

## FOREWORD

At Ball State University, staff members in the Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research work cooperatively with academic departments and other campus units to help facilitate many different types of assessment projects. Among the services we provide are helping to create unit assessment plans, conducting assessment workshops, developing survey instruments, conducting focus groups, conducting interviews, managing and analyzing data, providing institutional data, and providing extracts from university surveys.

Although our office conducts many university-wide assessment projects, this workbook is designed to facilitate the multiple assessment activities that are discipline specific and carried out by departments, schools, and colleges. The workbook attempts to illustrate the uses and advantages of different assessment techniques and respond to frequently asked questions. It also includes lists of numerous references that can be consulted for additional information on specific topics.

The initial chapter provides guidelines for designing an assessment plan. The second chapter discusses the development of departmental goals and objectives for learning—the basis of all assessment initiatives. The remaining chapters concentrate on specific assessment activities—choosing assessment tools; using surveys, tests, and performance-based measures; utilizing focus groups, available data, and other assessment techniques; and, finally, reporting and using assessment results. In keeping with the theme of a workbook, the narrative in each chapter is intended to be informative but succinct.

We hope this workbook is useful to faculty, professional staff, and administrators who are responsible for various assessment activities. We welcome your comments and suggestions to increase its usefulness.

As a final point, the staff in the Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research are always available to work with departments, schools, and colleges on various assessment projects. Please call on us when you need assistance.

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