

**Commission of Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools**

Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement

Section 3 COMPREHENSIVE STANDARDS

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas:

3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

3.3.1.2 administrative support services

3.3.1.3 educational support services

3.3.1.4 research within its educational mission, if appropriate

3.3.1.5 community/public service within its educational mission, if appropriate

Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation

Rationale and Notes:

This standard addresses the process of assessment that supports the institution's administrative and educational support services and serves as the cornerstone of institutional effectiveness. For academic programs and for administrative and educational support services, institutional effectiveness focuses on the design and improvement of educational experiences to enhance student learning.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:

- How are expected outcomes clearly defined in measurable terms for each educational program as well as for administrative and educational support services?
- What is the evidence of assessment activities for each educational, administrative, and educational support unit?
- What is the evidence for broad-based participation in assessment activities?
- How are periodic reviews in which programmatic outcomes such as retention, graduation rates, employer and alumni satisfaction, and the like assessed, reviewed, and used for improvements?
- How does the institution's use of assessment results improve educational programs and administrative and educational support services?

Sample Documentation:

- Documentation of goals and expected outcomes for educational programs and for administrative and educational support services
- Documentation of the evaluation of those outcomes
- Documentation of the use of the findings from assessment to improve the institution