

**INDIANA UNIVERSITY KOKOMO**  
**School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA)**

**2006-2007 Student Learning Outcome Report**  
**For Public Affairs (BSPA) and Criminal Justice Programs**

**(Separate review of both Programs Edition)**

## Public Affairs (BSPA) Program

### Evidence of the Students' Learning Outcomes

In 2006-2007, the assessment of public affairs (BSPA) degree programs students learning was conducted by the faculty of the School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) using synthesis of knowledge, skills or disposition that reflect learning obtained from a clearly indentified cluster of courses or across the entire public affairs curriculum. Assessment methods included multiple measures of performance which were either qualitative or quantitative or both.

- 1. Outcome Goals: Communication Skills** – *Students will be able to work collaboratively and utilize technology to communicate and implement related interpersonal relations, write and communicate effectively.*

**Benchmarks:** Eighty percent of the students will be able to communicate effectively at the end of the semester

**Assessment Method:** Projects papers were evaluated in V264 Urban structure and policy by Dr. Besel. Dr. Dibie also evaluated student research paper in V390 Independent Research; and E272 Introduction to Environmental Studies. The content of the student papers were assessed to determine (a) the effective use of grammar, (b) Originality, (c) quality of writing; (d) ability to communicate the theoretical significance of major arguments presented in the public affairs literature; and (e) effective use of computer to write research papers.

Twenty five students' project papers were randomly selected and evaluated. Eighty-six percent of the students' papers were rated as very good. Nine percent of the papers were rated as B or average, while the remaining five percent lacked clarity and conciseness in the overall argument.

The assessment result indicates that the BSPA program is effective in helping students to learn how to communicate effectively in writing. Ninety-five percent of students' performance exceeds the benchmark of eighty percent

- 2. Outcome Goals: Literacy in Government, Politics and Administration** – *Determine the nature and extend of the principles of democracy in public management; recognize institutions and intergovernmental relations in the American federalism system of government.*

**Benchmarks:** Eighty percent of the students will receive a satisfactory grade of A or B in the courses work assessed is able to demonstrate good grasp of the principles of public management.

**Assessment Method:** Students portfolio was assessed by Dr. Dibie, Dr. Besel and Mr. Joseph Bell in the following public affairs courses V170 Introduction to Public Affairs; V263 Public Management; and V264 Urban Structure and Policy to determine if they met the learning outcomes.

During the 2006-2007 assessment period 55 students submitted their portfolio assignment from these public affairs courses. The portfolio was divided into sections to help students

organize content, and to provide a template for evaluation of the content. A grading rubric was provided for overall evaluation of the portfolio. The rubric addressed appearance, completeness, demonstration of key theories in the literature, sound sentences structure, firm grasp of writing style, and quality of the materials included. Portfolio submitted by students were evaluated in terms of how well the student was able to demonstrate that he or she has met the public affairs bachelor's degree program communication skills outcome.

A "highly satisfactory" grade for the portfolio assignments was applied to those submissions that demonstrate thorough mastery of the written sources, sound sentence structure and paragraphing, lack of factual errors of any kind, and insight into the problem presented. A "satisfactory" grade was giving to submissions that reveal some combination of the following: a firm grasps of the written source, adequate, though not necessarily first-rate, sentence structure and paragraphing, minimal factual errors, and proper awareness of the problem presented. An "average" grade was giving to submissions characterized by one or more significant problems relating to such things as: factual accuracy, spelling or sentence structure, use of bibliographical sources. Ninety-six percent of the students who submitted a portfolio in 2006 -2007 had an A grade. Two percent of the students had a B grade. No student had a grade below satisfactory.

The assessment of students' portfolio reveals that ninety-eight percent of the students were very knowledgeable about the major subject of public affairs covered in V170, V263, and V264. The students were also able to demonstrate literacy in the nature and extend of the principles of democracy in public management; recognize institutions as well as intergovernmental relations between the federal, state and local government. Thus the result exceeds the benchmark.

**3. Outcome Goals:** *Ethical and professional Behavior skills – Student should be able to demonstrate and adhere to the ethical principles of the American Society for Public Administrators (ASPA); Demonstrate knowledge of and appreciation of ethical and professional behavior; and develop a broad perspective of public leaders practice that contribute to the safety and well being of citizens.*

**Benchmarks:** Eighty-five percent of the students will receive a satisfactory grade of A or B in the courses work assessed.

**Assessment Method (1):** In 2006-2007 Dr. Robert Dible administered exit survey to five students who graduate from the BSPA degree program in May, August and December respectively. These students indicated that they had taken V366 Managing Behavior; V376 Law and Public Policy, and V362 Nonprofit Management and Leader.

Analysis of the exit survey reveals that ninety-one percent of the respondents indicated that they had learned a lot from the BSPA degree program. These students were able to clarify and consciously articulate the ethical principles they were taught in these public affairs courses. Nine percent of the respondents who are already employed in professional positions indicated that the ethical behavior that they have learnt in the BSPA program is being practiced every day in their place of work and has been very useful to their job performance. Overall students' response concerning the appreciation of professional behavior or conduct was very positive. Students learning outcomes exceeded the benchmark.

**Assessment Method (2)** Dr. Besel and Dr. Dible also analyzed students' internship reports V380 to determine what they had learned in respect of professional behavior in the workplace. Ten students report were reviewed.

Seven-eighty percent of the students report shows that they learnt a lot from their course work and supervisors about professional conduct and the code of ethics. They were particularly delighted that they were deployed to different department within the organization that they worked at e.g. human resources, finance, administration and etc. In each of the departments they appreciated the chain of command, and the line of communication.

The assessment of the internship report reveals that the BSPA program is not meeting its benchmark in respect of students learning of professional conduct. Only seventy-eighty percent compared to eighty-five percent actually met the set standard.

## **Criminal Justice Degree (BSCJ) Program**

**1. Outcome Goals: Literacy in law enforcement practices and criminal justice principles –** *Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of criminal justice agencies and institution; produce discipline specific written document of substantial length; understand the nature and dynamics of homeland security.*

**Benchmarks:** Eighty percent of the students will receive a satisfactory grade at the end of the semester and demonstrate better understanding of the principles of criminal justices.

**Assessment Method (1):** Pre and post tests were measurement means used to assess the above learning goal. The pre and post test was administered in J101 Introduction to American Criminal Justice; J201 Theoretical Foundation of Criminal Justice; J202 Criminal Justice Data Methods; J301 Substantive Criminal Justice; J321 American Policing; and J331 Corrections. Pre and post test were conducted by Dr. Brown, Mr. DiNardo, Mr. Halein and Dr. Hough.

In the 2006-2007 academic year a total of 140 students took part in the test. Analysis of the pre and post test scores revealed that ninety-eight percent of the BSCJ students who took both tests learnt a lot about criminal justice agencies and institution as well as understand the nature and dynamics of homeland security. While only three percent passed the pre test, ninety-four percent passed the post test after they have been taught the subject materials by the program instructors. A number of students felt that the test was a good means of measuring what they have learnt in their courses. Generally the students were able to recognize the contribution of law enforcement institution in securing our homeland as well as the dynamics of law enforcement.

The post-test result reveals that the criminal justice program is meetings its learning goals of students' literacy in law enforcement practice and criminal justice principles. Their score of Ninety-eight percent exceeded the benchmark of eighty percent.

**Assessment Method (2):** Students written work were also assessed by Dr. Hough and Mr. DiNardo and Dr. Brown to determine their knowledge of law enforcement practice and the principles of the criminal justice systems in J202 Criminal Justice Data Methods; J301 Substantive Criminal Justice; J321 American Policing; and J331 Corrections.

Twenty students' papers were assessed randomly selected to determine the learning outcomes. The papers were evaluated on the basis of (a) clarity in demonstrating knowledge of

the dynamics of law enforcement, (b) knowledge of the nature of homeland security, (c) significance to sustainable political, economic and social development and the need for crime control, and (d) understanding the principles of the criminal justice system in the United States.

Eighty-one percent of the students' papers were rated as highly satisfactory. Eight percent of the papers were rated between satisfactory, while the remaining one percent had a failing grade because their paper lacked clarity and conciseness in the overall argument.

The assessment result indicates that the BSCJ program has been very effective in helping students to learn and develop knowledge of law enforcement practice and the principles of criminal justice. Eighty-nine percent of the students' performance exceeds the benchmark of eighty percent

**2. Outcome Goals: Communication Skills** – *Students will be able to integrate research materials appropriately; effectively use verbal, written and technological skills; and write effectively.*

**Benchmarks:** Eighty percent of the students will receive a satisfactory grade at the end of the semester as well as be able to communicate effectively.

**Assessment Method:** Projects papers were evaluated in J306 Criminal courts, J321 Criminal Investigation, J380 Internship Report, J390 Independent Research paper by Dr. Brown, Mr. Randy Hainlen, Mr. Thomas DiNardo and Dr. Dibie. The content of the student papers were assessed to determine (a) the effective use of grammar, (b) Originality, (c) quality of writing; (d) ability to communicate the theoretical significance of major arguments presented in the criminal justice literature; and (e) effective use of computer to write research papers.

Thirty students' project papers were randomly selected and evaluated. Nine percent of the students' papers were rated as highly satisfactory. Eighty percent of the papers were rated as satisfactory, while the remaining eleven percent lacked clarity and conciseness in the overall argument and was rated as below average.

The assessment result indicates that the criminal justice program is effective in helping students to learn how to communicate effectively in writing. Eighty-nine percent of the students' performance exceeded the benchmark of eighty percent

**3. Outcome Goals: Ethical and professional Behavior skills** – *Student should be able to demonstrate knowledge of and appreciation for ethical and professional behavior; developed a broad perspective of police practice that contribute to the safety and well being of citizens.*

**Benchmarks:** Eighty-five percent of the students will demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of ethical and professional behavior at the end of degree program.

**Assessment Method (1):** In 2006-2007 Dr. Robert Dibie administer exit survey to twenty-five students who graduate from both the Associate and Bachelors degree programs in criminal justice degree programs in May, August and December respectively. These students indicated that had taken J321 American Policing, J331 Corrections, J439 Crime and Public Policy, and V376 Law and Public Policy.

Respondents of the exit survey demonstrated that they were quite familiar with the ethical values and professional conduct of law enforcement officers. Eighty-five percent of the respondents indicated that they had learned a lot from both criminal justice degree programs. These students were able to clarify and consciously articulate the ethical principles they were taught in the criminal justice courses that are listed above. Fifteen percent of the respondents indicated that they were already employed in a criminal justice related job and the ethical values and principles that they were taught in the ASCJ and BSCJ programs were being practiced every day in their place of work. They contend that knowledge truly works and their training has enhanced their job performance. Overall students' response concerning the appreciation of professional behavior or conduct was very positive.

**Assessment Method (2)** Dr. Besel and Dr. Dibie also analyzed students' internship reports V380 Internship in Criminal Justice to determine what they had learnt in respect of professional behavior in the workplace. Fifteen students' report was assessed.

Ninety percent of the students indicated that they learnt more about the professional conduct of law enforcement officers from the Police and Sheriff Department that they did their internship. Most of the students were particularly delighted that they were rotated around the different departments in the organizations that they worked at e.g. Investigation, Precinct Patrol, Records keeping, Detective and etc. In each of the departments they appreciated the chain of command, and the line of communication.

The assessment of the internship report reveals that the ASCJ and BSCJ degree programs are meeting the set benchmark in respect of students learning of professional conduct. Ninety percent of the students exceeded the set benchmark.

**4. Outcome Goals: Literacy in Government, Politics and Administration – *Determine the nature and extend of the principles of democracy in public management; recognize institutions and s and intergovernmental relations; and recognizes the contribution of public administrators in the implementation of criminal justice policies.***

**Benchmarks:** Eighty percent of the students will receive a satisfactory grade of A or B in the courses work assessed as well as demonstrates knowledge of the principles of public management.

**Assessment Method:** Students writing assignments were reviewed by Dr. Dibie and Dr. Besel in the following public affairs courses V170 introduction to Public Affairs; V348 Management Science; V264 Urban Structure and Policy; and V376 Law and Public Policy to determine if they met the learning outcomes.

During the 2006-2007 academic year assessment of literacy in government, politics and administration was conducted by reviewing writing assignments of students. Thirty criminal justice students who took the various public affairs courses were evaluated. The students writing assignment papers were evaluated on the basis of (a) display an understanding of public management principles, (b) demonstration how the American democratic system affects the making of public policy, (c) significance of fiscal policy in the operations of government institutions, and (d) demonstration of the concept of new public management (MPM). A passing grade was giving to students' research papers that demonstrated thorough mastery of the principles

of government and the new public management. A failing grade was giving to papers that lack clarity in the principles of public management, full of factual accuracy and vague spelling or sentence structure.

The assessment of students' writing assignment shows that eighty-three percent of the students were quite knowledgeable and were able to demonstrate literacy in the principles of politics, government and public management. Student scores in this category exceeded the benchmark.

### **Using Assessment Results to Improve SPEA Program**

SPEA faculty have been engaged in multiple meetings to share and interpret the BSPA survey data and student assessment data. We anticipate making significant program and curriculum changes at the conclusion of the self-study program review. Data sources for program improvement include: (1) students-academic advisor interactions; (2) semester course evaluations; (3) regular program faculty meetings; (4) student representation at program meetings; (5) SPEA faculty review and analysis of students performance data; and (6) student exit interview.

In 2007 an emphasis on management in nonprofit organizations was developed as an addition to the general BSPA courses. This change was made in response to changes in the discipline, concern of students and the job market. The BSPA program also added a course on Leadership and Ethics. This course was developed as a direct result of our program assessment as students concerned that they would like to see more ethics issues incorporated into the SPEA program curriculum. As from 2007 the BSPA faculty will be encourage to integrate diverse perspectives in most of their courses.

During 2007, the BSPA program will offer more upper division courses in the hybrid format which will make it easier for both transfer and North Central Indiana residents who are very busy during the day to complete their degree requirements on time. Further, the BSPA program will encourage students to register for 6 credit hours of internship during summer if they so desire. In the future, internship will be a core requirement for public affairs students who do not have working experience in the discipline. This will afford students the opportunity to gain valuable field experience that many are lacking. Further, the BSPA advisement process has now been modified to effectively inform students about program requirements, career opportunities and the public management discipline standards. To this end, BSPA faculty continues to interact with practicing professionals to meet constituent needs for information and education. Overall, the public affairs faculty will continue to use students' learning outcome data to improve its curriculum and instruction.

### **Dissemination of Results**

The faculty of the public affairs program and the outcome assessment committee in an annual meeting will review the assessment data and information. The outcome assessment committee and faculty will interact and discuss issues and concerns. They will also make suggestions and recommendations. In addition, the faculty of the public affairs program will deal with this and other sources of information in their regular meeting to make program changes and

improvements. Data will be compiled by the SPEA Campus Dean on an annual basis and a report produced for faculty examination and input. The examination of data will be used by faculty to adopt new instrument in the following year to assess student performance in core classes and in the capstone courses. A copy of the report was sent to the Director of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment as well as the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. It was also share with students in the SPEA program during a focus group meeting. There are plans to place the outcome report on the division website.

### **Assessment Activity Planed for the 2008-2009 Year**

This public affairs students learning outcome report cover activities in the 2007 calendar year. The BSPA program is committed to measuring all the program goals each year, this does create a lot of volume of data and results, especially for an evaluator unfamiliar with the. In the future, the program plan to conduct an alumni survey. The alumni survey will consist of a written, mailed survey administered by the program to solicit feedback from recent graduates on the quality of their education while in SPEA at IU Kokomo. This alumni survey will be administered every five years to ensure reasonable coverage and to avoid saturating alumni with more frequent surveys.

In 2008, the goals of literacy in public leadership and literacy in government, politics and administration, will be assessed, the following year the goal of critical thinking will be evaluated. In mapping out specific outcomes, components, and objects of assessment we found that some of our original plans, from the standpoint of practical implementation, need to be modified. For example, some outcomes and components overlapped or are duplicated, thus the program faculty will need to think about a new strategy.