrates how faculty should be working with partners to co-design the experience. Promotes mutually-beneficial and reciprocal partnerships.
- u. T. Freeman – research and international taxonomies? J. Thorington-Springer – The community of practice will continue this. We have also received other requests (i.e., ePortfolios). Patti Clayton will be here to give feedback on the others as part of the CoP.
- v. A. Rao – will there be a 4th column that emerges based upon the scholarship that is developed? J. Thorington-Springer – these are living documents, so we hope that these continue to grow and evolve as additional ideas emerge.

3. Discussion about New York Times Op-Ed, “The Misguided Drive to Measure ‘Learning Outcomes,’” by Molly Worthen – Stephen Hundley (40 minutes). Please read the piece prior to the PRAC meeting to prepare for discussion:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/23/opinion/sunday/colleges-measure-learning-outcomes.html>

S. Hundley – Many of you are on the ASSESS List-serve (for advanced practitioners, but many of you would benefit from joining the group). We partner with them in a variety of ways (Assessment Institute, their June conference, on-going topic-based conversations). The Chronicle had this, but the New York Times piece really got a lot of attention. While challenging, it does accurately represent some perceptions of academics. The comments illustrate a great deal of agreement as well. We thought it might be interesting to look at it as it relates to our work as PRAC and the work of assessment at IUPUI.

Group discussions - see handout. Identify a scribe and spokesperson.

1. Agreements/disagreements – we could recognize many of the things described – poorly conceived assessment as it is currently practiced in some places. Assessment done well is hard. DENT - lots of coursework and it all boils down to passing a test. To get beyond that requires a great deal of time and \$.
2. Colleagues would agree with a lot of it, but assessment done well does have value.
3. The example provided – who came up with that? Assessment should be meaningful as opposed to coming from above. Critiques the whole industry using one example.

4. The author is an Asst. professor and many Ph.Ds are not taught assessment in grad school. This also conflicts with her idea of what she thought she would be doing.
5. We aren't talking about poorly prepared students and how we should handle this. How do we talk about that amongst our colleagues? And does assessment push them through or help us address their needs?
6. Can we send her an invitation to the Assessment Institute? HA!
7. Tried to understand the writers perspective--- 3 themes: Measurement, Use, Value
 - a. Measurement – it's really hard to measure these complex constructs
 - b. Use – collect all of this – does it improve student learning?
 - c. Value – this is a lot of time and money – does it really make a difference?
 Meta – level assessment --- should we evaluate our assessment processes (effectiveness, ROI, is the juice worth the squeeze)
8. Capitalist quote – what's the value of an education.
9. Tensions – need to use it, but also want to build it so that it can be part of SoTL.
10. How do we ensure assessment is meaningful...ensure we document the assessment – goals, processes, outcomes (when possible), changes that are made.
11. We agree that the volume of work is a huge. We appreciate the inequity raised and not sure if assessment is the space for that. But also inequity across colleges/departments. Also inequities as to how we assess.
12. Disagreed that assessment is dumbing down the university. It does serve to make the institution better.
13. Agree –people that care the most about quality of education gravitate towards assessment roles and therefore, perhaps has contributed to the increased time, resources, attention.
14. How can students who graduate sustain the skills they have? – sustaining these throughout the workplace.
15. National board exams and the pass rates – why are people failing?
16. Is there a disconnect between the PRAC reports? Are we contributing to the notions raised in this article?

4. Announcements (5 minutes)

L. Bozeman - March 30th meeting of international affairs liaisons – representatives are coming to talk about the Global Learning module of NSSE from the perspective of the disciplines if you are interested. (about 30min from 1-3:00pm – more to come as to exact time).

K. Norris – IUPUI received the Engaged Campus Award from Indiana Campus Compact.

S. Hundley – priority deadline for A.I. is tomorrow.

K. Sheeler – a 3rd iteration of the PULs/PCLs was released Monday and the feedback process ends this month.

5. Adjournment Future PRAC Meeting Dates:

Thursday, April 19 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. in University Hall (AD) 1006

Thursday, May 10 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. in University Hall (AD) 1006



Toolkit Resources: Campus Models & Case Studies



High-Impact Taxonomies: Designing Faculty Development Tools at IUPUI

March 2018

Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) has a long and successful history of using [high-impact practices \(HIPs\)](#) to engage students inside and outside the classroom.

National research and IUPUI’s own assessments show that students who participate in HIPs—including first-year seminars and experiences, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, collaborative assignments and projects, service learning, internships, and eportfolios—are more likely to be retained or graduate on time, and the campus has worked to increase access to these practices for all students.

“At IUPUI, we’ve been doing high-impact practices for a very long time. We’ve done great work and have been nationally recognized for it,” said Jennifer Thorington Springer, director of the [IUPUI RISE Initiative](#) and associate professor of English.

However, until recently, campus administrators struggled to answer one of their most pressing questions about HIPs: how could they ensure that these practices were not only available to students, but were done well?

According to Julie Hatcher, executive director of the Center for Service and Learning at IUPUI, a lot of research on high-impact practices treats them as “a dichotomous variable,” measuring whether students participate or don’t participate in HIPs and then making correlations to student learning outcomes. “What we don’t know enough about is what the various dimensions [of high-impact practices] are and how those various dimensions influence student learning outcomes.”

To learn more about HIPs and improve opportunities for students, “the next step was to look at the quality of the actual high-impact practices, and we thought it would be critical to develop a tool to help faculty think about how to do this work well and how to be intentional about it,” Springer said.

These tools, which the campus refers to as “[taxonomies](#),” are transforming the curriculum and faculty development around HIPs at IUPUI.

Designing High-Impact Taxonomies

Many of IUPUI’s HIPs are connected through the [RISE Initiative](#), which was established in 2008 to work with offices and centers across campus to ensure that all undergraduate students participate in two or more high-impact practices. Faculty tag their courses as one of the four elements of RISE:

- Research opportunities led by faculty and built into the curriculum
- International travel and learning tied to course pedagogy
- Service-learning experiences that help the local community
- Experiential learning through professional practice

RISE has successfully increased access to HIPs; in both the 2017 fall and 2018 spring semesters, more than six thousand students enrolled in over five hundred RISE courses, each including a high-impact practice and providing students with opportunities to “to reflect on their experience and

see their development over time,” Springer said.

However, RISE has also faced three critical challenges: (1) it was focused on for-credit courses, excluding the many cocurricular practices available outside of coursework; (2) it began as a top-down initiative, with little input from faculty; and (3) it was difficult to maintain and assess fidelity of courses with a RISE notation—because the tagging of courses is decentralized and done by faculty, a course might be tagged as an R, I, S, or E, but when a new instructor begins teaching the course they may not continue using the high-impact teaching practice.

Inspired by AAC&U’s [VALUE rubrics](#) and the California State University (CSU) system, Kathy Johnson, IUPUI’s executive vice chancellor, asked offices and centers with responsibility for research, international study abroad, service learning, internships, and other curricular and cocurricular practices to create eight taxonomies to ensure fidelity to RISE requirements and to serve as faculty resources for design and assessment (see fig. 1).

Getting Faculty to Buy In

RISE brought together administrators, faculty, and staff from each of the centers or offices that oversee HIPs to review existing research ([from George D. Kuh](#) and others) to identify the attributes of effective high-impact practices in general. This larger committee broke off into eight smaller teams, each of which was tasked with reviewing the research about a specific HIP, identifying best practices, and compiling a list of five attributes to include on the taxonomy (see fig. 2).

Figure 1. RISE currently has eight taxonomies, and plans to create a ninth for eportfolios:

- [summer bridge](#)
- [first-year seminars](#)
- [internships](#)
- [service-learning courses](#)
- [undergraduate research](#)
- [study abroad](#)
- [themed learning communities](#)
- [peer mentoring](#)

Figure 2. [Service Learning Taxonomy \(click to enlarge\)](#)

ATTRIBUTE	HIGH IMPACT	HIGHER IMPACT	HIGHEST IMPACT
Reciprocal partnerships and practices shape the community activities, course design, and community outcomes.	The instructor contracts a community organization to host students and provides a brief overview of the course (e.g., learning outcomes, syllabus) and the purposes of the community activities.	The instructor meets with the community partner(s) to discuss the course (e.g., preparation/orientation of students, learning outcomes, syllabus), and to identify how the community activities can enrich student learning and benefit the organization.	The instructor collaborates with and learns from the community partner(s) in collaboration in various aspects of course planning and design (e.g., learning outcomes, readings, preparation/orientation of students, reflection, assessment) and together they identify how the community activities can enrich student learning and add to the capacity of the organization.
Community activities enhance academic content, course design, and assignments.	The instructor includes community activities as added components of the course. The syllabus conveys this information.	The instructor utilizes the community activities as a “tool” to provide additional insight into student understanding of academic content and ability to complete assignments. The syllabus describes the relationship of the community activities to learning outcomes.	The instructor integrates the community activities and relevant social issues as critical dimensions for student understanding of academic content and ability to complete assignments. The syllabus provides a strong rationale for the relationship of the community activities to learning outcomes.
Civic competencies (e.g., knowledge, skills, dispositions, behaviors) are well integrated into student learning outcomes.	The instructor focuses on discipline-based content with some attention given to civic learning or development of civic competencies.	The instructor focuses on discipline-based content and connects to civic learning and skills competencies when relevant to the community activities.	The instructor focuses on the integration of discipline-based content with civic learning and civic competencies and emphasizes the relevance of the community activities to the public purposes of the discipline in society.
Dialogue with others across difference (e.g., racial, ethnic, social economic status, sexual orientation) occurs regularly.	The instructor, the course, and community activities offer students opportunities for interaction and dialogue with diverse others (e.g., race, ethnicity, social economic status, gender, sexual orientation).	The instructor, the course, and community activities engage students in periodic interaction and dialogue with diverse others (e.g., race, ethnicity, social economic status, gender, sexual orientation), as well as interaction and dialogue with peers across a range of experiences and diverse perspectives.	The instructor, the course, and community activities engage students in frequent interaction and dialogue with diverse others (e.g., race, ethnicity, social economic status, gender, sexual orientation), as well as interaction and dialogue with peers across a range of experiences and diverse perspectives.
Critical reflection is well integrated into student learning.	The instructor asks students to create reflective products about the community activities at the end of the semester.	The instructor structures reflection activities and prompts about the community activities that connect the experience to academic content, require moderate analysis, lead to new action, and provide ongoing feedback to the student throughout the semester.	The instructor builds student capacity to critically reflect and develops products that explore the relevance of the experience to academic content, use critical thinking to analyze social issues, recognize systems of power, and lead to new action. The instructor provides ongoing feedback to the student throughout the semester.
Assessment is used for course improvement.	The instructor articulates the student learning outcomes to the class and assesses at the end of the course.	The instructor articulates the student learning outcomes to the class and uses a measurement tool to assess the service learning component of the course.	The instructor and community partner(s) articulate the student learning outcomes to the class and use measurement tools to assess the service learning component of the course and influence on community outcomes.

One challenge in the taxonomies project, which depends on faculty participation, was a worry from some faculty or staff that the taxonomies could be used to assess their teaching. To counteract this perception and foster faculty support, the eight taxonomy teams asked faculty to provide feedback and made sure to address that feedback in future revisions.

Engaging faculty was easiest for practices centralized within a single program or office, like IUPUI’s themed learning communities (TLCs), which are cohorts of twenty-five first-year students who study together in a series of seminars and general education courses around a single theme.

Each spring, learning community faculty gather together to plan their courses and activities for the fall. “I have them all in one room at the same time, which is a huge advantage in doing this work,” said Amy Powell, director of themed learning communities. “We were intentional about presenting the taxonomy as a draft, as a pilot, and that we wanted their feedback. . . . We took their feedback and then made significant changes.”

The teams for other HIPs, like service learning or internships, worked with stakeholders spread across various departments and offices. They built or leveraged existing committees, communities of practice, or faculty learning communities to request feedback for revision.

Despite bringing faculty together around each HIP, it was difficult to garner wider faculty buy-in across campus. To help, the service-learning team held a webinar about its members’ experiences using the taxonomies, and RISE hosts a workshop series attended by more than one hundred faculty, many of whom hope to use taxonomies to create a new high-impact experience for students. In these workshops, Springer is careful about the language she uses to describe how the taxonomies guide course and program design.

“We didn’t use the word ‘improve,’ because that appears judgmental,” Springer said. “So, we used the word ‘enhance’ a lot. We reminded faculty that they’re doing a great job, but here’s how we can enhance what’s being done.”

Springer also made clear to faculty the ultimate goal of the taxonomies: "We want to make sure that students get the most benefit out of what it is we're doing. And once the focus was switched to students and student success, the faculty were all on board."

This attention to language applied to the taxonomies themselves. To ensure consistency across the various HIPs and to signal that faculty were not being judged for their work, the themed learning communities team recommended that the three stages of achievement for practices be dubbed "high impact," "higher impact," and "highest impact" (see fig. 2).

For a course to maintain its status as a RISE course, "you don't have to be at the very top. You can stay within 'high,' because that says you're doing a high-impact practice," Springer said.

"I really appreciate the way they're phrased and designed because they're much more open," said Jay Gladden, associate vice chancellor for undergraduate education, dean of University College, and dean of Honors College. The taxonomies tell faculty, who may be trying to design a HIP for the first time, "Hey, we're glad you want to try something different, and we're glad you want to employ a strategy that is considered a high-impact practice, and we want to help you do that, to evaluate the work, and to think through how you do the work with students."

High-Impact Professional Development

In their first two years, the taxonomies have enhanced HIPs on campus in several ways. They provide guidance to faculty when creating learning experiences, help program offices evaluate what faculty development is needed, and help to ensure greater fidelity between courses and RISE requirements.

"As soon as a program becomes more clearly defined, it's much easier to say this is going well and here's where we need to focus our energy," Powell said.

The Center for Service and Learning has sponsored two faculty learning communities to introduce the taxonomy as a tool to support course design and scholarship of teaching and learning projects. Faculty were asked to use the taxonomy to map their own performance and possible actions steps to create deeper learning experiences.

Each element of the Service Learning Taxonomy begins, "The instructor . . ." (see fig. 2). Rather than having faculty apply a rubric to student artifacts, this phrasing allowed the Center for Service Learning to create a student survey that faculty can use for self-assessment.

For internships, Matthew Rust, director of Campus Career and Advising Services, said his office used the internship taxonomy to develop a course for students who cannot take an internship through an existing course in a major. The office also produced a template internship course in the institution's learning management system and held a workshop introducing it to internship course instructors across campus.

In the biggest change brought by the internship taxonomies, courses provide more opportunities for students to reflect on their experience while also providing a platform for employers to give feedback.

"And that's been the biggest cultural shift that we're working toward, where we're viewing internships not simply as a matter of serving time or logging hours worked, but as students actually being able to articulate learning as they're going through that experience," Rust said.

When themed learning community faculty gather each spring, they use taxonomies to plan the following year's courses and activities. In August, they turn in their plans to Powell's office, and after each semester they use a survey to assess their individual performance and their team's performance on the five attributes.

Because the same faculty often teach within the same learning community year after year, the planning process is "an opportunity to revisit the taxonomy," Powell said. "I encourage each team to get to the high-impact level in each attribute and then pick one or two other attributes to strive for higher or highest to make it aspirational."

After two years of using the taxonomy, she has already seen "significant changes." For example, the taxonomy calls for each team to do at least one out-of-class activity. In 2015–16, before using the taxonomy, the thirty-nine themed learning communities conducted thirty-four out-of-class activities. One year later, after introducing the taxonomy, they did one hundred activities. This year, there were 123 out-of-class activities.

Students highly value these activities. On an end-of-term survey, they responded positively to the connections they made:

- "I liked all the trips we took to museums, festivals, and places of worship regarding many different religions."
- "I learned a lot about the TLC theme and am applying it in several places outside of class."
- "I liked making a deep connection with a large group of people and forming a large support network with instructors."
- "I really enjoy all of my professors; they were there for me both in and outside of the classroom. It truly made me feel like I was in my own community and felt like I was treated like family."

Once faculty see that the learning communities program provides support for implementing HIPs, including help with planning and logistics, "faculty want to do it. It's fun, it's exciting to connect with their students," Powell said.

Powell also worked with the Center for Service Learning to design experiences for themed learning communities that wanted to incorporate service learning as their out-of-class activity.

"But we wound up doing it much more in-depth than that," Powell said. "We mapped out attributes from both taxonomies and said, 'If you're going to do these together, what should they look like? What would the bar be? And how do you do them in a way that's truly integrative?'"

To increase the participation in HIPs for all students, IUPUI is in the process of creating an Institute for Engaged Learning. This institute will work with faculty and staff teams to create meaningful education pathways through the intentional scaffolding of curricular and cocurricular learning. The HIPs taxonomies will be an important tool in guiding the development of these pathways.

"These taxonomies are going to be very helpful and will undergird the work we're doing in creating the institute," Gladden said. They will "help faculty understand what a high-quality engaged-learning activity looks like."

Already, the communication fostered by the taxonomies is bringing more faculty on board, but the leaders of the project are careful not to lose focus of their ultimate goal—ensuring high-quality student learning experiences.

The faculty and staff working with the taxonomies—including IUPUI's Institutional Research and Decision Support office—are exploring ways to directly assess the effects of the redesigned HIPs on the student learning outcomes they enhance.

"We have such amazing faculty here that are so invested in this type of work," Powell said. "It's really faculty facing, it's fun, it's exciting, and the faculty are engaged and they want to do this at a high level. But the reason that we do this is the impact it's going to have on student outcomes."

