

Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Resources

Outcomes Assessment Coordinator

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UT Planning (link to Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment pages)

<http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/>

Instructional Assessment Resources (IAR)

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar/>

UT TracDat homepage

<https://tracdat.evp.utexas.edu/tracdat/>

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us>

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC)

<http://www.sacscoc.org>

Institutional Effectiveness Definitions

Institutional Effectiveness is the term used to describe how well an institution is accomplishing its mission. One process for contributing to effectiveness is outcomes assessment, an approach for measuring academic, student support, and administrative unit success. Faculty and staff establish outcomes (for academic units) or objectives (for student support and administrative units) for each degree plan or program and then undertake assessments to ascertain whether they are achieving outcomes or objectives at desired levels.

The university's accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), defines institutional effectiveness as follows:

The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission.

Furthermore, SACS expects institutions to comply with the following standard:

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: (Institutional Effectiveness)

3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

3.3.1.2 administrative support services

3.3.1.3 educational support services

3.3.1.4 research within its educational mission, if appropriate

3.3.1.5 community/public service within its educational mission, if appropriate

Institutional Effectiveness Benefits

As President Powers suggested in his September 2010 remarks, the university must measure what matters and use the results to become more effective. Not only that, but multiple economic and legislative realities indicate the need to become more deliberate and transparent in applying resources to improve student learning and the student experience. The university can respond to these driving forces by strengthening Institutional Effectiveness (IE) efforts like strategic planning, program review, and assessment. As an important way to support the president's call to reinvent the university, IE capitalizes on using information to make decisions and improve outcomes. IE is, simply, a process that supports continuous improvement.

The following table points to some of the results of institutional effectiveness efforts.

Faculty and staff will be able to:	Administrators will be able to:	The institution will be able to:	Students will be able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop curricula or programs that align with department or program goals ● Streamline curriculum/ program development ● Determine student or program areas of strength and weakness ● Illustrate course or program value to the university ● Provide evidence-based feedback to colleagues and students ● Support institutional goals ● Contribute to creating a disciplined culture of excellence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate and allocate resources efficiently based on evidence ● Increase effectiveness of providing direction and deciding policy ● Track and demonstrate program progress and contribution to the university ● Create cohesive and meaningful strategic plans ● Identify the degree of topic or activity overlap in courses/programs ● Identify the degree of topic or activity reinforcement in courses/programs ● Align curricula or services across courses/programs ● Support institutional goals ● Contribute to creating a disciplined culture of excellence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain better data to evaluate policies and practices ● Draw on evidence to make changes ● Use results to seek grant or foundation funding ● Demonstrate responsiveness to public needs and concerns ● Align learning across the curriculum ● Place students appropriately ● Generate higher student academic achievement ● Prepare students for the workforce ● Demonstrate how the institution is making a difference ● Improve communication with stakeholders ● Achieve more thorough curriculum review and revision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage in a more rigorous and coordinated learning experience ● Learn more and better

PLANNING

Assessment Model

This model outlines the areas of knowledge to consider when developing assessment activities. To produce the most successful and usable results, the best assessments consider and address these areas. While this model is laid out in linear form, it represents a process that is iterative and, ideally embedded in the system, so that the functions take place as part of day-to-day activities.

Assessment Practices	Participation	Purpose and Alignment	Communication	Competencies	Methods	Results
ASK: What do we need to know about assessment best practices? ASK: What do we need to know about our discipline?	ASK: What is the context for the assessment—a degree plan or a program? ASK: Who should be involved in the assessment?	ASK: How do our efforts align with organization? ASK: What is the purpose of our assessment?	ASK: How and to whom do we best communicate our plan, process, objectives or outcomes, and results?	ASK: What do we want to measure? ASK: What are the expected levels of competency?	ASK: How do we want to collect, analyze, interpret, and report on data?	ASK: What do we need to know about creating and leading change? ASK: How are we going to use the results to inform changes?
Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program outcomes • Program objectives • Best practices use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -measurable & visible -valid instruments -analysis, evaluation & interpretation of results -feedback to system -data-based decision making -reflection on changes • Professional standards 	Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context • Champion • Faculty • Stakeholders • Advisory group • Staff • Audience 	Align and Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional vision • Institutional mission • Institutional goals • Department or program mission • Assessment purpose 	Focus communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early and often • Two-way • Inquiry-based • Continual feedback loop • Accuracy • Transparency 	Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Knowledge • Behaviors • Abilities 	Determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct measures • Indirect measures • Qualitative methods • Quantitative methods • Comprehensive analysis • Concise, clearly-written and meaningful reports 	Determine how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilize leadership • Identify correct change target: course, program, department • Collaborate with those involved in the change • Make decisions based on the results • Communicate the change • Identify and build upon successful change

PLANNING: Developing Assessment Plans

For the university to sustain institutional effectiveness, all academic and administrative programs must demonstrate the development and use of assessment plans for improvement. The charts below outline steps for assessment planning.

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT PLANNING							
Mission Statement	Responsibility and Implementation	Program Educational Objectives	Program Outcome	Methods	Criteria	Assessment Results	Actions
Identify clear and descriptive program purpose aligned with department and institutional missions. The mission describes why the program exists.	Identify, by title, who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •crafts outcomes and methods •collects and analyzes data •enters results in TracDat •reports results •makes decisions based on data •ensures decisions are implemented 	Identify 2-3 achievements or accomplishments that graduates generally attain within the first few years after matriculation. PEO's describe career and professional accomplishments that the program prepares graduates to achieve.	Identify at least three meaningful, manageable outcomes that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •are visible and measurable •describe what students can do or demonstrate as result of program •align with and support PEO's <p>Outcomes describe specific knowledge, abilities, or skills that students can demonstrate as a result of their studies.</p>	Each outcome includes at least three methods that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •draw from at least two direct data sources, ideally part of coursework •describe data source: course name & number, assignment, or activity •describe tool used for scoring or measuring assignment or activity <p>Methods describe how students are evaluated.</p>	Each method identifies target or minimum performance standard and percentage of students to achieve it.	Each method provides results and analysis, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •qualitative or quantitative data in a narrative summary or table •a well-reasoned description of conclusions, significance, and impact <p>Results describe findings, including strengths and weaknesses, and whether program is achieving the intended results.</p>	Each action describes relationship among results, decisions, and next steps and explains how results are used to inform program or curricular changes.
ASK: What is our program trying to do? What do we intend to provide for students?	ASK: Who should be responsible for and involved in the assessment process?	ASK: What role will our graduates play in society after participating in our program?	ASK: What will students in our program be able to demonstrate or do as a result of their studies?	ASK: What will we measure? How do we want to use, collect, analyze, interpret, and report the data?	ASK: What level is acceptable as evidence of success?	ASK: Are we meeting the desired level of performance?	ASK: How do we improve the student learning experience or program? What changes can we test?

PLANNING: Developing Assessment Plans

ADMINISTRATIVE AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES ASSESSMENT PLANNING							
Mission Statement	Responsibility and Implementation	Goals	Objectives	Methods	Criteria	Assessment Results	Actions
Identify clear and descriptive unit or program purpose aligned with department and institutional missions. The mission describes why the program or unit exists.	Identify, by title, who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •crafts outcomes and methods •collects and analyzes data •enters results in TracDat •reports results •makes decisions based on data •ensures decisions are implemented 	Identify at least three goals stating what the unit will achieve. Goals describe what the unit will accomplish in order to meet its mission and are written in broad, non-measurable terms.	Identify at least three objectives that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •are visible and measurable •describe what students and/or unit staff will accomplish •align with and support unit goals Objectives describe specific results toward which you direct your activities. Producing these results leads to achieving the goals.	Each objective includes at least three methods that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •draw from at least one direct data source •describe unit activity •identify instrument used for scoring or measuring activity Methods describe how the program is evaluated.	Each method identifies target or minimum performance standard for each unit and/or student activity.	Each method provides results and analysis, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •qualitative or quantitative data in a narrative summary or table •a well-reasoned description of conclusions, significance, and impact Results describe findings, including strengths and weaknesses, and whether program is achieving the intended results.	Each action describes relationship among results, decisions, and next steps and explains how results are used to inform program changes.
ASK: What is our program or unit trying to do? What do we intend to provide for students?	ASK: Who should be responsible for and involved in the assessment process?	ASK: What roles does our program play at the institution? What role will our graduates play in society after participating in our program?	ASK: What do we intend to achieve? If we succeed in our activities, what are the results?	ASK: What specifically will we measure? How do we want to use, collect, analyze, interpret, and report the data?	ASK: What level is acceptable as evidence of success?	ASK: What are the results? Are we meeting the desired level of performance?	ASK: How can we use the findings to improve the program or student learning experience? What changes can we try out?