



**OFFICE OF THE PROVOST**

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

*Office of Assessment, Accreditation and Program Review*

# **Assessment of Student Learning Procedure Manual 2020 – 2021**

## CONTACTS

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## INTRODUCTION

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Assessment of student learning is a systematic process to collect and analyze information to improve student learning in both academic and co-curricular programs. The assessment process is essential to effective teaching and learning. It enables educators to measure the effectiveness of their teaching by linking student performance to specific learning outcomes. As a result, educators are better able to reflect on their teaching practices, and make adjustments to their pedagogy to best support student learning.

The purpose of the assessment of student learning is to ensure that the University of Toledo's faculty and staff are continuously improving their academic and co-curricular programs through ongoing reflection of student performance based on an established set of student learning outcomes, aligned with observable metrics. Are we teaching what we think we are teaching? Are students learning what they are supposed to be learning? Is there a way to teach the subject better, thereby promoting better learning?

## SCOPE

The scope of the assessment of student learning includes:

- Academic degree major and certificate programs
- Core curriculum program
- Academic and student support service units responsible for co-curricular learning
- Colleges
- Divisions responsible for co-curricular learning

## STRUCTURE

Assessment of student learning at The University of Toledo is structured as follows:

All academic programs, including the core curriculum, and student support service units offering co-curricular learning experiences develop and maintain:

- (a) An assessment plan that defines the expected program learning outcomes; appropriate evaluation methods or metrics to assess these outcomes, and performance targets. This document is stored in the online assessment tracking tool, and is made available to the public via the following website: <https://www.utoledo.edu/aapr/Plans.html>. Programs and service units update the document on an as needed basis, and/or at the direction of the University Assessment Committee.
- (b) A current curriculum map aligning program learning outcomes to institutional student learning outcomes, identifying the specific courses that support each program learning outcome, and designating which courses include the signature assignments used to assess student learning. The Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Program Review maintains a repository of current curriculum maps.
- (c) An annual assessment report describing the context of the assessments conducted; summarizing the analysis of the data; and describing how the results, as evidence of students' achievement of the expected student learning outcomes have been used to inform and justify decisions to make improvements in the program or service unit. Assessment reports are stored in the assessment tracking tool, and may be reviewed by any faculty or staff member using his/her UTAD credentials to access the system.

All colleges and divisions overseeing offices that offer co-curricular programs develop an annual college/divisional-level assessment report analyzing program level results to help inform college/divisional level decisions related to budget and resource allocation.

## **ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING SCHEDULE**

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The seven-year schedule is developed by the Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Program Review and University Assessment Committee liaison in collaboration with the department chair to best meet the needs of the individual programs in using assessment data to inform the program review process and external accreditation (if applicable).

## **PROCESS**

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The major steps of the assessment of student learning process are outlined below:

### **1. Individual Program Assessment Planning**

The program or service unit develops a comprehensive assessment plan that defines the program learning outcomes (PLOs), including outcomes for co-curricular experiences outside the scope of a credit-bearing course. The outcomes are to be both observable and measurable, and aligned with the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes. The assessment plan also requires programs to define their internal process to review their PLOs, and to describe how their PLOs are communicated and shared with students, faculty, and the community. The plan also requires programs to complete a seven-year cycle that identifies which PLOs are to be the focus for each year, and in which courses or co-curricular experiences those PLOs will be assessed. The seven-year cycle also outlines the reporting schedule designed to best support program review and external accreditation (if applicable). A plan template and corresponding rubric are provided for programs to follow. Externally accredited programs are encouraged to incorporate their accreditation requirements related to the assessment of student learning as part of their plan.

Although the University Assessment Committee does not require assessment plans to be updated annually, programs may adjust their assessment plans as needed. The UAC typically asks the programs to update their plans when adjustments to the assessment process are implemented.

### **2. Individual Program Curriculum Maps**

All programs and service units create and maintain a current curriculum map that outlines the alignment of PLOs with individual courses and/or co-curricular experiences. The maps also identify the courses with key assignments/experiences used for program assessment. A curriculum map template and corresponding rubric are provided for programs to follow. Externally accredited programs with curriculum mapping requirements are encouraged to submit the curriculum map required by their external accreditor in lieu of the template provided by the university.

Curriculum maps are to be reviewed, updated as necessary, and submitted annually as an attached document included in the program/service unit's annual assessment report. The UAC deadline to submit is October 15<sup>th</sup>, however, colleges and service units may set an earlier deadline to meet their individual needs.

### **3. Individual Program Annual Assessment Reporting**

Each program and service unit submits either a UAC Short-Form or UAC Long-Form annually, depending

on their individualized reporting cycle. The forms should be used by program faculty/staff for strategic planning, the submission of future UAC reports, and as evidence to support accreditation and program review. Annual assessment reports are to be completed by the individual programs, reviewed by the college/service unit assessment committee (or equivalent), and submitted to the University Assessment Committee through their respective Dean or VP. Reports are due annually to the UAC by October 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### *Short-Form*

The purpose of the short-form assessment report is to identify and describe the programmatic learning outcomes that were assessed during the academic year, and how the results of the analysis of data are being applied to improve programs. The report includes data tables for the curricular and co-curricular program learning outcomes measured during the previous academic year, including the method and procedure for data collection, the expectations for student achievement, and the results. It also includes information related to actions taken to improve the program based on the results, and addresses additional actions taken as a result of the previous year's assessment of student learning.

#### *Long-Form*

The goal of the long-form assessment report is to describe the assessments completed during the past several academic years, and how the results are being applied to improve programs. The form includes data from the immediate past academic year, and from previous short-form assessment reports, allowing faculty and staff to review their data longitudinally. The data tables include the program learning outcomes listed by year, the methods and procedures for data collection, the expectations for student achievement, and an overview of the percentage of students meeting expectations for each outcome.

The results description includes a narrative (both quantitative and qualitative) of the results, comparing past trends, as appropriate; explains how the findings provide the basis for program decision making; and describes the strengths and weaknesses of the assessment methods used. The report also describes actions to be taken based on the results, including target completion dates, person(s) responsible, and necessary resources (if applicable). Based on results, the report also indicates any need to adjust the student learning outcomes statements, and/or the assessment methods/plans. The form also addresses consideration of prior feedback from assessment report reviewers and how assessment results have been/will be used to showcase or promote student learning, and shared with program faculty/staff and other stakeholders.

#### *Core Curriculum*

The purpose of the core curriculum course assessment report is to identify and describe the course learning outcomes aligned with the core curriculum program outcomes that were assessed during the academic year, and how the results of the analysis of data are being applied to improve courses. The report includes information about each course learning outcomes; its alignment with the core curriculum outcomes; how the course learning outcomes were measured during the previous academic year, including the method and procedure for data collection, the expectations for student achievement, and the results. It also includes information related to actions taken to improve the course based on the results, and addresses additional actions taken as a result of the previous year's assessment of student learning. Departments with courses that contribute to the core curriculum submit one assessment report per course. The submission deadline is June 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **4. College/Service Unit Evaluation Reporting**

The goal of the evaluation report is to synthesize the data collected from the individual programs and University of Toledo Assessment of Student Learning Procedure Manual for 2020-21

service units with a college/division. The report summarizes the percentage of programs with established, evolving, or missing data/analysis compiled from the individual short and long form reports from the preceding academic year. It also discusses the overall strengths and weaknesses of the programs, and includes recommendations based on program-level data. College/Service Unit evaluation reports are due annually to the UAC by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **5. Institutional Analysis**

The University Assessment Committee reviews the program and college data and other relevant institutional data to develop a summary letter to the provost that identifies general themes based on the analysis of the data to be used to inform budget and resource allocation decisions.

The Faculty Senate Committee on the Core Curriculum reviews the core curriculum course reports and provides feedback to the Faculty Senate. Their analysis is also shared with the University Assessment Committee.

### **TIMELINE AND DEADLINES**

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*October 15<sup>th</sup>* – Program annual assessment reports and current curriculum maps due to the UAC\*

\*individual colleges and service units may select an earlier deadline to meet the needs of their area.

*November 1<sup>st</sup>* – College/Service Unit evaluation reports due to the UAC

*November-December* – Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Program Review prepares materials for the institutional analysis

*January* – University Assessment Committee completes the institutional analysis

*February/March* – UAC submits summary letter to the Provost for consideration in budget and resource allocation decision-making

*June 15<sup>th</sup>* – Core Curriculum course reports due from contributing departments

*As needed* – UAC presents at Faculty Senate and Graduate Council

## PRIMARY ROLES

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### *Office of the Provost/Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Program Review (OAAPR):*

- Implement and maintain the institutional assessment process in conjunction with the University Assessment Committee
- Provide support to colleges, divisions, Faculty Senate and individual academic and co-curricular programs
- Provide funding for assessment-related professional development for faculty and staff
- Oversight of assessment policy and procedures

### *Colleges/Deans and Vice President/Provosts:*

- Oversight for assessment practices of individual curricular and co-curricular programs
- Report college-level analysis and evaluation of program-level results to help inform college/divisional-level decisions related to budget and resource allocation
- Appoint a representative to serve as the liaison to the University Assessment Committee

### *Academic Programs and Service Units offering co-curricular programs:*

- Carry out individual program assessment processes based on best practices in their disciplines
- Maintain a current assessment plan and curriculum map
- Document their analysis and evaluation of their students' performance, including the context evidence, and justification of program-level decisions informed by assessment results

### *Faculty Senate:*

- Oversight and responsible for the assessment of the core curriculum
- Design and implement the core curriculum assessment process
- Maintain a current assessment plan and curriculum map for the core curriculum
- Ensure that departments contributing courses to the core curriculum
  - (a) carry out course-level assessment processes based on best practices in their discipline
  - (b) submit an annual report to the Faculty Senate and University Assessment Committee
- Appoint a representative to serve as the liaison to the University Assessment Committee

### *University Assessment Committee (UAC):*

- Design and implement the institutional assessment process
- Report institutional-level findings to the Provost for his or her use in decision-making related to budget and resource allocation.

### *University Assessment Committee (UAC) Liaisons:*

- Collect and review individual program assessment plans and reports
- Provide feedback to faculty and staff regarding the quality of their assessment practices
- Submit the college/divisional-level report to the Dean/VP for approval prior to submission to the UAC
- Participate in UAC meetings and sponsored events to represent their college/division's interests

## DEFINITIONS

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*Academic Program:* A formal course of study that leads to a degree or a stand-alone certificate.

*Assessment Plan:* A document that articulates the academic program or service unit's intended student learning outcomes, methods to be used to measure these outcomes, and provides examples of how faculty/staff use the data measured to impact decisions to improve student learning.

*Assessment Report:* An annual report from an academic program or service unit that describes the student learning outcomes measured during the past year, the findings from those assessments, and how the specific results were used to make decisions and improvements related to student learning.

*Core Curriculum Assessment Report:* An annual report from a department teaching a course(s) in the core curriculum that describes the student learning outcomes measured during the past year, the findings from those assessments, and how the specific results were used to make decisions and improvements related to student learning.

*Co-Curricular Program:* Intentionally designed learning opportunities sponsored by the University of Toledo that fall outside of the scope of a credit-bearing course. They are purposefully aligned to, and support student development in, one or more of the institutional student learning outcomes (ISLO). Each academic program and service unit that offers co-curricular programming is responsible for: (a) determining the program's alignment with the ISLOs; and (b) assessing and reporting the program's impact on students' learning.

*Service Unit:* An organization that offers co-curricular learning opportunities in fulfillment of the University's mission, but does not offer credit-bearing courses that lead to an academic degree or certificate. (i.e. Student Affairs, Library)

*Student Learning Outcomes:* Statements that describe the desired knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits of mind that students take with them from a learning experience- what students should know, think, and be able to do upon completion of an academic or co-curricular course, program, or degree. Student learning outcomes are categorized at three distinct levels:

- Institutional student learning outcomes are statements of the general knowledge and skills that all graduates should be able to demonstrate at the time of graduation, regardless of academic program of study.
- Program learning outcomes indicate intended learning at the conclusion of an academic or co-curricular program.
- Course learning outcomes describe what students should be able to do upon successful completion of the course.