Discussion Facilitation Guide:
Assessment Plans

The purpose of this guide is to help plan and facilitate a discussion about how program faculty will conduct learning outcomes assessment in the upcoming academic year. The answers to the questions posed in this guide will directly inform a strong narrative in the plan sections of the annual Academic Program Assessment form (Outcomes, Measures, Targets) in HelioCampus. A strong assessment plan facilitates straightforward assessment reporting!

Planning the Meeting

When should I schedule the Program Assessment planning meeting?

- Assessment Plans are due annually in early April, so allow adequate time to meet, discuss, and document assessment plans prior to the due date (e.g., every February or March).

Who should I invite to the Program Assessment planning meeting?

- **Department faculty, staff, and leadership**, especially those in a position to:
    - Teach courses critical to student success in the program (e.g., required, capstone, and gateway courses)
    - Enact changes relevant to the program's courses and learning outcomes
    - Assist in the collection of student artifacts for program assessment
    - Describe the assessment methodologies used in the program
    - Provide contextual information relevant to the future directions of the academic program
- **Student Advisory Board:** Students can provide insight on courses or program experiences in which they have had the clearest opportunity to demonstrate their grasp of PLOs.
- **College/School Assessment Liaison:** The Liaison can provide guidance about the assessment documentation process, particularly because they will be the person providing feedback on the assessment form.
- **Note-taker:** Someone tasked with taking detailed meeting notes and summarizing the discussion to be shared with meeting attendees and collaborators after the meeting.
- **Campus Collaborators (if needed):** Staff from the Center for Teaching Excellence, Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Evaluation, University Libraries, Career Center partner, instructional designers, external advisory boards, etc.

How should I prepare for a Program Assessment planning meeting?

Prior to the meeting, provide to attendees/collaborators:

☐ Previous assessment plans (learning outcomes, measures, targets) to contextualize the outcomes and measures previously assessed by the program and to reference feedback provided by OIEE and college liaisons on the most recent plans/reports.

☐ Other materials or supporting documentation to contextualize the plan within the current curriculum and assessment processes (e.g., curriculum maps, rubrics, syllabi, capstone assignments).

☐ Notes from prior assessment meetings, which may reference future (current) assessment strategies and/or previous findings which may influence the assessment plan.

During the Meeting

Some or all the following discussion questions can be used to develop the program's assessment strategy for the upcoming academic year.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

If PLOs are already established:

☐ Are there at least three different PLOs that have been assessed within the last 5 years?

☐ Do any PLOs need to be reassessed based on previous actions implemented by the program? (Refer to the *Use of Results* sections in the program's assessment reports from completed cycles.)

If PLOs are being written or revised:

☐ What knowledge and/or skills are students expected to be able to demonstrate because of their engagement in the program? How does the program define achievement of these PLOs?

☐ What question(s) related to student learning are program faculty hoping to answer or are curious about?

Measures: Data Collection/Gathering Evidence

Many different types of measures can provide evidence of student learning. The focus should be on <u>direct</u> measures, wherein actual student work/effort is evaluated. Indirect measures can also be included in the assessment plan as a means to supplement direct measure data. See the [Academic Program Assessment Guidelines](#) for examples.

- ☐ What kind of data would program faculty like to have to evaluate student performance? What kind of measures would be most useful for collecting this data?

- ☐ From where in the curriculum can/should data be collected to ensure representativeness, in terms of both sample size and relevancy to PLOs?

- ☐ Which measures have been used previously? Do these still align with the PLO(s) or do they need to be modified/replaced in the assessment plan?

- ☐ Are the proposed measures reliable, current, verifiable, coherent, objective, relevant, and representative?

- ☐ Are the proposed measures replicable year-to-year to track changes over time?

- ☐ Who is responsible for collecting and maintaining student learning data?

Measures: Data Analysis

- ☐ Are measurement strategies embedded in the assignment/artifact that will be collected? (e.g., a rubric or criteria list with assigned point values)

- ☐ Are individual instructors responsible for providing data from their own grading, or will instructors submit student work/artifacts to be evaluated by someone else on an established rubric?

Targets

What discussion questions can I pose to determine the <u>performance target</u> on each measure?

- ☐ How have students performed on the PLOs (and/or on particular measures) in the past?

- ☐ If students have consistently met previous targets, how can targets be adjusted? What is the aspiration goal of student performance at the time of data collection?

- ☐ If a rubric is used, should targets be set for specific rubric categories as they relate to the PLO(s)?

Based on the discussion from answering the questions above, respond to the following prompts to complete the *Measures and Target* sections in HelioCampus.

Measures Section

1. What data will be gathered, how will it be gathered, and from/by who?

2. How will the data be aggregated and analyzed to be meaningful at the program level? (I.e., Why/how will data from a specific measure, particularly if it is a course-based measure, speak to how well PLOs are achieved at the *program* level?)

3. What supporting documentation is available (rubrics, assignment guidelines, etc.) to provide additional context about the measure?

Targets Section

1. What is the identified target for each measure of learning?

After the Meeting

Have the note-taker write a summary of the discussion, including action items and responsible parties, to share with meeting attendees and other collaborators as appropriate. This summary can be uploaded as a supporting document of their planning process. Additionally, this information may be used to respond to each prompt in the form.