Institutional Assessment Handbook

Updated: December 11, 2018

Office of Institutional Research & Assessment
South Dakota State University
Box 2201, Morrill Hall, Room 233
Brookings, SD 57007

Table of Contents

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Assessment Handbook

University Mission

South Dakota State University offers a rich academic experience in an environment of inclusion and access through inspired, student-centered education, creative activities and research, innovation and engagement that improve the quality of life in South Dakota, the region, the nation, and the world.

University Vision

South Dakota State University will be a premier land-grant university recognized for high value, innovation, and bold impact.

Introduction

In support of the university's mission and vision, South Dakota State University has a strong history of conducting meaningful academic and co-curricular assessment. Each academic program and co-curricular unit is expected to actively participate in assessment activity in order to ensure high quality programs and student experiences. The intent of this handbook is to provide faculty, staff, and administration with a resource to understand expectations related to assessment practices.

Assessment Philosophy Statement

SDSU values the assessment and evaluation of its educational programs and services demonstrating SDSU's commitment to academic excellence, quality programs, and experiences. Assessment is foundational to effective teaching, instructional design, and student learning. When done well over time, assessment processes lead to improvement in student achievement and high quality academic and co-curricular programs.

Statement of Compliance

The South Dakota Board of Regents (SDBOR) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) value academic program and co-curricular assessment. The SDBOR Policy 2:11 states, "The assessment of student learning enhances the overall quality of academic and co-curricular programs." The policy makes it clear that "at minimum, each institution's assessment structure and processes shall: a) support institutional program review or specialty accreditation for each academic program/department…b) include program-level (undergraduate, graduate, and co-curricular) assessment plans and processes." (For more information, see SDBOR Policy 2:11).

As part of the Higher Learning Commission criteria for accreditation, the institution must demonstrate "responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement." (Higher Learning Commission, 2017). The full list of HLC Criteria for accreditation is listed at following site: HLC Policy: Criteria for Accreditation

Specifically HLC identifies assessment of student learning in the following criteria:

> **Criterion 3. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support**
> **The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.**
> > **3.A.2** The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
> > **3.C.1** The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

> **Criterion 4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement**
> **The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.**
> > **4.B.** The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.
> > **4.B.1** The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
> > **4.B.2** The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

4.B.3 The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

4.B.4 The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

Criterion 5. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness
The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

5.C.2 The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

Principles of Assessment

In 1992 the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) Assessment forum released the 9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning (AAHE, 1992). In these principles are the vision for high quality educational standards. These principles provide good practices that guide assessment at SDSU.

1. **The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.**
   Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only what we choose to assess but also how we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.

2. **Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.**
   Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore firmer bases for improving our students' educational experience.

3. **Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.**
   Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations—those derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.

4. **Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.**
   Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way—about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what

conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.

5. **Assessment works best when it is ongoing not episodic. Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative.**
   Though isolated, "one-shot" assessment can be better than none, improvement is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the process of individual students, or of cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same examples of student performance or using the same instrument semester after semester. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.

6. **Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.**
   Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculty play an especially important role, but assessment's questions can't be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni/ae, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. Thus understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.

7. **Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.**
   Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results"; it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.

8. **Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.**
   Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning,

budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such campuses, information about learning outcomes is seen as an integral part of decision making, and avidly sought.

9. **Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.** There is a compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the publics that support or depend on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation—to ourselves, our students, and society—is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

Assessment Basics

Assessment definition

Assessment is "the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development." (Palomba & Banta, 1999).

Assessment purpose

The primary purpose of assessment is provide evidence (or validation) of student learning and to use that evidence to improve the learning experience. Good assessment practices ensure SDSU is offering high quality academic programs and co-curricular experiences.

Assessment levels

Assessment can occur at different levels. Each level of assessment contributes to student learning and what students leave college knowing and being able to do. Faculty can assess student learning in a course. An institution can assess general education learning. There is also institutional level assessment. For the purposes of this handbook, the focus is on the assessment processes and procedures at the program/unit level.
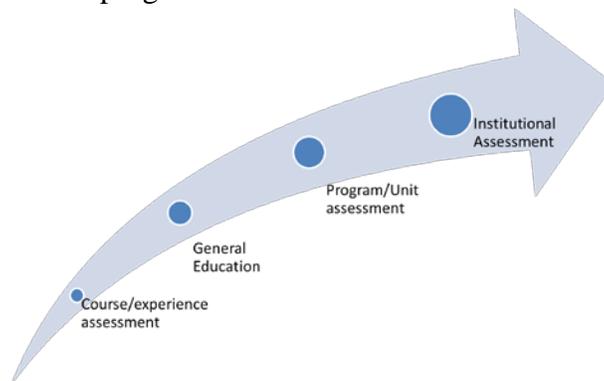
Assessment and evaluation are different

Assessment and evaluation not only differ in their purposes but also in their use of collected information. While it is possible to use the same tools for the two approaches, the *use* of the data collected differs. Assessment is ongoing (formative), focused on how learning is going (process-oriented) and identifies areas for improvement (diagnostic). On the other hand, evaluation gauges quality (summative), focused on what's been learned (product-oriented), and is judgmental (arrive at a single, overall score).

Assessment is not research

The purpose of assessment is to gather evidence to describe effectiveness and guide practice. Research is focused on gathering evidence to guide theory and test concepts. Assessment is focused on the institution, program, or unit, while research is focused on broader implications and generalizability.

Because assessment is primarily used internally for feedback and improvement purposes, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is not required. However, if there is intention to disseminate findings for presentations, publications, or other research activity, then IRB approval is required.

Assessment Cycle

At a basic level, an assessment cycle begins by identifying student learning outcomes. Then evidence is collected and interpreted. Finally that information is used to implement change.

The Assessment Cycle (Maki, 2002, 2004)
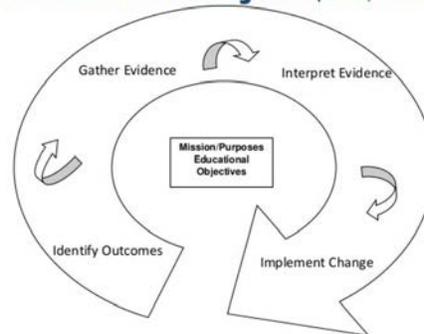
Assessment Spiral

The assessment spiral is another way to visualize and think about the assessment process. As suggested by Wehlburg (2007), the assessment spiral "visually demonstrates that the [assessment] process is continuous and that as we increase the quality of student learning and the ways in which we measure it, we will be moving upward in the spiral" (p.2). In addition the assessment spiral never closes and "presumes that quality will increase and that appropriate and meaningful changes will occur in student learning" (Wehlburg, 2007, p. 15).

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcome (SLOs) statements "clearly state the expected knowledge, skills, attitudes, competencies, and habits of mind that students are expected to acquire at an institution of higher education" (National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, 2011). See the resource section for more information on how to write SLOs.

Curriculum Map

Curriculum mapping is a method to align instruction with desired goals and program outcomes. It can also be used to explore what is taught and how. See the resource section for more information on how to create a curriculum map.

Assessment Methods

Assessment methods are the tools we use to collect assessment data and information. There are both direct and indirect assessment methods. Direct methods are products or performances that can be used to assess how well students met expectations. Indirect methods are based on

perceived student learning. See the resource section for more information on assessment methods.

Rubrics

Rubrics are frequently used as an assessment method. A rubric can be defined as a descriptive guideline, a scoring guide or specific pre- established performance criteria in which each level of performance is described to contrast it with the performance at other levels.

Benchmarking

Benchmarking is setting criterion or standards for our assessment. Benchmarking is used to compare the results in order to judge the results.

Roles and Responsibilities for Assessment

Department/Unit Leadership
The success of student learning assessment is a result of leadership from each department or unit. Deans, department heads, and directors should communicate expectations regarding assessment. They need to ensure assessment of student learning occurs on a continuous, systematic cycle. They also need to ensure assessment plans are maintained and updated. Most importantly, each department needs to provide the human, financial, and physical resources needed to implement and sustain a high quality assessment process.

Assessment Coordinator(s)
Each program/co-curricular unit needs to identify one (or more) individual(s) to coordinate the program/co-curricular unit assessment plan. This may be a department head, program coordinator, a faculty member, or staff. Although each program/co-curricular unit has a designated assessment coordinator(s), all faculty and staff plays a role in assessment efforts. It is the Assessment Coordinator's responsibility to do or coordinate the following:
- Ensure the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) has the most current assessment plan on file by updating Planning (Campus Labs).
- Regularly update Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and aggregate assessment data in Outcomes (Campus Labs).
- Prepare Annual Assessment Summary Report(s).
- Respond to inquiries from the SDSU Assessment Sub-Committee of the Academic Affairs Committee.
- Meet periodically with the Vice Provost and Director of Institutional Assessment to provide assessment activity updates.
- Designate and notify professional and civil service staff who will support assessment efforts.
- Be engaged in the assessment process.
- Be a champion for a culture of learning (inquiry).
- Other task as identified.

Program/Unit Assessment Committees
Depending on the size of the program/co-curricular unit, the assessment coordinator may want to establish a committee that can assist in assessment efforts. Although not required, many areas on campus have benefited from having a program or unit assessment committee. The committee can help provide guidance, feedback, and make decisions on the assessment plan and program improvements.

Faculty and Staff of Program/Unit
Faculty and designated staff of the program/co-curricular unit must be active participants in all phases of the assessment process.

Faculty and staff are expected to:
- Contribute to and be familiar with the program/unit's assessment plan, processes, and procedures.
- Provide assessment information as requested.
- Participate in meetings and reviews as requested.
- Be engaged in the assessment process.
- Be a champion for a culture of learning (inquiry).
- Other tasks as identified.

SDSU Assessment Sub-Committee
The Assessment Sub-Committee oversees and evaluates learning outcomes assessment at SDSU. The SDSU Assessment Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of the Academic Affairs Committee. Members are identified by the Academic Affairs Committee. There will be at least one representative from each academic college (including graduate college and honors college), three representatives from students affairs, and two (one undergraduate and one graduate) student representatives. Each member will serve a three-year term. There will be one academic affairs liaison. The Director of Institutional Assessment is also a member and serves as the administrative liaison.

The Assessment Sub-Committee's primary responsibilities are to:
- Oversee implementation of assessment plans by programs and co-curricular units.
- Develop criteria (rubrics) or guidelines to strengthen assessment plans.
- Assist the Director of Institutional Assessment in coordinating an annual schedule of assessment activities, plans, and reports.
- Review guidelines, policies, and templates/forms related to assessment plans and reports.
- Provide constructive feedback and recommendations to programs/units regarding assessment plans and reports.
- Provide support, workshops, and consultation on assessment.
- Promote campus discussion and reflection on learning outcomes assessment.
- Be engaged in the assessment process.
- Be a champion for a culture of learning (inquiry).
- Other tasks as identified.

Director of Institutional Assessment
Located within the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA), the Director serves as the primary contact for all assessment activities. The Director is responsible for leading, maintaining, and improving institution-wide assessment programs that focuses on student learning outcomes and institutional improvement; interpreting assessment results and training others in assessment.

The Director of Institutional Assessment will:
- Implement and communicate guidelines and policy related to assessment activity.

- Oversee implementation of assessment plans by programs and co-curricular units.
- Coordinate an annual schedule of assessment activities, plans, and reports.
- Provide guidance on SLOs, assessment methods, and assessment plans.
- Provide support, workshops, and consultation on assessment.
- Promote campus discussion and reflection on learning outcomes assessment.
- Be a champion for a culture of learning (inquiry).
- Other tasks as identified.

Assessment Procedures and Processes

All academic programs and selected co-curricular units participated in the SDSU Assessment Academy (2016-2019). The Assessment Academy provided participants with the foundation for revising or developing assessment plans. Additional workshops will be designed and delivered for representatives from co-curricular programs and new academic programs which did not have the opportunity to participate in the assessment academy. There will also be regular educational opportunities on the assessment of student learning open to any SDSU units. These will be offered on a regular basis during the academic year.

The following describes minimum expectations for program and co-curricular assessment of student learning:

1. **Develop a program/co-curricular unit assessment plan**
   The creation of a strong assessment plan provides the foundation to understand student learning. An assessment plan template is located in the appendix.

   Each plan should include the following information (see resources below for additional information)
   - Mission/Vision Statements
   - Goals/Objectives
   - Student Learning Outcomes
   - Curriculum/Experience Map
   - Assessment Methods
   - Timeline
   - Relevant documents (surveys, course syllabi, rubrics, test items, etc.)

   As required by SDBOR, each undergraduate level assessment plan must include and identify 5 cross curricular skills (SDBOR Academic Affairs 2:11). At SDSU, one of the cross curricular skills must be Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity.

   Each graduate level assessment plan must include a communication student learning outcome, as well as one transferable skill learning outcome. See Resources for additional information.

   Assessment plans should be updated in Planning (Campus Labs).

2. **Collect and interpret assessment data**
   On an annual basis, programs/co-curricular units should be collecting data to support assessment activity.

   - Well-designed assessment plans include both direct and indirect methods of assessment.

- o Well-designed assessment plans include a group of faculty/staff assisting in the review and scoring of assessment data.
- o The data should be interpreted in such a way to make meaningful conclusions and decisions. Descriptive statistics and qualitative summaries are common.
- o Data interpretation should focus on both areas of strengths and areas that warrant attention.

3. **Report assessment findings:**
   - o Aggregate data should be entered into Outcomes (Campus Labs).
   - o Each September, programs and co-curricular units are expected to submit their Annual Assessment Summary Report (see appendix)
     - ▪ The report will summarize assessment activities that occurred over the course of the year.
     - ▪ The report will describe the extent to which the intended outcomes were achieved.
     - ▪ The report will indicate how results will be used.

4. **Using assessment findings and recommendations:**
   - o Programs and co-curricular units should create an action plan as part of the continuous improvement process.
   - o The action plan should consider how to make program/unit improvements that will enhance student learning.
   - o Assessment activities, findings, and improvement plans should be communicated to appropriate constituents (leadership, faculty/staff, and students).

Assessment Timeline

Fall Semester
Assessment data collection (as needed)

August	September	October	November	December
Department/Unit assessment meeting (suggested)	SLOs updated in Outcomes Assessment Plan updated in Planning Annual Assessment reports due to Assessment Office	Assessment Sub-Committee meeting and reviews	Assessment reviews returned to programs/units	Department/Unit assessment meeting (suggested)

Spring Semester
Assessment data collection (as needed)

January	September	October	November	December
Fall semester assessment data entered in Outcomes	SLOs updated in Outcomes Assessment Plan updated in Planning Annual Assessment reports due to Assessment Office	Assessment Sub-Committee meeting and reviews	Assessment reviews returned to programs/units	Department/Unit assessment meeting (suggested)

Assessment Management Software

Campus Labs is an integrated platform that allows SDSU to centralize assessment efforts. Campus Labs Planning is used to store all program/unit assessment plans. In addition, Planning allows faculty and staff to produce yearly assessment reports. Campus Labs Outcomes is the central repository that houses and tracks outcomes assessment data.

Users can access Planning and Outcomes by visiting: Campus Labs

Additional information is located in the resource section below.

Additional Assessment Activities

Course Level Assessment

Assessment plays an important role in course design. This includes assessing individual student learning within courses. It is expected that each course articulates what students will learn. As identified in the Course Syllabus Policy (SDSU 2:3; SDBOR Academic Affairs Guidelines 5.3), faculty must include the course goals, student learning outcomes, and evaluation procedures.

General Education Assessment

The General Education curriculum consists of System General Education Requirements. Policies identify (a) the purpose of the requirement, (b) the skills to be developed in each course that satisfies the requirement, and (c) the approved courses (SDBOR Policy 2:7, SDBOR Policy 2:26, SDBOR Academic Affairs Guidelines 8.3, and SDBOR Academic Affairs Guidelines 8.4).

Goal #1

Students will write effectively and responsibly and will understand and interpret the written expression of others.

- o As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:
  - Write using standard American English, including correct punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure,
  - Write logically,
  - Write persuasively, with a variety of rhetorical strategies (e.g., expository, argumentative, descriptive), and
  - Incorporate formal research and documentation into their writing, including research obtained through modern, technology-based research tools.

Goal #2

Students will communicate effectively and responsibly through listening and speaking.

- o As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:
  - Prepare and deliver speeches for a variety of audiences and settings;
  - Demonstrate speaking competencies including choice and use of topic, supporting materials, organizational pattern, language usage, presentational aids, and delivery; and
  - Demonstrate listening competencies by summarizing, analyzing, and paraphrasing ideas, perspectives and emotional content.

Goal #3

Students will understand the organization, potential, and diversity of the human community through study of the social sciences.

- o As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:
  - Identify and explain basic concepts, terminology, theories, and systems of inquiry of the selected social science disciplines.

- Apply selected social science concepts and theories to contemporary or historical issues from different behavioral, cultural, institutional, temporal, or spatial contexts.
- Analyze the extent and impact of diversity among individuals, cultures, or societies in contemporary or historical contexts using social science methods and concepts.

Goal #4

Students will understand the diversity and complexity of the human experience through study of the arts and humanities.

- o As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:
    - Demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of values, beliefs, and ideas embodied in the human experience;
    - Identify and explain basic concepts of the selected disciplines within the arts and humanities.
- o In addition, as a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will be able to do at least one of the following:
    - Identify and explain the contributions of other cultures from the perspective of the selected disciplines within the arts and humanities;
    - Demonstrate creative and aesthetic understanding;
    - Explain and interpret formal and stylistic elements of the literary or fine arts;
    - Demonstrate foundational competency in reading, writing, and speaking a non-English language.

Goal #5

Students will understand and apply fundamental mathematical processes and reasoning.

- o As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:
    - Use mathematical symbols and mathematical structure to model and solve real world problems,
    - Demonstrate appropriate communication skills related to mathematical terms and concepts.

Goal #6

Students will understand the fundamental principles of the natural sciences and apply scientific methods of inquiry to investigate the natural world

- o As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:
    - Explain the nature of science including how scientific explanation are formulated, tested, and modified or validated.
    - Distinguish between scientific and non-scientific evidence and explanations, and use scientific evidence to construct arguments related to contemporary issues.

- Apply basic observational, quantitative, or technological methods to gather and analyze data and generate evidence-based conclusions in a laboratory setting.
- Understand and apply foundational knowledge and discipline-specific concepts to address issues, solve problems, or predict natural phenomena.

Board of Regents Policy 2:11 Assessment sets forth the responsibility of assessing student learning outcomes for the general education curriculum approved in Board of Regents Policy 2:7 and 2:26 to the System Assessment and Testing Committee.

The general education assessment requirement and processes are described in the General Education Assessment Guidelines (SDBOR Academic Affairs Guidelines 8.7). Departments and faculty who provide courses for the general education curriculum are expected to participate in the general education assessment processes as needed.

As part of this process, an annual general education report will be provided to the SDSU General Education Sub-Committee for their review and approval.

Institutional Program Review/Accreditation
Assessment plays a central role in accreditation and Institutional Program Review (IPR) processes. The processes and expectations outlined in this handbook should complement but not override accreditation and IPR requirements.
For additional information on the IPR purpose and process, please visit: SDSU Institutional Program Review on InsideState

Institutional Level Assessment
The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) leads institutional level assessment efforts. Institutional level assessment is conducted for internal improvement or to meet external accountability demands. Examples of institutional level assessment includes the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), Senior Exit survey, First Destination survey, and the Campus Climate survey.

Assessment Resources

[Writing Student Learning Outcomes](#)

[Developing a curriculum/experience map](#)

[Assessment Methods](#)

[Assessment plan rubric](#)

[Outcomes Getting Started](#)

Appendix

South Dakota State University
Academic Program/Co-Curricular Unit Assessment Plan Template

Academic Program/Unit Name	Sample Program/Unit Name
Department/Office	Sample Department/Office
Department Head/Administrator	Sample Department Head/Administrator
Assessment Coordinator	Sample Assessment Coordinator
Phone	000-000-0000
Email	sample@sdstate.edu
Date	00/00/0000

SDSU Mission & Vision Statement

Mission Statement

South Dakota State University offers a rich academic experience in an environment of inclusion and access through inspired, student-centered education, creative activities and research, innovation and engagement that improve the quality of life in South Dakota, the region, the nation, and the world.

Vision Statement

South Dakota State University will be a premier land-grant university recognized for high value, innovation, and bold impact.

Core Values

- **People-Centered**: We recognize leadership is derived from service to others. We are committed to creating a culture where all thrive and are supported on their own personal and professional paths toward lifelong learning, growth, and leadership.
- **Creativity**: Creativity is our cornerstone to expand knowledge, develop human understanding, and enrich quality of life. We believe that education and research/scholarship/creative activity reinforce one another and the best academic programs bring innovative teaching and rigorous research together.
- **Integrity**: We act with organizational and personal integrity, through honest interactions, professionalism, transparent and accountable decision-making, and respect for others.
- **Diversity**: We are committed to diversity of community and ideas. We believe in a supportive, inclusive, collaborative, and cohesive environment with a focus on access. We actively seek collaboration and we respect individuals with differing perspectives, backgrounds, and areas of expertise.
- **Excellence**: Excellence is achieved through continuous improvement, assessment, and accountability. We embrace bold action and adapt to an ever-changing environment. Individually, we are experts at what we do. Collectively, our impact is even greater.

Goals

- Achieve excellence through transformative education
- Cultivate and strengthen community engagement
- Foster innovation and increase Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA)
- Be a growing, high-performing and health university

Academic Program/Co-Curricular Unit Mission/Vision/goals statements

Add the program/co-curricular unit statements

Academic Program/Co-curricular Unit Outcomes Description

Describe student learning outcomes (SLOs). Outcomes identify knowledge, skills, abilities, etc., students should be able to demonstrate upon completion of program or experience. Outcomes need to be specific and measurable. For Undergraduate programs, please identify the cross curricular skills.

Curriculum/Experience Map ("Learning Opportunities")

Curriculum mapping is a method to align instruction with desired goals and program outcomes. It can also be used to explore what is taught and how.
- *Documents what is taught and when*
- *Reveals gaps in curriculum/event planning*
- *Helps design an assessment plan*
- *Improves communication among faculty/staff*
- *Improves program coherence*
- *Increases likelihood students achieve program-level outcomes*
- *Encourages reflective practice*

Learning Objective	Course/Experience	Course/Experience	Course/Experience	Course/Experience	Course/Experience
SLO #1					
SLO #2					
SLO #3					
SLO #4					
SLO #5					

*(I = Introduce; R = Reinforce; M = Master; * = Assessment data collected)*

Assessment Methods Description

Describe the academic program/co-curricular unit assessment methods/design. Include benchmarks/criteria for success. Include sampling technique if applicable.

Direct Measures (examples: exams, portfolios, papers, presentations, etc.)

Describe the direct measures, how/when the information is collected, where the data is stored, and how it is analyzed. If applicable, attach instrument and/or rubrics in appendix

Indirect Measures (examples: surveys, interviews, enrollment/retention data, etc.)

> *<<Describe the indirect measures, how/when the information is collected, where the data is stored, and how it is analyzed. If applicable, attach instrument and/or in appendix>>*

Timeline

> Create a timeline to that provides a year by year overview of the assessment plan. Describe each step and who will be responsible for each component. Include short-term and long-term goals.

Communication Plan

> Describe how you plan to communicate/distribute your assessment plan. Where and who can access the information? Consider students as part of the communication plan

Appendix

> Attach relevant documents/surveys/course syllabus/rubrics/etc.

South Dakota State University
Academic Program/Co-Curricular Unit Annual Assessment Summary Report Template

Program/Unit Name	Sample Program/Unit Name
Department/Office	Sample Department/Office
Department Head/Administrator	Sample Department Head/Administrator
Assessment Coordinator	Sample Assessment Coordinator
Phone	000-000-0000
Email	Sample@sdstate.edu
Date	00/00/0000

Assessment Activities

List the program/unit student learning outcomes measured over the last 12 months?

Indicate where the program/co-curricular unit SLOs are published:

☐ SDSU Course Catalog
☐ Department website. URL: _____
☐ Course Syllabi. URL if available: _____
☐ Information flyer/brochure
☐ Other. Please describe: _____

State the assessment questions/focus for the current year or over the past 12 months:

Select the program or unit level assessment activities that took place over the last 12 months:

☐ Create/modify/discuss assessment plan (e.g. SLOs, curriculum map, rubrics, surveys, etc.)
☐ Collect/evaluate student work/performance
☐ Collect/analyze student self-reports of learning
☐ Used assessment results to make programmatic decisions (curriculum changes, course offerings, etc.)
☐ Other. Please describe: _____

What types of evidence did the program use as part of its assessment activities

☐ Standardized/national exams
☐ Locally-developed exams
☐ Qualifying/comprehensive exam
☐ Thesis/Dissertation
☐ Course-embedded assignment
☐ Culminating/capstone project
☐ Portfolio
☐ Artistic exhibition/performance
☐ Publication or grant proposal
☐ Observation
☐ Interviews/focus groups
☐ Student reflective writing
☐ Student surveys
☐ Employer survey
☐ Alumni survey
☐ Other. Please describe: _____

Describe and summarize the assessment activities that took place:

Assessment Results

Who interpreted or analyzed the evidence that was collected?
☐ Course instructor(s)
☐ Faculty/staff committee
☐ Persons/organization outside the university
☐ Students
☐ Dean/department head/director
☐ Other. Please describe: _____

How did they evaluate, analyze, or interpret the evidence?
☐ Scored exam/test/quiz
☐ Rubric/scoring guide
☐ Aggregate survey results
☐ Qualitative methods (coding, themes, etc.)
☐ Other. Please describe: _____

State the number of students (or persons) who submitted evidence that was evaluated. If applicable, please include the sampling technique used.

Summarize the results of the assessment activities that took place over the last 12 months

Discuss to what extent the program or unit met the benchmarks:

Continuous Improvement

Which best describes how the program or unit used the results

☐ Assessment procedure change (SLOs, curriculum map, rubrics, evidence, sampling, etc.)

☐ Course changes

☐ Personnel or resource allocation changes

☐ Program policy changes (e.g. admission requirement, student probation policies, etc.)

☐ Student experience changes (e.g. advising, program handbook, workshops, etc.)

☐ Celebration of student success

☐ Results indicate no action needed

☐ Other. Please describe: _____

Describe how the results were used or will be used to make program/unit improvements:

Beyond the results, were there additional conclusions or discoveries (these can include insights regarding assessment procedures, teaching and learning, and significant achievements):

How was this information communicated with internal and external constituents?

Please describe any additional changes to the assessment plan based on these results:

If the program did not engage in assessment activities, please explain:

References

Higher Learning Commission. (2017). *Criteria for Accreditation*. Retrieved May 10, 2018 from https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/criteria-and-core-components.html

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (2011). *Student learning outcomes statements*. Retrieved May 10, 2018 from http://learningoutcomesassessment.org/TFComponentSLOS.htm

Palomba, C. A., & Banta, T. W. (1999). *Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in Higher Education. Higher and Adult Education Series*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Wehlburg, C. M. (2007). Closing the feedback loop is not enough: the assessment spiral. *Assessment Update, 19*(2), 1-15.