

Program Assessment Guidelines

Departmental Assessment Committees

The assessment committee in each department is responsible for reviewing learning outcomes and assessment measures and for analyzing results for the undergraduate major, the undergraduate minor concentration in the GBA major, the discipline-based master's program, and the department's core courses in support of the undergraduate program. The first three are relevant for SACS; the last three are relevant for AACSB. This is not a job for a single person—the committee should comprise three to four faculty; ideally, the chair of the departmental committee will be the department's representative to the college committee.

Because the approach to assurance of learning in a doctoral program is likely to be considerably different from that used in undergraduate and master's level programs, each department should appoint a doctoral program assessment committee comprising faculty who teach in the program. Departmental committees are expected to prepare written reports that address the five elements listed below (Develop Recommendations for Program Improvement for Undergraduate and Master's Programs) for each program; reports should be kept in departmental files with copies to the appropriate college committee and the dean's office.

Review Objectives for Undergraduate and Master's Programs

Each department has an academic learning compact (ALC) for its undergraduate major and minor concentration and the equivalent of an ALC for its core and master's program. Unless your department has made significant changes to the program or program objectives, you can find the information you submitted/approved in previous years in departmental files (electronic or hard copy) and online at the Office of Decision support site. You will want to give all faculty teaching in a program the opportunity to provide input on program objectives. The university and accrediting associations will look for real assessment, within each program, of critical thinking and communication as well as content/discipline skills: we can not rely solely on the general education assessment for critical thinking and communication skills assessment. The university guidelines also include a fourth category, 'other program outcomes', that is fairly broadly defined and could include placement, employer feedback or other indicators. Proposed changes in learning objectives should be included in the department's report to the college assessment committee and copied to the Undergraduate Programs Committee or Graduate Policy Committee.

Review Assessment Measures for Undergraduate and Master's Programs

The departmental assessment committee should review current measures against program objectives to determine if current measures are effective in measuring achievement against program goals: do they measure what they purport to measure and do so consistently. (Four or five multiple choice questions in a single course will probably not do the trick; however, departments with capstone courses can reasonably use a series of measures of critical thinking, communication, and content/discipline skills in that course to assess learning in the major or master's program.)

The university/SACS are interested in both quantitative and qualitative measures; at the undergraduate level in particular, they will be looking for numbers (80% of students completing the major in XXXX will be able to YYYY) to judge how well learning outcomes/objectives are being met as well as which outcomes the program should focus on improving. At the graduate

level, there is an expectation that *all* students will meet minimums (as opposed to e.g. 80%) and the focus is more on improving outcomes. (For example, even if everyone is scoring above 4.5/5 on a given outcome, there is likely something that can be done to improve overall student performance.) If the assessment committee finds that current measures appear inadequate, faculty teaching in the program should be asked to propose new means of assessment.

Review Assessment Data for Undergraduate and Master's Programs

The departmental assessment committee should review assessment outcomes for the most recent two or three rounds of assessment to determine to what degree objectives have been met and document how assessment results have been used for program improvement. Outcomes data through December 2007 are summarized in the Fifth Year Maintenance Report, section 4 (pp. 13-22) for the undergraduate program (core) and master's programs; all data should be available in each department and on file with the dean's office and the appropriate college committees. An evaluation of how well program objectives have been met as well as a summary of program changes in response to assessment should be included in the department's report to the college assessment committee.

Develop Recommendations for Program Improvement for Undergraduate and Master's Programs

The goal of comprehensive assessment is to provide the basis for program improvements that will enhance student learning. Enhancing student learning may require changes to learning objectives; changes to the program structure (required and elective courses as well as other requirements); and/or changes to the means of assessment. The committee's analysis of results should answer the following questions:

- Are critical thinking, communication, and discipline-specific learning outcomes appropriate to the program?
- Does the current program structure of required and elective courses address each of the learning objectives and provide the opportunity for student learning?
- Do the current means of assessment accurately measure student learning on the defined outcomes?
- Are expectations of student performance met?
- What specific action should the department/college take to address expectation gaps? (changes in teaching strategies, concept emphasis, assignments, etc. vs. substantive program changes.)

Doctoral Program Assurance of Learning

The doctoral program committee in each department/school will comprise the assessment committee for that program. Specific program objectives and learning outcomes should reflect both the college's mission to prepare students to contribute to and take leading positions in business and society and the general objectives addressed in AACSB standard 21. Interim assurance of learning measures (which may include annual performance reviews and performance on qualifying examinations) should address, at a minimum, quality of performance and a reasonable rate of progress through the program. Because doctoral program student

placement and professional progress are the true measures of program quality, departmental doctoral program committees should develop policies and procedures to maintain a file of current vitae for program graduates.

Departmental committees are responsible for providing a written report to the college's Doctoral Program Committee, which serves as the overall doctoral program assessment committee for the college.

Interdisciplinary/College Programs

Undergraduate Program

Because the college grants a single undergraduate degree (BA or BS in Business Administration), AACSB considers the undergraduate program to be a single program essentially comprising the core. The Undergraduate Programs Committee will serve as the assessment committee for the undergraduate program.

International Business Major

Because the International Business major is interdisciplinary, the Undergraduate Programs Committee, with advice from the Director of Undergraduate Studies, will recommend three faculty who teach in the program to serve as the assessment committee; they will be appointed by the dean. The responsibilities of this committee will parallel those of the departmental assessment committees as outlined above.

Defined GBA Major, Singapore

The General Business Administration major offered in Singapore differs from the traditional GBA in that minor concentrations and electives are defined. The major comprises the marketing concentration, the international business minor, and selected upper level core and elective courses taught in a cohort structure: all students complete all courses as a group. Learning outcomes have been defined by the Marketing department working with Undergraduate studies; they focus on the environment of international business and global marketing. Assessment will occur in the capstone course; the USF faculty member teaching that course will gather data; the Director of Undergraduate Studies will analyze the data and prepare a report for the Undergraduate programs Committee.

MBA and Executive MBA Programs

The Director of MBA Programs and the Graduate Policy Committee will comprise the assessment committee for the MBA and Executive MBA programs; they will be responsible for the assessment activities outlined above.

Master of Science in Entrepreneurship in Applied Technologies

The Director of the Center for Entrepreneurship will recommend three faculty who teach in the Master of Science in Entrepreneurship in Applied Technology (MSEAT) to serve as the assessment

committee for the program. The responsibilities of this committee will parallel those of other college assessment committees; however, in addition to providing periodic reports on assurance of learning to the COB Graduate Policy Committee, the MSEAT assessment committee will also provide data on outcomes to COB partners in USF Health and the College of Engineering.