Undergraduate Program Assessment

Bachelor's Degree with Individual Concentration

Student Learning Objectives

- Interdisciplinary Learning: BDIC students will learn to articulate a unique interdisciplinary concentration in their BDIC proposals. Students will explain in their proposals how they are crossing academic boundaries and developing creative paths of inquiry that connect different fields of knowledge. In the course of their studies, BDIC students should become accomplished interdisciplinary learners with a curiosity in several areas and a capacity to fuse the disciplines.

- Career Development: BDIC students should also learn how to connect their intended career goals with their studies. Again, this is required in the proposal. But it is also an ongoing objective for each student to deepen his or her career vision and its relationship to academic study. The program offers alumni forums and career advising sessions for this purpose.

- Leadership and Entrepreneurship: BDIC students should graduate with an understanding of the program’s strong track record in producing leaders and entrepreneurs. The terms “leadership” and “entrepreneurship” themselves should be definable by all BDIC students. The topics are covered in the proposal class and in BDIC special classes on entrepreneurship and leadership such as "Introduction to Entrepreneurship" and "Leadership and Networking."

- Self-Advocacy: Learning to explain what BDIC is, what one's individual concentration is, obtaining a faculty sponsor, gaining entry into classes across the campus--all of this requires motivation and initiative. BDIC students are expected to graduate with a sense of how to make the most of the resources of a large organization and how to negotiate one's way forward. This can be summed up by saying that BDIC students will develop a capacity for self-advocacy.

- Writing and Speaking: BDIC students are expected to develop their communication skills. The BDIC Junior Year Writing seminar is devoted to this goal, as is much of the work in the new Integrative Experience (IE) course taken by our seniors. Students in the entrepreneurship and leadership classes also have ample opportunities to develop and exercise their writing and speaking skills.

Assessment tools

- The BDIC concentration proposals are assessed by multiple readers: faculty supervisors, faculty sponsors, peer advisors, and the director. We have begun to invite alumni into the process for certain students whose proposal topics match up well with the interests of alumni volunteers.

- As students progress through the concentration they designed with their sponsors, any modifications to the proposal must be approved by both the sponsor and the faculty supervisor. This process provides an on-going context for communication and assessment between the students and faculty.

- The BDIC senior summary requires students to assess the courses which have had significant positive impact on their course of study, and also gives students an opportunity to discuss classes they found unsatisfactory. The senior summary includes portfolio work, which is assessed by the faculty.
supervisors.

- The BDIC archives contain several alumni surveys from different decades. The data here have never been summarized statistically but provide valuable information about career preparation in BDIC.

Recent activities

- In 2012-13 BDIC added a Freshman Seminar to introduce the program to students who may be interested in developing their own major. First-semester freshmen are not eligible to enroll in BDIC’s required proposal-writing seminar, and this new seminar was very popular in both semesters of the 12-13 academic year.

- BDIC is expanding its instructional staff and the number of classes offered under the BDIC rubric. In addition to the Freshman Seminar, BDIC will offer three sections of the IE course “Integration and Innovation,” and the proposal-writing seminar will be team-taught by the developer of the class together with the new Honors Program Director.

- BDIC faculty and students continue to be active participants in the annual conference on Individualized Majors Programs. The BDIC Director, Honors Program Director, and six students all attended the 2013 conference, and seven of them presented in panels there.

- BDIC has increased its efforts at alumni relations. One result of these activities is an increase of grants and scholarships in support BDIC students.

- BDIC is also looking closely at senior exit polls which show very high satisfaction in many areas and very low in a few others (notably course access).

- In response to a recent trend of lower satisfaction with faculty advising in BDIC, two new faculty supervisors will join the five already in place so that each supervisor can direct more attention to the students under their guidance.