

New Name, Same Great Office

Recently, the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness (IRPE) has undergone a name change. Formerly known as the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP), the Office changed its moniker to reflect more fully its functions.

IPRE serves several functions that can be generally summarized as follows:

- We respond to external and regulatory agencies' requests for data regarding the University's operations;
- We provide the University community with information to support campus decision-making; and
- We facilitate planning and assessment activities that promote institutional effectiveness.

Given the equal importance of these functions, it seems appropriate and logical that we recognize them within our name.



In addition to our new name, we have several new additions to our staff. You can get to know us a little better by visiting the staff page on our website: <http://www.uta.edu/irp/>.

From Left: Bob Lorick, Rebecca Lewis, Mansour Salami, Pam Haws, Mark Lansdon (back), Angie Barolet (front), Terri Lane, Sam Stigall. Not pictured: Roger Chiu, Araya Maurice, Arnita Williams.



Pam Haws, PhD
Associate Vice President
and Director of
Institutional
Research, Planning
and Effectiveness.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Reaffirmation Update

The new SACS reaffirmation process consists of two phases. In Phase One, the University demonstrates compliance with a number of standards required by SACS (e.g., ongoing planning and assessment at all levels, appropriate faculty qualifications, fiscal soundness, appropriate governance structures). The report on this phase, called the Compliance Certification, was submitted in September 2006. The off-site team that reviewed this report requested additional information in only six areas, a very good result. This information was provided to SACS in a Focused Report in January 2007.

Phase Two of the reaffirmation consists of a campus visit by a SACS team February 26– March 1, 2007 to evaluate the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The QEP is a new feature of the SACS reaffirmation process that provides an opportunity for the University to “enhance overall institutional quality and effectiveness by focusing on an issue important to improving student learning”

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So, What's New?

In our effort toward continuous improvement, IRPE has created a new Project Satisfaction Survey to gauge its effectiveness at meeting University requests. The survey, located on the IRPE website, asks individuals who recently received project data to rate their satisfaction with the received information and the responsiveness of the associate that fulfilled the request. The survey also asks individuals how IRPE can better serve UT Arlington's institutional research needs in the future. This survey is different from the UEP consultation evaluation feedback form that some of you may have received (and hopefully completed).

How the Survey Works

A few days after an information request has been completed, IRPE will send out an email to the individual who requested the information, asking them to go to the IRPE website to complete the Project Satisfaction Survey. Survey responses are anonymous and the results will be analyzed quarterly. Feedback from the survey will be used to improve IRPE services. If you receive a request to complete the Project Satisfaction Survey, please take the time to let us know how we are doing!

-Terri Lane, PhD
Institutional Research Associate

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QEP Corner

The QEP is a three-year institutional research plan examining four questions related to the effectiveness of active learning pedagogies in developing higher order thinking skills among UT Arlington students. The QEP focuses on twelve pilot projects, which include large classroom, symposia, and capstone courses from eight colleges/schools plus the University Library. Assessment data from these projects will be analyzed at the course, program, and University-levels. Following the three-year QEP implementation period, a set of best practices for employing active learning techniques will be developed. The lessons learned from the QEP will inform the University's larger ten-year strategic planning initiative by offering evidence of teaching and learning accomplishments and enabling the University to develop teaching goals and strategies to accomplish its strategic planning priorities.

-Victoria Farrar-Myers, PhD
Associate Professor for Political Science and QEP Coordinator

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Unit Effectiveness Process (UEP) Updates

Units should be well under way in implementing their assessment plans. Data collection likely began last semester and continues through this semester. Here are some things to put on your calendar:

Around March 20th – look for “Conducting FY 2008 Linking Budget to Planning Workshops”

5/14/07 - Annual Improvement Update Report CY 2006 (Form D)
Due - see page 3 for details

6/29/07 – Linking Budget to Planning Exercise FY 2008 Due (tentative)

9/28/07 - Assessment Results Report AY 06-07 (Form C) Due

http://www.uta.edu/irp/unit_effectiveness_plans/uep.htm

Resources for You!

The Office of IRPE maintains a lending library containing over 1000 books, periodicals, journals, videos, catalogs and directories, with 86 assessment related books. Listed below are some recent book additions to our collections:

- *Integrating Higher Education Planning and Assessment: A Practical Guide* (2006) by David Howell, Michael F. Middaugh and Elizabeth Sibolski
- *Outcomes-Based Academic and Co-Curricular Program Review: A Compilation of Institutional Good Practices* (2006) by Marilee J. Bresciani
- *Introduction to Rubrics: An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback and Promote Student Learning* (2006) by Dannelle D. Stevens and Antonia J. Levi

A catalog of our collections is available online at:
http://www.uta.edu/irp/irp_library/irp_library.htm

INFORMER FEATURE

Completing the Annual Improvement Update Report CY 2006 (Form D)

Improvement, Phase 3 of Unit Effectiveness Process (UEP), is at the heart of assessment and use of assessment results is paramount. The report generated for this phase of the UEP, the Annual Improvement Update Report (Form D), serves as documentation that the University is "closing the loop" by using assessment results for improvement.

This semester (by 5/14/07) units are to submit Form D for improvements implemented during CY 2006. The reported improvements are based primarily on the results of assessment for outcomes evaluated through the UEP, but can be based on other unrelated assessment.

Below is an excerpt from Form D with a sample response appropriate for units that did not implement any improvements during the calendar year.

At right is also an excerpt from Form D with a sample response appropriate for instances where improvements were implemented.

Complete this section if the unit did not implement any improvements for the specified calendar year.

Was there an assessment result that indicated the need for improvement?

Yes No

Elaborate as to why there were no improvements implemented.

Results of assessment regarding the UEP plans submission dates were inconclusive due to a flaw in the tracking system. Improvements in the reporting system are needed. However, no improvements were implemented during the specified academic year due to staff changes. It has been decided that any revisions to the report system will be made when the new staff is brought on-board, which is anticipated during the next academic year.

Assessment Result That Indicated a Need for Improvement

Feedback from the LIBQUAL+ Survey (Spring 2005) indicated the need for more current monographic titles.

How was the need for improvement determined?

By an outcome assessed through the UEP?
Specify plan year.

By assessment not related to the UEP?
Please explain.

This is a new survey initiated in a year outside of the assessment cycle.

Related Improvements

An increase in the monographic budget has been incorporated into the 2006-2008 Libraries' Strategic Plan.

Semester(s) the Improvement was Implemented

Fall

Estimated value of resources used to implement improvement?

\$55,000 for FY2006

Source of resources used to implement improvement?

- Reallocation of unit resources
 Reallocation of school/college/division resources
 New funds generated by unit (e.g., fees, grant)
 New funds added to budget

Actual forms can be found on our web site at:
[//www.uta.edu/irp/unit_effectiveness_plans/uep.htm](http://www.uta.edu/irp/unit_effectiveness_plans/uep.htm)

Additional samples are available and can be sent via email. Please send your request to rebeccal@uta.edu or call ext. 2-5133.

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The mission of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, a component of the Office of the Provost, is to conduct research and analysis in order to provide information to support institutional planning, assessment, policy analysis, and decision making, and to facilitate institutional effectiveness to advance the mission of the University.

Fact Book Fine Points

In 2005 the total student headcount was 25,216.

The College of Business Administration claimed the most number of declared majors while 10% of students had not declared a major.

Reaffirmation Update

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Through a series of surveys, focus groups, and meetings with faculty and other members of the academic community, the theme of "active learning" was selected for the QEP. Focusing on enhancing students' higher order thinking skills of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, the QEP is designed to create the type of educational environments that our faculty want to promote, that our students indicate they want to participate in, that our alumni report are most beneficial to them, and that employers believe produce the skills they desire in their future employees.

The SACS team evaluated the QEP based on the process by which the University developed and will implement the QEP, the clarity of the plan's focus, the University's institutional capability to successfully implement the plan, and the QEP's goals and assessment plan. Initial, positive feedback was received during the site visit with the complete report from the team to follow. The Commission on Colleges is expected to reaffirm UT Arlington's accreditation at the Annual Meeting in New Orleans December 8-11, 2007.



**Institutional Research,
Planning & Effectiveness**

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