

**PROGRAM REVIEW
1999-2000
OFFICE OF ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT**

PART I – DELIVERY OF CURRENT SERVICES

A. MISSION

The mission of the Office of Academic Assessment is to coordinate and implement an overall academic assessment program for the University, in keeping with USCA's overall mission statement, including the assessment of general education and assessment in the academic disciplines. To this end, the office seeks to achieve the following goals, to:

1. Effectively assess the basic skills of entering freshmen and at appropriate points throughout the undergraduate years of all students.
2. Coordinate and monitor the assessment of academic programs.
3. Serve as the primary assessment consultant to the University administration, academic units, departments/schools, and faculty committees.
4. Serve as the primary academic assessment liaison to outside agencies and institutions.
5. Conduct and analyze survey research of academic programs, as needed
6. Conduct faculty workshops, as needed, on assessment-related issues.
7. *To seek, secure and support grant efforts for the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and for USCA.*

B. Number and Type of Assessment Staff Support

| | HEADCOUNT (FTE) | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | <u>1993</u> | <u>1994</u> | <u>1995</u> | <u>1995-96</u> | <u>1996-97</u> | <u>1997-98</u> | <u>1998-99</u> |
| Full-time | 2 (1.5) | 2 (1) | 2 (1) | 2(1) | 2(1) | 2(1) | 2(1) |
| Part-time | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Student (FWS) | 1(.25) | 1(.25) | 1 (.1875) | 1(.1875) | 1(.1875) | 1(.1875) | 1(.5) |
| ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- | ----- |
| TOTAL | 3 (1.75) | 3 (1.25) | 3 (1.1875) | 3 (1.1875) | 3 (1.1875) | 3 (1.1875) | 3 (1.5) |

Some of the assessment strengths in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment include:

- Being an effective assessment consultant to the USCA Departments and Administration
- Knowing the various assessment procedures statewide and throughout the nation particularly as they apply to accreditation
- Encouraging flexible designs of assessment programs for the institution
- Maintaining strong administrative support
- Creating leadership recognition in assessment as a Conference Planning and Presenter for AACSB; as a Board member of SCAIR (as Board member supported the formation of an Assessment Track to the yearly SCAIR conference), Statewide evaluator for Act 629

Institutional Effectiveness Reports (critique process implemented 1998 by CHE); serve as Assistant Director for the Statewide FIPSE grant, FIPSE Executive Board, National presenter on assessment in general education and the major.

- Building credibility of the office and its assessment activities on campus and in the state
- Tracking data as it affects USCA academic and administrative departments
- Gaining state-wide and national recognition as AACSB assessment presenter

MAJOR PROJECTS ACCOMPLISHED IN 1998-99

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment is particularly proud of its accomplishments for the 1998-99 year. Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong has directed this office for slightly over one year and Ms. Jodi Herrin finished her BS degree from USCA in Math and Computer Science and was promoted to Statistical Analyst II. With the addition of Ms. Lisa Peterson and the continued expertise of Mr. Paul DeJong, along with the excellent organizational skills of Ms. Maureen Bergstrom the Office has accomplished many of its objectives for this past year.

Following is a listing of the objectives outlined in the 1998-99 Program Review and their current status and highlights. Objectives are marked as Achieved, Ongoing, or Discontinued as appropriate to the planning process of this office.

REVIEW OF 1998-99 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES (STATUS OF ACHIEVEMENT) Marked as Achieved; Ongoing, Did Not Achieve

ON-CAMPUS

- 1) **ASSIST THE UNIVERSITY IN A HAVING A SATISFACTORY SACS VISIT (Assm. Goal #1-6) Status: Ongoing** two staff members of the Office currently serving on SACS Steering Committee, Two staff members serve on the Data Collection Committee (Dr. Ulmer-Sottong chairs this committee); 30 requests for data or material were distributed by the Office to appropriate SACS committees or chairs including the MUST statement electronic tracking system.
- 2) **Continue to maintain the current workload in a timely manner. (Assm. Goal #1-6) Status: Ongoing** The average time in general for requests from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment is a 3-4 week turn around depending on the time required for the activity. Although not as fast as we would like, with various demands on the Office the Director determined that 3-4 weeks was within targeted turn-around time. This goal will be targeted for improvement this year.
- 3) **Increase the use of on-line services for on-campus surveys and testing. (Assm. Goal #1, 2,5) Status: Achieved and ongoing.** With the use of the on-line surveys to gather over 750 responses to the Statewide survey on performance funding, the USCA alumni survey, departmental exit surveys, and most recently the faculty satisfaction survey, steady increase is occurring in this cost effective and zero error method.

- 4) **Upgraded the MakeSurvey Program to more user friendly format which makes programming surveys much easier and more time efficient. (Assm.Goal. #5) Status: Achieved.**
- 5) **Increase the visibility of the Office on-campus by training a core group of faculty and staff in the use of on-line data in order to decrease amount of time spent on simple departmental data requests for assessment data. (Assm. Goal #2) Status: Phase I Achieved.** Although the training portion of this goal was not accomplished in 1998, it will continue to be an ongoing goal for the Office. The first phase of this goal was to upload pertinent data and information on to the IR Web page and monitor the use of the page. Currently approximately 800 hits have been recorded on the USCA IR/Assm. General Web Homepage. This does not include protected Web sites within the IR Home Page(such as the S.C FIPSE survey with 253 hits on FIPSE homepage and approximately 700 hits to on-line surveys in a 23 day period for a total of approximately 1000 FIPSE hits to date since April 1999. The IR/Assm. Office Web site can be found at: <http://assess.usca.sc.edu/ira/>
- 6) **Present on-campus assessment and data reports in more readable formats. (Assm. Goal #5) Status: Achieved** All reports from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment that are administered either in Bubble paper format or by electronic survey format have highly readable reports, sometimes with graph usage. All appropriate surveys will be formatted to show the 10 strengths and 10 weaknesses of the areas surveyed.
- 7) **Educate more faculty and staff regarding their role in performance funding. (Assm. Goal # 3) Status: Ongoing** With presentations to the Academic Council on a routine basis and particularly with the presentation of credit hour production, more faculty and chairs are aware of how every day decisions affect performance funding ratings. With course based data the tracking mechanism for faculty files in CHEMIS, such indicators as SACS, course assignments, FTE load by department, etc. are under more discussion as to the effect on performance funding.
- 8) **Position the Office as a “broker” of information about USCA students and services (Assm. Goal# 3) Status: Ongoing.** The visibility of the Office has increased in the past 12 months due to the hard work of the staff and willingness of the institution to use the office as a “information broker” to USCA constituents, to the Aiken community and to the State.
- 9) **Move all outside vendor surveys to on-campus production when possible. (Assm. Goal #5) Status: Achieved** All surveys administered by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment are now administered in scannable or electronic format. No data entry (except open-ended items on paper surveys are inputted by hand).
- 10) **Increased staff training in on-line programming such as JAVA, SAS reports and other “efficient software” training. (Assm. Goal #5) Status: Achieved and Ongoing** Ms. Jodi Herrin audited a JAVA course and has become proficient enough to monitor the server which uses a LINUX platform with JAVA programming. Ms. Lisa

Peterson has become proficient in both Bubble publishing and Web based surveying. Ms. Maureen Bergstrom has implemented Outlook procedures for the Office and continues to become proficient in Office 97.

- 11) **Assist in the evaluation of General Education goals (creation and use of a “values” rubric, review of a better test than the College Base, review of the use of standardized nationally accepted “values” surveys as a secondary means to measure the change of values of USCA students from entry to graduation and beyond). (Assm. Goal #1) Status: Ongoing** The development of a general education rubric is continuing; the acceptance of a three year rotation of testing, surveys, and general education goals testing is underway and accepted by the USCA Assessment Committee as a better and more efficient use of assessment resources. This will assure a better over-all assessment program by tracking change over a three year period, rather than year to year change patterns (which are usually very small).
- 12) **Educate faculty and staff on how performance funding can be used in SACS evaluation. (Assm. Goal #6) Status: Achieved**. Performance funding data is actively being used in reviewing must statements as applicable. Steering Committee directives have also helped to assure this.
- 13) **Create a better (less expensive and more effective) way to measure Alumni satisfaction and/or ideas for improvement. (Assm. Goal #5) Status: Achieved**. The 1999 Alumni Survey was the first Alumni survey to be wholly produced at USCA. (In years prior, one Alumni Survey was produced by an outside vendor; 12 separate sheets were produced in-house on non-scannable forms). Thirteen separate pieces were combined into two surveys (institutional and departmental) and 27% of the Alumni responded. The cost to USCA of the survey alone with mailing was \$2,446.29, approximately \$1,500 less than the same mailing two years ago (even with the two cent increase in first class mailing). Although a considerable amount of time was spent re-designing the Alumni Survey, the cost to the Office of going to a scannable survey and report was an overall decrease in data entry time, a zero error rate, and in turn-around time for on campus reports (although longer than desired because of unexpected first-time program glitches) was still only 3 months compared to the 7 month previous turn-around time the last time the survey was done in 1997.

OFF-CAMPUS

1. **Increase the use of on-line services as a "for-pay" service the Office can offer to the State and to the Aiken community. (Assm. Goal #5,7) Status: Achieved** Two year FIPSE grant contract from the Commission on Higher Education; Exploration of grant monies from Healthy Communities Grant from Pew Charitable Trusts.
2. **Increase the visibility of USCA in the statewide conversations regarding Performance Funding (as an assessment activity). (Assm. Goal #3) Status: Achieved and Ongoing** With the service of Dr. Ulmer-Sottong on the FIPSE Executive Committee, the SCAIR Board, and the ACIR Committee of the Commission, continual opportunities have presented themselves to keep assessment as a statewide

conversations. The most recent evidence of this is the Assessment Track of the SCAIR conference.

3. **Lead the State in the FIPSE evaluation data and information to assess Performance Funding (Assm. Goal #4) Status: Achieved and ongoing** Survey information on the Statewide FISPE survey can be found on the IR/ASSM. homepage and will continue throughout this year. (253 hits on FIPSE homepage and approximately 700 responses to on-line survey in a 23 day period for a total of approximately 1000 FIPSE hits to date since April 1999. With the attendance for the second year in a row of USCA at the National FIPSE Director's Meeting, we believe this will strengthen the opportunity to write another grant for the dissemination of the results of the FIPSE study. This grant will be due to FIPSE in March of 2001.

ADDITIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE OFFICE IN ADDITION TO LAST YEAR'S GOALS:

- 1) **Use of Office personnel and services to support on-campus grant production and evaluation –RATE; NSF Biology Grant (Assm. Goal #3; IR Goal 3,7)**
- 2) **Provided timely and accurate data to assist in successful NCATE Accreditation for the School of Education. (Assm. Goal. #2,3,4; IR Goal # 1,5)**
- 3) **Purchase of a secure server for the IR/Assm. Office assuring that less electronic interference or tampering can occur and the integrity of data can be maintained.(Assm. Goal #5; IR Goal 4)**
- 4) **The IR Office setup and maintains a Sector LISTSERV so that information can be shared and discussed immediately by all nine teaching colleges. (IR Goal #2)**
- 5) **The IR Office submitted correct data which reflected the work of the institution and supported USCA's Performance Funding "Achieves" Rating, the 2nd Place ranking in US News and World Report for regional public liberal arts colleges in the South; and IPEDS reports to the Federal Governments. The Office also assisted in the accreditation efforts of the School of Education and the School of Business. (IR Goal #1,2,5)**
- 6) **Representative Harry Stille Data Faculty Load Data Request Submission – Although later than we would have like, the faculty load Stille study was completed and took approximately 45 full days of staff time. (IR Goal # 1,3,5)**
- 7) **Supplied data for Office of Admissions for study of transfer students to determine "satisfactory progress" after 15 hours and 30 hours. (IR Goal #1,3)**

C. OFFICE ACTIVITY/TRANSACTIONS: TOTAL TRANSACTIONS FY 1998-99

Although it is important for both Institutional Research and Assessment to track the production for each area, it is just as important to reflect the "total load" for the office itself, thereby giving the reader an idea of the total production of both functions of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. Total production of the staff members is reflected below. (Detailed breakdown shown in Appendix A). **Assessment production is bolded.**

WORK TRANSACTIONS

| ACTIVITY | <u>AY</u> 1993 | <u>AY</u> 1994 | <u>AY</u> 1995 | <u>FY</u> 1995-96 | <u>FY</u> 1996-97 | <u>FY</u> 1997-98 | <u>FY</u> 1998-99 |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| SURVEYS (Distrib& Processed) | | | | | | | |
| Total Survey Load.....IR | ? | ? | 3753 | 1697 | 3222 | 6549 | 6062 |
| Total Survey Load.....Assm. | 1084 | 2031 | 375 | 482 | 322 | 522 | 389 |
| Total Load.....Combined | 1084 | 2031 | 4128 | 2179 | 3544 | 7071 | 6451 |
| TESTS/ TRANSCRIPTS/ REPORTS | | | | | | | |
| Total Load.....IR | ? | 314 | 367 | 370 | 1171 | 1631 | 1112 |
| Total Load.....Assm. | 513 | 747 | 917 | 1084 | 950 | 940 | 1404 |
| Total LoadCombined | 513 | 1061 | 1284 | 1454 | 2121 | 2571 | 2516 |
| REQUESTS/CONSULTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS | | | | | | | |
| Total Load.....IR | ? | ? | 149 | 484 | 522 | 308 | 339 |
| Total Load.....Assm. | 32 | 32 | 44 | 59 | 59 | 25 | 94 |
| Total Load.....Combined | 32 | 32 | 193 | 543 | 581 | 333 | 433 |
| NUMBER OF HOURS SPENT IN MTGS/WORKSHOPS | | | | | | | |
| Total Hours.....IR | ? | ? | 209 | 423 | 1016 | 181(3mo. only) | 653.5 |
| Total | 32 | ? | 155 | 149 | 166 | 75(3mo. only) | 260.5 |
| Hours.....Assm. | 32 | ? | 364 | 572 | 1182 | 256-(3 mo.only) | 914 |
| Total hours.....Combined | | | | | | | |

| | <u>AY</u> 1994 | <u>FY</u> 1997-98 |
|--|--|--|
| LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH OFFICE AS EVIDENCED BY SURVEY OF FACULTY AND STAFF | FACULTY 57% Satisfied 25% did not know CLASSIFIED 50% Satisfied 48% did not know | FACULTY 51% Satisfied 38% did not know CLASSIFIED 72% Satisfied 29% did not know |

Additional information regarding data production during 1998-99:

1. The breakdown of requests from USCA Departments is: Admissions 31%; Business 8%; Records 8%; Education 5%; Student Org. 5%.
2. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment generated approximately 9,388 total activities during the 1998-99 year.

OFFICE PRESENTATIONS

USCA Assessment Workshop: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong
 FIPSE State Conference: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong
 SCAIR Conference: Jodi Herrin, Lisa Peterson, Paul DeJong
 AACSB National Conference: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong

SCHEA Conference: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong
AACSB Planning Meeting: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong
USCA Divisional Presentation: All staff
SCWEA (USCA Representative): Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP OF IR/ASSM. STAFF

Classified Employees Assembly.: Ms. Maureen Bergstrom, Chair

S.C. Institutional Researchers Assc.: Ms. Jodi Herrin
Ms. Lisa Peterson
Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong, Secretary

AACSB Assessment Planning Committee: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong

RATE Committee: Ms. Lisa Peterson
Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong

S.C.FIPSE Study: Ms. Lisa Peterson, Web designee
Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong, Executive Board and Asst. Director

Campus Cabinet: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong

Enrollment Planning Committee: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong
Enrollment Services Division: Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong

Institutional Planning Cabinet - Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong
Ms. Maureen Bergstrom

SACS: Steering Committee, Ms. Maureen Bergstrom
Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong
Data Collection Committee: Ms. Jodi Herrin
Dr. Lovely Ulmer-Sottong, Chair

PART II – FUTURE PLANS – OBJECTIVES FOR 1999-2000

- 1. ASSIST THE UNIVERSITY IN HAVING A SATISFACTORY SACS VISIT (Objectives #1-6) (ongoing)**
- 2. Increase visibility of assessment as a continual activity for the Departments (Assm. Goal 2,3)**
- 3. Simplify score reports and assessment reports into highly usable information. Generally this will be by grouping 10 strengths and 10 weaknesses in the report; increasing use of charts and graphs; and using easy to read language.(Assm. Goal #3,5)**
- 4. Complete formal review of all Academic Program Assessment Reports in new formats; meet with all departments to review their assessment strengths and weaknesses.(Assm. Goal #2,5)**

5. Increase the use of electronic surveys as method of collecting feedback for use in assessment activities (Assm. Goal #5)
6. Increase the use of the IR/Assm. Web Page to access Assessment Activities (Assm. Goal #4)
7. Complete Rubric for Question #14 in General Education Assessment (Assm. Goal #1)
8. Effectively shift to new three year testing pattern for a new General Education Test, Issue Survey, and Question #14 on Values to Freshmen and Seniors (Assm. Goal #1,2,3,6)
9. Develop or find a survey or method to deal with such issues as cheating, alcohol use, study time, opinions on diversity issues, and other issues as determined by the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and the Vice Chancellor of Administration that are critical for USCA to “show change” over time. This will be used in the “off-year” of general education assessment (see #7 above). (Assm. Goal #1)
10. Support attendance to assessment meetings as appropriate for faculty and/or staff (Assm. Goal 6)

A: IDENTIFIED NEEDS TO ACHIEVE FUTURE PLANS
 (Combines Office of Institutional Research and Assessment):

SPACE

1. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment has an immediate and pressing need for lockable storage space in which to store institutional data for a period of at least 2 years. In addition, a storage retrieval system (CD ROM, microfiche, etc.) should be explored for all data and reports that are generated by the Office. With the advent of performance funding, increased testing and survey loads, increased academic departmental assistance in testing and surveys, and external contracts, secure space will continue to be a great need. Currently a lockable space of 6 X 10 will help with the immediate problem, but storage retrieval (long range) should be pursued.
2. A space design should be redone for the reception area of the Office of Institutional Research. Currently, this area is very inefficient in the use of space. \$500.