

UWG PROCEDURE NUMBER: 1.4.1, Assessment

Authority: UWG POLICY 1.4 (Institutional Assessment)

The Chief Institutional Research Officer, pursuant to the authority of UWG Policy 1.4, establishes the following procedures on Assessment:

A. Definitions

1. **Academic Programs** - as defined by the University System of Georgia Degrees and Majors Authorized (DMA) list of active offerings.
2. **Academic Program Operational Outcomes** - objective indicators of academic programs including data on enrollment, retention, degrees awarded, job/graduate school placement, post-graduation earnings, and employer evaluations, among other data points.
3. **Academic Program Student Learning Outcomes** - clear, concise, and measurable statements of the specific knowledge and/or skill which students should be able to demonstrate a level of mastery upon completion of a program of study.
4. **Administrative Units** - as depicted in the organizational charts located in the current UWG Fact Book, including UWG Academic Colleges and Departments.
5. **Assessment** - a systematic study designed to collect data to identify and implement modifications in service delivery aimed at improving effectiveness, efficiency, quality, and customer satisfaction.
6. **Assessment Measures & Methodology** - procedures and tools used to collect and analyze assessment data.
7. **Assessment Liaison** – University staff or faculty member designated by the department or unit to coordinate and serve as the main point-of-contact for all assessment activities.
8. **Assessment Timeline** - staggered, annual reporting schedule as determined by the reporting units.
9. **Curriculum and Assessment Map** - depicts the curriculum used by academic programs to impart student learning outcomes and illustrates where each outcome is assessed.
10. **Improvement Plan** - specific actions identified in the analysis of assessment data designed to address areas of focus.
11. **Institutional Strategic Plan** - the current UWG strategic plan as promulgated by the University President.
12. **Key Performance Indicators** - specific data points that encapsulate administrative unit performance.
13. **Success Criteria** – pre-defined benchmark measurement associated with unit and program outcomes used to provide context to interpretations and analyses of assessment data.
13. **University Assessment Committee (UAC)** – an advisory committee that provides guidance and recommendations concerning university assessment; ensures compliance with all applicable SACSCOC

standards and requirements; examines and provides feedback on university assessment for the purpose of continuous improvement; and oversees the implementation of these procedures.

B. Procedures for Annual Assessment

1. General Information

- a) All academic programs and administrative units are responsible for annual assessments.
- b) All academic programs and administrative units must designate an Assessment Liaison to serve as the coordinator and primary point-of-contact for all assessment activities for the unit/department.
 - a. All units must complete the official Assessment Liaison Assignment form (ASSES-01), and submit to the Director of Assessment when a new unit or program is formed, or when there is a change in the designee.
 - b. The Director of Assessment will maintain a complete list of all Assessment Liaisons for the institution.
- c) Administrative directives may be dictated to units periodically. When these directives are added, unit assessments must incorporate those types of modifications into existing assessment activities.

2. Assessment Process

The process of assessment has seven, interrelated steps.

Step 1. Develop appropriate outcomes. Outcome statements are clear, concise, and measurable.

- a. Academic Programs establish a set (number varies by discipline and degree level) of program-level student learning outcome statements (SLO).
- b. Academic Programs also identify three to five operational outcomes.
- c. Administrative Units define three to five outcomes that are key indicators of unit performance.

Step 2. Link each of the previously identified outcomes to the corresponding part(s) of the Institution's Strategic Plan and other applicable divisional strategic plans. Many activities support more than one strategic directive.

Step 3. Determine measures and methods appropriate to the assessment of each outcome. Define each outcome in terms of how it will be measured, the tools used to gather and measure the data, and the procedures related to data collection and analysis. Measures and methods should be closely aligned and reasonably rigorous.

Step 4. Define a success criterion. A success criterion is a pre-defined benchmark measurement and is subject to continuous revision based on assessment results. It is stated in terms of the measurement associated with each outcome.

Step 5. Collect assessment data. Data generated from the assessment methods are gathered and maintained in a manner that facilitates analysis.

Step 6. Interpret the data and use results. Explanation of the assessment data that includes descriptions of trends, annual differences, successes, and deficiencies in achievement as related to benchmark measurements. The interpretation builds on prior assessments by incorporating an analysis of the effect of previously implemented improvement plans on current year assessment data. Findings from the analysis also identify other potential areas for improvement.

Step 7. Provide an improvement plan. Specific actions the unit initiates to address areas of improvement identified in the analysis of data are stated as an improvement plan. The improvement plan provides a framework for the analysis of subsequent data.

3. Assessment Timeline

Assessment is on an annual cycle using a staggered reporting schedule that corresponds to the operations of different units. Specifically, the timeline is created to reflect the time data collected in the assessment is available, current, and actionable. The due date reflects the date units are to have completed their assessment reports and submitted them to IEA. Due dates by functional area are:

January 15: Group A*: Information Technology Services; University Advancement; President's Division; Student Affairs and Enrollment Management – *(Select Offices)*

March 15: Group B*: Student Affairs and Enrollment Management – *(Select Offices)*

October 15: Group C*: Student Affairs and Enrollment Management – *(Select Offices)*

November 15: Group D*: Academic Affairs; Business and Finance; Student Affairs and Enrollment Management – *(Select Offices)*

***For more information, please see the University Assessment website**

C. Assessment of New Academic Programs and Administrative Units

1. General Information

Assessment plans need to be integrated with the creation of new academic programs or administrative units. Annual assessment is expected to be completed on schedule after one year from inception. Approval for the assessment rests with assessment leaders as determined by the Chief Institutional Research Officer.

2. Academic Programs

As part of the formal proposal for a new degree program, it is required that all proposals include a plan for assessment. Specific information on requirements can be found in the official proposal form provided within the Academic Affairs division. However, as a general rule, all proposals will include the following information:

- a. Student Learning Outcomes and/or Operational Outcomes.
- b. Institutional Strategic Plan connection.
- c. A description of the intended measures and methodology used in the assessment.
- d. A Curriculum and Assessment Map (*the template and example of a completed map can be found on the University Assessment website.*)

3. Administrative Units

Within 90 days of inception, new administrative units are responsible for proposing a plan for assessment. The proposals will include the following information:

- a. Key performance indicators reflecting the unit's primary purpose(s).
- b. Institutional Strategic Plan connection.
- c. A description of the intended measures and methodology to be used in the assessment.

Proposals will be reviewed by the University Assessment Committee who will provide feedback to the unit. Official approval will be given by the division head.

D. Modifications to Existing Assessments

1. General Information

Academic programs and administrative units are expected to review the outcomes and methods periodically to maintain appropriate alignment and rigor. New outcomes and methods are sometimes warranted.

NOTE: With select and extreme exceptions, it is necessary to continue current assessments through to completion, i.e., after the effect of an initiative on an outcome has been determined. Likewise, it is necessary to include baseline measures with new outcome proposals.

2. Academic Programs

Requests for modifications to program learning outcomes and methods should be reported directly to the office of the Provost. New outcome request should include baseline measures.

3. Administrative Units

Requests for modifications to outcomes and methods will be reviewed by the University Assessment Committee who will provide feedback to the unit. Official approval will be given by the division head. Requests for new outcomes should include baseline measures.

E. Retention of Assessment Records

All units of the University must comply with the Records Retention Schedules as set forth by the University System of Georgia and as specified in UWG Policy 8.4, Records and Information Management (RIM). Specific information and examples can be found on the IEA website.

F. Additional Guidelines Published by University Units

Any unit of the University may publish guidelines that address these issues as it applies specifically to its Unit. In the event any Unit specific guideline conflicts with the UWG Policy or Procedures 1.4.1, the latter will control.

Issued by the Chief Institutional Research Officer, the 13 day of April, 2018.



Signature, Chief Institutional Research Officer

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