

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT
DEVELOPING A PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN

1. Assessment has taken on a variety of meanings. It may mean the process of grading a student's course assignment, or use of a standardized test imposed by external accountability, or any activity designed to evaluate the success of a program, course or institutional effectiveness.
2. Program Assessment focuses on student learning and the experiences associated with a specific program of study (i.e. major, possibly minor, concentration, certificate, graduate degree).
 - a. Has the student acquired the skills, knowledge and habits of mind (values, dispositions)?
 - b. How well are you doing it?
 - c. How can you improve?
3. Effective Program Assessment
 - a. Systematic, ongoing, acquires information over time; cultivates a culture of inquiry.
 - b. Meaningful. Builds a body of evidence to improve the program.
 - c. Built around the program's mission statement
 - d. Multi-faceted. Information is collected on multiple dimensions, using multiple methods and sources.
 - e. Faculty-designed and implemented.
4. Develop a Program-level Assessment Plan
 - a. Developing an effective assessment plan begins with being clear about what program faculty are trying to accomplish. A clear program mission and accompanying learning outcomes serve as the foundation for the entire plan. **IN A NUTSHELL:** What questions do you believe need to be answered, which will lead you to determine the methods you will employ, and how useful the assessment results are for making programmatic changes.
 - b. Checklist
 - Agree on your mission.
Successful program assessment begins with a program mission linked to the institutional and college mission statements. Program effectiveness begins with a clear sense of what the program is designed to accomplish.
 - Create program learning outcomes.
Describe the ideal student in your program. Be concrete and focus on those strengths, skills and values you feel are the result of or at least supported and nurtured by the program experience.
Ask yourselves: What does this student know? What can this student do? What does this student care about? Bottom line: What is it you want students to know, understand and be able to do when they graduate?
 - Align your curriculum.
Review instructional materials.
Review syllabi and course outlines.
Review course assignments and tests.
 - Brainstorm; identify and select measures - Set timeline to collect the evidence.
 - Discuss results and use information to improve program.
 - Communicate results.
 - Evaluate the process, make necessary adjustments.

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STEPS FOR DEVELOPING A PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN

- Step 1** ***Program Mission Statement***
Establish a description of the purpose of the program, who it serves, its broad goals, and how it fits into the mission of the University.
- Step 2** ***Program Learning Objectives – Expressed in Student Learning Outcomes***
Statements of what the student will be able to do upon successfully completing the Program. The statements articulate outcomes in the areas of 1) knowledge; 2) skills; and 3) dispositions and habits of mind.
- Step 3** ***Curricular Cohesiveness***
How well does your curriculum address the learning goals?
Do students have ample opportunity to study and practice the learning goals repeatedly and intensively?
- Step 4** ***Strategies***
Determine the assessment strategies that will be used to understand how programs are working and to determine whether they are contributing to student growth and development. Establish the level of expected performance and decide on a schedule for collection of evidence. Utilize multiple measures of learning. Select methods most suited for your discipline.
- Step 5** ***“Close the loop.” Interpret and Share Results.***
How will the information be used to make program improvements? Establish communication channels to share information.

