

## School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI

### 2011-2012 ACADEMIC YEAR ASSESSMENT REPORT

#### Introduction

In 2011 and 2012 as the School of Liberal Arts celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the faculty in the School of Liberal Arts engaged in an ongoing conversation about Teaching and Learning through regularly scheduled open meetings held throughout the year. The first conversation used the book *Academically Adrift* (Arum and Roksa, 2011) as its jumping off point. During this session, faculty from departments across the School discussed a wide range of topics on strengths and challenges of our programs, our faculty and our students. The second session was dedicated to student learning outcomes. During this session, we shared our goals for what our students will know and be able to do when they leave IUPUI after having earned their degrees. Subsequent topics included effective writing (how to elicit it from students and how to know it and evaluate it when we see it) and active reading. Each of these sessions created a space for faculty to actively engage in a free flowing discussion about student learning. They illustrated the breadth of what we in the Liberal Arts teach our students and expect of them. They illustrated the challenges inherent in the enterprise of education and the variety of approaches the different disciplines and faculty employ in pursuit of those goals. At base, we agreed that the liberal arts are about helping to make people more fully human; a lofty goal indeed.

One pragmatic question continually rose to the surface during these conversations. Do we really know how successful we are in achieving our goals? Faculty have clear ideas of what they hope for their students to tackle and ultimately master, but we were not always certain we could demonstrate that such mastery has taken place. Some faculty point to grades as one indicator of what and how much students are learning. Other faculty use pre- tests to establish a baseline of student knowledge and post- testing of students to measure what our Liberal Arts education has actually added to the student's body of knowledge, skills and competencies. Some programs systematically feed data into their decision-making and make changes to their programs. In other programs, such adjustments are more piecemeal.

Since previous annual assessment reports have focused on activity at the department level, this report will employ school level data on both direct and indirect measures to assess undergraduate student learning across the School of Liberal Arts.

## **Student Learning Outcomes in the School of Liberal Arts**

The School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI is a large, diverse and dynamic school. With 11 departments and more than 30 centers, institutes, and programs, the School is the only one of its kind in the IU system. The School enrolls nearly 1,700 undergraduate majors, 340 graduate students, and has more than 220 full-time faculty members. We award degrees in sixteen undergraduate majors, and most departments offer graduate degrees and/or certificates; students may also choose a Ph.D. program in Philanthropic Studies or Economics. New programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels are under development. A BA in Medical Humanities and Health Studies, a BA and minor in Latino Studies and a PhD in Health Communications are three of the most recent new programs being formulated.

Some departments and programs in the School of Liberal Arts participate in programs with national standards that have long specified agreed upon learning outcomes. Other programs have generally followed the Principles of Undergraduate Learning as a framework for what their students are expected to know and be able to do at the completion of their fields of study.

Last year the School collected the core student learning outcomes from each degree and certificate for all undergraduate and graduate departments. Certain commonalities exist across the many programs, of course, but the diversity and breadth of teaching and learning in the school means that we are in pursuit of many and varied learning outcomes. The following general statements of learning outcomes at each level of degree summarize across the many programs. As students move into higher levels of learning, greater levels of mastery are expected.

An Associate of Arts (AA) degree in the School of Liberal Arts (SLA) is designed to fulfill a set of desired learning outcomes for the general education of a university undergraduate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This degree reflects IUPUI's Principles of Undergraduate Learning (<http://academicaffairs.iupui.edu/plans/pul/>).

Students completing the Associate of Arts degree should:

- **Know** through an introductory level about their place and time in society and culture from a variety of perspectives (such as anthropology, economics, history, philosophy, political science, religious studies, sociology, and science), and through having an introduction to a second language.

- **Understand** methods and modes of inquiry specific to areas of knowledge in arts and humanities, natural sciences, and the social sciences, the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge, the components of a multicultural society, and the global society and processes of globalization
- **Be able to**
  - Demonstrate good written and oral communication skills
  - Demonstrate effective skills and interactions with individuals and within groups
  - Begin to integrate content materials to applications in the workforce
  - Propose solutions to problems based on their content area of study, either through individual or team member work

A Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in the School of Liberal Arts (SLA) includes at least two components: **General Education** courses (required and elective) and courses in **a declared major** (required and elective). Both components reflect IUPUI's Principles of Undergraduate Learning.

Students completing the Bachelor of Arts degree should:

- **Know** about their place and time in society and culture from a variety of perspectives (such as anthropology, economics, history, philosophy, political science, religious studies, sociology, and science), and through having a second language
- **Understand**, appreciate, and respect the variety and complexity of other societies and cultures—across time and place—as the basis for successful interaction in the global context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- **Be able to**
  - Find, analyze, evaluate, summarize, and apply information, drawing effectively on a variety of information sources and tools
  - Pose general as well as particular questions and propose creative solutions to those problems in different contexts—working independently and as members of teams
  - Communicate effectively in English to peers and professionals making effective use of a variety of communication modes, methods, and technologies, and have functional competency in one other language
  - Exercise ethically sound judgment in personal and professional situations and demonstrate responsible behavior as leaders as well as being able to work effectively in group or team projects

A Master of Arts (MA) degree in the School of Liberal Arts (SLA) reflects IUPUI's Principles of Graduate and Professional Learning (<http://academicaffairs.iupui.edu/plans/graduatePrinciples.cfm>).

Students earning a Master of Arts degree in the School of Liberal Arts will:

- **Know** the fundamental concepts, terms and theories in their chosen field of study
- **Understand** how to apply these concepts to important questions in their field
- **Be able to**
  - Discuss contemporary issues in a specialized field of study
  - Explain the interconnections between variants within the discipline of study

- Complete research with faculty supervision
- Give presentations at professional meetings, symposia and other fora
- Plan and conduct research in a specialized field of study
- Be prepared to continue on to doctoral level study in the discipline and/or to enter the workforce in the specific area of study, applying theoretical and practical skills to tasks employing critical thinking skills

A Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in the School of Liberal Arts (SLA) reflects IUPUI's Principles of Graduate and Professional Learning.

Consonant with these principles, students earning a Ph.D. in the School of Liberal Arts will:

- **Know** the ethics and practices of the discipline of study, how to respond to human diversity and to real-place settings, and the importance of critical reflection and how it can be used through research and/or work applications
- **Understand** leadership capacity through theory to practice, the link between staying abreast of the latest developments in the field through professional development and membership in professional organizations, and global perspectives of communities of practice
- **Be Able to**
  - Display proficiency in the discipline and engage in academic scholarship
  - Apply theory and research through employment in real-work settings and be able to disseminate this research through scholarly writings and presentations
  - Construct meaningful collaborations with local, national and international communities of practice
  - Promote an inclusive environment that promotes academic rigor and innovative methodologies for practice and learning

## Data on Student Learning

Departments and programs across the school vary in the quality and extent to which they gather data on student success in achieving desired learning outcomes. As noted above, those programs governed by professional associations with credentialing standards are more accustomed to thinking in terms of systematically requiring students to demonstrate particular learning outcomes. In this report we will be making use of three sources of data; one direct and two indirect. These include the Liberal Arts IUPUI Faculty Ratings of Student Performance on the Principles of Undergraduate Learning, the Graduating Student Assessment Survey and the Continuing Student Survey. These data sources taken together can be seen to provide a full picture of student learning. As the following discussion indicates, each source of data provides a remarkably similar picture of student learning.

## Faculty Ratings of Student Performance on Principles of Undergraduate Learning (Direct Measures)

The first measure employed here is a direct measure of student mastery of the PULs. As part of the campus wide initiative, all full time faculty in the School of Liberal Arts are expected to submit data on achievement of key PULs in each of their classes each semester. These data will hopefully provide opportunities for reflection on areas of success and need for improvement. Data are broken up by class level, 100, 200, 300 and 400. We report only major emphasis by level. Faculty provide assessments for each student on the primary PUL for each of their courses. There are again four possible responses, “Not effective” (1), “somewhat effective” (2), “effective” (3) and “very effective” (4). These data are combined across five semesters, Spring 2010, Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011 and Spring 2012. Note that the number of students included in each cell of the table varies significantly. In cases of very small numbers of students, percentages are not particularly meaningful. However, taken together, these data add another layer of information to our analysis. These tables give us an opportunity to examine student mastery at different levels of study.

Generally, the data provided by faculty rather closely mirror both graduating senior and continuing student self-reporting as will be noted below. For the vast majority of PULs at all levels, faculty report student mastery as at least “effective.” Interestingly, however, faculty report greater effectiveness in quantitative skills than do students. In 100 level courses, the mean faculty assessment is 3.20. Over 80% of students in 100 level classes are assessed as either effective or very effective (mean of 3.20, n=1,615). However, for 200 level classes, those two categories combined total only 51% while the mean was 2.58 (n=579). Mean faculty assessment of written and oral communication and critical thinking was at or above 3 in all four course levels.

As the tables illustrate, students in 100 and 200 level courses were assessed less positively on integration and application of knowledge than were students in 300 and 400 level courses. This finding may reflect a greater emphasis upon this PUL as our students progress into more advanced courses. Assessment for student understanding of society and culture also generally follows this trajectory (though assessments on this PUL are slightly lower in 200 level than in 100 level courses).

*Faculty Ratings of School of Liberal Arts Student Performance on PULs with Major Emphasis (100 level and lower)*

| PUL-Major Emphasis<br>114 Unique Course Sections | N<br>Mean     | Not<br>Effective | Somewhat<br>Effective | Effective      | Very<br>Effective |
|--|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1A. Written, Oral & Visual Communication Skills  | 7,218<br>3.04 | 704<br>9.8%      | 1,122<br>15.5%        | 2,598<br>36%   | 2,794<br>38.7%    |
| 1B. Quantitative Skills                          | 1,615<br>3.20 | 113<br>7%        | 178<br>11%            | 601<br>37.2%   | 723<br>44.8%      |
| 1C. Information Resource Skills                  | 72<br>2.94    | 2<br>2.8%        | 16<br>22.2%           | 38<br>52.8%    | 16<br>22.2%       |
| 2. Critical Thinking                             | 2,370<br>2.95 | 273<br>11.5%     | 391<br>16.5%          | 897<br>37.9%   | 809<br>34.1%      |
| 3. Integration and Application of Knowledge      | 1,436<br>2.69 | 179<br>12.5%     | 376<br>26.2%          | 585<br>40.7%   | 296<br>20.6       |
| 4. Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness | 344<br>3.03   | 55<br>16%        | 39<br>11.3%           | 90<br>26.6%    | 160<br>46.5%      |
| 5. Understanding Society and Culture             | 7,543<br>3.07 | 715<br>9.5%      | 1,296<br>17.2%        | 2,254<br>29.9% | 3,278<br>43.5%    |
| 6. Values and Ethics                             | 696<br>3.36   | 49<br>7.0%       | 73<br>10.5%           | 154<br>22.1    | 420<br>69.3%      |
| Total  | 21,294        |                  |                       |                |                   |

Total=combined number of student ratings in all 100 level courses sampled in Spring 2010, Fall 2010, and Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012. A student may be evaluated more than once if he or she is taking more than one 100 level course.

1="Not Effective", 2="Somewhat Effective", 3="Effective", 4="Very Effective."

*Faculty Ratings of School of Liberal Arts Student Performance on PULs with Major Emphasis (200 level)*

| PUL-Major Emphasis<br>59 Unique Course Sections  | Mean          | Not<br>Effective | Somewhat<br>Effective | Effective      | Very<br>Effective |
|--|---------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1A. Written, Oral & Visual Communication Skills  | 2,386<br>3.26 | 128<br>5.4%      | 245<br>10.3%          | 884<br>37.1%   | 1,129<br>47.3%    |
| 1B. Quantitative Skills                          | 579<br>2.58   | 99<br>17.1%      | 185<br>32%            | 153<br>26.4%   | 142<br>24.5%      |
| 1C. Information Resource Skills                  | 34<br>2.56    | 6<br>17.6%       | 11<br>32.4%           | 9<br>26.5%     | 8<br>23.5%        |
| 2. Critical Thinking                             | 1,277<br>2.98 | 113<br>8.8%      | 245<br>19.2%          | 477<br>37.4%   | 442<br>34.6%      |
| 3. Integration and Application of Knowledge      | 489<br>2.70   | 85<br>17.4%      | 80<br>16.4%           | 220<br>45%     | 104<br>21.3%      |
| 4. Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness | 100<br>3.23   | 6<br>6%          | 14<br>14%             | 31<br>31%      | 49<br>49%         |
| 5. Understanding Society and Culture             | 3,293<br>2.86 | 400<br>12.1%     | 592<br>18%            | 1,355<br>41.1% | 946<br>28.7%      |
| 6. Values and Ethics                             | 253<br>3.16%  | 12<br>10.1%      | 44<br>17.4%           | 89<br>35.2%    | 108<br>42.7%      |
| Total  | 8,411         |                  |                       |                |                   |

Total=combined number of student ratings in all 200 level courses sampled in Spring 2010, Fall 2010, and Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012. A student may be evaluated more than once if he or she is taking more than one 200 level course.

1="Not Effective", 2="Somewhat Effective", 3="Effective", 4="Very Effective."

*Faculty Ratings of School of Liberal Arts Student Performance on PULs with Major Emphasis (300 level)*

| PUL-Major Emphasis<br>60 Unique Course Sections  | Mean          | Not Effective | Somewhat Effective | Effective    | Very Effective |
|--|---------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1A. Written, Oral & Visual Communication Skills  | 1,136<br>3.31 | 50<br>4.4%    | 115<br>10.1%       | 401<br>35.3% | 570<br>50.2%   |
| 1B. Quantitative Skills                          | 45<br>3.38    | 1<br>2.2%     | 4<br>8.9%          | 17<br>37.8%  | 23<br>51.1%    |
| 1C. Information Resource Skills                  | 235<br>3.12   | 13<br>5.5%    | 40<br>17%          | 87<br>37%    | 95<br>40.4%    |
| 2. Critical Thinking                             | 938<br>3.14   | 59<br>6.3%    | 122<br>13%         | 384<br>40.9% | 373<br>39.8%   |
| 3. Integration and Application of Knowledge      | 1,069<br>3.15 | 85<br>8%      | 167<br>15.6%       | 320<br>29.9% | 497<br>46.5%   |
| 4. Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness | 353<br>3.37   | 21<br>5.9%    | 30<br>8.5%         | 100<br>28.3% | 202<br>57.2%   |
| 5. Understanding Society and Culture             | 3,046<br>3.29 | 225<br>7.4%   | 353<br>11.6%       | 787<br>25.8% | 1,861<br>55.2% |
| 6. Values and Ethics                             | 116<br>3.57   | 5<br>4.3%     | 9<br>7.8%          | 17<br>14.7%  | 85<br>73.3%    |
| Total  | 6,938         |               |                    |              |                |

Total=combined number of student ratings in all 300 level courses sampled in Spring 2010, Fall 2010, and Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012A student may be evaluated more than once if he or she is taking more than one 300 level course.

1="Not Effective", 2="Somewhat Effective", 3="Effective", 4="Very Effective."

*Faculty Ratings of School of Liberal Arts Student Performance on PULs with Major Emphasis (400 level)*

| PUL-Major Emphasis<br>43 Unique Course Sections  | Mean        | Not Effective | Somewhat Effective | Effective    | Very Effective |
|--|-------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1A. Written, Oral & Visual Communication Skills  | 212<br>3.30 | 6<br>2.9%     | 20<br>9.4%         | 90<br>42.5%  | 96<br>45.3%    |
| 1B. Quantitative Skills                          | 11<br>2.82  | 1<br>9.1%     | 1<br>9.1%          | 8<br>72.7%   | 1<br>9.1%      |
| 1C. Information Resource Skills                  | 2<br>2.0    | 1<br>50%      | 0<br>0%            | 1<br>50%     | 0<br>0%        |
| 2. Critical Thinking                             | 184<br>3.30 | 11<br>6.6%    | 14<br>7.6%         | 68<br>37%    | 91<br>49.5%    |
| 3. Integration and Application of Knowledge      | 568<br>3.28 | 32<br>5.6%    | 47<br>8.3%         | 219<br>38.6% | 270<br>47.5%   |
| 4. Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness | 219<br>3.31 | 11<br>5%      | 29<br>13.2%        | 60<br>27.4%  | 119<br>54.3%   |
| 5. Understanding Society and Culture             | 896<br>3.35 | 54<br>6%      | 90<br>10%          | 241<br>26.9% | 511<br>57%     |
| 6. Values and Ethics                             | none        |               |                    |              |                |
| Total  | 2,092       |               |                    |              |                |

Total=combined number of student ratings in all 400 level courses sampled in Spring 2010, Fall 2010, and Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012. A student may be evaluated more than once if he or she is taking more than one 400 level course.

1="Not Effective", 2="Somewhat Effective", 3="Effective", 4="Very Effective."

## Liberal Arts Graduating Student Assessment Survey (Indirect Measures)

The Liberal Arts Graduating Student Assessment Survey is administered through the IUPUI Office of Information Management and Institutional Research (IMIR). Beginning each June 15, all undergraduate students with an active program/plan in Liberal Arts with 85 credit hours or more (and associate degree students) are contacted via email and asked to indicate their anticipated graduation date and complete their “Intent to Graduate” survey on-line. The second part of this survey offers graduating students an opportunity to reflect on their academic experience, identify faculty/staff academic advisors and mentors, and indicate future employment/educational plans. Follow-up requests are sent each month through Dec. to students who have not replied to maximize response rates. The survey remains available to students until December 1. These reflections form the basis of the data we examine below.

Instructions on the survey explicitly indicate that responses will help the School to assess its programs. The survey has four parts: general items related to academic services, faculty mentoring, academic advising, and an opportunity for open ended student reflection. For our purposes, the most important element is the first one, though at the end of this section we provide a brief discussion of teaching and academic advising. The most recent data are from Spring, 2011. Two hundred twenty one graduating seniors completed this portion of the survey. The number of responses on each item varies slightly as the table indicates.

Graduates are asked to rate their level of mastery on a variety of learning outcomes based upon the PULs. Though these are not direct measures of student learning, they do capture the students’ assessment of their own learning. Students are queried on their ability to express their ideas effectively in writing, orally and visually. They are asked to assess how they view the effectiveness of their communication, the ability to express their opinions clearly and to employ analytical skills to comprehend, interpret and analyze ideas and facts. As this sampling of questions indicates, the survey gathers data on the students’ own assessment of their acquisition of the PULs and other important learning outcomes.

The following table presents the relevant data. Items highlighted in yellow indicate areas in which students reported particularly high levels of mastery (a mean response of 4.5 or greater out of 5). The first column indicates the primary PUL the question taps into as well as the sub-element. Students could choose one of five responses: not at all (1), poorly (2), somewhat (3), well (4) or very well (5). The last two columns provide data on means and standard deviations for each question.



Data from School of Liberal Arts Graduating Senior Survey 2011(N=185-186)

*Core Communication and Quantitative Skills*

| PUL  |   | Not at all (1) | Poorly (2) | Somewhat (3) | Well (4) | Very Well (5) | Mean | SD  |
|------|---|----------------|------------|--------------|----------|---------------|------|-----|
| 1(1) | Express ideas and facts to others effectively in written formats                                      | 0%             | 0%         | 2.2%         | 30.1%    | 67.7%         | 4.66 | .52 |
| 1(1) | Express ideas and facts to others effectively in oral formats   | 0              | .5         | 6.5          | 48.4     | 44.6          | 4.37 | .63 |
| 1(1) | Express ideas and facts to others effectively in visual formats                                       | 0              | .5         | 12.4         | 51.6     | 35.5          | 4.22 | .67 |
| 1(2) | Use effective analytical skills like the ability to comprehend, interpret and analyze ideas and facts | 0              | 0          | 2.2          | 37.6     | 60.2          | 4.58 | .54 |
| 1(3) | Communicate effectively   | 0              | .5         | 3.2          | 37.6     | 58.6          | 4.54 | .59 |
| 1(4) | Identify and propose solutions for problems using quantitative tools and reasoning                    | 0              | .5         | 5.4          | 47.3     | 46.8          | 4.40 | .62 |
| 1(5) | Make effective use of information resources   | 0              | .5         | 10.2         | 40.9     | 48.4          | 4.37 | .69 |
| 1(5) | Make effective use of information technology  | 0              | 1.1        | 12.9         | 39.2     | 46.8          | 4.32 | .74 |

*Critical Thinking*

| PUL |                    | Not at all (1) | Poorly (2) | Somewhat (3) | Well (4) | Very Well (5) | Mean | SD  |
|-----|--------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|----------|---------------|------|-----|
| 2   | Learn how to think | 1.1            | 0          | 1.6          | 27.4     | 69.9          | 4.65 | .63 |

*Integration and Application of Knowledge*

| PUL  |  | Not at all (1) | Poorly (2) | Somewhat (3) | Well (4) | Very Well (5) | Mean | SD   |
|------|--|----------------|------------|--------------|----------|---------------|------|------|
| 3(1) | Enhance my personal life                                   | 3.2            | 4.3        | 14.0         | 33.9     | 44.6          | 4.12 | 1.02 |
| 3(2) | Meet Professional Standards and competencies               | 1.1            | 2.2        | 7.0          | 41.4     | 48.4          | 4.34 | .79  |
| 3(3) | Further the goals of society                               | 1.1            | 1.1        | 12.4         | 47.6     | 37.8          | 4.20 | .78  |
| 3(4) | Work across traditional course and disciplinary boundaries | 0              | .5         | 5.4          | 34.4     | 59.7          | 4.53 | .63  |

*Intellectual Depth, Breadth and Adaptiveness*

| PUL  |   | Not at all (1) | Poorly (2) | Somewhat (3) | Well (4) | Very Well (5) | Mean | SD  |
|------|---|----------------|------------|--------------|----------|---------------|------|-----|
| 4(1) | Show substantial knowledge and understanding of at least one field of study                               | 0              | .5         | 4.8          | 27.4     | 67.2          | 4.61 | .61 |
| 4(2) | Compare and contrast approaches to knowledge in different disciplines                                     | 0              | .5         | 8.6          | 41.4     | 49.5          | 4.40 | .67 |
| 4(3) | Modify my approach to an issue or problem based on the contexts and requirements of particular situations | 0              | 0          | 5.9          | 40       | 54.1          | 4.48 | .61 |

*Understanding Society and Culture*

| PUL  |   | Not at all (1) | Poorly (2) | Somewhat (3) | Well (4) | Very Well (5) | Mean | SD  |
|------|---|----------------|------------|--------------|----------|---------------|------|-----|
| 5(1) | Compare and contrast the range of diversity and universality in human history, societies and ways of life | 0              | .5         | 7.0          | 34.4     | 58.1          | 4.50 | .65 |
| 5(2) | Analyze and understand the interconnectedness of global and local communities                             | 0              | 1.6        | 8.6          | 37.6     | 52.2          | 4.40 | .72 |
| 5(2) | Learn about others in the local community   | 1.1            | 1.6        | 14.5         | 38.7     | 44.1          | 4.23 | .84 |
| 5(3) | Operate with civility in a complex world  | .5             | 0          | 4.3          | 42.7     | 52.4          | 4.46 | .63 |

*Values and Ethics*

| PUL  |  | Not at all (1) | Poorly (2) | Somewhat (3) | Well (4) | Very Well (5) | Mean | SD  |
|------|--|----------------|------------|--------------|----------|---------------|------|-----|
| 6(1) | Make informed and principled choices and foresee consequences of these choices                       | 0              | 0          | 2.2          | 34.9     | 62.9          | 4.61 | .53 |
| 6(2) | Explore, understand and cultivate an appreciation for beauty and art                                 | .5             | 2.2        | 14.5         | 32.8     | 50            | 4.30 | .83 |
| 6(3) | Understand ethical principles within diverse cultural, societal, environmental and personal settings | 0              | 0          | 5.4          | 34.6     | 60            | 4.55 | .60 |

*Teaching and Advising in the School of Liberal Arts*

|  | Very Dissatisfied (1) | Dissatisfied (2) | Neutral (3) | Satisfied (4) | Very Satisfied (5) | Mean                      |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Quality of teaching by faculty in your major area          | .6                    | 1.7              | 5           | 36.3          | 56.4               | 4.46<br>SD .721<br>N=179  |
| Quality of teaching by faculty outside your major area     | 0                     | 3.4              | 17.8        | 55.2          | 23.6               | 3.99<br>SD .745<br>N=174  |
| Academic Advising in your major department                 | 2.9                   | 6.9              | 16.7        | 29.9          | 43.7               | 4.05<br>SD 1.069<br>N=174 |
| Helpfulness of the Miriam Z Langsam Student Affairs Office | 1.8                   | .6               | 29.9        | 33.5          | 34.1               | 3.98<br>SD.911<br>N=167   |

Though a full analysis of these data is beyond the scope of this report, students generally report high levels of perceived competence across the PULs. For example, eight questions in the survey capture PUL 1 Core Communication and Quantitative Skills and its sub elements. Summing the two responses indicating the highest levels of proficiency (well and very well) the majority of elements assessing PUL 1 show very high levels of perceived proficiency (80% or greater). For each question relating to PUL 1, the mean student response was at least 4 (meaning the response was “well” or “very well”). Highest reported responses were for expressing ideas and facts in written formats, effective use of analytical skills and effective communication. Reported mastery of expressing ideas in visual formats was slightly lower (mean of 4.22, with 35.5% reporting they perform this task very well and 51.6 reporting “well”) though even this comparatively low reported mastery is still quite high. Similarly, nearly all of graduating seniors report that they have high levels of proficiency on PUL 2 Critical Thinking. The mean response was 4.65 and the combined percentage of those responding well or very well to the item “I learned to think” was 97.3% (this is an admittedly rough approximation of PUL 2, but it is the closest item at our disposal).

Students report particularly high levels of mastery for items related to PUL 6. Nearly all graduating seniors report they have learned to make informed and principled choices and foresee the consequences. They similarly report high levels of learning in understanding ethical principles within diverse cultural, societal, environmental and personal settings. This is interesting in that relatively few of the School’s courses list PUL 6 as a core PUL. In sum, as the items highlighted in yellow above demonstrate, graduating seniors report very high levels of mastery across the remaining PULs. Those items that are not highlighted, nevertheless, represent mean responses above 4 meaning the majority of responses were at least “well.”

Teaching and advising are, of course, among the most important predictors of academic success. Recognizing this, the survey also gathered information about student experiences in these areas. Student responses to these items (quality of teaching in and outside their major area, advising in the department and in the Miriam Z. Langsam Student Affairs Office) appear at the bottom of the above table. These items ask students about their experiences with OTHERS rather than their own levels of mastery. It is perhaps not surprising therefore that those responses are slightly less universally positive. Students are most satisfied with their experience with those closest to them. They report higher levels of satisfaction with faculty and advisors in their own major areas of study. They are slightly less satisfied with the quality of teaching outside their majors and with the helpfulness of the Liberal Arts Student Affairs Office. Nevertheless, in each case mean responses are at or above 4, indicated that students are typically satisfied with their experiences in Liberal Arts at IUPUI.

Data from a single point in time cannot tell us a great deal about the ongoing successful acquisition of knowledge and skills by students. But comparing them across time (as additional data are amassed) can help us to identify areas of strength and weakness. Attention to these trends will help us focus greater attention upon elements in which students believe that they are less proficient. Student assessments of their own acquisition of learning outcomes are one important source of information, but they are not sufficient. It might be that graduating seniors are particularly positive as they depart with their degrees in hand. To fully assess student learning in the School of Liberal Arts additional data are needed.

### **Continuing Student Survey (Indirect Measures)**

The Continuing Student Survey was generated and administered by the Office of Information Management and Institutional Research (IMIR) in collaboration with administrative and academic leaders across IUPUI. In spring 2011, 7,046 students received an e-mail which included both an invitation to participate in the Continuing Student Satisfaction and Priorities Survey as well as an individual link to the survey itself. This included 656 students from the School of Liberal Arts. Of those 656 Liberal Arts students, 140 completed the survey for a response rate of 21%. The following tables provide information from this survey. Means, Standard Deviations, and Standard Errors are noted. The table also includes the mean response from across IUPUI so that the Liberal Arts response can be compared to students across IUPUI. Note that responses to this survey range from “Not at all Effective”(1) to “Very Effective” (4) while the Graduating Senior Survey (discussed above) responses ranged from 1-5. A mean of less than 3 indicates the mean response is either “somewhat effective” or “not at all effective.” We must take care, therefore, about making comparisons between the two surveys. Nevertheless, findings from the continuing student survey are remarkably similar to those presented above. Variation in these tables is even less noteworthy than the graduating senior survey tables so we have not highlighted particularly strong mastery (as we did above) as nearly everything would be highlighted. The mean response to

items across nearly all of the PULs is 3 or higher (meaning students report they are at least “effective”) in exercising each of the skills. The only items for which students reported mean responses of less than “effective” have to do with quantitative skills. For these items, students were more likely to respond that they are “somewhat effective” at exercising these skills than for any of the other PULs. These are also items on which our students report less mastery than students across all of IUPUI. As noted above, graduating seniors reported slightly lower levels of mastery on items related to quantitative skills as well. In sum however, Liberal Arts students report high levels of mastery of a variety of core learning goals. In addition, these two surveys with different questions, methodologies and administrators paint very similar pictures of student learning in the School of Liberal Arts.

*Data from Continuing Student Survey  
School of Liberal Arts*

*Please indicate how effectively you can perform each of these skills...  
Core Communication and Quantitative Skills*

| PUL  |   | Mean | STD  | SE   | IUPUI Mean | Effect size |
|------|---|------|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 1(2) | Read and understand books, articles, and instruction manuals                            | 3.44 | 0.69 | 0.06 | 3.38       | 0.09        |
| 1(1) | Formally communicate ideas and information  | 3.44 | 0.70 | 0.06 | 3.37       | 0.11        |
| 1(1) | Write a final report  | 3.41 | 0.70 | 0.06 | 3.28       | 0.18        |
| 1(1) | Communicate with a team to solve problems   | 3.32 | 0.75 | 0.07 | 3.37       | -0.08       |
| 1(4) | Solve mathematical problems*  | 2.64 | 0.88 | 0.08 | 3.05       | -0.48       |
| 1(4) | Use mathematics in everyday life*   | 2.74 | 0.93 | 0.08 | 3.06       | -0.37       |
| 1(4) | Understand a statistical report   | 2.64 | 0.89 | 0.08 | 2.75       | -0.13       |
| 1(4) | Support an argument using quantitative data   | 2.98 | 0.88 | 0.08 | 3.01       | -0.04       |
| 1(5) | Identify sources of information that are most appropriate for a project                 | 3.39 | 0.73 | 0.06 | 3.32       | 0.09        |
| 1(5) | Recognize which ideas or materials need to be fully acknowledged to avoid plagiarizing* | 3.56 | 0.60 | 0.05 | 3.39       | 0.25        |
| 1(5) | Use computer software   | 3.36 | 0.69 | 0.06 | 3.43       | -0.10       |
| 1(5) | Evaluate the quality and accuracy of information found on a website                     | 3.45 | 0.67 | 0.06 | 3.32       | 0.19        |
|      | N=132-133   |      |      |      |            |             |

aScale: 4 = “Very Effective”, 3 = “Effective”, 2 = “Somewhat Effective”, 1 = “Not at all Effective” \* Denotes effect size greater than 0.2 or less than -0.2

### Critical Thinking

| PUL  |   | Mean | STD  | SE   | IUPUI Mean | Effect Size |
|------|---|------|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 2(2) | Analyze different ideas and proposed solutions*                     | 3.49 | 0.61 | 0.05 | 3.35       | 0.21        |
| 2(4) | Systematically review your own ideas about how to approach an issue | 3.37 | 0.68 | 0.06 | 3.30       | 0.10        |
| 2(4) | Generate new ideas about how to approach an issue                   | 3.36 | 0.75 | 0.07 | 3.28       | 0.11        |
| 2(4) | Generate new ideas about how to improve things                      | 3.31 | 0.80 | 0.07 | 3.32       | -0.01       |
| 2(4) | Discuss challenging problems with peers to develop a solution       | 3.33 | 0.81 | 0.07 | 3.30       | 0.05        |
|      | N=131-132   |      |      |      |            |             |

aScale: 4 = "Very Effective", 3 = "Effective, 2 = "Somewhat Effective", 1 = "Not at all Effective"

\* Denotes effect size greater than 0.2 or less than -0.2

### Integration and Application of Knowledge

| PUL  |  | Mean | STD  | SE   | IUPUI Mean | Effect Size |
|------|--|------|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 3(1) | Integrate and apply knowledge to enhance my personal life. | 3.45 | 0.71 | 0.06 | 3.37       | 0.13        |
| 3(2) | Meet professional standards and competencies in my field   | 3.25 | 0.76 | 0.07 | 3.30       | -0.08       |
| 3(3) | Further the goals of society                               | 3.17 | 0.82 | 0.07 | 3.08       | 0.12        |
| 3(4) | Work across traditional course and disciplinary boundaries | 3.27 | 0.66 | 0.06 | 3.17       | 0.15        |
|      | N=128-132  |      |      |      |            |             |

aScale: 4 = "Very Effective", 3 = "Effective, 2 = "Somewhat Effective", 1 = "Not at all Effective"

\* Denotes effect size greater than 0.2 or less than -0.2

Please indicate how effectively you can perform each of these skills...  
Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness

| PUL  |  | Mean | STD  | SE   | IUPUI Mean | Effect Size |
|------|--|------|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 4(2) | Learn new approaches for work or for advanced studies                                    | 3.19 | 0.73 | 0.06 | 3.16       | 0.05        |
| 4(1) | Have an in-depth understanding of my major field of study                                | 3.25 | 0.75 | 0.07 | 3.27       | -0.03       |
| 4(2) | Have a general understanding of subjects other than the one in which I majored           | 3.20 | 0.74 | 0.06 | 3.20       | 0.00        |
| 4(3) | Being able to modify how I approach a problem based on the requirements of the situation | 3.34 | 0.65 | 0.06 | 3.30       | 0.07        |
|      | N=129-131  |      |      |      |            |             |

aScale: 4 = "Very Effective", 3 = "Effective, 2 = "Somewhat Effective", 1 = "Not at all Effective"

### Understanding Society and Culture

| PUL  |   | Mean | STD  | SE   | IUPUI Mean | Effect Size |
|------|---|------|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 5(3) | Deal with conflict among coworkers and friends                              | 3.27 | 0.72 | 0.06 | 3.28       | -0.01       |
| 5(2) | See the relationships among local, national, and global issues*             | 3.44 | 0.67 | 0.06 | 3.23       | 0.29        |
| 5(3) | Work effectively with people of different races, ethnicities, and religions | 3.66 | 0.57 | 0.05 | 3.59       | 0.11        |
| 5(3) | Respect the views of people who see differently than I do                   | 3.63 | 0.60 | 0.05 | 3.57       | 0.10        |
|      | N=129-131   |      |      |      |            |             |

aScale: 4 = "Very Effective", 3 = "Effective, 2 = "Somewhat Effective", 1 = "Not at all Effective"

*Values and Ethics*

| PUL  |   | Mean | STD  | SE   | IUPUI Mean | Effect Size |
|------|---|------|------|------|------------|-------------|
|      | Exercise my responsibilities as a citizen                       | 3.42 | 0.76 | 0.07 | 3.27       | 0.18        |
| 6(1) | Make informed judgments when faced with ethical dilemmas        | 3.56 | 0.58 | 0.05 | 3.47       | 0.13        |
| 6(1) | Recognize the consequences of my actions when facing a conflict | 3.60 | 0.59 | 0.05 | 3.56       | 0.06        |
| 6(2) | Understand and appreciate the arts*                             | 3.57 | 0.63 | 0.06 | 3.29       | 0.34        |
|      | N=131   |      |      |      |            |             |

<sup>a</sup>Scale: 4 = “Very Effective”, 3 = “Effective”, 2 = “Somewhat Effective”, 1 = “Not at all Effective”

\* Denotes effect size greater than 0.2 or less than -0.2

**Conclusion**

The School of Liberal Arts, as noted earlier, is a large and diverse School teaching courses of study that span a large array of fields of inquiry. Our courses have been designed to address the core learning principles embodied in the PULs and we have begun assessing students on the primary PUL for each class we teach. The three different data sources examined above all point to rather high levels of mastery among our students on key outcomes (as defined by the PULs) across the School of Liberal Arts. None of the data enable us to provide assessments at the program or department level however (though PUL assessment data might be made available at the request of the School that has not yet happened).

Data are needed at the program level to take the next step of feeding information back into the program to make improvements. In some cases, programs within the school are already effectively undertaking their own ongoing assessment of student learning and feeding the knowledge gained from this assessment back into the students’ curriculum. Other departments are still working to figure out how best to gather systematic data on student learning now that each department has clearly defined what we expect our students to know and be able to do at the conclusion of their courses of study. As these departments undergo periodic external reviews they will be expected to provide data on student learning. It is safe to say that all departments are attentive to the success of their students at acquiring and demonstrating mastery of core concepts. In some departments, the next step is to formalize the assessment process and capture and retain necessary data. The School is encouraging departments to create assessment processes so they might gather relevant data and use that data to identify strengths and weaknesses in their own programs.

Having identified learning outcomes by level for each of our majors, the School of Liberal Arts (and its departments) need to further develop criteria for systematically assessing each of these learning

outcomes. Faculty need to reflect on how well their course assignments reflect upon the learning outcomes they hope to achieve and restructure courses where necessary. Certain departments and individual faculty members are actively engaged in this work all the time, but we have not taken adequate steps as a School to capture and reflect upon these data and learn from them. Perhaps the School should name a committee of interested faculty with the charge of developing a template for faculty to use to guide them in linking Student Learning outcomes to assessment and performance. The capstone experience would be a good place to begin this endeavor as each department and program requires such a course. Just as the departments are diverse, so are the Capstones. However, these courses would provide a good jumping off point for identifying strengths and weaknesses in curricula and student mastery of learning outcomes that could be employed at the department level to improve curricula.

The School of Liberal Arts is made up of a faculty dedicated to student learning and student success. As we strive to create a more systematic evidence collection process that more effectively measures student success as mastering core learning outcomes, we will be better able to tailor learning and teaching methodologies and techniques to the strengths and weaknesses of our students and toward the outcomes we want them to achieve.

## Works Cited

Arum, Richard and Josipa Roksa. 2011. Academically Adrift. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.