



ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

MESSIAH COLLEGE

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING MANUAL

A Guide to Assessment

Third Edition

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Overview

What is the assessment of student learning at Messiah?

The assessment of student learning is a process of

- Creating clear, measurable expectations of the knowledge, skills, and beliefs our students should gain by completing the required curriculum;
- Ensuring that we give our students adequate instructional opportunities that will help them achieve these outcomes;
- Executing a plan to gather, analyze, and interpret evidence of student learning to determine how well their performance meets our expectations;
- Using this information to take strategic action to improve student learning.

(Suskie, *Assessing Student Learning*, 2004)

Who does it?

All Messiah University educators should be aware and involved in the assessment of student learning, and we play various collaborative roles to ultimately ensure our students are achieving the outcomes we expect from a Messiah education. Specifically,

- Department chairs and program directors lead curricular and co-curricular educators in creating departmental/program assessment plans, collecting and analyzing annual assessment data, and setting and executing action plans to improve student learning.
- School deans ensure their departments/programs are maintaining effective assessment plans and practices by co-scoring an annual assessment rubric for each major housed in their school, as well as helping department chairs prioritize and execute strategic improvements in student learning outcomes assessment.
- The associate dean of general education works with all educators teaching in the QuEST curriculum to report assessment outcomes on QuEST course objectives each semester. The office of general education aggregates and reports results on outcomes annually.
- The assessment of student learning committee (ASLC), with broad representation from educators across campus, educates committee members on assessment best practices, develops strategic plans to improve campus assessment efforts, and approves assessment plans accompanying curricular proposals.
- The director and assistant director of assessment provide resources and education to deans, chairs, and educators in order to support the ongoing improvement of assessment efforts. The director produces an annual report on assessment efforts and works with the Provost's Cabinet to make strategic improvements.

How does assessment relate to your department's curriculum and to the institutional mission?

Each academic department maintains curricula, which students complete in order to earn majors, minors, and concentrations in an academic field of study. While individual instructors gain helpful information about learning gains in their own courses, departmental assessment of student learning answers the question, "How do we know students are achieving the outcomes we expect from the required curriculum?" Departments find answers to this question by ensuring that they

- articulate clear program level learning objectives that express the knowledge and skills that a graduate of the program/major should be able to achieve
- identify curricular requirements in which students have adequate opportunities to gain the stated learning outcomes (curriculum mapping)
- select representative samples of the learning within the curriculum (i.e. measures) that provide evidence of the learning
- collectively review evidence of learning, interpret the results, and make strategic plans to improve learning outcomes by making changes in instruction, assignments, or curriculum

Likewise, students gain essential knowledge and skills by completing the QuEST general education curriculum and by participating in co-curricular programming. It is critical to know what students gain from their educational experience as a whole, and it is critical for educators to understand how their contribution relates to the other components of a Messiah education and our institutional learning outcomes. As a result, we ensure that all of our program level learning outcomes (in academic majors, QuEST, and Student Affairs) contribute in specific ways to our stated institutional learning outcomes. The undergraduate learning outcomes (ULOs) are as follows, and [pages 3-8](#) of the Assessment of Student Learning Resource Handouts provides a matrix explaining the specific contributions of majors, general education, and the co-curriculum to these outcomes.

1. **Foundations for Learning:** Students will develop skills common to the liberal arts and sciences: research, analysis, reflection, and communication
2. **Breadth and depth of knowledge:** Students will develop knowledge common to the liberal arts and sciences in the fields of arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. Students will also develop specialized knowledge and disciplinary expertise
3. **Faith knowledge & application:** Students will develop informed and mature convictions about Christian faith and practice
4. **Specialized skills and scholarship:** Students will become proficient in the scholarship of their discipline and demonstrate specialized skills needed to pursue a career and/or graduate school
5. **Self-Awareness:** Students will gain awareness of identity, character, and vocational calling

6. **Social responsibility:** Students will demonstrate a commitment to service, reconciliation, and justice, and respond effectively and ethically to the complexities of an increasingly diverse and interdependent world.

Upon completion of their degree, Messiah University graduate students will achieve the following Graduate Learning Outcomes (GLOs):

1. Exhibit mastery of specialized knowledge
2. Perform scholarly activities informed by professional standards.
3. Demonstrate mastery of competencies required in their field of study
4. Articulate how Christian faith and principles inform their vocation
5. Apply ethical principles relevant to their profession
6. Demonstrate intercultural competence

What Does the University Expect?

Academic Majors

The University expects every academic major to develop a plan for assessing student learning, and to work toward improving learning outcomes on an ongoing basis alongside other important department goals. Department assessment expectations are outlined in the assessment evaluation rubric ([Appendix A](#)), and this rubric is used to evaluate department assessment annually. The rubric sets the standard for assessment plans and processes, and it evaluates department progress in the following areas:

- **Process:** The department is expected to maintain a complete assessment plan, and to collect assessment data as prescribed by the plan. The department is also expected to revise the plan in accordance with any curricular changes that affect program learning outcomes or any measures within the plan.
- **Engagement and Dissemination:** The department should aim to engage all relevant stakeholders (students, employers, alumni) in the creation/revision, implementation, analysis, and/or improvement processes associated with the assessment plan. For suggestions on how to improve engagement with stakeholders and dissemination of assessment results, please see [pages 1-2](#) of the Assessment of Student Learning Resource Handouts.
- **Student Learning Objectives:** Program learning objectives should lead with an active, measurable learning verb, and state clearly the knowledge and skills a graduate of the major should be able to attain as a result of program completion. Departments should have about 5-7 program learning objectives. For a bank of active learning verbs, see [page 9](#) of the Assessment of Student Learning Resource Handouts, and for directions on crafting effective program learning objectives see [pages 10-14](#).
- **Measures:** Each program learning objective should be assessed using multiple, direct measures (actual evidence of student achievement). The measures should align well with the stated learning objective (for instance, if students should be able to “describe” content, we should assess the objective using a measure in which students demonstrate their ability to describe). Departments also benefit from the strategic use of indirect measures, such as a senior survey, alumni or employer advisory board. Each assessment plan should incorporate a variety of assessment measures, rather than relying heavily on one measure or one type of measure. For more information on how to select assessment measures, see [pages 15-18](#) of the Assessment of Student Learning Resource Handouts.
- **Targets:** Targets are meant to set a bar for expected student achievement; they should be challenging yet achievable. Targets should not be arbitrarily chosen, but instead should reflect past student achievement and professional standards. Targets should be set in order to inspire program improvement. For guidelines on setting assessment targets, see [pages 19-20](#) of the Assessment of Student Learning Resource Handouts.

- **Timeline:** Timeline refers to the frequency with which departments collect and analyze assessment data. Departments should collect all assessment data prescribed by the assessment plan at least once within a three year period to allow for two data points of reflection before every program review, which occurs once every seven years.
- **Action plans:** Departments are expected to develop action plans to improve student learning on an annual basis, and then work throughout the year to execute those plans. Action plans should be driven by evidence of learning outcomes, they should be specific, and they should be feasible. Plans need to be recorded in the University's assessment management system and included in department annual goals. The department should evaluate the effectiveness of the action plans it implements in order to assess whether its efforts improved learning outcomes.

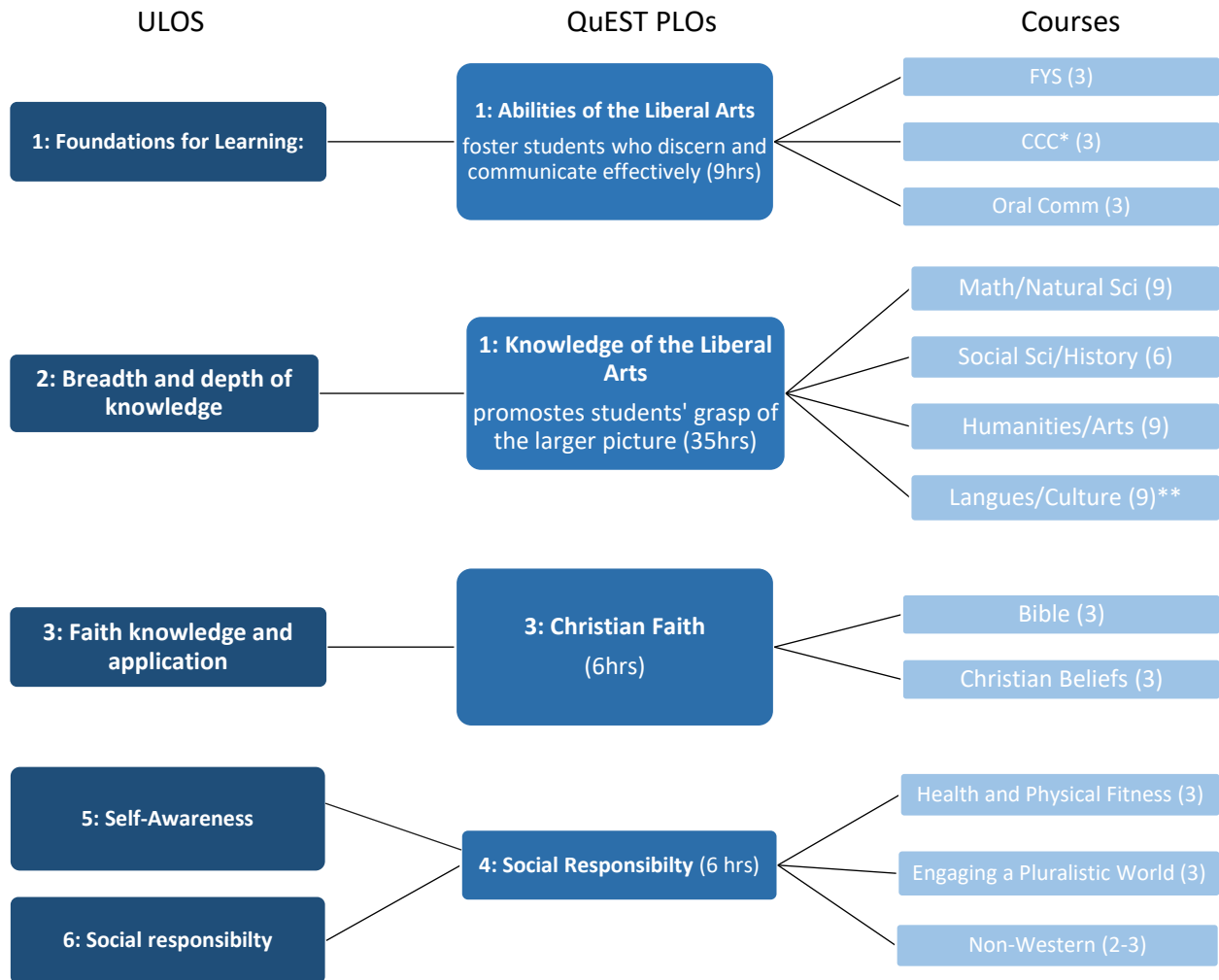
QuEST: Qualities Essential for Student Transformation

(General Education)

Each year the Office of General Education and Common Learning establishes the objective faculty will assess for each course and communicates that information to all faculty during May development week. The expectation is that faculty teaching in General Education will assess and share the resulting data for each QuEST course they teach. Faculty select the assessment measure most suited to their course: paper, assignment, test question, etc. All faculty (both FT and adjunct) teaching QuEST courses assess the objective as assigned in May Development. The Office of General Education and Common Learning emails reminders to QuEST faculty about the expected assessment data in the beginning, middle and end of the semester.

A current list of the QuEST objectives can be found on our messiah.edu/quest homepage under the curriculum tab or you can click [here](#).

Curriculum Mapping for QuEST



*CCC also provides content foundation for QuELO 4: Social Responsibility

**CCS also provides content foundation for QuELO 4: Social Responsibility

Student Success and Engagement

Division of Student Success and Engagement

The Division of Student Success and Engagement (SSE) involves assessment of the following departments: Agape Center, Athletics, Career and Professional Development Center, University Ministries, Engle Health and Counseling Center, Intercultural Office, Residence Life, Student Involvement and Leadership Programs, Student Conduct and Fitness Center.

Program-Level Outcomes and Annual Goals

SSE has six program learning outcomes (dig deep, be rooted, be cultivated, branch out, be strong, bear fruit) that map to Messiah's Undergraduate Learning Outcomes. Each of the six SSE outcomes connect to aspects of Messiah University's mission, our Undergraduate Learning Outcomes, and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). Each SSE department has established specific student learning outcomes that connect to the undergraduate learning outcomes and the SSE outcomes for each educational program housed in SSE. The Division collects, analyzes, and publishes data annually to inform improvements for student learning and the student experience.

A list of SSE outcomes and the most recent SSE Annual Report can be found on our messiah.edu Student Success and Engagement homepage under the student learning outcomes tab or you can click [here](#).

Mapping for Student Success and Engagement

#	SSE Outcome	Description of Outcome	University Mission	Foundational Values	Under-graduate Learning Outcomes	CAS
1	Cognitive Development DIG DEEP	Critical thinking, reflective thinking, effective reasoning, intellectual flexibility, emotional/cognition integration, identity/cognition integration	Maturity of Intellect	1	Foundations for Learning (1)	1,2
2	Identity Development and Spiritual Formation BE ROOTED	Formation of a maturing sense of self, personal attributes such as identity, self esteem, confidence, ethics and integrity, maturing sense of self in relationship to God resulting in spiritual practices, character-building, reconciliation, service, and intentional growth	Maturity of Christian faith and character	1,2,4,5	Faith Knowledge & Application (3)	3
3	Cultural Competence BE CULTIVATED	Understand, value and appreciate human differences, develop cultural competency, understand and pursue reconciliation	Reconciliation in church and society	2,3,5	Social Responsibility (6)	5
4	Leadership and Civic Engagement BRANCH OUT	Sense of civic responsibility, commitment to service, effective in leadership, commitment to living in community	Maturity of character, preparation for lives of service and leadership	3,4,5	Self Awareness (5)	4,5
5	Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Competence BE STRONG	Realistic self appraisal and self understanding, personal goal setting, meaningful relationships, interdependence, collaboration, ability to work with people different from self	Maturity	2,3,4	Self Awareness (5)	3,4
6	Practical Competence BEAR FRUIT	Effective communication, capacity to manage one's personal affairs, economic self-sufficiency and vocational competence, maintain personal health and wellness, prioritize leisure pursuits, living a purposeful and satisfying life	Preparation for life in church and society	2,4	Self Awareness (5)	6

What is the University's Policy on Assessment Plans and What Programs Do We Assess?

Academic Programs

1. General principle: When program development is incremental: assessment grid development will be incremental as well, comparable to level of program development.
2. Approval Protocol
 - a. Department chair works with the dean to develop assessment grid, in conjunction with the Director of Assessment and the Director of Curriculum/Assistant Director of Assessment.
 - b. ASLC scores assessment grid and submits to Director of Assessment. A grid must be assessed as at least a 3 in each of the relevant areas before it can be moved on to the curriculum Committee, specifically: learning objectives, measures, targets, and timeline.
 - c. If the score is less than a 3 in any of the relevant areas, the Director of Academic Assessment works with the Dean and chair to improve the plan.
 - d. Once the Director of Assessment verifies that the necessary changes have been made and the grid is scored at least a 3, the grid becomes a part of the full proposal that is approved by the Dean and sent on to the Curriculum Committee/Graduate Council.
3. The process for determining the need for revisions in assessment plan for the revision of current programs.
 - a. Each major has an assessment plan. The assessment plan should adequately evaluate the learning gains students achieve as a result of completing the required curriculum, as well as account for variations in learning outcomes (e.g. tracks, concentrations). Therefore, some curricular revisions to existing majors/programs may have an impact on assessment plans.
 - b. Department chair/program director and dean review curricular changes to evaluate impact on the assessment plan. Proposed curricular changes not accounted for by the existing assessment plan or changes to courses serving as assessment measures will be discussed with the Director of Curriculum. In these situations, revised assessment plans are submitted to ASLC for review and approval.
 - c. ASLC scores the assessment plan and submits to Director of Assessment. A plan must score 3 or higher in each of the relevant areas (i.e. objectives, measures, targets, timeline) before it can move on to the curriculum Committee.
 - d. If the score is less than a 3 in any of the relevant areas, the Director of Assessment works with the Dean and chair to improve the plan.
 - e. Once the Director of Assessment verifies that the necessary changes have been made and the plan is scored at 3 or higher in the relevant areas, the plan

becomes a part of the full proposal that is approved by the Dean and sent on to the Curriculum Committee/Graduate Council.

4. What are the “programs” we assess?
 - a. Each undergraduate major/graduate program will maintain an assessment plan and annually scored rubric for every undergraduate major/graduate degree.
 - b. The size, complexity, and any variations in learning outcomes (e.g. due to tracks/concentrations) should be reflected in the assessment plan in a way that is proportionate to those variations.
 - c. Given the current status of minors institutionally, Deans have the discretion to determine if an assessment plan is required for a minor depending on the number of students in the minor, or whether the minor does not have a related major (e.g. statistics).

Policies

Messiah’s contracted workload expectation for Ranked Faculty involves responsibilities in Teaching, Institutional Service, and Scholarship. Assessment falls under the categories of Teaching and Institutional Service through Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness respectively. Below is an excerpt from the COE Handbook Section Six—Personal Policies: Ranked Faculty, *Part IV: University-Wide Definitions for Teaching, Institutional Service and Scholarship*.

Student Learning: The most important indicator of teaching effectiveness is student learning. Faculty need to be identifying and implementing assessments in their courses that provide useful information about the extent to which students are achieving the full range of assigned course learning objectives in their courses. These assessments need to be high quality in terms of their relevance to course objectives (validity) and their ability to yield trustworthy (reliable) information about student learning. Because a primary purpose of classroom assessment is to inform and improve instruction, faculty need to demonstrate that they are using assessment results to guide their teaching practices.

Institutional Effectiveness involves activities that enhance other departmental, school, or University-wide efforts. Representative examples include:

- (1) Chairing one’s department
- (2) Serving on a departmental or school-wide committee
- (3) Writing a departmental review or accreditation report
- (4) Helping to design and implement a program-level assessment plan

* Refer to the COE Handbook Section Six—Personal Policies: Ranked Faculty, Part III and part IV to read the full policies.

When are Departments Expected to Complete Assessment Activities?

The University operates on an annual assessment cycle. The table below details required assessment activities, who is responsible to complete the activities, and the deadlines for each activity.

Assessment Cycle Timeline

When	Who	What
August/Sept	Director & Assistant Director	Summarize rubric results for Annual Assessment Report Analyze survey and prepare Annual Assessment Report
August/Sept	Deans and Chair	Meet to discuss action plans to address in upcoming academic year
September-May	Chairs	Execute any action plans that resulted from analysis of previous academic year's assessment data
May	Department faculty	Meet to discuss assessment data results and to develop action plans to improve student learning
June 1	Chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete the end-of-year fields in the Assessment Plan form after the department discusses assessment results and creates action plans for upcoming academic year • submit form to dean
July 1	Deans/Assistant Deans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve end-of-year assessment submissions • Score assessment rubrics

Assessment Rubric

Criteria	1	2	3	4
<p>Process</p> <p>Is the plan being implemented faithfully and revised as needed?</p>	Assessment plan is not implemented.	Most aspects of plan are being implemented or all aspects are implemented to some degree.	Assessment plan is fully implemented.	Plan is faithfully executed and modified/evaluated as needed.
<p>Engagement</p> <p>Are all relevant parties are meaningfully involved in the creation/revision, implementation, analysis, interpretation and learning improvement process?</p>	Limited involvement beyond chair/director	All educators contributing to the curriculum are aware of process and results	All educators contributing to the curriculum participate in conversations regarding the use of assessment data to improve student learning	All relevant stakeholders (students, employers, alumni) are meaningfully involved in the creation/revision, implementation, analysis, interpretation, and/or improvement processes associated with this assessment plan.
<p>Program Learning Objectives</p> <p>Are the student learning objectives clear, measurable, aligned with ULOs/GLOs, and representative of the range of learning for that major/program?</p>	Objectives are problematic (vague, abstract, not aligned with ULOs/GLOs) or missing.	Objectives are clear, mostly measurable, partially aligned with ULOs/GLOs.	Objectives are clear, measurable, aligned with ULOs/GLOs, and represent an overview of the knowledge, skills, beliefs, and values that are important for a graduate of this major/program, accounting for variations in learning outcomes due to tracks/concentrations	Objectives are clear, measurable, aligned with ULOs/GLOs, and representative of the range of learning that is important for this program. The learning objectives provide a comprehensive view of the knowledge, skills, beliefs, and values that are important for a graduate of this major/program and accounting for variations in learning outcomes due to tracks/concentrations
<p>Measures</p> <p>Are the instruments used to assess learning relevant for the</p>	Not all objectives have a measure identified. OR	All objectives have at least one direct measure. Measures connect to learning objectives	All objectives have at least one direct measure. Some objectives have multiple measures.	Measures meet all of the following criteria: All objectives have at least one direct measure.

<p>objective? Do measures yield information/data you can use to drive improvement?</p>	<p>Measures do not directly connect to the objectives.</p>	<p>superficially or tangentially and/or include learning other than stated objectives.</p> <p>Relies almost exclusively on the same form of assessment (survey, exam, project).</p> <p>Relies almost exclusively on data from a single source (course, program, activity).</p>	<p>Measures clearly connect to learning objectives.</p> <p>And two of the following four criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives measured more than one point in time (formative). • Indirect measures are used strategically. • Plan incorporates different forms of assessment (survey, exam, project). • Plan incorporates data from a variety of sources (course, program, activity). 	<p>Some objectives have multiple measures.</p> <p>Measures clearly connect to learning objectives.</p> <p>Objectives measured more than one point in time (formative).</p> <p>Indirect measures are used strategically.</p> <p>Plan incorporates different forms of assessment (survey, exam, project).</p> <p>Plan incorporates data from a variety of sources (course, program, activity).</p>
<p>Timeline</p> <p>Is the timeline for data collection manageable with sufficient data points to effectively inform decision making and program review?</p>	<p>Not identified clearly for all measures.</p>	<p>Clearly states semester/year for each objective/measure.</p> <p>Data analysis delayed from data collection.</p> <p>Time between collection points may not facilitate informed decision making.</p>	<p>Clearly stated and manageable schedule.</p> <p>At least two data points for each objective per review cycle.</p>	<p>Timeline for data collection is manageable and allows for continuous improvement with timely and meaningful decision making even before program review.</p>
<p>Targets</p> <p>Are the targets based on professional standards and/or experience with student work? Are</p>	<p>Some targets are missing.</p>	<p>Targets are arbitrarily chosen or reflect minimal expectations.</p>	<p>Targets are challenging and achievable based on prior data, and reflect the level of performance a novice professional knows/can do.</p>	<p>Targets are challenging and achievable.</p> <p>Targets are based on professional standards and/or prior data and experience with student work and</p>

<p>targets challenging and achievable?</p>				<p>reflect the level of performance a novice professional knows/can do.</p> <p>Targets are set at a level to inspire program improvement.</p>
<p>Use of student learning data from prior academic year (action plans and closing the loop)</p> <p>Is the department effectively examining and using assessment data to revise curriculum and pedagogy to support student learning?</p>	<p>Assessment data not collected/analyzed/used for decisions and/or results not documented in AEFIS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Data collected, documented and discussed by department. •Department reviewed confidence in measures and data as sufficient indicators of student performance. •If data indicated changes were needed, action plans were developed in consultation with dean (e.g. improving outcomes, measures, targets, curriculum or pedagogy). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Data collected, documented and discussed by department. •Department and dean confirmed confidence in measures and data as sufficient indicators of student performance. •Action plans (e.g. improving outcomes, measures, targets, curriculum or pedagogy) developed in consultation with dean. •If prior year data warranted action plans, the department implemented the changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Department collected and discussed follow-up data after the implementation of action plans in order to determine whether changes resulted in improvement or whether additional action is necessary, and/or •Data confirms effective curriculum and pedagogy for learning outcomes. <p>*Score of 4 should be assigned only if objectives, measures, targets and timeline all score a 4.</p>
<p>Dissemination</p> <p>Is the department communicating learning objectives, results and improvements related to student learning to a wide audience?</p>	<p>No record of assessment results and changes made as a result of assessment findings.</p>	<p>The department/program retains records of assessment results and positive changes made as a result of assessment findings, and results are entered in assessment software system.</p>	<p>The department/program retains records of assessment results and changes made as a result of assessment findings, results are entered in assessment software system, and assessment results and improvements are publicly posted.</p>	<p>The department/program retains records of assessment results and changes made as a result of assessment findings, and results are entered in assessment software system. Assessment results and improvements are publicly posted and shared proactively with faculty, prospective students, employers and alumni in ways that facilitate their discussion.</p>

A Conceptual Framework for Assessing Institutional Effectiveness

**Preparation, Implementation, and Final Report
for Program Reviews**

Student Success & Engagement

**Prepared by the
Office of Student Affairs**

November 2017

Preparation, Implementation, and Final Report Student Success and Engagement

1. The Nature and Purpose of the Program Review Process

Every seven years, each educational unit will go through the periodical review process. At this time, units review their performance to ensure that the purpose, performance, and effectiveness of each unit are in line with professional standards and Messiah's mission, goals, and expectations and to identify areas and strategies for self-improvement. Each program review is a part of Messiah University's institutional assessment plan as described in the *Conceptual Framework for Assessing Institutional Effectiveness*. All units should acquaint themselves with this document before they begin their program reviews.

2. Program Review Calendar/Timeline [See Attachment A]

- a. The calendar/timeline for a review involves (1) preparing for the review, (2) conducting the review, and (3) completing and submitting a final report.
- b. All program reviews will have a completion date of either October 1 or February 1, and the Design Plan for each review must be approved no later than one year prior to the completion date. Within these two parameters, departments are free to develop their own timelines that fit the departmental rhythms, personnel/personalities, and other departmental responsibilities (e.g., accreditation/self-studies, etc.).

3. Preparing for the Review — The Design Plan [See Attachment B]

- a. Program reviews do not exist in a vacuum. Program reviews are an evaluative and developmental summation of the department's activities, assessment and planning in the previous seven years. Moreover, the program review exists in the context of broader institution goals and strategic planning as well as broader changes in the broader society and culture.
- b. Before a Program Review can begin, the department must prepare and submit a Design Plan for approval. An approved Design Plan indicates that the department is prepared to begin the seven-year Program Review. [See Attachment B for the Design-Plan checklist]
- c. The Provost and Vice Provost/Dean of Students will meet with the director and must approve the final Design Plan before the review can officially begin.

4. Conducting the Review [See Attachment C]

- a. Program reviews are scheduled to take place over a 12-month period, beginning and ending either in October or in February.
- b. In the review the department addresses questions related to Purpose, Programming, Process and Planning.
- c. Each review will involve input from outside consultant
- d. The review results in identification of the unit's strengths and weaknesses with both unit-specific and University-specific recommendations.
- e. The conclusions of the program review will provide the department direction for its next seven years and provide input to the University's ongoing planning and resource allocation process.

5. The Final Report [See Attachment D]

- a. The final report should be no longer than 20 doubled spaced pages with supporting materials exhibited in appendices.
- b. See Attachment D for a template for the final report.

6. Institutional processing of the final report [See Attachment E]

- a. Guidelines for processing the final report are provided in Attachment E

Typical Calendars for Program Reviews: Two Options

Option 1: October Due Date (preferred)

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
a	e	a	p	a	u	u	u	e	c	o	e	a	e	a	p	a	u	u	u	e	e	c	o	e
n	b	r	r	y	n	l	g	p	t	v	c	n	b	r	r	y	n	l	g	p	t	v	c	
Planning and Preparing for Program Review							Design Plan	Conducting the Review: Consultant, Analysis, Assessment, Drawing Conclusions, Writing											Final Report	Institutional Processing: Dean/Provost/University Council				

Option 2: February Due Date

S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A
e	c	o	e	a	e	a	p	a	u	u	u	e	c	o	e	a	e	a	r
p	t	v	c	n	b	r	r	y	n	l	g	p	t	v	c	n	b	r	r
Planning and Preparing			Design Plan	Conducting the Review: Consultant, Analysis, Assessment, Drawing Conclusions, Writing											Final Report	Institutional Processing: Dean/Provost/University Council			

The Design-Plan Checklist

Purpose of the Design-Plan

- The purpose of the Design Plan is to document that the department is ready to begin its review.
- The Design Plan does not constitute an additional layer of work. In essence, the Design Plan is primarily a compilation of preliminary and necessary reflection and decisions that prepares a department for its upcoming review. It pulls together and summarizes material that the department has already developed and should have been maintaining.
- The following checklist indicates the items that need to be finalized prior to the launching of a department review.

Design-Plan Checklist

- The department's mission, student learning outcomes/goals and program assessment grid are in place and updated. (see **Attachment C**)
- In consultation with the Vice Provost/Dean of Students and Provost, any department-specific questions relative to the five assessment dimensions (purpose, programming, process, personnel, and planning) have been identified. This is a crucial step in that it ties the review directly to identifying relevant needs, opportunities and goals in the department and the University.
- The principles and parameters in the Foundational Educational Documents have been identified (e.g., *Principles for the Cocurriculum*, etc.)
- Department-specific benchmarking/peer groups, professional standards, and other relevant evaluative and comparative standards have been identified or established
- In consultation with the Vice Provost/Dean of Students, an external reviewer has been identified, and how the reviewer will be used in the process has been determined and approved by the Vice Provost/Dean of Students.
- The leadership for the review has been identified, and specific tasks have been assigned to members of the unit.
- A department-specific calendar (working timetable) for the review has been developed (i.e., who will be doing what, and when will they be doing it?).
- The budget for the review has been developed and approved by the Vice Provost/Dean of Students.

The completed checklist along with the supporting materials compiled in a folder or notebook is submitted to the Vice Provost/Dean of Students. The Vice Provost/Dean of Students (in consultation with the Provost) is ultimately responsible for determining whether the department is ready to begin its review.

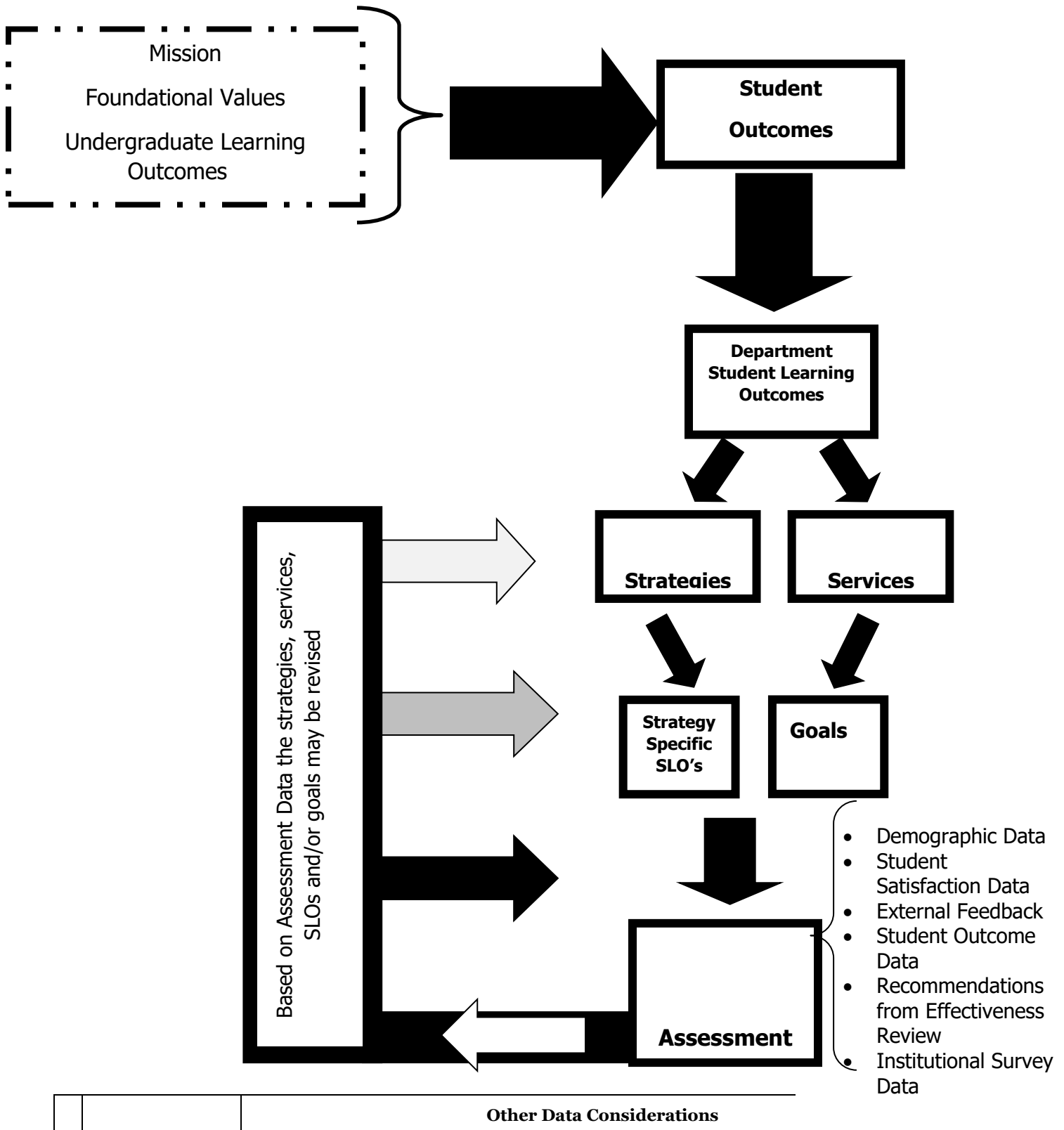
Student Success and Engagement Outcome Mapping

The Division of Student Affairs has established six student outcomes. Each of these outcomes encompasses some aspect of the mission of Messiah University, University-Wide Educational Objectives, and CAS standards. In addition, each department within Student Affairs has established specific student learning outcomes (SLOs) for each educational program they deliver. Annual goals are determined to help departments meet their SLOs. Annual goals are informed by 1) external feedback (another department has indicated a need, i.e., safety reports increased vandalism and seeks our help in reducing this), 2) demographic and student satisfaction data has shown areas of weakness or need, or 3) SLO data has indicated a need to adjust a program/service in order to better attain the outcome. Goals are also established for each service delivered.

Primary Connections to

#	Student Success Outcome	Description of Outcome	University Mission	Foundational Values	Under-graduate Learning Outcomes	CAS
1	Cognitive Development DIG DEEP	Critical thinking, reflective thinking, effective reasoning, intellectual flexibility, emotional/cognition integration, identity/cognition integration	Maturity of Intellect	1	Foundations for Learning (1)	1,2
2	Identity Development and Spiritual Formation BE ROOTED	Formation of a maturing sense of self, personal attributes such as identity, self esteem, confidence, ethics and integrity, maturing sense of self in relationship to God resulting in spiritual practices, character-building, reconciliation, service, and intentional growth	Maturity of Christian faith and character	1,2,4,5	Faith Knowledge & Application (3)	3
3	Cultural Competence BE CULTIVATED	Understand, value and appreciate human differences, develop cultural competency, understand and pursue reconciliation	Reconciliation in church and society	2,3,5	Social Responsibility (6)	5
4	Leadership and Civic Engagement BRANCH OUT	Sense of civic responsibility, commitment to service, effective in leadership, commitment to living in community	Maturity of character, preparation for lives of service and leadership	3,4,5	Self Awareness (5)	4,5
5	Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Competence BE STRONG	Realistic self appraisal and self understanding, personal goal setting, meaningful relationships, interdependence, collaboration, ability to work with people different from self	Maturity	2,3,4	Self Awareness (5)	3,4
6	Practical Competence BEAR FRUIT	Effective communication, capacity to manage one's personal affairs, economic self-sufficiency and vocational competence, maintain personal health and wellness, prioritize leisure pursuits, living a purposeful and satisfying life	Preparation for life in church and society	2,4	Self Awareness (5)	6

SSE Assessment Flowchart



*	Student Satisfaction	In the context of an environment committed to the holistic development of students, it is desired that students are generally satisfied with the content and delivery of programming. Satisfaction data serves the departmental function of informing planners of the perceived reaction to programming initiatives. Data becomes part of a feedback loop that helps shape program elements (delivery style/format/content, etc.). Student satisfaction with programs themselves serves as one piece of assessment.
*	Demographics	It is desired that Student Affairs provide a variety of programming that serves a diverse student body. It is critical that the majority of programming not be focused on and attended by one single group. Demographics (attendance figures; information about those attending) provide information to planners regarding whether the target audience of programming is being reached, and whether or not more attention needs to be given to advertising, use of inducements, content and style of programming in order to correct imbalances or other weaknesses in the demographics. Demographics should help inform decisions on whether to discontinue or enhance a given program.
*	External Factors	It is important to recognize that sometimes events that occur outside the regular rhythm of the academic year in the University community, the nation, or the world will inform programming (i.e., the national elections)
*	Student Affairs Division Wide Assessment Results	Annually the student affairs assessment committee will present data related to one specific Student Affairs learning outcome. This data will allow us to reflect as a division on student learning and determine whether or not we need to make some programmatic adjustments.
*	Institutional Survey Data	Each year the institution participates in institutional surveys that provide information about participation, satisfaction, behaviors and to some extent student learning. It is important for us to consider that data and adjust programming or services accordingly
*	Effectiveness Review	Each department conducts an effectiveness review on a seven-year cycle. Unit managed recommendations usually are a result of the review. These recommendations are important to consider while planning.

Mission and General Department Goals

Each department has an established mission and student learning outcomes that both justify and guide the department's activity. This mission and the accompanying SLO's should be linked to the University's mission, foundational documents, Undergraduate Learning Outcomes and CAS standards. That is achieved through the student affairs outcomes. Below is a generic grid that departments should use in (1) identifying the student affairs outcomes, (2) identifying the dimension of the outcome that is specific to that department, (3) establishing student learning outcomes (SLOs) and (4) developing strategies for achieving these SLOs. This grid will remain fairly static over time, serving as a guide for planning anchored in student learning.

Generic Assessment Grid

1	2	3	4
Student Affairs Student Outcome	Description of Outcome	Department Student Learning Outcomes	Strategies

Description:

Column 1: List the **student success program learning outcome**

Column 2: Include a description of the student affairs outcome (Found on SSE Outcome Grid page 2)

Column 3: Identify the **student learning outcomes** for your department related to a specific student affairs outcome (through the lens of your department) (for example, students will be able to write a professional resume).

Column 4: List the **strategy** for attaining each PLO. **What** educational experience will be offered to encourage students to attain the learning outcomes? (For example, resumania)

Educational Plans

Each strategy will use an Educational Plan to direct the planning and assessment of the strategy. An Educational Plan template has been provided below. Educational plans should be completed for each strategy and evaluated and updated annually.

Educational Plan Template

Strategy _____

(Column 4 on Assessment Grid)

Program Facilitator Name & Department:

Collaborating Partners and Departments:

Student Affairs Outcome(s):

Only check relevant outcomes (Column 1 on Assessment Grid)

- #1 Dig Deep: Cognitive Development
- #2 Be Rooted: Identity Development
- #3 Be Cultivated: Cultural Competence
- #4 Branch Out: Leadership and Civic Engagement
- #5 Be Strong: Interpersonal Competence
- #6 Bear Fruit: Practical Competence

Department Student Learning Outcome

(Column 3 on Assessment Grid) N/A for collaborative programs

Purpose

Brief description of what you hope to accomplish through this strategy

Strategy Specific Student Learning Outcome(s):

Clearly articulate the learning outcome for this strategy

Additional Intended Goals

Include extra goals not directly associated with one of the six Outcomes (i.e., demographics, satisfaction, attendance)

Resources

Include any materials, facilities, budget, or other resource considerations

Agenda

A detailed list of instructions for the facilitator to accomplish the intended goals/outcomes. This list should be a detailed plan that you would be able to hand to a student or educator executing the educational program. It includes a schedule/timeline of events, talking points, etc.

Assessment Methods

A plan for how learning and effectiveness of the strategy will be assessed. Assess learning outcomes, and other intended goals

Assessment Results

Describe the assessment results

Recommendations:

*Given the assessment results, what do we learn about the effectiveness of our programming/services?
What do we learn about our learning outcomes, educational programming, and assessment strategies?
What changes are recommended to improve attaining our SLOs?
What changes were made to meet other goals?*

Artifacts:

Attach any relevant artifacts, i.e., hall poster

Notes:

A space to include notes for future programming, lessons learned, etc.

Column 6: Identify the **assessment method** to be used to determine whether or not SLO/goals have been met.

Column 7: Compile assessment data related to student learning, demographics, and student satisfaction.

Column 8: Analyze data and make **recommendations** for changes in programming /strategies.

B. Assessment:

1. Mission Assessment:

- a. Is the department's mission consistent with the University's Foundational Documents?
- b. What do our benchmarking institutions or best practices inform us about our mission?
- c. What do standards from professional organizations or accreditation groups inform us about our mission?

2. Student Success Outcomes (Column 1)

- a. Are the outcomes consistent with the University's mission, foundational values, undergraduate learning outcomes and CAS standards?
- b. What do our benchmarking institutions or best practices inform us about our outcomes?
- c. What do standards from professional organizations or accreditation groups inform us about our outcomes?

3. Department Specific Dimension of the Outcomes (Column 2)

- a. Are the department specific dimensions of the student outcomes consistent with the student outcomes and the department's mission?
- b. What do our benchmarking institutions or best practices inform us about department specific dimensions of the outcomes?

- c. What do standards from professional organizations or accreditation groups inform us about the department specific dimensions of the outcomes?
- 4. **Educational Programs/Services designed to meet the Student Affairs Outcomes (Column 3)**
 - a. Is the programming intentionally linked to the outcomes? Do the services support the mission of the department?
 - b. What do our benchmarking institutions inform us about our programming?
 - c. What do standards from professional organizations inform us about our programming?
- 5. **SLO/Goals for the Educational Program/Service (Column 4)**
 - a. Are the SLO/goals measurable and designed to accommodate the outcomes?
 - b. Are the SLO/goals responding to student satisfaction and demographic data?
 - c. Are the SLO/goals responding to external issues and concerns?
- 6. **Strategy (Column 5)**
 - a. Are specific strategies outlined to assist in meeting SLO/goals?
 - b. Is the strategy realistic and relevant?
- 7. **Program Assessment Methods Application and Assessment (Column 6)**
 - a. When applied, what do the **Assessment Methods** tell us about the adequacy of the educational programming in meeting established SLO/goals (including student satisfaction, demographics and student outcomes)?
 - b. Are the methods useful and adequate? Are we collecting good data that provides useful and relevant **information**?
- C. Planning:**
 - 1. **Results (Column 7)**
 - a. How well did we meet our established SLO/goals? What were the demographics? What was the student satisfaction?
 - b. Given the assessment results, which strategies were most effective?
 - 2. **Recommendations (Column 8)**
 - a. Given the assessment results, what do we learn about the effectiveness of our programming/services?
 - b. What do we learn about our learning outcomes, educational programming, and assessment strategies?
 - c. What changes are recommended to improve attaining our SLOs/goals?
- D. Timing:**
 - 1. **Student Success Program Outcomes:** At least every seven years
 - 2. **Mission Assessment:** At least every seven years
 - 3. **Department Specific Dimension of Student Outcome:** At least every seven years
 - 4. **Program Assessment (Column 3):** At least every seven years.
 - a. Educational Programs/Services Assessment: Ongoing
 - (1) It is not feasible for each department to fully assess every educational program and/or service on an annual basis. Therefore, each department will be expected to assess 3-5 programs/services a year as it relates to the specific outcome focused on that year.
 - (2) The seven-year review will then be an accumulation and analysis of annual assessments and provide an overall report on the effectiveness of the department.
 - 5. **Assessment Methods Application and Assessment (Column 6):**
 - a. Application: Ongoing
 - b. Assessment: Every seven years

Outline of the Final Report

I. Introduction

- A. Give a brief history and description of the department.
- B. Identify the leadership team for program review.
- C. Identify unit-specific issues or questions to be addressed by the review.
- D. Identify and explain the connection between this review and any accreditation review.

II. Assessment of Purpose, Process, and Personnel

A. Purpose

1. Descriptive Analysis

- a. What is the stated mission of the department? [*Originates within unit; on file within unit*]
- b. What are the student learning outcomes of the department directly related to educational programming? [*Originates within unit; on file within unit*]
 - (1) What are the undergraduate learning outcomes assigned by the University or the Division of Student Affairs to the department?
 - (2) What are the department-specific learning outcomes adopted by the department? [*Developed by the unit; on file within the unit*]
 - (3) What are the measurable goals? [*Developed by the unit; on file within the unit*]
- c. What are the goals involving service/support?
- d. What are the goals not directly related to educational programming (e.g., service to the outside community, national recognition, honor society membership, etc.)? [*Originates within unit; on file within unit*]

2. Evaluation and Assessment

- a. To what extent do the mission and outcomes of the department conform to the University's *Mission and Identity Statement* and *Foundational Values*?
- b. How do the mission and outcomes of the department compare with professional standards and benchmark/peer institutions? [*Evidence gathered by means developed by the unit; on file in the unit*]
- c. Are the student learning outcomes linked to the mission?
- d. Assess and summarize unit-specific issues/questions identified by the department as they pertain to the category of Purpose.

3. Initial Conclusions Related to Purpose:

- a. Strengths and weaknesses
- b. Unit specific and University-specific recommendations.

B. Programming

1. Descriptive Analysis

- a. What programming (educational programming and services) is delivered by the department? [*Assigned by the COE and/or approved by the unit; on file within unit*]
- b. How is this programming linked to the Student Affairs outcomes? [*Developed by the unit; on file within the unit.*]

2. Evaluation and Assessment

- a. Are the educational programs and services designed in such a way that they are linked to the outcomes and goals for this programming?
- b. How does the programming being offered compare with benchmarking institutions, professional standards and professional best practices?

- c. Is there evidence that the outcomes and goals of the programming are being achieved?
 - d. Assess and summarize unit-specific issues/questions identified by the department as they pertain to the category of Programming.
3. Initial Conclusions Related to Programming
- a. Strengths and weaknesses
 - b. Unit specific and University-specific recommendations.

C. Process

1. Descriptive Analysis

- a. How productive is the programming? Over the past seven years, describe the development and any developing trajectories in the following areas:
 - (1) How many students are served by the programs within the unit? [*Originates in the unit*]
 - (2) Student/educator ratios that are tracked
- b. What facilities, equipment, technology, library holdings, and other resources are currently available to deliver the unit's programming? How have these changed over the past seven years? [*Originates in unit; on file in the unit*]
- c. What is the budget? How has this changed over the past seven years? [*Available from the Office of the Provost*]
- d. What revenue is generated by the unit? How has this changed over the past seven years? [*Available from the Office of the Provost*]

2. Evaluation and Assessment

- a. How does the educational and service programming compare with professional standards and/or identified benchmark/peer institutions? [*Data gathered by means developed by the unit; on file in the unit*]
- b. How does the unit compare with professional standards and/or identified benchmark/peer institutions on relevant process factors? [*Data gathered by means developed by the unit; on file in the unit*]
- c. Assess the efficiency and appropriateness of the above environmental factors identifying strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities.
- d. Assess and summarize unit-specific issues/questions identified by the unit as they pertain to the category of Process (i.e., curriculum, resources, budget, etc.).

3. Initial Conclusions Related to Process

- a. Strengths and weaknesses
- b. Unit specific and University-specific recommendations.

D. Personnel

1. Descriptive Analysis

- A. Over the past seven years,
 - (1) What has been the level of staffing in the unit? [*Available from the Office of the Provost*]
 - (2) What is the ratio of full-time to part-time employees? [*Available from the Office of the Provost*]
- b. What is the general profile of full-time educators and staff (e.g., age, training, experience, advanced degrees, disciplinary expertise, diversity, etc.)? [*Originates within unit; on file within unit*]
- c. What is the profile of part-time personnel? [*Originates within unit; on file within unit*]

- d. How has the full-time fte and effort been distributed among teaching, advising, scholarship, institutional service, department administrations, and other University assignments? [*Originates within unit; on file within unit*]
 - e. What is the level of support staffing (staff/administrative support, student work-study)? [*Originates within unit; on file within unit*]
2. **Evaluation and Assessment**
 - a. How does the unit compare with professional standards and/or identified benchmark/peer institutions on the identified personnel factors? [*Evidence gathered by means developed by the unit; on file in the unit*]
 - b. Assess appropriateness and effectiveness of the above personnel factors identifying strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities. In particular, assess the overall quality of teaching, institutional service, scholarship, and advising. [*Evidence from University instruments and evidence generated by the unit; on file in the unit*]
 - c. Is there a fit between the personnel profile and fte allocation to the unit's objectives and priorities?
 - d. Assess and summarize unit-specific issues/questions identified by the unit as they pertain to the category of Personnel
 3. **Initial Conclusions Related to Personnel**
 - a. Strengths and weaknesses
 - b. Unit specific and University-specific recommendations.
- E. Planning**
1. What the major findings? What are the strengths and distinctives of the department? What are the challenges and weaknesses? Is there evidence that student learning outcomes are being met? Are service goals being met?
 2. What are the recommendations?
 - a. **Unit-managed recommendations:** What specific actions undertaken by the department will preserve or enhance the program's strengths and address the department's weaknesses and challenges?
 - b. **University-managed recommendations:** What specific actions by the University will preserve or enhance the program's strengths and address the department's weaknesses and challenges?
 3. What are the recommended steps and time-line for the department and the University in addressing these recommendations?
 4. How will these recommendations impact the department's annual and strategic plan in anticipation of ongoing planning and assessment within the department?

Completing the Review Report – The Link to Institutional Planning

Program review is a central component of the planning within the program units and the University's institutional strategic and financial planning. Regularly scheduled program reviews serve as a basis for strategic and financial planning to assure the further development effectiveness of University programming. A program review is only valuable if it has meaningful implications for the institution. Thus, once completed, the review results must be integrated into the institutional governance process so that the results of it can have an impact on the institution. The following is the protocol for processing educational program reviews.

1. The unit director (or chair) submits the final report along with an executive summary to the Dean. The executive summary should be no more than two pages and summarize all the other sections of the report. It should be sure to include key findings, unit-manageable recommendations, University-manageable recommendations and projected timelines for implementing both categories of approved recommendations.
2. Upon receipt, the Dean reviews the report. If the Dean has significant questions, concerns, or disagreements with the report, he/she may request several possible actions including: revision of the report, discussions with the unit or director, addition of supplemental materials, etc.
3. Upon acceptance of the report, the Dean will write an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the unit's review process and final report in the form of a cover letter. The letter will also indicate the Dean's level of support for both unit-managed and University-managed recommendations and timelines.
4. The Dean will forward the final report, the executive summary, and the cover letter to the Provost. The Provost will review these materials in relation to the strategic planning in the Provost's area. The Provost will meet with the Dean and the unit director (or chair) to review the Provost's analysis. After this meeting, the Dean and unit director will develop a working plan to implement the unit managed recommendations approved by the Dean and reviewed by the Provost.
5. The Provost will take the executive summary and the Dean's cover letter along with the Provost's comments to University Council for review.
6. University Council will review this material and determine how it relates to the institutional strategic and annual planning processes.
7. The executive summary of the report along with a summary of the results of the University Council discussion will be taken by the Provost to the Committee on Education of the Board of Trustees for information and review.