

Assessment Task Force
Minutes from General Education Subcommittee
28 March 2002

The subcommittee meeting began with a review of the Baccalaureate Skills assessment plan in the 1995 SSU Assessment Plan. Discussion focused on whether the Outcomes represented current thinking about baccalaureate skills. Although we briefly discussed other outcomes such as interpersonal skills, lifelong learning and public affairs skills/knowledge, we officially added “**technological literacy**” and “**public speaking skills**” to the list of outcomes.

We also discussed the difficulties of developing valid and reliable critical thinking tests and examined the possibility of merging critical thinking into the tests for reading, writing, and quantitative literacy.

The subcommittee dealt with issues at the following levels of assessment:

Institution:

Exit assessment should determine whether students have reached the “bar” we want them to have achieved as graduates of UIS (e.g., making sure students are literate by some valid measure). We discussed the idea of using sample portfolios from students across the institution. We will need to determine how to structure assignments from different disciplines that could be scored according to a single rubric or set of rubrics.

Entrance assessment may be useful at the institutional level for determining what skills they bring in with them and for determining placement in coursework.

We also discussed continuing the use of focus groups at both entrance and exit. At the entrance level, focus groups might tell us what students expect out of their education.

Program:

Use of portfolios was also judged useful at this level, but we will need to determine how to encourage programs to use them effectively for curricular improvement.

Individual Students:

We discussed the use of placement tests at entrance, and determined that we should perhaps focus on students entering with lower GPAs or other at-risk factors. We discussed whether we need to keep track of all students or only random samples and whether there should be differences in assessment procedures for CAP and transfer/mid-career students. We mentioned the need for tracking students through their careers at UIS.

Submitted by Karen Moranski, 4/11/02