
POLICY ON INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM REVIEW

(This policy supersedes Policy Statements 98-06 and 10-12.)

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and approved by the President on September 28, 2022.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The broad purposes of assessment and program review are to acquire systematic evidence of our success in fulfilling our mission, especially meeting our desired educational outcomes and addressing equity gaps for students, and to use such evidence to support planning aimed at improving the quality of the University. More specifically the goals of assessment are to:

1.1.1 Guide departments, colleges, divisions, and the University in efforts to strengthen or improve academic programs and support services.

1.1.2 Stimulate efforts by departments and colleges to collaboratively develop clear and measurable learning goals for courses, departments, and programs and to assess student attainment of those goals.

1.1.3 Support evidence-based decision making for annual and multi-year assessment and review processes.

1.1.4 Develop evidence for external constituencies such as the state legislature, the California State University, regional accreditors such as the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), and the public at large regarding the effectiveness of the University in achieving its mission, strategic goals, and objectives.

1.2 This policy is intended to establish the basic principles of assessment at the University.

1.3 For the purposes of this policy, CSULB is using the following definitions:

1.3.1 Institutional assessment: The systematic collection and analysis of data to ensure that the university is meeting its mission, vision, and core values. Institutional assessment ensures

institutional effectiveness through the analysis of data that includes, but is not limited to: strategic planning initiatives, institutional research data, large-scale surveys, institutional outcomes, campus defined graduation requirements, general education outcomes, and assessment for Institutional Accreditation (including WASC Senior College & University Commission Core Competencies).

1.3.1 Program assessment: The assessment of student achievement of program learning outcomes (PLOs) through a variety of direct and indirect measures of student learning.

1.3.2 Program review: WSCUC defines periodic program review as, “a systematic process of examining the capacity, processes, and outcomes of a degree program or department in order to judge its quality or effectiveness and to support improvement.”

1.3.3 Assessment report: A report that articulates the nature of assessment conducted, the analysis of that assessment, and the strategies for improvement (closing-the-loop). Assessment reports typically follow a template provided by Academic Affairs.

1.3.4 Assessment plan: A plan that illustrates a program’s alignment of learning outcomes as well as a schedule for assessing outcomes over an accreditation or review cycle.

1.3.5 Self-study: A document produced for the purposes of periodic program review. The goal of the self-study is to engage in self-reflective analysis of a number of national metrics of student success, faculty and student demographics, changes in the discipline, and student learning outcomes achievement.

1.3.6 Unit: A unit may be a department, program school, or academic support unit. An Academic Support Unit is defined as a non-degree unit within the Division of Academic Affairs that supports student learning. A degree-granting program is defined as an academic program that leads to a baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degree.

2. Components of Assessment

2.1 Assessment is the process by which programs and institutions articulate what students should learn, and then analyze the extent and equity of that learning. CSULB assessment activities should meet professionally recognized standards of best practice including direct and indirect assessment of student learning, critical reflection of results, and implementation of relevant changes to close-the-loop aimed at improvements in student learning. Assessment activities are the responsibility of the entire department, program, or unit. Assessment should employ systematic, valid, and reliable procedures for gathering and integrating information.

2.2 Forms of assessment may vary across the University, depending upon the type of assessment which is most appropriate for the unit being assessed.

2.2.1 All units should develop and maintain up-to-date direct, measurable learning outcomes using language from Bloom’s Taxonomy (2001 revised).

2.2.2 All units should incorporate ongoing assessments of equity and equity gaps among

faculty, staff, and students.

2.2.3 The basis for program assessment on campus should be the direct assessment of student learning and experience as determined by the program. Direct assessments rely on artifacts produced by the student over the course of the learning experience. Examples include but are not limited to: course-embedded work, pre/post testing, licensure examinations, performances and exhibitions, and portfolios of student work.

2.2.4 Indirect assessment of the student experience, such as surveys and focus groups, are essential forms of assessment, but should complement, not replace direct assessment of student learning.

2.3 Assessment is a central component of the program review process (Section 5 of this policy). Annual assessment reports developed during the review cycle should be used to answer questions about student success in the unit.

2.4 Results of assessment activities shall be reported along with practical action items for program improvement, including analysis and discussion of assessment methods, interpretations, and closing-the-loop activities.

2.5 Assessment results shall not be utilized in personnel actions, such as but not limited to instructor course assignments and other contractual consideration.

3. Assessment Plan

3.1 Each unit will develop and implement an assessment plan of its Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) aligned with Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and strategic priorities which will provide meaningful feedback to the unit for its planning. Plans will be developed for undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

3.1.1 Departments/programs/school shall articulate individual faculty, staff and student involvement with the assessment process in their unit assessment plans.

3.1.2 Program assessment plans are ongoing, and should be reviewed yearly and updated regularly, and copies should be sent to the Division of Academic Affairs and the College Dean or appropriate administrator.

3.1.3 Units should follow the procedures for developing and revising assessment plans as outlined in the procedural document on the Program Review & Assessment website.

3.1.4 Units should include assessments of progress made toward eliminating equity gaps.

3.2 The General Education Program should develop, implement and occasionally revise and update an ongoing assessment plan similar to that of academic units. For more information, please see the charge for the General Education Evaluation Committee.

4. Annual Program Assessment Report

4.1 Each year, on a schedule determined by the Office of Program Review and Assessment, all units (with or without nationally recognized accreditation) will provide an annual report to the Division of Academic Affairs and the College Dean or appropriate administrator. The annual report includes assessment of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for degree programs and academic support units, as directed by the program's assessment plan. Additional items included in the Annual Report are articulated in procedural documents.

4.1.1 The self-study may be substituted for the annual report during the academic year in which the self-study is due.

4.1.2 The annual report will include a brief summary of the progress made toward accomplishing the actions stated in the MOU as well as relevant changes since the last program review and/or annual report.

4.1.3 Annual reports written during program review cycles will be a component of the self-study (see 5.4.1).

4.2 Members of the Institutional and Program Assessment Council's Program Assessment Subcommittee will act as resources for faculty in completing and analyzing assessment results. Reports shall be no longer than 4 single spaced pages and shall include a review of the assessment process, results of the assessment, and plans for program improvement as a result of the assessment.

4.3 The Coordinator of Program Review and Assessment (CPR&A) will provide mentoring and support to the members of the Program Assessment Subcommittee. In addition, the CPR&A will provide feedback to the department/program/school faculty on the assessment process, results, and plans for program improvement as a result of the assessment.

5. The Program Review Process

5.1 Program review is useful as a systematic, ongoing, self-reflective process of inquiry aligned to the institutional strategic plan and conducted by academic programs for their own improvement. Program review is a continuous process that focuses on helping students, including addressing equity gaps, to meet learning outcomes can also aid academic programs in planning for both the short and long terms in developing curricular offerings, in documenting successes, and in substantiating resource needs.

5.1.1. The program review will include a summary and evaluation of equity-minded and inclusive practices enabled and advanced by the unit. Direct evaluations may rely on internal and external assessments, surveys, and other data concerning access to resources and extent of student support.

5.2 Program review for all units will be completed every 7 years, with the exception of accredited programs who follow their re-accreditation timetable (not to exceed every 10 years). When circumstances warrant, the frequency of review may be extended or reduced by the Division of

Academic Affairs in consultation with the College Dean or appropriate administrator and the Chair of the Program and Institutional Assessment Council of the Academic Senate. Under exceptional circumstances, the department may request an exception to delay their program review for 1 year. They must receive approval from the College Dean and the Vice Provost for Academic Programs. No extensions beyond 1 year will be granted. For programs that do not meet the extended deadline, the external review and *program review process will continue* without a self-study.

5.3 All degree programs within a department will be reviewed at the same time. Exceptions may be granted by the College Dean and the Vice Provost for Academic Programs.

5.4. The degree-granting program or academic support unit shall complete the components of program review according to the following guidelines:

5.4.1 The self-study shall be composed of the annual assessment reports and feedback responses, Institutional Research and Analytics (IR&A) data, and a short analysis of the assessment and data, including recommendation for future changes. For programs or units with nationally recognized accreditation, documents prepared for accreditation shall be accepted as satisfying the short analysis portion of this requirement. Assessment reports and IR&A data with an accompanying short analysis should be included in addition to the accreditation self-study, if not already included in the accreditation report.

5.4.2 External reviewer(s) will be selected by the Division of Academic Affairs in consultation with the College Dean or appropriate administrator and the department chair, Program director or school director of the degree-granting program or director of the academic support unit. For programs or units with nationally recognized accreditation, the external review of the program or unit conducted by the accrediting body shall be accepted by the College Dean or appropriate administrator and the Division of Academic Affairs as satisfying this requirement.

5.5 The Program self-study and external review reports and recommendations will be considered in preparation of the final Program review report.

5.5.1 The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (or designee) and the Coordinator for Program Review and Assessment will draft a final Program review report summarizing the commendations, concerns, and opportunities for the unit, and providing recommendations to the Division of Academic Affairs, the College Dean, and the unit

5.5.2 A draft of the final Program review report (along with the documents reviewed to create the report) will be shared with the Program and Institutional Assessment Council, the Dean or designee of the College, and the department chair, program director or school director. Revisions to the final draft will be made according to feedback received from this group. IPAC will review and ultimately approve the final Program review report.

5.5.3 A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be drafted by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (or designee) including recommendations and conditions for the department or program to address during the next program review

period. This MOU will be between the Division of Academic Affairs, and the program being reviewed. The MOU will be kept on file in the program or unit, the College, and the Division of Academic Affairs.

5.5.4 The final program review report and MOU will be posted on the Program Review and Assessment Senate website.

5.6 At the end of each academic year, the Chair of the Institutional and Program and Assessment Council will prepare a summary of all program reviews completed during the year and forward it to the Division of Academic Affairs and the Academic Senate.

6. Institutional Assessment

6.1 Institutional assessment will be conducted by members of the Institutional Assessment Subcommittee of the Institutional and Program Assessment Council (IPAC) Institutional assessment will focus on the University Strategic Plan, campus defined graduation requirements, and assessment for Institutional Accreditation (including WSCUC Core Competencies). The Subcommittee shall:

6.1.1 Develop and recommend Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to the President and the Academic Senate.

6.1.2 Develop and norm rubrics for institutional assessment of ILOs.

6.1.3 Use rubrics to score artifacts from at least 5% of the students in courses with PLOs and assignments related to at least 2 ILOs per year.

6.1.4 Use data from program assessment in conjunction with other data related to ILOs to provide an Institutional Assessment report to the President, the Office of Program and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) and the Academic Senate each year.

7. Responsible Committees

7.1 Institutional and Program Assessment Council (IPAC). The Institutional and Program Assessment Council shall serve as the primary advisory body to the Academic Senate and University administration on matters relating to the assessment and periodic program review of degree-granting programs and academic support units and the planning associated with those programs and units. The Council will serve the same function for Institutional assessment including assessment of Institutional Learning Outcomes related to the University's Strategic Planning Process. The Institutional and Program Assessment Council is subordinate to the Academic Senate, and, as such, all policies and regulations recommended by the Program and Institutional Assessment Council shall be presented to the Academic Senate for approval, except for those matters specifically delegated to the Council itself.

7.2 General Education Evaluation Committee (GEEC). The GEEC shall serve as the primary body on matters relating to the assessment, evaluation, and program review of the General Education (GE) Program. The GEEC is subordinate to the Institutional and Program Assessment Council (IPAC), and, as such, all policies and recommendations by the GEEC shall be presented to IPAC for

approval, except for those matters specifically delegated to the Committee itself. Moreover, the GEEC shall notify the General Education Governing Committee (GEGC) of all its recommendations, as described in the Policy on General Education (PS 21-09).

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