Course Alignment Matrices FAQs

Who should I contact with questions about course alignment matrices (or other assessment questions)?
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What is the purpose of a course alignment matrix?
A course alignment matrix helps faculty, administration, and external reviewers see the connection between a program’s curriculum and a program’s student learning outcomes (SLOs). The course alignment matrix may be used to justify needed changes to a program’s curriculum. By completing the course alignment matrix, you may be able to identify the following:
- Student learning outcomes that are not introduced in the curriculum
- Student learning outcomes that are not developed and mastered in the curriculum
- Courses that are not associated with student learning outcomes
- Places where mastery can be assessed
- Courses in which assessment can be done
- Changes that may enhance the curriculum.

Where do I submit completed course alignment matrices?
You can email them as an attachment to msu.assessment@murraystate.edu.

Where can I find a course alignment matrix form?
Course alignment matrix forms for each degree (with courses and outcomes, if available, listed) were emailed to department chairs.
You can download a blank course alignment matrix form (in .doc format) from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website: http://libguides.murraystate.edu/assessment (Click on the Academic Program Assessment Information tab.)

Where can I find instructions for completing a course alignment matrix?
Instructions for completing the course alignment matrices were emailed to department chairs.
Instructions and examples of completed course alignment matrices also can be found on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website: http://libguides.murraystate.edu/assessment (Click on the Academic Program Assessment Information tab.)

Does each degree require a separate course alignment matrix?
Each degree requires a separate course alignment matrix. You may need to prepare multiple course alignment matrices per CIP code.

Does each track of a degree require a separate course alignment matrix?
The course requirements for each individual track can be listed separately on the same course alignment matrix. Or, you can create a separate course alignment matrix for each track. It depends on how much the course requirements for each track overlap. That is, if the majority of courses required for all tracks of a degree are the same, and only a few courses differentiate the tracks, you could include all tracks on the same course alignment matrix. If, on the other hand, there is a relatively short list of core degree requirements and substantial differences between the tracks, it may be easier to prepare a separate course alignment matrix for each degree track.

If students are required to take a course in another department as part of their degree requirements, should I include the course on the course alignment matrix?
Yes. List courses required for the degree that are offered by other departments. If students are required to take specific University Studies courses as part of the degree curriculum, list the required University Studies courses on the course alignment matrix. Indicate which student learning outcomes (SLO) are introduced, developed, or mastered in the courses. Most likely, you will assess students’ mastery of the SLO in a course offered by your department. However, if you plan
to assess students’ mastery of the SLO in a course offered by another department, you will need to make arrangements with the department that offers the course.

**Do I have to revise my course alignment matrix each year?**
No. Course alignment matrices do not need to be edited unless the program curriculum or outcomes change.

**Which academic bulletin should we use for degree requirements?**
The current academic bulletin contains the most updated degree requirements for undergraduate and graduate degrees. (Murray State combined the undergraduate and graduate bulletins and will publish the bulletin on a yearly basis.)

You can download a PDF of the current academic bulletin on the Registrars webpage: [http://www.murraystate.edu/registrar.aspx](http://www.murraystate.edu/registrar.aspx).

**How do we handle required limited electives (groups of courses from which students are required to select courses)?**
You can list electives as a group, and indicate which SLOs are introduced, developed, and/or mastered during the group of elective courses. Or, you can list each limited elective course separately and indicate introduction, development, and/or mastery of SLOs for each individual elective course.

**What if we have students working on a previous bulletin?**
Contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (270-809-3341  [msu.assessment@murraystate.edu](mailto:msu.assessment@murraystate.edu))

**What if we have cancelled degrees that are listed in the current bulletin?**
Contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (270-809-3341  [msu.assessment@murraystate.edu](mailto:msu.assessment@murraystate.edu))