Assessment Process
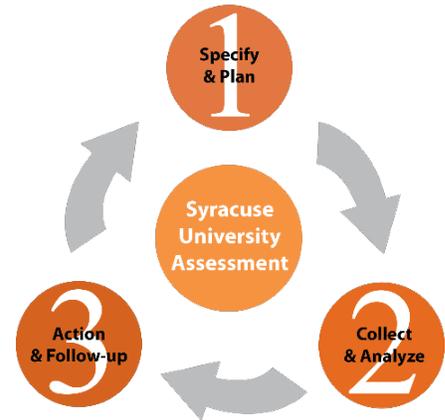
Syracuse University's process for conducting functional area assessment is organized into three phases:
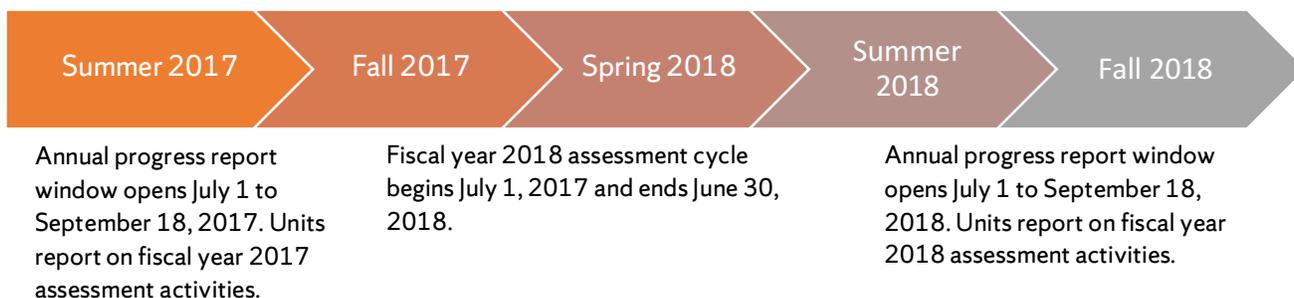
- **Phase 1—Specify and Plan**: Identify goals that align with the unit's mission and strategic plan. For each goal, develop specific and measurable objectives and identify associated strategies that detail how the objectives will be achieved. Specify targets to measure each objective's performance.
- **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 to enhance the unit's operations. After actions are implemented, determine and document the impact(s).

Assessment Expectations

Element	SU Expectation
Goals	• Goals are consistent with the unit's mission and embedded in the strategic plan. • Two to four goal statements that are broadly stated, meaningful, achievable, and provide a framework for identifying operationalized objectives.
Objectives	• Objectives state what the unit strives to accomplish to achieve the goal and are focused on efficiency, effectiveness, and impact. • Objectives are specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time bound. • At least two clear objectives are identified per goal.
Strategies (Actions)	• Strategies represent the impact and value of processes used and services offered by the unit. • Strategies are actions units undertake to achieve objectives. • Two or more strategies for each objective are listed.
Targets (formerly known as KPI)	• Targets are criteria focused on the impact of objectives. • At least one target to measure each objective's performance is listed. • A target should include three aspects: a *level* (e.g., prior year metrics or baseline data), a *subject/object* (e.g., students, faculty, staff, report, or satisfaction level), and a *modifier* (e.g., percentage increase, decrease, maintained performance, or timeframe).
Results	• Target measurements are regularly collected and recorded. • Recorded results include as much detail as possible.
Interpretation	• Collected information is analyzed, discussed, and summarized in detail to assist the unit with informed decision-making about strategies, processes, and services.
Action and Follow-up	• Based on results, staff members suggest and implement changes to improve the functions of the unit's processes/services. • Implemented changes are measured and documented in subsequent assessment cycles.
Sustaining Assessment	• Units sustain a well-designed and manageable assessment plan and process to inform decision-making. • The entire set of objectives are assessed over a four-year assessment cycle. • All unit members participate in the assessment process.

Assessment Timeline

Summer 2017 ▸ **Fall 2017** ▸ **Spring 2018** ▸ **Summer 2018** ▸ **Fall 2018**

Annual progress report window opens July 1 to September 18, 2017. Units report on fiscal year 2017 assessment activities.

Fiscal year 2018 assessment cycle begins July 1, 2017 and ends June 30, 2018.

Annual progress report window opens July 1 to September 18, 2018. Units report on fiscal year 2018 assessment activities.

Systematic Assessment: The Assessment and Action Plan (AAP)

- The assessment and action template provides a structure for documenting the unit's goals and objectives and monitoring progress towards achieving the them.
- The assessment and action plan is also a key tool to monitor the unit's strategic plan.
- Information presented in the template includes measurable objectives; concrete strategies and targets; specific results, interpretation, and actions taken to guide decision-making at the unit level.
- Assessment results are intended to provide feedback for continuous improvement. The assessment and action plan is not used to evaluate individual faculty or staff.
- Faculty/staff should meet at least once annually to have unit level assessment conversations and update the unit's assessment and action plan. Assessment provides a means for faculty/staff to reflect on the goals, objectives, and their own practices.

PHASE 1				PHASE 2		PHASE 3	
Goals What do you strive to accomplish?	**Objectives** What objectives will be measured?	**Strategies** How will the objective be met?	**Targets** How will success be determined?	**Results** What was learned in the assessment process?	**Interpretation** What do the results mean to the area?	**Action** How will results be used to make improvements?	**Follow-Up** What has been the impact of the action taken?

Systematic Assessment: The Annual Assessment Progress Report (APR)

- Results of assessment activities for each functional area are documented in the annual assessment progress report, which includes an updated assessment and action plan.
- The reporting window for the 2017 fiscal year is July 1 to September 18, 2017. Syracuse University expects each functional unit to provide a progress report by September 18.
- 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.

taskstream | Tk20

Additional Resources

The Assessment Working Team is available for consultation and can work with units to develop and implement their assessment and action plans. Contact Gerald 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.