

Discussion Facilitation Guide: Using Assessment Results for Improvement of Learning (*Use of Results*)

The purpose of this guide is to help plan and facilitate a discussion about how the program will use current assessment results to improve student learning. The goal is for the questions posed in this guide to directly inform the narrative in the annual Program Assessment Report's *Use of Results* section.

Planning the Meeting

When should I schedule the Program Assessment meeting?

- Assessment Report drafts are due annually in mid-October, so allow adequate time to meet, discuss, and document the discussion.
- Scheduling an annual Assessment Retreat in late Summer or early Fall is one strategy for ensuring assessment data is regularly discussed.

Who should I invite to the Program Assessment 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)
 - Affect 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 what learning-centered actions they believe might be beneficial for the students in the program.
- **College/School Assessment Liaison:** The Liaison can provide guidance about the assessment documentation process.
- **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:** 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 meeting?

Prior to the meeting, provide to attendees/collaborators:

- The assessment plan (learning outcomes, measures, targets), with the understanding that the purpose of this meeting is *not* to make retroactive changes to the current plan.
- Current data/findings, as well as findings from previous cycles to easily compare trends across cohorts of students.
- Other materials to contextualize the findings within the current curriculum and assessment processes (e.g., curriculum maps, rubrics, syllabi, capstone assignments).

During the Meeting

What discussion questions can I pose to analyze and interpret the assessment results?

- Where are students doing well or excelling?
- Where are students struggling or encountering difficulties?
- Are there patterns or themes emerging?
- Was the sample representative, if applicable?
- What are the main takeaways from the results?
- What other existing assessments or data points help to contextualize the results?
- What additional assessment might help clarify these results in the future?
- Who else in the program would benefit from seeing the results?

What discussion questions can I pose to develop the Use of Results section?

The primary objective of program-level learning outcome assessment is using data collected about student learning to make informed decisions about the future of the program. The goal of the *Use of Results* section is to detail specific next steps, in response to assessment data, to facilitate intentional improvements or changes. The answers to the questions below can be used to develop a tailored response that meets the needs of the program while also fulfilling the documentation requirements for program assessment.

Questions to consider might include:

- Are the course standards aligned with the end-of-experience program standards? If not, why?
- Were classroom-based activities and pedagogies helpful in preparing students for the assignments/assessments? If not, why?
- If targets are met:
 - Why were the targets met? Is this a consistent trend?
 - Can the data be further interrogated to determine if disparities exist (e.g., disaggregated and/or compared with other data points)?
 - Where are there opportunities to further develop student learning?
 - Does the data suggest a previous action could be built upon/expanded in some way?
- If targets are not met:
 - Why were the targets not met? Is this a consistent trend?
 - Where are there opportunities to further develop student learning?
 - How can students' abilities to demonstrate the learning outcome be influenced throughout the program?

Based on the discussion from answering the questions above, respond to the following prompts to complete the *Use of Results* section.

1. What action, update, or change will be implemented based on the discussion?
2. Who will be responsible for implementing the action? What is the estimated timeline?
3. What is the rationale for why the group believes the action will lead to improvements in 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. Include this summary in the *Use of Results* section of the assessment report.