

# Office of University Accreditation

## Program of Institutional Effectiveness

### University of North Texas

Academic Degree Programs  
Academic Departments & Divisions  
Administrative Support Units  
Institution



## Table of Contents

	Introduction .....	1
	What is Institutional Effectiveness (IE) .....	1
	The Institutional Effectiveness Cycle .....	2
	Institutional Effectiveness Levels .....	3
	UNT Program of Institutional Effectiveness.....	4
	Academic Degree Programs.....	5
	Mission & Vision Statements of Purpose.....	5
	Mission Statement .....	5
	Vision Statement.....	5
	Academic Plans .....	6
	Academic Expected Outcomes – Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s).....	6
	Means of Assessment .....	6
	Related Goals .....	8
	Results .....	8
	Recommendations and Follow up (Improvement Actions) .....	9
	Academic Departments and Divisions .....	10
	Mission & Vision Statements of Purpose.....	10
	Mission Statement .....	10
	Vision Statement.....	10
	Academic Department/Division Plans .....	11
	Department/Division Expected Outcomes .....	11
	Means of Assessment .....	11
	Related Goals .....	13
	Results .....	13
	Recommendations for Improvement .....	14
	Administrative Support Units.....	15
	Mission & Vision Statements of Purpose.....	15
	Mission Statement .....	15
	Vision Statement.....	15

Administrative Support Unit Plans..... 16

    Administrative Support Unit Expected Outcomes..... 16

    Means of Assessment ..... 16

    Related Goals ..... 18

    Results..... 18

    Recommendations for Improvement ..... 19

 Summary Reports (post review) – Institution..... 20

 References ..... 21

 Suggested Materials..... 21

## Introduction

### What is Institutional Effectiveness (IE)

Institutional Effectiveness is the systematic and ongoing process of collecting, analyzing, and implementing data-driven decisions as related to the goals and outcomes in support of UNT's Strategic Plan. The University Accreditation office oversees IE and Improve, the IE database. In general, UNT will focus on these two major categories of expected outcomes of organizational function:

1. Academic Expected Outcomes (Student Learning Outcomes [SLOs])
2. Non-Academic Outcomes (Administrative Outcomes [AOs])

According to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), IE responsibilities are defined as:

### Comprehensive Standard 7.1-3 Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

Effective institutions demonstrate a commitment to the principles of continuous improvement. These principles are based on a systematic and documented process of assessing institutional performance with respect to mission in all aspects of the institution. An institutional planning and effectiveness process involves all programs, services and constituencies; is linked to the decision-making process at all levels; and provides a sound basis for budgetary decisions and resource allocations.

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is an integral component of the reaffirmation of accreditation process and is derived from an institution's ongoing comprehensive planning and evaluation processes. It reflects and affirms a commitment to enhance overall institutional quality and effectiveness by focusing on an issue the institution considers important to improving student learning outcomes and/or student success.

- 1. The institution engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that (a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and (b) incorporate a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission. (Institutional Planning) [CR]**
2. The institution has a Quality Enhancement Plan that (a) has a topic identified through its ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes; (b) has broad-based support of institutional constituencies; (c) focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success; (d) commits resources to initiate, implement and complete the QEP; and (e) includes a plan to assess achievement. (Quality Enhancement Plan)
- 3. The institution identifies expected outcomes of its administrative support services and demonstrates the extent to which the outcomes are achieved. (Administrative effectiveness)**

## Comprehensive Standard 8.1-2

Student learning and student success are at the core of the mission of all institutions of higher learning. Effective institutions focus on the design and improvement of educational experiences to enhance student learning and support student learning outcomes for its educational programs. To meet the goals of educational programs, an institution provides appropriate academic and student services to support student success.

**1. The institution identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success. (Student achievement) [Core Requirement]**

**2. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:**

- a. **Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs. (Student outcomes: educational programs)**
- b. **Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs. (Student outcomes: general education)**
- c. **Academic and student services that support student success. (Student outcomes: academic and student services)**

### The Institutional Effectiveness Cycle

Institutional Effectiveness is an ongoing cycle of planning, assessment, measurement, and implementing the data-driven decision process “closing the loops”. UNT has designated the following timetable for IE:

- **October 15<sup>th</sup>** -- all results entered with evidence, improvement recommendations and follow up updated for the previous academic year. Units should put emphasis on documenting how student learning or administrative processes were improved or advanced. Documentation required;
- **October 15<sup>th</sup>** – any new outcomes and/or means of assessment to be entered in Improve<sup>®</sup> for the upcoming academic year. Units should put emphasis on crafting well defined outcomes, identifying assessment strategies and establishing criteria for success.
- **October 15<sup>th</sup> - May 31<sup>st</sup>** – all data to be reviewed from the previous academic year for compliance with Principles of Accreditation (SACSCOC). UA puts emphasis on ensuring data is complete, thorough and consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

## **Institutional Effectiveness Levels**

The University of North Texas recognizes five levels of organizational structure for Institutional Effectiveness. UNT identifies these levels of organization as:

1. Institutional (UNT)
2. Summary (Vice Presidents & Colleges)
3. Administrative Support Units
4. Academic Departments/Divisions
5. Academic Degree Programs

Responsibilities assigned to each level will be fully described in later sections.

## UNT Program of Institutional Effectiveness

The general assumptions for the UNT Program of Institutional Effectiveness within the Office of University Accreditation (UA) are:

- A. The overarching goal for the Program of Institutional Effectiveness is engineered to continually improve student learning, degree program effectiveness, and generate support for the UNT Strategic Plan.
- B. Results generated from the Institutional Effectiveness Process are to be used for program/departmental/administrative support unit assessment and improvements. **Results are not to be used for evaluation in matters of tenure, promotion, merit review, or any other human resource decision process.**
- C. Collecting, analyzing, and entering data into Improve should not be the responsibility of just one person. **Assessment should always be a team effort.**
- D. Assessment should be embedded in all academic and non-academic activities.
- E. The data-informed decision process relies on the measurement and assessment of all expected outcomes to validate any and all changes in degree programs, academic support services, and for the periodic renovation of the UNT Strategic Plan.

## Academic Degree Programs

### Mission & Vision Statements of Purpose

#### Mission Statement

Mission statements at the program level may reflect either the departmental mission statement or the college mission statement. The SACSCOC liaison officer has advised UNT programs to establish, as much as is possible, a unique mission statement which reflects the goals and guidance of the program. For example:

- **Foundation** – relationship of the program to the departmental/college mission;
- **Role** – the part that the program plays in achievement of the departmental/college mission;
- **Goals** – the expected outcome from participation in the program
- **Guidance** – how the participant will be guided toward the successful completion of the program

Sample Mission Statement:

- *The degree program for Chemistry – Bachelor of Arts within the Department of Chemistry at the UNT College of Science was founded in order to fulfill regional, national, and international requirements for highly skilled personnel trained to work in various and ongoing chemistry related concerns. Students completing the requirements in this program will possess the skills of chemical analysis, chemical materials management, and research for chemical related fields of study. All students will complete the core competencies and a practical internship prior to the conferral of the degree for Chemistry – Bachelor of Arts.*

#### Vision Statement

Vision Statements at the program level may reflect either the departmental vision statement or the college vision statement.

Sample Vision Statement:

- *The degree program for Chemistry – Bachelor of Arts supports the vision of the College of Science in attaining the goal as a national contender for instruction in the Natural Sciences by the year 2019 through increased research and partnerships in order to ensure that each program participant experiences the best possible learning environment in the discipline of Chemistry.*

## Academic Plans

### Academic Expected Outcomes – (Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's))

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) “describe what the students will *think* (affective), *know* (cognitive), or *do* (behavioral/performance) when they have completed a degree program” (Nichols & Nichols, 2005, p.75). SLO's should be constructed as a simple sentence. For example:

- Students will be able to apply the laws of thermodynamics to explain the heat source/output of machinery.

In alignment with the model from Nichols et al. (2005), this sample SLO states that the student will know how to apply thermodynamics to a model of machinery as related to heat source/output. Another example is one from journalism in which the student demonstrates editorial skills.

- The student will accurately edit copy ready for print in a newspaper/periodical.

SLO's are simple statements about the skills bank that a student will possess once he/she completes the degree program. Each SLO should identify a singular outcome. UNT degree programs will focus on 3-5 outcomes each academic year. A degree program IE plan may have more than 3-5 outcomes within their plan; however, only the outcomes which are to be measured will be considered active.

### Means of Assessment

Once the SLO is identified, a means of assessment must be constructed in order to effectively measure the outcome. SLOs must be assessed by at least one direct measure. Examples of direct measures include:

1. Capstone Assignment/Project
2. Course Assignment
3. Course Exam
4. Employer/Supervisor Evaluation for Field Placement/Internship
5. Performance Evaluation
6. Portfolio Review
7. Standardized Test
8. Writing Samples

Once the category has been identified, the assessment method needs to be defined. An example from an accounting degree program is provided.

- Expected Outcome Name - Technical Competence
- Expected Outcome – Student will demonstrate technical competence in the accounting field.
- Assessment Category – Course Exam
- **Assessment Method** – Course embedded questions are pulled from written exams in ACCT 5330, ACCT 5320, and ACCT 5140.

A second example is provided from an outcome in the Criminal Justice program.

- Expected Outcome Name – Effective Communication
- Expected Outcome – Students will demonstrate an ability to effectively communicate their declarative knowledge regarding criminal justice.
- Assessment Category – Course Assignment
- **Assessment Method** –Criminal Justice majors are assessed by presenting a paper in required course CJUS 5800. The attached rubric is used to measure communication skills.

The remaining two portions under means of assessment are assigning the *criterion* and *schedule*. All criteria should reflect a percentage or success rate ascribed to the SLO, for example:

- 80% or more of the responding students will score a minimum of 8 out of 10 points as indicated on the rubric.

It is important to note here that a rubric should be assigned to the criterion which clearly and succinctly describes the process. Additionally, a copy of the assignment will clarify your process to a reviewer.

A schedule is the time frame for which the assessment will take place. For example:

- The assessment is completed each spring semester.

Schedules can vary in time and frequency; yet, the assessment must take place within the academic year for which the SLO is considered to be active.

## Related Goals

The UNT Strategic Plan, Expected Core Outcomes, or other alternate goals assigned to the degree program are available via check box format in the related goals section of the plan. Goals are to be checked where the SLO demonstrates symmetrical relationship(s). At least one goal should be related (checked) for a single SLO. For example:

Goal 1 – Provide the best undergraduate educational experience in Texas.

## Results

Results are data recorded for the SLO in the active academic year. Always include the total number of students assessed; the % meeting or exceeding the criterion; a summary statement; and evidence of the resulting data. Data are recorded as tables, charts, rubrics, performance scores, or other means of data expression as related to the SLO. For example:

- 27 students completed this assessment. 89% of the students achieved a minimum of 8 points. The criterion was met. A copy of the results tally is attached in the document repository for review.

A drop-down menu is available in the system for *result type*. Select the option provided:

1. Criterion Met
2. Criterion Not Met
3. Inconclusive

A drop-down menu is available in the system for the *change status*. Select the option provided:

1. Change Made
2. Change Recommended
3. No Change

**It is important to note that using “no change” repeatedly is not acceptable.** If the data you are collecting does not provide your unit with information that can be used to improve or advance the unit, then examine a different outcome in your IE plan.

## Recommendations and Follow up (Improvement Actions)

Recommendations are made to improve and/or advance student learning based on the results of your assessment. A recommendation for improvement based on results is a required component. The unit should reflect, as a team, on the results of the assessment and decide what the next steps will be for the unit.

- What does the data tell you about your unit? Did you meet your expected criterion for success?
- What strengths or weaknesses were identified?
- If the criterion was not met, what steps will the program take to improve the student learning experience?
- If the criterion was met successfully, should the criterion be raised? If the criterion has been successfully met for two or more cycles, a program using multiple assessment methods should consider examining a different student learning outcome. If the outcome has been assessed using only one method, the program may want to consider using a different assessment method to verify student attainment.
- Follow up on previous recommendations each year. If you recommended a change, what it made? Has it had any effect on the results?

## Academic Departments and Divisions

### Mission & Vision Statements of Purpose

#### Mission Statement

Mission statements at the department and division level may reflect either the college mission statement or the institutional mission statement. For example:

- Foundation – relationship of the department/division to the college/institutional mission;
- Role – the part that the department/division plays in achievement of the college/institutional mission;
- Goals – the expected outcome for the department/division;
- Guidance – how the department/division will guide the programs towards the successful fulfillment of the department/division mission.

Sample Mission Statement:

- *The mission of the professional programs in accounting at the University of North Texas are to prepare a diverse student body for careers in industry, public accounting, and the nonprofit sector primarily in the North Texas region.*

#### Vision Statement

Vision Statements at the department/division level may reflect either the college mission statement or the institutional mission statement.

Sample Vision Statement:

- *The vision of the professional programs in accounting at the University of North Texas is to graduate the most knowledgeable and highly sought after accounting professionals in the North Texas region.*

## Academic Department/Division Plans

### Department/Division Expected Outcomes

Administrative Outcomes (AO's) at the department/division level should be "*leading the faculty* in conducting assessment activities resulting in substantive program improvement" (Nichols & Nichols, 2005, p.58). This may be accomplished by the data-driven decision process which entails:

- What goals are to be accomplished by the department/division;
- How are the goals to be accomplished by the department/division;
- When is the goal to be completed by the department/division;
- What resources will be needed to enable the department/division to accomplish these goals?

An example of an AO from a department in the College of Business might be:

- The department will experience a consistent increase in undergraduate and graduate enrollments during the next five years.

The goal is to increase student enrollment within the department with an expressed timeline of five years. Another example would be:

- Faculty will produce applied and basic research through journal publications and conference proceedings and presentations.

The goal is to produce research and that the research is published in professional journals and presentation at conferences.

### Means of Assessment

Once the AO is identified, a means of assessment must be constructed in order to effectively measure the outcome. A drop-down box has been provided with the following options:

1. Enrollment Data
2. Frequency of Occurrence
3. Internal Audit or Report
4. Number of Complaints
5. Participation Rates
6. Supervisory Approval
7. Survey

Once the category has been identified, the assessment method needs to be defined. An example from a department is provided.

- Expected Outcome Name – Student Enrollment
- Expected Outcome – The department will experience a consistent increase in undergraduate and graduate enrollments within the next five years.
- Assessment Category – Enrollment Data
- **Assessment Method** – Student Credit Hour (SCH) report prepared each semester.

A second example is provided from another department.

- Expected Outcome Name – High Impact Practices
- Expected Outcome – Students will participate in service learning.
- Assessment Category – Frequency of Occurrence
- **Assessment Method** – The number of students that participate in internships/co-op jobs.

The remaining two portions under means of assessment are assigning the *criterion* and *schedule*. All criteria should reflect a percentage or success rate ascribed to the AO, for example:

- At least 30% of our majors will participate in internships/co-op opportunities.

It is important to note here that a rubric/tally sheet should be assigned to the criterion which clearly and succinctly describes the data collection process.

A schedule is the time frame for which the assessment will take place. For example:

- The data collection will take place at the close of each fall semester.

**Schedules can vary in time and frequency, but the assessment must take place within the academic year for which the AO is considered to be active.**

## Related Goals

The UNT Strategic Plan, Expected Core Outcomes, or other alternate goals assigned to the department/division are available via check box format in the related goals section of the plan. Goals are to be checked where the AO demonstrates symmetrical relationship(s). More than one goal may be checked for a single AO. For example:

- Goal 3: Become a national leader among universities in student support, employee relations, operational effectiveness and service to constituencies
  
- Goal 4: Establish UNT as a nationally recognized, engaged university and regional leader by building and expanding mutually beneficial partnerships and resources

## Results

Results are report data recorded for the AO in the active academic year. Data are recorded as tables, charts, rubrics, or other means of data expression as related to the AO. For example:

- After compilation, data show 77% of graduating seniors (n= 100) have contracted gainful employment within their chosen career path. A tally sheet has been attached in the document repository for review.

A drop-down menu is available in the system for *result type*. Select the option provided:

1. Criterion Met
2. Criterion Not Met
3. Inconclusive

A drop-down menu is available in the system for the *change status*. Select the option provided:

1. Change Made
2. Change Recommended
3. No Change

It is important to note that using “no change” repeatedly is not acceptable. If the data you are collecting does not provide your unit with information that can be used to improve or advance the unit, then examine a different outcome in your IE plan.

## Recommendations for Improvement

A recommendation for Improvement based on results is a required component. The unit should reflect, as a team, on the results of the assessment and decide what the next steps will be for the unit.

- What does the data tell you about your unit? Did you meet your expected criterion for success?
- What strengths or weaknesses were identified?
- If the criterion was not met, what steps will the program take to improve?
- If the criterion was met successfully, should the criterion be raised? If the criterion has been successfully met for two or more cycles, a program using multiple assessment methods should consider examining a different administrative outcome. If the outcome has been assessed using only one method, the program may want to consider using a different assessment method to verify the results.
- Follow up on previous recommendations each year. If you recommended a change, what it made? Has it had any effect on the results?

## Administrative Support Units

### Mission & Vision Statements of Purpose

#### Mission Statement

Mission statements at the Administrative Support Units (ASU) reflect the institutional mission statement or alternate goals established in conjunction to the institutional mission. For example:

- Foundation – relationship of the ASU to the institutional mission or alternate goal(s);
- Role – the part that the ASU plays in achievement of the institutional mission or alternate goal(s);
- Goals – the expected outcome for the ASU;
- Guidance – how the ASU will guide the service units toward the successful fulfillment of the institutional mission or alternate goal(s).

Sample Mission Statement:

- *The Office of Enrollment Management provides leadership for UNT to reach its goals through enrollment success. We conceptualize enrollment success through the achievement of three student-oriented goals:*
  1. *Outreach - We reach out to our community and others to increase the college-going rate in the region and the state.*
  2. *Recruitment - We shape our university with our students in mind, creating a student-centered learning environment, and attracting quality students to UNT.*
  3. *Academic Success - Enrollment success culminates in the success of our students. We guide our students to achieve academic success and timely graduation.*

#### Vision Statement

Vision Statements for the ASU may reflect either the institutional mission statement or alternate goal(s).

Sample Vision Statement:

- *Our vision is to provide an integrated learning and service environment that welcomes all students and guests to the University of North Texas. Through collaboration, we foster an evolving comprehensive program of essential services for our diverse university community. In an ever-changing world, we are dedicated to continual growth and life-long learning.*

## Administrative Support Unit Plans

### Administrative Support Unit Expected Outcomes

Administrative Outcomes (AO's) at the ASU level should answer the question "how will the unit know it is accomplishing its purpose and is providing the described services to its clients" (Nichols & Nichols, 2005, p.146). This may be accomplished by the data-driven decision process for the ASU which entails:

- "How well do our current administrative services work;
- What is the skill/knowledge we want our clients to receive from the current services offered;
- Are the students we serve learning from the current services offered;
- What is the level of satisfaction of our clients with current services offered?"

(Nichols & Nichols, 2005, p. 147)

An example of an AO from the Veteran's Center:

- Faculty and staff participating in the Green Zone Training Program will demonstrate knowledge of resources available to assist student veterans in transition from military to campus life.

Another example from Libraries is:

- Usage of Library space will increase as a result of innovative design.

### Means of Assessment

Once the AO is identified, a means of assessment must be constructed in order to effectively measure the outcome. A drop-down box has been provided with the following options:

1. Enrollment Data
2. Frequency of Occurrence
3. Internal Audit or Report
4. Number of Complaints
5. Participation Rates
6. Supervisory Approval
7. Survey

Once the category has been identified, the assessment method needs to be defined. An example from institutional research is provided.

- Expected Outcome Name – Response Time
- Expected Outcome – The Institutional Research Office will provide a forty-eight (48) hour response time for the ad-hoc request for UNT related information at a proficiency level of eighty-five (85) percent.
- Assessment Category – Internal Audit or Report
- **Assessment Method** – Each analyst within the office maintains a log of ad-hoc request. The office manager will tally and process both the amount of ad-hoc request and the rate at which the request were satisfied. The Director of Institutional Research will evaluate the data results for compliance with the Expected Outcome.

A second example is provided from Libraries.

- Expected Outcome Name – Use Awareness of Collections and Services
- Expected Outcome – Increase user awareness of current collections and services.
- Assessment Category – Frequency of Occurrence
- **Assessment Method** – Compare the number of external partnerships that supported outreach activities in the current academic year with the number in the previous year.

The remaining two portions under means of assessment are assigning the *criterion* and *schedule*. All criteria should reflect a percentage or success rate ascribed to the AO, for example:

- At least three additional partnerships.

It is important to note here that a rubric/tally sheet should be assigned to the criterion which clearly and succinctly describes the data collection process.

A schedule is the time frame for which the assessment will take place. For example:

- September 01, 2018 – August 31, 2019.

**Schedules can vary in time and frequency; yet, the assessment must take place within the academic year for which the AO is considered to be active.**

## Related Goals

The UNT Strategic Plan, Expected Core Outcomes, or other alternate goals assigned to the department/division are available via check box format in the related goals section of the plan. Goals are to be checked where the AO demonstrates symmetrical relationship(s). More than one goal may be checked for a single AO. For example:

Goal 3: Become a national leader among universities in student support, employee relations, operational effectiveness and service to constituencies

Goal 4: Establish UNT as a nationally recognized, engaged university and regional leader by building and expanding mutually beneficial partnerships and resources

## Results

Results are report data recorded for the AO in the active academic year. Data are recorded as tables, charts, rubrics, or other means of data expression as related to the AO. For example:

- After compilation, data show 100% of the objective has been met. A tally sheet has been attached in the document repository for review.

A drop-down menu is available in the system for *result type*. Select the option provided:

1. Criterion Met
2. Criterion Not Met
3. Inconclusive

A drop-down menu is available in the system for the *change status*. Select the option provided:

1. Change Made
2. Change Recommended
3. No Change

It is important to note that using “no change” repeatedly is not acceptable. If the data you are collecting does not provide your unit with information that can be used to improve or advance the unit, then examine a different outcome.

## Recommendations for Improvement

A recommendation for improvement based on results is a required component. The unit should reflect, as a team, on the results of the assessment and decide what the next steps will be for the unit.

- What does the data tell you about your unit? Did you meet your expected criterion for success?
- What strengths or weaknesses were identified?
- If the criterion was not met, what steps will the unit take to improve?
- If the criterion was met successfully, should the criterion be raised? If the criterion has been successfully met for two or more cycles, a unit using multiple assessment methods should consider examining a different administrative outcome. If the outcome has been assessed using only one method, the unit may want to consider using a different assessment method to verify the results.

## Using Assessment Data to Implement Change

The following are examples of changes that may be implemented as a result of an assessment activity at UNT:

<p><b>Changes to the Assessment Plan</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ revision of intended student learning outcomes</li> <li>▪ revision of measurement approaches</li> <li>▪ changes in data collection methods</li> <li>▪ changes in targets/standards</li> <li>▪ changes in sampling techniques</li> </ul>
<p><b>Changes to the Program/Service</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ changes in facilitation techniques</li> <li>▪ revision of delivery methods</li> <li>▪ revision of program content/service components</li> <li>▪ addition of programs/services</li> <li>▪ deletion of program/services</li> </ul>
<p><b>Changes to the Decision Making Process</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ revision of marketing methods</li> <li>▪ revision of staffing patterns</li> <li>▪ reallocation of fiscal resources for program/service</li> <li>▪ improvements to technology/technology tools</li> <li>▪ changes in scheduling and timing of program/service</li> <li>▪ suggested policy recommendations</li> </ul>

*Adapted from University of Central Florida UCF Academic Program Assessment Handbook, February 2005, Information, Analysis, and Assessment*

## Summary Reports – Institution

The Institutional Effectiveness Academic Committee (IEAC) and the Institutional Effectiveness Administrative Committee (IEAC) compile peer reviews of the each unit's report. Summary reports are prepared at the end of the academic year which encompasses all Academic Programs, Departments/Divisions, and Administrative Support Units. These master reports provide roll-up data for the executive branch of the institution as a whole. These reports are linked to the Unit or Departmental Institutional Reports which are prepared for the accreditation and renovation(s) of strategic plans, academic goals, and other summary processes related to the operation(s) of the institution.

## References

- American Association for Higher Education (1996). *AAHE assessment forum: 9 Principles of good practice for assessing student learning*. Retrieved June 18, 2009 from [http://www.academicprograms.calpoly.edu/pdfs/assess/nine\\_principles\\_good\\_practice.pdf](http://www.academicprograms.calpoly.edu/pdfs/assess/nine_principles_good_practice.pdf)
- Nichols, J.O., & Nichols, K.W. (2005). *A road map for improvement of student learning and support services through assessment*. New Jersey: Agathon Press.

## Suggested Materials

- Berk, R.A., (2006). *Thirteen strategies to measure college teaching*. Virginia: Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Bers, R.H., & Seybert, J.A. (1999). *Effective Reporting*. Florida: Association for Institutional Research.
- Gronlund, N.E., & Brookhart, S.M. (2009). *Gronlund's writing instructional objectives* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Kuh, G.D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J.H., & Whitt, E.J. (2005). *Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter*. California: Jossey-Bass.
- Nichols, J.O., & Nichols, K.W. (2005). *A road map for improvement of student learning and support services through assessment*. New Jersey: Agathon Press.
- Suskie, L. (2004). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. Massachusetts: Anker Publishing Company.
- Walvoord, B.E. (2004). *Assessment clear and simple: A practical guide for institutions, departments, and general education*. California: Jossey-Bass.

## Developing a Campus-Wide Language of Assessment

### *Accountability*

The demand by a community (public officials, employers, and taxpayers) for school officials to prove that money invested in education has led to measurable learning.

### *Action Research*

Research involving the systematic collection of data in order to address certain questions and issue so as to improve delivery of student support services, student success, and effectiveness.

### *Affective Outcomes*

Outcomes of program/service that reflect feelings more than understanding; likes, pleasures, ideals, dislikes, annoyances, values.

### *Annual Report*

A report from each department based on its strategic plan that is submitted annually, which outlines how the department managed to achieve goals. Describes key accomplishments, outlines key performance indicators and tracks usage statistics, number of programs/events offered and staff demographic patterns.

### *Assessment*

The systematic collection, review, and use of information about Student Affairs programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.

### *Assessment Cycle*

The assessment cycle varies by department. Typically, it is dictated by the programs and services and may include program design, instrument development, data collection, data analysis and program modifications. This cycle in an ideal setting will be fluid, dynamic, ongoing and cyclical in nature.

### *Assessment Tool*

Any instrument that has been designed to collect objective data about students' knowledge and skill acquisition.

### *Assessment Literacy*

The possession of knowledge about the basic principles of sound assessment practice, including terminology, the development and use of assessment methodologies and techniques,

familiarity with standards of quality in assessment. Increasingly familiar with alternatives to traditional measurements of learning.

### *Benchmark*

Student performance standards (the level(s) of student competence in a content area). Also refers to the practice of researching the activities of peer institutions to make knowledgeable comparisons.

### *Cohort*

A group whose progress is followed by means of measurements at different points in time. Examples might include LeaderShape participants, REAL community residents (by program or as a whole), first year RLA staff, etc.

### *Confidence Interval*

Range with a specified probability that a result lies within that range. Example: 95% confidence level = there is a 95% chance the result lies within this range. Confidence interval  $\pm 2.5$  = plus/minus 2.5 percentage points (e.g. opinion polls). The width of the confidence interval gives us some idea about how uncertain we are about the difference in the means. A very wide interval may indicate that more data should be collected before anything definite can be said. In social science research, a CI  $\pm 3$  is considered very strong.

### *Criterion Referenced Assessment*

An assessment in which the results can be used to determine a student's progress toward mastery of a content area. Performance is compared to an expected level of mastery in a content area rather than to other students' scores. Such assessments usually include questions based on what the student was taught through Division programs and are designed to measure the student's mastery of designated objectives of a program/service.

The "criterion" is the standard of performance established as the passing level of knowledge for the assessment. Scores have meaning in terms of what the student knows or can do, rather than how the student compares to a reference or norm group.

### *Direct Assessment*

Assessment to gauge student achievement of learning outcomes directly from their work or interaction with program/service.

### *Effect size*

Measures the magnitude of the result, and can be interpreted as an indicator of how much use in the real world does a result have. "Something is going on here." Effect sizes are utilized to let

the researcher know how large the differences are and if the differences found have any practical significance. Effect sizes range from 0 to 1 (or 0 to -1 for nonparametric data). Cohen (1988) recommends researchers interpret findings utilizing anchors for large effect sizes as  $R^2 = .25$ , medium effect sizes of  $R^2 = .09$  and small effect sizes of  $R^2 = .01$ .

#### *Frequency Distribution*

A graph plotting values of observations on the horizontal axis and the frequency with which each value occurs in the dataset on the vertical axis.

#### *Formative Assessment*

The assessment of student achievement at different stages of their involvement with a UNT program/service or at different stages of a student's academic career. The focus of formative assessment is on the documentation of student development over time. It can also be used to engage students in a process of reflection on their education.

#### *General Education Assessment*

Assessment that measures the campus-wide, general education competencies agreed upon by the Division. General education assessment is more holistic in nature than program outcomes assessment because competencies are measured across departments, rather than just within a single department.

#### *Indirect Assessment*

Assessment that deduces student achievement of learning outcomes through the reported perception of learning by students, Division staff and/or others.

#### *Institutional Assessment*

Assessment to determine the extent to which a college or university is achieving its mission.

#### *Learning Outcomes*

Operational statements describing specific student behaviors that evidence the acquisition of desired goals in knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes or dispositions. Learning outcomes can be usefully thought of as behavioral criteria for determining whether students are achieving the educational goals of a program, and, ultimately, whether overall program goals are being successfully met. Outcomes are sometimes treated as synonymous with objectives, though objectives are usually more general statements of what students are expected to achieve.

### *Mean*

A simple statistical model of the center of the distribution of the scores. A hypothetical estimate of the “typical score.” Also known as the average.

### *Measurable Criteria*

An intended student outcome, or administrative objective, restated in a quantifiable, or measurable, statement. "60% of residents will attend a RLA sponsored program in fall 2013;" "75% of responding male students will indicate on a survey in fall 2013 that they have read materials about career opportunities on campus."

### *Median*

The middle score of the set of ordered observations.

### *Mode*

The most frequently occurring score in a set of data.

### *Non-Parametric Statistics*

Assumes that data are not normally distributed at the onset and as such requires different types of analysis techniques.

### *Norm*

A distribution of scores obtained from a norm group. The norm is the midpoint (or median) of scores or performance of the students in that group. Fifty percent will score above and fifty percent below the norm.

### *Parametric Statistics*

Assumes that data have come from a type of probability distribution and makes inferences about the parameters of the distribution.

### *Performance-Based Assessment*

Direct, systematic observation and rating of student performance of an educational objective, often an ongoing observation over a period of time, and typically involving the creation of products. The assessment may be a continuing interaction between staff and student and should ideally be part of the learning process. The assessment should be a real-world performance with relevance to the student and learning community. Assessment of the performance is done using a rubric or analytic scoring guide to aid in objectivity. Performance-based assessment is a test of the ability to apply knowledge in a real life setting or performance of exemplary tasks in the demonstration of intellectual ability.

### *Portfolio*

A systematic and organized collection of a student's work that exhibits to others the direct evidence of a student's efforts, achievements, and progress over a period of time. The collection should involve the student in selection of its contents, and should include information about the performance criteria, the rubric or criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection or evaluation.

### *Portfolio Assessment*

Portfolios may be assessed in a variety of ways. Each piece may be individually scored, or the portfolio might be assessed merely for the presence of required pieces, or a holistic scoring process might be used and an evaluation made on the basis of an overall impression of the student's collected work. It is common that assessors work together to establish consensus of standards or to ensure greater reliability in evaluation of student work. Established criteria are often used by reviewers and students involved in the process of evaluating progress and achievement of objectives.

### *Program Assessment*

Assessment to determine the extent to which students in a departmental program can demonstrate the learning outcomes for the program.

### *Qualitative Assessment*

Primarily answers "Why?" questions. Involves focus groups, interviews, extreme case discussions, theme analysis, open-ended questions and generally inserts the researcher or assessment staff member into the process.

### *Quantitative Assessment*

Primarily answers "What?" questions. Involves numbers, surveys, scales, finite instruments, statistical analysis and generally isolates the researcher or assessment staff member from the process.

### *Reliability*

An assessment tool's consistency of results over time and with different samples of students. Put simply, will this assessment perform the same way every time it is used?

### *Rubric*

A set of criteria specifying the characteristics of a learning outcome and the levels of achievement in each characteristic. Rubrics are typically score-based and involve pre-defined categories of performance.

### *Self-Efficacy*

Students' judgment of their own capabilities for a specific learning outcome.

### *Statistical Significance*

A result is called statistically significant if it is unlikely to have occurred by chance. It is not a measure of importance or meaningfulness. It just means that it is probably true.

If a test of significance returns a value that is less than  $\alpha$ , one can say that the result was unlikely due to chance. Example: the value was 0.025 and  $\alpha$  was 0.05. That means there is a less than 5% probability that the result was due to chance, or that there is a greater than 95% chance of the result being true.

### *Statistics*

In the most general sense, statistics describes a set of tools and techniques that is used for describing, organizing, and interpreting information or data (Salkind, 2008, p.7).

### *Summative Assessment*

The assessment of student achievement at the end point of their education or at the end of their experience with a program/service. The focus of summative assessment is on the documentation of student achievement by the end of a course or program. It does not reveal the pathway of development to achieve that endpoint.

### *Triangulation*

The collection of data via multiple methods in order to determine if the results show a consistent outcome. Triangulation is very important in qualitative research but also how multiple results across assessments corroborate one another.

### *Validity*

The degree to which an assessment measures (a) what is intended, as opposed to (b) what is not intended, or (c) what is unsystematic or unstable

## **REFERENCES**

ACSD. (1992). *Assessment: How do we know what they know?*

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Dickinson, D. (2004). Dissolving the boundaries: Assessment that enhances learning. In L. Campbell, B. Campbell, and D. Dickinson (eds.), *Teaching and learning through multiple intelligences*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

Field, A. (2009). *Discovering statistics using SPSS. Third Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mulberry Antic, S.L. (2011). *Stats for scaredy cats*. Presented at Assessment 101, Division of Student Affairs, Denton, TX.

State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards. (1999). *SCASS arts assessment project glossary of assessment terms*.

The ERIC Review. (1994). *Performance-based assessment*, 3(1).

Wiggins, G. (1998). *Glossary of useful terms related to authentic and performance assessments*.