2019-2020 Academic Program Assessment

Assessment Review Guidelines

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The purpose of academic program assessment is for faculty to gather information about what and how students are learning, discuss that information as a faculty group, and use it to inform continuous improvement efforts within the academic program. By extension, these efforts could aid in enhancing the educational experience for students, improving program student learning outcome assessment results in the future, further developing students’ skills in the identified program learning outcomes, and actively involving program faculty in the curricular assessment and quality improvement process. The guidelines presented below are designed to walk academic programs through the academic program assessment process, highlight best-practices, define Texas A&M University’s (TAMU) expectations for the documentation of program student learning outcome assessment processes, and facilitate self- and peer-review of assessment plans and reports.

As of Spring 2019, academic programs across TAMU document student learning outcome assessment efforts in AEFIS (Assessment, Evaluation, Feedback, and Intervention System), an integrated, comprehensive, online assessment platform. Based on feedback from faculty and staff involved in the assessment process over the years, and in an effort to support a more manageable and meaningful assessment process, three changes were implemented to coincide with the implementation of AEFIS:

1. The documentation of academic program assessment has been segmented into three distinct components: (1) the Assessment Plan, (2) the Assessment Report, and (3) an Assessment Reflection and Closing the Loop Report;
2. The assessment review cycle has been extended to approximately 18 months, more reflective of a typical academic program assessment cycle; and,
3. New strategies have been implemented to provide more timely feedback regarding ongoing assessment efforts.

Each of these changes is briefly outlined below.

Components of Academic Assessment

Assessment Plan. The Assessment Plan, completed each spring, identifies specific student learning outcomes (SLOs) to be assessed during the upcoming academic year and outlines the measures and targets used to assess each. Annually, academic programs will be asked to identify which SLOs are to be the focus of assessment efforts during the upcoming academic year; programs may choose to identify as many SLOs as they see fit to assess in a given year as long as at least one is assessed each academic year.

Assessment Report. The Assessment Report, completed at the conclusion of a given academic year, summarizes assessment findings or results gathered over the course of the year (as outlined in the Assessment Plan). Based on the results reported, data-informed actions to be implemented during the upcoming academic year are outlined in the Assessment Report as well. Academic programs are expected to outline at least one data-informed action to be undertaken during the upcoming academic year, designed to strengthen or improve one of the student learning outcomes assessed.

Assessment Reflections and Closing the Loop. At the conclusion of a given assessment cycle, program faculty are asked to reflect on the effectiveness and usefulness of assessment efforts undertaken during the academic year addressed in the Assessment Report. Any changes to assessment strategies for the upcoming cycle (e.g.,
revised rubrics, expanded sources of data, changed targets) are outlined in this final report. In addition, programs are asked to identify a change recently implemented (i.e., over the last 2-3 years) designed to improve a specific learning outcome. The final component of the report summarizes subsequently gathered assessment data used to determine whether or not the change(s) described led to improvements in the targeted learning outcome(s).

**Academic Program Assessment Cycle at Texas A&M University**

Academic programs engage in an approximately 18-month assessment process during which faculty assess the effectiveness of their programs in meeting identified student learning outcomes. The annual timeline will vary slightly by year; the cycle for AY19-20 is as follows:

**ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR AY19-20:**
- June 3, 2019: DRAFT Assessment Plan (that is, prioritized Student Learning Outcomes with associated measures and targets) for AY 19-20 submitted in AEFIS
- By July 1, 2019: College-level Assessment Liaison to provide feedback to program (within AEFIS)
- By August 10, 2019: Final Assessment Plan for AY19-20 submitted in AEFIS
  - OIEE\(^1\) will provide feedback on the Assessment Plan to programs by no later than September 13, 2019\(^2\)

**ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR AY19-20:**
- Fall 2019 – Spring 2020: Data collection efforts ongoing based on the AY19-20 Assessment Plan
- By October 30, 2020: DRAFT Assessment Report submitted in AEFIS (that is, Findings, Data-Informed Actions, and Distance Education Responses based on data gathered during AY19-20)
- By November 20, 2020: Assessment Liaison will provide feedback to program (within AEFIS)
- By December 9, 2020: Final Assessment Report for AY19-20 submitted in AEFIS
  - OIEE will provide feedback on assessment report by no later than January 31, 2021

**ASSESSMENT REFLECTIONS & CLOSING THE LOOP REPORT:**
- By December 18, 2020: Assessment Reflections and Closing the Loop Report submitted in AEFIS
  - OIEE will provide feedback by no later than January 31, 2021
  - Program acknowledgement and AY19-20 closed by February 28, 2021

**Feedback and Support on Assessment Efforts**

As of Academic Year 2018-19, Academic Program Assessment Review will move to a staged process in which both college/branch campus liaisons as well as OIEE staff will support the assessment process by providing feedback during the cycle (as opposed to the conclusion of the cycle as in previous years). Rather than receiving feedback on report sections as a whole (e.g., all of the measures in the assessment plan), feedback will be provided with specific attention paid to how a particular outcome, its measures, targets, findings, and resulting action(s) are holistically connected and discussed. Feedback will be provided as described below:

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\(^{1}\) Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation

\(^{2}\) OIEE efforts to provide feedback in a timely manner will begin as soon as the final Assessment Plan is submitted; if the Assessment Plan is submitted earlier in the summer, feedback will likely be provided sooner than mid-September.

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Assessment Plan: Feedback from college/campus liaisons on the program-specific Mission Statement, Student Learning Outcomes and associates Measures and Targets will be provided by July 1, 2019; Feedback from OIEE will be provided by September 13, 2019

Assessment Report (including information specifically regarding assessment of Distance Education programs): Feedback from college/campus liaisons will be provided by November 22, 2019; Feedback from OIEE will be provided by January 31, 2020

The Feedback Criteria described in this manual provide the framework for the feedback to be given for each outcome and its associated assessment efforts (i.e., measures, targets, findings, and data-informed actions). Specifically, feedback will be provided with respect to whether or not the given criterion was either present or absent followed by related qualitative feedback throughout.

Assessment Support

Academic programs are supported in these efforts by OIEE assessment consultants. Each academic college/branch campus is assigned specifically to a liaison (assessment consultant) within OIEE as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIEE Staff Member and Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>College of Dentistry</td>
<td>College of Architecture</td>
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<td>College of Medicine</td>
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<td>College of Pharmacy</td>
<td>College of Liberal Arts</td>
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<td>College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences – professional DVM program</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University - Qatar</td>
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OIEE staff will be working closely with the college/branch campus assessment liaisons during the year to ensure training, expectations, and deadlines are clearly communicated to all programs. Requests for additional training or questions can be submitted to assessment@tamu.edu. Program directors/faculty are welcome to contact the relevant liaison listed above for guidance on assessment efforts at any point during the assessment cycle.
Additional Assessment Efforts and Reporting for Online and/or Off-Site Programs

Introduction

There are three sections of the annual Assessment Report where programs available via distance education (i.e., greater than 50% of the program requirements are available online or available for students studying at an approved off-site location) should highlight this distinction: in the program-specific mission statement, in the findings (if applicable), and in the Distance Education Reporting section.

1. Program-Specific Mission Statement

The program-specific Mission Statement should include a brief description of the nature of the distance education program. Specifically, the mode(s) of delivery and/or alternative location(s) should be clearly stated.

2. Findings

If the program is offered both face-to-face and via distance, or if the program is offered at multiple locations, Findings should be reported separately by cohort. This can be done as either separate Measures (e.g., one measure specific to the distance students and another specific to the traditional delivery) or within the Findings (e.g., DE students scored XX, and Face-to-Face students scored YY). If there are no students enrolled in a particular mode of delivery or at a particular location, indicate that in the finding statements.

For programs offered only via distance or off-site, there is no need to emphasize that point again as long as that information is covered in the Mission Statement.

3. Distance Education Reporting

There are three specific questions/prompts to which distance education programs must respond each year:

1. Explain what data are routinely reviewed and how they are used to ensure the quality of student learning and the educational experience, given the unique mode of delivery and/or geographic location.

2. What do the data described above suggest about the quality of student learning and educational experience for distance education students (either online or at another site)?

3. Outline action(s) to be taken based on the results summarized above, where applicable, to improve/strengthen the quality of student learning and/or the educational experience. Why does the program believe that this/these actions should strengthen the students’ learning/experience? What is the anticipated timeline for implementation of this/these actions?
Program-Specific Mission Statement

Introduction

The Program-specific Mission Statement details the purpose of the program. A strong Program-specific Mission Statement maintains its alignment with the department, college, and university missions, but focuses specifically on the purpose or overarching goal of the program itself. The Program-specific Mission Statement will be evaluated based on the presence or absence of the criteria described below.

Feedback Criteria

1. *The degree(s)/certificate is/are explicitly stated*

   For example:
   - The mission of the bachelors’ program in Animal Science is...
   - The Master of Engineering in Petroleum Engineering...
   - The graduate program in Communication (MA and PhD) ...

2. *The Mission Statement is clear and concise*

   Keep the Mission Statement focused and avoid including many specific details about required coursework or program requirements.

3. *The Mission Statement addresses the overall purpose of the program*

   The overall purpose of the program may relate to the discipline, the role professionals in the field are expected to play in society, or other related ‘impact’ qualities of the program.

FAQ

Q: *Can I use a department mission statement?*

A: No. The mission statement should be specific to the credential(s) being addressed in the assessment plan.
Student Learning Outcomes

Introduction

Each program is required to establish a minimum of three student learning outcomes (SLOs) as part of their program’s Assessment Plan, though not all SLOs need to be assessed annually. These SLOs should represent the knowledge and skills the faculty believe graduates of the program should possess by the time they graduate. Outcomes will be evaluated based on the presence or absence of the criteria described below.

Feedback Criteria

1. Outcome is clearly written, reflecting what students are expected to learn upon completion of the program

   To external party reading the assessment plan it should be clear what learning outcomes have been identified as priorities for students who complete the program. In other words, ensure an external reviewer understands the knowledge and skills a graduate of the program should possess.

2. Outcome is measurable

   Student learning outcomes that are simple and specific are the most straightforward to measure.
   - Use of action verbs (such as those found in Bloom’s Taxonomy) to define the specific expectations of students, which makes measuring their attainment of an outcome more concrete.
   - Outcomes that identify values, beliefs, or opinions graduates should have upon completion of the program are not directly measurable and should be avoided.

3. Outcome is mapped appropriately to university-level outcome(s)

   Texas A&M University has identified university-level outcomes that describe the knowledge and skills graduates of Texas A&M should possess (i.e., TAMUS EmpowerU, undergraduate, masters, and doctoral level learning outcomes). Programs should appropriately document their alignment with these outcomes.

4. Outcome reflects a program expectation/graduation requirement rather than student learning

   The program is encouraged to track programmatic goals established for students such as publications, participation in high-impact practices, or other relevant metrics. However, the program should ensure student learning outcomes make up the majority of the assessment plan and that at least one SLO is assessed and reported on each assessment cycle.

FAQs

Q: The program has external accreditation requirements for the discipline which requires specific student learning outcomes be assessed. Can we use those outcomes in this report?

A: Yes, in fact we encourage accredited programs to ensure close alignment between the annual assessment process and accreditation requirements.
Q: *Do we have to measure the same outcomes every year? / Can we measure the same outcomes every year?*

A: Program faculty should guide the assessment process, including determining which outcomes are measured and when. Some programs have placed their learning outcomes on two- or three-year rotations, focusing on just one or two in a given academic year. Outcomes will likely stay consistent for an extended period of time, so it is up to the faculty to determine how frequently they should be measured.

Q: *Can this assessment report include program objectives like participation in events, publication productivity, etc.?*

A: The primary purpose of the assessment reporting process is to document student learning. If faculty believe other objectives (e.g., tracking the number of manuscripts submitted by students) are important to include as part of the assessment report, the program may add additional objectives. However, programs should ensure they are meeting the minimum expectation of reporting assessment results for one student learning outcome and that programmatic objectives are *in addition to* student learning outcomes.

Q: *Can we add additional outcomes?*

A: Yes. If additional outcomes are included, be sure to link associated measures and targets as appropriate.

Q: *For the associations with the university-level student learning outcomes, is it better to indicate all that are somewhat associated or be more selective and only indicate one?*

A: The associations should be as closely aligned as possible, that is, any given program-specific SLO should only be associated with one (or possibly two) of the university-level outcomes that it most closely resembles. One purpose of the associations is to demonstrate how the program is assessing the university-wide outcomes through its annual assessment practices.
Measures

Introduction

“Measure” refers to an assessment method, or how data are collected and evaluated. Strong Measure descriptions make the assessment process easy to follow for an external party who is not intimately involved in the day-to-day operations of the program. The Measures section should be viewed as a mini-methods section—that is, an outline of methods used to gather the data for analysis.

For academic programs, there are two types of Measures: direct and indirect.

- **Direct Measures** require students to demonstrate and display their competency or ability in some way that is evaluated for measurable quality by an expert, whether that be faculty, assessment professionals, or industry representatives.
- **Indirect Measures** are tasks that rely on completion/participation (e.g., presenting a paper at a conference but not being assessed on the quality of that presentation) or survey questions that students answer about their own perception of their ability.

All Student Learning Outcomes must have at least one direct Measure. The Measures will be evaluated based on the presence or absence of the criteria described below.

**Feedback Criteria**

1. **Measure is a direct measure of student learning**

   A direct measure of student learning requires direct evaluation, meaning the quality of the demonstration of that specific skill should be observed and recorded in some way. For example, if the targeted learning outcome is written communication the program should identify a measure whereby student writing ability, and only their writing ability, is evaluated for quality. See the FAQs below for additional examples.

2. **The data collection is clear (i.e., where the data are coming from)**

   The external reviewer of the assessment plan will not have an in-depth understanding of the program and its curriculum, so it is important to clearly communicate where data are coming from by including the following information, where appropriate: the course designation, employed sampling methods, recruiting methods (or stating participation is required), etc.

3. **Methodological processes are clear (i.e., how the data are to be evaluated and reported)**

   This criterion is concerned with evaluation and measurement. The information in each Measure description should provide a clear picture of how the data are evaluated and reported.

4. **Measure clearly aligns with the outcome as defined**

   This criterion is concerned with the clarity by which the measurement process relates to the Outcome. This means there is enough information provided in the Measure description to validate the selected methodology for the targeted Outcome(s).
5. **All referenced rubrics/surveys are attached or sufficiently described**

Ensure instruments used in the assessment process (i.e., rubrics, prompts, surveys/items) are included as supporting documentation in the assessment report. Instruments that do not require supporting documents include standardized tests (such as certification exams or third-party assessment instruments) and qualifying/preliminary examination prompts.

**FAQs**

**Q:** What are some examples of direct measures?

**A:** Direct measures are any direct evaluation of the specific learning outcome in question. Examples include rubrics that applied to student work/assignments, assignments with detailed criteria, or any other process through which student-produced work or skill demonstration is evaluated exclusively for the targeted outcome.

**Q:** What are some examples of indirect measures?

**A:** The following are considered indirect measures of student learning:

- Tracking the number of publications/conference presentations (unless directly observed and evaluated using an appropriate rubric), or placement (such as in internship positions or careers after graduation)
- Completion of degree requirements
- Course grades
- Major GPAs or cumulative GPAs
- Yes/No participation in assignments/activities/events/etc.

**Q:** Should I use more than one measure? Do I have to use more than one measure?

**A:** Relying on a single measure will provide limited information about the extent to which students are achieving program learning outcomes. Programs are encouraged to use multiple measures to assess student ability as this will provide a more complete picture of the curriculum and what the student learning experience entails in each respective program. As a byproduct, using and reporting on multiple measures will facilitate conversations about continuous improvement.
Targets

Introduction

Targets are the levels at which a program considers their Outcomes to be “met” or achieved on a given Measure. Strong Targets are static, clear-cut levels of achievement. The Targets will be evaluated based on the presence or absence of the criteria described below. Each criterion should be present.

Feedback Criteria

1. **The standard is clearly presented and justified**
   
   “Standard” refers to the *minimally acceptable student performance*. In other words, the standard is the level of performance at which the targeted outcome is determined to have been “Met” or achieved (e.g., Score at least 3 on a 4-point rubric)

2. **Target is specific**

   The Target represents the proportion of students the faculty aspire to have meet the Standard (e.g., 80% of students).

3. **The target clearly aligns with the measure as described**

   The Target(s) for a given Measure should align with the Measure description by using consistent language and format.

FAQ

**Q: If a rubric is used to assess student work, should the target be based on the average across all of the criteria included on the rubric?**

**A:** For purposes of guiding continuous improvement efforts, the more granular or detailed the assessment data examined, the easier it will be for the program to identify any potential gaps in learning. Consider, for example, a rubric that has three separate criteria (i.e., rows if designed as a matrix). Calculating a score based on an average score across the three criteria will provide general information regarding the students’ performance. However, looking at the average scores for each of the three criteria would provide a much clearer indication of students’ performance on the specific skills or expectations reflected by the criteria.
Findings

Introduction

Findings represent the results of the analysis on the data collected through the assessment process. Strong assessment reports will consistently report Findings in a clear manner and use appropriate designations of whether the target was met, partially met, or not met. Findings will be evaluated based on the presence or absence of the criteria described below.

Feedback Criteria

1. **Findings align with the Measure and Target as described**

   The program should ensure Finding statements use consistent descriptors throughout and mirror the processes described in the Measure and Target. Inconsistencies between the processes described in the assessment plan and the reported Findings should be avoided.

2. **Findings include a brief discussion regarding the meaning/value of results for purposes of continuous improvement**

   The Finding statements should go beyond simply reporting results and explain and/or analyze the significance of the Findings. This can be achieved by comparing results to previous years, discussing what was surprising or affirming about the results, or in some other way providing a more drilled-down analysis. Consider the Finding statements as similar to a Results section in a manuscript (though shorter).

3. **Target status indicator (i.e., Met, Partially Met, Not Met) is used appropriately**

   Target status indicators are used to indicate whether the Target was Met, Partially Met, or Not Met. In addition to selecting Target status indicators, the narrative provided should support the indicator selected. See the FAQs below for specific examples.

4. **Where appropriate, findings are disaggregated for each program reflected in the assessment plan**

   If the Assessment Report includes more than one program/credential, make sure to disaggregate findings where appropriate. If only one program is represented in a particular Finding statement, be sure to state which program is represented.
FAQs

Q: What does ‘Partially Met’ mean and when should it be used?

A: Partially Met should be used only when reporting findings for compound/complex Targets. For example: A program uses a four-criteria, four-point rating scale rubric to measure written communication. The Target states that 80% of the students will achieve a score of ‘3’ or higher on all criteria of the rubric. The results show that 83% of students achieved ‘3’ or better on two of the criteria, but only 75% achieved a ‘3’ or better on the other two criteria. This Target would be Partially Met. Partially Met should not be used if the Target was close to being met.

Q: How should Finding statements be structured?

A: There is not a prescribed template that all Finding statements must follow. However, the following is a template that many programs might find useful:

- First sentence: Whether or not the target was met.
- Second sentence: Executive summary of the results as they relate only to the specific measure and the targeted outcome.
- Additional sentences: Presentation of other supporting data (if available) and/or brief discussion of longitudinal data trends.
Data-Informed Actions

Introduction

Data-informed Actions are specific steps the program intends to take, or has taken, to improve assessment results in the future. These actions should have a close, clear connection to the data collected during the assessment reporting cycle. Every program must submit at least one data-informed action that fulfills the criteria below. In addition, programs are expected to address use of results for each individual Finding statement. See FAQs section for additional information.

Feedback Criteria

1. Data-informed action outlines a specific course of action designed to improve/strengthen student learning

   Data-informed action should clearly articulate a specific course of action designed to improve future assessment results for an intended Outcome. There should be enough detail provided for an external reader to understand what specific changes are being made to affect positive change in achievement of a specific Outcome. See FAQs for additional information.

2. Data-informed action description addresses why program faculty and leadership believe the action will lead to improvements in learning

   Data-informed action should identify how and/or why the program believes the action will affect assessment results (Findings) in the future. This might be a description of how the action will directly affect students (and thus improve results), how the action addresses identified deficiencies contributing to current assessment results, or why faculty believe this action will help improve the program and the learning outcome results overall.

3. Data-informed action includes a timeline

   Including a timeline demonstrates the action has been carefully considered and implementation has been discussed. Consider including in the timeline an estimate of when the impact of the action might first be observed in assessment results.

4. Data-informed action identifies a responsible party or group

   Including a responsible party or group demonstrates that the action has been communicated to the individual or group who will be carrying out the action.

FAQs

Q: Can a data-informed action be about changing assessment strategies?

A: No, the data-informed actions in the Assessment Report should be specific to actions to be taken with the goal of strengthening or improving the student learning outcome specifically. Programs are encouraged to document changes in assessment strategies in the Assessment Reflections & Closing the Loop Report.
Q: Do I have to data-informed action for every finding?

A: Yes, data-informed actions are expected for all findings, even if that action is to continue monitoring student achievement on the outcome or to continue collecting data for X number of cycles in an effort to identify a specific trend in the data or in an effort to gather sufficient data for analysis.

Q: How do I write a data-informed action when all of the Targets are met?

A: Met Targets are a sign that the program is functioning well and that the established Outcomes are achievable. It does not mean, however, that all of the work is done and there is no further need for assessment or attention to continuous improvement. Therefore, the program should still consider how the collected data can inform continuous improvement efforts. Possible approaches include, but are not limited to:

- Drilling down into the results further, perhaps by demographics, course section, or some other dimension in an effort to identify possible gaps or disparities to address
- Adjusting the Target*
  *If this is the strategy the program chooses to pursue it is critical to include a discussion of what the program will do in order to meet the new Target. This keeps the focus of the data-informed action on the change rather than simply on updating the Target (which would be considered a change to the assessment strategy).

Q: How specific does a data-informed action need to be?

A: The development of a data-informed action should be a collaborative decision-making process involving program faculty, and should reflect their specific, systematic response to the Findings. This does not mean the action must be a large, resource-demanding overhaul to the program. Rather, the action should be specific, identifiable, and should be able to be implemented in a systematic and intentional way.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- A course-level adjustment at any point in the curriculum
- New text, assignments, etc.
- Guest lecturer in a specific course
- New programming or activities designed to enhance and improve SLO results
- A pilot program
- Prerequisite or other curriculum-based adjustment
- Changes to assignment requirements
- Changes to meeting requirements
- Changes to advising strategies
- Additional required trainings for faculty, staff, or students

Listing possible responses without committing to a specific action does not demonstrate a clear and intentional use of assessment data for improvement.
Assessment Reflections & Closing the Loop

Introduction

The purpose of this section is twofold: First, to reflect on the program’s assessment activities over the course of the last year; and, second, to reflect on the impact of previously implemented data-informed actions or continuous improvement strategies specifically designed to strengthen one or more of the learning outcomes.

Assessment Reflections

Programs will be asked to reflect on their assessment activities over the course of the last year. Specifically, programs will address each of the following:

1. **The role of faculty and program leadership in assessment.** That is, provide a brief summary of how faculty were involved in the data sense-making of assessment results and in decisions regarding continuous improvement efforts.

2. **Lessons learned regarding assessment practices and processes.** For example, what data was particularly useful to help inform continuous improvement efforts? What data was not particularly useful?

3. **Changes related to assessment practices.** For example, what new measures or data-gathering strategies are being implemented in the current year? What new strategies for data analysis are being employed?

Feedback Criteria

1. **The role of faculty and program leadership in assessment is sufficiently described**

   Program assessment should be a faculty-owned and faculty-driven process. Responses to the first prompt should describe the role of program faculty throughout the assessment process. Questions to consider include: At what stage(s) of the assessment process were faculty and program leadership involved? In what capacity? What role did they play in data sense-making and in the decision-making processes related to continuous improvement and future assessment?

2. **Lessons learned regarding assessment practices and processes are sufficiently described**

   Just as it is important for students to reflect on their learning, it is important for program faculty to reflect on what they have learned about their assessment efforts. Responses to the second prompt might include: the need for establishing and convening an assessment committee, reviewing measures that have been used for multiple cycles, identifying other learning outcomes that the program wishes to start assessing, developing or revising assessment tools such as surveys or rubrics, or determining more intentional ways of using assessment results.
3. **Changes related to assessment practices are sufficiently described**

Based on lessons learned throughout the assessment process, programs should clearly discuss what changes, if any, are being implemented with regard to the way the program approaches student assessment. Describe the concrete steps that are being taken or the new processes that are being followed to address what the program learned about their assessment practices.

**FAQs**

**Q:** If we created a data-informed action that addresses changes to the assessment process, do we provide the same information here?

**A:** Actually, such actions should be reported here and not as a data-informed action in the previous section of the report. Any planned changes to the assessment process (e.g., changing rubrics, revising surveys, redefining outcomes, changing the outcome assessment rotation) should be described only in this section.

**Q:** What level of detail should be provided with respect to the role of faculty and program leadership in assessment?

**A:** The purpose of this essential part of the assessment reflection is to provide a brief narrative about the breadth and scope of faculty involvement given assessment should be a faculty-driven process. The response does not need to include specific names but should be detailed enough to capture the overall process. For example, this process could be captured simply by attaching minutes from a program faculty meeting where assessment data were discussed and data-informed actions identified.

**Closing the Loop**

Programs will be asked to reflect on the impact of previously implemented data-informed actions or continuous improvement strategies specifically designed to strengthen one or more of the learning outcomes. Identify at least one specific previously implemented action informed by assessment findings. The identified data-informed action(s) should address a learning outcome for which assessment data has since been collected. For this/these data-informed action(s), the program will respond to the following:

1. Briefly describe the **targeted student learning outcome(s)** and the **assessment findings** that prompted the development of the data-informed action(s).

2. Describe the data-informed action(s) that was/were implemented, including contextual information such as what changes were made, when they were made, etc.

3. Summarize subsequently gathered assessment data used to determine whether or not the data-informed action(s) described above led to improvements in the targeted learning outcome(s). Do the findings suggest the student learning outcome(s) was/were strengthened? How do you know? What’s next?

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3 WEAVEonline will be accessible until **November 26, 2019**. Programs that would like to download their historic action plan data from WEAVEonline should do so before that date.
Feedback Criteria

1. **Targeted student learning outcome(s) and assessment findings that prompted the development of the data-informed action(s) are described**

   Indicate the specific outcome(s) that was/were the focus of the implemented data-informed action(s). Briefly describe the assessment findings on which the data-informed action(s) was/were based. This should include a short description of the measure(s) from which the results were derived. *Be sure to state the specific findings, avoiding vague statements such as “the target wasn’t met.”*

2. **Data-informed action(s) that was/were implemented (including contextual information) are described**

   Provide a brief but descriptive summary of at least one previously implemented data-informed action designed to strengthen specific learning outcome(s). It should be clear what specific action(s) were implemented, when they were implemented, and who was involved in the implementation process.

3. **Subsequently gathered assessment data used to determine whether the data-informed action(s) led to improvements in the learning outcome(s) are summarized**

   Clearly state the specific results of the subsequent learning outcome assessment and how they compare to previously gathered data related to the targeted outcome. In doing this, the program may wish describe the methodology that was used (e.g., describe the scale or rubric if the result is a mean situated on a scale). The results should be clear enough that an external party does not have questions about the interpretation of the results.

4. **Implications of subsequently gathered assessment data are discussed**

   Consider the impact the action(s) may have had on the learning outcome results. Whether results were improved or not improved, reflect on what role the action(s) may have played and discuss how the program aims to further improve outcome achievement in the future.

FAQs

**Q:** *Which data-informed action should I choose to discuss?*

**A:** The action discussed here does not need to be tied to any particular assessment cycle (i.e., it is not required that the update is on an action from the last cycle). Ideally, the “closing the loop” discussion will be in reference to an action that has since been fully implemented and the targeted outcome assessed. A good rule of thumb is to discuss an action that was implemented a minimum of two or three cycles ago, as this would have allowed sufficient time to determine whether or not the action improved achievement of the outcome as intended.

**Q:** *What if there was no improvement in the targeted outcome(s)?*

**A:** The purpose of this process is to examine whether or not program changes made a difference. In cases where improvement was not observed, this is valuable information in and of itself. Reflect on what might be done differently in the future to ensure improvement.