



Assessment Updates

Newsletter from the Office of Assessment & Program Review (APR)

Assessment is effective and useful when the focus is on the learning issues that faculty consider valuable.

(Adapted from the *9 Principles for Assessing Student Learning*, AAHE Assessment Forum, <http://www.aahe.org/assessment/principl.htm>)

Developing and Maintaining a Plan for Learning & Assessment of Student Learning

One of the ways for K-State to carry on providing the best learning environment for students is to continually inquire about and improve student learning. A major benefit of the assessment of student learning is the improvement that can occur in a program based on the feedback from the assessment results (Nellis, 2005.) However, continuous improvement requires an ongoing and systematic process to learn about student learning. One approach to sustain the assessment process is to integrate it into the university's culture of scholarship, institutional curiosity, and its commitment to learning and improving student learning. This

process can be accomplished by raising questions and finding answers on what, how well, when and which students learn; how teaching pedagogies and educational experiences enhance student learning; and how improvements can be applied in creative and innovative ways (Maki, 2002). A recommended series of steps to develop and maintain assessment plans has been developed to help faculty design their plans, so that they are integrated into their own disciplines and cultures. Here are a few examples of these steps:

- Identify and link program-level student learning outcomes to: (a) university and

college-wide (if applicable) student learning outcomes; (b) academic missions; (c) accreditation standards; (d) criteria identified by professional organizations; or (e) industry standards.

- Identify the various courses and co-curricular activities where the outcomes are learned (developed or enhanced) by students in your program (e.g., department can create a matrix for discussion).
- Identify the assignments, experiences, activities and projects that promote the achievement of the learning outcome.

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♣ Would you like to share your assessment plan, tool, article or story?

♣ Do you need more information on assessment?

♣ Want to contact us?

Please email or call:

Patricia Marsh

(Interim Assistant Director, APR Office)

at pmarsh@k-state.edu

or 785-532-5712

Proposed Template for Documenting Assessment Plans

A key memo from Provost Nellis (Sept. 9, 2004) reminds faculty of the availability of a template that has been developed to facilitate the creation of assessment plans. The format and layout of the template is a recommended guideline, thus, it does not need to be followed exactly. Addressing four key sets of questions is what is important for departments to achieve in their assessment plans. The template can be downloaded from the APR website: [http://](http://www.k-state.edu/apr/Library/templatew.doc)

www.k-state.edu/apr/Library/templatew.doc.

The key questions to answer are:

- D.1. Student Learning Outcomes - Select 2-5 degree program learning outcomes that will be assessed in the next three years. Indicate program SLOs that are linked to university-wide SLOs.
- D.2. How will the learning outcomes be assessed?

What groups will be included in the assessment?

Reminder: Half of the assessment measures used need to be direct measures of student learning. (Please refer to more examples of direct and indirect measures at the APR website under Measures, Rubrics and Tools: <http://www.k-state.edu/apr/Learning/Measures.htm>).

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Developing and Maintaining ... (page 1)

Key Dates ...

November 1, 2004

⇒ Assessment plans for all degree programs are to be submitted from departments to Deans (College Deans for undergraduate programs, Dean of the Graduate School for graduate programs)

⇒ Brand-new (or newly endorsed) SLOs are to be submitted to the Office of the Provost

November 29, 2004

⇒ Deans send summary of complete plans and copies of the plans to Office of the Provost

December 6, 2004

⇒ Brand-new (or newly endorsed) SLOs for minors, secondary majors, certificate, interdisciplinary programs are to be submitted to the Office of the Provost

February 21-22, 2005

⇒ Assessment focused visit from our regional accreditor

- Identify and describe multiple methodologies and measures.
- Present data and results to faculty for discussion.
- Identify changes needed to improve student learning (e.g., changes in curriculum, pedagogies, advising strategy, refinement of assessment measures, assessment process, refinement of SLOs).

- Act on results, maintain feedback loops.
- Re-evaluate plans.

The full list of steps is located at <http://www.k-state.edu/apr/Library/steps.pdf>.

Additional assessment resource materials (templates, rubrics, models, etc.) can be found at the Assessment & Program Review (APR) website: <http://www.k-state.edu/apr/>.

Sources:

- * Nellis, Duanne. (September 9, 2004). *Memo to Deans and Department Heads re: Submis-*

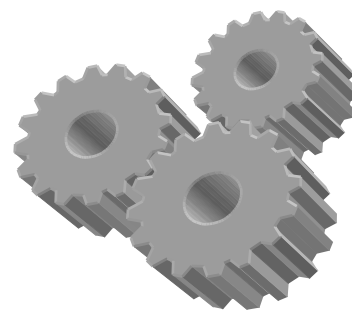
sion and Approval of Assessment Plans. Kansas State University.

- * Maki, Peggy. (2002). *Developing an Assessment Plan to Learn About Student Learning*. American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) Assessment Forum. Pre-publication version of article that appears in the *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, January 2002. Downloaded from <http://www.aahe.org/Assessment/assessmentplan.htm>.

Proposed Template ... (page 1)

- D.3. When will these outcomes be assessed? When and in what format will the results of assessment be discussed?
- D.4. What is the unit's process for using assessment results to improve student learning?

Identifying SLOs, designing plans to assess the SLOs, and developing reporting strategies are all ways of sharing how student learning will be improved and sustained at K-State.



Future Projects

- * *Creating FAQs to address faculty questions and concerns*
- * *More assessment resources and updates at the APR website*
- * *Updates on the Focused Visit on Assessment*