

Assessment Policy – Academic and Administrative Units

- 1. Policy Abstract** – As a means of continuous improvement, academic and administrative unit assessment is the cyclical process of determining the extent to which identified outcomes are met and findings used to improve programs and services. Assessment of academic and administrative units contributes to the measures used by the College to gauge its level of institutional effectiveness. Assessment reports are submitted by academic and administrative units and reviewed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment on an annual basis.

Responsible Office – Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment

Official – Noreen Gaubatz, Vice President – Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment

Contact – Noreen Gaubatz, 226-4671, ngaubatz@bsc.edu

Applies to – All academic and administrative units

Effective Date – June 2013

Revision Dates –

2. Introduction/Background

An outcomes-directed assessment effort by academic and administrative units allows for continuous improvement of programs and services, while maintaining the College's compliance with external mandates. Additionally, the process of identifying outcomes, collecting and analyzing data, and using results for improvement by academic and administrative units supports the assessment of the College's institutional effectiveness, as evidenced in its mission statement.

3. Purpose

Assessment of academic and administrative units maintains and strengthens programs and services, allowing the institution to achieve stated outcomes. The assessment process illustrates the College's efforts to:

- Advance institutional goals and outcomes
- Align the goals of the Strategic Plan with those of academic and administrative units
- Demonstrate how assessment results inform curriculum, pedagogy, student support, and services

4. Applicable Regulations

SACS-COC Core Requirement 2.5 – Institutional Effectiveness

SACS-COC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1 – Institutional Effectiveness, educational programs

SACS-COC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.2 – Institutional Effectiveness, administrative support services

SACS-COC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3 – Institutional Effectiveness, academic and student support services

5. Policy Statement

Responsibility for assessment of each academic and administrative unit rests with the individual unit. Student learning outcome assessment is the focus of academic units, with process and efficiency outcome assessment the primary emphasis of administrative units.

Assessment of academic and administrative units occurs annually, with the timeline specified by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment. It is expected that the entire unit's faculty or staff participate in discussing and implementing the various aspects of the assessment plan (i.e., outcomes, methodology, data review, and use of data). A common template is used for submission of assessment reports for consistency of reporting across units. Assessment reports and supporting documentation are reviewed by the appropriate unit administrator and then submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment for evaluation.

Academic Units

Academic unit assessment includes academic majors, general education curriculum, and engaged learning programs. Overall responsibility for assessment of academic units lies with the Provost's Office, supported by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment.

- Individual departments are responsible for assessment of *academic majors*.
- The Provost's Office is responsible for assessment of the *general education curriculum*.
- Individual programs are responsible for assessment of *engaged learning programs*.

Each academic unit is expected to implement an assessment plan that clearly articulates student learning outcomes, identifies an appropriate methodology, measures the extent to which students achieve the learning outcomes, analyzes the findings, and uses the results to make curricular or programmatic enhancements or adjustments. Faculty in each department or program are responsible for determining the scope (i.e., cognitive, behavioral, and affective domains) and appropriateness of student learning outcomes in accordance with standards from their field of study. Development of the general education student learning outcomes is the responsibility of faculty teaching within the curriculum, in conjunction with the Provost's Office, with outcomes reflecting the general competencies that faculty deem essential within a liberal arts curriculum.

Administrative Units

Administrative unit assessment includes support, services, and programs provided to students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Overall responsibility for assessment of administrative units lies with the senior administrative officer of the unit (e.g., Vice President, Director), supported by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment.

Each administrative unit is expected to implement an assessment plan that clearly identifies expected outcomes, engages an appropriate methodology that produces sufficient findings (i.e., reliable, valid, inclusive) to determine progress towards achieving outcomes, and uses the results for improvement purposes within a specified timeline.

6. Details

Assessment reports are evaluated by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment on an annual basis. In the event that additional information, clarification, or revisions to the report are necessary, the unit will meet this request in a timely manner.

As academic and administrative assessment reports are a key component of meeting SACS-COC requirements, any missing reports will yield a noncompliance recommendation. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment is responsible, therefore, for following-up with units that do not submit assessment reports.

7. Definitions

SACS-COC – Southern Association of Colleges and Schools-Commission on Colleges

8. References

The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement, SACS-COC, 2012 Edition.