

Assessment Checklist Example

General Directions: This checklist provides an overview of the basic components of the assessment process used at the major/program/school level. Supporting documents for each of the areas below should be available.

NOTE: There are many ways to document ongoing assessment. This is one example.

_____ 1. **Mission Statement**

Mission Statement must be appropriate to collegiate education as well as to the specific educational role of the major and/or program in fulfilling the University's Mission. The Mission Statement should be periodically reviewed to assure it is still relevant and consistent with the university mission. Documentation must be available to show that the development and re-evaluation of the Mission includes all major stakeholders (e.g. students, faculty, alumni, employers)

_____ 2. **Goal(s)/Outcome/Objectives Clearly Articulated**

Goals stated as simply and clearly as possible? It is important that the goals be related to student learning and tied to the Mission Statement. Goals are also derived from prior assessment cycle. For example, if it is determined that attrition for this program is higher than others at the University or at peer institutions, a goal may be established to increase graduation rates. The corresponding objective might read something like: "Reduce attrition in the freshman year by 10% (from 50% to 40%)." It is advisable to have measurable objectives for each goal.

_____ 3. **Action Plan (Strategies) for Achieving Goals(s)**

The Action Plan should address the following questions:

- a. Who is or who are the responsible party(ies)?
- b. What exactly will they do? What specific steps will be taken to achieve the objective(s)?
- c. When will it be implemented or accomplished? A schedule with interim and final deadlines for completion of the actions should be included.
- d. What resources are required?

_____ 4. **Description of Measurement for Achievement of Goal(s)**

This is supposed to answer how the department/program/school will measure whether or not it is achieving its goals. What measures/instrument(s) will be used to determine if outcomes have been achieved. (e.g. alumni surveys, employer interviews, GRE test scores, licensure examination results, focus groups). Must also include frequency of the measurement, who is responsible for implementation, benchmarks, and where results will be stored. It is strongly recommended that measures include direct measures (e.g. licensure exam) of student success as well as indirect measures

(e.g. surveys of student ratings of learning achievement). This section is similar to the Methods section of a scholarly paper.

_____ 5. **Evaluation of Goal Achievement**

Evaluation of goal achievement must include analysis of results from measures described above in order to determine if the goals stated above were achieved. First, data should be summarized in a clear and concise manner. Second, the analysis must answer not only if goals were achieved but how well. This section is similar to the Results section of a scholarly paper.

_____ 6. **Closing the Loop**

This section is similar to the Discussion section of a scholarly paper. If benchmarks/targets were not met, a description of possible reasons should be included. Also include what will be done with the results of the evaluation. How will the results be disseminated to the individual or groups that are responsible for making improvement and changes?

Some questions that are helpful to answer in “closing the loop” might include:

How well were goals achieved? In other words, “what specifically did the assessments show regarding strengths or progress made in achieving intended outcomes?” If at or above benchmarks, great! Consider setting a higher goal for next time and try again? Perhaps set the benchmark for you want 4% participation next time instead of the 24% you asked for this time. Other options might include a curriculum change, change in the content of a class, etc.

If goals were not achieved, what needs to be re-thought? Were the goals realistic? Were the targets overambitious? Were there unexpected complications (e.g. faculty vacancy)? Do the strategies need to be modified? Where was the problem? What corrections or changes need to be made?

_____ 7. **Documentation of the Process**

Documentation not only shows that the goals and objectives have been evaluated and implemented, but also, and perhaps most importantly, that the results of the evaluation have been applied to future planning processes. Documentation shows that the results of the above planning and evaluation process were used in a systematic way in order to effect changes in the program/major/school for the benefit of student learning. In summary, documentation implies that the following procedures have been followed:

- a. The goals and objectives established within each area have been addressed and dealt with;
- b. Some mechanism or tool has been employed to measure the goals and objectives; and

- c. As a result of the assessment results, **either the *status quo* is affirmed or change is made**, affecting the establishment of new goals and objectives to restart the cycle.

An Annual Report section with the following elements may be requested: executive summary, contributions to the institution, highlights, teaching activities, research/scholarly activities, public/community service, external threats and opportunities, and resource needs