Program Review Assessment Plan
Internships
September 2005

I have reorganized my proposal for Program Review. I was not satisfied with my initial goals nor did they represent standards that lent themselves to assessing outcomes. What follows are my revised goals.

**Student Learning Goals** for graduates who participate in the elective internship seminar:

1. **Develop Personal Understanding of Christian Vocation**: Graduates should be developing a sense of Christian vocation that will inform career and lifestyle goals, and that is based on recognition of their own gifts and on their faith convictions. *(cf Standard 1 Christian Orientation)*

2. **Use Learned Skills in a Professional Setting**: Graduates should have the writing, oral and thinking skills necessary for career and vocational success, along with the ability to work cooperatively and effectively with others in both leadership and subordinate roles. *(cf Standard 5 Active Societal and Intellectual Engagement)*

**Institutional Goal**:

1. Develop a method for keeping track of students who make a meaningful contribution to the community through internships.* The method should include not only students earning academic credit for their internships but also those who do not.

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This year I plan to focus on my Student Learning Goals. This seems like an excellent time to do so because my student group is larger this year. In addition to my elective internship seminar, I have the political science majors in the fall and will have referrals from communication studies and art to join the elective group in the spring.

**What have I done so far on my program review plans?**

Every semester I have made small changes in the internship seminar in an attempt to improve the quality of the learning. There are however, some **practices I’ve maintained since I began** this position in the fall of 2001:

1. Students are required to write a learning plan at the beginning of the semester specifically geared toward their internship. The plan consists of specific learning objectives. A student writes one objective for every unit of credit earned. Each objective is three-part: 1) State the objective; 2) List activities and resources needed to accomplish the goal and; 3) Determine how the objective will be
evaluated or verified. The idea is to help the student be intentional about the learning process at the internship site.

2. Students submit regular journal entries about the internship experience. Until this past year, students were provided some general questions to jumpstart the writing process.

3. Students take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Strong Interest Inventory. These are followed up with a group interpretive session by someone on the Office of Life Planning staff.

4. Students assemble a portfolio of their work at the end of the semester documenting the learning that has taken place in the internship. The portfolio includes the verification of objectives as well as reflective commentary about whether (and how closely) learning objectives have been met.

5. Employers evaluate students’ performance on an evaluation form.

6. Students evaluate the course.

Changes made in 2004-2005

1. Instead of providing students with general questions to jumpstart the journal writing process, they are assigned directed journal topics. For example, they are required to use the results from personal assessments to shed light on their experience at the internship site.


3. I replaced the integrative paper with a 15-minute oral presentation assignment. Until this change, students had plenty of writing practice but they had not yet been provided with opportunities to develop their oral skills. Perhaps more importantly, the group was missing out on learning from each other. Each student was assigned a chapter or topic from one of two resources: Schuurman’s Vocation or Schultze’s Here I Am. They summarized the author’s views, offered their own views and prepared discussion questions for their peers.

4. I added an oral dimension to the final portfolio assignment. Students spoke from their portfolios to make an oral presentation to their peers so all could benefit from their learning.

5. The final oral presentation included a vocation requirement. Students articulated their personal understanding of the concept of vocation.

6. Portfolio presentations became an event rather than the final class meeting. Each student invited two people outside of the seminar to the portfolio presentations.

7. Students evaluated their internship site on an evaluation form for future students to refer to.

What evidence have I gathered?

1. Learning Plans
2. Portfolios (including verification of learning objectives)
3. Notes from my mid-term site visits
4. Journal entries
5. Results from three interest/strengths assessments
6. Employers’ evaluation forms
7. Students’ site evaluation forms
8. Students’ course evaluation forms

What do I plan to analyze?
This is a key question. I believe I have collected some good evidence of student learning. But, I have not used it as well as I might to measure outcome.

For example, with regard to developing a personal concept of vocation, I have not documented a starting point. At the end of the semester, students may be able to articulate their understanding, but it is not clear how their understanding has changed since they started the class.

With regard to using their learned skills in a professional setting, I have some concerns. The learning plan helps students identify what they want to learn. But, does the verification do a good enough job of showing that it meets the objective? Also, what happens when objectives take a new direction due to unforeseeable changes in the internship? In these cases I have not required students to submit a revised objective, thus making it difficult to realize what has been learned.

Are students maximizing the information they receive from their assessments? They are generally pleased to have the feedback but how does this knowledge affect their performance on the job? They are getting good feedback on the TypeFocus (MyersBriggs) and Strong. But how can we make better use of the StrengthsFinder? And what is the best way to apply this information to the internship experience?

What part of the plan will I implement this year?
(Student Learning Goal #1)
1. Establish a starting point by having students respond in writing to the question, “What does vocation mean to you?” at the beginning of the semester.
2. Formulate a “vocation” objective collectively with the students so they enter into the exploration of individual vocation with more intent.

(Student Learning Goal #2)
1. Make the learning plan the point of reference during the midterm site visit. Solicit feedback from the supervisor and the student. Ascertaining whether objectives remain relevant and reasonable for the remaining weeks.
2. Write up a review of each mid-term site visit.

What will I do with evidence I gather?
1. I would like to be intentional about comparing the “cold write” definitions of vocation with the vocation statements made at the portfolio presentation at the end of the semester. Address in writing, “How has the student’s understanding of vocation changed?”
2. Record observations of final student presentations. Record the students’ evaluation of the success of their learning objectives. Did they meet their objectives? Why or why not? If not, what might have made the difference?
How do I plan to function differently as a result of this evidence?

1. Determine whether the students have come to an informed, personal understanding of vocation (based on comparisons of cold write and final presentation). Are the resources effective? Should they change?
2. Is the learning plan a realistic, effective tool for measuring the success of the internship? Using student and employer feedback, determine whether and how should this be changed.

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In my initial proposal, I decided I was asking the wrong question. It is not clear to me that we should increase the number of students participating in internships. Since we already keep track of those doing so for credit, we need to find a way to account for those who participate without receiving academic credit.

Institutional Goal:

2. Develop a method for keeping track of students who make a meaningful contribution to the community through internships.* The method should include not only students earning academic credit for their internships but also those who do not.

What have I done so far on my program review plans?

1. The implementation of the Internship Learning Agreement Form (ILAF) was for the purpose of keeping track of students campus-wide participating in for-credit, off-campus internships, requiring the signature of the site supervisor and the practicum advisor.
2. The student may register for zero units initially, and has four weeks in which to submit the completed ILAF in order to register for units.

Changes made in 2004-2005

1. I helped increasing numbers of students wanting to find internships not attached to the academic component (190 courses).
2. Reworked the initial web message to faculty about internship opportunities for their majors.
3. Filed a student information record for each student who came in my office.
4. Stopped doing #3. Instead, put names into Corporate Time.

What evidence have I gathered?

1. ILAF forms
2. Reports from Registrar tracking practicum participation each semester
3. Memorandums of Understanding
4. Access data base of internship sites and dates
5. Appointments scheduled on Corporate Time
6. E-mail paper trail of communication with students, faculty and employers

What do I plan to analyze?
1. I want to figure out how to follow through with students and employers for whom I have no official record. This may be a matter of pulling names off Corporate Time and emailing them with a plea for feedback.
2. Perhaps Greg Smith can help me keep track of “hits” on the internship website. I am not sure if/how this information can help yet.

**What part of the plan will I implement this year?**
   1. I think I will start with the information on Corporate Time.
   2. I want to talk to the web experts (Greg and Will) about ideas for tracking.

**How do I plan to function differently as a result of this evidence?**
   1. Put together a plan for tracking “unofficial students.”

Note: I hope to add another institutional goal to my plan. I would like to improve this office’s communication with faculty about internship opportunities for their majors, provide a template for practicum seminars, and help develop opportunities for their majors in the community. I see my role here increasing as we implement the Competent and Compassionate Action area of the GE over the next few years. This area deserves some careful attention and planning in my five-year plan. I will flesh this out more in my January submission.