

Syracuse University

Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment

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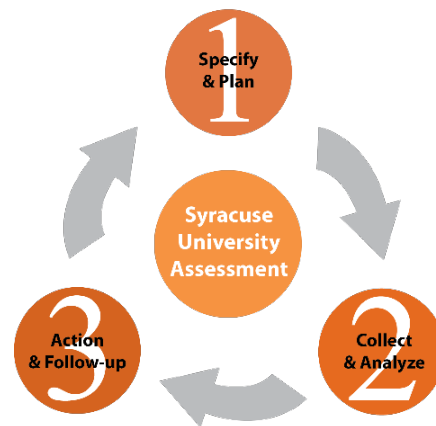
August 2017

Academic Program Assessment Overview

Assessment Process

Syracuse University’s process for conducting student learning outcomes assessment at the academic program level is organized into three phases:

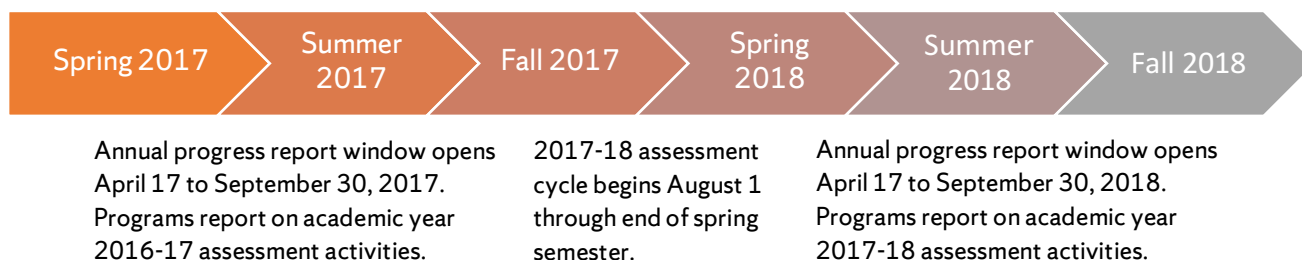
- **Phase 1—Specify and Plan:** Develop student learning outcomes to describe what students will know or be able to do at the end of the academic program. For each outcome, identify direct and indirect measures that provide evidence of whether the outcome is achieved and define criteria used to determine success.
- **Phase 2—Collect and Analyze:** Collect data for measures specified in Phase 1. Analyze and interpret results.
- **Phase 3—Action and Follow-up:** Indicate actions to be taken and how faculty know the actions made a difference. After actions are implemented, determine and document impact(s).



Assessment Expectations

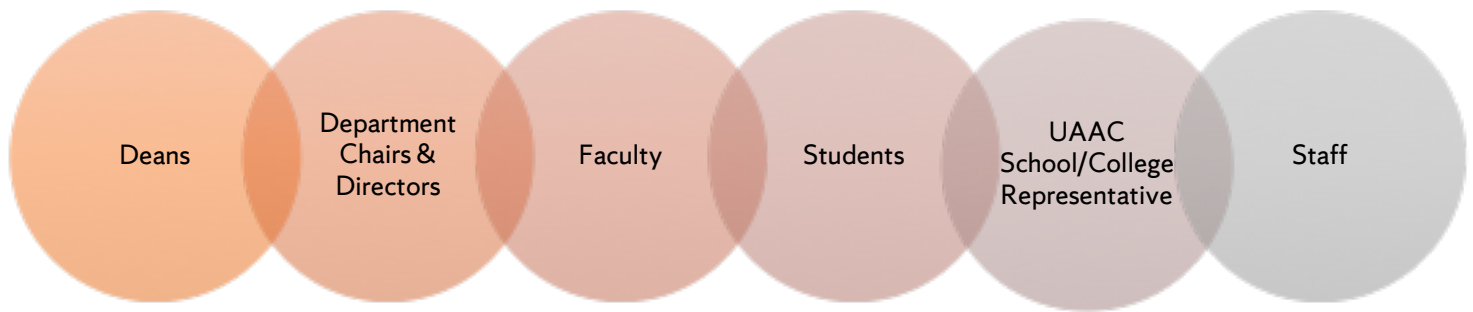
| Element | SU Expectation |
|---------------------------|---|
| Student Learning Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academic program has clear statements of essential student learning outcomes that are consistent with the institutional and school/college missions and important in the discipline or field. • The curriculum map demonstrates how the student learning outcomes are addressed across the curriculum. |
| Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment measures are clearly linked to student learning outcomes. • At least one direct measure and one indirect measure (or two direct measures) are used. |
| Criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria identify levels of success that the program is striving to achieve. • A criterion is identified for each measure. |
| Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results are consistent with information provided for measures and criteria. • Evidence of student learning useful for decision-making is collected from at least two measures. |
| Interpretation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on student learning is analyzed and summarized by faculty. • In addition to discussing student work that has met the criteria for success, faculty consider student work that has not met the criteria. |
| Action and Follow-Up | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment results inform faculty decisions about the academic program. • Records related to any actions are maintained to document the process. • Implemented actions are assessed in subsequent assessment cycles. |
| Sustaining Assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academic program sustains a well-designed and manageable assessment plan and process to inform decision-making. • Processes to assess the academic program are routinely conducted and documented by faculty. • The entire set of program student learning outcomes are assessed over a four-year assessment cycle. |

Assessment Timeline



School/College Roles in the Assessment Process¹

Syracuse University strives to develop and maintain meaningful and sustainable assessment processes to support and improve student learning. Several school/college stakeholders have roles and responsibilities in this process. All stakeholders' investment and participation in the assessment process is key to our success.



Deans

- Communicate the value of assessment to the school/college.
- Identify, establish, and sustain the school/college's commitment to assessment.
- Incorporate student learning, student needs, and operational goals into a school/college assessment plan.
- Establish a school/college wide committee responsible for assessment (can be the curriculum committee).
- Act on assessment results.

Department Chairs & Directors

- Lead the department assessment efforts.
- Collaborate with faculty and administrators to document learning outcomes assessment.
- Align courses and learning outcomes with program and institutional goals.
- Systematically collect, assess, and reflect on assessment results.
- Act on assessment results.

Faculty

- Participate in assessment activities such as develop student learning outcomes, develop rubrics, collect student work, participate in norming sessions, discuss results, and implement actions.
- When requested, provide course level measures and/or data.
- Communicate program learning outcomes and course objectives to students.
- Act on assessment results.

Students

- Engage in assessment-related activities (e.g., surveys, course evaluations, focus groups), to the best of their ability.
- Provide feedback to faculty and staff on assessment activities.
- Serve on assessment committees.

University Assessment & Accreditation Committee (UAAC) School/College Representative

- Advise the UAAC on assessment and accreditation activities in the school/college.
- Communicate information to academic programs and school/college leaders to guide assessment activities used to support and improve teaching/learning.
- Identify strengths and limitations of current assessment practices in the school/college.

Staff

- Provide support to schools/colleges on all assessment activities.
- Facilitate program and institutional level assessment planning, implementation, reflection, and data informed decision-making.

¹ Adapted from University of Hawaii at Manoa. *The Wheel of Program Assessment*. Retrieved August 7, 2017 from <https://manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/handouts/index.htm>.

Systematic Assessment: The Assessment and Action Plan (AAP)

- The assessment and action plan template provides a structure for documenting student learning outcomes and monitoring progress towards achieving the outcomes. The plan includes each component of the University’s three-phase assessment process.
- Information presented in the template includes measurable student learning outcomes; concrete measures and criteria; specific results, interpretation, and actions taken to enhance or improve student learning.
- Assessment results are used by faculty to identify action areas and guide decision-making at the program level. Faculty should meet at least once annually to have program level assessment conversations and update the program’s assessment and action plan.
- The assessment and action plan is not used to evaluate individual students, faculty, or staff, but rather provides a means for faculty to reflect on the program’s student learning outcomes and their own pedagogy.

| PHASE 1 | | | PHASE 2 | | PHASE 3 | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student Learning Outcomes At the end of the program, what will students know or be able to do? | Measures What direct and indirect assessment measures will be used? | Criteria How will competency be determined? | Results What was learned in the assessment process? | Interpretation What do results mean to the program? | Action Based on the results and interpretation from Phase 2, what action will be taken? | Follow-Up What has been the impact of the action taken? |

Systematic Assessment: The Curriculum Map

- A curriculum map demonstrates the degree to which student learning outcomes are addressed in the courses and learning experiences that comprise the curriculum.
- The rating scale represents a continuum from the beginning of the curriculum to the end of the student’s experience in the academic program and shows how learning outcomes are introduced, practiced/reinforced, or fully realized.

| | Course # | Course # | Course # | Course # |
|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Learning Outcome 1 | | | | |
| Learning Outcome 2 | | | | |
| Learning Outcome 3 | | | | |

Systematic Assessment: The Annual Assessment Progress Report (APR)

- Results of assessment activities for each academic program are documented in the annual assessment progress report, which includes an updated assessment and action plan.
- The reporting window for the 2016-17 academic year is April 17 to September 30, 2017. Syracuse University expects each academic program to provide a progress report by September 30.
- Qualtrics is being used to collect the progress reports during the current reporting cycle.
- Syracuse University is in the process of transitioning to an online system, Taskstream/Tk20. The tool provides organizational support for assessment and accreditation efforts. The system includes tools that allow the University to create an integrated, streamlined picture of campus efforts.



Assessment and Action Plan Checklist

1
Specify
& Plan

Develop five to seven student learning outcomes that describe what students will know or be able to do by the end of the academic program.

Create a curriculum map to show how the student learning outcomes are addressed in the curriculum and where direct measures may be obtained.

Identify at least two measures for each student learning outcome (either one direct measure and one indirect measure or two direct measures).

Establish criteria for each identified measure indicating how the academic program's competency will be determined.

Periodically set aside a formal time to review the Phase 1 components (student learning outcomes, measures, and criteria) and update or revise as necessary.

Designate a person to lead the implementation of the assessment and action plan and submit the annual progress report.

Provide faculty members with access to an updated copy of the assessment and action plan and curriculum map.

2
Collect
& Analyze

For direct measures, designate faculty from selected course(s) to collect data/information. Collected data should relate specifically to the student learning outcome(s) being assessed.

Collect data/information from designated indirect measures.

Build time into regular faculty meetings for program level assessment conversations. Keep meeting minutes.

When reviewing the data from direct and indirect measures, consider:

The *strengths* and *weaknesses* observed across the selected measure(s) related to the student learning outcome being assessed.

Discuss how the academic program may be improved and develop plans for how recommendations or actions will be implemented.

3
Action
& Follow-up

Determine and document the impact of actions implemented previously.

Update the assessment and action plan document and submit the annual assessment progress report.

Sustain a well-designed and manageable assessment plan and process to inform decision-making.

Additional Resources

The Assessment Working Team is available for consultation and can work with faculty to develop and implement assessment and action plans. Contact Jerry Edmonds, Assistant Provost, Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, at assessment@syr.edu for more information. You can also visit our website, assessment.syr.edu, for information, announcements, and resources on assessment and institutional effectiveness.

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