ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT
LIAISON COMPANION MANUAL

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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Office of Institutional Effectiveness
& Evaluation

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Introduction

The Liaison Role in the Assessment Process

As Assessment Liaisons you serve an important role to the academic programs in your college, school, or campus, and to OIEE as an intermediary to programs for communication about assessment. The role of the Liaison is as follows:

1. Provide feedback and guidance to programs on the Assessment Plan and Report;
2. Reinforce the importance of complete and timely Assessment Reports for purposes of compliance; and,
3. Provide updates on program changes, program coordinator access, and mode of delivery changes to OIEE.

How to Use This Manual

This manual explains the feedback process and includes specific guidance on providing feedback in each section of the Assessment Plan and Report. The tables in the *Feedback Considerations & Boilerplate Feedback* section include frequently cited areas for Plan and Report improvement and the corresponding feedback that can be copy/pasted into the feedback text boxes in HelioCampus (formerly AEFIS).

You are <u>not required</u> to use this feedback verbatim. The feedback may be tweaked as necessary, and more specific feedback may be provided in program forms that might require more guidance. Ultimately these boilerplate statements are meant to support you in your role by streamlining the feedback process.

Providing Assessment Feedback in HelioCampus (Formerly AEFIS)

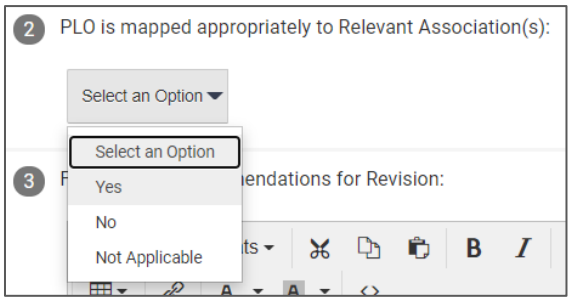
Types of Feedback

Feedback in the program assessment review process takes two forms:

1. Categorical Dropdown: *Yes, No, Not Applicable*

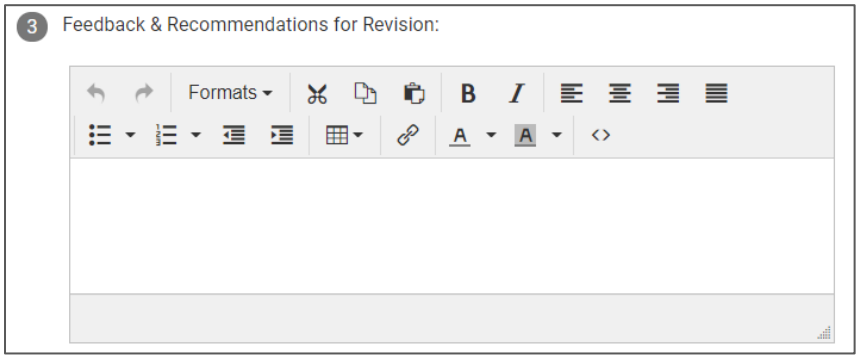
   Yes should be selected only in cases where the criterion is completely fulfilled. *Not Applicable* option should be used in instances where a particular criterion is not relevant to the PLO, measure, finding, etc.

   For example: An Assessment Plan for a fully face-to-face, College Station-based program is not expected to disaggregate their results by program, geographic location, or mode of delivery, so *Not Applicable* is the appropriate selection for that criterion in the Findings section.



2. Qualitative

   Each section of the Plan/Report includes a text box where qualitative feedback can be provided. OIEE recommends providing qualitative feedback in sections where *No* is selected for any of the related criteria.



Tips for Providing Meaningful Qualitative Feedback

As feedback is provided in stages, sometimes it may be difficult for Program Coordinators to discern whether certain feedback was provided during the Plan stage or during the Report stage. This is particularly true when feedback is updated or added to the Plan sections during the Report stage (at Step 4), which is sometimes necessary when significant changes have been made to the Plan mid-cycle. Confusion may also occur when a form is rejected multiple times, each time with added feedback.

OIEE recommends one of two strategies (or a combination of the two) for making the timing of feedback clearer to Program Coordinators:

1. **Date the feedback**

   Example:

   4/15/21: It isn't clear how this measure addresses the PLO as defined. Please provide more information to make this alignment clearer.

   11/10/21: The update to this section has made the relationship to the PLO and measure much clearer. Nice work!

2. **Color format the different iterations of feedback**
   This strategy is particularly helpful as it sets your qualitative feedback apart from the rest of the text in the form.

   Example:

   It isn't clear how this measure addresses the PLO as defined. Please provide more information to make this alignment clearer. [Plan-stage feedback is blue]

   The update to this section has made the relationship to the PLO and measure much clearer. Nice work! [Report-stage feedback is orange]

Timing of Feedback

When Program Coordinators begin submitting Plans/Reports for feedback, you will periodically receive email notifications from the system reminding you to log in and check for submissions. The Plan deadlines are essentially guidelines; there is some leeway with those deadlines because actual assessment of the PLOs in the Plan does not begin until the following Fall semester. However, it is important that all feedback is provided prior to the start of the Fall semester.

Report deadlines are stricter because there are more workflow steps for the forms to go through during the Fall semester. Final Approvers have two weeks to review Reports submitted by Program Coordinators (Step 6), so it is important that Reports stay on track up to that point.

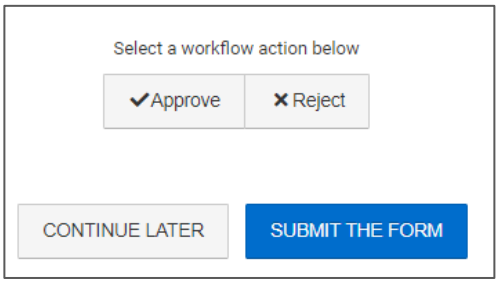
Submitting Feedback

If after providing feedback you do not wish to review the form a second time after revisions are made by the Program Coordinator, select the "*Approve*" button. Once the button is highlighted, click *"Submit"* to send the feedback forward in the workflow to the Program Coordinator for final revisions.

The *"Reject"* button can be used if you would like to review the Plan or Report again before it advances to the next workflow step(s). Select the *"Reject"* button and click *"Submit"* to send the form with feedback *backwards* in the workflow to the Program Coordinator. This action ensures you will see the form again after the Program Coordinator makes changes.

Use your best judgment to determine which programs might benefit from more than one round of feedback on the Plan/Report.

NOTE*: Please note that the HelioCampus system will automatically notify Program Coordinators via email when one of their assessment forms is rejected back to them.*

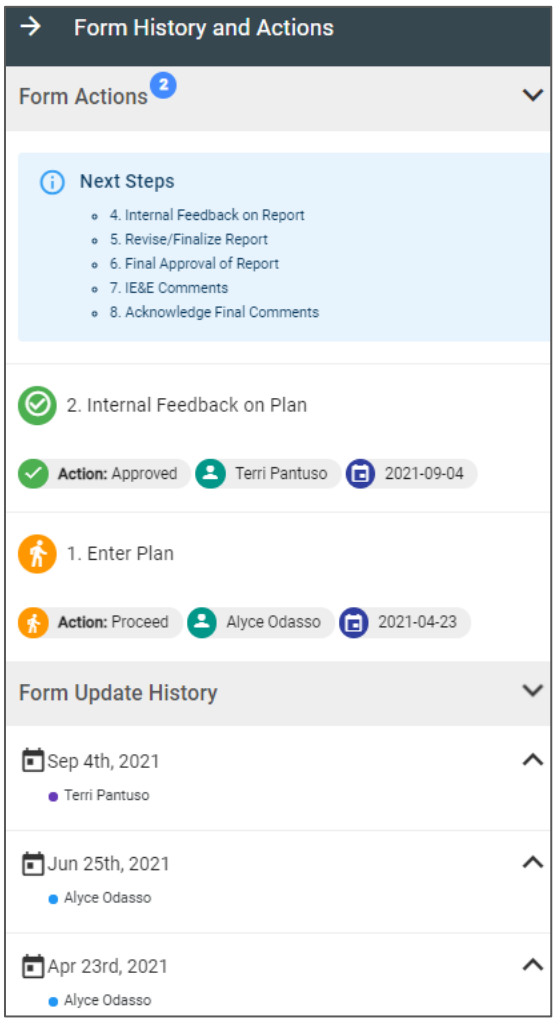


Form History

The Form History feature allows Liaisons to see the changes Program Coordinators have made to the assessment form between feedback iterations. To access Form History, click the *Show History* icon at the top right of the assessment form:

The first section of the Form History menu, labeled *Form Actions* (as seen below), shows the submission history for the assessment form, including date, time, whether it was sent forward in the workflow (*Action: Proceed/Approved*) or backward (*Action: Rejected*), and by whom.

The second section of the Form History menu, labeled *Form Update History*, shows a list of "sessions" during which Program Coordinator(s), Liaison(s), and/or OIEE staff were working in the form. Expanding a session entry will show every change made in the form during that session. Each change is timestamped and labeled with the user's name. Clicking on an individual change within this list will automatically navigate you to that section of the form.



Feedback Considerations & Boilerplate Feedback

Considerations and boilerplate feedback for each section of the Assessment Plan and Report are on the following pages. The boilerplate feedback can be copy/pasted into the qualitative feedback fields in HelioCampus (formerly AEFIS). *We recommend using the Word document version of this manual to do so; it is linked on the OIEE Assessment website.* In the tables that follow, frequently cited areas for improvement are listed in the left column and the related boilerplate feedback is listed in the right column.

Feedback is embedded in the assessment process to help programs understand and utilize assessment best practices, but this is also a good opportunity to acknowledge good work.

Program Description

Program Coordinators can freely describe the **discipline-specific purpose** of their program. This may resemble the program's mission statement. There are not any categorical feedback criteria specifically related to the description they provide.

Alternate Locations & DE Programs: Program Coordinators are asked to indicate the geographic location(s) of program delivery. They are also asked to indicate whether the program is available through distance education (DE) technology and, if so, what the format of delivery is (synchronous, asynchronous, or both). When reviewing this section, ensure the Program Coordinators of combined Assessment Plans (i.e., Plans that include two or more programs, including those that name a single program but offer it in both modalities) respond to this prompt with detailed information. It should be clear exactly how/where each program is delivered. Here are some useful definitions:

- ***Program offered through DE technology***: More than half or all the curriculum (>50%) is available to students through asynchronous and/or synchronous web-based delivery. *This <u>DOES NOT</u> include temporary remote delivery of courses due to the pandemic.*

- ***Asynchronous delivery****:* Majority of instruction *does not* occur in real time. Instructors provide content which the student can access via technology on their own time.

- ***Synchronous delivery****:* Majority of instruction is available to and accessed by students in real time with the instructor via technology.

- ***Both asynchronous and synchronous****:* The program offers 50% or more of the CHs a*synchronously* <u>AND</u> 50% or more of the CHs *synchronously* via DE technology.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
Vague description; could be applied to any program at the same degree level	The program is only vaguely described. The purpose should be discipline-specific to differentiate it from other academic programs. One thing you might consider is using the mission/purpose that's published in the catalog entry for this program.
Description is focused on the department instead of the specific program	The information provided here should cover the purpose or mission of the program, specifically, versus the purpose of the department.
Combined Assessment Plans: Programs are not described separately	Although these credentials are included in the same assessment plan, they should be described separately here. An external reviewer should be able to see why these are functionally separate credentials, whether in terms of discipline focus and/or depth of knowledge and skills.
Combined Assessment Plans: Location/DE information not communicated for all programs/credentials in the plan	Location/mode of delivery (i.e., delivery via DE technology) should be clearly stated for each program.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Meaningful Process: Selection of PLO(s) to assess in the upcoming academic year should be an intentional, faculty-driven decision. Encourage Program Coordinators to open this discussion with faculty each spring semester before Assessment Plans are due.

Relevant Associations: Appropriate selection of Relevant Associations is important because OIEE uses those associations to run a variety of institution and system reports. Only the most directly related Relevant Associations should be selected.

- *Undergraduate Programs:* PLOs should be linked to applicable outcomes in three sets of Associations: University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes, Core Curriculum Objectives, and EmpowerU (TAMUS) outcomes.

- *Graduate Programs:* University master's and doctoral outcomes are listed in their respective forms. Relevant Associations from both the master's and doctoral lists should be selected in combined MS/PhD Assessment Plans if students in both degrees are assessed on the same PLO(s).

Program Level vs. Course Level Outcomes: PLOs in an assessment should not look the same as outcomes in a course syllabus. Course learning outcomes (CLOs) are narrower and more specific than PLOs. Whereas CLOs are the incremental knowledge and skills that students develop over time, PLOs characterize the cumulative learning across courses at the end of the program. It is acceptable to use course-based measures to assess a PLO, but the outcome statement itself should not be so narrow as to focus on the specific knowledge taught in a single course.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
PLO is multi-faceted/complex (If the measurement strategy addresses all parts of the PLO, this is fine)	PLOs can be difficult to measure when they encompass multiple components of learning. In trying to assess every skill or topic in a complex outcome, the assessment process can become convoluted and cumbersome. Keep the outcomes focused on a single skill or content area to make the assessment strategy more manageable. A PLO can be split apart if it needs to be.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
PLO is too broad/worded too generally (e.g., *Students will communicate effectively*)	PLOs should be framed in a discipline-specific way and, ideally, define the characteristics of the outcome in the context of the discipline.
PLO is focused on unobservable skills or knowledge (e.g., students' beliefs, values, or attitudes)	PLOs should identify specific competencies or skills which students are expected to be able to demonstrate at the end of the program. Though many students will experience a shift in values or beliefs from what they have learned, those constructs are difficult to demonstrate and capture objectively. Use verbs to make PLOs more concrete and measurable: identify, develop, create, analyze, synthesize, etc.
Outcome is not about learning (e.g., A program objective such as "The program will attract diverse students" or "Students will present at conferences")	Program objectives like this one are valuable metrics to track on an annual basis. However, this assessment process is meant to focus specifically on student learning outcomes. Consider how this objective could be re-phrased to make learning the focal point.
Over-selection of Relevant Associations	Only the Relevant Associations that are directly related to the PLO should be selected. There are usually just one or two associations that align best.

Measures

Direct Measures & Multiple Measures: Every submitted PLO must be assessed using a direct measure. In addition, programs are strongly encouraged to implement more than one measure per PLO. Remind program faculty that measures do not necessarily need to be *created* for program assessment. Existing assignments, projects, and educational experiences are often great sources of assessment data so long as they are discussed relative to the PLOs and not only within the context of the course or experience from which they are taken.

Indirect Measures can be included in the Assessment Plan as they provide valuable supplemental information about PLOs. Indirect measures should not constitute the entire measurement strategy for a given PLO. See below for examples of direct and indirect measures:

Direct Measures

- Written assignments, oral presentations, or portfolios of student work to which a rubric or some other detailed criteria are applied
- Exam questions focused on a particular learning outcome
- Scores on standardized exams (e.g., licensure, certification, or subject area tests)
- Employer or internship supervisor evaluations of student performance
- Other assignment grades based on *specific* and *identifiable* criteria related to the PLO

Indirect Measures

- Completion or participation rates
- Completion of degree requirements
- Number of students who publish manuscripts or present at conferences
- Survey questions students answer about their own perception of their abilities
- Job placement data
- Course grades and some comprehensive exam grades (i.e., broad exams that cover a variety of learning outcomes)
- GPAs
- Course enrollment data

Aggregation and analysis of data at the program level is an important aspect of a *program* assessment report. It is not uncommon for programs to use course-based measures as evidence, but it starts to look more like course-level assessment when most or all measures come from just one or two courses. Program Coordinators are asked to explain how data from each of their measures is ultimately aggregated and analyzed to be meaningful at the program-level (and thus to make program-level decisions and improvements).

Supporting Documentation such as rubrics, assignments, project instructions/descriptions, and surveys are always useful to include, but are not necessarily crucial to include if all aspects of the measure are *thoroughly* described in the Measure Description.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
Measure description does not align with PLO: Complex PLO is not measured in its entirety (e.g., the measure only addresses one of the skills listed in the PLO)	Complex PLOs (those measuring multiple skills or knowledge areas) are generally difficult to capture with just one measure. It is unclear how all parts of the PLO are measured. Consider: (a) providing more detail about which part(s) of the measurement tool address each facet of the PLO, (b) incorporating another measure to address the missing pieces, or (c) revising/splitting up the PLO to make it more focused.
Measure does not align with the PLO in a clearly discernible way	It is not clear how this measure relates to the PLO as defined. Please provide more information that makes this alignment clearer or select a different measure to address this PLO.
Data collection process is not clear/ lacks sufficient detail	The description of the data collection process should provide a clear picture of the "who, what, where, and when" of obtaining data to be used for assessment purposes. Provide enough detail that future Program Coordinators will be able to understand the assessment strategy and replicate it.
Rubric or evaluation criteria is referenced but not uploaded or described	The scale on which a PLO is assessed using this measure should either be uploaded as a supporting document, or it should be described in detail in the Methodology section. To fully address the methodological process for this measure, consider these questions: ● What are the individual components on that rubric or the specific evaluation criteria that address this PLO? ● Do all components/items pertain to this PLO, or just one? ● How many performance categories are included on the rubric/evaluation (e.g., exceeds, meets, etc.)? ● What, specifically, delineates these performance categories in each rubric component?
Survey or exam is linked with little or no explanation	Surveys/comprehensive exams often address more than a single PLO. Does the whole instrument measure the PLO, or just sections/items of the instrument? This should be clarified.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
Does not explain how the collected data will be aggregated and/or analyzed to be meaningful at the program level *(Most necessary when course-based measures are used)*	Once the data is collected and analyzed, what will it tell you about the knowledge/skills students leave this program with? What is the most meaningful way to aggregate, analyze, and report out the results on this measure so that program faculty can gain a clear understanding of how well students are achieving the PLO?
Program uses a letter grade or percentage on an assignment to measure a PLO (This *may* be acceptable if the PLO is specifically focused on mastery/depth of content knowledge and all grading criteria are related to correctness)	A single letter grade or percentage on an assignment is often too broad to provide evidence of a specific PLO, and therefore makes it difficult to determine what the program could do to improve achievement of the PLO in the future. Additionally, As, Bs, Cs, etc., are not treated equally across courses and/or instructors so the findings could be interpreted differently.
Final course grade or GPA is used as the only measure of a PLO	Course grades are good comprehensive measures of *overall* performance in a course, but they fail to capture student achievement of a specific PLO. Most courses cover a variety of learning outcomes and therefore are too broad to be used as evidence of any single PLO. Therefore, they are considered indirect measures. In addition, course grades sometimes also reflect other factors like attendance, participation, etc., which are unrelated to the PLO.
For combined assessment plans: Measure description does not clearly indicate which credential is assessed using the measure (e.g., The plan covers an MS and PhD, but the measure description doesn't say whether both programs are assessed using the measure)	Plans that include more than one program or credential should clearly indicate in each Measure section which program is assessed using the measure. If both/all credentials are assessed using a particular strategy, this should be clearly stated in the measure description.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
For programs offered in multiple locations or programs available in both modalities (FTF & DE): Measure description does not address how students in each location/mode of delivery are assessed	Plans that include programs offered via different modes of delivery or in multiple geographic locations should include details about how data are collected from students in those circumstances. If the same data is collected across delivery modes and/or across all locations, this should be clearly indicated in the measure description.
Overly simplistic rubric is used: Rubric uses a dichotomous, non-descriptive scale (e.g., Present/Not Present)	Dichotomous performance levels (e.g., Present/Not Present, Sufficient/Needs Improvement) often do not adequately capture variance in student learning. Consider how these broad categories could be split up and defined in the context of the PLO.
Overly simplistic rubric is used: Rubric does not describe what the different performance levels look like within each rubric category	Performance levels on the rubric are not clearly differentiated from each other, making the scoring process somewhat subjective. Consider adding descriptive information under each performance level for the rubric categories.
The same measure is used to assess all PLOs, and it is the only measure in the Assessment Plan (e.g., PhD program uses the final defense exam as the only measure for all PLOs)	Though it is possible that a single measure is robust enough to provide evidence of multiple PLOs, such a measure often fails to do so thoroughly in practice. Programs are encouraged to utilize multiple sources of evidence to gain a more complete understanding of student achievement of the PLO across various settings/points in the curriculum.
Only an indirect measure is used for a PLO	Indirect measures of student learning outcomes can provide valuable supplemental information for program improvement, but programs are required to identify at least one direct measure to assess each PLO. Direct measures (i.e., student work that is directly observed and evaluated for quality) provide more objective evidence of PLO achievement than indirect measures.
Documents are referenced but not described or uploaded	If possible, please upload the referenced document(s) under Supporting Documentation. If no documents are available for upload, provide a description in the appropriate text box.

Targets

Specific Rubric Criteria: Pay especially close attention to measures where rubrics are used. The targets for these measures should only refer to *comprehensive* rubric scores if ALL rubric criteria directly relate to the PLO as it is described. If only a *single rubric criterion* directly relates to the measure, the target statement should refer to only that criterion.

It is important to note that *qualitative* targets are permissible, but qualitative targets should include enough specificity that it is clear how the qualitative findings will be compared to the target in order determine whether the target is met/not met.

Planning Ahead to Disaggregate Results: In either the Measure Description or the Target text box, the program should clearly indicate how they intend to disaggregate results, if applicable. This typically applies to programs offered in multiple locations or modes of delivery, but it also applies to targets where a comprehensive rubric score is appropriately used (see above). Encourage Program Coordinators to further break down the results by rubric criteria when the time comes to report findings. This practice may uncover gaps in the learning that the single, comprehensive rubric score is unable to communicate.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
For combined assessment plans: Targets are not differentiated between degree levels when the same measure is used (e.g., MS/PhD)	There should be something in the assessment plan to differentiate the degree levels from each other in terms of expectations. That is, when students in two different degree levels are assessed on a PLO using the same measure, typically the target should be differentiated between the two.
Target includes a clear threshold, but it is unclear how many students are expected to reach that threshold E.g., *Students will earn 80% of the points on this assignment.*	Along with indicating the target performance level, identify the percentage of students expected to meet that threshold (e.g., 80%, 90%, 100%).
Inconsistent language between the measure and its target	Plans are more clearly aligned when the language in the target matches the language used in the measure description. For example, if a measure states that the scale of *Not Met, Met Expectations,* and *Exceeds Expectations* is used but the target states that 80% of students will "pass," this is inconsistent language.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
Target is not specific to the criteria/item/rubric/etc.	A strong target identifies specific data from the measure that will be reported. If using a rubric or survey, what specific criterion/item is being used as evidence? Or will an overall average score on the instrument be used? This should be explicitly stated in the target statement.
Target refers to a comprehensive rubric score but only one/some of the criteria relate to the PLO	The rubric covers several skills/PLOs. Using a comprehensive rubric score as the only evidence of a specific PLO can serve to "hide" actual student performance in achieving the outcome. Establish a target that refers only to the individual rubric criterion that directly relates to the PLO. It's fine to report the comprehensive score supplementally.

Findings

Disaggregating Results: Results should be disaggregated by program/credential (in the case of combined Assessment Plans), mode of delivery, and/or geographic location, as applicable. Refer to the information provided by Program Coordinators in the Program Description section—this should help Liaisons determine whether results should be disaggregated in each Assessment Report. If results are not disaggregated, or if no explanation is provided as to why results are not disaggregated, you are encouraged to reject the form and request more information.

Low-Enrolled Programs: ***Programs with traditionally low enrollment are NOT exempt from engaging the assessment process*.** This means that if a UG program consistently graduates fewer than 10 students a year (or if a GR program consistently graduates fewer than 5 students a year), they are still required to report assessment results annually. These programs should plan to aggregate their results across multiple assessment cycles to achieve a larger sample of student data on which to report (e.g., a two- or three-year running average). Of course, some programs experience uncharacteristically low enrollment just from time to time, which may result in an inability to collect assessment data in a given year. In such cases programs may use the *No data collected/reported* selection and provide that explanation.

No Data Collected/Reported: If Program Coordinators select *No data collected/reported*, they must provide an explanation as to why. There is a separate text box specifically labeled and meant for a response to this selection.

Putting Findings in Context: Program Coordinators are prompted to discuss implications of the findings and/or compare the findings with those of previous assessment cycles. There is not a single correct way for programs to discuss their results, but more should be said than "We met the target which means our students are doing well."

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
Findings are not clearly disaggregated by program/location/mode of delivery	Findings for students in different credentials/locations/modes of delivery should be reported separately and clearly. If the data are not disaggregated, or if there are no findings to report for a group, there should be a clear explanation as to why.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
Findings are not compared to previous assessment results or any other relevant trends/observations	Assessment is most useful when the current findings are contextualized in some way, particularly with past findings. A review of the historical pattern of PLO achievement can provide valuable information to the program. If this is the first time the PLO has been assessed, how are the faculty interpreting these results beyond "our students are doing well"? If this is the first time the PLO has been assessed using this measure, it can still be useful to consider how the findings on this measure to compare to findings on another measure. The comparison provides a more holistic picture of achievement.
No data collected/reported is selected but no explanation is provided	Please provide a brief explanation for why no data was collected/reported. Remember—programs that are traditionally low-enrolled or consistently only graduate a few students each year are still expected to collect data and report assessment results annually. You may aggregate data across years for reporting.
Partially Met is incorrectly selected	*Partially Met* is reserved for compound targets in cases where only part of the target is met. Targets that were close to being met should still be indicated by a selection of *Not Met*. There are no negative consequences for not meeting targets.

Use of Results (Data-Informed Actions)

Actions for Improved Learning: All programs must establish and submit at least one action each cycle that is curricular in nature (i.e., one that is specifically designed to improve student learning). It is acceptable for Assessment Reports to include other actions that deal with making changes to their assessment strategies, but there must be at least one that is designed to directly affect learning.

- **NOTE:** As of the AY21-22 cycle, there is a single "Use of Results" section in the form instead of a section under each Finding. Program coordinators are prompted to select what "type of action" they are submitting. The list is as follows:
  - No action – New/low-enrolled program
  - Additional emphasis on time or content
  - Additional activities or assignments
  - Redesign of activities or assignments
  - New course developed/proposed
  - Course redesign
  - Curriculum revision
  - Other

Meaningfully Determined Actions: "Pre-actions" are not appropriate actions to include in the Report (e.g., "We will meet to discuss assessment results" or "We will review the curriculum to determine the best place for an intervention"). By the time the Report is submitted, program faculty should have convened to discuss the assessment results and establish meaningful, intentional action(s) or change(s).

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
Report only includes action(s) related to changing the assessment strategy; none designed to improve student learning	The report must include at least one action specifically designed to improve *student learning* (i.e., a curricular/content-based change). Actions to improve the *assessment process* should be supplemental only. The assessment process matures and changes naturally over time, so changes to the assessment plan itself do not qualify as acceptable standalone actions.

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
"No action necessary based on the findings"	All programs must establish at least one learning-centered action or change annually, regardless of whether all targets are met. This provides evidence of seeking continuous improvement to Texas A&M's accreditor (*SACSCOC Standard 8.2.a*). For examples of appropriate actions, refer to the Use of Results section in the *Assessment Guidelines* manual.
"Results will be discussed with faculty" or "Actions will be established at a future meeting"	A meeting or discussion among faculty should be a step that occurs before this report is submitted. Scheduling a meeting/discussion does not constitute a specific action designed to improve student learning.
The Use of Results narrative describes the intent to continue with a previous action from a past cycle with no changes OR to continue with program practices which are already in place	The way programs use their results for improvement each year should be novel in some way. The *current* results should directly inform the change. It is acceptable to use a past action only if it is built upon in some way.
Program does not commit to specific action [e.g., *possible or hypothetical* action(s)]	The action described here should be one that faculty have previously discussed and agreed upon. The action or change should be described in specific terms and the program should be able to implement it in a systematic and intentional way.
Action relies on encouragement of faculty/students to do something, complete something, participate in something, etc.	Encouraging students or faculty to engage in certain behaviors/activities is not a systematic response to the findings. There should be an actionable response to the findings—all involved parties should agree to carry out the decision and understand what the program is trying to achieve and/or improve by implementing the action.

Status Update on a Previously Identified Action (*Closing the Loop*)

In this section, programs should discuss how they have "closed the loop" on an action (i.e., Use of Results) from a previous year's Assessment Report.

Considerations

- Action(s) from past Assessment Reports that have been fully implemented should be prioritized for this status update. If all previously identified actions are still in progress, it is acceptable to provide an update on how the implementation is going and when program faculty expect to assess the targeted PLO(s) again.

- If the action has been fully implemented and the outcome has been re-assessed, the impact of the action should be discussed. One way this can be achieved is by comparing current assessment findings to those from previous cycles.

- The action on which they are providing an update must be one that was designed to improve student learning (i.e., not one that focuses on changes to the assessment strategy).

Boilerplate Feedback	
Frequently Cited Area	**Feedback**
Subject of the status update is not an action designed to directly improve student learning	The purpose of the assessment process is to improve student learning, and thus the action discussed here should be curricular in nature (i.e., a content-based change), specifically designed to improve a PLO.
"No actions have been taken" / "No actions were necessary"	In each annual program assessment report programs are required to submit an action designed to improve student learning. The action discussed here should be one from a previous year's report. Those reports can be found in the *My Data Collections* widget on the HelioCampus dashboard.
Status update reiterates the action submitted in the current report (i.e., the action they entered in the same form under Use of Results)	The status update provided here should be on an action or change that was submitted in a *previous* report, not this report. Those reports can be found in the *My Data Collections* widget on the HelioCampus dashboard.
"I am not aware of any actions that have been taken" / "I'm new, so I don't know" (i.e., a personal response)	The response should not be written on behalf of an individual, but on behalf of the program as a whole. These discussions should be held as a faculty group prior to submission of this report to provide an accurate depiction of the program's assessment philosophy and process.

Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation

Purpose

The goal of assessment is to use data to make informed decisions about teaching, learning, program delivery, equity, and overall institutional effectiveness. Engaging in systematic, integrated, and thoughtful assessment of student learning, the student learning experience, and administrative and support functions helps our campus to ensure a high-quality, equitable experience for all students. OIEE is committed to this endeavor and to assisting our faculty and staff in the continuous improvement of their programs and processes.

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