

Update on Educational Outcomes and Assessment

Fall 2005

The following is a list of assessment activities for the last academic year and plans for the next few years:

1. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has selected Chris Haas as its assessment coordinator, an excellent first step in the College's assessment plans. Chris has recently been revisiting departments about their mission, goals and objective statements. Departments, which did not have them, began working in earnest on mission, goals and objective statements last summer into fall. The next step will be the planning and implementation of the assessment instruments for each department and the college. Concurrent with this, Hass has been taking a second look at the College's mission, goals and objective statement. Some departments within A & S (e.g. Computing Science and Chemistry) have already used assessment data to make curricular changes.
2. The College of Commerce and Finance, after a few false starts, has been active in the creation of its Assessment Plan. It has been driven to a large extent by the "assurance of learning" standards set forth in their accreditation standards. The plan incorporates both indirect and direct measures of student learning outcomes.
3. The Colleges of Nursing and Engineering are well into the assessment and change phase of their plans. We will want them to show how their activities are tied to the University's Educational and Goals and Objectives.
4. On the University level, an analysis of data, which is and has been collected for sometime, has led, in part, to a series of focus groups being spearheaded by John Kelley to address issues which have been observed in the data. These focus groups are a part of a multi-pronged effort to examine student engagement and the intellectual climate at Villanova.
5. There have been some changes in the structure of the committees which are directing the assessment process at the University. The University-wide committee that established the University's Statement of Educational Goals and Objectives has become less active as we have continued the process. The committee will, however, continue to monitor the survey activities of OPTIR and suggest improvements to the University's overall assessment process. Assessment activity is now concentrated mostly at the college and departmental level. Each college has identified a lead person(s) on assessment (Melinda German for Commerce and Finance, John Molyneux and Nancy O'Connor for Engineering, Christopher Haas from Liberal Arts and Sciences and Suzanne Smeltzer from Nursing) as well as its own assessment committee. A small steering committee of four individuals (Fritz Hartmann, Carol Weiss, Kathy

Byrnes and Jim Trainer) continues to work to coordinate assessment efforts across the University.

6. Plans for the Periodic Review Report for Middle States, which is due in June, 2006, are underway. A timetable of activities has been established with Jim Trainer and Fritz Hartmann assigned to coordinate the writing of the section on Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness. No problem is anticipated in the preparation of this document.
7. It is hoped by the steering committee that the addition of a new position in OPTIR will help in the assessment phase of the University's activities.