

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON

DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

GUIDELINES FOR ANNUAL REPORTING OF STUDENT LEARNING  
OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC PROGRAM OUTCOMES  
ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

PROCESS and SCHEDULE

1. Annual reports of assessment activity for each academic year are due in the Office of the Vice Provost by the end of the first week in November of the following academic year.
2. College/school assessment directors will meet with the Vice Provost before the end of November to review and evaluate the annual reports.
3. Annual reports of assessment activities will be reviewed by the Learning Assessment Council at its meeting or meetings following the annual review and evaluation of the annual reports by the college/school assessment directors and Vice Provost.
4. The Learning Assessment Council will provide resulting recommendations for improvements in student learning and academic programming to the Provost.

GUIDELINES

1. Reports are to be submitted in digital format and will include, at a minimum, the elements described in numbers 2 and 3 below. A sample template is available at <http://www.uncw.edu/cas/documents/AssessmentReportTemplate2008-2009.doc>
2. Academic Program Outcomes Report<sup>i</sup> will include (one for each academic degree offering):
  - a. Title of department or administrative unit
  - b. Academic year of report
  - c. List of program outcomes linked to UNCW strategic goals<sup>ii</sup>
  - d. Description of tools or measures used for outcomes
  - e. Description of implementation, including who is responsible, what data will be collected, and the schedule of activities
  - f. Summary of findings from the year's assessment activities
  - g. List of actions taken/changes made or of plans for actions to be taken/changes to be made to improve academic program
3. Student Learning Outcomes Report<sup>iii</sup> will include:
  - a. Title of degree program
  - b. Academic year of report
  - c. List of student learning outcomes/assurances of learning outcomes linked to UNCW learning goals<sup>iv</sup>
  - d. Description of tools or measures used for outcomes

- e. Description of implementation, including who is responsible, what data will be collected, and the schedule of activities
  - f. Summary of findings from the year's assessment activities
  - g. List of actions taken/changes made or of plans for actions to be taken/changes to be made to improve student learning
4. Each college/school will archive supporting documentation for learning outcomes assessment and academic program outcomes assessment, and providing links (and access as appropriate) to the archive in each annual report (documents to be maintained locally).
  5. The annual assessment report will include a reporting of any new or modified assessment plans for that year and provide links (and access as appropriate) to the new or modified assessment plans.
  6. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment will archive the annual assessment reports.

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<sup>i</sup> Program outcome assessment is establishing expected outcomes for what the administrative unit seeks to accomplish for each of its degree (and certificate) programs, formulating and implementing a plan for determining the extent to which those outcomes are being achieved, and using the results to make improvements. Sometimes this process is called strategic planning and assessment, sometimes it's called institutional effectiveness. For an academic department, these expected outcomes would likely include expected outcomes for faculty recruitment, faculty development, faculty research productivity, faculty grant activity, faculty teaching performance, community engagement, recruitment and retention of majors, graduation rates, job placement, advising, etc. The planning and assessment of program outcomes involve all the activities of the department.

<sup>ii</sup> UNCW Strategic Goals

1. GOAL I: Create the most powerful learning experience possible for our students.
2. GOAL II: Recruit, retain and develop quality faculty, administration and staff in appropriate numbers.
3. GOAL III: Embrace and enhance diversity throughout the university's constituencies, culture, curriculum and outreach activities.
4. GOAL IV: Create an educational environment that prepares our students to be global citizens.
5. GOAL V: Strengthen the university's regional engagement and outreach activities.
6. GOAL VI: Enhance the quality of UNCW's environment and provide a sustainable campus that is attractive, functional and, above all, safe.
7. GOAL VII: Ensure adequate resources to achieve university goals by increasing public financial support and private giving.

<sup>iii</sup> Learning outcome assessment is establishing what students are expected to be able to do after completion of an identifiable educational entity (course, academic major, degree, certificate, minor, Basic Studies, learning community, internship program, honors program, distance learning program, etc.), formulating and implementing a plan for determining the extent to which those expected learning outcomes are being achieved by the students, and acting on the findings of assessment to make improvements in the educational enterprise.

<sup>iv</sup> UNCW Learning Goals

1. **Foundational knowledge** comprises the facts, theories, principles, methods, skills, terminology and modes of reasoning that are essential to more advanced or independent learning in an academic discipline.

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2. **Inquiry** is the systematic and analytic investigation of an issue or problem with the goal of discovery. Inquiry involves the clear statement of the problem, issue or question to be investigated; examination of relevant existing knowledge; design of an investigation process; analysis of the complexities of the problem, clear rationale supporting conclusions; and identification of limitations of the analysis.
  3. **Information literacy** is the ability "to recognize when information is needed and to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information." [American Library Association. (1989) American Library Association Presidential Committee on Information Literacy. Final Report. Chicago.] Demonstrating information literacy involves determining the extent of information needed, accessing the needed information, critically evaluating the information, organizing the information to accomplish a specific purpose, and using the information ethically and legally.
  4. **Critical thinking** is "skilled, active interpretation and evaluation of observations, communications, information and argumentation." [Fisher and Scriven. (1997) Critical Thinking: Its Definition and Assessment, Center for Research in Critical Thinking (UK)/Edgepress (US).] Critical thinking involves a clear explanation of relevant issues, skillful investigation of evidence, purposeful judgments about the influence of context or assumptions, reasoned creation of one's own perspective, and synthesis of evidence and implications from which conclusions are drawn.
  5. **Thoughtful expression** is the ability to communicate, orally and in writing, meaningful ideas in an organized, reasoned and convincing manner. Thoughtful expression involves a purpose responsive to an identified audience, effective organization, insightful reasoning and supporting detail, style appropriate to the relevant discipline, purposeful use of sources and evidence, and error-free syntax and mechanics.
  6. **Second language** shall be used to describe basic proficiency in speaking, listening, writing and reading in a language other than English that is sufficient for interaction and comprehension. This includes American Sign Language, but not computer languages.
  7. **Diversity** constitutes the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to examine the importance and implications of cultural and ethnic human differences. Diversity examines the significance of historical, political, social, racial, ethnic and cultural realities through critical thinking to understand and explain their implications in human endeavors.
  8. **Global citizenship** is characterized by the ability to evaluate large-scale impacts of historical, scientific, economic, political cultural and artistic perspectives on individuals, societies and our environment; and by participation in efforts to make the world a better place.
  9. **Teamwork** comprises an individual's understanding and ability to work cooperatively toward a common goal. Characteristics that demonstrate effective teamwork include regular contribution of useful ideas, active listening and constructive use of others' ideas, timely completion of assigned tasks, respectful interaction, and supportive conflict resolution.