

## UNIT REPORT

## Arts Management MA - 01 - Academic Program Rubric Review (IPE)

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# Arts Management MA

## MA Arts Management Program Mission Statement

### Mission Statement (Full Description):

The MA/MBA at Southern Methodist University, jointly offered with the Cox School of Business, aims to equip leaders for both the arts and cultural sectors and beyond. This comprehensive dual-degree program melds rigorous business training with extensive arts management education. Graduates are endowed with critical skills necessary for effective leadership across diverse organizational contexts.

Located in Dallas, the program offers global perspectives through its connections with international institutions like Bocconi University in Milan, including an optional study abroad opportunity for one semester at Bocconi. The MA courses are conducted in-person and synchronously, while the MBA courses are primarily synchronous and in-person, with some elective options available online.

The first enrollment of students in this program was in 1981.

**Does your program offer courses at an off-campus instructional site (not at SMU Dallas campus)?:** Yes

**Does your program offer courses through distance education technology (e.g., asynchronous, synchronous, or both)?:** No

**During which academic year were students first enrolled in this program?:** Prior to AY2023-2024

**Progress:** Complete

## 4 Teamwork & Project Management

### Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):

By the conclusion of AMAE 6202, students will illustrate effective group collaboration and project management by co-developing a strategic plan for a local arts organization. Working in small teams, students will demonstrate their ability to coordinate roles, manage deadlines, delegate tasks, and resolve conflicts productively. Final group projects will reflect clear alignment with organizational needs and showcase collective accountability for high-quality deliverables.

This outcome is designed to measure both the process and product of teamwork in a professional arts management setting and is aligned with expectations for mid-level leadership roles in the field. The goal is specific, measurable through rubric-based assessment, attainable within the course's structure, realistic given student backgrounds, and time-bound to the final semester of the program.

### Step 2A: Measure:

Students will engage in a group-based consulting project to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for an arts organization. They will manage the project's scope, timelines, and deliverables, focusing on effective communication within the team.

The assessment for this outcome will be conducted through peer evaluations within group projects. Each student will evaluate their peers based on defined criteria such as contribution to the project, communication effectiveness, and ability to resolve conflicts. This method provides direct, insightful feedback on each individual's teamwork and project management skills within a real-world collaborative setting.

This will be completed in the capstone course, AMAE 6202- Strategic Planning and Change Management. The MA/MBA students being assessed will have already completed at least 75% of their total coursework.

### Attached Files

[Spring-2024-AMAE-6202-001B-Nonprft-Strat-Plan\\_Change-Mgmt\(4\).pdf](#)

[Group Member Assessment \(Strategic Plan\).pdf](#)

**Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):** Capstone project

Presentation

Rubric

Written paper/project

**Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:** Direct

### Step 3A: Target for Measure:

At least 80% of students will receive an 'Above Average' rating on their project management contributions, as assessed by their peers. This benchmark not only seeks to ensure high standards of proficiency in project management skills but also emphasizes the crucial role of teamwork.

The assessment of project management contributions addresses the identified skills gap where 83% of alumni recognized these skills as essential, but only 66% felt their education effectively addressed them. This target reflects a proactive response to SNAAP findings, aiming to enhance the curriculum with a focused development on project management skills critical for leading within the arts sector. The inclusion of group projects enhances students' ability to work collaboratively on large-scale projects, a key skill for future arts leaders managing diverse teams and projects.

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?: Met**

**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

Students were evaluated on their teamwork and project management skills using peer evaluations at the conclusion of the strategic plan project. Each student rated their group members on quality of contributions, dependability, workload distribution, and professionalism using a standardized rubric.

Across both teams, peer assessment scores were overwhelmingly positive, with an average rating of 9.95 out of 10. Qualitative feedback highlighted team members as being reliable, respectful, and consistently engaged. The majority of students were rated as contributing more than the average team member and could be counted on to meet deadlines. There were no reports of conflict or unequal workload, and all students received high marks for cooperation and professionalism.

Given this data, the program has determined that the target for this measure was met.

Attached Files

[Student Sample #1 \(Peer Review\)](#)

[Student Sample #3 \(Peer Review\)](#)

[Student Sample #2 \(Peer Review\)](#)

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

**(1) Interpretation of Results**

Student performance in teamwork and project management was a notable strength in this cycle. Students consistently demonstrated professionalism, responsibility, and collaboration, as reflected in peer assessments and corroborated by faculty observations. The near-perfect average peer evaluation score (9.95/10) suggests that students were highly effective in managing responsibilities, communicating with team members, and maintaining accountability. There were no reported weaknesses, and no disparities between cohorts or teams were observed.

**(2) Documentation of Modifications or Previous Changes**

This was the first year this specific SLO was formally assessed using peer evaluations within the MA/MBA program. The decision to incorporate peer feedback as a direct measure was informed by informal faculty discussions about the importance of evaluating team dynamics and leadership development. These results provide a strong baseline for future assessments. The program will continue using peer evaluations as a tool and may explore integrating reflective components to further enhance students' self-awareness and teamwork strategies. The impact of these changes will be re-assessed in the next annual cycle.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

**(1) Sharing Results with Stakeholders**

Assessment results were reviewed through informal conversations between the Program Director and individual faculty members. These discussions centered on the consistently strong peer evaluation results, with an average score of 9.95 out of 10 and repeated comments highlighting professionalism, communication, and balanced contributions across teams.

**(2) Use of Results for Improvement**

Based on these findings, the program will maintain the use of structured peer evaluations as a core component of teamwork assessment. However, to deepen student self-reflection and leadership growth, a new short reflective writing assignment will be piloted next year. This activity will ask students to assess their own contributions, leadership styles, and areas for improvement in collaborative settings. The self-assessment will complement peer reviews and provide faculty with a more nuanced understanding of team dynamics and individual growth.

**(3) Planned Actions and Timeline**

- Responsible Party: Program Director and Instructor
- Timeline:
  - Design new self-reflection assignment - Fall 2025
  - Implement pilot assignment - Spring 2026
  - Review outcomes and revise as needed - Summer 2026
- Planned Action: Add a reflective writing assignment to accompany peer evaluations, focused on leadership, contribution, and teamwork awareness

This enhancement is designed to promote greater self-awareness, reinforce team-based learning, and support students in developing practical leadership competencies relevant to arts and nonprofit management.

**Step 5B: Type of Action:** Additional emphasis or time on content  
Additional activities or assignments

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):** Administrator  
Faculty  
Staff  
Student

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

Although a formal faculty retreat did not take place during the 2024–2025 cycle due to scheduling conflicts and changes to the MA/MBA core faculty, informal discussions were held between the program director and individual faculty members. These conversations addressed assessment findings, student performance on key assignments, and preliminary ideas for curricular and pedagogical adjustments.

A formal faculty meeting will be planned for Spring 2026 to collectively review assessment data, discuss trends, and agree on next steps for program improvement. Documentation from that meeting will be submitted as formal evidence of dialogue in the next assessment cycle.

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

This was the first year that this Student Learning Outcome was formally assessed in the MA/MBA program. As such, there are no previous action items to report or follow up on from prior assessment cycles.

During this academic year, baseline data was collected and analyzed, and opportunities for improvement were identified through faculty discussion and rubric review. These results will inform future instructional adjustments, rubric revisions, and assignment refinements in the upcoming cycle. Impact of these changes will be assessed after implementation in the next academic year, and results will be reviewed to inform ongoing program development.

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):** Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:** Complete

## 1 Analysis of the Internal Environment (Quantitative)

**Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):**

By the end of AMAE 6202: Nonprofit Strategic Planning and Change Management, typically the final MA course, students will analyze 10 years of IRS Form 990 data from a selected local arts organization. They will identify a minimum of three key financial trends, assess the organization's operational sustainability, and categorize its revenue sources. Results will be presented in a written report, demonstrating students' ability to interpret nonprofit financial data and apply insights to support long-term strategic planning.

**Step 2A: Measure:**

Students will complete an individual written analysis of a local arts organization's IRS Form 990 data spanning a ten-year period. This analysis is embedded within AMAE 6202: Strategic Planning in the Arts and requires students to identify financial trends, assess organizational sustainability, and categorize revenue streams. The assignment will be evaluated using a standardized rubric.

This measure is appropriate for evaluating this outcome because it directly assesses students' ability to engage with real-world nonprofit financial documents and apply strategic reasoning - skills that are critical for professional leadership in the arts. The structure of the assignment allows for consistent evaluation across students and aligns closely with the program's goals of financial literacy and strategic acumen.

By the time they undertake this analysis, students will have completed at least 75% of their total coursework, ensuring they are well-prepared to apply advanced quantitative methods and critical thinking skills to real-world data.

Attached Files

[Spring-2025-AMAE-6202-001B-Nonprft-Strat-Plan\\_Change-Mgmt.pdf](#)

**Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):** Capstone project  
Presentation  
Written paper/project

**Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:** Direct

**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

At least 80% of students will achieve a 'Good' or higher rating on their organizational analysis project, as evaluated by the faculty instructor. This benchmark underscores the program's commitment to ensuring that students possess proficient internal assessment skills, enabling them to apply their knowledge effectively to enhance organizational performance.

A critical component of the organizational analysis project involves students conducting a quantitative analysis of ten years of IRS Form 990s to track financial health and operational sustainability. This exercise enables them to identify trends in revenue sources, expenditure patterns, and financial stability, providing a basis for assessing long-term organizational viability. This deep dive into financial data is instrumental in fostering a thorough understanding of financial management within the arts sector, equipping students with essential skills to navigate complex financial landscapes.

The training emphasizes enhancing business, financial, and entrepreneurial skills, which aligns with addressing the significant skills gap identified by the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP). According to SNAAP, while 65% of working alumni deemed these skills as 'important' or 'very important', only 33% reported acquiring these skills substantially during their postsecondary education. By meeting this target, the program demonstrates its commitment to developing the skills necessary for students to excel within the arts sector.

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?: Met**

**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

The measure for this Student Learning Outcome was a written internal analysis assignment in the AMAE 6202: Nonprofit Strategic Planning and Change Management course. Students were tasked with analyzing the internal environment of a nonprofit organization of their choosing, with a focus on financial performance, resource capacity, governance structure, and strategic alignment. Evaluation was conducted using a rubric aligned to key course competencies, including quantitative reasoning and internal organizational assessment.

All students completed the assignment, and scores were calculated out of a possible 30 points. The average score across the cohort was 27/30 (90%), indicating strong overall performance on the internal analysis component.

Review of the student work showed that most demonstrated a clear understanding of how to evaluate organizational capacity, analyze financial statements, and interpret internal strengths and weaknesses using quantitative frameworks. Several students provided detailed budget projections, SWOT matrices, and mission alignment assessments backed by appropriate data.

These findings suggest that students are successfully applying quantitative analysis tools to evaluate the internal environment of arts organizations.

Attached Files

[AMAЕ 6202 Rubrics.pdf](#)

[Student Sample #2 \(Written Analysis\)](#)

[Student Sample #3 \(Written Analysis\)](#)

[Student Sample #1 \(Written Analysis\)](#)

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

**(1) Interpretation of Results:**

The results indicate that students demonstrated a strong grasp of internal environmental analysis, with an average score of 27 out of 30 (90%). Strengths included the ability to apply financial and operational data effectively, as well as the use of analytical tools such as SWOT and ratio analysis to support strategic recommendations. This suggests a high level of competency in translating quantitative information into actionable insights.

A potential weakness observed was that a few students presented descriptive overviews without deeper interpretation of the implications of the data for strategic planning. In some cases, data visualizations were underutilized or lacked clarity, which limited the impact of the analysis.

Since this is the first formal cycle of assessing this SLO, there is no prior year comparison available. However, the strong average score provides a solid baseline for future cohort comparisons.

**(2) Documentation of Modifications or Previous Changes:**

This is the first year the outcome has been measured in this format. The assignment was designed specifically to align with this SLO and was refined through collaboration between program faculty and industry advisors to ensure alignment with current professional expectations. Rubric criteria were also revised to emphasize interpretation and synthesis of quantitative data. The impact of these changes will continue to be monitored through subsequent assessment cycles to identify any persistent skill gaps or areas for enhancement in instruction or assignment design.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

**(1) Sharing Results with Stakeholders**

Due to scheduling conflicts and recent changes in the MA faculty teaching rotation, a formal faculty retreat was not held during the 2024–2025 academic year. However, preliminary results were reviewed internally by the AMAE 6202 course instructor. Informal discussions between the instructor and program coordinator addressed trends in student performance, and these conversations will inform upcoming curricular revisions. A formal faculty meeting will be planned for Spring 2026 to review proposed adjustments.

**(2) Use of Results for Improvement**

The overall student performance on the financial analysis assignment was strong (class average of 27/30, or 90%), indicating solid technical proficiency in internal quantitative analysis. However, faculty noted some variation in students' ability to synthesize financial data into strategic, mission-aligned insights. While most students demonstrated strong Excel and calculation skills, a subset struggled to frame findings within the broader context of nonprofit or arts management strategy.

To address this gap, the assignment rubric will be revised to include a dedicated interpretive component, prompting students to explicitly connect financial patterns to strategic decision-making. In addition, faculty will introduce a supplemental in-class exercise - a brief applied case study - designed to reinforce the connection between financial analysis and mission-driven leadership.

**(3) Planned Actions and Timeline**

- Revise assignment rubric to include strategic interpretation prompts by Spring 2026
- Develop and pilot in-class applied financial reasoning activity by Spring 2026
- Review student outcomes and feedback during Summer 2026 faculty meeting
- Finalize curricular adjustments and formalize implementation plan by Summer 2026

These enhancements aim to strengthen students' applied financial reasoning skills and better prepare graduates for real-world leadership roles in nonprofit and arts-based organizations.

**Step 5B: Type of Action:** Additional emphasis or time on content

Additional activities or assignments

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):** Administrator

Faculty

Staff

Student

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

Although a formal faculty retreat did not take place during the 2024–2025 cycle due to scheduling conflicts and changes to the MA/MBA core faculty, informal discussions were held between the program director and individual faculty members. These conversations addressed assessment findings, student performance on key assignments, and preliminary ideas for curricular and pedagogical adjustments.

A formal faculty meeting will be planned for Spring 2026 to collectively review assessment data, discuss trends, and agree on next steps for program improvement. Documentation from that meeting will be submitted as formal evidence of dialogue in the next assessment cycle.

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

This was the first year that this Student Learning Outcome was formally assessed in the MA/MBA program. As such, there are no previous action items to report or follow up on from prior assessment cycles.

During this academic year, baseline data was collected and analyzed, and opportunities for improvement were identified through faculty discussion and rubric review. These results will inform future instructional adjustments, rubric revisions, and assignment refinements in the upcoming cycle. Impact of these changes will be assessed after implementation in the next academic year, and results will be reviewed to inform ongoing program development.

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):** Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:** Complete

## 2 Analysis of the Internal Environment (Qualitative)

**Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):**

Students will develop relationship management and networking skills by engaging directly with internal and external stakeholders - including staff, executive leadership, board members, and community partners - at a local arts organization. During the module, students will conduct stakeholder interviews, participate in meetings or site visits, and submit a written reflection analyzing work cultural dynamics, stakeholder roles, and strategies for long-term relationship cultivation. This outcome will be assessed through a rubric evaluating depth of analysis. Students are expected to complete this work by the end of AMAE 6202, typically their final MA course.

**Step 2A: Measure:**

Students will undertake a comprehensive internal analysis project including qualitative interviews as part of their capstone course, AMAE 6202 - Strategic Planning and Change Management.

This project will involve detailed interactions with a range of internal stakeholders, including senior staff, board members, and key personnel within a local arts organization. These interviews aim to uncover in-depth insights into organizational culture, operational strategies, and employee engagement. By engaging directly with these stakeholders, students will collect valuable qualitative data that is essential for understanding internal dynamics and identifying opportunities for strategic enhancements. In addition, this skill is essential for fostering a deep understanding of organizational dynamics, driving meaningful change, and building a professional network that supports career growth in the arts management field.

The MA/MBA students being assessed in this project will have already completed at least 75% of their total coursework, equipping them with the necessary skills to conduct these critical evaluations.

Attached Files

[Spring-2024-AMAE-6202-001B-Nonprft-Strat-Plan\\_Change-Mgmt\(4\)\(1\).pdf](#)

[Student Sample #4 \(Group Presentation\)](#)

[Student Sample #2 \(Written Analysis\)](#)

[Student Sample #3 \(Written Analysis\)](#)

[Student Sample #1 \(Written Analysis\)](#)

**Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):** Capstone project

Interview

Rubric

Written paper/project

**Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:** Direct

**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

At least 80% of students will achieve an 'Above Average' rating on their organizational analysis project, as evaluated by the faculty instructor.

This focus on stakeholder interviews directly addresses the skills gap highlighted by alumni feedback in the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP), where 78% of respondents acknowledged the importance of networking and relationship-building, yet only 62% believed their education had adequately prepared them in these areas. By embedding these interviews within the curriculum, the program strengthens the students' capability to build professional relationships. This curriculum integration ensures that graduates are well-prepared to lead organizations, aligning educational outcomes with the demands of the arts management field.

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?: Met****Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

Based on the evaluation of submitted qualitative internal analysis papers, the class achieved an average score of 27 out of 30, which equates to 90%. According to the grading rubric, a score of 24/30 or above indicates strong understanding and application of qualitative analytical tools. Out of the cohort, 12 out of 13 students (92.3%) met or exceeded this benchmark, surpassing the target of 85%.

Students demonstrated a solid ability to apply frameworks such as SWOT, VRIO, and cultural analysis to real-world organizations. Papers were assessed for the quality of insights, relevance and use of theoretical models, organization of ideas, and strategic recommendations.

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:****(1). Interpretation of Results**

Students showed strong proficiency in using qualitative models to evaluate organizational environments. Most were able to articulate how internal structures, resources, and culture influence strategy. A notable strength was their ability to synthesize models (e.g., combining VRIO with cultural context). A minor weakness observed was inconsistent depth in addressing organizational culture - some analyses relied on generic descriptors rather than data-driven insights.

This was the first cycle of assessment for this SLO, so comparative data is not yet available. However, the overall performance suggests students are well-prepared to apply qualitative internal assessment tools.

**(2). Documentation of Modifications or Previous Changes**

As this is the first year of implementation for this assessment cycle, there are no prior modifications to report. The assignment was designed as part of the curriculum to align with program goals and expectations. Future improvements will focus on enhancing support for deeper cultural diagnostics and encouraging incorporation of interview or case-based evidence. The impact of any such changes will be evaluated in the next assessment cycle through rubric results and instructor feedback.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):****(1) Sharing Results with Stakeholders**

Due to scheduling constraints and change in faculty, a formal faculty meeting did not occur. However, final presentation materials and summary results were shared with program faculty via email for review. Faculty provided informal feedback on student performance and assignment structure.

**(2) Use of Results for Improvement**

Although students performed well overall, faculty identified an opportunity to enhance their cultural analysis and stakeholder engagement skills. Some students demonstrated only surface-level interpretation of organizational dynamics, particularly in areas related to internal communication, leadership style, and workplace culture. To address this, the course will incorporate an in-class workshop on qualitative assessment tools - such as stakeholder interviews, organizational storytelling, and cultural observation frameworks. Assignment prompts will also be revised to explicitly require cultural insights and their connection to leadership effectiveness.

**(3) Planned Actions and Timeline**

- Responsible Parties: Course instructor and program director
- Timeline: Curriculum revision for Spring 2026; reassessment in Summer 2026
- Planned Action:
  - Introduce a cultural diagnostic in-class exercise
  - Revise assignment instructions to emphasize cultural and leadership alignment analysis

These improvements aim to better prepare students for the interpersonal and contextual dimensions of leadership in mission-driven organizations.

**Step 5B: Type of Action:** Additional emphasis or time on content

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):** Administrator  
Faculty

Staff  
Student

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

Although a formal faculty retreat did not take place during the 2024–2025 cycle due to scheduling conflicts and changes to the MA/MBA core faculty, informal discussions were held between the program director and individual faculty members. These conversations addressed assessment findings, student performance on key assignments, and preliminary ideas for curricular and pedagogical adjustments.

A formal faculty meeting will be planned for Spring 2026 to collectively review assessment data, discuss trends, and agree on next steps for program improvement. Documentation from that meeting will be submitted as formal evidence of dialogue in the next assessment cycle.

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):****Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

This was the first year that this Student Learning Outcome was formally assessed in the MA/MBA program. As such, there are no previous action items to report or follow up on from prior assessment cycles.

During this academic year, baseline data was collected and analyzed, and opportunities for improvement were identified through faculty discussion and rubric review. These results will inform future instructional adjustments, rubric revisions, and assignment refinements in the upcoming cycle. Impact of these changes will be assessed after implementation in the next academic year, and results will be reviewed to inform ongoing program development.

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):** Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:** Complete

**3 Presentation Skills****Step 1C: SLO Statement (Full Description):**

By the end of the AMAE 6202, students will construct and deliver strategic organizational plans to real-world clients from local arts organizations. Through this process, students will demonstrate effective communication skills by translating complex analysis into clear, persuasive presentations aligned with client needs. This outcome will be assessed based on the clarity, professionalism, and applicability of each student's recommendations as evaluated by faculty and client feedback.

**Step 2A: Measure:**

Students will deliver formal strategic plan presentations to real nonprofit clients as part of the final deliverable in the AMAE 6202 module. These presentations will be evaluated using a standardized rubric completed by both the client and a faculty panel. The rubric assesses clarity, structure, alignment with client needs, professionalism, and the strategic viability of the recommendations. Presenting to actual clients ensures authenticity and real-world relevance, while faculty presence provides academic oversight and consistency in assessment. This dual-rater approach offers a comprehensive and reliable evaluation of students' strategic communication and applied leadership skills.

Attached Files

[AMAЕ 6202- Group Presentation.pdf](#)

[AMAЕ 6202 Client Assessment Rubric.pdf](#)

[Spring-2024-AMAЕ-6202-001B-Nonprft-Strat-Plan Change-Mgmt Syllabus.pdf](#)

**Step 2B: Type of Measure (check all that apply):** Capstone project

Presentation

Written paper/project

**Step 2C: Is Measure direct or indirect?:** Direct**Step 3A: Target for Measure:**

At least 90% of students will achieve an 'Above Average' rating on the effectiveness of their presentations to real clients, as assessed by both the clients and faculty. This benchmark highlights the importance of excellent communication skills in arts management. An 'Above Average' rating aligns with the program's objective of graduating leaders who are not only strategic thinkers but also compelling communicators, capable of influencing and engaging diverse stakeholders effectively.

The goal of achieving at least a 90% 'Above Average' rating addresses a 12% skills gap in communication, identified as crucial by 97% of alumni, yet only 85% felt it was sufficiently developed during their education, according to Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) survey responses. By enhancing communication training, the program aims to better equip graduates to articulate strategies and engage stakeholders effectively, which is pivotal for leadership roles in the arts

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:** Met**Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:**

All students presented final deliverables to representatives from the Business Council for the Arts as part of their strategic consulting projects. Presentations were evaluated by both faculty and the client using a standardized rubric assessing verbal delivery, organization, use of visual aids, and ability to respond to audience questions. Faculty scored both groups at 30/30 (100%).

The client also provided a completed rubric and narrative feedback for each group, rating both teams as "Exceptional" across all categories. The client highlighted the students' professionalism, preparation, and effectiveness in translating complex ideas into accessible recommendations. Based on the faculty and client assessments, the target was met for this SLO.

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:****(1) Interpretation of Results**

Students demonstrated strong competency in professional presentation skills, with both teams earning perfect scores (30/30) from faculty evaluators and “Exceptional” ratings from the client, Business Council for the Arts. Key strengths included clarity of verbal communication, effective visual aids, and poise during Q&A sessions. Both teams were noted for their professionalism and the ability to tailor messaging to the client’s needs. One minor area for improvement across both groups involved managing transitions between presenters to ensure smoother delivery.

This is the first year of data collection for this SLO, so no comparisons to prior years or cohorts are available. However, baseline performance suggests that the instructional and rehearsal strategies employed were successful in preparing students for high-stakes public speaking contexts.

**(2) Documentation of Modifications or Previous Changes**

As this was the first year of implementing this Student Learning Outcome, no previous changes had been made. The instructional team developed this SLO and corresponding rubric in advance of the client presentations, incorporating structured presentation workshops and scheduled feedback rounds as part of the course design. These measures were intended to scaffold the development of students’ public speaking abilities in a professional consulting context. The effectiveness of these interventions was validated through both faculty and client assessments. Future evaluations will monitor whether this level of performance is sustained and explore opportunities to deepen feedback on pacing, slide design, and inter-speaker coordination.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):****(1) Sharing Results with Stakeholders**

Final presentation recordings and rubric scores were shared with program faculty via email due to scheduling limitations. While no formal meeting was held, the instructor reviewed faculty and client assessments and collected informal feedback from both groups.

**(2) Use of Results for Improvement**

Although overall presentation quality was strong, both faculty and clients noted that some students struggled to adjust communication tone or framing based on client familiarity with strategic planning concepts. As a result, future instruction will include a communication calibration exercise where students tailor messaging for different stakeholder types (e.g., board members, program managers, donors).

In addition, faculty will provide an annotated model presentation to clarify expectations around pacing, slide structure, and integration of visuals and data.

**(3) Planned Actions and Timeline**

- Responsible Parties: Course instructor and program coordinator
- Timeline:
  - Communication calibration exercise integrated into course by Spring 2026
  - Annotated model presentation shared during project briefing in Spring 2026
  - Results reviewed at Summer 2026 MA/MBA faculty meeting
- Actions:
  - Add communication exercise to prepare students for audience-specific delivery
  - Revise assignment instructions to include model presentation example
  - Evaluate impact through rubric scoring and client narrative feedback in Spring 2026

**Step 5B: Type of Action:** Additional emphasis or time on content

**Step 5C: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):**

**Step 5D: Evidence of Dialogue:**

Although a formal faculty retreat did not take place during the 2024–2025 cycle due to scheduling conflicts and changes to the MA/MBA core faculty, informal discussions were held between the program director and individual faculty members. These conversations addressed assessment findings, student performance on key assignments, and preliminary ideas for curricular and pedagogical adjustments.

A formal faculty meeting will be planned for Spring 2026 to collectively review assessment data, discuss trends, and agree on next steps for program improvement. Documentation from that meeting will be submitted as formal evidence of dialogue in the next assessment cycle.

**Step 5E: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5F: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

This was the first year that this Student Learning Outcome was formally assessed in the MA/MBA program. As such, there are no previous action items to report or follow up on from prior assessment cycles.

During this academic year, baseline data was collected and analyzed, and opportunities for improvement were identified through faculty discussion and rubric review. These results will inform future instructional adjustments, rubric revisions, and assignment refinements in the upcoming cycle. Impact of these changes will be assessed after implementation in the next academic year, and results will be reviewed to inform ongoing program development.

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):** Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:** Complete

## 1 Job Placement

### Step 1C: PG Statement (Full Description):

The MA/MBA in Arts Management program will track the employment success of its graduates to evaluate the effectiveness of its interdisciplinary training in arts and business leadership. Employment outcomes - such as full-time placement, leadership roles, and career advancement - will be monitored annually for each graduating cohort.

The goal is to determine how well the program equips students for careers. Tracking will include a combination of graduate surveys, LinkedIn audits, and faculty/staff follow-up.

Results will inform ongoing curriculum planning, professional development support, and alumni engagement strategies. Program leadership will review findings annually and discuss outcomes with faculty during summer curriculum review meetings. Adjustments to advising, coursework, or career resources will be made as needed based on these results.

### Step 2A: Measure:

To evaluate post-graduation employment outcomes, the program will implement an annual alumni employment tracking process. This measure will include:

- A brief online survey distributed to graduates twelve months after program completion, collecting data on employment status, job title, employer, and job alignment with career goals.
- A LinkedIn audit conducted by the program coordinator to verify employment status and capture additional outcomes not self-reported in the survey.
- Informal follow-up via email or faculty/alumni networks for graduates who do not respond to the survey or whose information is incomplete.

This mixed-method approach is appropriate because it provides both quantitative employment data and qualitative insights into graduate outcomes. The twelve-month post-graduation window aligns with common benchmarks used in graduate education and career reporting, and the combination of direct responses and online data verification ensures robust tracking even in cases of nonresponse.

**Step 2B: Is Measure direct or indirect?:** Indirect

### Step 3A: Target for Measure:

The program's target is that at least 90 percent of graduates will report full-time employment or equivalent professional engagement (such as self-employment, fellowships, or graduate study) within one year of program completion.

This target exceeds the national average by 10%, responding to the findings from the 2022 Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) survey, which reported a workforce participation rate of 79% among the most recent alumni. By setting the benchmark at 90%, the program aims to demonstrate its capacity to surpass typical industry outcomes, fostering leaders who are exceptionally well-prepared to thrive and contribute across various sectors. The "above average" assessment criterion aligns with the program's focus on high-impact outcomes and underscores the significant role of MBA-level strategic and business acumen.

**Step 4A: Was the target met for this Measure?:** No data collected/reported this cycle (provided explanation in Step 4B)

### Step 4B: Results and Findings for this Measure:

This is the first year the MA/MBA program has established a formal program goal to track alumni employment outcomes. While a structured survey instrument has not yet been deployed, preliminary data collection was conducted through faculty outreach and LinkedIn verification for the Spring 2024 graduating cohort.

All four graduates were successfully located and confirmed to be employed within one year of graduation, exceeding the program's benchmark target of 90%. The following positions were verified:

- Associate Director, Allsup Family Charitable Foundation (Fort Worth, TX)
- Senior Public Information Officer, City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture (Dallas, TX)
- Development Officer, Dallas Children's Advocacy Center (Dallas, TX)
- Account Coordinator, StreetCred PR (Remote position)

These initial results suggest strong early career placement and alignment with the program's intended outcomes. A formalized data collection and reporting process will be developed and implemented during the next assessment cycle.

**Step 4C: Interpretation of Results:**

**(1) Interpretation of Results:**

The early results indicate a promising start for the MA/MBA program's career tracking initiative. All four graduates from the Spring 2024 cohort secured full-time employment within one year of graduation, exceeding the program's 90% target benchmark. The confirmed positions represent a diversity of roles - illustrating the program's ability to prepare students for a broad range of leadership careers across the nonprofit and cultural sectors.

Because this is the first year the program goal was formally tracked, there is no direct comparison to prior years. However, the early results suggest strong professional outcomes and validate the program's interdisciplinary approach and emphasis on applied experience.

**(2) Documentation of Modifications or Previous Changes:**

The decision to formally implement employment tracking as a program goal was made in response to national data (e.g., SNAAP survey) and internal faculty interest in strengthening outcomes-based assessment. While no structural changes were made to the curriculum in response to employment data this cycle, the findings affirm the current instructional and experiential design of the program.

The impact of this new tracking process will be evaluated further during the 2025–2026 cycle. Results from these assessments will inform future revisions to program advising, career development support, and curriculum design.

**Step 5A: Use of Results for Seeking Improvement (Action Plan):**

**(1) Sharing Results with Stakeholders**

Preliminary results of the employment tracking goal were reviewed by program leadership and faculty through informal meetings and one-on-one discussions. Findings were also shared with the program director overseeing the MA/MBA curriculum. Faculty expressed interest in developing a more consistent mechanism for following alumni outcomes over time, especially as the program grows.

**(2) Use of Results for Improvement**

While early results exceeded the target benchmark, the program recognizes the need to formalize and standardize its employment tracking process. In lieu of a graduate exit survey or centralized career outcomes report, this year's findings were based on LinkedIn verification and direct faculty outreach to the four Spring 2024 graduates. To ensure consistency in future cycles, the program will develop a survey to be administered one year after graduation.

**(3) Planned Actions and Timeline**

- Fall 2025: Develop and finalize a survey
- Spring 2026: Launch survey to graduates from Spring 2025 cohort
- Summer 2026: Review survey results and compare to 90% benchmark
- Fall 2026: Integrate findings into curriculum and advising conversations

These actions aim to establish a more reliable and sustainable system for evaluating graduate success while strengthening program accountability and career readiness.

**Step 5B: Dialogue Participants (check all that apply):** Administrator

Faculty

Staff

Student

**Step 5C: Evidence of Dialogue:**

Although a formal faculty retreat did not take place during the 2024–2025 cycle due to scheduling conflicts and changes to the MA/MBA core faculty, informal discussions were held between the program director and individual faculty members. These conversations addressed assessment findings, student performance on key assignments, and preliminary ideas for curricular and pedagogical adjustments.

A formal faculty meeting will be planned for Spring 2026 to collectively review assessment data, discuss trends, and agree on next steps for program improvement. Documentation from that meeting will be submitted as formal evidence of dialogue in the next assessment cycle.

**Step 5D: Type of other Improvements (check all that apply):**

**Step 5E: Other Improvements (Full Description):**

N/A

**Step 6A: Status Update on Action(s) Identified in the Previous Assessment Cycle (Full Description):**

This was the first year that this Program was formally assessed in the MA/MBA program. As such, there are no previous action items to report or follow up on from prior assessment cycles.

During this academic year, baseline data was collected and analyzed, and opportunities for improvement were identified through faculty discussion and rubric review. These results will inform future instructional adjustments, rubric revisions, and assignment refinements in the upcoming cycle. Impact of these changes will be assessed after implementation in the next academic year, and results will be reviewed to inform ongoing program development.

**Step 6B: Status Update on Previously Identified Action Plan(s):** Not applicable for this cycle (explain in Step 6A)

**Progress:** Complete

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<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Score / Narrative Feedback</b>
<b>Program</b>	Arts Management MA
<b>Reviewer</b>	Academic Program Assessment Report Review Assist/Yan Cooksey
<b>Review Date</b>	December 19, 2025
<b>Location</b>	<b>Yes.</b> The report clearly notes that the program is offered at SMU Dallas and includes an optional study abroad semester at Bocconi University in Milan, which is correctly identified as an off campus instructional site.
<b>Distance Education</b>	<b>No.</b> The report states that MA courses are in person and synchronous, and the MBA courses are primarily in person with some elective options available online. The program correctly indicates that it does not offer courses through distance education technology as a primary delivery format.
<b>Mission Statement Score</b>	<b>3 (Good)</b>
<b>Mission Statement Comments</b>	<b>Highlights:</b> The mission clearly describes a dual degree program that prepares graduates for leadership roles in arts and cultural sectors and beyond, emphasizing rigorous business training, arts management education, and global perspectives through a partnership with Bocconi University. This aligns well with SMU's focus on shaping world changers who contribute to their communities and excel professionally in a global society. <b>Areas for improvement:</b> The mission reads more like a catalog narrative and blends purpose, outcomes, modality, and history into a single dense paragraph. It would be helpful to: (1) state more explicitly what graduates will be able to do, naming specific knowledge and skills; and (2) separate core purpose from delivery details (in person, synchronous, history) which can instead live in the template sections for location and distance education. <b>Suggested rewrite (model, not required to adopt verbatim):</b> "The MA/MBA in Arts Management at Southern Methodist University prepares graduates to lead arts, cultural, and creative sector organizations by combining advanced business education with specialized training in arts management. By graduation, students will be able to analyze financial

**Criterion**                      **Score / Narrative Feedback**

and organizational data, develop and implement strategic plans, and communicate effectively with diverse stakeholders in local and global arts ecosystems. The program is delivered in person on the SMU Dallas campus with an optional semester of study at Bocconi University in Milan.”

**SLOs Score**                      **3 (Good)**

**SLOs Comments**    **Highlights:** The program provides four SLOs, all assessed at or near the point of program completion in AMAE 6202, which is appropriate for a graduate capstone experience. The outcomes are specific, clearly time bound (end of AMAE 6202), and tightly aligned with arts management practice: teamwork and project management, quantitative internal analysis, qualitative internal analysis, and client facing presentation skills. All four are assessed with direct measures in a capstone context. **Areas for improvement:** Several SLOs read like combined outcome and assignment descriptions, and they sometimes bundle multiple actions and tools into one statement (for example, specifying “10 years of IRS Form 990 data,” “stakeholder interviews,” “written reflections,” and “strategic plan presentations” inside the SLO itself). Best practice is to reserve those details for the measure, keeping SLOs focused on what students will know or be able to do in a single clear verb phrase. This will also make it easier to adapt assignments in the future without rewriting the SLOs. **Suggested SLO rewrites (models):**

- **Teamwork & Project Management SLO:** “By the end of AMAE 6202, students will collaborate effectively in small teams to design a strategic plan for a local arts organization, demonstrating shared responsibility, reliable task completion, and constructive resolution of conflict.”
- **Analysis of the Internal Environment (Quantitative) SLO:** “By the end of AMAE 6202, students will analyze multi year financial data for an arts organization to identify key trends, evaluate sustainability, and classify major revenue streams in a written report.”
- **Analysis of the Internal Environment (Qualitative) SLO:** “By the end of AMAE 6202, students will evaluate organizational culture and stakeholder relationships in a local arts organization using qualitative evidence and will articulate implications for strategy in a written analysis.”
- **Presentation Skills SLO:** “By the end of AMAE

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Score / Narrative Feedback</b>
	6202, students will deliver a professional presentation of a strategic organizational plan to an external arts client that communicates key findings clearly, uses appropriate visual supports, and responds effectively to audience questions.”
<b>PGs Score</b>	<b>3 (Good)</b>
<b>PG Comments</b>	<p><b>Highlights:</b> The program goal on job placement is clearly framed around graduate employment outcomes, with attention to leadership roles and career advancement, and indicates that results will inform curriculum, advising, and alumni engagement. This aligns well with the interdisciplinary, professionally oriented nature of the MA/MBA. <b>Areas for improvement:</b> The PG statement currently blends the goal itself with a detailed description of measures (“surveys, LinkedIn audits, follow up”) and process (“review annually, discuss in meetings”), which are better housed in Steps 2A and 2B. Best practice is to keep the PG as a concise, measurable improvement statement (for example, “increase the percentage of graduates employed full time within one year”) and let the measure describe how that will be tracked. <b>Suggested PG rewrite (model):</b>“The MA/MBA in Arts Management program will achieve strong early career outcomes, with at least 90 percent of graduates securing full time professional roles or equivalent engagement in arts, cultural, or related sectors within one year of graduation.”</p>
<b>Measures Score</b>	<b>4 (Exemplary)</b>
<b>Measures Comments</b>	<p><b>Highlights:</b> Each SLO is assessed with a clearly described, direct capstone level measure: peer evaluated group consulting project for teamwork and project management; an individual written internal financial analysis for quantitative skills; a qualitative stakeholder based internal analysis for relationship management and culture; and client evaluated strategic plan presentations for communication and leadership. Rubrics and assignment briefs are referenced and attached, which strengthens transparency and replicability. The job placement PG uses an appropriate indirect measure (alumni employment tracking via survey and LinkedIn), which is suitable for a</p>

Criterion	Score / Narrative Feedback
	<p>program goal. Measures are explicitly linked to the capstone course, which is a logical point in the curriculum. <b>Suggestions (optional refinement, not required for scoring):</b> For even stronger clarity, consider explicitly labeling the SLO link in each measure description (for example, “This measure assesses SLO 2: Analysis of the Internal Environment (Quantitative)”).</p>
<b>Targets Score</b>	<b>4 (Exemplary)</b>
<b>Targets Comments</b>	<p><b>Highlights:</b> Targets are clearly stated and quantifiable for all outcomes: for example, at least 80 percent of students earning “Above Average” ratings on teamwork and project management, at least 80 percent achieving “Good” or higher on the financial analysis, at least 80 percent achieving “Above Average” on qualitative analysis, and at least 90 percent achieving “Above Average” on client presentations. The PG target of 90 percent full time or equivalent professional engagement within a year is clearly benchmarked against national SNAAP data, and several SLO targets are likewise positioned as responses to documented skills gaps. This rationale strengthens the case that targets are both aspirational and evidence informed. <b>Suggested target refinements (optional):</b> When possible, define the rubric scale in the narrative (for example, “Above Average corresponds to level 3 or higher on a 4 point rubric”) to help external readers interpret rigor. No rewrite is required for scoring.</p>
<b>Results &amp; Findings Score</b>	<b>3 (Good)</b>
<b>Results Comments</b>	<p><b>Highlights:</b> For each SLO, the program reports summary performance results and provides thoughtful interpretation of strengths and areas for growth. Teamwork and project management results note an average peer rating of 9.95/10 with no reported conflict. Quantitative analysis results report an average score of 27/30 (90 percent) and describe student use of financial tools and strategic frameworks. Qualitative analysis results report an average of 27/30 with 92.3 percent meeting the benchmark, and note that students effectively applied models such as SWOT and VRIO. Presentation skills results highlight perfect</p>

**Criterion****Score / Narrative Feedback**

faculty scores and “Exceptional” client ratings. The job placement PG reports preliminary outcomes for four graduates, all employed within one year, and explains why Step 4A was coded as “No data collected/reported this cycle” given that the formal survey process is still being built. **Areas for improvement:** \* Numeric detail is still relatively minimal. In most cases, N (number of students) is not explicitly stated, and distributions across rubric levels are not reported. For example, we learn that the average quantitative analysis score was 27/30 but not how many students scored at each level of performance. \* For several SLOs, this is noted as the first cycle, so multi year trends are not yet available. That is expected, but it will be important to add year over year comparisons once a second cycle of data exists. \* For the job placement PG, the narrative provides useful preliminary outcomes, but the Step 4A selection (“No data collected/reported this cycle”) may confuse readers unless it is clarified that these findings are informal and outside the new standardized process. **Actionable suggestions:** \* In future reports, include N and, where possible, the percentage of students at each rubric level (for example, “N=13; 8 students at Exemplary, 4 at Proficient, 1 at Developing”). \* When you repeat these assessments in future years, add a brief trend statement (for example, “Average score increased from 27/30 in 2024–25 to 28/30 in 2025–26”). \* For the job placement PG, consider coding Step 4A as “Met” in future years once the formal survey is in place and clearly marking any informal or partial data as such in the narrative.

**Action Plans  
Score****4 (Exemplary)****Action Plan  
Comments**

**Highlights:** Each SLO and the PG includes a clear, data driven action plan that responds directly to documented findings. For teamwork, the program will add a reflective writing assignment to enrich self awareness and complement peer evaluations, with specific design, implementation, and review dates listed and responsible parties named. For quantitative analysis, the rubric will be revised to emphasize strategic interpretation and an in class applied case study will be added, again with concrete Spring and Summer 2026

**Criterion****Score / Narrative Feedback**

milestones. For qualitative analysis, a cultural diagnostics exercise and revised prompts will support deeper engagement with organizational culture and leadership. For presentation skills, the program will introduce a communication calibration exercise and a model presentation to help students tailor messaging to different audiences. The job placement PG action plan lays out the development, launch, and review of a formal alumni employment survey with a clear timeline from Fall 2025 through Fall 2026. In each case, actions, responsible parties, and reassessment windows are specified, satisfying expectations for structured implementation. **Suggestions (optional refinement):** Once formal faculty meetings resume, consider attaching agendas or minutes as evidence of dialogue to strengthen documentation in Step 5D going forward.

**Status Update****Score (Steps  
6A/6B)****3 (Good)****Status Update  
Comments**

**Highlights:** For all SLOs and the PG, the report clearly notes that this is the first year of formal assessment and explains that there are no previous action items to update. Instead, faculty describe how baseline data and rubric reviews in this cycle will shape future instructional adjustments and refinements, with impact to be assessed in the next year. This is appropriate for an initial cycle and shows early thinking about continuity. **Areas for improvement:** Since there are not yet prior actions, the narrative is necessarily brief. In future cycles, the expectation will be a more detailed report on what was implemented, what evidence you have of impact (for example, changes in scores or student feedback), and how that evidence is shaping new actions. **Actionable suggestions:** For next year's report, reserve a place in internal documentation (for example, a simple tracking spreadsheet) that lists each action plan, the date implemented, and the evidence you will use to judge its impact. Then summarize that in Step 6A and 6B.

**Overall Rating****3 (Good)**

**Criterion**                      **Score / Narrative Feedback**

**Revision Level**            **Minor**

**Overall Summary Highlights:** This is a well structured, practice focused assessment report for a professional MA/MBA program. The mission aligns with SMU’s emphasis on developing world changers and leaders, and the program has thoughtfully anchored all SLO assessment in a capstone course that engages real arts organizations and clients. SLOs are specific, professionally relevant, and assessed with strong direct measures using rubrics, client feedback, and authentic projects. Targets are clear, measurable, and justified by national SNAAP data and internal aspirations. Results show high levels of student achievement, and the action plans are concrete, sequenced, and clearly connected to findings, with attention to both pedagogical adjustments and program level outcomes such as job placement. **Key recommendations:** 1) Refine the mission statement and SLO/PG language to separate outcomes from measures and logistics, making each statement concise and outcomes focused while leaving the detailed “how” in later steps. 2) Enhance results reporting in future cycles by consistently including N, percent distributions at each rubric level, and, once available, year to year comparisons for each SLO and the PG. 3) As action plans are implemented, strengthen the Status Update sections by explicitly describing what was done, what evidence of impact has been observed, and how that evidence is feeding into new plans. With these modest refinements, the program is well positioned to reach an exemplary level of assessment practice in future cycles.

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**Quality Control Checklist (Reviewer Confirmation)**

- **SLO count:** Four SLOs are present for this graduate degree program. ✓
- **Assessment cadence:** All four SLOs are assessed in this cycle through the capstone course; long term rotation across five years will need to be confirmed in future documentation.
- **Program Goals:** At least one PG (Job Placement) is present. ✓
- **Direct evidence:** Each SLO uses at least one direct measure (capstone projects, written analyses, presentations, peer evaluations). ✓

- **Targets:** All SLOs and the PG have quantifiable targets with rationale, often referencing SNAAP data. ✓
- **Results & Interpretation:** Results are provided for all SLOs with interpretation, though future reports should add N, distributions, and trend data once multiple years are available.
- **Action Plans:** At least one action plan is present and data driven for this cycle, with actions, responsible parties, and timelines specified for each SLO and the PG. ✓
- **Status Update:** Step 6A/6B explains that this is the first year of formal assessment for all items, which is appropriate, but richer updates will be expected in subsequent years.
- **SLO quality check:** Suggested rewrites provided above ensure SLOs are SMART and avoid embedding measures or numeric thresholds.
- **Linkage:** Every SLO reported has an associated measure, target, results, and action plan documented.
- **Data integrity:** Numerical results and descriptions in this review reflect the report exactly as written; no values have been altered or reinterpreted.