

**PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT PLAN WORKBOOK**

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**I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM MISSION, GOALS, AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The **academic** **program** refers to any degree program and the individual majors within each degree program at the undergraduate, professional, and graduate levels and all certificate programs. Do this separately for each degree program.

Name of degree program: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The program **mission** and **goals** are the rationale for the program, its values and philosophy, and where it is headed. Insert the mission and goals for this program here:

**Program-level student learning outcomes** (SLOs) are brief statements of what a student will know or be able to do by the end of a course of study. These may come from disciplinary associations, professional accrediting bodies, academic literature, consensus among peers in the field, alumni, employers, or doctoral degree granting institutions. More information on programmatic learning outcomes is listed [here](https://assessment.uga.edu/howto/outcomes/).

Program-level outcomes are intentionally broader than course learning outcomes. Program-level learning outcomes convey the main knowledge, skills, and abilities a student should have upon completing the program. While there is variance across programs and outcomes should be written to reflect disciplinary context, generally program-level outcomes include the following:

Common Undergraduate Program-level Learning Outcomes:

* Content mastery in the discipline (an ability to demonstrate knowledge of canonical facts, theories, and basic tenets of the field)
* Basic understanding and application of theories and/or appropriate methodology
* Communication skills
* Ethical awareness and practice within the discipline
* Critical thinking skills

Common Graduate Program-level Learning Outcomes:

* Content mastery / Depth in specialization area
* Synthesis and analysis of literature
* Research skills
* Communication to scholarly and non-academic audiences
* Preparedness for scholarly contribution or entering the field

Generally, academic programs should aim to have between 3-6 outcomes. State the major student learning outcomes for your program here:

*Example: Students will demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the fundamental principles and concepts of biology.*

II**. CURRICULUM MAPPING**

**Curriculum maps** provide a means to visualize the interaction between various learning outcomes. They provide collective visual evidence of educational practices and allow faculty to assess whether learning outcomes are addressed across their academic program(s). Additionally, curriculum maps allow faculty to identify potential gaps in their learning outcomes or if certain outcomes need to be reassessed due to changes in their discipline.

For each outcome, identify where the student acquires the knowledge and skills (add rows and columns as needed):

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Student Learning Outcome 1 | Student Learning Outcome 2 | Student Learning Outcome 3 | Etc. |
| Course 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Course 2 |  |  |  |  |
| Course 3 |  |  |  |  |
| Course 4 |  |  |  |  |
| Course 5 |  |  |  |  |
| Course 6 |  |  |  |  |
| Course 7 |  |  |  |  |
| Internship |  |  |  |  |
| Thesis |  |  |  |  |
| Electives\* |  |  |  |  |

There may be other activities outside of courses that also help students attain the outcomes (namely, experiential learning opportunities such as service-learning, internships, study abroad, faculty-mentored research, membership and/or leadership in student organizations, and so forth). You can include these as contributing to student attainment of the learning outcomes.

\*If the program includes a list of electives that students choose from, you can also include these if they connect to a specific outcome. (If they do not, it may reveal something important about the structure and purpose of the curriculum).

**IV. GATHERING EVIDENCE**

When developing an assessment plan, it is important to remember that it is not generally necessary to collect evidence on every student learning outcome, from every course, from every student, for every semester. [Academic Policy 01.06.003](https://policy.uga.edu/policies/#/programs/rJGholjxp?bc=true&bcCurrent=Assessment%20of%20Student%20Learning%20Outcomes&bcGroup=Evaluation%20%26%20Assessment%20&bcItemType=programs) outlines the annual assessment reporting requirements of two or more outcomes per cycle, with all outcomes reported on within a seven-year timeframe. Begin by selecting two outcomes and collecting direct evidence (ideally, including sample of student work from courses). In the following cycle, different outcomes can be assessed and so on until all outcomes have been assessed at least once before starting over.

***Direct and Indirect Measures***

DIRECT measures require students to demonstrate and yield tangible, visible, self-explanatory evidence of learning. Examples include cumulative experiences such as research projects, presentations, portfolios, theses, dissertations, oral defenses, exhibitions, and performances. Other direct measures include significant coursework, scores on appropriate licensure or certification exams, final or comprehensive exams, observations of student behavior undertaken systematically, and in some cases, student reflections on their experiences.

INDIRECT measures capture the attitude, perception, or opinion of a students’ learning and yield signs that students are *probably* learning. Examples include student ratings of their knowledge and skills (e.g., exit surveys) and reflections on what they have learning in the course or program (e.g., exit interviews), placement rates of graduates, honors earned by students, or student participation rates in faculty research, publications, and conference presentations.

Describe the evidence of student learning that will be used for each learning outcome:

Student Learning Outcome 1:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Evidence 1:

Evidence 2:

Student Learning Outcome 2:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Evidence 1

Evidence 2:

Student Learning Outcome 3:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Evidence 1:

Evidence 2:

The assessment plan should include a detailed plan for the systematic collection of evidence of student proficiency in the learning outcomes. Evidence may be collected at one or more points during the student’s tenure in the program (e.g., at the beginning, middle, and end).

For each of the Student Learning Outcomes, describe the evidence to be collected, when, where, and by whom:

**V. ANALYSIS OF ASSESSMENT DATA**

Analysis of assessment data refers to the application of faculty expertise to the evidence of student learning. How well have students demonstrated their learning? Have students met faculty expectations for learning? This usually involves application of a rubric or scoring system to evidence of student work.

What are the scoring criteria or rubric that will be used for examining student learning for each of the learning outcomes, for each type of evidence that was collected? For example, a (very simple) rubric for oral presentations might look like this:

Oral Presentation Rubric

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **1: Below expectations** | **2. Meets**  **expectations** | **3: Exceeds**  **expectations** |
| **Visual aids** | None; or not used; or poor quality; | Uses visual aids; satisfactory quality | Visual aids of superior quality; support audience learning |
| **Speech, grammar, voice** | Too soft or too loud; poor grammar; inappropriate words | Speaking voice, word choice, grammar, are all satisfactory | Excellent speaking voice; appropriate speech; no errors |
| **Geared to the audience** | Not appropriate for the audience | Appropriate to the expected audience | Easily adjusts to unexpected developments |
| **Meets time limit** | Presentation is too short or too long | Presentation meets specified time limit | Presentation makes excellent use of time |

The choice of criteria is up to the faculty as is the definition of the expected levels of performance (e.g., what goes into each of the boxes defined as below expectations, meets expectations, exceeds expectations).

After the rubric(s) or scoring criteria have been applied, you may wish to summarize student performance on each of the learning outcomes you have assessed.

Best practices recommend setting **thresholds**, ora target performance benchmark or level of expectation for student learning. For example, you expect that the average student score on a standardized exam will be at the national median (50th percentile). Or it may be that at least 85% of students will receive a score of “meets expectations” or better on an outcome related to knowledge of the discipline. Or that more than half of all students will show improvement on a skill outcome over time. Generally, thresholds should lie somewhere between *attainable* and *aspirational*, to encourage an improvement-focused program assessment practice.

**VI. FEEDBACK FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT**

A **feedback** mechanism must be incorporated to communicate the results of assessment. How will the results of assessment be communicated to all faculty? It could be through an annual retreat, a department meeting, a department newsletter, or regular items on a faculty meeting agenda. How will your program communicate the results of assessment?

**Program improvement** is the careful change of aspects of the program, based on the analysis of evidence, in order to increase the level of student attainment of the learning outcomes. Program improvement is a good way to “close the loop” on assessment, by incorporating evidence about student learning into program change. What are some examples of program change that have been made based on evidence from assessment of student learning?

Sample Timetable for Program-Level Assessment Revisions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **TIME** | **STEPS** | **RESPONSIBLE PARTY** |
| Fall 2024 | * Revisit program mission and vision at faculty meeting or mini-retreat; rework student learning outcomes * Identify evidence of learning and specific measures to be used to assess each outcome * Curriculum mapping exercise can help with this. * **OCTOBER 1 – enter outcomes and measures into Xitracs for “report”** | Faculty; consult alumni, advisory board, employers, professional groups, part-time faculty, etc. |
| Spring 2025 | * Develop rubrics or other program-level evaluation tools, if needed. * Set benchmarks for student performance * Collect any assessment data, if possible | Faculty; consult resources, peers, colleagues, assessment coordinator, professional meetings, etc. |
| Fall 2025 | * Collect assessment data on pre-determined learning outcomes | Faculty; with student assistants or other resources |
| Spring 2026; possibly Summer 2026 | * Collect assessment data on pre-determined learning outcomes | Faculty; present to program faculty, chair, advisory board, etc. |
| Fall 2026 | * Present assessment results at faculty meeting or mini-retreat * Identify and implement strategies to improve attainment of outcomes * **OCTOBER 1 – enter full assessment report from 2025-2026 into Xitracs** | Faculty; curriculum committee, peers, resources, professional groups, etc. |