

## **Office of University Assessment Strategic Planning Document Update – Spring, 2005**

### **Overview**

This strategic planning document for the Office of University Assessment (OUA) provides an update to the OUA's Fall, 2003 Strategic Plan (attached). In addition to providing a progress summary of the OUA's strategic plan implementation to date and providing specific information regarding progress on our performance indicators, this update will discuss new initiatives, reallocation of current resource and funding priorities in response to changing external contexts, including the impending full University accreditation review by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) and the considerable emphasis the NWCCU will be placing on outcomes assessment in that review.

### **Summary of Strategic Plan Implementation**

This strategic planning document for the Office of University Assessment (OUA)

### **Priority Resource Needs**

Since the 2003 OUA Strategic Plan was submitted, we have fulfilled two of our priority resource needs: obtaining 1.5 FTE professional staff positions. The 1.0 FTE Assessment Coordinator position is designated to work with the Core Curriculum Board and Director to help plan and implement an assessment plan, and to work on a variety of special assessment projects. The .5 FTE Programmer/Analyst II position is designated to continue work on development and maintenance of the OUA database and Web interface to insure that communication channels and useful assessment data are easily available to program assessment coordinators, department chairs, deans and central administration. We have reallocated resources to help fulfill these needs by shifting resources from graduate salaries and student wages into professional salaries. The online Alumni/Employer Surveys methodology we are requesting funding to test would, if successful, enable a significant reallocation of resources by substantially reducing the cost of conducting these surveys using current methods.

Current priority resource needs are described below.

Area of Need	Amount Requested	Details and Justification
Alumni/Employer Surveys	\$103,365	<p>This figure is for the continued implementation of the 2005-2006 surveys for the 2004-2005 graduating cohort. The surveys are increasing in cost due to larger graduating classes, implementation of the three and five year post-graduation follow-up surveys and costs increases passed on from the Center for Applied Research.</p> <p>Continuing these surveys, which have resulted in successful phone interviews with over 3,400 alumni and over 900 of their immediate supervisors since the 2002 inception, serves several important purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support regional and professional accreditations;</li> <li>▪ Respond to accountability inquiries;</li> <li>▪ Inform program assessment plans (over half of academic programs specifically refer to these data in their assessment plans and we believe other programs use the data as well), by enabling programs to submit program-specific items and by providing survey results online at program, department and college levels;</li> <li>▪ Relieve departments and colleges of the work and expense of trying to track graduates and conduct such surveys themselves (usually with poorer results);</li> <li>▪ Assessment of the Core Curriculum also is informed by several items on both surveys.</li> </ul>
Alumni Survey Pilot Study	\$3,346	<p>This figure is an additional amount for the 2005-2006 alumni survey in order to pilot an online methodology with half of the graduating cohort. If successful, we can move the entire alumni survey to an online format and save approximately 40% of the current (and growing) survey costs.</p>

**Priority Resource Needs (continued)**

Area of Need	Amount Requested	Details and Justification
Faculty Mini-Grants	\$50,000	<p>This figure represents half of the cost for expanding the successful Instructional Enhancement Grants (IEG) program. The Excellence in Teaching Program and the IEG Committee both support this proposal and will propose the funds for the Instructional category be increased to \$50,000 (from \$25,000) as well.</p> <p>Currently, UNR has 198 programs for whom assessment plans are required and who receive no assessment-specific financial support in their budgets. Many of these programs face discipline-based accreditations that increasingly are requiring assessment of student learning outcomes. Mini-grants would offer needed support to these programs. These grants will be added to the IEG program, thus creating two categories of grants with different funding criteria: Instructional Enhancement and Assessment. In the Assessment Category, two kinds of grants are envisioned. The first kind of grant funds <u>Implementation Projects</u>. These projects are for the design, development and creation of products and procedures to facilitate the ongoing implementation of program assessment plans. The project focus must be on assessing and/or using outcomes of student learning and performance for program improvement purposes. We expect to fund 8-10 of these projects annually at amounts up to \$3,000. The second kind of grant funds <u>Demonstration Projects</u>. These projects are for the design, development and creation of <b>innovative</b> products and procedures to <b>significantly enhance</b> the revision or implementation of assessment plans. These projects should build assessment capacity and capability and should be adaptable to at least some programs in other departments and colleges, or in other student service units or divisions. We expect to fund up to three of these projects annually (though the project may span more than one year) at amounts up to \$10,000.</p> <p>The IEG committee, on which the OUA is represented, would continue to manage the request and review of proposals. All assessment grant recipients would be required to present their projects at the annual Northern Nevada Assessment Conference.</p>
Professional Development re: Using Assessment Data for Improvement	\$33,000	<p>We know that student outcomes assessment, particularly demonstrating how results have and are being used for program improvement, will be a major focus of the 2007 University accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Academic leadership at the department and college levels is key to ensuring assessment results are incorporated into review, budget and planning activities. We propose supporting this process through a variety of activities. Although occurring over 2-3 years, we propose the following for 2005-06:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inviting a nationally respected expert in assessment to meet with the chairs, assessment coordinators and deans on a college-by-college basis to discuss use of assessment results, including what other universities have found effective, and to discuss the critical role of academic leadership in supporting this process;</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offer a consultant-led workshop for academic leaders similar to the one the Provost Office sponsored last year when Dr. Bob Smallwood presented on NSSE;</li> <li>▪ Provide support for one or two faculty members from each of up to ten programs to learn about effective practices in using assessment results in other institutions by visiting those programs or by inviting faculty from those programs to come to Reno;</li> <li>▪ Offer a campus-wide forum featuring a panel of representatives from University of Nevada, Reno programs to talk about how they have and are making effective use of assessment results in their programs;</li> <li>▪ Work with the Provost Office to sponsor a campus-wide convocation to “launch” the accreditation self-study, a highlighted aspect of which is assessment.</li> </ul>
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### Progress on Performance Indicators

The following goals, performance indicators, timeframes and assessment measures are taken from the OUA 2003 Strategic Plan without modification. Progress is reported in the last column.

Goal	Performance Indicator	Timeline	Assessment Measure	Status																																																						
Every graduate and undergraduate academic program, as well as major student services program, will design and implement an assessment plan and will use assessment results for improvement and accountability.	Percent of academic and student service programs having designed, implemented and used outcomes assessment plans for program improvement (goal is 100%).	Assessment plans are only required one time, but are available to be edited at any time on the OUA Web site. Implementation of the plans will be ongoing by the respective programs, with reports of the previous year's implementation expected annually.	The OUA will maintain a database of program assessment plans and of annual reports which indicate what assessment data indicate regarding how well program-level student performance outcomes were achieved and what program improvements and modifications, if any, will be made. The assessment report the subsequent year will indicate the outcome of those modifications. GRE scores are collected and organized by the assessment office and are available to any program wishing to include GRE score data as part of its assessment plan.	<p>(as of 3/25/05)</p> <p>Assessment Plans Submitted?</p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes</th> <th>No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bachelors</td> <td>68</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Masters</td> <td>54</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doctorate</td> <td>31</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ed. Specialist</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prof. Degrees</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student Affairs</td> <td><u>22</u></td> <td><u>0</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>177</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(89%)</td> <td>(11%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Current Assessment Reports Submitted?</p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes</th> <th>No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bachelors</td> <td>35</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Masters</td> <td>30</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Doctorate</td> <td>17</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ed. Specialist</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prof. Degrees</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student Affairs</td> <td><u>18</u></td> <td><u>4</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>103</td> <td>97</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>(51.5%)</td> <td>(48.5%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes	No	Bachelors	68	2	Masters	54	10	Doctorate	31	7	Ed. Specialist	2	0	Prof. Degrees	0	2	Student Affairs	<u>22</u>	<u>0</u>	TOTAL	177	21		(89%)	(11%)		Yes	No	Bachelors	35	35	Masters	30	34	Doctorate	17	21	Ed. Specialist	2	0	Prof. Degrees	0	2	Student Affairs	<u>18</u>	<u>4</u>	TOTAL	103	97		(51.5%)	(48.5%)
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**Progress on Performance Indicators (continued)**

Goal	Performance Indicator	Timeline	Assessment Measure	Status
<p>The Core Curriculum Board will develop and implement an assessment plan of all elements of the Core Curriculum that will enable them to use the results to make decisions for improvement.</p>	<p>Facilitate development and implementation of a Core Curriculum Assessment Plan, and facilitate the use of assessment results for improvement of the Core Curriculum.</p>	<p>The role of the OUA is to facilitate this process in accordance with the timeline set by the Core Curriculum Board.</p>	<p>The Core Curriculum Board will have available for review: a written assessment plan, reports of implementation of the plan, assessment findings and modifications to the Core Curriculum based, in part, on the assessment results.</p>	<p>Comprehensive outline of general education assessment prepared, submitted, and accepted.</p> <p>Working with Core Writing Program Director to implement a pilot assessment for English 102 in the Fall semester to be followed with a full assessment in Spring '06</p> <p>Working with the Core Humanities area to design critical thinking assessment for implementation in CH 201 or 202.</p> <p>Working with the Capstone Area Committee to design assessments in both capstone areas.</p> <p>Working with Math and Science Core Areas to create new Core Curriculum requirements which will inform the assessment needs of these areas.</p>

**Progress on Performance Indicators (continued)**

Goal	Performance Indicator	Timeline	Assessment Measure	Status
<p>Provide current, valid information regarding UNR graduates' employment and educational status, as well as their evaluation of their UNR experience for use by colleges, departments, programs and University administration for program improvement and accountability.</p>	<p>Alumni data are available to programs receiving useful survey information from their alumni that helps inform their assessment plans.</p>	<p>Funding permitting, we will attempt to survey all members of each graduating class one year, three years and five years post-commencement.</p>	<p>Alumni survey response rate &gt;50%</p> <p>Program-level data accessible by programs at all times</p> <p>Survey programs to determine the usefulness of alumni data</p>	<p>We have developed, maintained and updated a Web-based database with alumni and employer survey data disaggregated by college, department and program. Access to the data, though password protected, is available to central administration, deans, department chairs and program assessment coordinators. Additionally, the data may be viewed and downloaded for a individual or aggregated graduating class years.</p>