



Stony Brook University

**FINAL REPORT OF
THE PROVOST'S TASK FORCE ON ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT**

July 2013

Lori Escallier, Co-Chair
Keith Sheppard, Co-Chair
Chuck Taber, Co-Chair
Patricia Aceves
Henry Bokuniewicz
Dan Davis
Terry Earley
Agnes He
Imin Kao
Maurice Kernan
Peter Khost
Peter Kuemmel
Joe Lauher
Manny London
Wei-Hsin Lu
Richard Morgan
Marvin O'Neal
Dave Paquette
Charlie Robbins
Paul Schreiber
Christopher Sellers
Lauren Tacke-Cushing

With the assistance of
Barbara O'Connor

Context

In order to both foster and enhance the culture of academic assessment at Stony Brook University, Provost Dennis Assanis appointed an Academic Assessment Task Force to develop a university-wide strategy and timeline for the implementation of assessment plans for all academic programs at Stony Brook University. This final report details how we conceived the task, how we organized ourselves, and the recommendations we are making. The Task Force met biweekly as a committee of the whole, with subgroups meeting in the off weeks. We had representation from most areas of campus, including some with experience and expertise in academic assessment and others with no prior experience. This mix proved to be useful as it sparked conversations about the appropriate goals for and wide variety of approaches to academic assessment that has helped us understand the challenges we face in developing a campus-wide strategy and plan for communicating this strategy.

Early discussions centered on the basic questions: What is academic assessment? How does it differ from external evaluation of programs? What are its purposes? What will academic assessment mean in the different academic departments at SBU? Who will do it? How can we foster a culture of assessment across our university that will persist beyond accreditation pressures? We concluded that academic assessment is a process of self-improvement in which evidence is gathered and applied by programs to improve the “learning outcomes” of students in the program. By contrast, program evaluation “grades” program performance from the outside. We recognized that the nature of this assessment process and its evidence vary from discipline to discipline. Assessment plans must be developed and implemented by programs themselves with centralized support from the institution. A change in institutional culture on assessment will require an investment of resources. The focus is on assessing academic programs (undergraduate majors and minors, graduate and professional programs at the master’s and doctoral levels); course-level assessment will be necessary as a component of program assessment. The fundamental questions to be addressed by programs are:

1. Learning Outcomes/Goals: What do we want students to learn?
2. Metrics/Data/Evidence: How do we know what they are learning?
3. Closing the Loop: How can we modify our programs so students better learn what we want them to learn?

It was noted that some faculty and programs already had academic assessment programs in place, usually because of external accreditation demands; in other areas the process is informal and idiosyncratic, but the basis for formal assessment is already in place in the implicit or explicit standards faculty apply in their courses and programs. We must also emphasize that the standards of general accreditation (Middle States) now mandate formal assessment within all programs. It is a good idea for our own improvement, we are already doing it on some level, and it is required by outside bodies.

In order to accomplish the goals of the Task Force as articulated in the Provost’s Charge and as elaborated in our own early discussions, we divided into 4 topical subgroups. Building on the work of these subgroups, the committee as a whole developed the set of recommendations described below. A great deal of work remains to be done to facilitate this change of culture on our campus, and so the Task Force intends to continue working beyond the submission of this report.

Goals of the Task Force (From the Provost's Charge)

1. Communicates that academic assessment is an expectation for every program and course.
2. Recognizes those areas in which academic assessment is currently practiced and identifies academic leaders whose experience and expertise could be helpful in rolling these practices out across the board.
3. Create an environment in which faculty can be helped to develop measureable learning outcomes for all programs and propose specific mechanisms for helping them reach that goal.
4. Develop a timetable by which all programs will be held accountable for having written learning outcomes and a way to measure them.
5. Ensure that those programs with external accreditation are in fact practicing continuous academic assessment (and not just in anticipation of an external site visit)
6. Develop institutional academic assessment guidelines that include the documentation of program learning outcomes, plans for the collection of learning outcome data, and a format for reporting on an ongoing basis how learning outcome data are used in decision making.

Sub-Groups and Charges

1. Collection of Information about Assessment Practices

- Develop a plan to collect information to better understand the current state of assessment practices campus-wide (e.g. development of a template, etc.).
- Investigate examples of a broad array of assessment plans from different disciplines and contexts.
- Conduct a detailed survey of current program assessment practices (see Appendix A).

2. Metrics/Rubrics

- Identify examples of program goals and curriculum maps to determine where and how key knowledge and skills are taught and show the progress students are expected to make throughout the curriculum.
- Identify excellent (useful and practical) examples of assessment tools (rubrics, etc.) for groups of disciplines and professions.
- Examine resources needed to support and facilitate the development and application of assessment methods.
- Develop a literature list of current texts and on-line references on rubrics, assessment methods, measurement of organizational performance, and creating and maintaining assessment programs.

3. Structure

- Identify a structure for “on-going” communication among the colleges, schools, and programs.
- Identify a plan for the development of a sustainable assessment program campus-wide.
- Develop a “Flow Chart” to identify what programs require academic assessment.

4. Communication

- Develop a strategy for communicating the university assessment plan to all constituents (e.g. assessment website, town hall meetings, etc.).
- Develop a simple guide to assessment.
- Develop a glossary for assessment concepts and terms.

Recommendations

Allied to a commitment to academic assessment at all levels of the university the task force makes the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Establish a permanent Office of Academic Assessment at the university

Stony Brook University must establish an infrastructure of personnel and resources to support a culture of assessment campus-wide. Key personnel must be in place as part of the permanent administrative structure of the university. A Director and Assistant Director of Academic Assessment with responsibility for the oversight of all assessment activities across campus should be appointed as soon as possible. Additionally, to support the coordination of data and information we recommend that a data analyst be hired.

The Office of Academic Assessment would coordinate and provide the resources to support the assessment infrastructure. These resources include but are not limited to:

- Extensive web-site and internet resources
- Offering workshops, seminars and conferences on state-of-the-art assessment strategies
- Assisting with the development of assessment plans
- Assisting with collection of evidence, analysis and reporting
- Serving as an assessment data repository
- Assisting with recommendations to inform quality improvement
- Maintaining data for regulatory agencies and other program reviews
- Ensuring that academic assessment is visible and ongoing on campus
- Assisting in the coordination of the Stony Brook Curriculum assessment plan

It is important to note that we can build on the resources that are already available through the Faculty Center: <http://facultycenter.stonybrook.edu/assessment>.

Recommendation 2: Appoint Assessment Coordinators in each academic unit

The successful introduction of a more formalized assessment initiative requires skilled leadership, the development of open and clear communication pathways and the identification and input of a team of appropriately qualified faculty. Most importantly, the success of a university-wide assessment program requires widespread faculty/staff support and engagement. The goal is to develop a university-wide culture, which recognizes that the mission of providing comprehensive, high quality education is promoted by the incorporation of rigorous assessment practices into academic programs. The intent is to avoid producing a culture of compliance by adopting a flexible system that meets the varied needs of all the academic entities at the

university. A key factor in this development is the appointment of personnel to act as assessment coordinators.

Given the size, scale and diversity of the university, no single system for appointing program assessment coordinators would be appropriate. The chain of command for such an assessment system would follow a hierarchy from the Provost through the deans and department chairs to the undergraduate and graduate program directors, who would be largely responsible for identifying faculty members who have experience and expertise with assessment or who can commit to gaining this expertise. While faculty in each academic program will develop assessment plans for their programs and courses, the program directors would be tasked with appointing the assessment coordinators or teams of coordinators for their academic areas and identifying what resources are needed. The assessment coordinators would monitor the assessment practices and liaise with the University-wide assessment offices. It will be advisable to compensate coordinators in areas that have no previous assessment experience or who may hold wider assessment responsibilities across broad groups, for example undergraduate STEM education, general education, undergraduate colleges, or grouped departments with common missions like humanities or life sciences. While the appointed coordinators will lead the assessment process, faculty within academic programs must be in control of the assessment of their own programs.

Recommendation 3: Establish a university-wide committee for the purpose of ongoing communication and policymaking regarding assessment

We recognize that there is a need for ongoing communication regarding assessment activities campus-wide. A major function of the committee will be to provide a forum for the exchange of information, ideas and practices of academic assessment. This committee should serve in an advisory capacity to the provost and should formally incorporate representation from the Standing Committees of the University Senate that deal with undergraduate and graduate education (the Undergraduate and Graduate Councils).

Recommendation 4: Establish a university-wide assessment recognition program

It is vital that the university encourages broad involvement and recognizes those who engage in quality assessment activities. We believe that a process should be established that makes successful assessment achievement prominently visible on our campus, e.g. Presidential Mini-Grants or awards for those programs or individuals that develop and implement exemplary assessment activities. Appropriate compensation should be provided.

Recommendation 5: Conduct a survey of current assessment practices at SBU

We have developed a survey instrument to be administered after a university academic assessment policy has been announced. The purpose of the survey is to better understand the degree to which assessment practices are used to improve student outcomes at Stony Brook University. The survey will be sent to the coordinators to complete, and is attached as Appendix B to this report.

Recommendation 6: *When the assessment policy is announced to the university community, it must be simple, flexible, and under the control of each program's faculty*

We believe that to build a successful culture of assessment faculty must see the value of a formalized program and not be overwhelmed by a “regulatory mandate”. For this reason, we have developed a simple, jargon-free introduction and guide for outcomes-based academic assessment that should be distributed when the assessment policy is announced. This primer is attached as Appendix C.

Recommendation 7: *Be very clear on a timeline of activities and provide the necessary resources for timely progression.*

It is very important that the administration signal the importance of academic assessment by committing the necessary resources to support the activities as described in earlier recommendations. We must strive to have these resources in place in sync with the timeline expected for program faculty to follow in creating their plans. We attach our recommended timeline as Appendix D.

Appendix A: AAU Public Research University Assessment Plans and Resources

| University | Plan | Structure | Program &/or Course Level Assessment | Resources (\$) and staff) | On-line resources |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|
| Georgia Institute of Technology | Assessment mission, principles, and roles derived from university's vision https://www.assessment.gatech.edu/mission-statement/ | https://www.assessment.gatech.edu/ Office of Assessment provides information and technical expertise to assist units at all levels in measuring and improving student learning and outcomes; | Matrix for program assessment http://inside.mines.edu/fs_home/rhmiller/matrix.htm https://www.assessment.gatech.edu/oats/ Online Assessment Tracking System for documenting student learning and continuous improvement https://www.assessment.gatech.edu/adors/ | 5 staff members | Web page of links: https://www.assessment.gatech.edu/ Also, see "Learning Terms Glossary" http://staging.cetl.gatech.edu/sites/default/files/resources/learningterms.pdf |
| Indiana University | Web site with mission and roles, plans and results, and key information http://www.iun.edu/campus-assessment/ | Assessment plan and committee http://www.iun.edu/campus-assessment/assessment-committee.htm | Unit assessment plans General Education Plan and separate plans for each college unit http://www.iun.edu/campus-assessment/assessment-plans/index.htm Course embedded system for program assessment http://www.iun.edu/campus-assessment/assessment-plans/school-of%20business-and-economics.htm | Two member staffs, Associate vice chancellor and assistant: http://www.iun.edu/campus-assessment/meet-our-staff/index.htm | Forms & reporting templates under Plans & Results http://www.iun.edu/campus-assessment/index.htm |
| Iowa State | Plans and guidelines available http://www.provost.iastate.edu/help/student-outcomes | Each college develops its own program assessment following general university guidelines issued by the Provost's Office. The university website summarizes the results for each college. For instance, here's the | General procedures for academic program review http://www.provost.iastate.edu/help/student-outcomes/guidelines The Provost's Office has | Iowa does not appear to have a central staff to support assessment. Each department has its own detailed assessment process: | Assessment of Learning Outcomes reports from academic departments are available. They include detailed learning outcomes and methods of assessment—largely indirect measures such as graduation rates and student opinions. See the report |

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| | | <p>one for Business: http://www.provost.iastate.edu/help/student-outcomes/business</p> | <p>a schedule for program review, including policies and procedures and a report format. See http://www.provost.iastate.edu/help/program-review/schedule</p> | <p>http://google.iastate.edu/search?output=xml_no_dtd&client=default_frontend&site=search=&proxystylesheet=default_frontend&q=assessment+of+learning+outcomes&btnG=</p> <p>Colleges have their own offices of curricular and student assessment: E.g., the office in the College of Veterinary Medicine: http://vetmed.iastate.edu/about/services/office-curricular-and-student-assessment</p> | <p>from Chemistry: http://www.chem.iastate.edu/assessment</p> |
| <p>Michigan State University</p> | <p>Program reviews are required</p> | <p>Offices of Assessment Office of Academic Program Review</p> | <p>Calendar and methods for academic program review: http://www.esp.msu.edu/APR.asp</p> | <p>MSU has a Director of Assessment and an Associate Provost for Academic Services who is responsible for program review: Guidelines for self-study and other resources are available: http://www.esp.msu.edu/APR.asp</p> | <p>Website on Institutional and Programmatic Student Outcomes Assessment provides resources from other universities: http://fod.msu.edu/oir/institutional-and-programmatic-student-outcomes-assessment</p> <p>Departmental reports available: http://socialwork.msu.edu/msw/docs/Statewide_Blended_MSW_Clinical_ASSESSMENT%20OF%20STUDENT%20LEARNING%20OUTCOMES%20FORM.pdf</p> <p>Resources for program review from the Director of Assessment's office: http://fod.msu.edu/search/node/director%20of%20assessment%20types%203Aoir</p> <p>Teaching and learning resources for assessment are available, including</p> |

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| | | | | | | | rubrics, tests, and portfolios for course assessment. http://fod.msu.edu/oir/institutional-and-programmatic-student-outcomes-assessment |
| The Ohio State University | College assessment mission is outlined on the web http://asccas.osu.edu/assessment | College of Arts & Sciences has a support department called Curriculum & Assessment Services http://asccas.osu.edu/ | Assessment of general education http://asccas.osu.edu/assessment/ge-assessment and program assessment http://asccas.osu.edu/assessment/majors-program-assessment | Unclear staff Colleges seem to do their own thing. | Resources are available from AAC&U and links to other universities: http://asccas.osu.edu/assessment/resources | | |
| Pennsylvania State University | Has a web site outlining plan, policies, and reports: http://www.assess.psu.edu/ | Complete on-line outline and description of plan, expectations, and resources | Program and course level procedures http://www.schreyerinsitute.psu.edu/tools/program Process includes Getting started, identifying goals, identifying objectives, aligning goals and objectives, providing evidence, interpreting evidence, and developing an assessment plan http://www.schreyerinsitute.psu.edu/tools/program | An assessment coordinating committee Staff with at least 9 professionals (similar to our TLJ) http://www.schreyerinsitute.psu.edu/staff | Links are available on http://www.assess.psu.edu/ and cover Expectations and due dates Assessment report template Assessment plan evaluation guidelines Examples of a learning outcomes assessment plan A self-paced module on learning outcomes assessment Past events and their resources | | |
| Purdue | Assessment web site outlines plan http://www.purdue.edu/provost/assessment/ | Assessment office in the Provost's Office Learning outcomes are listed for each college http://www.purdue.edu/provost/assessment/ | Assessment office conducts a Graduating Senior Learning Outcomes Survey http://www.purdue.edu/oir/PDF_files/2012%20Grading%20Students%20 | Assessment Coordination Team is chaired by Director of Assessment draws from staff from provost's office and elsewhere | Offers testimonials and case studies: http://www.purdue.edu/provost/assessment/use/index.html Lists internal resources to support instruction and assessment: http://www.purdue.edu/provost/asse | | |

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| | | | | Learning ⁹ %20Outcomes%20Survey%20University-wide%20Report.pdf See university-wide results: http://www.purdue.edu/oir/PDF_files/University-wide%20GSLOS%20Appenix%202012.pdf | http://www.purdue.edu/provost/assessment/contact/coordination.html | ssment/resources/index.html Sponsors Learning Outcomes Mini Grants |
| University of Maryland at College Park | Assessment Activities at the University of Maryland https://www.irpa.umd.edu/Assessment/ | Home page for Learning Outcomes Assessment including forms, instructions, and examples https://www.irpa.umd.edu/Assessment/LearningOutcomes/ | Course level assessment https://www.irpa.umd.edu/Assessment/cts_eval.shtml & learning outcomes https://www.irpa.umd.edu/Assessment/LearningOutcomes/ | 1 Assoc VP 15 staff https://www.irpa.umd.edu/about_menu.cfm?action=staff | Campus working group https://www.irpa.umd.edu/CAWG/ | |
| University of Michigan | Planning http://www.crlt.umich.edu/assessment/planning | Home page: http://www.crlt.umich.edu/assessment with structure of university level curricular assessment and evaluation | Program level http://www.crlt.umich.edu/programs | Resources provided by CRLT | CRLT site http://www.crlt.umich.edu/consultations-teaching & http://www.crlt.umich.edu/programs | |
| University of Minnesota, Twin Cities | The Office of Planning and Analysis supports an institutional culture of assessment and evidence through the systematic measurement of the University's performance, standing, and progress. http://www.planning.umn.edu/initiatives/metrics | Office of planning and analysis http://www.planning.umn.edu/ | Program level http://www.planning.umn.edu/about-opa/mission | Strategic planning resources http://www.planning.umn.edu/resources/strategic-planning-resources 6 staff http://www.planning.umn.edu/about-opa/directory | http://www.planning.umn.edu/ | |
| The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill | Unit-level assessment http://oira.unc.edu/institutional-effectiveness/unit-level-assessment/ & Medical education assessment http://www.med.unc.edu/otlr/assessment | Policy & procedures http://oira.unc.edu/institutional-effectiveness/unit-level-assessment/assessment-policies-and-procedures.html | Program level assessment http://oira.unc.edu/institutional-effectiveness/unit-level-assessment/assessment-in-academic-programs.html | 12 staff including directors http://oira.unc.edu/about-us/about-us/contact-information.html | Tools http://oira.unc.edu/institutional-effectiveness/unit-level-assessment/assessment-and-evaluation-tools.html | |
| University of Missouri- | Home page http://provost.missouri.edu/assessment | Office of Provost; Center assessment (1) UG, (2) | Academic program http://provost.missouri.edu | 4 staff listed http://provost.missouri.edu | Student learning assessment & others | |

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| Columbia | ment/ | research, (3) service http://provost.missouri.edu/assessment/centerassessment.html | u/assessment/programassessment.html http://provost.missouri.edu/program/schedule.html | edu/assessment/ | http://provost.missouri.edu/assessment/ |
| University of Oregon | Page with links to assessment http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/university-oregon-assessment-plans | Office of academic affairs http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/university-oregon-assessment-plans Assessment Council http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/about-us | Program level & academic units; Each department or program has its own assessment plan | 2 staff http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/about-us | Student learning; outcomes http://academicaffairs.uoregon.edu/assessment-student-learning |
| University of Pittsburgh | Assessment requirement (2006) http://www.academic.pitt.edu/assessment/requirements.html | Provost office http://www.academic.pitt.edu/assessment/index.html | Program level http://www.academic.pitt.edu/assessment/assessment_process.html | Appears to be very decentralized; faculty in programs are leading | Plenty of resources & links http://www.academic.pitt.edu/assessment/resources.html |
| | Process http://www.academic.pitt.edu/assessment/assessment_process.html | | | | Glossary in http://www.academic.pitt.edu/assessment/glossary.html |
| University Of Wisconsin-Madison | Assessment Plan (written in 2003 revised in 2008) http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessmentplan2003_R2008.pdf | Located in Provost's office Has a university Assessment Council | Departmental Level includes details of student learning outcomes http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/manual/manual.html#dplan | Makes annual awards from \$1k to \$20k to support academic programs that are modifying assessment practices http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/13_14_Call_for_Assess.pdf | Plenty of useful resources & links* http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/manual/manual.html No Glossary but terms are explained when introduced |
| | http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/manual/manual1.html | | http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/SC_Assessment_Plans.html | | |
| | Overview at http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/assessment/ | Located in Provost's office Supported by The Office of Institutional Accreditation and Program Assessment (IAPA) http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/assessment/iapa/ | Developing plans for Academic Units http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/assessment/iapa/resources/pdfs/Developing%20Assessment%20Plans_Academic.pdf | IAPA has a director and staff (unclear how many); Tracking Assessment Activity with TracDat (web based assessment) | Assessment Resources* http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/assessment/iapa/resources/ Links to a variety of useful pdfs on assessment* http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/assessment/iapa/workshops.html |
| The University of Texas at Austin | | | | | |

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| | | | | tracking software) http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/assessment/iapa/resources/ | and * http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/assessment/iapa/resources/ |
| University of Virginia | Overview at http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assessment.shtm http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assessment/process/plan.shtm | Coordinated by Institutional Assessment & Studies (IAS) Schools have appointed assessment coordinators with job descriptions Details at http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assess/resources/coordiators.shtm | Has assessment plans for various units at http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assessment/resources/assessplans.shtm | WEAVE online used to: track goals, objectives, and outcomes; measure how well the unit is meeting established target levels; and manage the data, documents, and reports resulting from planning and assessment. http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assessment/reporting/weave.shtm | Assessment Resources Planning http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assessment/process/plan.shtm Rubrics http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assessment/tools/rubrics.shtm No Glossary but has explanations of various terms at http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assessment/aq/assessment.shtm |
| University of Washington | Overview of UW Tacoma at http://www.tacomu.uw.edu/academic-affairs/academic-assessment-committee | Has academic assessment committee that reports to VP for Academic Affairs Is in the process of “developing a culture of continuous improvement in student learning, through systematic assessment that is faculty –driven and administratively supported.” | Assessment plans for various units are not publicly available | Is in the process of establishing resources for faculty – though limited resources presently available | Not available |
| University at Buffalo, | Overview http://www.buffalo.edu/provost/academic.html | Office of Accreditation and Assessment has a Director who reports to the Provost http://www.buffalo.edu/provost/accredit.html | Rubric for Annual Assessment Reports Academic Programs With guidelines at http://www.buffalo.edu/provost/accredit/assessment.html | Has a Director. Unclear what resources are made available | Resources http://www.buffalo.edu/provost/accredit/resources/assessment-resources.html Glossary Has a glossary of assessment terms (5 page WORD doc) at http://www.buffalo.edu/provost/accredit/resources/assessment-resources.html |

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| Rutgers | Does not appear to have a University wide Assessment Plan | Assessment seems to be subsumed in the Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning http://oirap.rutgers.edu/ | Some limited assessment data is provided for programs at http://irp.rutgers.edu/MSA-PRR-2013/Documents/Appendix5.1.pdf | Unclear as to whether any resources are available | Few resources on assessment available Changes in assessment of some programs are reported at http://irp.rutgers.edu/MSA-PRR-2013/Documents/Appendix5.1.pdf |
| Stony Brook University | Has Convened an Assessment Task Force | Task Force convened by the Provost | Details re assessment available at Faculty Center/ DoIT http://facultycenter.stonybrook.edu/assessment and http://it.stonybrook.edu/services/by-category/all | ? | For assessment tool see http://it.stonybrook.edu/services/assessment-tools course evaluations http://it.stonybrook.edu/services/online-course-evaluations |
| Texas A & M University | A university-wide web-based assessment system, WEAVEonline They also run an annual assessment conference, with >600 attendees: http://assessment.tamu.edu/conference/ | Office of Institutional Assessment, 'Supporting and assisting assessment efforts across the university.' They administer WEAVEonline, Thinking Test (CAT), imbedded in capstone courses, and faculty graded (with stipend) Writing Assessment Project (WAP) in preparing a long (95 pages) annual report (over a 3 year cycle) on all components of their General Education program. http://assessment.tamu.edu/committees/2010-2011_AssessmentReviewMemoPresident.pdf | Guidelines found at: http://assessment.tamu.edu/outcomes_achievement/outcomes_index.html Annual reports to the president on the progress in creating and improving assessment plans, in an extensive (84 pages!) annual report to the university president. http://assessment.tamu.edu/outcomes_achievement/General_Education_Assessment_Report_2011-12.pdf | 7 staff members (5 professionals and 2 graduate assistants) | Built around the WEAVEonline site, http://assessment.tamu.edu/weave/weave_index.html Faculty and staff can learn about and document assessment and quality improvement processes, procedures, and evidence. The software can both lead and record assessment practices in academic, administrative, and educational support areas." A broad range of very useful resources at: http://assessment.tamu.edu/resources/resources_index.html |

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| University of Colorado, Boulder | No evidence for a fully-developed plan. | Within 20-member Office of Planning, Budget, and Analysis (PBA). (http://www.colorado.edu/pba/misc/staff.htm) | Modest-scale program assessment outcomes are posted for UG and Grad programs (http://www.colorado.edu/pba/outcomes/units/unitindex.htm , but none are more recent than AY 03-04. | No sign that academic assessment is a large part of the focus of PBA. | There is just a series of sketchy outlines: http://www.colorado.edu/pba/outcomes/ |
| University of Arizona | A number of useful resources, including examples of detailed program assessment plans. | Office of Institutional Research and Planning Support: http://oiips.arizona.edu OIRP is responsible for institutional research. | Programs are intended to use a wide array of resources and examples of assessment plans (across several colleges), each including assessment findings. http://assessment.tamu.edu/resources/example_assessment_reports_plans.htm | 18 staff members, including 17 professionals | Extensive guides to help programs with assessment, outcomes, data collection, terminology; and methods are found thru: http://assessment.arizona.edu/information_sheets |
| University of Florida | Building up for re-accreditation. They have lots of plans (http://assessment.a.ufl.edu/undergraduate-academic-assessment-plans), but no clear follow-thru. | Each program develops its own assessment plan by following a detailed set of guidelines, including: http://assessment.a.ufl.edu/aap http://assessment.a.ufl.edu/Data/Sites/22/media/aap/2012-13-guide-to-developing-an-academic-assessment-plan_v2.pdf http://assessment.a.ufl.edu/gaap | Intended to be on an annual cycle. The scheduling template indicates a start in a.y. 2010-11, but there is no indication on the websites that there are outcomes reported. | 12 member Academic Assessment Committee, all faculty, administrators, or students – no professional staff. | Detailed instructions for developing both graduate and undergraduate assessment plans (including formulaic templates) are at: http://assessment.a.ufl.edu/academic-assessment-plan-resources . |
| University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign | There are plans for all units, and most are coherent and in a largely consistent structure. Most are in the future tense (dating to 2008, before 2010 re-accreditation) | Separate plans generated by each program – but with enough stylistic overlap that they clearly had guidance from the Center for Teaching Excellence staff. Plans vary, with some describing past evolution of the programs and problems overcome. Most plans refer to data to be collected, generally after the | There are posted outcomes assessments for all units http://cte.illinois.edu/outcomes/unit_assess.html Some close the loop and anecdotal, but what is posted includes more ‘will do’ than ‘have done’ | Center for Teaching Excellence has 16 professional staff, 7 of whom are in ‘Measurement and Evaluation’ (http://cte.illinois.edu/about.html) | Web resources are not evident, but based upon the degrees of similarity in structure of some of the unit outcomes assessment plans, there must have been some |
| | An annual outcomes assessment update | A 7 member Council on Student Learning (comprised of faculty | Departments are expected to develop an assessment | There is an assessment coordinator. There are | Some guides & tools for departments & programs, but not |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p>University of Iowa</p> | <p>(http://www.uiowa.edu/~outcomes/).</p> | <p>and staff, all with other positions) serves as the coordinating body for learning outcomes assessment (http://www.uiowa.edu/~outcomes/contact.htm)</p> | <p>plan, and assessment outcomes annually. (http://www.uiowa.edu/~outcomes/documents/2012AssessmentSummary.pdf)</p> | <p>\$5k assessment innovation grants (http://www.uiowa.edu/~outcomes/innovations.htm#grants)</p> | <p>very complete. There is a number to call for assessment consultations (http://www.uiowa.edu/~outcomes/innovations.htm#consultations)</p> |
| <p>University of Kansas</p> | <p>An annual document lists goals for assessment of 100-200 level courses in a rotating subset of departments, but nothing concrete about degree programs or about data, outcomes, etc.</p> | <p>Emphasis upon core competencies, written examples of successful learning http://academicaffairs.ku.edu/assessment-student-learning</p> <p>Colleges develop core outcomes and competencies for general education courses http://academicaffairs.ku.edu/sites/academicaffairs.drupal.ku.edu/files/docs/KansasCoreOutcomesReport20120131.pdf</p> | <p>“In 2012-2013, departments will assess undergraduate written communication at the program-level.” http://academicaffairs.ku.edu/undergraduate-written-communication</p> <p>‘Portfolios’ for learning http://www.cte.ku.edu/gallery/index.shtml</p> | <p>Subsumed within a 15-person office of Academic Affairs, which covers everything from international programs and online learning to ROTC and continuing ed.</p> | <p>There are forms and guidelines meant to help structure evaluation of written communication. The undergraduate version is at: http://academicaffairs.ku.edu/undergraduate-written-communication</p> |

Appendix B: Survey on Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

This survey is intended to learn about assessment activities in the program or department that you identify with in the first question. *Student learning outcomes* include general and specialized knowledge, skills, abilities, dispositions, and values that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of completing the program of study.

1. School: Department: Major or Program:

2. I am the:
 Program Director [SKIP LOGIC-> continue onto Question 3.]
 Department Chair [SKIP LOGIC-> goes to Question DC3 on page 6.]
 Other: Please specify

3. Is your program, or some aspect of it, accredited by a specialized accreditation entity?
 Yes
 No
 Not sure

4. Does your program have an explicit set of student learning outcomes that applies to ALL STUDENTS majoring in the program area in addition to those that might apply to students in all majors?
 Yes
 Under development now
 No
 Not sure

5. How many students in your program participate or are represented in the following types of assessments?

| | None | Very few | Some | About half | Most | All | Uncertain |
|--|------|----------|------|------------|------|-----|-----------|
| Performance assessments, other than grades, of simulations, lab and other demonstrations, critiques, senior capstone presentations, recitals, etc. | | | | | | | |
| Performance assessments, other than grades, in field experiences (e.g., internship, practicum, student teaching, service-learning) | | | | | | | |
| Formal assessment of student performance (as above) accomplished by people external to the institution (e.g., professionals in the field, employers, external examiners from other institutions) | | | | | | | |
| Professional licensure examinations | | | | | | | |
| Standardized content examinations (e.g., ETS Major Field Tests; PRAXIS) | | | | | | | |
| Standardized certification examinations (e.g., CPA, financial planner or therapeutic recreation exam) | | | | | | | |
| Locally developed content examinations | | | | | | | |
| Capstone course | | | | | | | |
| Comprehensive exam (oral or written) | | | | | | | |
| Culminating project or demonstration | | | | | | | |
| Rubrics to assess student work | | | | | | | |
| Portfolios (a purposeful collection of student work intended to demonstrate achievement of learning objectives) | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| National student surveys (e.g., NSSE, CCSSE, SENSE, CSEQ, SSI, CIRP FS, CSS, YFCY, FYI) | | | | | | | |
| Locally-developed student surveys | | | | | | | |
| Student interviews or focus groups | | | | | | | |
| Alumni surveys | | | | | | | |
| Alumni interviews or focus groups | | | | | | | |
| Employer surveys | | | | | | | |
| Employer interviews or focus groups | | | | | | | |
| Results from institution-wide assessments broken out for students in your program (e.g., CLA, CAAP, MAPP, Work Keys) | | | | | | | |
| Results from institution-wide surveys broken out for students in your program (e.g., NSSE/CCSSE, Student Satisfaction Inventory) | | | | | | | |
| Other, if applicable (briefly describe): | | | | | | | |

6. To what extent has your program USED student learning outcomes results for each of the following?

| | Not at all | Some | Quite a bit | Very much |
|---|------------|------|-------------|-----------|
| Preparing self-studies or reports for programmatic or specialized accreditation | | | | |
| Preparing self-studies or reports for institutional accreditation | | | | |
| Preparing self-studies or reports for program review | | | | |
| Revising program learning goals | | | | |
| Determining student readiness for learning in the English language | | | | |
| Determining student readiness for college-level work | | | | |
| Determining student readiness for admission to the program or major | | | | |
| Determining student readiness for later courses in the program or major | | | | |
| Reviewing or revising program or department curriculum | | | | |
| Improving instruction or pedagogy | | | | |
| Evaluating faculty and staff performance | | | | |
| Evaluating overall program or department performance | | | | |
| Informing program or department planning | | | | |
| Determining classroom and instructional equipment needs | | | | |
| Supporting budget requests to central administration | | | | |
| Other, if applicable (briefly describe): | | | | |

7. Is a person in your program responsible for coordinating or implementing student learning outcomes assessment?

- Yes, (full-time on assessment) (SKIP LOGIC -> continues onto question 8)
- Yes, (part-time on assessment) (SKIP LOGIC -> continues onto question 8)
- No, (SKIP LOGIC -> Goes to question 9)

8. If Yes, is that person a:

- Tenured faculty member
- Not tenured faculty member
- Non-tenured faculty member
- Staff member

9. Which of the following accurately describe this position? (Select all that apply.)
 Does not receive any teaching load reduction
 Receives one course equivalent teaching load reduction
 Receives more than one course equivalent teaching load reduction
 Other (please specify):
10. Does your program have a committee or group responsible for coordinating and implementing student learning outcomes assessment?
 Yes. What is the name of this committee?: _____
 No
11. Does your program generate annual reports based on its student learning outcomes assessment activities?
 Yes (SKIP LOGIC -> continues onto question 12)
 No (SKIP LOGIC -> goes to question 13)
12. Who receives these reports? (Select all that apply.)
 Program faculty
 Program/department chairperson
 Dean of school/college
 Provost/chief academic officer
 State board or agency
 Prospective students
 Currently enrolled students
 Alumni
 Other (please specify):
13. Which of the following would be helpful for your program to more effectively assess student learning outcomes? (Select all that apply.)
A More faculty release time to coordinate student learning outcomes assessment activities
B Some or additional stipends for faculty assessment leaders
C A program or department assessment committee, if not now in place
D Full-time assessment position in your program or department, if not now in place
E Some or more external consultants
F More faculty involvement in assessment
G Stronger support from the institution's leaders
H Better tests or measures of student learning outcomes
I More information about policies and practices of programs like yours at other institutions
J More information about assessment tools and approaches
K Greater faculty/staff expertise in assessment methodology among program faculty
L More help with assessment tools and approaches from institutional resources (e.g., institutional assessment office, teaching/learning center)
M More financial resources to pay for assessment instruments, etc.
N More recognition of faculty and staff members doing good work in assessment
O Other, if applicable (briefly describe):
14. From the list of factors above, please select the three that would be most helpful to your program by entering the letter corresponding to the selected factor for each response below:
 ___ Most Helpful
 ___ Second most helpful
 ___ Third most helpful

Questions 15 - 28 address student achievement in courses that are specifically required by their major or program, but that are taught by other departments. Examples include many introductory STEM courses.

15. Does your department/unit administer any large-enrollment (>50 students) courses that are taken by students to fulfill specific requirements of other majors or programs?
 Yes (SKIP LOGIC -> continues onto question 16)
 No (SKIP LOGIC -> goes on to question 22)
16. Please list these courses:
17. On what basis are faculty in your department/unit assigned to teach these courses? Numerically rank the following criteria (equal rankings OK).
 Seniority
 Equity in teaching load
 Not research-active
 Interest and/or knowledge in the area being taught
 Pedagogic skill in teaching introductory or Gen Ed courses
 Other (please specify): _____
18. Are the syllabi and learning objectives for these courses available to faculty in the requiring programs?
 Yes
 If they are available online, please give the URL: _____
 No
19. Do you discuss the learning objectives and content of these courses with faculty or directors from the requiring programs?
 Yes
 Is there any regular forum for such discussions? Yes No
 No
20. Do you share information about student performance in these courses with the requiring programs?
 Yes
 No
21. Do you receive any information about the later performance of students who have completed these courses, from the programs that require them?
 Yes
 No
22. Do programs administered by your department/unit require specific introductory courses that are taught by faculty from other departments/units?
 Yes (SKIP LOGIC -> continues onto question 23)
 No (SKIP LOGIC -> goes to question 28)
23. Please list these courses by departments/units:
24. Are the syllabi and learning objectives for these courses routinely available to you and faculty in your program?
 Yes
 No
25. Do you discuss the learning objectives and content of such courses with the program directors and faculty that administer and teach them?
 Yes
 Is there any regular forum for such discussions? Yes No
 No

26. Do you receive any information from the teaching department about student performance in these courses?

Yes

No

27. Do you share information with the teaching department about the later performance of students in your program who have completed these courses?

Yes

No

28. Please add any comments or suggestions for improving student learning outcomes in programs requiring courses from multiple departments.

29. Is there a dedicated program budget line for student learning outcomes assessment?

Yes (SKIP LOGIC -> continues onto question 30)

No (SKIP LOGIC -> goes to question 31)

30. About how much is your dedicated program budget?

\$

31. To your knowledge what are some of the institutions in your field that are exemplars in assessment of student learning outcomes?

Yes

If they are available online, please give the URL: _____

No

32. If the university establishes a peer review system whereby programs/departments are reviewed by other peer programs/departments, which program/department would you suggest in reviewing your own program/department?

DC3. A successful student in the major offered by your department will be able to:

Examples: Integrate information from multiple courses, Critically analyze a research article...

DC4. Which of the following does your department do? (check all that apply)

Placement Tests

Use required capstone experiences (seminar, thesis, field project)

Percentage of majors who complete such experiences? ____ %

Course number of capstone course: _____

Have more than one faculty member rate student paper (thesis, essay)

Have oral defense of a project

Percentage of majors who have oral defense? ____ %

Require students to make oral presentations

Conduct evaluations of internship performance

Require students to construct a portfolio

Have multiple raters evaluate a portfolio

Conduct exit interviews of graduates

Survey alumni

Monitor performance of majors on standardized exams (GRE, GMAT, MCAT, LSAT, licensing exams, etc.) Which exams?

GRE

GMAT

MCAT

LSAT

Other: _____

Do you use the results for improving curriculum?

Yes

No

Keep records of students who go to graduate school

Keep job placement records

Public demonstrations of student research (poster sessions, student research symposia, etc.)

Program is reviewed by an outside group, such as a professional organization

Other (please specify): _____

DC5. How important are each of the following to your department in making changes in its curriculum?

Please check the appropriate box.

| | Do not use | Not Important | Somewhat Important | Very Important |
|---|------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Recommendations of a curriculum committee | | | | |
| Course evaluations | | | | |
| Student complaints | | | | |
| Recommendations from national organizations in the discipline | | | | |
| Analysis of the quality of students' work | | | | |
| Alumni feedback | | | | |
| Employer feedback | | | | |
| Changes in the discipline | | | | |
| Department self-study/External review | | | | |
| Periodic curricular reviews at department meetings | | | | |
| Curricular changes at the college level | | | | |
| Accreditation standards | | | | |
| Student interests | | | | |
| Other (please specify) | | | | |

Questions DC6 – DC19 address student achievement in courses that are specifically required by their major or program, but that are taught by other departments. Examples include many introductory STEM courses.

DC6. Does your department/unit administer any large-enrollment (>50 students) courses that are taken by students to fulfill specific requirements of other majors or programs?

Yes (SKIP LOGIC -> continues onto question DC7)

No (SKIP LOGIC -> goes on to question DC13)

DC7. Please list these courses:

DC8. On what basis are faculty in your department/unit assigned to teach these courses? Numerically rank the following criteria (equal rankings OK).

___ Seniority

___ Equity in teaching load

___ Not research-active

___ Interest and/or knowledge in the area being taught

___ Pedagogic skill in teaching introductory or Gen Ed courses

___ Other (please specify): _____

DC9. Are the syllabi and learning objectives for these courses available to faculty in the requiring programs?

Yes

If they are available online, please give the URL: _____

No

DC10. Do you discuss the learning objectives and content of these courses with faculty or directors from the requiring programs?

Yes

Is there any regular forum for such discussions? Yes No

No

DC11. Do you share information about student performance in these courses with the requiring programs?

Yes

No

DC12. Do you receive any information about the later performance of students who have completed these courses, from the programs that require them?

Yes

No

DC13. Do programs administered by your department/unit require specific introductory courses that are taught by faculty from other departments/units?

Yes (SKIP LOGIC -> continues onto question DC14)

No (SKIP LOGIC -> goes to question DC19)

DC14. Please list these courses by departments/units:

DC15. Are the syllabi and learning objectives for these courses routinely available to you and faculty in your program?

Yes

No

DC16. Do you discuss the learning objectives and content of such courses with the program directors and faculty that administer and teach them?

Yes

Is there any regular forum for such discussions? Yes No

No

DC17. Do you receive any information from the teaching department about student performance in these courses?

Yes

No

DC18. Do you share information with the teaching department about the later performance of students in your program who have completed these courses?

Yes

No

DC19. Please add any comments or suggestions for improving student learning outcomes in programs requiring courses from multiple departments.

DC20. To your knowledge what are some of the institutions in your field that are exemplars in assessment of student learning outcomes?

Yes

If they are available online, please give the URL: _____
No

DC21. If the university establishes a peer review system whereby programs/departments are reviewed by other peer programs/departments, which program/department would you suggest in reviewing your own program/department?

OUTCOMES-BASED ASSESSMENT

An Introduction and Guide

Assessment is a process that asks and answers important questions: To what degree are students learning? Are courses effective? Do programs fulfill their missions? Is the university in accord with objectives set by its accrediting body?

While many of us have long asked these questions about our teaching, the goal of “outcomes-based assessment” is to formalize the ways we answer them, in harmony with each program’s goals.

The first step is for the faculty in a given department or other program to formulate the criteria by which they intend to consider student outcomes. They should then decide what variety of quantitative and qualitative information they will use to determine the extent to which these criteria are being met, carefully gauged to the needs and goals of their program.

The department or program not only gathers its own varieties of information, but it also presents these in a form – the matrix being a common one – so that relevant faculty may analyze and draw conclusions about opportunities for improvement.

The goal of formalizing this feedback loop, over time, is to enhance quality at all levels. As the cycle is repeated, outcomes-based assessment assists faculty, administration, and staff in making informed decisions about their respective areas.

Assessment is not the same as evaluation. Assessment seeks to improve the quality of performance regardless of its current level, whereas evaluation measures performance by judging quality against a standard.

Stony Brook University expects that outcomes-based assessment routinely will take place in every program and course. The university is committed to helping faculty reach that goal.

Assessment is not necessarily simple or intuitive. It is complicated by a dense thicket of literature that attempts to describe goals and process. And it depends in large part on mutual understanding and the desire on the part of the faculty, departments, programs, and the university to make each piece happen.

To be successful, we must acknowledge what we do well and agree that the university community can approach assessment in diverse ways and with different measures and identify achievable goals that improve student learning.

The three most relevant questions in creating an assessment plan are *what*, *who*, and *when*.

What is to be assessed?

Undergraduate majors, minors, graduate degree programs, and certificates all need to develop outcomes-based assessment plans. These should answer the following basic questions: (1) What knowledge or skills should students who complete this program have? (2) How can we know whether students have the expected knowledge or skills? (3) How can we improve programs to bring students closer to expectations?

Who will do the assessing?

The faculty in each academic program will develop a plan to assess their program. An assessment coordinator will be identified to lead this process. Help and support will be provided through peer groups, workshops, web materials, and a central assessment office. But faculty within academic programs will be in control of the assessment of their own programs

When will this happen?

The development of assessment plans must start now and make real progress through the fall 2013 semester. Learning outcomes for each program – the knowledge and/or skills students should gain – are to be submitted by October 15, 2013. Programs should identify evidence they will use to assess these learning

outcomes by January 15, 2014. By spring 2014, programs will submit a plan to use this evidence for program improvement, where needed.

Once you know where you are headed, it is a lot easier to get there. Examples may be more useful than description. We will provide two examples of program assessment plans, chosen to demonstrate the diversity and flexibility of approaches to assessment in areas that do not normally have accreditation-driven assessment plans. Other examples are available on the Faculty Center website at <http://facultycenter.stonybrook.edu/assessment>.

Example 1

The first example comes from the Sociology Department at Boise State University (<http://academics.boisestate.edu/provost/files/2009/01/ba-social-science.pdf>).

Sample Program Assessment Plan

Department Name: Sociology

Degree Program or Major: BA Social Science

Program Educational Objectives (or Student Learning Outcomes):

| | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Critical thinking/problem solving skills – learning to exercise a social scientific perspective. |
| 2. | Mastery of key social scientific concepts: culture, social structure, inequality, diversity. |
| 3. | Ability to describe and value diversity in a variety of contexts. |
| 4. | Ability to describe and explain continuing sources of inequality nationally and internationally. |
| 5. | Mastery of the central theories in at least two of the social sciences. |
| 6. | Mastery of the methodological and statistical techniques employed in the social sciences. |
| 7. | Ability to communicate effectively in written and oral form. |
| 8. | Applying social science to the analysis and evaluation of public affairs. |
| 9. | Public social science– the ability to apply the discipline to the betterment of communities both globally and locally. |
| 10. | Basic communication skills in a foreign language. |

Assessment Plan:

| Assessment Method | Objectives/ Outcomes Addressed | How will this information be used? |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Sociology Capstone Course Project | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | Senior projects will be reviewed by Departmental subcommittee. Subcommittee will report findings to Department as a whole annually. Findings will be discussed in a departmental meeting devoted to assessment outcomes, and used to determine any needed revision in major curriculum. |
| ETS Major Field Test in Sociology | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | The results are shared in the department and discussed in department meeting. Changes in curriculum and specializations of new faculty hires have been influenced by this data. Results will be maintained by the department and charted over |

| | | |
|--|------------|---|
| | | time. |
| Annual Data Collection: Number of Student Awards, community service projects, Service Learning participation, Internships, Paper presentations, student organizational involvement, and community volunteerism | 8, 9 | Data can be used to evaluate Department's ability to open community involvement opportunities for students. Results will be maintained by the department and charted over time. |
| Senior Outcomes Assessment Survey | 1, 7, 8, 9 | First assessment survey will provide benchmark for how well the department is meeting goals for the major. After this, department will annually compare results to the benchmark to assess progress. Results will be maintained by the department and charted over time. |
| Student Focus Groups (conducted every 2 years) | 1, 7, 8, 9 | First focus group will provide benchmark for how well the department is meeting goals and needs for the major. After this, department will compare results to the benchmark to assess progress. |
| Alumni Survey (conducted every 3 years) | 1, 7, 8, 9 | First alumni survey will provide benchmark for how well the department is meeting goals for the major, and preparing students for post-college success. After this, department will compare results to the benchmark to assess progress. Results will be maintained by the department and charted over time. |
| Senior Essay Competition | 1, 6 | Departmental subcommittee will evaluate essays annually. Aggregate strengths and weaknesses will be identified, and sample essays (exemplary, average weak) will be saved. Every three years this information will be compared and discussed through department meeting, to identify patterns. Changes in curriculum or instruction may be indicated. |

Example 2

Next, we have an in-progress example from the undergraduate program in History at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (http://cte.illinois.edu/outcomes/unit_assess.html).

History Undergraduate Assessment Plan

A. PROCESS: Brief description of the process followed to develop or revise this assessment plan

The process of developing this assessment plan found its source in the department-wide discussions that surrounded the year-long process of Self Study (2005-2006) and the preparations for and discussions of the External Review (fall 2006). The specifics of this plan are the product of meetings by the department's Undergraduate Studies Committee which includes the DUS, faculty members, and the academic advisor along with undergraduate and graduate student representation. This report was presented to faculty for consultation on May 8, 2008. A wider discussion will follow in fall of 2008. Meetings will also be held with Phi Alpha Theta, the history honors society in order to get undergraduate perspectives, input, and suggestions. The discussion of the department's goals will culminate in a faculty retreat planned for fall 2009.

B. STUDENT OUTCOMES: List Unit's student learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes)

- Outcome 1:** Acquiring historical knowledge; replacing students' misunderstanding of history as a discipline in which experts assemble uncontested facts into an objective story. Suggesting instead the diverse methods of research and means of interpretation that historians invoke.
- Outcome 2:** Improving students' ability to write and speak clearly and effectively; empowering them to criticize, explore, and develop their own perspectives and interpretations, and to research and support their own logical arguments.
- Outcome 3:** Discriminating between a primary and a secondary source and their uses in research.
- Outcome 4:** Obtaining tools to decode, contextualize, interrogate, and derive meaning from primary sources; recognize the variety of primary sources, and the importance of better drawing inferences by locating them in historical context (how, when, and for whom they were produced; human agency behind their production).
- Outcome 5:** Learning how to identify and assess central arguments, themes, perspectives, and theoretical frameworks of secondary sources.
- Outcome 6:** Appreciating the complexity of historical causation.
- Outcome 7:** Learning to think historically and to carry out historical research: planning and carrying out a historical research project; formulating historical questions and arguments, while locating and deploying historical data to answer or support them; comparing, contrasting, and exploring relationships among multiple primary and secondary sources; improving ability to comprehend historical narratives; improving ability to think analytically and logically while applying historical perspectives.
- Outcome 8:** Grasping both the foreignness of the past and the ways that the past shapes and gives meaning to their own lives and to society at large.
- Outcome 9:** Broadening a capacity for empathy through an appreciation of shared humanity and the diversity of the human experience, as influenced by culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and class in a matrix of time and place.

C. MEASURES AND METHODS USED TO ASSESS OUTCOMES

100-level courses: comprehend/recognize: telling a primary from a secondary source; recognizing the variety of useful primary sources and learning how to analyze them; recreating a historical context and connecting it to a document; beginning to empathize with people from another place and time

200-level courses: interpret and apply. Many of the same skills are emphasized in the 200-level courses as in the 100-level, but in more depth. History 200, "Introduction to Historical Interpretation," which serves as the gateway to the major, introduces students to specific problems that allow them to isolate historical questions, identify methodological problems and evaluate primary sources against secondary accounts. This experience offers students a series of problems provoked by specific questions and provides students with hands-on experience with the analytical and argumentative practices of history.

300- and 400-level courses: explain and evaluate: dealing with ambiguity and contradiction in historical sources; comparing and contrasting diverse and potentially conflicting primary sources for a single historical problem; weighing trustworthiness and value of different sources; recognizing major arguments, themes, and theoretical frameworks in primary and secondary sources.

History 498, the "Research and Writing seminar," our capstone course: create: producing one's own historical work by connecting, building upon, evaluating, developing relationships among, and synthesizing multiple primary and secondary sources.

In order to assess the efficacy of our program we will take the following measures:

For Students:

1. To ensure that we are meeting outcomes 1-4, the Undergraduate Studies Committee will consider establishing a writing assessment for a sample of students in our 100- and 200-level courses. The assignment will consist of the analysis of a primary source evaluated with a grading guide produced by the Undergraduate Studies Committee.
2. Survey majors about the gateway course (200) and the capstone (498). Questionnaire to address student satisfaction with academic requirements of program, especially outcomes 5-9.

3. Conduct focus groups among majors to discuss the effectiveness of the undergraduate history major. These would be held with selected groups of undergraduates once each year, probably early in the spring semester. For Faculty:

1. Faculty self-assessment based on questionnaires produced by the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies committees.
2. Evaluation of syllabi and papers in 200 and 498.
3. Workshops for faculty to identify weaknesses and strengths in the curriculum.

Steps of Assessment

Step 1: Identify Learning Outcomes

These are the important knowledge, skills, modes of thinking, or values that you expect graduates of your program to possess. This process may entail a review of your program mission and goals, disciplinary norms, or employment criteria. In some cases, you may survey or consult students or graduates of your program. Some professional associations provide guidance on standard learning outcomes within a given discipline, but the most important source of learning outcomes must be the faculty within that program.

It will usually be useful to consider how these learning outcomes relate to the courses in your program, which is often done by creating a matrix listing learning outcomes in columns and courses in rows. The cells can contain information about how each course should relate to each learning outcome.

Step 2: Identify Evidence

What information can you gather to determine whether your students are learning what you want them to? There are many forms of evidence, both qualitative and quantitative, and approaches to evidence vary by discipline. The two examples of assessment plans above and many more linked from the Faculty Center website (<http://web.virginia.edu/iaas/assess/resources/assessplans.shtm>) provide guidance on metrics or other forms of information you may gather for different purposes.

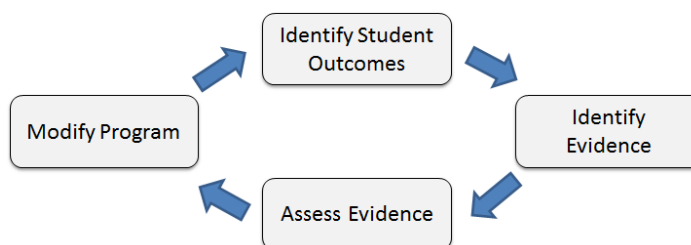
This information may also be displayed for convenience and simplicity in a matrix form.

Step 3: Assess the Evidence

How well are your students mastering the important outcomes for your program? Once types of evidence are identified and collected for each learning outcome, you must use this evidence to uncover strengths or weaknesses in your program.

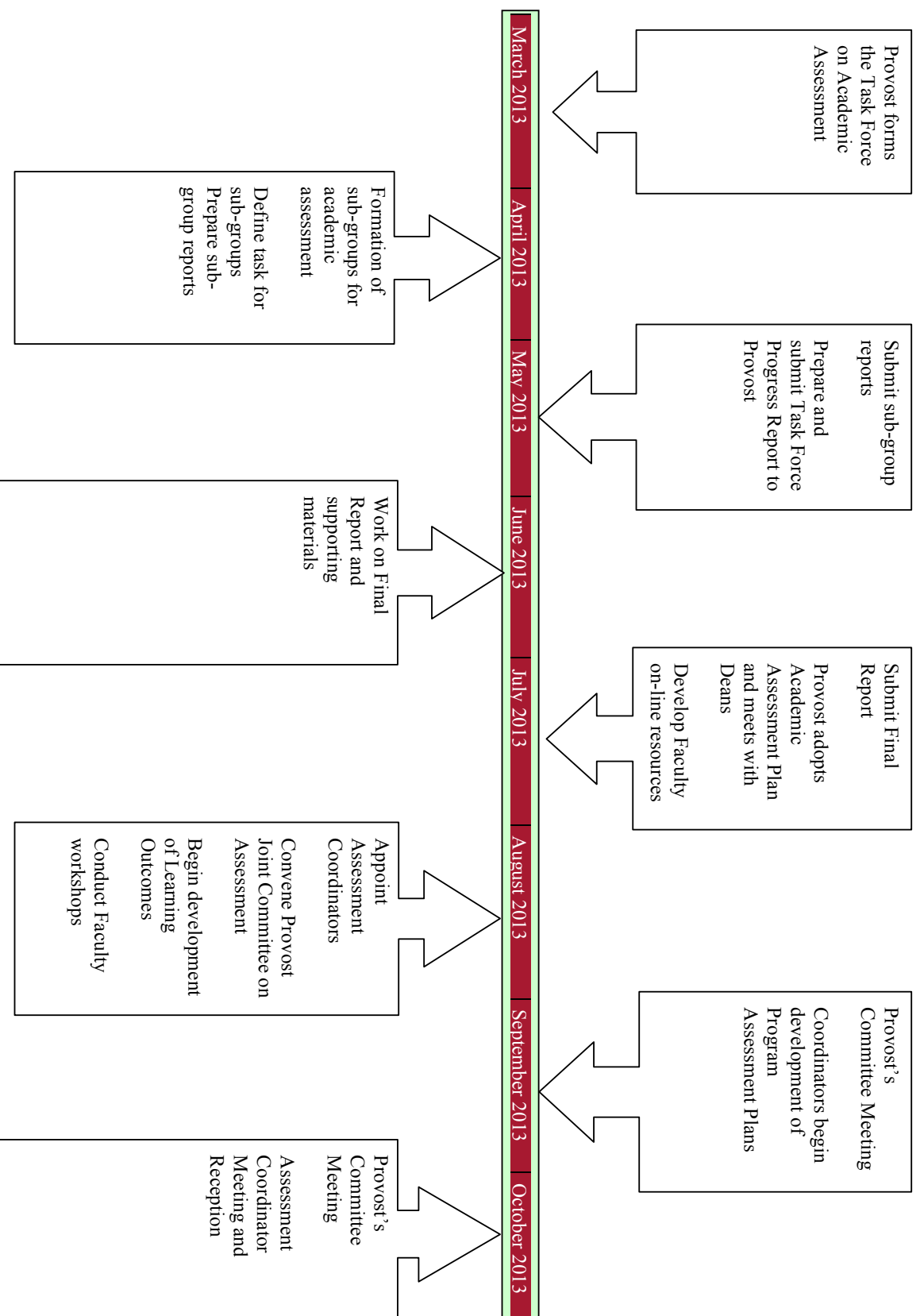
Step 4: Make Changes if Needed

The whole point of this exercise is to improve, so we must learn from the evidence we gather and change our programs where necessary. Most program modifications will be curricular in nature, involving changes to the courses or structures of academic programs.



Appendix D:

**Task Force on Academic Assessment: Proposed Timeline
Time Line March 2013 to October 2013**



Task Force on Academic Assessment: Proposed Timeline Time Line November 2013 to June 2014

