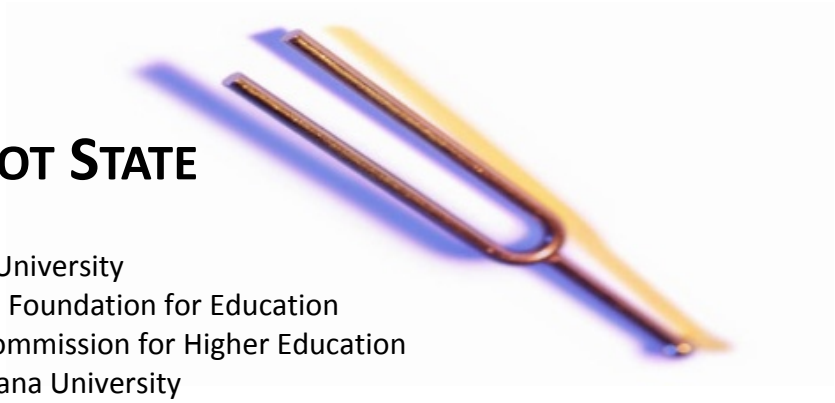
THE TUNING PROCESS IN ONE *TUNING USA* PILOT STATE



A roundtable discussion
Mary Ziskin, Indiana University
Haley Glover, Lumina Foundation for Education
Ken Sauer, Indiana Commission for Higher Education
Afet Dadashova, Indiana University

PURPOSE FOR THE SESSION

In this session, we aim to

- Hold a discussion of the Tuning process as it is currently unfolding in practice in the U.S.
- Present details and results from the process as it has taken place in one of the three pilot states participating in the *Tuning USA* project.
- Raise questions for constructive debate regarding the translation of global higher education policy questions in U.S. context.

THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

- Large-scale initiative begun in 1999 to reconstruct higher education systems in Europe
- General goals include increasing access to higher education and flexibility in pursuing degrees
- Participating countries commit to adopt common rules for programs and degrees
- 46 European countries participating; efforts echoing and adapting this process in other parts of the world as well

TUNING

General Goals

- A mechanism for making programs and degrees comparable, compatible and transparent across contexts
- Focuses on developing consensus around learning expectations and identifying competencies associated with specific levels and fields of study

Tuning USA

- Adelman (2009) points to the Tuning Process as a potential vehicle for informing the accountability discussion in the U.S.
- Lumina Foundation for Education (2009) launches Tuning USA — an exploratory study "to determine whether the process can be engaged within states on a deeper, wider scale." Work has focused on 3 pilot states: Indiana, Minnesota, and Utah

The View from Indiana

Focus on exploring competencies for degrees in three fields of study

- Chemistry: Associate's and bachelor's degrees
- Elementary Education: Bachelor's degrees
- History: Associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees

Process of identifying competencies

- Committees of faculty from a diverse set of institutions within the state
- Identified competencies specific to each degree and field
- Identified competencies for Indiana bachelor's degree recipients generally

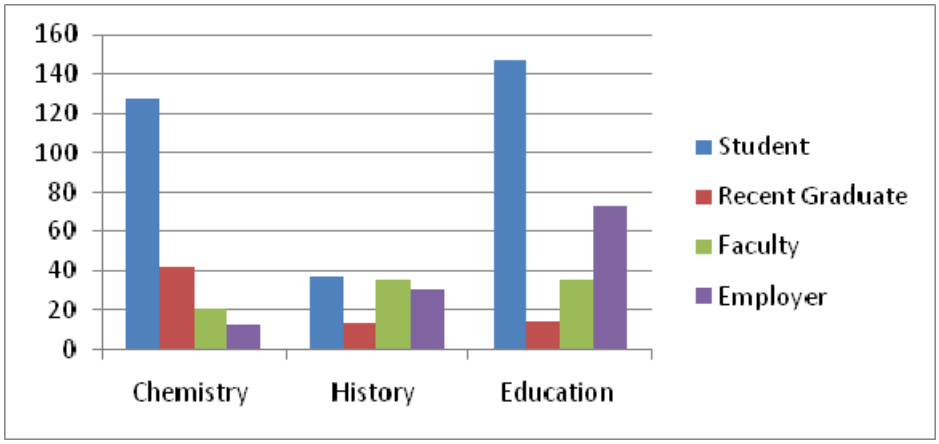
Surveys of four groups from each field

- Students
- Graduates
- Faculty
- Employers

Table 1. Respondents to the Indiana Tuning Pilot Survey 2009-2010

		Role				
		Student	Graduate within the last 5 years	Faculty	Employer	Total
What field is your study or work related to?	Chemistry	128	42	21	12	203
	History	37	13	35	30	115
	Education	147	14	35	73	269
	Total	312	69	91	115	587

Figure 1. Respondents by Field and Role



SURVEY METHODS

Survey design using competencies identified by committees verbatim

Administered 2009–2010

- Snowball sampling of students, graduates and faculty
- Employers identified via statewide listings via NAICS codes
- Sampling list augmented by follow-up calls to identify email contacts
- Qualtrics websurvey interface was used
- Respondents total (See Table 1 and Figure 1 above)

Four main construct areas:

- Respondents' ratings of each competency's *importance*
- Respondents' ratings Indiana graduates' *achievement* on each competency
- Respondents' selection of the *5 most important* competencies
- Employers' ratings of the *level of skill needed* on each competency

Respondents of this survey should be employers of graduates of the following three disciplines that are at the focus of this study: chemistry, history, education. The following question will establish your eligibility for the study.

What field is your study or work related to? (Leaving this question blank will end the survey.)

- Chemistry
- History
- Education
- None of the above

If **None of the above** Is **Selected**, Then Skip To **End of Survey** Skip Logic

Display This Question:
If Respondents of this survey should be employers of graduat... **Education** Is **Selected** Edit

In your opinion, what level of achievement should Indiana college students have reached on each of the following general competencies, by the time they graduate with a **bachelor's degree**?

Ability to:

Communication

	None at all	Minimal level	Moderate level	High level
communicate orally in English				
communicate in writing in English				
communicate in a second language				
use information and communication technologies				
work in a team				
apply appropriate interpersonal skills				
communicate about one's chosen field to the public				
communicate with and understand people from diverse backgrounds				

Results: Top-Ranked Bachelor's Degree Competencies

- Think critically,
- Plan and manage time,
- Think abstractly, analyze, and synthesize ideas,
- Apply knowledge in practical situations, and
- Self-evaluate

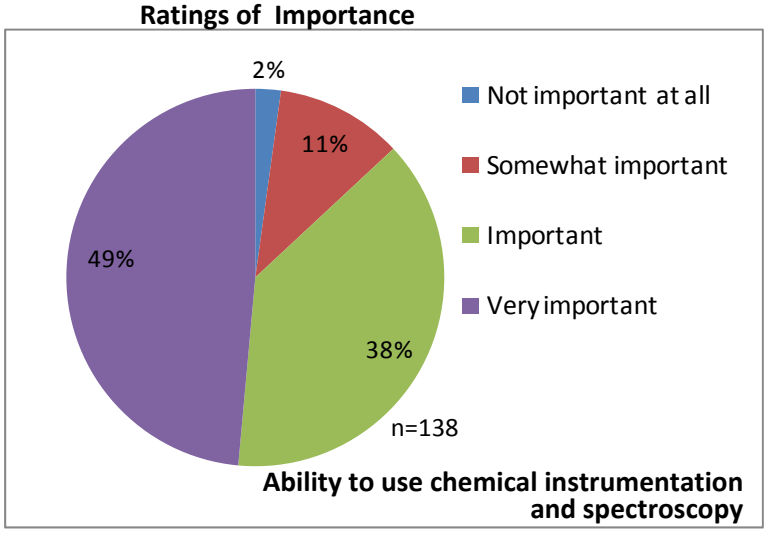
Rankings disaggregated by role. Faculty emphasized writing, while students stressed working in a team.

Table 2. Top-Ranked Bachelor's Degree Competencies

Please select 5 (five) general competencies that you consider the most important for graduates with a bachelor's degree.										
	Student Hist	*Student Chem*	*Student Educ*	*Graduate Hist*	*Graduate Chem*	*Graduate Educ*	*Faculty Hist*	*Faculty Chem*	*Faculty Educ*	*Total*
Think critically	9	56	48	5	21	2	16	5	16	178
Plan and manage time	3	40	71	2	13	4	3	0	11	147
Think abstractly, analyze, and synthesize ideas	12	45	32	4	12	4	13	7	14	143
Apply knowledge in practical situations	3	39	38	1	17	4	2	4	9	117
Self-evaluate	1	11	45	1	0	5	2	3	13	81

Results: Respondents' Ratings on Importance & Level of Competency Needed

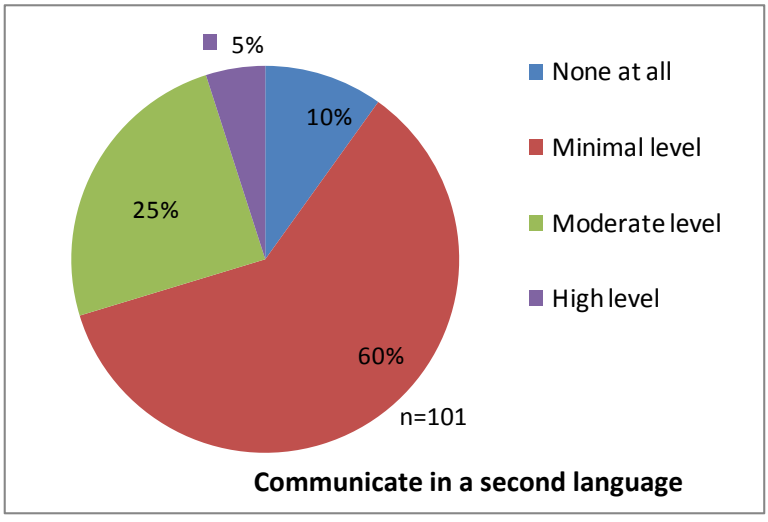
Figure 2. Chemistry Students' & Recent Graduates' Ratings of Importance



- **Students' and recent graduates' responses showed wider variation on relatively more competencies.**

- **On most items, employers selected "none" or "minimal" only rarely; one exception is shown in Figure 3 below.**
- **Faculty responses were similarly concentrated in the "important" and "very important" categories.**

Figure 3. Employers' Ratings of Level of Competency Needed



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

? **What are the logistical and methodological challenges that have emerged for consideration in the next phase of the project?**

? **What does the Tuning process mean for the institutions and for higher education policy in the US?**

REFERENCES

Adelman, C. (2009). The Bologna Process for U.S. Eyes: Re-learning Higher Education from a Decade of European Reconstruction. Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy.

Lumina Foundation for Education. (2009). Tuning USA. Retrieved on September 20, 2009 from, http://www.luminafoundation.org/our_work/tuning