

MISSION

A Mission communicates the overarching purpose of the degree program.

A well-written Mission includes a brief statement of the general values and principles which guide the program curriculum and is specific to the degree program/major (as opposed to the department). The mission clearly articulates the educational purpose, the primary functions, and the learning experiences of the program. The Mission sets the foundation for the program's overall direction and position within the college and university.

How to Write a Mission

The Mission should address the following questions:

1. What is the degree program name?
2. What is the educational purpose of the program?
3. What is the primary function of the program?
4. What are the primary activities or learning experiences provided by the program?
5. Does the mission implicitly or explicitly align the program with the mission of the department, college, and university?

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:

- Mission mostly provides a clear, comprehensive, and concise description of the program to internal and external stakeholders; mission is aligned with college or university mission.

Here's a template to follow:

The mission of the [1. degree program name] is to [2. educational purpose] in order to [3. primary function]. The program seeks to [4. primary activities or learning experiences]. In alignment with the mission of the college and university, the program [5. explicit or implicit alignment with overarching missions].

Examples

Example 1: Undergraduate Program

The mission of the [1] Bachelor of Arts in Political Science is to [2] provide students with skills and dispositions in the areas of political systems, government relations and international organizations in order to [3] prepare students for careers in government services, non-profit agencies or the private sector. The program seeks to [5] prepare thoughtful citizens and productive members of society (as stated in the College and University mission) [4] through the utilization of diverse, pluralistic curricula.

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

Example 2: Graduate Program

The mission of the [1] [Computational and Applied Mathematics MS program](#) is to [2] [provide students with skills and knowledge in the areas of computational mathematics and computational sciences](#) in order to [3] [prepare them to be computational and applied mathematicians, statisticians, data scientists and teachers](#). [4] [The program seeks to help students conduct research in the field through an applied modeling project](#). [5] [The program aligns with the mission of the College and the University in our pursuit to apply scientific principles creatively and responsibly](#).

Example 3: Certificate Program

[5] [In alignment with the Darden College of Education and Professional Studies, the program is focused on preparing professional educators](#). The [1] [Autism Certificate Program](#) is designed [2] [to prepare professional educators to implement research-based methods and procedures](#), [3] [to deliver high-quality academic and nonacademic instruction to students with autism spectrum disorder, and to maintain lifelong professional development](#).

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are the specific knowledge, skills, or abilities that students should be able to demonstrate or perform at the end of the program. The outcomes can be focused on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. SLOs are clear statements that describe an observable behavior. SLOs are always expressed in terms of the student.

A well-written SLO includes a concrete action verb that conveys the appropriate level of learning.

This can be accomplished by using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy¹, whose levels are:

- I. Remembering (action verbs include: *arrange, define, describe, select, state*)
- II. Understanding (action verbs include: *explain, summarize, give examples, paraphrase*)
- III. Applying (action verbs include: *demonstrate, apply, predict, produce, write*)
- IV. Analyzing (action verbs include: *interpret, analyze, compare, manipulate, solve*)
- V. Evaluating (action verbs include: *critique, justify, evaluate, defend, rate, argue*)
- VI. Creating (action verbs include: *create, design, formulate, generate, synthesize*)

This can also be accomplished by using Dee Fink's Taxonomy², whose levels are:

- I. Foundational Knowledge – understanding and remembering information and ideas (action verbs include: *explain, associate, describe, summarize, give examples, paraphrase*)
- II. Application – skills; critical, creative, and practical thinking; management projects (action verbs include: *analyze, assess, critique, coordinate, create, imagine, solve, use*)
- III. Integration – Connecting ideas, people, realms of life (action verbs include: *associate, connect, correlate, contrast, differentiate, relate, link, synthesize*)
- IV. Human Dimensions - Learning about oneself and others (action verbs include: *advocate, communicate, collaborate, lead, promote, reflect, empathize*)
- V. Caring – Developing new feelings, interests, and values (action verbs include: *develop, express, discover, interpret, recognize, value, reflect, share*)
- VI. Learning to Learn – Becoming a better learner, inquiring about a subject, becoming self-directing learners (action verbs include: *construct knowledge, critique, develop a learning plan, self-assess, generalize knowledge, formulate, frame questions, predict performance, analyze*)

¹ Anderson, Krathwohl, Bloom, Anderson, Lorin W, Krathwohl, David R, & Bloom, Benjamin S. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing a revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives* (Complete ed.). New York: Longman.

² Fink, L., & ProQuest. (2013). *Creating Significant Learning Experiences [e-book] an Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses*.

How to Develop Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes should address the following questions:

1. What level of learning (Blooms action verb) is taking place?
2. What knowledge, skill, or ability should students demonstrate at the end of the program?

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:

- Most SLOs use concrete action verbs (e.g., Bloom's Taxonomy) to indicate the specific behavior that will be performed; most SLOs reflect an appropriate level of learning for the program; most SLOs contain a description of the knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions that students will demonstrate in a disciplinary context.

Just Getting Started? Here's a template to follow

Students will be able to [\[1. action verb\]](#) [\[2. specific knowledge, skill, or ability\]](#) to [person, place, or thing].

Examples

Example 1: Written communication for an undergraduate program

Students will be able to [\[1\] write](#) [\[2\] with clearly stated objectives and logical consistency](#) for a variety of audiences.

Example 2: Theoretical knowledge for a graduate program

Students will be able to [\[1\] apply](#) [\[2\] theories of crime and criminal justice](#) to research and public policies.

Example 3: Methodologies for a certificate program

Students will be able to [\[1\] choose](#) [\[2\] methods](#) to promote the sustainability of health programs.

MEASURES

Measures are opportunities for programs to collect information about how well students are demonstrating or performing the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

Well-chosen measures will yield information that is relevant, useful, and actionable. Measures should be consistently administered to help ensure that data are reliable and that issues of faculty bias are addressed. Measures should directly assess the intended outcome to help ensure data are valid and represent the phenomenon.

There should be at least two measures for every SLO because multiple assessment measures provide a convergence of evidence. This convergence promotes the use of results for decision making. Each measure should incorporate the majority of students in the program or a representative sample. At least one of the measures should be a direct measure of student learning which requires the evaluation of student work samples.

Common Assessment Measures

If you want to...	Use these sources of information	And assess them using
Assess knowledge and conceptual understanding	Multiple-choice tests	Item scores that are mapped back to test blueprints
Assess thinking and performance skills	Papers, projects, performances, essays, exhibitions, field experiences, and other learning activities	Program level rubrics, rubrics
Assess attitudes and values	Reflective writing Self-assessments and surveys	Qualitative analysis Item scores that are mapped back to outcomes
Draw an overall picture of student learning, including thinking and performance skills as well as attitudes, values, and habits of mind	Portfolios	Rubrics and reflective writing
Compare your students against peers	Published instruments, national or certification exams	Item scores and instrument sub-scores that are mapped back to key learning outcomes

Adapted from "Assessing Student Learning" by Suskie, L. 2018, p. 96.

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

Types of Measures

Direct Measures assess actual samples of student work. Direct measures are regularly employed to assess learning in the classroom. They provide evidence of student learning that is tangible, visible, and measurable. Direct measures are assessed by faculty, professionals in the field, or experts regarding what a student learned and how well they learned it.

Examples: Essays, performances, presentations, course projects, capstone projects, exams, final papers, research paper, regional or national tests, ratings or evaluation from field or clinical supervisors, comprehensive exams, etc.

Indirect Measures provide signs, high-level indicators, or perceptions of learning. Indirect measures often assess opinions or thoughts about students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, learning experiences, and perceptions. These measures provide information that students are *probably* learning and help to substantiate instances of student learning.

Examples: Surveys (student, department, student evaluation of instruction, alumni, employer, faculty), self-assessments, focus groups, interviews, advisory board feedback, employment or placement rates of graduating students into appropriate career positions, graduation or completion rates, number or rate of students involved in faculty research, collaborative publications and/or presentations, service learning, or extension of learning in the larger community, etc.

Direct vs Indirect Measures: Both types of measures have strengths and weaknesses. Each have their own limitations and contain some bias. A meaningful assessment plan should use both direct and indirect measures from a variety of sources (students, alumni, faculty, employers, etc.).

What about course grades? The use of course grades as the sole measure of student learning are insufficient in achieving assessment's main purposes of educational quality and improvement. They can be a useful indirect measure of student learning to help substantiate evidence from direct measures.

How to Create Meaningful Measures

Measures should address the following questions:

1. Where and how are students demonstrating the learning outcome?
2. What is the purpose of the measure and how does it relate to the outcome?
3. How is the measure of student learning evaluated (rubric, faculty panel, answer key, survey, etc.)?
4. What scale, criteria, or standard is used to evaluate the student learning outcome?
5. How is this consistently measured across administrations?
6. What makes this measure trustworthy and useful?

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:

- ☑ Most measures directly assess intended outcome (validity); measures are consistent across administrations (reliable); results will yield useful and meaningful information for improvement; includes multiple types of measures; includes 1 direct measure for each outcome; sufficient details are provided about where and how students demonstrate learning; sufficient details are provided about the measures to determine relevancy and rigor.

Here's a template to follow:

In [1. [course or program requirement](#)], students should complete a [[test, portfolio, presentation, performance, assignment, survey, etc.](#)]. The purpose of the assignment is to have students [[2. describe assignment](#)]. Students are asked to demonstrate [outcome] in this assignment.

[Outcome] is evaluated by [[3. evaluation process](#)], on a scale of [[4. criteria or standard](#)].

The program addresses the consistent application of the [rubric, faculty panel, answer key, etc.] across administrations with the use of [[5. reliability strategy](#)]. This measure is considered to be trustworthy and useful because [[6. validity strategy](#)].

Examples

Example 1: Measure - Research project rubric, Outcome – Research methodology

In [1] [ODUU 400](#), students should complete a [research project on a topic of their choosing](#). The purpose of the assignment is to have students [[2\] ask a research questions, provide a rationale for an appropriate methodology, conduct or outline that methodology, and then provide a list of possible recommendations. Students are asked to demonstrate advanced research methodology skills in this assignment.](#)

Research projects are evaluated by [[3\] a rubric, with three rubric areas directly evaluating research methodology \(research questions, methodology selection, methodology skills\).](#) Rubric sections are scored on a scale of [[4\] 1 - 4, with 4 for Exceeds Standard, 3 for Meets Standard, 2 for Approaches Standard, and 1 for Needs Attention.](#)

The program addresses the consistent application of the rubric across administrations with [[5\] the use of a shared program rubric for the final project.](#) All faculty members teaching this course use the program rubric. This measure and the data are considered to be trustworthy and useful because [[6\] the rubric was collaboratively developed by program faculty and informed by educational best practices in our field. Additionally, all senior students are required to take ODUU 400 and the research project represents a large portion of the final grade. For these reasons, the program believes that this measure will provide useful data for improving student learning.](#)

Example 2: Measure - Panel review of ePortfolio with rubric, Outcome – written communication

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

In [1] [ODUU 470](#), seniors should complete an [ePortfolio](#). The purpose of the ePortfolio is to have students [2] [make connections between their course assignments, the overall goals of the programs, and the disciplinary field. All sections of the ePortfolio are used to assess to written communication.](#)

EPortfolios are evaluated by three faculty using [3] [a program-level rubric, with three rubric areas directly evaluating written communication \(Readability, Logical Consistency, Reflection\)](#) and the rubrics are given to students along with the ePortfolio assignment. Rubric sections are scored on a scale of [4] [1 - 4, with 4 for Exemplary, 3 for Good, 2 for Acceptable, and 1 for Unacceptable.](#)

The program addresses the consistent application of the rubric across administrations by [5] [holding a short norming session at the start of the fall semester. All faculty who teach ODUU 470 attend. Samples of student work are shared and rated on the rubric. Faculty share their ratings, discuss applications of the rubric, and pose questions to each other based on previous experience.](#) The ePortfolio evaluations are considered to be trustworthy and useful because [6] [the rubric was collaboratively developed by faculty in the program and informed by educational best practices in our field. Additionally, all students are required to take ODUU 470 within their senior year. By this time students have taken our writing intensive courses, the general education writing requirements, and ODUU 300 \(another required course in our program that is focused on writing\). The ePortfolio is worth 30% of the final grade in this course. For these reasons, the program believes that this measure will provide useful data for improving student learning.](#)

Example 3: Measure - Capstone test developed by the program, Outcome – Applied Theoretical Knowledge and Data Analysis

In [1] [ODUU 480](#), seniors take the [capstone test](#). The purpose of the capstone test is to have students [2] [demonstrate mastery in two areas – applied theoretical knowledge and data analysis.](#)

[4] [The test is 50 multiple choice questions.](#) [5] [specific questions on the test were developed to measure each outcome – see the item analysis and test blueprint in the project attachments.](#)

The program addresses the consistent application of the test across administrations by [6] [adopting a common capstone test](#). This measure is considered to be trustworthy and useful because [7] [the test counts for 10% of the final grade and ODUU 480 is taken by all seniors in their final year of the program. Additionally, the test was created by two faculty members within the department in 2015. The test was piloted and reviewed to ensure that each question corresponded with the subsequent outcomes.](#)

Example 4: Measure - Test developed nationally, Outcome – Advanced knowledge

In [1] [ODUU 490](#), seniors will take the [capstone test](#). The purpose of the test is to [2] [measure students' advanced knowledge in multiple areas within the discipline.](#)

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

The test is [3] 100 multiple choice questions. Specific questions on the test are used to measure this student learning outcome. [4] Sub scores should be at or above the national average on questions related to this outcome.

The program addresses the consistent application of the test across administrations by [5] using the Major Field Test administered by ETS. This measure is considered to be trustworthy because [6] it was created and validated by ETS. Students are motivated to do well on the test as it counts for 10% of the final grade. Additionally, this measure is considered useful because courses are mapped to the outcomes tested in the major field test. Our program is interested in collecting data that can be nationally benchmarked.

Example 5: Measure – Candidacy Exam Rubric, Outcome – advanced knowledge, research methods, written communication

During the [1] Candidacy Exam, graduate students will write a response to 3 prompts. The purpose of the candidacy exam is to have students [2] demonstrate advanced knowledge in the field, advanced knowledge of research methods, and written communication skills appropriate for an academic audience.

The candidacy exam is evaluated by three faculty using [3] a program-level rubric, with three rubric areas directly evaluating advanced knowledge in the field, advanced knowledge of research methods, and written communication skills. The rubrics are given to students along with the candidacy exam. Rubric sections are scored on a scale of [4] 1 - 4, with 4 for Exemplary, 3 for Good, 2 for Acceptable, and 1 for Unacceptable.

The program addresses the consistent application of the rubric across administrations by [5] using a common program-level rubric. The program also holds a norming session every two years. All graduate faculty attend. Samples of student work are shared and rated on the rubric. Faculty share their ratings, discuss applications of the rubric, and pose questions to each other based on previous experience. The candidacy exam evaluations are considered to be trustworthy and useful because [6] the rubric was collaboratively developed by faculty in the program and informed by educational best practices in our field. Additionally, all students are required to take the candidacy exam after 2 years of coursework. By this time, students should have the foundational knowledge to advance in the graduate program.

TARGETS

A Target states the expected achievement level of students in the program. It describes how well students in the program should be able to demonstrate a particular knowledge or skill.

A well-written target clearly indicates the percentage of students and the expected standard of performance within the program. Targets should be realistic or aspirational rather than minimal.

How to Set Targets

Targets should address the following questions:

1. What is the expected standard of performance?
2. How many students should be able to achieve this standard of performance?

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:

- Most target levels and performance standards for the outcome are stated and appropriate.

Here's a template to follow:

[2. [target percentage of students to achieve the standard](#)] of the students will [1. [standard of performance](#)] on the [rubric, test, survey, etc.].

Examples

Example 1: Rubric scores

[2] [80%](#) of the students will [1] ["Meets Standard" or "Exceeds Standard" on all areas](#) of the rubric related to written communication.

Example 2: Exam pass rate

[1] [A composite score of 470 and scores of 235 on both the Reading and Writing sections is required in order to pass the VCLA.](#) Our program targets a [2] [90% pass rate overall \(470 composite score\) as well as a 90% pass rate \(235 section score\) on each section of the VCLA \(Reading and Writing\).](#)

Example 3: Satisfaction ratings

[2] [At least 80% of our students who respond to the Senior Student Satisfaction Survey](#) will report being [1] ["satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their experience in the major.](#)

RESULTS

Results or findings are the information collected through the Measures that tell the program how well students are meeting the Target. The Results should be a succinct summary statement.

When identifying whether or not the program met its target for a particular result, please refer to the following explanations and use the term that is most appropriate:

- Exceeded: All data reported significantly surpass the target set
- Met: All data reported achieve or surpass the target set
- Partially Met: A portion of the data reported do not meet the target set
 - Example 1: When reporting findings for two or more groups, one or more group achieves or surpasses the target but other(s) do not.
 - Example 2: When reporting multiple Meets Standard Criteria, one or more Meets Standard Criteria achieves or surpasses the target but other(s) do not.
- Not Met: All data reported do not meet the target set

How to Report Results

Results should address the following questions:

1. Do the results report on the information described in the target (a. percentage of students; b. standard of performance)?
2. If using percentages or some other calculated final tally, what are the numbers involved in creating the final result? (e.g., 87/94=92.55%)
3. Did the program clearly state achievement of the target (target status)?

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:

- Results are related to the specific measures of outcome; results provide evidence of target achievement.

Here's a template to follow:

Results: [\[1a. Percentage of students to achieve the standard\]](#) [\[2. percentage breakdown\]](#) of the students [\[1b. standard of performance\]](#) on the [rubric, test, survey, etc.].

Target Status: [\[3. Exceed, Met, Partially Met, Not Met\]](#)

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

Examples

Example 1: Test score target for undergraduate program, outcome – applied learning

Target: 80% of the students will score 80% or higher on the applied learning section of the exam.

Results: [\[1a\] 75%](#) [\[2\] \(9/12\)](#) of the students scored [\[1b\] 80% or higher on the applied learning section of the exam.](#)

Target Status: [\[3\] Not Met](#)

Example 2: Rubric target for a graduate program, outcome – methods

Target: 90% of students will score meets standard or higher on the methods section of the rubric.

Results: [\[1a\] 100%](#) [\[2\] \(40/40\) students](#) demonstrated the appropriate use [methodological approaches– \[1b\] scoring meets standard on the methods section of the rubric.](#)

Target Status: [\[3\] Met](#)

Example 3: Rubric target for certificate program, outcome – grant writing

Target: 75% of the students (online and face-to-face) will score “meet standard” on all sections of the final paper rubric in ODUU 555 University Grant Writing.

Results: [\[1a\] 71% of the students - \[2\] 90% \(10/11\) online and 69% \(27/41\) face-to-face – \[1b\] scored “meet standard” on all section of the final paper rubric in ODUU 555 University Grant Writing.](#)

Target Status: [\[3\] Partially Met](#)

INTERPRETATION & USE OF RESULTS

This asks programs to extrapolate meaning from the results and provide additional detail or context to fully explain the results to an outside reader. Various levels of analysis could be conducted to make sense of the information. It is especially important to compare learning environments and analyze the results over time to look for trends. This is an opportunity for faculty to make sense of the results against the larger landscape of the program and factors impacting the student learning outcome.

How to Interpret Results

The Interpretation of Results should address the following questions:

- a. What are the strengths and weaknesses of student learning in this area?
- b. For programs with both online and face-to-face degree options: how does the performance of these unique learning environments compare?
- c. How do the results compare to previous years?
- d. How do the results fit into the larger landscape of student learning in the program?
- e. How were results shared within the program?

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:

- Mostly evaluates results, addresses patterns, and/or describes specific strengths and/or weaknesses related to student learning and the interpretation could support programmatic decisions; as appropriate, compares data from differing delivery methods; interpretation includes information about how well students are learning and why (e.g. how courses, experiences, and/or the assessment process might have affected the results); appropriate collaboration and sharing of assessment results to support program decisions is indicated; provides an interpretation for at least two results.

Here's a template to follow:

1. Interpretation of Results

Strengths and weaknesses of student learning are [1a. describe strengths/weaknesses of knowledge, skills, and abilities; analyze rubric sub scores]. The face-to-face courses had [1b. describe face-to-face results]. The online courses had [1b. describe online results]. These results are [1c. compare data to previous years] than [timeframe]. Upon interpretation, [1d. discussion of the results and the landscape of learning within the course and the program]. These assessment results were shared and discussed [1e. describe sharing and decision-making processes].

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

Examples

Example 1: Analysis of final paper rubric scores, outcome - historical, social, and cultural knowledge
Additional modules and quizzes are needed to enhance student's analysis of social and cultural dimensions

Overall, students in the program are able to articulate the historical, social, and cultural dimensions of a topic of their choosing. [1a] Students who earned a score of 1 - Unacceptable on this area of rubric failed to articulate at least one of the required dimensions of the topic. Most projects who earned this score confused the social and cultural dimensions, although they were able to articulate the historical dimension. [1a] Students who earned scores of 4 - Exemplary were able to connect their topic to the present day in addition to the required discussion of each dimension. [1c] An analysis of last year's data shows that students continue to struggle with the social and cultural dimensions. [1d] students are advised to take ODUU 330 and 350 before taking this course; however, we do not have prerequisites in place to formally require this. ODUU 330 and 350 both reinforce skills that are mastered in this course. This could be why we are seeing lower student performance than desired. The results suggest that the program should emphasize the distinction between social and cultural dimensions when discussing historical topics. [1e] Assessment results were shared and discussed at an assessment subcommittee meeting.

Example 2: Comparing online and on-campus courses and final papers, outcome - methods
Enhancing student methodology in HSC 555 Online Courses

Overall, our students demonstrated mixed levels of ability in identifying methods for assuring health program sustainability. [1c] These results are similar to the results we reported last year. [1b] From these assessment results, it is clear that the online students are performing at a lower level than the main campus students on the HSC 555 final paper. [1a] In these papers, on-campus students were able to identify multiple methods for assuring health program sustainability, while online students struggled to identify more than one method. Additionally, on-campus students were able to discuss how the multiple methods could interact in application to support their given health program. [1d] A large majority of the main campus students meet with the professor to discuss their final paper. And while online office hours are scheduled for the online students, these have not been well attended. Lots of feedback about the methodology is given during these office hours. The professor teaching this course provides suggested deadlines for scaffolding the final paper. [1e] Assessment results were shared and discussed at the end of year advisory board meeting. As appropriate, this group makes decisions and consults with faculty on making course and programmatic modifications.

Example 3: Analysis of Praxis scores, outcome – content knowledge
Reading and Writing test scores improve with additional test prep

The XX% pass rate for the PRAXIS I/Core Reading subtest exceeds the XX% pass rate last year. The XX% pass rate on the PRAXIS I/Core Writing subtest exceeds the XX% pass rate last year. [1c] A seven-year trend in scores reflects that these are the highest pass rates in 7 years. [1a] There was significant improvement in both Reading and Writing PRAXIS Core scores this year.

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

Over the past several years the program has seen a trend in students receiving low pass rates on the Praxis I. [1d] After some analysis and review by the program, the decision was made to purchase the NorthStar PRAXIS Core Prep package that is accessible on-line for free by all students. All IDS-TP teacher candidates are advised to use this resource. Advisors were instructed to share and show this resource to students during the spring advising meeting. Since the addition of this resource and targeted advising, students' Reading scores on PRAXIS Core continue to be stronger than their scores on the Writing subtest.

In order to be the best program in the state, we are striving for a 95% pass rate. [1e] Program faculty and staff met to review assessment information and determine the actions needed.

IMPROVEMENTS OR MODIFICATIONS

This asks programs to follow up and describe completed action plans, modifications, or improvements made by the program. This is an opportunity for programs to tell their story and connect the dots between the student learning outcome, assessment results that prompted action, and the modifications that were made. The program should outline and determine the impact of their changes on student learning.

How to Document Improvements or Modifications

The documentation should address the following areas:

- a. Why were the changes made? (e.g., the student learning outcome and the information that prompted action)
- b. What changes were made during the year or in previous years that impacted student learning?
- c. What impact did this have on student learning?

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:

- Mostly describes the impact on student learning from previous improvements or modifications to course, program, teaching methods, curriculum, etc.; justification for modification is based on the analysis of assessment results or programmatic information.

Here's a template to follow:

2. Improvements or Modifications

Last year, [2a. describe data or circumstance that prompted action and specify student learning outcome]. In response the program made the following modifications – [2b. list completed action plans or modifications to the program]. This year, we can see that results are [2c. compare results before and after modification].

Examples

Example 1: Defending research designs, early signs of improved student learning, outcome - methods and analysis

[2a] After seeing poor performance on the comprehensive exam over the past three years in research methods and analysis, strategies were recommended by the Curriculum and Assessment Committee and implemented by faculty. [2b] Over the past two years, faculty teaching the Introduction to Research course as well as Qualitative Methods 1 and Statistics in Research courses put additional emphasis on design and rationale for methodology. Specifically, the Introduction to Research course added a methods assignment and enhanced the rigor of the methods section in the final paper. The Qualitative

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

Methods 1 and Statistics in Research courses both added a critique assignment to help students further develop these skills. [2c] This is the first year that students with these modifications have gone through the comprehensive exam. Exam scores were higher in the research methods and analysis areas than previous year.

Example 2: Reading and writing test scores improve with additional test prep, outcome - content knowledge

[2a] Over the past several years the program has seen a trend in students receiving low pass rates on the Praxis I which directly assessed content knowledge, specifically reading and writing. [2b] After some analysis and review by the program, the decision was made to purchase the NorthStar PRAXIS Core Prep package that is accessible on-line for free by all students. All teacher candidates are advised to use this resource. Advisors were instructed to share and show this resource to students during the spring advising meeting. [2c] Since the addition of this resource and targeted advising, students' Reading scores on PRAXIS Core continue to be stronger than their scores on the Writing subtest. A seven-year trend in scores reflects that these are the highest pass rates in 7 years. There was significant improvement in both Reading and Writing PRAXIS Core scores this year.

ACTION PLANS

This asks programs to explain their process of sharing and using assessment results for decision making. The strength of assessment is not that it provides quick fixes for a problem, but that it promotes active, informed, and systematic improvement of a program through discussion among faculty. This is an opportunity to review student learning data and make decisions as a program.

How to Use Results and Create Action Plans

The Use of Results and Action Plans should address the following questions:

- a. How is assessment information about the quality of learning shared and used for program decision making in areas such as curriculum, pedagogy, and other aspects that impact learning?
- b. What actions do the results suggest need to be implemented?
- c. What concrete actions will the program take to sustain or improve this outcome? What is the timeframe of these actions?

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:

- Action plans are developed directly from results and are aligned with the outcome; actions are intended to modify course, program, teaching methods, curriculum, etc. to improve student learning; as necessary, actions are intended to improve assessment strategies.

Here's a template to follow:

3. Use of Results and Creation of Action Plans

Assessment information was reviewed and discussed [3a. describe process for using results]. As appropriate, [3a. describe process for decision making – e.g., changes and recommendations about curriculum, pedagogy, or other aspects that impact learning are made]. Based on our discussions, review of the results, and additional departmental information, the program will [3b. describe actions]. This action plan will be completed by [3c. timeframe] with the help of [3c. persons responsible].

Examples

Example 1: Create a repository for faculty, outcome – written communication and theory evaluation
Assessment information was reviewed and discussed [3a] at a curriculum committee meeting. The curriculum annually reviews this information and recommends changes to the curriculum, pedagogy, or other aspects that impact learning. These recommendations are shared with the chair and the faculty. Based on our discussions, partially met targets related to written communication and theory evaluation, and additional departmental information, the program will [3b] create a repository of model assignments and assessments related to the written communication and theory evaluation program outcomes. This repository is be collaboratively developed by faculty and will serve as a guide in addition

How-To Guide: Academic Program Assessment Plan and Report

to the syllabus for future faculty teaching this required course. This action plan will be completed by [3c] before the start of the fall semester with the help of [3c] three lead faculty teaching ODUU 300W.

Example 2: Additional modules and quizzes are needed to enhance student's analysis of social and cultural dimensions, outcome - historical, social, and cultural knowledge

[3a] Results were shared with all faculty members of ODUU 400. Results were discussed at the curriculum committee meeting and an action plan was developed by faculty teaching ODUU 400. [3b] The curriculum committee will review where and how social and cultural dimensions are taught within the program. [3c] A curriculum map will be shared with faculty in November. Dr. Monarch will develop a teaching module on social and cultural dimensions by the fall semester for all faculty to use in ODUU 400. Dr. Dominion will develop quiz questions for faculty teaching ODUU 400.

Example 3: Reading and Writing test scores improve with additional test prep, outcome - content knowledge

In order to be the best program in the state, we are striving for a 95% pass rate. [3a] Program faculty and staff met to review assessment information during our annual program retreat. After some discussion, [3b] we are going to introduce this resource to students earlier in the program. [3c] Students will have access to NorthStar upon entry into the program starting in 20XX. Information about this resource will be shared at an orientation session this upcoming fall. Orientation will be managed by our academic advisor. We hope to see the impact of this modification in two years through improved performance on the PRAXIS as well as an increase in practice test usage and scoring.

For more information, please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment
www.odu.edu/assessment
assess@odu.edu
(757) 683-3322