

# Academic Assessment Plan Components and Instructions

University of Florida, Office of Institutional Assessment  
<http://assessment.aa.ufl.edu>

## Introduction

Academic Assessment Plans are an essential part of the University of Florida's assessment process for measuring student learning in the academic programs. All programs at UF – undergraduate, graduate, professional, and certificate – must develop Academic Assessment Plans annually. These plans are submitted for review and approval by the Academic Assessment Committee.

In these plans, faculty members address the specific components of their assessment processes. The components are described here. Once developed, each component is then entered into its corresponding field in UF's assessment and accreditation software program, *Compliance Assist!*.

## Mission Statement

All units on campus have a mission statement that describes the purpose of the unit and guides the unit's actions, spells out its overall goal, provides a sense of direction, and guides decision-making. This section should meet these criteria:

- Clarity – the mission is clear, concise, and addresses teaching, research, and service
- Alignment with the university mission – the unit mission clearly supports the University mission

These criteria are met by reviewing the unit's mission and the university's mission (University of Florida, 2014-15) and ensuring that they are aligned, and that the unit's mission supports the University's mission.

## Program Goals (PGs)

Program goals include the broad educational goals of the program (i.e., to graduate students who are prepared for the workplace) and programmatic elements such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Total number of students enrolled
- Percent minority students
- Percent of admits from those who applied
- Percent matriculated from those admitted
- Median time to degree
- Percent attrition rate
- Percent completion rate
- Number of graduates
- Number of graduates produced per budgeted faculty position

Goals are measured by establishing specific actions that will provide data that inform the faculty of the progress they are making toward achieving the goal.

## **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

Student Learning Outcomes should be current, relevant, and rigorous; written concisely and clearly; and represent the consensus of the program faculty on what students should know and be able to do at the end of their program. SLO are evaluated by the Academic Assessment Committee on the following criteria:

- clarity – the SLO is concise and clear
- focus on demonstration of student learning – the SLO describes an observable behavior or action
- measurability – the SLO can be measured using a direct or indirect assessment (see Methods and Procedures for further information about assessments)

All SLOs fall into one of three broad categories:

- Undergraduate – Content Knowledge, Critical Thinking, or Communication.
- Graduate – Content Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Behavior

## **Research (Graduate/Professional only)**

Briefly describe the research expectations for students in the degree program. NOTE: If the degree is NOT a research degree, briefly state this, and include a brief description of any research-related activities that students complete in the program

## **Curriculum Maps (Undergraduate) and Assessment Timelines (Graduate/Professional)**

Curriculum Maps describe the distribution of the assessments in undergraduate programs; Assessment Timelines present the general sequence of assessments in graduate programs. Curriculum Maps and Assessment Timelines consist of a matrix that indicate where and in which courses the program's student learning outcomes are introduced, reinforced, and assessed. When appropriate, they also list other assessments that are used to measure student learning. Templates for the Maps and Timelines are posted at the Institutional Assessment website.

In the Academic Assessment Plan, the Curriculum Map/Assessment Timeline should meet these criteria:

- aligns SLOs with program courses
- Curriculum Maps (undergraduate programs) identify where SLOs are introduced, reinforced, and assessed in the program
- Assessment Timelines (graduate/professional programs) identify the when the assessment is planned in the program
- identifies the assessments used for each SLO

## Assessment Cycle

The assessment cycle is a matrix that graphically organizes the frequency of SLO assessment. Because programs have multiple SLOs in three broad categories, all SLOs must be assessed at least once every three years. However, faculty may choose to assess all of their SLOs annually or over a two year period. The Assessment Cycle is evaluated on the following criteria:

- clarity – the cycle is clearly articulated
- all student learning outcomes are measured
- data is collected at least once in the cycle for each SLO
- there is a date or time period for data analysis and interpretation
- there is a date for planning improvement actions based on the data analysis
- there is a date for dissemination of results to the appropriate stakeholders

## Methods and Procedures (Undergraduate) and Measurement Tools (Graduate/Professional)

Each unit employs various methods and procedures to assess and collect data on program goals and student learning outcomes. SLO assessments include but are not limited to rubrics, exam scores, portfolios, recitals or art show critiques, etc. Program goal measures vary widely. In this section of the plan, units provide information on their specific methods and procedures for the Program Goal measures and SLO assessments. In the Academic Assessment Plan, methods and procedures are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Clarity – methods and procedures are clear
- Measurements occur at specified times
- Measurements are appropriate for the Goals and SLOs
- SLO assessment methods and procedures reflect an appropriate balance of direct and indirect methods
- At least one course/program assessment/measurement tool (attachments preferred)

### ***More about Direct and Indirect Assessments***

*Direct assessments* of student learning are those that provide for direct examination or observation of student knowledge or skills against measurable performance indicators.

*Indirect assessments* are those that ascertain the opinion or self-report of the extent or value of learning experiences

Examples of direct assessment include but are not limited to quizzes, tests, inventories, team/group projects, standardized tests, licensure exams, internships, service learning projects, case studies, simulations, and portfolios. Indirect assessments include but are not limited to quantitative data such as enrollments; questionnaires; honors, awards, scholarships; interviews, focus groups; employer satisfaction measures; retention/graduation rates; and job/graduate school placement data.

The balance of direct and indirect measures should be appropriate for the program. Most programs will have at least 50% of the SLOs measured using direct assessments.

**Sample Rubric Used to Measure an SLO**

In this section faculty attach a sample rubric that is used to measure one of the program SLOs.

**Assessment Oversight**

In this section of the plan, the appropriate personnel (coordinator, committee, etc.) charged with assessment responsibilities are identified. A list of names, department affiliations, and email addresses meets this criterion. If it is appropriate, additional information on the assessment oversight in the unit can be provided.