



Institutional Effectiveness:

A Guide to Implementation

Accrediting
Council for
Independent
Colleges
and Schools

Institutional Effectiveness: A Guide to Implementation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACICS's Approach.....	1
Purpose of the Institutional Effectiveness Plan.....	2
Accreditation Criteria and Council Expectations.....	4
Best Practices.....	9
Sample Institutional Effectiveness Plan.....	12
Key Terms.....	23
Suggested References.....	25
Suggested Web site Addresses.....	28
Institutional Effectiveness Plan Checklist.....	29

Published July 2004

Accreditation's fundamental purposes

- ☞ assure quality of an institution, and*
- ☞ facilitate continuous improvement*

ACICS was an early adopter of the institutional effectiveness movement.

The institutional mission drives the institutional effectiveness plan.

Institutional effectiveness is “the process of articulating the mission, setting goals, and using data to form assessments in an ongoing cycle of goal setting and planning” (Grossman & Duncan, 1989). This definition encapsulates the intent of the ACICS criteria and expectations for the Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) of accredited institutions.

The Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) published criteria on institutional effectiveness in 1991. The criteria focus on educational outcomes and improvement of those outcomes. The outcomes include retention, placement, student learning, graduate satisfaction and employer satisfaction. Institutions are required to document continuous improvement through a written Institutional Effectiveness Plan. This monograph provides a brief background of ACICS's approach to institutional effectiveness, the purpose of the IEP, a discussion of ACICS *Accreditation Criteria* Sections 3-1-111 through 3-1-113, characteristics of the IEP, a “how to” section, a sample IEP, key terms, and references.

The best practices section is an exciting new addition to this revision. The section includes guidance and examples for developing the IEP; establishing benchmarks; selecting and interpreting data; implementing the IEP; documenting progress; and reviewing, assessing, and evaluating the IEP.

ACICS's Approach to Institutional Effectiveness

Accreditation's fundamental purposes are to (1) assure the quality of an institution, and (2) facilitate the continuous improvement within an institution. This is reflected in the mission of the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS), which is *to advance educational excellence for students at independent, non-public career schools, colleges, and organizations, in the United States and abroad. This is achieved through a deliberate and thorough accreditation process of quality assessment and enhancement as well as ethical business practices and educational practices.*

Accrediting agencies recognized that institutional effectiveness was a method for achieving both quality control and continuous improvement. Until the mid-1980s, accrediting agencies had focused predominately on input measures, such as enrollments and numbers of books in the library, with little attention given to output measures such as placement and graduation

rates. ACICS was an early adopter of the institutional effectiveness movement seeing its usefulness in achieving the mission of ACICS accreditation: *compliance* with ACICS standards and the *process* of continuous improvement.

In the late 1980s, the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (now Council for Higher Education Accreditation) made the following statements about institutional effectiveness:

The quality of an educational process is related to (1) The appropriateness of its objectives; (2) the effectiveness of the use of resources in pursuing these objectives; and (3) the degree to which these objectives are achieved. Without a clear statement of what the education is expected to provide, it is not possible to determine how good it is.

During the 1990s, accrediting agencies firmly established institutional effectiveness as the object for evaluation. ACICS published the first formal institutional effectiveness criteria in 1991. Over the years, the criteria have been revised as our understanding of institutional effectiveness and the needs of institutions change. However, the core of the institutional effectiveness criteria remains that of “evaluating the success of each institution in meeting its published mission” (1991). *The institutional mission drives the institutional effectiveness plan.* All of the institutional effectiveness indicators selected by an institution should link to the mission to demonstrate mission achievement and continuous improvement.

Purposes of the IEP

The IEP serves as many purposes as there are institutions, but the most important purpose, and the purpose common to all institutions, is *continuous improvement* throughout the institution. ACICS looks for continuous improvement demonstrated specifically in educational programs and processes. A well-conceived and implemented IEP can serve other purposes as well. These purposes are to achieve *internal effectiveness*, *assess progress* and the need for *change*, *communicate outcomes* to the public, and *demonstrate regulatory compliance*.

Continuous Improvement

The most important purpose of the IEP is to continuously improve the institution, by providing a tool for planning, a method of documenting outcomes, and a system for recording the summary and analysis of data during the process of developing short- and long-term goals designed to improve the institution.

Internal Effectiveness

The process of developing the IEP can assist the institution in achieving internal effectiveness through its use in establishing goals for both short- and long-term success. Further, criteria for measuring the accomplishment of these goals can be defined, allowing the institution to focus its plans and activities on the critical activities needed for effectiveness. Once defined, these goals and criteria can be used to unify administrative and educational activities to achieve a high degree of commitment and common direction among all employees.

Assess Progress and Change

Another internal benefit can be obtained when the IEP is used to assess progress and the need for change. Establishing and implementing a continuous review process can help the institution increase effectiveness by making timely changes based upon valid information. The institution can respond proactively rather than reactively to opportunities or threats.

Communicate Outcomes

In addition, the IEP can be instrumental in communicating key information to constituents regarding the institution's goals, its degree of effectiveness, and how it plans to enhance

overall quality. Constituents may be external such as graduates, employers, and community leaders, or internal, faculty, students, and staff. Having information which depicts the most important elements of the institution's operation communicates clearly and accurately how well the institution is meeting the needs of constituents and providing quality learning experiences.

Institutional effectiveness provides a direct response to the question, "What value do we receive for the money invested?" A well-conceived and appropriately implemented institutional effectiveness plan provides information which institutional stakeholders use to enhance the quality of educational processes within the institution. The data derived from the IEP also equips institutional stakeholders to confidently respond to questions such as, "What have your students really learned?" "How do you know learning has occurred?" "What happens to your graduates?" "Are your graduates successfully employed?" "What value has your institution added to the community?"

Demonstrate Regulatory Compliance

The IEP can meet the expectations and requirements of approving agencies and accrediting associations, including state boards and ACICS. A document which defines institutional goals and educational processes is a primary focus of most accrediting agencies as they measure overall effectiveness and the quality of programs and services provided.

Purposes of the IEP:

- Continuous improvement*
- Achieve internal effectiveness*
- Assess progress and change*
- Communicate outcomes*
- Demonstrate regulatory compliance*

The primary purpose of IE is to demonstrate continuous improvement.

ACICS Accreditation Criteria

From the definition, “the process of articulating the mission, setting goals, and using data to form assessments in an ongoing cycle of goal setting and planning,” we see that institutional effectiveness is a process. The process is cyclical and includes planning, goal setting, implementation, and evaluation. Each of these components is recognized in the ACICS standards. Sections 3-1-110 and 3-1-111 address *mission articulation, planning and goal setting*, and Sections 3-1-112 and 3-1-113 address *implementation and evaluation* respectively. Sections 3-1-110 through 3-1-113 of the *Accreditation Criteria* follow:

Council Expectations for Compliance

The following section is provided for clarity. Following the Institutional Effectiveness criteria is a discussion of the intent of the criteria which is presented in narrative format, non-italics. The intent represents Council expectations for compliance. The italicized text is taken directly from the ACICS Criteria. The non-italicized text is the discussion.

3-1-110 INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

An important indication of the overall effectiveness of an ACICS-accredited institution is the degree to which it meets its own predetermined educational outcomes. Each ACICS-accredited institution, consistent with its mission, shall develop and implement an Institutional Effectiveness Plan that identifies how it plans to assess and continuously improve its educational programs and processes, and that addresses its ability to meet the educational and occupational objectives of its programs. In this document, each institution should attempt to incorporate short-term objectives to be accomplished in order to achieve the mission of the institution and its future goals.

Section 3-1-110 is the most straightforward and obvious of all the IEP criteria. Very simply, the institution should have a *written plan*, or the IEP; and the IEP must be *congruent with the institutional mission*. Very little judgment is required for determining compliance for this section. Either the institution has a written plan or it does not; the plan is congruent with the mission or it is not. Few citations are found for section 3-1-110. Most institutions develop a written plan that is congruent with the mission. Thus, the institution has successfully begun the IEP process.

Just as missions are unique to institutions, the IEP is

unique to the institution; therefore, no two plans are alike. There are as many different IEPs as there are missions, but the IEPs will have common elements as seen in Sections 3-1-111 through 3-1-113.

3-1-111 INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PLAN

Each institution shall have on file an Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) that describes the characteristics of the programs offered and of the student population, describes what types of data will be used for assessment, identifies outcomes, and states how continuous improvement will be made to improve or enhance outcomes. At a minimum, the following five elements will be evaluated for institutional effectiveness:

- (a) student retention rates;*
- (b) student placement rates;*
- (c) level of graduate satisfaction;*
- (d) level of employer satisfaction; and*
- (e) student learning outcomes.*

In compiling the data needed to assess the level of graduate satisfaction and the level of employer satisfaction, each institution shall identify and describe how the data were collected, the rationale for using each type of data, a summary and analysis of the data collected, and how the data have been used to improve educational processes.

The data needed to demonstrate student learning outcomes includes baseline data and data to support that student learning has occurred. Examples of data may include, but are not limited to, course grades, GPA, CGPA, pre- and post-tests, entrance assessments, portfolios, standardized tests, professional licensure exams, and other measures of skill and competency attainment. Placement data should not be used exclusively to validate student learning outcomes.

Each institution shall publish annual placement and retention goals. In formulating these goals, each institution shall take into account the retention and placement rates from the previous three Annual Institutional Reports and the specific activities that will be undertaken to meet those goals. The activities demonstrate the institution's ability to maintain or improve retention and placement outcomes each year.

Section 3-1-111 is the most detailed of the IEP criteria and is the most frequently cited section. To facilitate understanding, short selections are extracted from this section and discussed. (Again, the italicized text is taken directly from the Criteria. The non-italicized text is the discussion.)

Each institution shall have on file an Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) that describes the characteristics of the programs offered and of the student population...

This component of the criteria is frequently cited, but, curiously, it should be one of the easiest pieces of information for an institution to provide. The IEP should include the programs the institution offers and the program characteristics. Characteristics could include a variety of items, the most common being degree level, program description, objectives, rationale for offering the program, and projections for future employment demands. Characteristics of the student population also could include many items, the most common being student demographics: median age of student population, gender ratio, socioeconomic descriptors, marital status, and race/ethnicity. These items should be included for each program offered if the program demographics differ from the overall institutional demographics.

Section 3-1-111, continued

...describes what types of data will be used for assessment, identifies outcomes, and states how continuous improvement will be made to improve or enhance outcomes. At a minimum, the following five elements will be evaluated for institutional effectiveness:

- (a) student retention rates;*
- (b) student placement rates;*
- (c) level of graduate satisfaction;*
- (d) level of employer satisfaction; and*
- (e) student learning outcomes.*

Section 3-1-111 identifies five elements the institution must consider as it assesses and continuously improves its educational programs and processes: student retention rates, student placement rates, level of graduate satisfaction, level of employer satisfaction, and student learning outcomes. These five elements meet the minimum expectations of the Council; however, institutions may include additional elements.

The five elements are the institutional indicators of

effectiveness. In essence, Section 3-1-111 requires the institution to answer these three questions. Where has the institution been? Where is the institution now? Where does the institution want to go?

Where has the institution been? To answer this question, the IEP should include baseline data for each of the five outcomes. The baseline data provide a starting point for the institution, something to which the institution refers, to gauge and demonstrate improvement. Section 3-1-111 specifies the baseline data to be used for retention and placement, the retention and placement rates from the previous three Annual Institutional Reports.

Examples of baseline data for graduate and employer satisfaction might come from surveys. Baseline data for student learning outcomes might be program specific and might come from pre- and post-tests. Many sources of baseline data for these three elements might be selected. The sources of the baseline data and rationale for selecting the data should be identified in the IEP.

Where is the institution now? To respond to this question, the IEP should include the characteristics of the programs offered and the student population. Additionally, current data should be available for each element which demonstrates how the institution will measure change from the baseline data of each element. The comparison data will be used by the institution to identify changes made and changes needed.

Where does the institution want to go? The IEP should include goals for continuous improvement or enhancement of the five elements. Specifically, the plan should include how the data will be used to improve or enhance educational processes and/or programs. In summary, an institution will use the data to discern if the IEP has in fact been implemented *with a goal toward continuous improvement* of educational programs and/or processes.

Section 3-1-111, continued

In compiling the data needed to assess the level of graduate satisfaction and the level of employer satisfaction, each institution shall identify and describe how the data were collected, the rationale for using each type of data, a summary and analysis of the data collected, and how the data have been used to improve educational processes.

Five elements of the IEP:

- ✍ retention rates*
- ✍ placement rates*
- ✍ graduate satisfaction*
- ✍ employer satisfaction*
- ✍ student learning outcomes*

Most often, institutions use questionnaires to determine graduate and employer satisfaction. Each component of this paragraph must be addressed in the IEP, paying special attention to providing a summary and analysis of the data and describing how the data have been used to improve educational processes. Institutions are frequently cited for not providing (1) a summary and analysis of the data, and/or (2) a description of how the data were used to demonstrate continuous improvement. Remember, the primary purpose of institutional effectiveness is to demonstrate continuous improvement.

Employer and graduate satisfaction questionnaire data offers a rich source of information on program health and viability. Be specific in describing how the data were used to improve educational processes. For example, if several survey responses indicate that a particular competency is no longer required in the field, the institution should consider that information as a basis for revising or eliminating that competency from the curriculum. There are many, many other examples of ways the questionnaire data are used to improve educational processes.

Section 3-1-111, continued

The data needed to demonstrate student learning outcomes includes baseline data and data to support that student learning has occurred. Examples of data may include, but are not limited to, course grades, GPA, CGPA, pre- and post-tests, entrance assessments, portfolios, standardized tests, professional licensure exams, and other measures of skill and competency attainment. Placement data should not be used exclusively to validate student learning outcomes.

“Student learning outcomes” is the least understood element of effectiveness. ACICS requires that institutions show evidence of student learning. Learning is defined as a “change in behavior.” To demonstrate that student learning has occurred requires both assessment as a continuous process and the demonstration of outcomes. Faculty, as education experts, determine what the results should be and how learning should be assessed to assure the desired outcomes. Faculty are challenged to agree on how learning should be assessed along the way.

Assessment: Faculty assess student learning

throughout a student's progression in each course of study and for the overall program. The objective of assessment is to measure the differences or changes made in students' lives as a result of their experiences at the institution.

The information gleaned from assessment is then used to improve the quality of the educational process, curriculum, and instruction, which will maximize the capacity for learning. Assessment should include a variety of methods appropriate to adult learners and the methods should accommodate various learning styles. As an example, a student learning assessment process might include some or all of the following: pre- and post-tests, journals or portfolios, community service, standardized final exams, capstone courses, certification exams, internship/externship experiences. Strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and learning process will emerge as practices and products are assessed.

Student learning assessment should also include evaluation of job-related competencies that address both academic and personal skills such as work attitude, motivation, critical thinking, and communication skills. In a well-planned program, these skills can and should be measured throughout the student's enrollment. While standardized assessments may be used for this purpose, the involvement of faculty is critical in developing the instruments and processes required to measure job-related competencies. Since institutions, programs, and student populations vary, faculty should always be involved in the development of student learning outcomes assessment. Quality improvement is a process that depends on continual assessment and tweaking along the way.

Outcomes: The effectiveness of the assessment process is demonstrated in the outcomes. Traditionally, student learning outcomes are evaluated by reviewing grades and transcripts. Reviewing transcripts and grades are, arguably, indicators that learning has occurred, but, given the inherent subjectivity in grading, these should not be the only indicators. Competency-based education has become an acceptable way to deal with outcomes assessment. Specific performance standards are often established for a particular course or program with the student required to meet those standards.

Student learning should be assessed continuously.

The effectiveness of the assessment process is demonstrated in learning outcomes.

For example, the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) Standards and Guidelines identify national standards of competency for medical assistants. Many other professional associations also have established national competency standards for specific fields. National standards are appropriate outcomes to strive for.

An effective plan for measuring student learning outcomes should describe both the assessment model and the expected outcomes for each program in terms of the knowledge gained, skills acquired, and attitudes and behaviors influenced. The plan should include evidence that students' lives are changing (assessment) and have changed (outcomes). The quality of the educational process is assured and enhanced through this process.

Section 3-1-111, continued

Each institution shall publish annual placement and retention goals. In formulating these goals, each institution shall take into account the retention and placement rates from the previous three Annual Institutional Reports and the specific activities that will be undertaken to meet those goals. The activities demonstrate the institution's ability to maintain or improve retention and placement outcomes each year.

Each institution has the retention and placement data from the Annual Institutional Report (AIR). The data for the past three years should be reported in the IEP. Goals for retention and placement are based upon the AIR data. Perhaps your institution has retention and placement percentages that you are satisfied with; but there are always ways to improve, the percentages and the processes.

3-1-112 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PLAN

Institutions shall document that the specific activities listed in the plan are carried out and that periodic progress reports are completed to ensure that the plan's activities are implemented. Appropriate individuals should be assigned responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Institutional Effectiveness Plan.

The IEP should include the name(s) of those responsible for implementing and monitoring the IEP. Although a committee or team is not prescribed, many institutions find that a team tasked with implementing and monitoring the IEP is the most effective and efficient way to manage

the IEP. An institutional effectiveness team may be comprised of the president of the institution, a senior administrator (usually the dean of academics), a representative from admissions and placement, faculty program coordinators or department chairs, and a student leader. The designated person or team should be key decision-makers, or have access to the key decision-makers. The size and composition of the team is up to the institution.

It is important that the institution does have a designated person or group responsible for implementing and monitoring the IEP. And that the person or group knows who they are and what their responsibilities are! A good way to document progress is through the minutes of the team and/or through minutes of staff and faculty meetings. Many institutions find that a quarterly review of the IEP works well, documented, of course. Minor revisions to goals may occur during the monitoring period. The IEP should not be substantively revised until the annual evaluation, unless there is a major change in institutional mission and/or leadership.

3-1-113 EVALUATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PLAN

Institutions shall evaluate the plan, its goals, and activities at least annually. Evaluation requires the determination of initial baseline rates and a measurement of results after planned activities have occurred. Institutions shall maintain documentation of historical outcomes and show evidence of how this documentation is used to achieve expected goals. Institutions should adjust their goals accordingly as a result of an evaluation of the Institutional Effectiveness Plan.

The annual evaluation represents a summation of the monitoring activity and/or quarterly reviews. The findings should be documented. The evaluation is used to develop or revise the goals.

The IEP should be assessed quarterly and evaluated annually.

SUMMARY

“Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives.” The IEP is a living document that “represents the wise choice of many alternatives.” (Willa A. Foster)

Institutional effectiveness measures both *institutional quality* and *academic quality*. *Institutional quality* is determined by appropriateness of mission and goals, effective use of resources to achieve goals, and the degree to which goals are achieved. *Academic quality* is determined through student learning assessment and outcomes, retention, placement, graduate satisfaction, and employer satisfaction.

The IEP is typically developed for a period of three to five years. Like any big, important task, taking the first step is usually the most challenging. Attention to the characteristics of developing the IEP will assure that the process becomes exciting, engaging, and enlightening.

Characteristics of a good IEP consist of a thorough planning process which involves key stakeholders who look at the external and internal environment of the institution; analyze the labor market trends and projections; identify the institution's strengths and weaknesses; ask the hard questions, “Are we doing the right things, and are we doing those things right?”; examine alternatives; identify opportunities and threats; articulate the most distinctive future for the institution; identify strategies and develop measurable goals; implement the IEP; assess the IEP at regular, periodic intervals, usually quarterly, and revise as needed; communicate the progress to the constituents.

The process is iterative and cyclical. The IEP is never really “finished.” It is a road map to the institution's destination, and the destination represents the institution's best future!

Planning Tools:

- ◊ environmental scan
- ◊ SWOT
- ◊ mission
- ◊ vision

Best Practices

In preparing this section of the monograph, several institutional effectiveness plans were reviewed. Eight plans were selected from IEPs that team members and Commissioners on 2003 accreditation visits identified as exemplary. IEPs were selected from all credential levels: one nondegree, three occupational associate's degree, two academic associate's degree, one bachelor's degree, and one master's degree. The sizes of the institutions varied from small, family-owned institutions to those owned corporately. The IEP contributors graciously have permitted us to use their IEPs, in part or whole, as examples of best practices. The contributors have asked to remain anonymous. Reviewing the plans, the characteristics described below emerged as best practices.

Please remember as you read these best practices, that, unless otherwise stated, not all IEPs contained everything listed. For example, the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) teams developed at the eight institutions varied in size from three members to a dozen. Also, data sources used varied from two sources per category to several. How the IEP is constructed depends on institutional culture, resources, goals, and style.

I. The Team, or Who's Responsible?

All IEPs were developed, implemented, and monitored by a well-identified team of institutional leaders and key decision-makers. Most IE teams were comprised of some combination of the following positions: director, academic dean, admissions coordinator, student services director, placement coordinator, retention coordinator, financial aid administrator, director of computer information systems, and program chair(s). The function of the team was to develop, implement, and monitor the IEP. The IE team met three to four times in the year to discuss progress. In interviews with the contributors, all stressed the importance of involving representatives from across the institution. They all emphasized that the success of the IEP could be correlated to the level of engagement and interest in the process as demonstrated by the campus director. At all eight institutions, the person ultimately accountable for the plan was the campus director.

II. Data Resources

All IEPs listed data sources. Data from the Annual Institutional Report (AIR) are required for the IEP. Other than that, the data selected for the IEP is driven by goals for each element. Some institutions selected only a couple of data sources for each element, others used several. The following data sources were frequently cited as information sources for the five required elements of the IEP:

Student Learning Outcomes

- Course grades
- Cumulative GPA
- National and state certification and licensure outcomes
- Capstone courses
- Portfolios
- Nationally-normed pre-tests and post-tests
- Course and/or program exams
- Competency (skill) checklists
- Standard Academic Progress
- Program review data
- Faculty performance review data
- Practicum (assessment of student performance as observed by site preceptor)

Student Retention

The Annual Institutional Report (AIR) (three years of data)
 IPEDS data
 Weekly monitoring of withdrawals
 Weekly monitoring of student attendance
 Retention trends by program (three years)
 Quarterly program enrollment
 Quarterly cohort retention monitoring
 Current student program satisfaction surveys
 Current student institutional satisfaction surveys
 Student course/faculty perception-of-quality surveys
 Noel Levitz (or other) national surveys
 Exit interview data
 New student orientation (student perception of effectiveness)
 Student services available (student perception of effectiveness)
 Student organizations (student perception of effectiveness)

Student Placement

The Annual Institutional Report (AIR) (three years of data)
 IPEDS data
 Quarterly placement reports
 Analysis of placement numbers (in field, out of field)
 Entry-level salary
 Placement process (student perception of effectiveness)
 Placement trends by program (three years)
 Analysis of length of time student stays employed
 Program review data

Graduate Satisfaction Survey

Analysis of length of time student stays employed
 Program review data
 Level of preparation to enter the field (graduate perception of strengths and weaknesses of the training received)
 Placement process (graduate perception of effectiveness)

Employer Satisfaction Survey

Analysis of length of time student stays employed
 Program review data
 Employer surveys regarding perceived level of preparation to enter the field (strengths and weaknesses of the training received)

III. Developing the document

The IEPs reviewed were structured and formatted to reflect the style and meet the needs of the institution. Each IEP was unique in appearance and content. However, most of the IEPs contained the following sections:

- Introduction
- Mission and objectives
- List of IE team members with indication of the person responsible
- Student demographics (institutional and program)
- Program characteristics

- The five elements: retention, student learning outcomes, placement, graduate satisfaction, employer satisfaction
- Benchmark data for each element (AIR and Key Operating Statistics)
- Goals for each element
- Activities required to accomplish the goals
- Timelines for accomplishing the goals
- Assessment and evaluation of the IEP
- Examples of continuous improvement

IV. Implementation of the IEP

The eight institutions employed various strategies to implement the IEP. A common strategy was to assign the team members specific areas of responsibility and goals. The team member involved colleagues from respective departments in meeting the responsibility and working toward the assigned goal. Each team member would then report to the team at large during regularly scheduled meetings. This strategy serves two important purposes: (1) a broader audience is involved in the institutional effectiveness process, and (2) communication about the IEP and the institutional goals are more widely disseminated.

Some institutions had an IE team with sub-teams responsible for each goal. This served the same two purposes listed above. Smaller institutions depended on the campus director or the academic dean to implement the plan. Even in this situation, the IEP leader actively involved constituents, had regular meetings, and communicated progress throughout the institution.

V. Monitoring the IEP

All institutions monitored the IEP by conducting regularly scheduled meetings, usually quarterly, in which the IE team discussed and documented the status of the IEP. Monitoring was commonly documented through minutes of meetings.

VI. Documenting progress

The primary purpose of the IEP is to demonstrate continuous improvement of the institution with a special focus on educational programs and processes. Progress is determined through systematic and regularly scheduled reviews of the activities associated with the goals of the IEP. The eight institutions had detailed methods to track progress. Progress must be noted and recorded. Many used charts. A progress chart is an appropriate visual cue for identifying completed activities and goals achieved. As challenges arise, they can be addressed early when regularly scheduled meetings are held.

VII. Evaluating the IEP

The institutions charted and documented progress at each monitoring meeting. The annual review of the IEP will be the culmination of the progress reports. A summary report of the annual evaluation of the IEP should be available. The report would include goals accomplished and new or revised annual goals. Should a goal not be realized, the rationale for not accomplishing the goal should be included in the annual report.

SAMPLE

Institutional Effectiveness Plan for Best College of Business and Technology (BCBT) Anywhere, USA 2003

The sample Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP) below was developed for a fictitious institution, Best College of Business and Technology in Anywhere, USA. The IEP includes the minimum components required to be in compliance with ACICS standards. The reader should keep in mind that the format, structure, style, and content of this sample IEP is not intended for duplication. The sample was developed from pieces of IEPs copied from the eight "best practices" IEPs. The IEP developed for your institution should reflect the uniqueness of the institution. In the case of IEPs, "one size" does not "fit all."

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Institutional Effectiveness Team

Mission, Goal, and Objectives

Student Demographics

Program Characteristics

Retention and Placement

Student Learning Outcomes

Graduate and Employer Satisfaction

2004 Goals

- Benchmark data
- Assessment activities
- Timelines and Responsibility
- Results

Evaluation of the IEP

Examples of Continuous Improvement

Introduction

Just as relevant today is the 1977 quote by Robert Hutchins, a leader in strategic planning, "The only way you can criticize an institution, the only way you can appraise it, the only way you can determine whether it's good or bad or medium or indifferent is to know what it's about, what it's supposed to be, and what it's supposed to be doing. If you don't know these things, you haven't any standards of criticism."

Before an institutional effectiveness plan can be written, an institution must know "what it's about, what it's supposed to be, and what it's supposed to be doing."

Best College of Business and Technology (BCBT) was founded in 1976 to offer business programs at the occupational associate's degree level. In 1982, BCBT earned ACICS accreditation, and in 1997 was awarded accreditation to offer academic associate's degrees. BCBT is located in an urban area of Anytown, USA.

In preparing for this plan, Best College of Business and Technology (BCBT) formed an Institutional Effectiveness (IE) team comprised of the director, academic dean, registrar, department chairs, admissions coordinator, and placement coordinator. The team examined issues of quality related to the following areas: institutional mission (role and scope), enrollment, relevance of current programs in the context of student learning outcomes and placement, and faculty and student engagement. From an analysis of the issues, the team identified institutional goals and objectives for educational processes and programs. The BCBT institutional effectiveness plan addresses the five elements as required by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS): retention, student learning outcomes, placement, graduate satisfaction, and employer satisfaction.

Mission, Goal, and Objectives

The **mission** of Best College of Business and Technology is to serve students, employers, and their communities through education for careers in Business Administration and Computer Information Systems.

The **goal** of BCBT is to be the college of choice for those wishing to pursue degrees, enhance job skills, or fill positions in:

- Business Administration: Accounting
- Business Administration: Marketing and Management
- Computer Information Systems: Microcomputer Applications
- Computer Information Systems: Networking, and
- Personal Computer Specialist

The **objectives** of the college are

- To serve the student
 - By providing contemporary education in an independent, alternative educational system at a reasonable cost.
 - By providing placement assistance for marketing the skills that have been developed.
 - By maintaining avenues for continuing academic and professional growth.
- To serve the employers
 - By providing employers with high-quality personnel who have a sound practical and technical, as well as theoretical, academic background and who are aware of their responsibilities in their chosen career.
- To serve the community
 - By providing an alternative education, free of tax support, with independence, innovation, responsiveness, and flexibility of operations.

□ Student demographics

BCBT enrolls 178 full-time students and 86 part-time students for a total of 264 students. 61% of the student population is female, predominately single-parent. The median age of the student population is 26. BCBT has a diverse student population with 38% White, 31% Hispanic, 27% African American, and 4% Asian. Approximately 80% of the population is independent with an annual mean income of \$22,000; approximately 20% of the population is dependent with a annual mean income of \$41,000.

BCBT offers two academic associate's degree programs, two occupational associate's degree programs, and one diploma program.

<u>Program</u>	<u>Credential</u>	<u>Percent enrollment</u>
Business Administration: Marketing and Management	AAD	19%
Business Administration: Accounting	AAD	16%
Computer Information Systems: Networking	OAD	32%
Computer Information Systems: Microcomputer Applications	OAD	28%
Personal Computer Specialist	Diploma	5%

AAD = Academic Associate's Degree

OAD = Occupational Associate's Degree

□ Program Characteristics

Business Administration: Marketing & Management (Academic Associate's Degree)

BCBT offers this program to assist individuals in pursuit of marketing and/or management careers. The unique feature about this program is its cutting edge curriculum. Every program-related course includes instruction utilizing web technologies, advanced management principles, and strategic marketing practices. Courses in web site creation and electronic marketing ensure that graduates are able to promote their businesses on the World Wide Web in a manner that is effective and appealing. The program offers training in presentation graphics, desktop publishing, and database management, key productivity tools for any marketing professional. In order to become knowledgeable in the field of management, students take courses in supervision, human resource management, and small business management. Finally, general education courses, including public speaking and critical thinking, assist students to be successful in both their professional and personal lives.

Business Administration: Marketing & Management core objectives

- Develop, implement, and monitor business plans
- Develop, implement, and monitor marketing plans
- Create and execute sales promotion programs
- Acquire the ability to implement human resource management principles and practices
- Create a presence on the World Wide Web in order to promote a business
- Develop skills to apply general accounting principles
- Use common business software productivity tools, including word processing software, databases, and spreadsheets
- Understand and apply laws and regulations related to owning and operating a small business
- Develop supervisory skills

Business Administration/Accounting (Academic Associate's Degree)

This program is unique in that it offers a broad range of contemporary accounting and business practices. Students receive instruction in the basic principles of accounting and specialty areas. As the field of accounting has become computerized, each course includes training in accounting software such as QuickBooks, TurboTax, and PeachTree. In order to ensure that students understand general business principles, business courses are incorporated into the curriculum. All students are offered the opportunity to receive training in the entire suite of Microsoft Office, thus enabling them to be fully functional in a broad range of jobs. To round out the educational experience and prepare students to be successful on and off the job, general communication and social science courses are integrated into the curriculum.

Business Administration/Accounting core objectives

- Develop skills to apply general accounting principles
- Acquire the ability to utilize the principles and procedures of managerial accounting
- Acquire the ability to utilize the principles and procedures of cost accounting
- Acquire the ability to utilize the principles and procedures of payroll accounting
- Acquire the ability to utilize the principles and procedures of federal income tax accounting
- Acquire the ability to utilize the principles and procedures of nonprofit and governmental accounting
- Acquire the ability to utilize the principles and procedures of computerized accounting software
- Gain an understanding of and apply basic business practices
- Use common business software productivity tools, including word processing software, databases, and spreadsheets

Computer Information Systems: Networking (Occupational Associate's Degree)

This program was designed to enable graduates to seek careers in the field of network administration. Besides being awarded the Occupational Associate's Degree, students are offered all of the coursework necessary to seek Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, A+, Certified Cisco Network Administrator, and Microsoft Office User Specialist certifications. Students are offered the opportunity to enhance their communication and social skills by taking a series of general education courses.

Computer Information Systems/Networking core objectives

- Design, maintain, and implement an enterprise-wide computer network
- Troubleshoot hardware problems
- Setup and configure Internet routing
- Establish and maintain an enterprise-wide messaging and communications system
- Design and implement databases using Microsoft SQL Server
- Design, implement, and administer a network infrastructure
- Prepare for A+ certification
- Prepare for Microsoft Certified System Engineer certification

Computer Information Systems: Microcomputer Applications (Occupational Associate's Degree)

This program was designed for individuals desiring both business and computer skills. Students take both introductory and advanced courses in all of Microsoft Office's productivity applications; desktop publishing and basic web site design are included. From the business perspective, students learn accounting principles, computerized accounting, small business management, and technical report writing to ensure a well-rounded background required for success in a business setting. The program prepares students to become Microsoft Office User Specialists.

Computer Information Systems/Microcomputer Applications core objectives

- Use common business software productivity tools, including word processing software, databases, desktop publishing software, and spreadsheets at an advanced level
- Use internet technology to create and maintain web pages
- Develop skills to apply general accounting principles
- Build, repair, and troubleshoot hardware problems with personal computers
- Install, configure, and upgrade software
- Gain an understanding of and apply basic business practices
- Prepare for Microsoft Office User Specialist certification

Personal Computer Specialist (Diploma)

Students learn the fundamentals of personal computer operation and popular business software in all the major applications areas. These include word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets, databases, and presentation graphics. The program is designed to offer the student an opportunity to learn types of computing that are of special interest to him/her, such as website design, computer hardware, and computer programming.

Personal Computer Specialist core objectives

- Develop a basic understanding of Microsoft Windows XP
- Develop the ability to use basic business software, including word processing, database, and spreadsheet applications
- Leverage the capabilities of the Microsoft Office Suite to integrate applications
- Develop the ability to use the Internet as a productivity tool
- Prepare for Microsoft Office User Specialist certification
- Develop skills necessary to create powerful resumes, acquire job seeking skills, and demonstrate interviewing skills

RETENTION AND PLACEMENT

The retention trends for the programs as reported in the past three ACICS Annual Institutional Reports are:

RETENTION TREND DATA BY PROGRAM

Program	2000	2001	2002
Business Administration: Accounting	76%	68%	70%
Business Administration: Marketing and Management	77%	70%	73%
Computer Information Systems: Microcomputer Applications	75%	75%	72%
Computer Information Systems: Networking	74%	72%	75%
Personal Computer Specialist	74%	69%	69%

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PLANNING: SAMPLE

The placement trends for the programs as reported in the past three ACICS Annual Institutional Reports are:

PLACEMENT TREND DATA BY PROGRAM

<u>Program</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Business Administration: Accounting	82%	83%	85%
Business Administration: Marketing and Management	78%	77%	80%
Computer Information Systems: Microcomputer Applications	81%	82%	84%
Computer Information Systems: Networking	79%	79%	83%
Personal Computer Specialist	66%	68%	67%

The retention trends for the institution as reported in the past three ACICS Annual Institutional Reports are:

RETENTION

<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
75%	71%	72%

The placement trends for the institution as reported in the past three ACICS Annual Institutional Reports are:

PLACEMENT

<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
77%	78%	80%

The key placement success indicators for BCBT are placement in field and continuous employment in-field for three years.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

BCBT uses multiple measures to assess student learning outcomes; for example, pre- and post-tests, cumulative GPA by program, review of grade distribution by subject and instructor, MOUS certifications earned by CIS program graduates and completers, a capstone course in the Business Administration programs, and a practicum experience in the CIS occupational associate's degree programs. Benchmarks are established for each student learning outcome.

GRADUATE SATISFACTION

Graduates are trained for entry-level positions in their fields through curricula that emphasize the actual skills needed in the field. The BCBT Graduate Satisfaction Survey (GSS) is Web-based and is sent to graduates 90 days after graduation. The GSS includes institutional and program-specific items. Institutional items cover the graduate's perceived satisfaction with the services offered through the placement office. Program-specific items include the graduate's perceived level of preparation in specific skills required for the job. The survey is administered, tabulated, and analyzed by the registrar's office and reported to the IE team, faculty, and advisory committees.

EMPLOYER SATISFACTION

Employers of the institution's graduates receive a survey within 90 days of the graduate's employment. Employer responses to the items indicate the employer's opinion regarding the graduate's level of preparation in specific skills required for the job. The survey is administered, tabulated, and analyzed by the registrar's office and is reported to the IE team, faculty, and advisory committees.

Retention

Data Collection, Timeline, Assessment Results

	Assessment Tool and Assessment Criteria	Data Collection Timeline/ Responsibility	Assessment Results
<p>1) To establish and meet annual retention goals.</p>	<p>Assessment Tool: <i>AIR Retention Rate</i></p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Historical rates are used to determine goals for new year. Programs that fall below established baselines will be required to submit a plan for improvement. Retention rates are set on a quarterly and annual basis (see retention report).</p>	<p>Reviewed weekly, quarterly, and annually</p> <p><i>Campus:</i> Campus Director <i>Management Person:</i> Vice Registrar</p>	<p>Results/Findings:</p>
<p>2) Provide opportunities to interact with one another, potential employers, and the community.</p>	<p>Assessment Tool: <i>Student Satisfaction Surveys</i></p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Using the Student Satisfaction Surveys (orientation through graduation) the following baselines have been established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>✍</i> Social Events 50% <i>✍</i> Support From Faculty 75% <i>✍</i> Spirited/Fun Environment 50% <i>✍</i> Orientation Sessions 75% <i>✍</i> Recognition 65% <i>✍</i> Mission Statement 50% <i>✍</i> Reputation 80% <i>✍</i> Academic Programs 80% <i>✍</i> Email 60% <i>✍</i> Classroom Assignments 80% <i>✍</i> Encouragement/Motivation 80% <i>✍</i> Accessibility 80% <p>The data is collected and benchmarks are set and analyzed for improvement strategies when measures fall below established baselines.</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p><i>Campus:</i> Campus Director <i>Management Person:</i> Admissions Director</p>	<p>Results/Findings:</p>

Placement
Data Collection, Timeline, Assessment Results

	Assessment Tool and Assessment Criteria	Data Collection Timeline/Responsibility	Assessment Results
<p>1) To achieve and maintain placement rates above ACICS average AIR rate.</p>	<p>Assessment Tool: <i>Placement Rates - AIR</i></p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Annually review the AIR overall placement rates. Establish goals for the upcoming year. Campuses that fall below established baselines will be required to submit a plan for improvement.</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p><i>Campus:</i> Career Services Director</p> <p><i>Management Person:</i> Campus Director</p>	<p>Results/Findings:</p>
	<p>Assessment Tool: <i>Alumni Surveys</i></p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Data is collected with an alumni survey six months after student has graduated. Satisfaction percentages reported on original surveys established a baseline. Analysis will look for an increase in percentage and indicate any needed improvement plans.</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p><i>Campus:</i> Career Services Director</p> <p><i>Management Person:</i> Associate Campus Director</p>	<p>Results/Findings:</p>

**Student Learning Outcomes
Data Collection, Timeline, Assessment Results**

	Assessment Tool and Assessment Criteria	Data Collection Timeline/Responsibility	Assessment Results
<p>1) Appropriately place students to ensure college-level literacy and numeracy.</p>	<p>Assessment Tool: <i>Persistence Study COMPASS 2000 Cohort</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍ 1999 Cohort ✍ 2000 Cohort ✍ 2001 Cohort <p>Assessment Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍ Using the fall/early fall cohort of beginning students who have taken all three compass exams and started in the fall/early fall of 1999, the College will continue to track the academic performance and persistence to establish benchmark data. <p>The second and third cohort group of students consists of those students who are early fall/fall beginners 2000 and 2001. Statistics on academic performance and persistence will be gathered and compared to the 1999 cohort group.</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p><i>Campus:</i> Dean of Instructional Programs <i>Management</i> <i>Person:</i> Campus Director</p>	<p>Results/Findings:</p>
<p>2) Provide opportunities for positive interaction with faculty and courses which promote the skills necessary for life-long learning and inquiry.</p>	<p>Assessment Tool: <i>End-of-Quarter Course Evaluations</i></p> <p>Assessment Criteria: The goal for end-of-quarter evaluation is to provide feedback on the overall quality of instruction that students receive. The goal is to identify areas of concern and importance to students and then respond institutionally to these concerns. The format and questions are based upon research done by Noel-Levitz. The format allows students to rate the importance of certain areas related to instruction as well as how satisfied they are with those areas. The categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✍ Learning environment ✍ Quality of instruction ✍ Teaching tools ✍ Engagement <p>Data collected will be used as benchmark.</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p><i>Campus:</i> Dean of Instructional Programs <i>Management</i> <i>Person:</i> Chief Academic Officer</p>	<p>Results/Findings:</p>

**Student Learning Outcomes
Data Collection, Timeline, Assessment Results**

	Assessment Tool and Assessment Criteria	Data Collection Timeline/Responsibility	Assessment Results
--	---	---	--------------------

3) To maintain a dynamic business-educational operation which provides on-going services and initiates change as needed to keep abreast of today's ever-changing technology.

Assessment Tool:

Annual Program Review

Assessment Criteria:

A complete set of Program Review Binders (PRB) for each campus (consisting of one binder for each course for day and evening) will exist by the end of Fall 2001 and will be used to ensure that programs are consistent in terms of course descriptions, performance objectives, content and instruction with overall program objectives. The following is to be included in each PRB: Program objectives, assignments, and syllabus:

- ✍ Review program objectives to ensure they are consistent with recommendations from Advisory Boards minutes.
- ✍ Review all program objectives to ensure they are reflected in one or more of the following:
 - course description(s),
 - performance objectives(s) or assigned coursework.
- ✍ Review student enrollment, retention, and placement to demonstrate strength/accuracy of program objectives. Strength and accuracy to be defined in measurable terms for the 2001-2002 criteria.

By August 2001 (Professional Development Day) the departmental teams to complete the review of PRB's. End-of-program assessment tools will be identified and added to departmental plans. Spring 2002 annual program review assessing the above three bullets to be fully implemented.

**Graduate Satisfaction
Data Collection, Timeline, Assessment Results**

Assessment Tool and Assessment Criteria	Data Collection Timeline/Responsibility	Assessment Results								
<p>1) To define traits and skills needed by graduates for successful entry-level employment and promotability.</p> <p>Assessment Tool: <i>Graduate Employer Survey</i></p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Data is collected on job performance, desired entry-level skills, general applicant weaknesses, employment trends, and software packages used. Data to be analyzed for improvement will be on job performance ratings. Data collected is to reflect improvement by 10% on previous history as indicated below:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Exceeds Performance Rating</td> <td>36%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Meets Job Expectations</td> <td>44%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Meets Most Job Expectations</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Performance Below Expectation</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> </table> <p>Also by increasing visits to employers the survey response should increase 25%</p>	Exceeds Performance Rating	36%	Meets Job Expectations	44%	Meets Most Job Expectations	0%	Performance Below Expectation	0%	<p>Collected quarterly; Tallied annually in October</p> <p><i>Campus:</i> Career Services Director <i>Management Person:</i> Campus Director</p>	<p>Results/Findings:</p>
Exceeds Performance Rating	36%									
Meets Job Expectations	44%									
Meets Most Job Expectations	0%									
Performance Below Expectation	0%									

**Employer Satisfaction
Data Collection, Timeline, Assessment Results**

Assessment Tool and Assessment Criteria	Data Collection Timeline/Responsibility	Assessment Results
<p>1) To define traits and skills needed by graduates for successful entry-level employment, sustained performance, and Promotability.</p> <p>Assessment Tool: <i>Data Base Employer Survey</i></p> <p>Assessment Criteria: To expand the database (beyond surveying just the graduates) to determine current workplace needs and future job requirements.</p>	<p>Tallied annually</p> <p><i>Campus:</i> Career Services Director <i>Management Person:</i> Campus Director</p>	<p>Results/Findings:</p>

Evaluation of the IEP.....see page 11 "Evaluating the IEP"

Examples of Continuous Improvement.....see page 11 "Documenting Progress"

Key Terms

Educational Outcomes

Institutions may identify a variety of educational outcomes that result from a student's successful completion of a program. The Council has identified the following as major outcomes and the ones that should, at a minimum, be addressed in the IEP:

- a) Retention percentage for the institution.
(See formula, page 24)
- b) Placement percentage for the institution.
(See formula, page 24)
- c) Employer Satisfaction--determined by conducting periodic (at least annual) surveys of those who employed graduates over the past three years.
- d) Graduate Satisfaction--determined by conducting periodic (at least annual) surveys of graduates over the past three years.
- e) Student Learning Outcomes--determined by analyzing results of data gathered during the assessment of academic outcomes and job-related skill development.

Institutions may also decide to measure, summarize, and analyze data and information related to other types of outcomes, such as retention and placement rates for individual programs offered, default rates, and many other items.

Baseline Rates

This data is analyzed for any of the educational outcomes for a specific period of time and is used as the foundation for making comparisons across future time periods. For example, the institution may choose to use its retention and placement rates for a specific Annual Institutional Report (AIR) reporting year as its "baseline data." It will then compare the data for future years to this "baseline data" to determine whether its educational outcomes are improving, declining, or remaining constant.

Historical Outcomes

Historical data should be used for each element. Historical outcomes for retention and placement rates would be taken from the previous three Annual Institutional Reports. A minimum of three years must be included in the IEP. However, institutions may use data from prior years if it will help them obtain a clearer picture of their progress or set more realistic goals for future years.

Continuous Improvement

A process that involves an institution (1) systematically collecting data and information on each of the educational outcomes areas and achievement of its occupational objectives at least annually; (2) completing an analysis of the data and information including, but not limited to, a comparison with previous findings; and (3) identifying what changes in educational operations or activities it will make based on the analysis.

Level of Evaluation

The level of evaluation is determined by the type of credential offered. An institution is categorized as being authorized to award **non-degrees, occupational associate's degrees, academic associate's degrees, bachelor's degrees, or master's degrees**. Institutions offering more than one type of credential are classified and evaluated at the highest credential offered.

Occupational Objectives

These are a specific set of stated objectives for each educational program that identifies the competencies students will develop and the overall career goals of the program. The objectives should be reasonable for the program of instruction and the facilities in which the program is offered and the mission of the institution.

Retention and Placement Formulas

(Use data from the Annual Institutional Report)

Retention Percentage = $(TE - W) / TE$

$$\frac{\text{(Total Enrollment - Withdrawals)}}{\text{Total Enrollment}^*}$$

*Total Enrollment = Beginning Enrollment + New Starts + Reentries

Placement Percentage = $(PF + PR) / (G - U)$

$$\frac{\text{(Placed in Field + Placed in Related Field)}}{\text{(Graduates and Completers - Unavailable for Placement)}}$$

Suggested References: Institutional Effectiveness and Related Topics

Alfred, R., P. Ewell, J. Hudgins, K. McClenney. *Core Indicators of Effectiveness for Community Colleges*. Washington D.C.: Community College Press, 1999.

This monograph describes core institutional effectiveness indicators as identified by key community college leaders and constituents. The indicators are similar to those identified by career college leaders.

Angelo, Thomas A., and Cross, K. Patricia. *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994.

A classic in classroom assessment, and an excellent reference for 50 assessment techniques that can be used by faculty members to assess student learning outcomes. Addressed to college faculty regardless of their background or experience. For each classroom assessment technique (CAT) it includes: levels of time and energy required, description, purpose, a list of teaching goals (related to a Teaching Goals Inventory presented earlier in the handbook), suggestions for use, examples from varied disciplines, step-by-step procedures, suggestions for analysis, benefits, cautions, and significant references.

Astin, Alexander A. *Assessment for Excellence: The Philosophy and Practice of Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*. American Council on Education. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1991.

Astin's work continues to be relevant and compelling, despite the age of the book. Valuable assessment techniques are described along with the suggested methods to analyze assessment data and present it to various audiences. Particularly interesting is Astin's further development of the concept of the I-E-O (input-environment-output) assessment model and his notion of "talent development" as a framework for assessing quality.

Bogue, E. Grady, and Saunders, Robert L. *The Evidence for Quality: Strengthening the Tests of Academic and Administrative Effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.

This book provides a comprehensive overview of institutional effectiveness. It includes chapters on defining academic quality assurance and quality enhancement and approaches to quality assurance, such as accreditation, college ranking and ratings, client satisfaction, professional licensure, academic program reviews, college outcomes, among others.

Boothe, Barbara. *The Institutional Effectiveness Manual: A Guide for the Development of an Ongoing, Comprehensive Institutional Effectiveness Planning Process*. Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, 2002.

Dr. Boothe writes of institutional effectiveness as a triad of strategic planning, assessment, and budget decisions. She provides many practical tools: committee structure, time lines, curriculum review plans, suggested data, and forms.

Carr, Judy, and Harris, Douglas. *Succeeding with Standards: Linking Curriculum, Assessment, and Action Planning*. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2001.

Although with an approach to standards and K-12 levels, the authors present ideas very appropriate to programs that deal with professional licensing. It is focused on student learning and offers ideas that can work when developing curriculum and assessment plans, faculty professional development plans, and reporting. It links the institutional vision with an action plan in order to improve student learning.

Chaffee, Ellen E., and Sherr, Lawrence A. *Quality: Transforming Postsecondary Education*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 3. Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, 1992.

Chaffee and Sherr present a comprehensive picture of quality in higher education within the context of total quality management (TQM). The content of the monograph retains its relevance in that the authors focus their discussion on the quality improvement through evaluation of processes. The authors effectively describe limitations associated with focusing only on outcomes and not including inputs and process in the discussion of quality.

Diamond, Robert M. *Designing and Assessing Courses and Curricula: A Practical Guide*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998.

This monograph offers a practical approach to systemic change through curriculum design, goals, assessment, and to the design of programs with goals that consider multicultural diversity and critical thinking. An excellent book for faculty development activities. It includes case histories from different scenarios, public and private, large or small institutions. Very useful checklists are provided as a quick reference for answering questions and exploring alternatives that should be explored. It also includes very good references to be considered as next readings.

Erwin, T. Dary. *Assessing Student Learning and Development: A Guide to the Principles, Goals, and Methods of Determining College Outcomes*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991.

In simple and clear words, the author addresses issues and strategies in developing an assessment program. It includes a step-by-step guide for determining what is to be assessed and how to determine program objectives. The author discusses how to ensure the quality and reliability of data, effective reporting, and use of assessment information for positive change at an institution.

Green, John L., and Jonas, Peter. *Outcomes assessment in Higher Education linked with Strategic Planning and Budgeting*. Kansas: Strategic Planning/Management Associates, Inc. 1997.

The authors present an introduction and historical overview of the concepts of outcomes assessment, strategic planning, and budgeting, viewed in an integrated model. Includes excellent ideas on external and internal environment assessment. A glossary of more than 60 related concepts for beginners and an impressive reference section are presented.

Grossman, G.M., and M. E. Duncan. *Indications of Institutional Effectiveness: A Process for Assessing Two-Year Colleges*. Columbus, Ohio: Center on Education and Training for Employment. 1989.

Grossman and Duncan present an interesting study on indicators of institutional effectiveness at community colleges. Their report adds to contemporary thought on the striking similarities between career colleges and community colleges.

Merriam, Sharan B., and Cafferella, Rosemary S. *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide*. 2nd edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

A comprehensive work that examines the way adults learn and the context in which learning takes place. Merriam and Cafferella draw from current research in sociology, philosophy, psychology, and education to present a thorough examination of and new ways to think about adult learning. A "must read" for all involved in adult learning.

Nichols, James O., and Nichols, Karen W. *The Departmental Guide and Record Book for Student Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness*. New York: Agathon Press. 1995.

Nichols, James O. *A Practitioner's Handbook for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Outcomes Assessment Implementation*. New York: Agathon Press. 1989, 1991.

Nichols, James O. *Assessment Case Studies: Common Issues in Implementation with Various Campus Approaches to Resolution*. New York: Agathon Press. 1995.

Nichols, James O., and Nichols, Karen W. *General Education Assessment for Improvement of Student Academic Achievement: Guidance for Academic Departments and Committees*. New York: Agathon Press. 2001.

Nichols books are a "must read" for those engaged in developing plans for institutional effectiveness. They present the key elements in an Institutional Effectiveness Plan with emphasis in outcomes assessment implementation. The models presented give the administrator and institutional effectiveness leader practical ideas to address the institutional effectiveness issue.

Nightingale, Peggy, and O'Neill, Mike. *Achieving Quality Learning in Higher Education*. London: Kogan Page Limited, 1994.

This book presents several quality issues and practices in higher education, with emphasis in quality teaching and learning, and case studies by leading international practitioners are included.

Palomba, A. Catherine, and Banta, Trudy W. *Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing and Improving Assessment in Higher Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

This book offers a step-by-step guide to the development of assessment programs in colleges and universities. A review of the most successful practices in this field. It presents ideas to assess college environment and students' experiences. A chapter on reporting and using assessment results is also included.

Senge, Peter M. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Currency Doubleday, 1990.

A "must read" for all who are engaged in the business of providing and facilitating learning.

Sperling, J. and Tucker, R. W. *For-Profit Education: Developing a World-Class Workforce*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1997.

Sperling and Tucker present an excellent picture of higher education from the perspective of the career college, for-profit sector. They present compelling evidence, further adding to the strengths of the for-profit education model.

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. *Standards for the Evaluation of Educational Programs, Projects, and Materials*. New York: McGraw-Hill (1981, 1994).

In 1994, the committee built upon prior research (1981) and established several standards for program evaluation that would be useful to those charged with evaluating an assessment program or evaluating instructional programs. Educational Programs, Projects, and materials. New York: McGraw-Hill (1994, 1994).

Suggested Web site addresses:

Noel-Levitz: Provide research services and information about student learning, retention, and other areas.

www.noellevitz.com

List of government resources that may be useful in environmental scanning.

www.firstgov.gov

National Center for Education Statistics Where all the IPEDS data goes! Loads of data about anything you want to know about education. Includes a benchmarking site.

www.nces.ed.gov

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education provides interesting and informative reports on the national status of higher education. Check out "Measuring Up 2000."

<http://www.highereducation.org/>

Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria offers a complete award based on the level of institutional quality. Very rigorous.

<http://www.qualityexperts.com/malcom-baldrige.htm>

The National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness is housed at North Carolina State University and was founded by Dr. George Baker, III, a pioneer in institutional effectiveness.

<http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncsu/cep/acce/nillie/>

Dr. James Nichols coordinates the Institutional Effectiveness Associates. He is a leader in institutional effectiveness and offers worthwhile seminars.

<http://www.iea-nich.com/>

Sam Houston State University has published analysis of their SWOT.

www.shsu.edu/~SACS/spcreport/environmental-scan.htm

Tulane University has a comprehensive strategic plan, and it is on their Web site.

www.tulane.edu/~sphm/stratplan2000.htm

Columbus State Community College has an impressive collection of material it uses for institutional effectiveness. For good ideas, check out their Web site.

www.csc.edu (search "institutional effectiveness")

Alverno College is a leader in assessment of learning.

<http://www.alverno.edu/>

Mesa Community College has a strategic plan that focuses on learning.

http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/organizations/employee/orp/planning/Strategic_plan_2002-2005.pdf

Rochester Community and Technical College (Minnesota) was one of the few community colleges to be awarded the Baldrige Quality Award.

<http://www.roch.edu/rctc/>

**INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PLAN (IEP)
CHECKLIST
(Are these items in your IEP?)**

Section 3-1-110

- _____ 1. The IEP is developed, implemented, and congruent with the institutional mission.
- _____ 2. The IEP identifies ways to assess and continuously improve educational programs and processes.
- _____ 3. Short-term objectives are included in the plan.

Section 3-1-111

- _____ 1. The IEP describes the characteristics of the programs offered.
- _____ 2. The IEP describes the student population.
- _____ 3. The IEP states how continuous improvement will be made to improve or enhance these outcomes: (These five outcomes must be in the IEP. The institution may choose to add outcomes.)
 - _____ student retention rates
 - _____ student placement rates
 - _____ level of graduate satisfaction
 - _____ level of employer satisfaction
 - _____ student learning outcomes
- _____ 4. The IEP describes the types of data, including baseline data, used for assessment.
- _____ 5. The IEP describes how the data were collected.
- _____ 6. The IEP describes the rationale for using the data.
- _____ 7. The IEP provides a summary and analysis of the data collected.
- _____ 8. The IEP describes how the data were used to improve educational processes.
- _____ 9. The IEP describes how baseline and comparative data were used to demonstrate that student learning has occurred.
- _____ 10. The IEP identifies placement and retention rate goals for the following year and identifies the rates for the past 3 AIR years
- _____ 11. The IEP identifies the specific activities that will be undertaken to meet the goals set for the next year.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PLAN (IEP), *cont'd*
CHECKLIST
(Are these items in your IEP?)

Section 3-1-112

- _____ 1. The IEP documents that the specific activities identified in the plan are carried out and that periodic progress reports are completed.
- _____ 2. Periodic reports of IEP progress are completed to ensure that the plan's activities have been implemented.
- _____ 3. The institution has identified individuals assigned with the responsibility for implementing and monitoring the IEP.

Section 3-1-113

- _____ 1. The institution evaluates the plan, its goals, and activities at least annually.
- _____ 2. The annual evaluation requires the determination of initial baseline rates and a measurement of results after planned activities have occurred.
- _____ 3. The institution has documentation of historical outcomes (for the prior three years is sufficient).
- _____ 4. The IEP shows evidence of how this historical data is used to achieve expected goals.
- _____ 5. The institution has adjusted its goals as a result of the evaluation of the IEP.

