AOC Summary of Industrial Studies

On April 8, 2013 the Assessment Oversight Committee reviewed the assessment report from Industrial Studies (IS). Colleen Kaiser gave the report. She noted that there are various standards for particular programs within IS, set by national accreditation bodies. The Industrial Technology Management Program assesses its students’ learning based on the standards set forth by its external assessment governing board, the Association of Technology Management and Applied Engineering (ATMAE). The metals program is accredited by the Foundry Educational Foundation (FEF), the plastics program is accredited by the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE), and the Technology Education major meets the certification requirements of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

The Industrial Technology Management Program uses employer and alumni surveys, advisory board input and feedback, internship and co-op reports, internship and co-op visits, grades, employer assessments, Course File Assessments, Senior Design, Course Projects, PACCE projects, exit surveys for graduates, and contact with employers and alumni at conferences and career fairs, and scholarships received by students to assess student learning. The department administered a senior exit survey from 2003-2008. Unfortunately, the department never utilized the data, so the survey was discontinued. The department administered an alumni survey in 2012 and had an approximately 30% response rate. The results indicate:

91% are currently employed in a career that is directly related to their Industrial Studies degree and 92% of the respondents felt the internship was of value to their career. These high placement numbers are an indication the students were/are prepared with the skills wanted/needed by employers for initial hiring. On a scale of 0 to 100; Career progression expectations was rated at 75.66% and career success was given a rating of 72.46%.

Kaiser also shared the results of a recent SWOT analysis. Understaffing and hiring new faculty at competitive salaries continue to be problems. The department is also recognizes the need for more management and mathematics courses in its curriculum but struggles to find a way to meet this need without adding more credit hours.

Due to a snafu, the AOC did not receive the report until the meeting itself and this limited the quality and amount of feedback it could provide. The committee discussed the IS report further at its April 22 meeting. The AOC has a few concerns about the report. First, it is unclear what the student learning outcomes (SLOs) are for the various programs in IS. Neither the report nor the assessment plan on the AOC web page gives a clear indication of what the particular SLOs are. This raises questions about whether SLOs are being assessed at all. The AOC is also concerned that IS over-uses indirect measures, such as surveys, and under-utilizes direct measures, such as projects that are graded according to a common rubric. The AOC is also concerned that too much of the data is dated. It strongly recommends that the Industrial Studies department address these issues before its next APC review.