Indiana University School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI
2013-2014 AY Learning Assessment Report

Introduction

The School of Liberal Arts is a complex organization. We grant undergraduate degrees across more than 20 majors; if one takes into account that some of the majors serve as "umbrellas" for quite distinct types of concentrations or tracks, the number is pushed to 30 (for example, SLA offers a BA in English, but under that BA lies several separate major plans--linguistics majors and creative writing majors share almost no common courses within the major; indeed, one falls heavily on the "arts" side of "arts and humanities," while the other is considered by most to be a social science). At the graduate level, 12 MAs and 2 PhDs are offered by the school. Again, the range is startling, moving from a hard social science such as Economics to a humanities field such as literature.

Such a range, however, is necessary as the contemporary world now demands the habits of mind and the skills engendered by engagement with the liberal arts for successful navigation in the international context in which we find ourselves. To think critically and creatively, to understand a people's language, society, and culture, to engage in the analysis of data and be able to convey it through appropriate written and oral media, these and other such habits of thought and application of skills are what our students learn. To understand self, community, and the world and to be able to act upon those entities and shape them is the point of a liberal arts education.

Few, if any, other schools offer such a range of types of courses to be assessed. What is more, most of the areas of study in Liberal Arts do not have accrediting bodies that have guidelines for expected student learning outcomes; in fact, some of the professional associations in the Liberal Arts are suspicious of data-driven assessment outcomes. So, in addition to a situation in which the expected learning outcomes are so different that intradepartmental help is not always seen as such, there is, in fact, some hostility to "assessment" language and methods among at least some faculty. These complicating factors make assessment in SLA interesting, to say the least.

This report examines both department and school-level data. There are too many degree programs to examine in detail in each report, so, following what was started last year, the assessment work of three departments will be highlighted (this will need to be increased in next year's report to four or five; the hope is to track progress in assessment work by each unit by taking a snapshot every five years or so of efforts and results at the program/department level). Following review of these selected departments, there follows a report of school-level material.

Department Efforts
Last year, assessment data was reviewed for the departments of English, World Languages and Culture, and Communication Studies. For the 2013-2014 school year, I requested assessment information from two programs and one department: the Paralegal

Studies program (undergraduate), the Museum Studies program (graduate) and the History department (this department applied for but did not receive a PRAC grant). Of these three, it is clear that both Museum Studies and Paralegal Studies are further along in thinking through assessment issues as a way to improve student learning; History is not as far along, but, as a department, they are charting a way forward in order to attend more carefully to assessment issues in the future.

Museum Studies

The Museum Studies program offers an undergraduate certificate and a graduate certificate in Museum Studies; the primary work of the program, however, falls to its MA. There are currently 35 students enrolled in the graduate program.

During the past year, the program has developed desired learning outcomes and proficiencies for its program and mapped student outcomes to courses (see tables 1 and 2 below).

An in-progress curriculum revision process shows the program's progress toward those outcomes. In summary, the program is conceived in three distinct parts-- foundational experiences, exploration of practice, and culminating formative experience. Students should leave the program with a solid foundation of professional proficiencies (visual, textual, and design analysis, and knowledge of interpretive and evaluative practices) that are grounded in a research-based and community-centered approach. In order to achieve this goal, the program will, based on its newly established student outcomes:

- Refine the "foundational" first semester experience for students and develop or re-develop a "formative" culminating experience in the final semester.
- Establish a flexible and responsive inventory of courses and formats that can meet the student experience goals that match with program values and proficiencies.

The following actions will be taken in support of the above objectives:

- Integrate both programmatic core values and proficiencies into all coursework
- Maintain internships
- Maintain core courses but explore ways to better link these with thematic threads
- Maintain and expand community collaboration and ideas of civic engagement
- Develop series of 1.5 credit or other variable credit courses to provide greater flexibility around content for students
- Build flexibility for students with regular, predictable schedule for electives

Specifically, in regard to the three parts of the program, these steps will be incorporated: 1) build a first-semester foundational "block" experience for students that encompasses the core material covered in the existing courses: Introduction to Museum Studies, Museum

Education, and Collections Care and Management; 2) following the foundational semester, students will spend time exploring conceptual ideas of museum work through additional required courses (exhibition planning and design; museum administration) and various electives; by the end of the first year students would create a finalized plan of professional practice with an emphasis on key questions they wish to pursue through an internship; and 3)   faculty will more fully shape, support and complement the internship experiences with a more robust course component as they rethink the relationship between the internship and the role of the colloquium. the goal will be a final paper/internship report that represents a substantive explanation of the professional research project.

Again, as noted, this is not the full report; there are action steps to support what is here outlined.

A new feature of the program, based on developing best practices and the need for assessment data that is meaningful (which means it must be meaningful for student learning), is that a 'signature' project, tied to the learning outcomes, is required in all classes.

In addition, as part of their program, students complete portfolios of their work and make a public presentation of that work. Many of the signature projects end up in the portfolios as examples of student work. The portfolio is one of the major components of students' final class and one that, the program director indicates, could potentially be a place for data gathering. The portfolios have varied in format over the years, with the majority being done in the Epsilen platform. The most recent versions have been loaded on Linkedin.

Finally, the program director is piloting this fall (2014) the use of the outcomes function on Canvas to gauge its helpfulness in the work of assessment.

Table 1

Museum Studies Program Desired Outcomes Across Core Courses and Profciences

Desired Outcomes	Core and Required Courses						
	Intro	Education	Collections	Admin	Exhibits	Colloqium	Internship
Talk about why they do what they do; justified and grounded in a rationale						X	
Communicate professionally in written and oral forms	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Demonstrate professionalism and ethical behavior that honors the rights of people and organizations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Understand a framework for applying ethics to situations and connect to their actions, apply it to their practice	X	X	X		X		
Craft educational program that serves their own goals and needs							X
Come out with confidence that they can use what they've learned and know how to use it.							
Understand multifaceted aspects of museums and the role they play in interpretatation	X	X					
Understand the role of the museum in its community	X	X					
Understand the role of the professional museum worker in the community		X					X
Appropriately define and implement actions that museums can and do have to contribute to communities	X	X				X	
Apply skills they use rather than serving as "armchair" curators			X		X		
Identify and conceptualize problems of practice and know how to answer the question and use research/inquiry skills	X	X	X	X	X		X

	Proficiencies						
	Visual analysis	text analysis	design	evaluation	interpretation	research	community
Talk about why they do what they do; justified and grounded in a rationale					X	X	X
Communicate professionally in written and oral forms	X	X					
Demonstrate professionalism and ethical behavior that honors the rights of people and organizations			X	X	X		X
Understand a framework for applying ethics to situations and connect to their actions, apply it to their practice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Craft educational program that serves their own goals and needs							
Come out with confidence that they can use what they've learned and know how to use it.							
Understand multifaceted aspects of museums and the role they play in interpretatation					X		X
Understand the role of the museum in its community							X
Understand the role of the professional museum worker in the community							X
Appropriately define and implement actions that museums can and do have to contribute to communities				X	X	X	X
Apply skills they use rather than serving as "armchair" curators	X	X					
Identify and conceptualize problems of practice and know how to answer the question and use research/inquiry skills	X	X					

Table 2
Museum Studies Outcome Mapping to Courses

- Talk about why they do what they do; justified and grounded in a rationale
- Communicate professionally in written and oral forms
- Demonstrate professionalism and ethical behavior that honors the rights of people and organizations
- Understand a framework for applying ethics to situations and connect to their actions, apply it to their practice
- Craft educational program that serves their own goals and needs
- Come out with confidence that they can <u>use</u> what they've learned and know <u>how</u> to use it.
- Understand multifaceted aspects of museums and the role they play in interpretation
- Understand the role of the museum in its community
- Understand the role of the professional museum worker in the community
- Appropriately define and implement actions that museums can and do have to contribute to communities
- Apply skills they use rather than serving as "armchair" curators
- Identify and conceptualize problems of practice and know how to answer the question and use research/inquiry skills

First Year

	Intro to Museum Studies	**Museum Education**	**Collections Care and Management**
Course Description	This survey of museology introduces students to the history of museums and to debates on the philosophical nature of museums. The course covers the types and definitions of museums. It traces the history of museums, discusses contemporary practice in museums, and examines current issues in the profession as it faces the future of museums in the twenty-first century. The course explores museums' missions and their roles in society through case studies and exhibitions in a variety of museums including art, history, and ethnographic museums.	Education is about communicating messages, creating experiences, and promoting human development for people of all backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances. Museums are powerful and important locations of education and learning in communities. Individuals, families, and other groups can learn and explore the world through objects, collections, and social interactions. This course will give students a basic foundation on the educational theory, practices, and skills central to museum education and an appreciation for the wide-ranging learning needs of all audiences. Through a variety of in-class projects and	This course offers a survey of museum collections care and management, introducing students to a variety of professional skills through readings on professional practice, hands-on projects and museum visits. The course focuses on collections management and care, drawing on practices from a variety of disciplines, covering: administration (policies, budgeting, rights and reproduction); documentation (registration methods, photography, manual and computerized systems, inventory);physical care (object handling, storage, environmental monitoring, preservation and conservation); loans; exhibitions; risk management (insurance, disaster planning, security, theft, fire and water

		exercises, service-learning and observation, museum-based classes, and readings, students will gain an understanding of the role of museum educators, current issues in museum education, and informal/non-formal learning in museums. Topics in this survey of museum education practice include the role of museums in the learning process, planning and development of learning activities, life-long learning and the educational mission of museums, the role of museums in promoting diversity in learning, and museum-community partnerships.	protection, pest management, hazards inherent to objects); and ethical and legal issues.
Course Objectives	At the end of the course, the student should be able to: • Demonstrate an understanding of museum history and professional organizations • Debate museum ethical issues • Discuss critically, in written and verbal form, current issues in the philosophy of museums, museum missions, representation of the past, interpretation of cultural objects, and the role of museums in society • Evaluate critically a museum exhibition • Locate the core museum studies literature, principal museum organizations, and museum reference	*At the end of the course, the student should be able to:* • Recognize the basic philosophy and approaches to informal learning as it applies to the museum setting; be familiar with key philosophies in education that impact museum practice. • Identify the ways in which the museum serves as a learning place within the community and how this contributes to the democratic process, social justice, and lifelong learning. • Place learning and education within the museum context; be able to identify and explain where and how	When you complete this course you will: • have an understanding of the role of registrars, collections managers, archivists, photographers, conservators, conservation scientists, conservation technicians, art handlers, couriers and other professionals involved in collections care and management; • be familiar with the types of museum collections and the history of collections; • be able to integrate and apply knowledge of current best practices in collections management and care; • be familiar with the core museum collections management, professional organizations and

	sources including on-line resources • Conduct a literature review and develop a critical assessment of the development and scholarship of an issue or topic in the museum field and present that research in written form and as a PPT – supported oral presentation • Work collaboratively with others in team based learning and problem solving • Articulate why museums matter in a self-reflective essay • Discuss critically his or her own goals and aspirations as a museum professional	museums are educational resources and how they can pay special attention to the diverse needs of learners. • Practice essential skills of museum education: concept and program development (for school, family, adult, distance learning, etc.), label writing, and exhibit and program evaluation. • Have an understanding of the role of museum educators within a museum and within the community at large, and the professional responsibilities of a museum educator. • Discuss critically, in written and verbal form, current issues in museum education including education theory applicable to informal learning, object-based learning, and assessment. • Evaluate critically a museum exhibit and museum programming through the lenses of ability and access. • Be familiar with the core museum education literature, professional organizations, and museum education reference sources including on-line resources. • Design and complete an original applied research-based museum education program that meets the	reference sources including on-line resources; • be able to work collaboratively with others in team-based learning and problem solving and communicate that learning in both written and oral forms; • be familiar with and apply critical thinking to current legal and ethical issues in museum collections care and management; • be able to conduct independent and applied research on collections-based issues.

		needs of different audience segments.	

General Overview
<mark>Technical skills</mark>
<mark>Professional skills</mark>
<mark>Communication</mark>
<mark>Frameworks/Theory</mark>
<mark>Community issues</mark>

Course Objectives	At the end of the course, the student should be able to:	*At the end of the course, the student should be able to:*	When you complete this course you will:
	• Demonstrate an understanding of museum history and professional organizations • Debate museum ethical issues • Discuss critically, in written and verbal form, current issues in the philosophy of museums, museum missions, representation of the past, interpretation of cultural objects, and the role of museums in society • Evaluate critically a museum exhibition • Locate the core museum studies literature, principal museum organizations, and museum reference sources including on - line resources • Conduct a literature review and develop a critical assessment of the development and scholarship of an issue or topic in the museum field and present that research in written form and as a PPT –supported oral presentation	• Recognize the basic philosophy and approaches to informal learning as it applies to the museum setting; be familiar with key philosophies in education that impact museum practice. • Identify the ways in which the museum serves as a learning place within the community and how this contributes to the democratic process, social justice, and lifelong learning. • Place learning and education within the museum context; be able to identify and explain where and how museums are educational resources and how they can pay special attention to the diverse needs of learners. • Practice essential skills of museum education: concept and program development (for school, family, adult, distance learning, etc.), label writing, and	• have an understanding of the role of registrars, collections managers, archivists, photographers, conservators, conservation scientists, conservation technicians, art handlers, couriers and other professionals involved in collections care and management; • be familiar with the types of museum collections and the history of collections; • be able to integrate and apply knowledge of current best practices in collections management and care; • be familiar with the core museum collections management, professional organizations and reference sources including on-line resources; • be able to work collaboratively with others in team-based learning and problem solving and communicate that learning in both written and oral forms; • be familiar with and apply critical thinking to current

• Work collaboratively with others in team based learning and problem solving • Articulate why museums matter in a self-reflective essay • Discuss critically his or her own goals and aspirations as a museum professional	exhibit and program evaluation. • Have an understanding of the role of museum educators within a museum and within the community at large, and the professional responsibilities of a museum educator. • Discuss critically, in written and verbal form, current issues in museum education including education theory applicable to informal learning, object-based learning, and assessment. • Evaluate critically a museum exhibit and museum programming through the lenses of ability and access. • Be familiar with the core museum education literature, professional organizations, and museum education reference sources including on-line resources. • Design and complete an original applied research-based museum education program that meets the needs of different audience segments.	legal and ethical issues in museum collections care and management; • be able to conduct independent and applied research on collections-based issues.

Proficiencies

Visual analysis

Textual analysis

Interpretation

Design

Evaluation

Research

Community

Paralegal Studies

The Paralegal Studies program grants an undergraduate certificate and is based in the Political Science department. The certificate provides the education needed to obtain employment as a paralegal. There are approximately 70 students enrolled in this 30-credit hour program.

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the Paralegal Studies program developed new student learning outcomes, mapped those outcomes to specific courses, and conducted surveys among its students regarding the students' assessment of the courses they completed. Legal Studies is one of those degree programs that does have an accrediting body that provides guidelines for student outcomes with an eye toward assessment of those outcomes (the program is currently working toward accreditation). The outcomes and mapping appear as follows:

IUPUI Paralegal Program Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes
Developed August 2013

Program Objectives and accompanying Student Learning Outcomes – Developed to coincide with the IUPUI Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PULs). More information on the IUPUI PULs is available here: http://ctl.iupui.edu/Resources/PULs

Program Objective 1: To prepare students to communicate effectively in a legal environment. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:
- Analyze legal situations;
- Use legal research tools or print electronic sources effectively;
- Write well researched and legally reasoned responses;
- Effectively communicate both orally and in writing.

Program Objective 2: To stimulate critical thinking in our students. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:
- Evaluate legal situations;
- Consider legal arguments and counter-arguments and prepare a response;
- Arrive at reasoned persuasive legal conclusions and be able to support these conclusions.

Program Objective 3: To prepare students for careers in the legal field. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:
- Behave in a professional and courteous manner;
- Develop an organizational system for accomplishing work;
- Meet strict deadlines;
- Develop General Computer and Office Skills.

Program Objective 4: To provide a foundational knowledge of legal principles. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:

- Develop an understanding of legal concepts and structures;
- Learn legal vocabulary;
- Retain knowledge about the legal system.

Program Objective 5: To prepare students to invoke an understanding of legal rules and structures to promote fairness and civility. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:
- Understand and apply procedural rules;
- Prepare effective and persuasive pleadings and other documents.

Program Objective 6: To prepare students to learn and apply rules of legal ethics. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:
- Understand the impact of rules of professional conduct;
- Apply the rules of professional conduct.

These objectives and outcomes are mapped to courses as follows.

IUPUI Paralegal Program Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Program Objective 1:   To prepare students to communicate effectively in a legal environment. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:

• Analyze legal situations;	Y 221
• Use legal research tools or print electronic sources effectively;	Y 221, Y231
• Write well researched and legally reasoned responses;	Y221, Y231
• Effectively communicate both orally and in writing.	Y 221, Y231, Y222, Y233

Program Objective 2: To stimulate critical thinking in our students. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:

• Evaluate legal situations;	All Courses
• Consider legal arguments and counter-arguments and prepare a response;	All Courses
• Arrive at reasoned persuasive legal conclusions and be able to support these conclusions.	All Courses

Program Objective 3: To prepare students for careers in the legal field. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:

• Behave in a professional and courteous manner;	Y222, Y233, Y232
• Develop an organizational system for accomplishing work;	Y221, Y231
• Meet strict deadlines;	All Courses
• Develop General Computer and Office Skills.	Computer Prerequisite, Y222, Y211

Program Objective 4: To provide a foundational knowledge of legal principles. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:

• Develop an understanding of legal concepts and structures;	All Courses
• Learn legal vocabulary;	All Courses
• Retain knowledge about the legal system.	All courses

Program Objective 5: To prepare students to invoke an understanding of legal rules and structures to promote fairness and civility. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:

• Understand and apply procedural rules;	Y222, Y233, Y232
• Prepare effective and persuasive pleadings and other documents.	Y222, Y233, Y221, Y231

Program Objective 6: To prepare students to learn and apply rules of legal ethics. This objective is demonstrated by the student's ability to:

• Understand the impact of rules of professional conduct;	Y232, Y211
• Apply the rules of professional conduct.	Y232

Program Objectives by Course:

POLS Y211 – Introduction to Law	2
POLS Y221 – Legal Research & Writing	1
POLS Y222 – Litigation for Paralegal Studies I	4
POLS Y232 – Professional Responsibility for Paralegals	6
POLS Y223 – Litigation II	4
POLS Y224 – Property Law	4
POLS Y225 – Contract Law	4
POLS Y226 – Tort Law	4
POLS Y227 – Criminal Law	4
POLS Y228 – Family Law	4
POLS Y229 – Estate Law	4
POLS Y230 – Bankruptcy Law	4
POLS Y231 – Advanced Legal Research	1
POLS Y233 – Business Associations for Paralegals	4
POLS Y481 – Field Experience in Paralegal Studies	3

One way in which the learning outcomes are assessed is through the programs administration of an internal survey, given to students at the end of the term in December 2013, May 2014, and Summer 2014. Herein, after a variety of demographic data is gathered, the following assessment questions are asked.

"How valuable was each course for your preparation as a paralegal? Rate only those classes in which you were enrolled." Students then could respond for each individual course they completed using one of the following four possible answers: valuable,

somewhat valuable, not very valuable, and not applicable. An open-ended question followed: Are there courses you think should be added to the curriculum?

Students were then asked to rate the following items from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The paralegal curriculum met my expectations.
Document preparation required in the courses prepared me for work as a paralegal.
The workload in the courses was appropriate.
The program adequately prepared me for a career as a paralegal.
Overall Evaluation of Course Offerings
Overall Evaluation of Instructors
Overall Evaluation of Facilities
Overall Evaluation of Library Offerings
Overall Evaluation of Lexis Offerings
Overall Evaluation of Placement Services
Overall Evaluation of Advising
Overall Evaluation of Program Director
Overall Evaluation of Program
Career and placement counseling

Of course, for assessment purposes, it seems that the first set of questions might come closest to helping assess (indirectly) student learning if there is the assumption that the courses have now been geared to specific learning outcomes as listed in the implementation chart above that maps courses to outcomes. It appears, however, that in addition to the valuable data gathered from the above survey, it would be helpful if the program would add items related specifically to the designated and desired student learning outcomes. This is an opportunity to build upon an already existing survey that appears successful in drawing student responses upon completion of the certificate.

History

The History department has always been one of the larger units with the School of Liberal Arts, both in terms of credit hours taught and majors. While the new general education curriculum has caused some erosion in credit hours, the department taught nearly 3800 students in the 2013-14 academic year (not including summer).

During the 2013-2014, the department underwent an external review. As a result, they continue to work vigorously on their Strategic Action Plan, one that, among other things, sees a revamping of their curriculum, paying special attention to "tiering" the program. They are now building a curriculum that builds quite intentionally on gateway courses to move students into new 200-level courses that are meant to prepare students better for their 300- and 400-level courses. The goal is to structure learning so that, upon entry into the capstone course, students are well prepared for both this course and for life after graduation, with an understanding of the skills and knowledge they have gained while students.

As part of this restructuring, the Teaching, Curriculum, and Assessment committee continues to think of ways in which assessment can best be used to help them achieve the student learning outcomes they think essential for the degree in history. While the department submitted, via one of its members, a grant application to PRAC that was not successful, the department is using the heart of this application as a way to continue to think about and chart out the best uses of assessment as they restructure their program. They continue to have enthusiasm for the possibilities eportfolios provide for documenting student work, tracking progress, and assessing learning outcomes. They have had an outside scholar (a historian) come in to present a workshop on assessment and eportfolios. So, while, at the moment, the department is not as far along as some other programs in the implementation of assessment strategies, they have included it as a central component of this new SAP and are aware of the benefits of assessment--specifically, using it to make the changes necessary to improve student learning. Hopefully, they can serve as an example to others who have not yet decided to what extent and how to engage assessment methodologies in the advancement of student learning (and curricular enrichment).

School-Level Data Analysis

This section is based on data from several sources: the results from faculty ratings of student PUL achievement (cumulative report over a four-year period), the School's 2014 continuing student survey summary report, and the PUL Indirect Assessment Scale Comparisons by School. (Source material provided by the Office of Information Management and Institutional Research and from the Office of Student Data Analysis and Evaluation. See "References" at the end of the report.)

Direct Measure: Faculty Ratings of Student PUL Achievement

For the purposes of this report, I have used the IUPUI Faculty Ratings of Student Performance on Principles of Undergraduate Learning: School of Liberal Arts (Spring 2010-Fall 2013). The PUL report breaks out results by PUL and by course level. Thus, for each PUL, a separate table shows results for each course level (from 100 level to 400 level) and for each category of evaluation (from Not Effective to Very Effective). Looking across the levels, from 100 to 400, one sees that, in most cases, PUL evaluation scores increase, as one would hope and expect. The below represent only those PULs that are identified as PULs with a major emphasis.

PULs	100	200	300	400
1a: Written, Oral, and Visual Communication Skills	3.06	3.27	3.36	3.29
1b: Quantitative Skills	3.18	2.64	3.38	2.82*
1c: Information Resource Skills	2.94	2.51	3.09	2.90*
2: Critical Thinking	2.94	2.96	3.11	3.27

3: Integration and Application of Knowledge	2.68	2.77	3.12	3.33
4: Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness	2.94	3.13	3.35	3.28
5: Understanding Society and Culture	3.08	2.90	3.28	3.30
6: Values and Ethics	3.24	3.11	3.58	2.88*

*Sample size less than 25.

In all cases but two, there is an increase in PUL scores from 100 to 400 levels; in the two cases where this is not so, the sample size is too low render a valid score. In both those cases, however, there is an increase in score from 100 to 300 levels.

What might be drawn from this data? In four of the nine cases, there is actually a dip in score between the 100 and 200 levels--quantitative, information skills, understanding society and culture, and values and ethics. This may simply represent problems in adjusting to somewhat higher-level college work, though once the adjustment is made it then tends to hold, and one sees higher scores at the 300 level, above both the 200 and 100 levels. It is at the 200 level that one has, in liberal arts, many of the gateway courses into a specific major; it is also the level of many of the quantitative courses (stats for economics, for example). Still, it could prove fruitful to target these courses for more in-depth assessment work.

There are also a few dips in score moving from the 300 to 400 levels. In three of these cases, the sample size is too small to derive meaningful data. That still leaves two major PULs at the 400 level where one sees scores lower than in the third-year courses. There is anecdotal evidence in SLA that some students get to their 400-level capstone courses and perform less well than expected. There has been discussion about using assessment in a more systematic and detailed way to discover if the anecdotal evidence bears out and, if so, to remedy the gaps that may exist in student learning.

Indirect Measure: Continuing Student Survey

In their report, *School of Liberal Arts, 2014 Continuing Student Survey: Summary Report for the School of Liberal Arts*, Steven Graunke and Rachel Tomasik provides data that helps to identify areas of strength as well as areas of opportunity in the school.

Using the report's guideline about effect size, variances of 0.2 or more can be seen as statistically significant (though small; the higher the number, the greater the significance). Based on this assumption, we see there are opportunities for improvement in the area of mathematics for SLA students: those students rate themselves lower than the IUPUI mean (again, at a variance of 0.2 or higher) in being able to solve mathematical problems and in understanding a statistical report. These are the only two negative variances of SLA

students when compared to the IUPUI population as a whole.

SLA has strengths in a number of areas, and there is certainly opportunity to build upon these strengths. One sees a positive significant positive variance in the following areas: being able to identify sources of information that are most appropriate for a project; see the relationships among local, national, and global issues [a must in our modern global and international environment]; and understand and appreciate the arts.

A number of other items that contribute positively to SLA students' education include: the fact that SLA students rate the quality of teaching by faculty in their major area at a mean score higher than the IUPUI mean (in a statistically meaningful manner); SLA students undertake foreign language coursework and study abroad at almost twice the rate of the IUPUI average; and SLA students undertake independent study and engage in a culminating senior experience at a higher rate than the IUPUI average. These are areas that we will continue to build upon, making these areas of strength an even more integral part of the SLA experience.

Indirect Measure: PUL Indirect Assessment Scale Comparisons by School

The PUL Indirect Assessment Scale: Comparisons by School provides data broken down by school and year (2010, 2011, 2013). One can, by this data, look at one's progress as a school over the time period covered as well as see how one compares to various schools and to IUPUI as a whole. SLA's scores are as follows:

	2010	2011	2013
Written, Oral, and Visual Communication Skills	84.0	81.65	84.33
Quantitative Skills	58.85	60.29	65.0
Information Literacy Skills	81.67	82.92	82.67
Critical Thinking	78.67	79.74	81.33
Integration and Application of Knowledge	74.12	76.75	79.33
Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness	75.97	75.74	78.33
Understanding Society and Culture	81.12	83.92	83.67
Values and Ethics	82.74	85.87	86.67

If one compares 2010 to 2013, what one sees is that scores are either stable or that they are going up. The biggest increase--which is good to see because it is one of SLA's areas for improvement--is in quantitative skills. Though we are still below the IUPUI

average, the score between 2010 and 2013 increased from 58.85 to 65.0. Other areas showed gains as well, but these are in areas of strength (for example, Integration and Application of Knowledge jumping more than 5 points).

When one compares to IUPUI as a whole, what one sees is that, in all but one case, SLA averages a higher score. The exception is mathematics, though it is good to see that the gap has been more than halved between 2010 and 2013 (from more than 6 points to less than 3). For the most recent year, 2013, the comparisons are as follows:

	SLA	ALL IUPUI
Written, Oral, and Visual Communication Skills	84.33	81.67
Quantitative Skills	65.0	67.67
Information Literacy Skills	82.67	80.67
Critical Thinking	81.33	79.67
Integration and Application of Knowledge	79.33	76.33
Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness	78.33	76.67
Understanding Society and Culture	83.67	81.67
Values and Ethics	86.67	83.33

The challenge for SLA is to continue to build on the strengths exhibited by this table. By continuing to encourage those programs that have engaged with assessment in a serious manner and by showing other colleagues the benefits to be gained in student learning through assessment techniques, SLA can move forward in providing even higher quality learning opportunities for students.

Conclusion

There are departments in SLA that will be moving forward with a number of new initiatives, and others will continue to refine the assessment mechanisms already in place. In last year's report, English (especially composition), World Languages and Culture, and Communication Studies were highlighted as departments with a culture of assessment; part of this culture stems from the fact that these are fields that have professional associations deeply engaged in the assessment of learning outcomes as those associations look to standardize expectations for student learning.

The programs highlighted in this report represent other ongoing efforts: two, again, are programs that have, in some way, national standards that serve as guidelines for assessing student learning. The Department of History is not as far along in the process, but it has become engaged in assessment as a way to think of curricular reform. This step represents a step forward in the school, and it will help spur others to think of assessment in the same manner.

What is more, there are serious conversations taking place within departments, especially around the use of eportfolios and signature assignments. Even among faculty and departments that have been slow to engage assessment issues beyond arguing that grading is assessment, one now hears about those who are at least exploring the use of eportfolios, or one hears some faculty are suggesting that, in fact, signature assignments might be extremely useful as a way to gauge student learning, address shortcomings, and revise curriculum so that students are prepared for higher level work.

In the coming year, the School of Liberal Arts will continue to think through how best to grapple with assessment strategies that work for Liberal Arts courses. In some ways, the skills set part of the equation is the easiest to assess; the habits of mind part, perhaps more difficult to assess. But both are important, and it is important to assess how well students learn and embody the skills and disciplines of thought. The more and better we can actually understand and express our assessment of student learning, the more students benefit from a type of education meant to prepare them for our increasingly complex global environment.

References

SLA Institutional data provided by:

Graunke, S. and Rauch, J. (November 2014). *School of Liberal Arts, 2014 Continuing Student Survey: Summary Report for the School of Liberal Arts*. Office of Student Data Analysis and Evaluation.

IUPUI Faculty Ratings of Student Performance on Principles of Undergraduate Learning--School of Liberal Arts--Spring 2010, Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Spring 2013 and Fall 2013, Office of Information Management and Institutional Research, January 2014.

"PUL Indirect Assessment Scale: Comparisons by School." Office of Information Management and Institutional Research, http://static.imir.iupui.edu/docs/surveys/PUL%20Scale%20Comparisons%20by%20School.pdf

SLA program and departmental data provided by:
Elee Wood, Museum Studies
Erin Engels, Paralegal Studies
diDier Gondola, Department of History