Amarillo College

Program Assessment
Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)
& Program Review
Assessment Guide

Adopted by the Assessment Committee: April 2021

Program Assessment Guide

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for assessing the College's program student learning outcomes (PSLOs). Learning outcomes assessment is a process for improving teaching and student learning. Additionally, guidelines are included for the biennial Program Review process.

There are two components of AC's program assessment: 1) PSLO assessment and 2) Program Review.
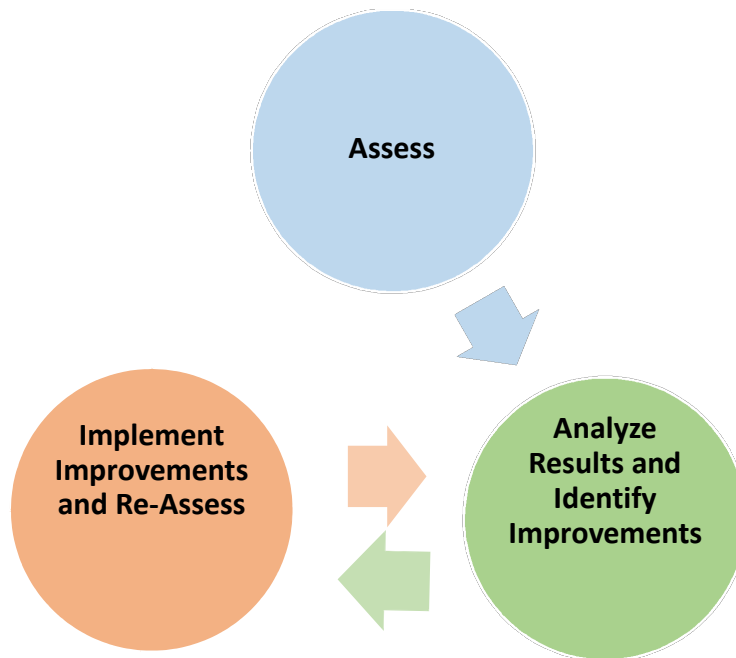
Amarillo College Principles of Assessment

AC's process for assessing student learning outcomes is guided by the following principles:

1. In alignment with the mission of Amarillo College, the intent of assessment is to improve the processes that help our learners identify and achieve their educational goals.

2. Outcomes assessment is data-driven and focuses on achieving continuous improvement in educational and administrative programs and educational support services rather than identifying these programs' successes or failures.

3. Outcomes assessment of student learning, educational support, and administrative support will be a collaborative process involving faculty, staff and students.

4. Outcomes assessment results will not be used for evaluation of faculty or staff. Assessment results will be used to illuminate areas of opportunities for improvement and serve as a celebration of teaching and student learning. The demonstration of self-reflective assessment of our educational support services and academic programs ultimately leads to institution success.

5. Whenever possible, the methodologies for assessing outcomes will be inconspicuous to students or others who are being assessed.

6. Whenever possible, submissions used for assessment will come from existing assignments instead of ones specially created for outcomes assessment. We will honor and assess the work we already do.

7. The assessment process itself will be evaluated by the Assessment Committee to ensure our continued alignment with AC's Strategic Plan and in our own efforts for continuous improvement.

8. Amarillo College's Strategic Plan includes evaluating student success by establishing and assessing an institutional outcomes assessment program. The President's Cabinet supports these outcomes assessment efforts.

Assessment Cycle and Schedule

An assessment cycle is displayed in *Figure 1*. A cycle is completed when a learning outcome has been re-assessed. Re-assessment allows the College to determine if improvements that were made have impacted students learning. [1]

Figure 1: Assessment Cycle

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          Assess
              ↓
Implement               Analyze
Improvements   →  ←     Results and
and Re-Assess           Identify
                        Improvements
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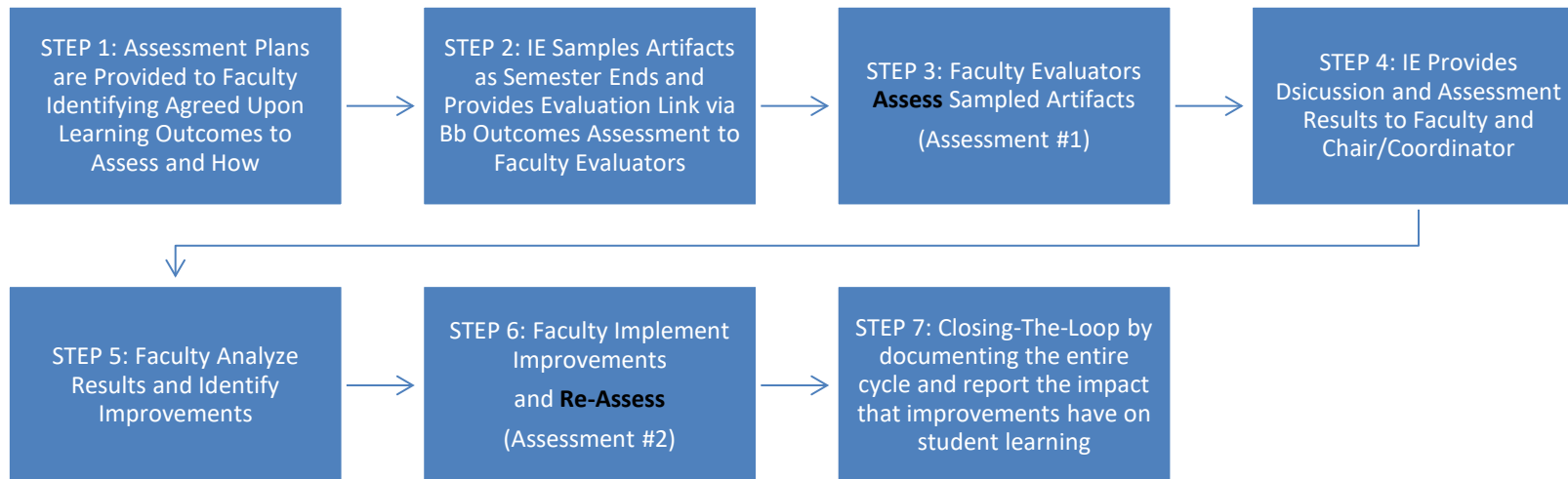
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[1] This definition of an assessment cycle conforms to SACSCOC Standard 8.2.a.

PSLO Assessment Schedule

1. The assessment cycles are planned and on-going where learning outcomes are assessed and reassessed.
2. The assessment schedule is manageable.
3. Program assessment occurs every two years (i.e. 2018-19, 2020-21).
4. Depending on the department, assessment occurs in fall, spring or summer allowing for a variety of courses and learning outcomes to be included in the assessment cycle and process.
5. Faculty engagement with CTL faculty development is embedded in the assessment cycle and assists faculty in developing improvement strategies for both teaching and learning.

PSLO Assessment Process Steps (*Figure 2*)

| STEP 1: Assessment Plans are Provided to Faculty Identifying Agreed Upon Learning Outcomes to Assess and How | → | STEP 2: IE Samples Artifacts as Semester Ends and Provides Evaluation Link via Bb Outcomes Assessment to Faculty Evaluators | → | STEP 3: Faculty Evaluators **Assess** Sampled Artifacts (Assessment #1) | → | STEP 4: IE Provides Dsicussion and Assessment Results to Faculty and Chair/Coordinator |

| STEP 5: Faculty Analyze Results and Identify Improvements | → | STEP 6: Faculty Implement Improvements and **Re-Assess** (Assessment #2) | → | STEP 7: Closing-The-Loop by documenting the entire cycle and report the impact that improvements have on student learning |

*IE=Institutional Effectiveness

## Curriculum Map for the Identification of Outcomes

The use of the Curriculum Map is the AC's method for identifying expected program student learning outcomes (PSLOs) for all academic programs. This assessment tool has two components: 1) identifying learning outcomes and mapping them to discipline-specific courses and 2) defining the achievement level of the student (I-Introduced, D-Developed and Practiced w/Feedback, and M-Mastery).

PSLOs measure the extent to which students are achieving learning outcomes. These outcomes are established and maintained by the program faculty through a Curriculum Map.

Each program has one map. There is an exception. Programs that have stackable credentials may have one Curriculum Map for all programs that stack upon each other. For example, Aviation-General and Airframe has one map that includes the identification of learning outcomes across all of their academic programs such as the AERM.AAS (Aviation AAS) and AERM.CERT.AM (Airframe Certificate) as the students can earn one credential and then move to the next within the same discipline.

The Curriculum Map components are:

1) Goals – Broad statements of what the program intends to accomplish
2) Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) – Specific and measurable statements that reflect what faculty state a student should know throughout the curriculum and at the time of graduation
3) Identifying whether the learning outcomes are being (I) Introduced, (D) Developed and practiced with feedback or (M) Mastered by the student
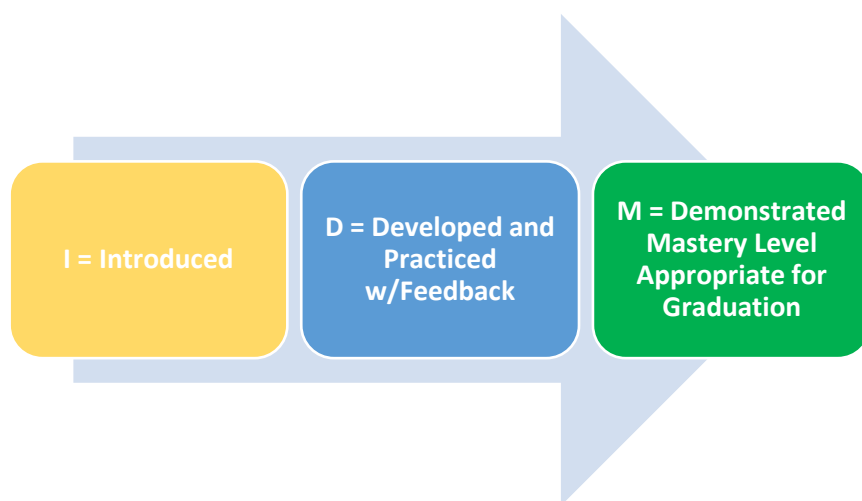
Identification of Outcomes
Faculty identify measurable student learning outcomes for each educational program. While most programs have three to six student learning outcomes, programs accredited by an external agency tend to have more.

Faculty map the PSLOs and specify the common assessment that demonstrates student learning for each outcome. Through the mapping, faculty also specify where in the curriculum learning will be assessed and where mastery is expected. Expected PSLOs are consistent regardless of location or delivery mode. Expectations for, and assessment of, student learning outcomes are the same for traditional students' learning and at off-campus instructional sites.

Assessment Methodologies
Assessment activities include all instructional modalities, to include face-to-face lecture, online, hybrid, clinical, and practicum, and are inclusive of instruction and student learning at off-campus instructional sites.

First, student artifacts are collected, sampled, and assessed using the online Blackboard Outcomes Assessment application or assessment is reported out on the PSLO Assessment and Evaluation Report for Technical Programs. Many of the College's technical programs, particularly programs in the Health Services Community and Industry Community, use the latter instrument. This is due to the nature of the instruction and the demonstration of student learning that cannot be captured in Blackboard, such as learning that takes place in clinics, hospitals, and automotive bays.

A student artifact is also known as the "common assessment" among faculty to assess student learning. For example, program faculty meet to decide on the best assignment/assessment to use to assess their PSLOs. This assignment is the same (common assessment) across all sections to assess the PSLO. Each year the students are directed by the program faculty to upload their work into the "common assessment" folder found in Blackboard where the students interact with their instructor. Faculty work together to design assignments/activities to better foster and measure student learning.

Second, Amarillo College faculty assess student learning using rubrics. Assessment scoring rubrics are developed by faculty. Rubric scoring is on a scale of four to zero. Faculty choose their benchmarks prior to assessment based on previous results and typically set 75% or an average of 3.00 out of 4.00 points as a benchmark.

Achievement	Score
Exemplary	4
Proficient	3
Emerging	2
Insufficient	1
Incomplete	0

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness analyzes the data, provides and discusses the results with program faculty for review and action.

The assessment process including the use of results to seek improvement is identical for the assessment of educational programs on-campus as it is for off-campus instructional sites. Amarillo College assesses programs delivered at off-campus instructional sites the same as it does for programs on-campus. Amarillo College encourages and supports the use of results to seek improvements.

Support for Faculty
The role of Department Chairs and Deans in the assessment process is to facilitate this ongoing conversation of using the results to seek improvement and to support the faculty in these endeavors. In that role, the faculty and Chairs/Deans meet with Institutional Effectiveness to review the results.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness also assists faculty in the development of assessment scoring rubrics and curriculum maps and offers training on these subjects through the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Faculty are also supported through faculty development offered by our Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL).

CTL offers professional learning cohorts for all faculty. These cohorts are provided for faculty as they learn new student engagement techniques or pedagogical approaches to teaching. The Faculty Professional Development Plan provides for an academic year timeline and stipend to faculty for their development.

CTL and IE (Institutional Effectiveness) collaborate to bring professional development and assessment integration into the assessment cycle.

Program Review

The Assessment Committee was tasked with developing a new Program Review process and documentation per academic degree program. Dr. Lowery-Hart met with the AC Assessment Committee in September 2016 and charged the committee to "create a more functional, purposeful Program Review that aligns with the No Excuses 2020 Strategic Plan."

The core purpose of the Program Review is to study the overall health of a program. The Assessment Committee met throughout the 2017-18 academic year to finalize the method and Program Review instrument to capture data and create a narrative that faculty and academic leadership could create every two years. The Program Review captures several performance indicators that align with the Strategic Plan: Completion, Equity, Labor Market Demand and Retention. Additionally, these criteria are also reviewed: course success data, transfer rates, persistence rates, number of majors, credit hours, and graduates.

The Director of Institutional Effectiveness in collaboration with the Executive Director of Decision Analytics and Institutional Research enables the Department Chairs and Program Coordinators the ability to find this data with ease through the creation of data dashboards. (www.dair.actx.edu) The Program Review is a biennial program review.

Program Reviews demonstrate institutional planning compliance with SACSCOC under Standard 7.1 - The institution engages in ongoing, comprehensive, integrated, and research-based planning and evaluation processes that a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and b) incorporate a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission.

Each department measures performance indicators over a three-year trend line. For the 2018-19 Program Review submission, faculty reviewed program data for academic years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18. Each year includes the fall, spring and summer semesters. The program outcomes reviewed are detailed below:

- Program Majors - This represents how many students are actively enrolled in a program of study and serves as the foundation for most of the other student achievement outcomes in the Program Review.

- Credit Hours - These figures are driven by enrollment (the only criteria not driven by number of program majors) and allows for each academic leader to analyze overall credit hours for their

program(s) as well as individual course section credit hours. Note: Individual course data consists of the major course requirements (program-specific) for each program.

- Course Success - This is the number of students earning a grade of A, B, or C in the overall program courses. Academic leaders may analyze individual course section success data as well through this tool.

- Persistence - This figure allows leadership to examine if students in their program(s) return from Fall to Fall and/or return from Fall to Spring.

- Graduates - This figure represents the number of majors in the current year that also completed with a degree in that same year.

- Transfers - This data is populated by the National Student Clearinghouse after all fall, spring and summer semester graduates have been completed. This shows the transfer rate of all students pursuing an AA, AS, or AAT degree.

- Labor Market Demand - This data is provided to examine a workforce program's (either AAS or CERT only) labor market projections out to the year 2022. An academic leader can analyze the statistics on how many students are enrolled in their program(s) versus how many graduates the local labor market will need over time. The local labor market takes into consideration the 26 counties in the Panhandle region of Texas.

PSLO Evaluation & Tracking Report for Technical Programs

Components

In lieu of assessing PSLOs in the Blackboard Outcomes Assessment tool, several technical programs (mainly located on our East and West off-campus instructional sites), choose to assess using this method. Often times students are on-site in the lab, automotive bay, or clinical locations and are being assessed in person versus assessment of an artifact.

The report must also align with one or more of the No Excuses 2020 Strategic Plan Institutional Goals of: Completion, Aligning Degrees with Labor Market Demand, Learning, Equity, or Financial Effectiveness.

This biennial report consists of the following 7 components and are documented as such:

- PSLOs to be measured
- Activity or Assessment Method Used
- Evidence (through narrative and/or attached to the report)
- Analysis of Results
- Action Plan for Seeking Improvement
- Implementation of Action Plans
- Documentation of Improvement based on implemented changes (Closing-the-Loop)