



Director of Academic Assessment

Steps to Developing an Assessment Plan

There are several steps to follow in creating a new or improved assessment plan:

1. Examine the learning outcomes that have been outlined by the department for the course or program to be assessed.
2. Identify those learning outcomes that will be assessed. Rather than attempting to assess all the learning outcomes at once, choose those that seem most critical to the overall goals of the program and can be meaningfully measured.
3. Select your assessment tool(s): methods or instruments for gathering evidence to show whether students have achieved the expected learning outcomes. Determine if there are existing data sources or tools that may be used or if new tools must be selected or developed. Select those tools that seem most appropriate to the learning outcomes and student population being assessed.
4. Select the student population to be assessed (e.g. random sample of sections, graduating student, etc.).
5. Specify procedures for analyzing and interpreting the evidence gathered in assessment. Prior to administering assessments, create a scoring rubric or other method of evaluating results, and determine the departmental standard for performance expectations (e.g. success equals 75% of students meeting outcomes). Determine if the assessment will be episodic (a snapshot of student performance at one point in time) or ongoing (a recurring, consistent, and comparative assessment of student achievement over time).
6. Determine how the information that results from assessment can be used for decision making, planning, and course/program evaluation and improvement. Develop means whereby involved faculty can review the data, make recommendations for change as appropriate, and incorporate such changes in the unit's planning cycle. Report findings to the appropriate stakeholders.