Assessment Schedule & Requirements

Assessment reporting schedule

- **Mid-September**: The assessment report (including results and action plan) for the previous academic/fiscal year is due.
- **Early October**: The assessment plan for the current academic/fiscal year is due.

Learning outcomes schedule:
- Programs are not required to assess every student learning outcome each year. Instead, all learning outcomes must be assessed over a three-year period.

An assessment plan includes

- **Learning outcomes** that will be assessed during the current academic year.
- A list of all assessments that will be conducted and reported during the academic or fiscal year.
  - Each learning outcome must be assessed with at least two summative and two formative measures/tests/instruments. (Each test/instrument can measure a different aspect of the learning outcome.)
  - Summative assessments measure student mastery of skills/knowledge. **Summative assessments should focus on the stages of the curriculum where students are expected to master** the skills/knowledge described in the learning outcomes. (I.e., the curriculum requirements marked “M” on the course alignment matrix.)
  - Formative assessments measure how well students are developing skills/knowledge and are conducted earlier in the curriculum sequence. (I.e., the curriculum requirements marked “D” on the course alignment matrix.)
  - Include enough description of each assessment so that an outside reviewer can understand the assessment and understand how it is a measure of the learning outcome.
- A clear achievement target (aka “criteria for success”) for each assessment listed.

An assessment report includes

- The assessment plan
- A summary of the results of assessments conducted
- An action plan (aka “use of results”). **Discussions of how results are used must include specific actions taken to make improvements in response to the assessment results.**
Guidelines for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Outcomes should

- Answer the question: “What are students expected to know, think, or be able to do when they complete the program?”
- Be clear and succinct
- Be under the control or the responsibility of the unit
- Be measurable and specific
- Be actionable; that is, lead to improvements
- Be singular rather than a list
- Be meaningful rather than trivial
- Not lead to a yes or no answer.
- **NOTE:** The list of all learning outcomes should present a comprehensive summary of the core sets of skills and knowledge students are expected to have at/near completion of the program.

Assessment measures should

- Be directly related to the outcome
- Consider all aspects of the outcome
- Provide measurable results
- Provide adequate data for analysis
- Provide actionable results
- Outline in detail a systematic way to assess the outcome (who, what, when, how) and the achievement target.
- **NOTE:** Each outcome must be assessed with multiple, summative assessment measures (aka, “instruments/tests”). Each measure does not have to address all aspects of the outcome.
- **NOTE:** Summative program assessments evaluate students at the point in the curriculum where they should master the knowledge/skills described in the outcome.

Criteria for Success (a.k.a., achievement targets) should

- Use component (not the student) as the unit of analysis
- Be specific
- Avoid vague words such as “most” or “majority”
- Avoid stating in terms of “all” or “100%”
- Directly relate to the outcome and assessment method
- Should not include grades, GPA, passing courses, or graduation

Results should

- Provide detailed data (avoid “most” or “majority”)
- Use specific numbers (not rounded or estimates)
- Avoid technical language
- Align with outcome and target
- Be clearly and succinctly presented
- Support actions taken later to improve unit.
- **NOTE:** Institutions with excellent IE programs benchmark against other institutions, but this method isn't required.
Use of results (improvements made based on assessment results) should

- Address gaps or weaknesses identified by assessment results
- Provide details of improvement made
- Relate to outcome and the results
- Be substantive, not trivial (but they can be small changes)
- Be stated in past tense
- Avoid words like “continue” or “maintain.”
- NOTE: Use of results can include major or minor changes made to improve program curriculum, instruction, faculty training, assessment practices, facilities (if applicable), course scheduling, etc.