



Assessment Brief

Volume 7, Issue 1

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Points of Interest

Assessment Cycle Upcoming Deadline

September 14, 2018
 “Closing the Loop” - analyze data that was collected during 2017/2018, have department discussions regarding the data, make observations as to the strengths and weaknesses, develop action plans and plan for follow-up based on the changes being implemented for 2018-2019.

Need help with TracDat? Schedule a meeting with Wrenette Tedder at 230-5270 or tedderw@hsu.edu or Brett Serviss at 230-5158 or servissb@hsu.edu.

If you have suggestions for items and/or information to be included in future editions of the Assessment Brief, send them to tedderw@hsu.edu.

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Four-Year Assessment Cycle Update Brett Serviss, Faculty Assessment Coordinator

As we near the end of the second year of the inaugural four-year assessment cycle, a “state of the union address” is in order. In September of 2016, the decision was made to change from an annual assessment cycle to a four-year assessment cycle for academic departments, based on the rationale that it is somewhat difficult for departments to conduct meaningful assessment practices when constrained to a yearly cycle interval. This decision to change assessment cycles was not decided casually, and was made as a collaborative effort between the Provost, Director of Assessment, Faculty Assessment Coordinator, and the Assessment Team. It is our belief that the shift to a four-year cycle will promote better assessment practices and provide robust, long-term data for better decision making by departments for program improvement.

At present, 42 out of 55 academic departments have approved assessment plans for the four-year cycle and these plans, along with some to all associated (related) documents, have been entered into TracDat. Most of the remaining departments have plans at the final revisions stage, which is the step prior to approval (see table below for general breakdown of the current state of academic departments as of February 2018). The goal for the Office of Assessment is 100% compliance from all academic programs, where each of the 55 programs has an approved assessment plan, to include all goals, outcomes, measures, and criteria, related documents, completed linkages, and curriculum mapping (related courses) by May 2018.

Programs	Status Summary
42 (76%)	Approved — ready for the four-year cycle
9 (16%)	Final Revisions — require only minor adjustments for approved status
4 (7%)	Under Review — plan has been revised based on original feedback but is under the second round of review
0 (0%)	Under Development — plan is currently being developed by department
0 (0%)	No Plan
55	TOTAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

As a follow up review pertaining to the last accreditation assurance review in 2015, an interim report pertaining to assessment at Henderson State University was submitted to the Higher Learning Commission on January 31, 2018. Even though the report has been completed, it is imperative that all of our academic programs maintain current and appropriate assessment plans and are actively engaged in conducting meaningful assessment endeavors, to include data collection and analysis, with proposed action plans for addressing the conclusions and outcomes of said analysis.

We would, of course, be remiss if we did not acknowledge all of the hard-work and timely communication by faculty, department chairs, and college deans that have worked closely with us on establishing this new process and the associated assessment plans that have been developed as a consequence of it — for that, we sincerely thank all of you.

Higher Learning Commission Progress Report Update

Wrenette Tedder, Director of Assessment

Henderson State University submitted a progress report on assessment to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) on January 31, 2018. The report highlighted the progress we have made in Criterion 4B.

The institution demonstrates a commitment to education achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

- 1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.*
- 2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.*
- 3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.*
- 4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.*

There were two areas of focus that the progress report had to address.

- 1. Implementation of an assessment program with workable, reasonable and meaningful processes that are useful in confirming and improving student learning for the Liberal Arts Core, the Bachelor of Integrated Studies (formerly Bachelor of General Studies), and the Master of Liberal Arts.*
- 2. For all programs, the creation and disclosure of deliberate linkages between course objectives with program outcomes, the four Liberal Arts Core Student Learning Outcomes, and the eight student learning goals. A concerted effort to include those linkages explicitly on syllabi is a best practice; curriculum maps indicating where the outcomes are introduced, reinforced, and mastered might help in creating the alignments.*

The report outlined the implemented changes since the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) assurance review in fall of 2015. In January of 2016, the provost created the position of faculty assessment coordinator to ensure compliance of academic programs with university assessment policies, provide assistance to individual programs for assessment-related needs, and address assessment issues pertaining to accreditation standards. The faculty assessment coordinator also serves as co-chair of the Assessment Team, along with the director of assessment.

During the spring 2016 semester, the director of assessment and faculty assessment coordinator proposed and developed a plan for a four-year assessment cycle and subsequently presented it to the Assessment Team and the provost/VPAA for consideration and approval. The university assessment team felt that a one-year assessment cycle would not work well due to time constraints in analyzing data and planning for the next year. Based on that information, a four-year assessment cycle was constructed and approved to begin in spring 2017. With regard to the four-year cycle, assessment will be conducted and associated data will be collected for three consecutive years, with year four used to analyze data and determine future actions, adjustments and directions for program improvement, and also create a new assessment plan for the next four-year cycle. Departmental collaboration with the assessment process is essential. The assessment team discussed specific wording and timing/implementation of the different aspects/phases of the process and cycle. The team asked that campus-wide communication and training be held during the fall 2016 term. It also was communicated at that time, that departments had to develop new assessment plans and would be required to report data collected during the spring 2017 term.

The provost/VPAA, vice provost, director of assessment, and faculty assessment coordinator also met individually with the director of the Bachelor of Integrated Studies program (BIS — formally known as Bachelor of General Studies), chair of the General Education Committee, and the director of the Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) program in spring 2016 to discuss the current state and future direction for assessment of their respective programs. The Office of Assessment implemented an assessment program with workable,

Higher Learning Commission Progress Report Update (Continued)

reasonable and meaningful processes that is useful in confirming and improving student learning in general education/Liberal Arts Core (LAC), BIS, MLA and the 53 other academic units.

The assessment plans for all 55 academic programs at Henderson were reviewed by the director of assessment and the faculty assessment coordinator during spring 2016. The comments and feedback from the review were used to revise, develop and modify assessment plans for all academic programs; this process occurred in summer of 2016. Templates were created for most plans, which outlined the correct structure and language used in an academic assessment plan. The director of assessment and faculty assessment coordinator subsequently provided feedback to all 55 programs regarding the state of their respective assessment plan, to include all comments, feedback, and, if needed, a plan template. This information was used in developing new assessment plans for academic programs for the 2016-2017 academic year. During the fall of 2016, the director of assessment and faculty assessment coordinator met face-to-face with the individuals responsible for departmental assessment in developing a workable and manageable assessment plan. This process received positive feedback from the faculty. A document has been created outlining the meetings and/or email correspondences that occurred during this time period. All departments have assessment plans in Nuventive Improve (formally known as TracDat), Henderson's assessment management system.

The progress report also highlighted what has been accomplished in General Education, Bachelor of Integrated Studies and Master of Liberal Arts. All three programs now have an assessment plan that will collect useful data that will confirm and provide areas needing improvement.

Also, Henderson State University addressed the need to create and disclose the linkages between course learning outcomes with program outcomes, the four LAC student learning outcomes, and the eight institutional student learning goals.

Henderson State University has made progress in addressing the two areas needing organizational attention. The general education/LAC has had a workable, reasonable, and meaningful assessment process in place over the past few years. The General Education Committee has continued to collect and evaluate the data, and make decisions on how to make the general education assessment process better. Bachelor of Integrated Studies (BIS) has made changes to their program over the past two years by changing the name and adding a series of program-level assessments, along with two courses (ISD2003/3003 Introduction to Integrated Studies and ISD4033 Senior Seminar), where assessment data will be collected. BIS has a strong assessment plan in place, along with all the associated rubrics, and has begun collecting data using the new plan. Henderson realizes that it has taken time to develop a workable assessment plan for this program; however, we believe the progress made will ultimately provide the data needed to assess the effectiveness of the program. The Master of Liberal Arts has experienced a change in leadership and direction of the assessment program within the past year. The new MLA assessment plan now allows for data collection at the beginning, midpoint, and the end, using pertinent rubrics. The university assessment officers have been working closely with each of the three areas mentioned above, along with all other academic programs, to ensure all have sound assessment plans and that they are collecting evidence needed to make appropriate and effective decisions about their programs.

Henderson State University has also made progress in addressing the need to create and disclose the linkages between course learning outcomes and with program outcomes, the four LAC student learning outcomes, and the eight institutional student learning goals. This will be an area that is concentrated on until 100% of course syllabi have the linkages.

The university is currently waiting on a response from the Higher Learning Commission regarding the progress report.

“Closing the Loop”

Wrenette Tedder, Director of Assessment

What does “Closing the Loop” mean? This is the last step in the assessment process that takes into account the assessment data that has been collected, interpreting the results, making recommendations for changes, implementing and documenting the changes and posting follow-up data from the implemented changes.

Each year departments will compile, analyze, and enter into TracDat. Conclusions and inferences based on the data also should be developed and entered each year. Compiled data should be compared to the data of previous years; this may reveal important trends. During each year, time should be allotted for consideration of any trends, conclusions, or inferences provided from accumulated assessment data, and minor adjustments to the assessment plan for the following year may be made.

What do you need to do each year? Once your department has collected the assessment data for the academic year, the department will need to hold departmental meetings to discuss what the data showed. Each department will summarize the findings, attach the support data, and enter action plans into TracDat for each measure in their assessment plan.

Questions to ask:

Did the data show strengths or weakness that need to be addressed?

What did you learn about your students from the data?

How was the data that was collected shared and when was it discussed?

What changes need to be made? (curriculum, pedagogy, etc.)

When will the changes be implemented?

When will a follow-up (reassess) be done to see if changes have improved student learning?

“Closing the Loop” is the most important part of the assessment process, but it is also the most difficult.

“Closing the Loop” Deadline: September 14, 2018

Assessment Team

Brett Serviss,, Faculty Assessment Coordinator

The Assessment Team is a standing university committee that is tasked with assisting the Director of Assessment and the Faculty Assessment Coordinator with facilitating and promoting successful assessment practices for all academic and administrative (non-instructional) programs of the university. The Assessment Team also provides representation from all major academic and administrative areas of the university. One critical role assumed by Assessment Team members is operation as liaisons between the respective areas they represent and the Office of Assessment and Research, to provide accurate and timely, two-way communication pertaining to assessment between Faculty and Staff and the office of Assessment.

In addition to its role in facilitating and promoting assessment practices across the university, the Assessment Team operates as an advisory body regarding all aspects of university assessment, and regularly meets to deliberate and plan regarding such, including assessment-related accreditation requirements mandated by the Higher Learning Commission, which, of course, periodically reviews the assessment plans and protocols of the university and its individual programs, as a major component of the accreditation process.

The Office of Assessment hosts a website dedicated to the activities and processes of university assessment practices and the associated role, function, and activities of Assessment Team. Additionally, pertinent documents for the four-year assessment cycle, guidance for departmental assessment endeavors and TracDat usage, and meeting minutes of the Assessment Team since 2010 may all be accessed on MyHenderson under the Shared Governance tab, Assessment Team entry.

Assessment Team Members

Role	Committee Member	Term Expires
Director of Assessment	Wrenette Tedder, Co-Chair	
Faculty Assessment Coordinator	Brett Serviss, Co-Chair	
Faculty member-Library	David Sesser	2018
Faculty member-School of Business	Lonnie Jackson	2018
Faculty member-Ellis College, at-large	Shari Valentine	2018
Faculty member-Ellis College, Fine Arts	Emily Gerhold, Webmaster	2018
Faculty member-Ellis College, Math, Science, and Nursing	Shannon Clardy	2019
Faculty member-Ellis College, Liberal Arts	Beth Ann Maxfield	2018
Faculty member-Teachers College	Judith Jenkins	2019
Administrative Staff-Academic Affairs	Chanda Hooten	2019
Administrative Staff-Athletics	Lenette Jones	2018
Administrative Staff-Finance and Administration	Scott Freeman	2017
Administrative Staff-Student and External Affairs	Sheryl Strother	2017
Administrative Staff-University Advancement	vacant	2019
Associate Dean-Ellis College	Angela Boswell	
Associate Dean-Teachers College	Gary Smithey	
Associate Dean-School of Business	Nathan Campbell	
Chair, General Education Committee	Angela Boswell	
Research Associate	Ginger Otwell	Ex officio
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	Steve Adkison	Ex officio
Graduate Student	vacant	2017
Undergraduate Student	vacant	2017

Need help.....Call the Office of Assessment

The Office of Assessment supports the University's efforts in planning, assessing, and making changes to the programs and/or departments. The office is available to consult on any part of the assessment process or TracDat training. If you need assistance, please contact Wrenette Tedder at 230-5270 or tedderw@hsu.edu or Brett Serviss at 230-5158 or servissb@hsu.edu.