

Program Assessment Overview & Planning Training

Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

03.27.2024

World Changers
Shaped Here



SMU



Why Assess?

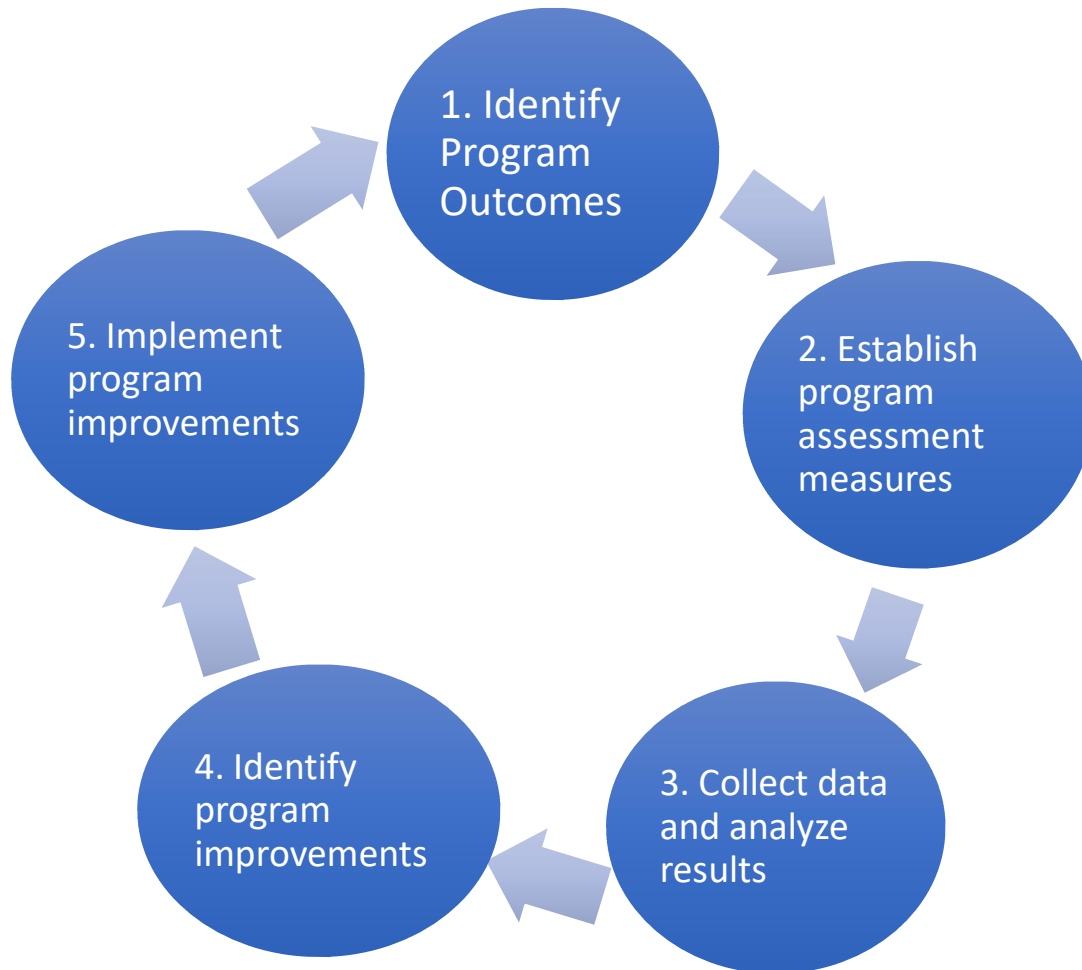
- ✓ Internal desire to improve
- ✓ External factors such as accreditation and calls for accountability

SACSCOC Standard 8.2

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 each of the following areas:

- a. **educational programs**, to include student-learning outcomes (*All degree & certificate programs*)
- b. **general education** (*general education competencies of undergraduate degree program*)
- c. **academic and student services that support student success** (*All administrative and educational support services*)

Program Assessment Cycle



Assessment is a journey, not a destination.

Administrative & Academic Student Support Unit Assessment Plan

- Unit Mission Statement
- Unit Objectives/Outcomes
- Measures & Targets

Administrative & Academic Student Support Unit Assessment Report

- Findings and Interpretation of Results
- Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan)
- Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle

Unit Mission Statement

- Provide a summary of the purpose and essential functions of the unit. Include the primary group(s) the unit serves (e.g., unique student populations, faculty, prospective students, etc.).
- If the unit only serves students at a specific geographic location (e.g., Taos, Houston, Galveston, Fort Worth, abroad sites, etc.), this should be noted. Indicate whether the unit serves students at multiple locations (e.g., distance education students or students at approved off-site locations).
- In the event services are provided through contracts or third parties, please include that information as well.

Unit Objectives/Outcomes

- Strong objectives identify unit's key services and operations and define what they would look like in a high-functioning unit.
- All support units are expected to establish a minimum of **three** **Unit Objectives** (*and sometimes Student Learning Outcomes*) assessed by variety of direct and indirect measures.
- Each support unit should assess **at least two** **Unit Objectives** per year and assess all objectives at least twice in five years.

Write Effective Unit Objectives/Outcomes

- * Align with the unit mission.
- * Be **SMART**– Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely.
- * Use action verbs for writing objectives/outcomes.
- * Not include more than one outcome each (avoid using “and”).

Useful Categories for Administrative and Educational Support Unit Objectives/Outcomes

- **Enrollment and Retention** oriented objectives (numbers of students who persists and graduate, retention rate of students, etc.)
- **Student Satisfaction** oriented objectives (survey results measuring student satisfaction with services such as advising, counseling, financial aid, and career services, etc.)
- **Inclusive Excellence** oriented objectives (percentage of underrepresented students who utilize services, the number of cultural events hosted by the institution, the diversity of staff providing services, etc.)
- **Timeliness and Accessibility** oriented objectives (average wait time for students seeking assistance, the number of students served within a given timeframe, and the availability of services outside of normal business hours, etc.)
- **Resource Management** oriented objectives (the efficient use of resources such as personnel, technology, and facilities, cost-effectiveness measures such as the return on investment for programs and services, etc.)

Examples of Unit Objectives/Outcomes

- *Unit will achieve a student satisfaction rate of 85% or higher on annual surveys of advising services (Student Satisfaction).*
- *Hegi Family Career Development Center will increase the number of students served by our career services office through expanded outreach efforts (Accessibility).*
- *Unit will offer extended hours for support services at least two evenings per week during the academic year (Accessibility).*
- *Our office will implement training programs for staff on providing inclusive and culturally responsive services across institution (DEI).*
- *Unit will reduce the average wait time for students seeking counseling services every year (Timeliness).*
- *Unit will improve the cost-effectiveness of our support services by reducing program expense annually (Resource Management).*

More Examples of Unit Objectives/Outcomes

- *Student Academic Success Program will develop an early warning system for faculty to monitor student success and employ intervention strategies to support student success.*
- *Student Academic Success Program will increase the four- and six-year graduation rates of under-represented students.*
- *Athletics will be able to successfully balance priorities through engagement in athletics, community services, and personal development.*
- *Students will demonstrate basic information literacy skills (Library).*

Measures

Measures describe the methods of collecting and evaluating assessment data to determine success.

Direct Measure Examples:

- *Decrease in wait time*
- *Increase in counts (i.e., number of customers served)*
- *Growth in service capacity*
- *Reductions in cost of performance*

Indirect Measure Examples:

- *Surveys of students, alums, or employers*
- *Focus groups of stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, staff, community leaders)*
- *Employee exit interviews*
- *An external review of the unit*
- *Staff professional development perceptions*

Targets

A **target** is the level at which a unit considers their objective to be “met” on a given measure. Strong targets are clear levels of achievement.

Targets need to be revisited annually and updated as necessary, particularly if the targets are met year after year.

Examples:

- *80% of OIT help tickets will be acknowledged within 24 hrs.*
- *At least 85% of the center’s grant proposals will be funded.*
- *Over 60% of students who complete the study skills workshop series should report an improvement in their ability to manage their study time six months later.*

Findings & Interpretation of Results

Findings are the results from analysis of assessment data. Strong assessment reports will consistently communicate findings in a clear manner using language that aligns with the related measure and target.

Indicate whether the set target was met, not met, or partially met. Describe your results so that someone unfamiliar with your field can understand your accomplishments.

Reminder: programs are NOT penalized if their targets are not met. What is important with any target and findings is there is reflection and evidence of seeking improvement.

Findings & Interpretation of Results *cont.*

- All academic and student support units should disaggregate results by demographic groups when possible.
- If your unit is responsible for serving students at alternate geographic locations, you should disaggregate assessment results by location.

Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plans)

Every support unit is expected to develop a minimum of one Action Plan at year end, regardless of whether all targets are met.

- IF your unit does not meet or partially meet the target of an outcome, the action plan explains what the program plans to do in the next academic year to meet the target.
 - If any gaps are identified once results are disaggregated (e.g., between locations, identified groups, etc.), strategies for reducing these gaps should be the focus of at least one of the unit's action plans.
- IF you meet your targets, an action plan is not necessary that year, but 2-3 years max on same target, same results.
- Action(s) should have a close, clear connection to the data collected during the assessment cycle.

Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle

Support unit should provide a status update on action(s) identified in the previous assessment cycle.

- For any action items that have not yet been fully implemented, describe in detail what happened this year, where the unit is in the implementation process, and when staff expect to re-assess the targeted objective(s).
- For any completed action items, provide a brief summary of these actions and expand on the impact of these actions had on the unit operation. Describe any changes that have been seen in the assessment results since the action was taken.

Evidence Files

- **Evidence** files include *budget documents, year-end reports, meeting minutes, evaluation rubric, survey results, etc.*

Logging into Anthology Planning

<http://smu.campuslabs.com/planning>



Resources

Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

Website: smu.edu/assessment

Wiki: <https://wiki.smu.edu/bin/view/AP/>

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