Inventory of
Institutional Support for
Student Assessment

For The Research Program on
Institutional Support for Student Assessment

An Introduction to the ISSA

The *Institutional Support for Student Assessment Inventory* (ISSA) was developed as part of a national research program examining the *Organizational and Administrative Support for Student Assessment* for the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement (NCPI). The ISSA is designed as an institutional inventory of the organizational and administrative practices that have been designed and implemented to support the use of *student assessment* on your campus.

Institutional Support Practices are those organized activities, policies, and procedures that your institution has intentionally designed to enhance the practice of student assessment. *Student Assessment refers to those activities focused on measuring dimensions of student performance other than traditional end of course grading*.

This national survey is designed to identify institutional support practices for undergraduate student assessment. The project also examines the factors influencing the adoption of various support practices and how those practices enhance the impact of student assessment for institutional improvement.

We understand that being selected for this survey will require a commitment of time to complete and we appreciate your involvement. This instrument is also intended as an institutional self-assessment inventory to facilitate examination of your institution's own organizational and administrative practices which support student assessment. We encourage each institution to use the survey in this manner. You will receive a summary report of survey responses to all compare with your own institutional profile.

Completing the ISSA

The main purpose is to obtain a profile of your institution's current approach to undergraduate student assessment and its support practices. The inventory may be completed by one individual or group of individuals who are most familiar with the patterns of undergraduate student assessment on your campus. It should take less than one hour to complete.

- Please keep in mind that the questions refer to *undergraduate education* at your institution.
- Respond to each item in the questionnaire to the best of your knowledge.

The questionnaire is coded to allow follow up only. Individual institutions will not be identified in any analyses or reports.

Return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed return envelope. Any questions concerning the survey can be addressed to the following:

National Center for Postsecondary Improvement Project 5.2
School of Education
University of Michigan
610 E. University, Room 2339
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259
Phone: 734-647-2464
Fax: 734-936-2741
Email: ncpi.proj52@umich.edu

Marvin W. Peterson, Project Director

I. Institutional Approach to Student Assessment

A. Type, Extent and Timing of Student Assessment

We are interested in your institution's routine practices of collecting different types of undergraduate student performance data, the extent to which they are collected, and when they are collected. For each of the following content types of undergraduate student performance data:
  1) indicate the extent to which each type is collected
  2) for each type of data collected, check whether it is collected at entry, during enrollment, at exit, or a combination of these data collection points.

Type	**Extent**				**Timing**		
Currently Enrolled Students	Not Collected	Collected for some students	Collected for many students	Collected for all students	Collected at entry	Collected while enrolled	Collected at exit
		(circle one number for each item)			(check all that apply for each item)		
1. Student academic intentions or expectations	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
2. Basic college-readiness skills (reading, writing, mathematics, etc.)	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
3. Higher-order skills (critical thinking, problem solving)	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
4. General education competencies	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
5. Competence in major field of study (discipline- or program-specific knowledge)	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
6. Vocational or professional skills	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
7. Personal growth and affective development (values, attitudes, social development, etc.)	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
8. Student experiences and involvement with institution	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
9. Student satisfaction with institution	1	2	3	4	___	___	___
10. Student academic progress (retention, graduation rates)	1	2	3	4			
Former Students							
11. Vocational or professional outcomes (career goals, job attainment or performance)	1	2	3	4			
12. Further education (transfer, degree attainment, graduate study)	1	2	3	4			
13. Civic or social roles (political, social or community involvement)	1	2	3	4			
14. Satisfaction and experiences with institution after leaving	1	2	3	4			

B. Student Assessment Instruments

Does your institution employ institutionally or externally developed instruments or tests for the following types of undergraduate student assessment information? (circle all that apply for each item):

Source of Instrument

Content of Instrument	Not used	Institutionally developed	State provided	Commercially available
1. Student plans, goals, or expectations	1	2	3	4
2. Basic college-readiness skills (reading, writing, mathematics, etc.)	1	2	3	4
3. Higher-order skills (critical thinking, problem solving)	1	2	3	4
4. General education competencies	1	2	3	4
5. Competence in major field of study (discipline- or program-specific knowledge)	1	2	3	4
6. Vocational or professional skills (excluding licensure exams)	1	2	3	4
7. Personal growth and affective development (values, attitudes, social development, etc.)	1	2	3	4
8. Student effort, experiences or involvement with institution	1	2	3	4
9. Student satisfaction with institution	1	2	3	4
10. Alumni satisfaction and experiences	1	2	3	4

C. Other Student Assessment Methods

To what extent does your institution use the following methods to collect undergraduate student assessment information? (circle one number for each item):

Other Student Assessment Methods	Not used	Used in some units[*]	Used in most units	Used in all units
1. Observations of student performance (simulations, demonstrations, lab)	1	2	3	4
2. Student portfolios or comprehensive projects	1	2	3	4
3. Student performance in capstone courses	1	2	3	4
4. Student interviews or focus groups	1	2	3	4
5. Transcript analysis	1	2	3	4
6. External examination of students (licensure exams, external reviewers)	1	2	3	4
7. Special surveys of or interviews with withdrawing students	1	2	3	4
8. Alumni interviews or focus groups	1	2	3	4
9. Employer interviews or focus groups	1	2	3	4

---

[*] "Unit" refers to academic areas such as departments, divisions, schools, or colleges.

D. Student Sub-Populations

Does your institution use different assessment methods for the following sub-populations of undergraduate students?
(check <u>one</u> for each item):

		Different	Same as Other Students
1.	Adult students	_____	_____
2.	Part-time students	_____	_____
3.	Minority students	_____	_____
4.	Distance education students	_____	_____

E. Student Assessment Studies

Does your institution conduct studies of the *relationship between* the following experiences and students' performance (check <u>all</u> that apply):

__ 1. Student course-taking patterns
__ 2. Exposure to different instructional or teaching methods
__ 3. Patterns of student-faculty interaction
__ 4. Extra-curricular activities
__ 5. Residence arrangements
__ 6. Student financial aid and/or concurrent employment
__ 7. Admission standards or policies
__ 8. Academic advising patterns
__ 9. Classroom, library and/or computing resources
__ 10. Do not study the relationship between the above experiences and student performance

F. Student Performance Profiles or Reports

Does your institution provide profiles or reports of appropriate student performance information at the following levels of aggregation (check <u>all</u> that apply):

__ 1. Institution wide
__ 2. Schools or colleges
__ 3. Academic programs or departments
__ 4. Special populations or subgroups/students
__ 5. By course or groups of courses
__ 6. Do not provide any reports

II. Institutional Support for Student Assessment

A. Institutional Emphasis

1.   Your institutional mission statement explicitly (check <u>all</u> that apply):

__   a.   emphasizes excellence in undergraduate education as an institutional priority
__   b.   identifies the educational outcomes intended for your students
__   c.   refers to student assessment as an important institutional activity
__   d.   does not explicitly mention any of the above

2.   For how many years has your institution engaged in student assessment? _____

B. Purpose of Student Assessment

The following are often intended purposes of an institution's undergraduate student assessment process. Please rate the importance of each for your institution. (circle one number for each item):

Purpose	No Importance	Minor Importance	Moderate Importance	Very Important
1. Preparing institutional self-study for accreditation	1	2	3	4
2. Meeting state reporting requirements	1	2	3	4
3. Guiding internal resource allocation decisions	1	2	3	4
4. Guiding undergraduate academic program improvement	1	2	3	4
5. Improving the achievement of undergraduate students	1	2	3	4
6. Improving faculty instructional performance	1	2	3	4
7. Other (briefly describe): _____	1	2	3	4

C. Administrative and Governance Activities

Institutions have introduced a variety of administrative or governance activities that address or promote student assessment. Does your institution engage in any of the following activities? (check all that apply):

__ 1. Annual presidential or other institution-wide initiatives, forums or seminars on student assessment
__ 2. Rewards or incentives for academic and student affairs administrators who promote use of student assessment in their unit
__ 3. Incentives for academic units to use student assessment information in their evaluation and improvement efforts
__ 4. Student assessment workshops for academic and student affairs administrators
__ 5. Board of trustees committee that addresses student assessment
__ 6. Faculty governance committee that addresses student assessment issues
__ 7. Student representation on student assessment committees

D. Support for Student Assessment

Use the scale below to rate the degree to which various groups within your institution support undergraduate student assessment activities (circle one number for each item):

	Very Unsupportive	Somewhat Unsupportive	Neutral, Unknown	Supportive	Very Supportive
1. Board of trustees	1	2	3	4	5
2. Chief executive officer	1	2	3	4	5
3. Academic affairs administrators	1	2	3	4	5
4. Student affairs administrators	1	2	3	4	5
5. Faculty governance	1	2	3	4	5
6. Students	1	2	3	4	5

E.   Planning and Coordinating Student Assessment

1.   Which of the following best describes your institution's *plan or policy* for undergraduate student assessment? Your institution (check all that apply):

__   a.   has a formally adopted institutional plan or policy requiring specified undergraduate student assessment activities of all academic units or programs
__   b.   has a formally adopted plan or policy for undergraduate student assessment in some academic units or program areas (e.g. general education or academic majors)
__   c.   has a formally adopted institutional plan or policy requiring all academic units or programs to develop their own undergraduate student assessment plan
__   d.   has a formally adopted institutional plan or policy stipulating institution-wide activities to be conducted by a central committee, office, or officer
__   e.   has no formal plan or policy but academic units or programs are encouraged to conduct their own undergraduate student assessment activities
__   f.   is currently developing a plan or policy for undergraduate student assessment
__   g.   does not have an undergraduate student assessment plan or policy (SKIP TO QUESTION E-6)

2.   Is there an *institution-wide group* (committee, task force, etc.) that is primarily responsible for *ongoing planning and policy setting* for undergraduate student assessment? (check one):

__   a.   yes
__   b.   no (SKIP TO QUESTION E-5)

3.   If yes, who serves on this group? (check all that apply):

__   a.   Chief executive officer
__   b.   Academic affairs administrator(s)/staff
__   c.   Student affairs administrator(s)/staff
__   d.   Institutional research administrator(s)/staff
__   e.   Academic review and evaluation administrator(s)/staff
__   f.   Student assessment administrator(s)/staff
__   g.   Faculty
__   h.   Students
__   i.   Other _____

4.   Who has *executive responsibility* for or who *chairs* the institution-wide group responsible for the ongoing planning or policy-setting process for undergraduate student assessment? (check all that apply):

__   a.   Academic affairs administrator
__   b.   Student affairs administrator
__   c.   Institutional research officer
__   d.   Academic review and evaluation officer
__   e.   Student assessment officer (if separate)
__   f.   Faculty member
__   g.   Other _____

5. Who *approves* any changes in your institution's plan or policies for undergraduate student assessment? (check all that apply):

__ a.   Board of trustees
__ b.   Chief executive officer
__ c.   Chief academic affairs officer
__ d.   Chief student affairs officer
__ e.   Institutional research officer
__ f.   Academic review and evaluation officer
__ g.   Student assessment officer
__ j.   Student government
__ h.   Academic senate or other faculty committee(s)
__ i.   Faculty union (IF YOUR FACULTY ARE NOT UNIONIZED, CHECK HERE _____)
__ k.   Other _____

6. Who has *operational* responsibility for your institution's day-to-day undergraduate student assessment activities (e.g., instrument development, data collection, analysis, and reporting)? (check all that apply):

__ a.   Academic affairs administrator
__ b.   Student affairs administrator
__ c.   Institutional research officer
__ d.   Academic review and evaluation officer
__ e.   Student assessment officer
__ f.   Faculty member(s)
__ g.   Other _____
__ h.   No one (SKIP TO QUESTION E8)

7. To whom does the individual with operational responsibility for day-to-day student assessment activities directly report? (check one):

__ a.   Chief executive officer
__ b.   Chief academic officer
__ c.   Chief student affairs officer
__ d.   Institutional research officer
__ e.   Academic review and evaluation officer
__ f.   Other _____

8. Is there an office which provides faculty consultation in using student assessment for instructional improvement or curriculum development? (check one):

__ a.   yes   __ b.   no

9. If yes, what is the name of the office?_____

F.   Evaluating Your Institution's Student Assessment Plan or Process

1. Has your institution evaluated its undergraduate student assessment process? (check one):

__ a.   yes, with a formal evaluation
__ b.   yes, with an informal evaluation
__ c.   currently developing evaluation plans (SKIP TO SECTION III)
__ d.   not currently evaluating or planning to evaluate assessment process (SKIP TO SECTION III)

2.	In evaluating your institution's student assessment process, which of the following elements of that process were reviewed? (check all that apply):

__	a.	your student assessment plan and policies
__	b.	the structure and responsibility for student assessment
__	c.	achievement of your institution's intended objectives for student assessment
__	d.	reliability and validity of student assessment instruments and methods
__	e.	quality of data analysis
__	f.	use of student assessment information in institutional decision-making
__	g.	the problems encountered while conducting student assessment activities
__	h.	comparison of the costs and benefits of student assessment

III. External Influences on Institutional Student Assessment Activities

**A.	State Role** (FOR STATE-FUNDED INSTITUTIONS ONLY; ALL OTHERS SKIP TO QUESTION III. B-1)

1.	Was your state's plan/requirement for student assessment primarily developed (check one)):

__	a.	by state-level officials
__	b.	through joint consultation between state officials and institutional representatives
__	c.	no statewide plan or requirement for student assessment exists (SKIP TO QUESTION III. B-1)

2.	State requirements for student assessment (check all that apply):

__	a.	were an important reason for your institution to initiate undergraduate student assessment
__	b.	have increased your institution's involvement in undergraduate student assessment
__	c.	have not been a factor in your institution's undergraduate student assessment activities
__	d.	have been a negative influence on your institution's undergraduate student assessment activities

3.	Your state's reporting requirements include (check all that apply):

__	a.	evidence that a student assessment plan is in place
__	b.	measurement of state-mandated student performance indicators
__	c.	institutionally-devised student performance indicators
__	d.	evidence of institutional use of student assessment information

4.	How has your state higher education agency reviewed or evaluated your institution's undergraduate student assessment plan or process after it was implemented? (check all that apply):

__	a.	reviewed by state officials
__	b.	reviewed using external reviewers
__	c.	required an institutional self-review
__	d.	no post hoc review has occurred (SKIP TO QUESTION B-1)

5.	The state review of your institution's undergraduate student assessment plan or process included (check all that apply):

__	a.	review of your institution's student assessment process itself
__	b.	comparison of your institution's student performance record with your past performance
__	c.	comparison of your institution's student performance record with peer institutions
__	d.	comparison of your institution's student performance record with other institutions in your state
__	e.	other (briefly describe) _____

B. Regional Accrediting Role in Student Assessment

1. Has your institution gone through a regional self study accreditation review which required undergraduate student assessment? (check <u>one</u>):

__ a. yes   __ b. no

2. Regional accreditation agency requirements for undergraduate student assessment (check <u>all</u> that apply):

__ a. were an important reason for your institution to initiate undergraduate student assessment
__ b. have increased your institution's involvement in undergraduate student assessment
__ c. have not been a factor in your institution's undergraduate student assessment activities
__ d. have been a negative influence on your institution's undergraduate student assessment activities

3. Your institution's regional accreditation agency requires (check <u>all</u> that apply):

__ a. evidence that a student assessment plan or process is in place
__ b. intended institutional uses of student assessment information
__ c. results of student assessment
__ d. evidence of actual institutional use of student assessment information
__ e. unfamiliar with regional accreditation requirements for student assessment

C. External Sources of Support for Assessment

1. Has your institution received external grants to improve undergraduate student assessment practices from any of the following? (check <u>all</u> that apply):

__ a. FIPSE
__ b. other federal agencies (please identify): _____
__ c. a state incentive program
__ d. private foundations or corporate sources (please identify): _____
__ e. no known external grants received

2. Has your institution used any of the following student assessment services offered by the following postsecondary organizations? (check <u>all</u> services that apply for each type of organization):

Student Assessment Service Used

Type of Postsecondary Organization	Not used or not available	Consultation services	Assessment conferences	Training workshops	Publications or research reports
a. Professional associations (Institutional, disciplinary, or administrative)	___	___	___	___	___
b. Regional accrediting association	___	___	___	___	___
c. State-level agency	___	___	___	___	___
d. Consortium of institutions	___	___	___	___	___

IV. Academic Management Policies and Practices for Student Assessment

Institutions have a wide array of formally organized policies, activities, and procedures intended to enhance or support the collection and use of undergraduate student assessment information. The following policies and practices have been identified in many institutions.

FOR QUESTIONS A THROUGH D, INDICATE WHETHER THE FOLLOWING POLICIES OR PRACTICES EXIST AT YOUR INSTITUTION.

A. Resource Allocation for Student Assessment (check all that apply):

__ 1. An explicit operating budget allocation is made to support student assessment.
__ 2. An academic budget process that considers student performance indicators in resource allocation to academic units.
__ 3. An academic budget process that compares academic units on student performance indicators and allocates resources competitively.
__ 4. An academic budget process that rewards academic units for improvement based on their own past student performance indicators.

B. Student Assessment Information System (check all that apply):

__ 1. Key student assessment activities have been scheduled into the academic calendar.
__ 2. A computerized student information system which includes student performance indicators.
__ 3. A student information system which tracks individual students from application through graduation.
__ 4. A student assessment database which is integrated with faculty, curricular, and financial databases.

C. Access to Individual Student Assessment Information (check all that apply):

Student assessment information on individual students is available to:

__ 1. Institutional research, assessment or evaluation professionals
__ 2. Senior academic administrators
__ 3. Department chairs or academic program administrators
__ 4. Student affairs professionals
__ 5. Faculty advisors

D. Distribution of Student Assessment Reports and Studies (check all that apply):

Student assessment reports and studies or appropriate summaries are regularly distributed to:

__ 1. Students
__ 2. Faculty
__ 3. Academic administrators
__ 4. Student affairs professionals
__ 5. Employers
__ 6. The general public

FOR QUESTIONS E THROUGH H, USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING POLICIES AND PRACTICES EXIST AT YOUR INSTITUTION (Circle <u>one</u> number for each item).

	Not done at all	Done in a few depts.	Done in some depts.	Done in many depts.	Done in most depts.
E. Student Policies on Student Assessment					
1. Students are required to participate in student assessment activities	1	2	3	4	5
2. Incentives are provided to encourage students to participate in student assessment activities	1	2	3	4	5
3. Information regarding the purpose and uses of student assessment is provided to students	1	2	3	4	5
4. Students are provided with individual feedback regarding their own student performance results	1	2	3	4	5
F. Professional Development					
1. Faculty are required to learn about or receive training on student assessment	1	2	3	4	5
2. Funds for faculty to attend or present at professional conferences on student assessment are available	1	2	3	4	5
3. Workshops, seminars, or consultative services for faculty on the use of student assessment in course design or instruction are offered	1	2	3	4	5
4. Assistance for faculty in the form of paid leaves, stipends, mini grants or course reduction to improve use of student assessment is provided	1	2	3	4	5
5. Workshops and seminars for department chairs, deans, and other academic administrators to improve use of student assessment in their unit is provided	1	2	3	4	5
6. Student affairs staff are required to learn about or receive training related to student assessment	1	2	3	4	5
7. Student assessment workshops for student affairs administrators are provided	1	2	3	4	5
G. Faculty Evaluation and Rewards					
1. Faculty evaluation for promotion considers evidence of student performance in their classes (not just student teaching evaluation)	1	2	3	4	5
2. Faculty evaluation for annual salary and merit increases incorporates evidence of student performance	1	2	3	4	5
3. Faculty scholarship on or innovative uses of student assessment is considered in promotion, tenure, or salary reviews	1	2	3	4	5
4. Faculty willingness to use or to participate in student assessment activities is considered in faculty promotion, tenure, or salary reviews	1	2	3	4	5
5. Faculty receive public recognition or awards for innovative or effective use of student assessment	1	2	3	4	5
6. Faculty hiring process considers experience or skill in student assessment	1	2	3	4	5
7. Faculty are encouraged to assess student learning in their classes	1	2	3	4	5

H. Academic Planning and Review

	Not done at all	Done in a few depts.	Done in some depts.	Done in many depts.	Done in most depts.

Your institution incorporates student performance data into the following processes:

	Not done at all	Done in a few depts.	Done in some depts.	Done in many depts.	Done in most depts.
1. Academic department or undergraduate program planning or review	1	2	3	4	5
2. General education or core curriculum review	1	2	3	4	5
3. Course-level review and development	1	2	3	4	5
4. Review and planning for student academic support services	1	2	3	4	5

V.   Impacts of Student Assessment

A. Decision Making

To what extent has the use of information available from your undergraduate student assessment process influenced the following actions? (circle <u>one</u> number for each item):

Institutional Actions	No action or influence unknown	Action taken, data not influential	Action taken, data somewhat influential	Action taken, data very influential
1. Revising your undergraduate academic mission or goals	1	2	3	4
2. Designing or reorganizing academic programs or majors	1	2	3	4
3. Designing or reorganizing student affairs units	1	2	3	4
4. Allocating resources to academic units	1	2	3	4
5. Modifying student assessment plans, policies, or processes	1	2	3	4
6. Deciding faculty promotion and tenure	1	2	3	4
7. Deciding faculty salary increases or rewards (release time, travel funds, etc.)	1	2	3	4
8. Revising or modifying general education curriculum	1	2	3	4
9. Creating or modifying student out-of-class learning experiences (e.g. internships, service learning)	1	2	3	4
10. Creating or modifying distance learning initiatives	1	2	3	4
11. Modifying instructional or teaching methods	1	2	3	4
12. Modifying student academic support services (e.g. advising, tutoring)	1	2	3	4

B. Institutional Impacts

Have you monitored the following institutional indicators and been able to document the impact of student assessment information on them? (circle <u>one</u> number for each item):

Internal Impacts	Not monitored, do not know	Monitored, negative impact	Monitored, no known impact	Monitored, positive impact
1. Affected campus discussions of undergraduate education	1	2	3	4
2. Contributed to faculty satisfaction	1	2	3	4
3. Contributed to faculty interest in teaching	1	2	3	4
4. Led to changes in instructional or teaching methods used	1	2	3	4
5. Contributed to student satisfaction	1	2	3	4
6. Affected student retention or graduation rates	1	2	3	4
7. Affected student grade performance	1	2	3	4
8. Affected student achievement on external examinations (e.g. professional licensure, GRE)	1	2	3	4

External Impacts

9. Affected student applications or student acceptance rates	1	2	3	4
10. Affected allocation or share of state funding	1	2	3	4
11. Affected evaluation from regional accreditation agency	1	2	3	4
12. Affected private fund-raising results	1	2	3	4
13. Affected success on grant applications	1	2	3	4
14. Affected communication with external constituents	1	2	3	4
15. Affected institutional reputation or image	1	2	3	4

<u>**VI. Further Studies - Optional**</u>

This page will be removed from the questionnaire before it is processed and completion of it is optional. However, we would like to know more about your institution's experience with student assessment and we would like to be able to respond to you personally with a follow up report.

Within the next year several institutions will be invited to participate in a more intensive study of the impacts of their student assessment practices and policies. Would you be interested in participating in a case study?

__ yes
__ possibly
__ no

If you are interested, we would appreciate any additional information regarding your student assessment practices that you believe would be of interest to other institutions. If you believe your approach to student assessment or its impacts are unusual, please describe it briefly (or enclose a report you think captures your experience).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Please provide your name and address if you are interested in receiving a personal summary report of this survey.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Institution: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this instrument.