

University Assessment Committee - Liberal Studies Subcommittee

Summary Report of the Local Assessment of IUP's  
Expected Learning Outcomes for the Academic Year 2008-09

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## Introduction

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) is responsible for identifying student learning outcome assessment challenges as they arise and providing input on these and other assessment-related issues to the Provost's Office. The Liberal Studies Subcommittee of the UAC is charged with designing and implementing assessment of IUP's Liberal Studies program, disseminating findings to both the Provost's Office and the Liberal Studies Committee. The focus of the Subcommittee's assessment is the degree by which the Liberal Studies program is meeting the Expected Student Learning Outcomes (Appendix A) passed by University Senate (May, 2006). Effective assessment will assist in identifying strengths and limitations of the program, allowing for future curriculum development to address acknowledged areas where improvement is needed.

To determine the degree to which IUP's Liberal Studies program is meeting the Expected Learning Outcomes, the UAC agreed to implement an overall assessment plan similar to the plan enacted for the Academic Year 2007-2008. This plan included data collection and analysis from three separate measures:

- ❖ Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). This instrument is administered by the Provost's Office. Utilizing a pre-post cross-sectional design, the CLA is analyzed according to the gains reflected across the two samples and correlated to student SAT scores.
- ❖ National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This instrument asks students a variety of questions pertaining to their experiences at IUP. Responses to specific questions would be analyzed as measures of achievement toward the Expected Student Learning Outcomes.
- ❖ Student assignments from capstone/senior level courses. Student documents collected from IUP seniors enrolled in capstone/senior level courses would be assessed against a rubric developed by faculty on the University Assessment Committee.

The Liberal Studies Subcommittee of the UAC for AY 2008-2009 was responsible for the third of the aforementioned strategies, the direct assessment of collected student assignments. This summary is therefore limited to that component of the overall assessment, with the results of the CLA and NSSE components reported elsewhere.

## Methodology Employed

The task of the UAC's Liberal Studies Subcommittee was to evaluate written assignments produced by IUP senior-level students to determine the extent to which they reflected attainment of the Expected Student Learning Outcomes. This involved the following three sub-tasks, each then described in more detail: procurement of assignments, development of rubrics, and review of assignments.

### *Procurement of Assignments:*

A Subcommittee constructed document (Appendix C) was electronically delivered to all Department Chairpersons as an initial step. This document explained the assessment strategy and the Subcommittee's goal of obtaining writing samples from senior-level students within department's capstone courses. If a department did not offer a capstone course, assignments from senior-level courses of majors-only students were accepted. The purposes of first contacting Chairperson's were to provide them notification this assessment was about to begin, and to also seek their cooperation in identifying appropriate capstone/senior-level courses from which assignments might be obtained. Clearly noted in this Subcommittee document was that any faculty member willing to provide assignments would be doing so voluntarily. After notifying the Chairpersons, Subcommittee members were assigned to a college. Their purpose was to contact each Chairperson within that college to answer any questions he/she might have about the Subcommittee's task, and to help identify courses/faculty from which assignments might be obtained. The subcommittee members then contacted appropriate faculty to obtain the assignments.

The Subcommittee ultimately received a total of one-hundred-ninety-eight (198) documents from five of the six colleges. All identifying information from the documents was removed, then each document coded for tracking purposes. By colleges, the number of documents provided was:

College of Fine Arts – 5 documents (2.5% of total)  
College of Education & Educational Technology – 0 documents (0% of total)  
Eberly College of Business & Information Technology – 4 documents (2% of total)  
College of Health & Human Services – 110 documents (56% of total)  
College of Humanities & Social Sciences – 40 documents (20% of total)  
College of Natural Science & Mathematics – 39 documents (20% of total)

### *Development of Rubrics*

Rubrics (Appendix B) for the Expected Student Learning Outcomes were utilized in the assessment of these documents. The Subcommittee refined the rubrics developed by the previous year's assessment committee for the assessment of LBST 499 coursework. The rubrics were constructed so that for each of the three Expected Student Learning Outcomes, indicators were developed that if identified in the documents, could be viewed as evidence of achievement of the Outcomes. For each indicator a set of traits were developed that would constitute achievement at four levels: Undeveloped, Developing, Proficient and Advanced. The Subcommittee ultimately included 9 indicators in the rubrics:

- Forms of inquiry and core concepts of the natural and social sciences
- Forms of inquiry and core concepts of the humanities
- Appreciation of the aesthetic experience of the arts and their role within a culture
- Application (knowledge in practice) and/or Synthesis (interdisciplinary perspective, or ability to incorporate multiple mode of inquiry, or ability to explain links across contexts)
- Critical thinking
- Communication
- Acknowledgment of sources (academic integrity)
- Sense of social justice
- Respect for identities, histories, and culture of others

### *Review of Assignments*

Seven Subcommittee members received a packet of 42 assignments and two members received a packet with 52 assignments to rate in all 9 categories noted in the rubrics. The rater was charged with identifying the level at which a document satisfied the criterion(s) for that category. If the category was not relevant for that assignment it was coded as such. Each assignment was evaluated by two separate Subcommittee members, with ratings entered into a database. Statistical procedures were performed to determine the means and frequency distributions of student performance in each indicator, along with the percentage of documents which showed evidence of the presence of the indicator.

Members of the Subcommittee that participated in the review of course documents included: Kevin McKee (Health & Physical Education), David Pistole (Biology), Therese Ruffner (Psychology), Mary MacLeod (Philosophy), Mark Staszkiwicz (Educational & School Psychology), Fred Slack (Management), Rick Kemp (Theatre), Michael M. Williamson (English), and Holly Travis (Biology).

### Results

The results of the Subcommittee's assessment are reported by frequency distribution- the percentage of students who were rated as having demonstrated a particular level of skill for a particular area. This permits faculty a detailed account of exactly how those skills or capacities were defined, as it relates to our Expected Student Learning Outcomes.

#### **Learning Outcome 1 – Natural and Social Scientific Mode (n = 316 assessments)**

The rubric for the Natural and Social Scientific Mode of Student Learning Outcome 1 included two traits: 1 – Understanding scientific or social scientific method, and 2 – Awareness of the role of science or social science in society. Based on these criteria, 24% of IUP seniors demonstrated skills at the Advanced level, 46% at the Proficient level, 27% at the Developing level and 2% at the Undeveloped level. Thus, 70% of our students are accurately applying concepts relating to the scientific or social scientific approach and show a clear comprehension of basic scientific concepts and principles. These 70% also show a strong awareness of the role of science or social science within society. Twenty seven percent of our seniors can state basic scientific concepts and principles and use vocabulary related to scientific or social scientific approach in a rote manner or in a way that shows a simple conceptualization. In addition, they show a limited awareness of the role of science or social science within society. The final 2% lack an understanding of and an inability to apply basic scientific concepts and principles and do not show an awareness of science or social science within society.

#### **Learning Outcome 1 – Humanities (n = 80 assessments)**

The rubric for the Humanities Mode of Student Learning Outcome 1 included two traits: 1 - Understands humanities, and 2 – Exhibits an awareness of the role of the humanities in society. Based on these criteria, 18% of IUP seniors demonstrated skills at the Advanced level, 53% at the Proficient level, 28% at the Developing level and 2% at the Undeveloped level. Thus, 71% of our students can use their knowledge of theoretical frameworks, concepts, terms, important thinkers and ideas from two disciplines to discuss social phenomena and to identify perspectives

of each discipline in explaining a particular event or scenario. In addition, they show a strong awareness of the role of humanities within society. Twenty eight percent of our seniors have a basic understanding of concepts, descriptive terms, important thinkers and ideas from at least one discipline in the humanities and can relate them to perspectives of other disciplines. They also show a limited awareness of the role of humanities within society. Finally, 2% of our students lack an understanding of the relationship between the concepts, terms and important ideas to each other or to a humanities perspective; uses beliefs, applies ideas inaccurately, or uses irrelevant facts to explain ideas. They also do not show an awareness of humanities within society.

### **Learning Outcome 1 – Arts (n = 10 assessments)**

The rubric for the Arts Mode of Student Learning Outcome 1 included two traits: 1 – Interpretation of art form and/or creation of art form, and 2 – Awareness of the role of arts in society. With only five papers to review it is difficult to establish an accurate assessment of the mode. However, based on the small number, it appears that the Arts mode has similar numbers as the other two modes. Ten percent of the documents assessed were considered Advanced, 60% Proficient, and 30% Developing. The advanced and proficient students show an ability to interpret art forms and/or show an ability to create a work of artistic expression. In addition, they show a strong awareness of the role of the arts within society.

### **Learning Outcome 2 – Application and Synthesis (n = 384 assessments)**

The rubric for Application and Synthesis of Student Learning Outcome 2 included two traits: 1 – Making generalizations and drawing conclusions, and 2 – Application of theory. Based on these criteria, 31% of IUP seniors demonstrated skills at the Advanced level, 40% at the Proficient level, 26% at the Developing level and 4% at the Undeveloped level. Again, that means that 71% of our seniors can make generalizations and draw conclusions using knowledge drawn from multiple sources. In addition, they can (if relevant to discipline) apply theory to the understanding of practice. Twenty six percent of our seniors can explain generalizations and/or identify conclusions using knowledge and limited sources or perspectives and, they do not acknowledge conflicting evidence or perspectives. In addition, (if relevant to discipline), they present some theory, but do not relate it to practice and show no evidence of application or analysis. Finally 4% of our students provide a narrow review of information without any attempt to make generalizations or draw conclusions. In addition, they do not incorporate theory.

### **Learning Outcome 2 – Critical Thinking (n = 396 assessments)**

The rubric for Critical Thinking of Student Learning Outcome 2 included two traits: 1 – The ability to argue or explain, and 2 – Discrimination regarding the quality of sources. Based on these criteria, 25% of IUP seniors demonstrated skills at the Advanced level, 46% at the Proficient level, 27% at the Developing level and 3% at the Undeveloped level. Thus, 71% of our seniors demonstrate effective strategies of argument and/or explanation using appropriate claims and clear reasoning, as well as the ability to adequately discriminate the quality and reliability of sources. Twenty seven percent of our seniors are able to provide limited arguments and/or explanations based on

weak reasoning or unsupported claims as well as having a limited discrimination of the quality and reliability of sources. Finally, 3% of our seniors do not attempt to provide arguments or explanations nor do they discriminate in terms of the quality or reliability of sources.

### **Learning Outcome 2 – Communication (n = 396 assessments)**

The rubric for Communication of Student Learning Outcome 2 included two traits: 1 – Communication through written language, and 2 - Organization of ideas. Based on these criteria, 39% of IUP seniors demonstrated skills at the Advanced level, 43% at the Proficient level, 16% at the Developing level and 2% at the Undeveloped level. Thus, 82% of our seniors' use of language reflects fluency with writing and expresses clarity of thought. In some cases there may be a sufficient number of problems with fluency and clarity that they cause problems with understanding the meaning of the piece. In addition, there may be a few problems with organization and structure that interfere with the clarity of the piece. Only 16% of our students have grammatical and mechanical issues that interfere with the writer's ability to communicate in writing, reflecting a lack of fluency with writing and causing problems with clarity, and/or they have ideas that are not sufficiently organized to communicate a clear meaning in the piece. There are only 2% of our students who do not communicate clearly and lack fluency and clarity in their communication.

### **Learning Outcome 3 – Acknowledgement of Sources (Academic Integrity) (n = 354 assessments)**

The rubric for Acknowledgement of Sources (Academic Integrity) of Student Learning Outcome 3 included two traits: 1 – The documentation and acknowledgement of sources, and 2 – The differentiation of original thought and ideas of others. Based on these criteria, 36% of IUP seniors demonstrated skills at the Advanced level, 38% at the Proficient level, 20% at the Developing level and 7% at the Undeveloped level. Thus, 74% of our IUP seniors are able to provide adequate and generally accurate citations throughout their work, as well as attributing different opinions and evidence to sources. In addition, they adequately differentiate between their own ideas and those from cited material. Twenty percent of our seniors are able to provide some citations, but the practice is inconsistent and the format is sometimes inaccurate. They occasionally attribute different opinions and evidence to sources and occasionally differentiate between their own ideas and those from other sources. The final 7% of our seniors make limited or no use of citations and do not attribute opinions and evidence to sources. In addition, they do not differentiate between their own ideas and those from other sources.

### **Learning Outcome 3 – Sense of Social Justice (n = 291 assessments)**

The rubric for the Sense of Social Justice of Student Learning Outcome 3 included two traits: 1 – The understanding of moral principles relevant to the subject, and 2 – The ability to draw action guiding inferences from principle. Based on these criteria, 11% of IUP seniors demonstrated skills at the Advanced level, 58% at the Proficient level, 22% at the Developing level and 8% at the Undeveloped level. Thus, 69% of our IUP seniors are able to articulate moral (or socio-political) principles relevant to a subject and understand that the implications of said principles for the subject under discussion are well considered. Twenty two percent of our seniors at IUP

have little awareness of moral (or socio-political) principles relevant to the subject as well as little awareness of the moral (or socio-political) concerns that should be prompted by the subject under discussion. Finally, 8% of our seniors have no awareness of moral (or socio-political) principles relevant to the subject and no awareness of the moral (or socio-political) concerns that should be prompted by the subject under discussion.

**Learning Outcome 3** – Respect for the Identities, Histories and Culture of Others (n = 289 assessments)

The rubric for the Respect for the Identities, Histories and Culture of Others of Student Learning Outcome 3 included one trait: The recognition of different perspectives and the awareness of personal cultural position. Based on these criteria, 29% of IUP seniors demonstrated skills at the Advanced level, 36% at the Proficient level, 24% at the Developing level and 10% at the Undeveloped level. Thus, 65% of our IUP seniors have their awareness and arguments shaped by the needs of others (still bettering self), while 24% have an awareness of other arguments but feel that their own position is best. Finally, 10% of our seniors show a lack of awareness of different perspectives.

Limitations

These findings may be limited by the following:

1. Source documents.

The main problem with the source documents is the lack of adequate representation from three of the six colleges on campus. Thus, there may be some bias to the results based on the reliance on three of the six colleges in the university.

2. Rubrics.

The rubrics were modified from the first year's assessment workgroup but should not be considered a finished product. We assume that further modifications of the rubrics will continue in future years.

3. Interrater reliability.

The team from this year's assessment would have benefited from some meetings to help gain more reliability from difficult documents. Due to time constraints this year we were unable to do this. We recommend that if a similar assessment strategy is performed again that these meetings occur earlier in the academic year, perhaps using papers from this year.

4. Generalizability.

There are two issues for this limitation. The first is similar to last year in that for the papers assessed we can't know the characteristics of the students to see if they are representative of all seniors. The second relates the unequal representation of all source documents which may not be representative of all colleges and/or seniors.



## Summary

An important finding from this year's assessment was that the use of capstone/senior level courses resulted in higher levels in each of the three Student Learning Outcomes and more specifically in each of the three (nine total) subgroups of each level as compared to the use of LBST 499 courses. The increases were from a minimum of 10% to a maximum 49%. These findings support the supposition of last year's group that the students take their major courses more seriously than the LBST synthesis courses.

The results of our assessment of the first learning outcome, **Informed Learners**, indicate that our seniors are receiving very good training in the Natural and Social Science mode and the Humanities mode. The Arts mode appears to follow the trends of the other two modes but because of low n numbers it is difficult to make any reliable predictions. Seventy percent and 71% of our students are performing at the Advanced or Proficient levels in the Natural and Social Science and Humanities modes respectively versus 50% from last year's assessment. In addition, these students are able to apply concepts from more than one discipline and seem better suited to linking theory with practice than was suggested from last year's data.

The assessment results of the second learning outcome, **Empowered Learners**, shows that IUP is providing very good training in the areas of Application and Synthesis and Critical Thinking and excellent training in the Communication area. The first two areas had 71% of the students performing at the Advanced and Proficient levels while the final had them performing at the 82% level. In comparison to last year's data the Application and Synthesis area increased slightly from 50% to 71%, the Critical Thinking from 60% to 71%, while communication went from 66% to 82%. In general, most IUP seniors are able to gain knowledge drawn from multiple sources, make effective arguments and explanations and are able to communicate with fluency of language and clarity of thought.

The results of our assessment of the third learning outcome, **Responsible Learners**, indicate that students are working close to the levels in the other two outcome areas. IUP seniors performed at the Advanced or Proficient levels at the following percentages: Acknowledgement of Sources (Academic Integrity) 74%; Sense of Social Justice 69%; and Respect for the Identities, Histories, and Culture of Others 65%. Last year's report noted that "we suspect that the indicator of "academic integrity" might have scored much higher in capstone documents". Indeed this was where the largest difference occurred, increasing from 25% to 74% in the Advanced and Proficient categories. A large increase was also seen in the Sense of Social Justice which went from 38% to 69%. The final category, Respect for the Identities, Histories, and Culture of Others increased from 50% to 65%. Again, it is suggested that the use of capstone courses helped to achieve a better assessment for this learning outcome than did the LBST 499 papers. It should also be noted that this area had the fewest papers to assess of the three outcomes. However, there are other sources to obtain information on these outcomes and this should not be viewed as a limitation of the current assessment. Finally, the results of the third learning outcome show that IUP students are doing a very good job of differentiating between their own ideas and those from cited material are able to articulate moral or socio-political principles when needed and are aware of other cultures and their histories.



A final note is that although the report lumps all colleges together in its analysis there are separate analyses of the assessment data for individual colleges. These data are available upon request.

## APPENDIX A

### Expected Student Learning Outcomes

I. Informed Learners understand nature and society through forms of inquiry fundamental to the sciences, the humanities, and the arts. Learners are informed by knowledge and ways of knowing that extend beyond core concepts enabling them to link theory and practice.

Informed Learners demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- the ways of modeling the natural, social and technical worlds
- the aesthetic facets of human experience
- the past and present from historical, philosophical and social perspectives
- the human imagination, expression and traditions of many cultures
- the interrelationships within and across cultures and global communities
- the interrelationships within and across disciplines

II. Empowered Learners are critical thinkers who demonstrate intellectual agility and creativity and the ability to manage or create change. They are able to derive meaning from experience and observation. They communicate well in diverse settings and employ various strategies to solve problems. They are empowered through mastery of intellectual and practical skills.

Empowered Learners demonstrate:

- effective oral and written communication abilities
- ease with textual, visual and electronically-mediated literacies
- problem solving skills using a variety of methods and tools
- information literacy skills including the ability to access, evaluate, interpret and use information from a variety of sources
- the ability to transform information into knowledge and knowledge into judgment and action
- the ability to work within complex systems and with diverse groups
- critical thinking skills including analysis, application and evaluation
- reflective thinking and the ability to synthesize information and ideas

III. Responsible Learners are engaged citizens of a diverse democratic society who have a deep sense of social responsibility and ethical judgment. They are responsible for their personal actions and civic values. Responsible Learners demonstrate:

- intellectual honesty
- concern for social justice
- civic engagement
- an understanding of the ethical and behavioral consequences of decisions and actions on themselves, on society and on the physical world
- an understanding of themselves and a respect for the identities, histories, and cultures of others

APPENDIX B

Rubrics for Expected Student Learning Outcomes

Section I: Informed Learners understand nature and society through forms of inquiry fundamental to the sciences, the humanities, and the arts. Learners are informed by knowledge and ways of knowing that extend beyond core concepts enabling them to link theory and practice.

	<b>Natural and Social Scientific Modes</b>	<b>Humanities Modes</b>
	<p>Trait 1 – Understanding scientific or social scientific method.</p> <p>Trait 2- Awareness of the role of science or social science in society.</p>	<p>Trait 1 – Understands humanities.</p> <p>Trait 2 – Awareness of the role of humanities in society.</p>
<b>Advanced</b>	<p>T.1. Accurately expresses concepts related to the scientific or social scientific approach and shows evidence of extending findings beyond the scope of the project.</p> <p>T.2. Shows strong ability to analyze and interpret the role of science or social science within society.</p>	<p>T.1. Has a deep understanding of theoretical frameworks, concepts, terms, important thinkers &amp; ideas from several humanity disciplines to explain social phenomena and can make connections between disciplines and identify separate contribution of disciplines to understanding.</p> <p>T.2 Shows strong ability to analyze and interpret the role of humanities w/in society.</p>
<b>Proficient</b>	<p>T.1. Accurately applies concepts relating to the scientific or social scientific approach and shows a clear comprehension of basic scientific concepts/principals.</p> <p>T.2. Shows strong awareness of the role of science or social sciences w/in society.</p>	<p>T.1. Can use their knowledge of theoretical frameworks, concepts, terms, important thinkers and ideas from two disciplines to discuss social phenomena and to identify perspectives of each discipline in explaining a particular event or scenario.</p> <p>T.2. Shows strong awareness of the role of humanities within society.</p>
<b>Developing</b>	<p>T.1. Can state basic scientific concepts &amp; principals and use vocabulary related to scientific or social scientific approach in a rote manner or in a way that shows a simple conceptualization.</p> <p>T.2. Shows limited awareness of the role of science or social science within society.</p>	<p>T.1. Has basic understanding of concepts, descriptive terms, important thinkers and ideas from at least one discipline in the humanities and can relate them to perspectives of other disciplines.</p> <p>T.2. Shows limited awareness of the role of humanities within society.</p>
<b>Undeveloped</b>	<p>T.1. Lacks an understanding of and an inability to apply basic scientific concepts and principals.</p> <p>T.2. Does not show an awareness of science or social science w/in society.</p>	<p>T.1. Lacks an understanding of the relationship between the concepts, terms, and important ideas to each other or to a humanities perspective; uses beliefs, applies ideas inaccurately, or uses irrelevant facts to explain ideas.</p> <p>T.2. Does not show an awareness of humanities within society.</p>

APPENDIX B

Rubrics for Expected Student Learning Outcomes

Section I: Informed Learners understand nature and society through forms of inquiry fundamental to the sciences, the humanities, and the arts. Learners are informed by knowledge and ways of knowing that extend beyond core concepts enabling them to link theory and practice.

	<b>Arts Modes</b>	<b>Application and Synthesis</b>
	Trait 1 – Interpretation of art form and/or creation of art form.  Trait 2 – Awareness of role of arts in society.	Trait 1 – Making generalizations and drawing conclusions.  Trait 2 – Application of theory.
<b>Advanced</b>	T.1. Shows strong ability to independently interpret art forms, and/or shows strong ability to independently create a work of artistic expression.  T.2. Shows strong ability to analyze and interpret the role of the arts within society.	T.1. Formulates generalizations and justifies conclusions by using and integrating knowledge drawn from multiple sources and perspectives to explain relationships between contexts.  T.2. (if relevant to discipline) Analyzes practice through the use of theory and/or describes the implications of practice for refining theory. Capable of making predictive hypotheses.
<b>Proficient</b>	T.1. Shows ability to interpret art forms, and/or shows ability to create a work of artistic expression.  T.2. Shows strong awareness of the role of arts within society.	T.1. Makes generalizations and draws conclusions using knowledge drawn from multiple sources, but does not justify these generalizations or conclusions effectively.  T.2. (if relevant to discipline) Applies theory to the understanding of practice.
<b>Developing</b>	T. 1. Shows ability to accurately report others’ interpretations or assessments of art forms, and/or shows an understanding of the creative process in an art form.  T.2. Shows limited awareness of others’ analysis of the role of the arts within society.	T.1. Explains generalizations and/or identifies conclusions using knowledge and limited sources or perspectives. Does not acknowledge conflicting evidence or perspectives.  T.2. (if relevant to discipline) Presents some theory, but does not relate it to practice. No evidence of application or analysis.
<b>Undeveloped</b>	T.1. Unable to provide an informed interpretation of art forms, shows no understanding of the creative process in an art form.  T.2. Does not show an awareness of the role of the arts in society.	T.1. Provides a narrow review of information without any attempt to make generalizations or draw conclusions. Essentially a summary, comparison or review.  T.2. (if relevant to discipline) Does not incorporate theory.

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Section II: Empowered Learners are critical thinkers who demonstrate intellectual agility and creativity and the ability to manage or create change. They are able to derive meaning from experience and observation. They communicate well in diverse settings and employ various strategies to solve problems. They are empowered through mastery of intellectual and practical skills.

	<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<b>Communication</b>
	<p>Trait 1 – Ability to argue or explain.</p> <p>Trait 2 – Discrimination regarding quality of sources.</p>	<p>Trait 1 – Communication through written language.</p> <p>Trait 2 – Organization of ideas.</p>
<b>Advanced</b>	<p>T.1. Defends and justifies arguments and/or explanations using novel strategies, credible claims, and sound reasoning.</p> <p>T.2. Clearly assess and discriminates regarding quality and reliability of sources.</p>	<p>T.1. Other than occasional lapses, language is fluent and clear.</p> <p>T.2. Although occasional pieces of information may be out of place, the organizational structure is evident and contributes to the clarity of the piece. The writer helps direct reader through the piece by providing advance organizers and signals transitions among ideas.</p>
<b>Proficient</b>	<p>T.1. Demonstrates effective strategies of argument and/or explanation using appropriate claims and clear reasoning.</p> <p>T.2. Applies adequate discrimination of quality and reliability of sources.</p>	<p>T.1. While the writer’s use of language reflects fluency with writing and expresses clarity of thought, there are a sufficient number of problems with fluency and clarity that cause problems with understanding the meaning of the piece.</p> <p>T.2. There are problems with organization and structure that interfere with the clarity of the piece. There is not much evidence of consideration for the reader.</p>
<b>Developing</b>	<p>T. 1. Provides limited arguments and/or explanations based on weak reasoning or unsupported claims.</p> <p>T.2. Limited discrimination regarding quality and reliability of sources.</p>	<p>T.1. Grammatical and mechanical issues interfere with the writer’s ability to communicate in writing, reflecting a lack of fluency with writing and causing problems with clarity.</p> <p>T.2. Ideas are not sufficiently organized to communicate a clear meaning in the piece. The writer’s ideas are not sufficiently transformed from self-expression for consideration by a reader.</p>
<b>Undeveloped</b>	<p>T.1. No attempt to provide arguments or explanations. Purely descriptive.</p> <p>T.2. No discrimination regarding quality or reliability of sources.</p>	<p>T.1. Does not communicate clearly, lacks fluency and clarity.</p> <p>T.2. No clear meaning in piece.</p>

APPENDIX B

Rubrics for Expected Student Learning Outcomes

Section III: Responsible Learners are engaged citizens of a diverse democratic society who have a deep sense of social responsibility and ethical judgment. They are responsible for their personal actions and civic values.

	<b>Acknowledgment of Sources (Academic Integrity)</b>	<b>Sense of Social Justice</b>	<b>Respect for Identities, Histories, &amp; Culture of Others</b>
	Trait 1 – Documentation and acknowledgment of sources.  Trait 2 – Differentiation of original thought and ideas of others	Trait 1 – Understanding of moral principals relevant to subject.  Trait 2 – Ability to draw action guiding inferences from principals	Trait 1 – Recognition of different perspectives and awareness of personal cultural position.
<b>Advanced</b>	T.1. Provides complete and accurate citations throughout the work. Clearly acknowledges the influence of sources on the work.  T.2. Clearly differentiates between original thought and ideas drawn from other sources.	T.1. Articulates moral (or socio-political) principals relevant to subject.  T.2. Implications of said principals for subject under discussion are well considered.	T. 1. Uses awareness of historical and/or contemporary issues to benefit other groups.
<b>Proficient</b>	T.1. Provides adequate and generally accurate citations throughout the work. Attributes different opinions and evidence to sources.  T.2. Adequately differentiates between own ideas and those from cited material.	T.1. Articulates moral (or socio-political) principals relevant to subject.  T.2. Implications of said principals for subject under discussion are examined with limited success.	T.1. Awareness and arguments are shaped by needs of others (still bettering self).
<b>Developing</b>	T.1. Provides some citations, but the practice is inconsistent and the format is sometimes inaccurate. Occasionally attributes different opinions and evidence to sources.  T.2. Occasionally differentiates between own ideas and those from other sources.	T.1. Little awareness of moral (or socio-political) principals relevant to subject.  T.2. Little awareness of the moral (or socio-political) concerns that should be prompted by subject under discussion.	T. 1. Awareness of other arguments but own position is best.
<b>Undeveloped</b>	T.1. Makes limited or no use of citations. Does not attribute opinions and evidence to sources.  T.2. Does not differentiate between own ideas and those from other sources.	T.1. No awareness of moral (or socio-political) principals relevant to subject.  T.2. No awareness of the moral (or socio-political) concerns that should be prompted by subject under discussion.	T.1. Lack of awareness of different perspectives (the world revolves around me).



## APPENDIX C: Document sent to Chairpersons

To: Department Chairpersons and Faculty Teaching Capstone/Senior-Level Courses  
From: University Assessment Committee, Liberal Studies Subcommittee  
Co-Chairs: Kevin McKee (HPED), David Pistole (Biology)

### Overview

The Liberal Studies Subcommittee of the University Assessment Committee (UAC) evaluates facets of IUP's Liberal Studies program and disseminates its findings to the University's Liberal Studies Committee and the Provost's Office. This spring our subcommittee is replicating a component of last year's assessment plan by evaluating senior-level writing assignments to assist in determining the extent to which they meet the Expected Student Learning Outcomes approved by University Senate in May of 2006. Based on recommendations from last year's committee, this year's committee is seeking work from department-level senior capstone courses from the Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 semesters. We are asking faculty involved in these courses to provide written work for this evaluation. For departments that did not offer a capstone course this year, written work originating from another departmental senior (400)-level course would be acceptable for submission and assessment. In this instance the course should consist of department majors only; courses with mixed major enrollment are not applicable.

### Anonymity\*

To ensure anonymity all work submitted will have the names of instructors and students removed prior to review by subcommittee members. The removal process can be one of two methods:

- 1) participating faculty delete (white out) names prior to submitting
- 2) UAC Liberal Studies Co-Chairs and/or staff of the Interim Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Planning delete as assignments are delivered to the Associate Provost's office

\*Participating faculty are asked to voluntarily indicate what College the assignments are from. Why?

- 1) we'd like to know the extent to which our sample reflects representation across Colleges
- 2) utilization of Section I of the rubric requires readers to evaluate assignments along the following categorical lines: Natural and Social Scientific Modes, Humanities Modes, Arts Modes, or Application and Synthesis; knowledge of the College would expedite the reader's selection of the most appropriate category and allow for more accurate use of the rubric

Page 2 of this document would be used by the faculty willing to provide this information.

### Delivery/Return of Documents

Documents will be collected through Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, in Room 209 of Sutton Hall, the office of The Interim Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Planning. One of two methods can be used:

- 1) participating faculty can personally deliver
- 2) student workers can be sent to faculty offices to pick up assignments; with this option notification should be sent to Karen Pizarchik (Interim Associate Provost's staff) at [karenpiz@iup.edu](mailto:karenpiz@iup.edu), or by calling 7-2209

Upon delivery, the documents will be photocopied, after which originals can be:

- 1) personally retrieved by participating faculty
- 2) returned to the office of the participating faculty by student workers
- 3) destroyed if permission given to do so

### Report of Data

Following data analysis a summary report will be constructed by the subcommittee, with the results disseminated to the Liberal Studies Committee and the Provost's Office. The summary will be of aggregate data; there will not be comparative conclusions made between the Colleges.

Thanks! The UAC Liberal Studies Subcommittee members appreciate your cooperation.

APPENDIX C: (continued)

To the faculty member providing assignments for the Liberal Studies Subcommittee (of the University Assessment Committee) in AY 2008-2009:

- 1) Thank you for your willingness to provide documents for our assessment. We are very appreciative of your time and efforts.
- 2) If you are willing to allow the Liberal Studies Subcommittee members to know what College your student work originates from, please place an 'X' on the appropriate line and include this form with your documents when delivered to Room 209 of Sutton Hall. If you choose not to divulge this information, simply do not include this page when your assignments are delivered.

\_\_\_\_\_ The Eberly College of Business and Information Technology

\_\_\_\_\_ The College of Education and Educational Technology

\_\_\_\_\_ The College of Fine Arts

\_\_\_\_\_ The College of Health and Human Services

\_\_\_\_\_ The College of Humanities and Social Sciences

\_\_\_\_\_ The College of Natural Science and Mathematics