

# Henderson State University

## Assessment Quick Reference Guide Assessment

The following is not intended as a substitute for a complete working knowledge of the materials contained in the Assessment Planning Guide.

### Assessment Cycle

The assessment cycle identifies and documents the strengths, weaknesses, needs, improvements, and future plans for learning outcomes/objectives.

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. What are we doing to assure that the students are learning the intended content?
2. How well are we achieving the intended goals?
3. How do we know that the curriculum or service is fulfilling the needs of the students, community, or institution?
4. How do we use the assessment information to improve the curriculum, teaching, or service?
5. How do we know if the changes implemented are now achieving their intended purpose?

### Assessment Plan Components

- Step 1: Mission Statement
- Step 2: Goals (Extended Statement of Purpose)
- Step 3: Learning Outcomes/Objectives
- Step 4: Measures or Methods
- Step 5: Collect and Summarize Data Results
- Step 6: Use of Results ("Closing the Loop")

Once all components of the assessment cycle are complete (Steps 1-6) return to the Mission Statement or other component to further evaluate the extent to which the Unit has achieved the intended goals. The assessment process is continuous.

### Step 1: Mission Statement

Each program or unit will develop a mission statement related to the University Mission Statement (and their VP or Dean mission statement). A mission statement should:

- State the primary purpose of your department or unit
- Indicate your stakeholders
- Include your function, operations, and/or offerings
- Align your mission to the university mission statement
- Ask yourself if your statement distinguishes the program from other units?

#### Mission Statement

"The mission of (your unit name) is to (your primary purpose) by providing (your primary functions or activities) to (your stakeholders)."

- Add additional clarifying statements.
- The mission statement must be concise (75 words or less).

## **Step 2: Goals (Extended Statement of Purpose)**

Goals are:

Broad statements;  
General intentions;  
Abstract; and  
Cannot be validated.

Examples:

- To prepare students to successfully complete a certification examination
- To facilitate continuous quality improvement in the academic and administrative educational support units of the university
- To graduate students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in a professional field

### **Difference between Goals and Learning Outcomes/Objectives**

The difference between goals and learning outcomes/objectives is in their scope. Goals describe broad concepts. Learning outcomes/objectives describes specific aspects of processor, student abilities, knowledge, and attributes.

## **Step 3: Learning Outcomes/Objectives**

Your learning outcomes/objectives must relate to the unit mission statement.

Learning is:

Cognitive: mental skills (knowledge)  
Affective: growth in feelings or emotions (attitude)  
Psychomotor: manual or physical skills (skills)

### **Types of Learning Outcomes**

- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

### **Types of Objectives**

- Timely response
- Accurate response
- Efficient operation
- Productive
- Satisfied customers
- Successful students

Each outcome/objective must be:

Specific;  
Measureable;  
Attainable, but aggressive;  
Results-oriented; and  
Time-bound.

Each learning outcome/objective must also relate to:

- The appropriate institutional goals;
- The appropriate unit goals;
- The appropriate external unit goals; and
- The appropriate department goals.

Student Learning Outcome Examples:

- Graduates will be able to write a research paper in the appropriate style.
- Students will be able to apply classroom experience during an internship program and professional workplace.

Administrative and Educational Support Objectives Examples:

- To recruit and retain a highly qualified student population through the utilization of scholarship funding as an incentive and a reward.
- Students will be proficient in logging onto the Internet through the academic computer center.

## **Step 4: Measures or Methods**

An assessment tool is a measure or method that is used in the assessment process. Examples of assessment tools are: surveys, pre/post tests, embedded questions, rubrics tests measuring content gained across the semester, annual reviews of student progress, and response times.

The choice of an assessment tool can be affected by:

- The purpose of the assessment;
- Subject of the assessment;
- Values of the audience for assessment;
- Availability, number, and willingness of participants;
- Information available at time; and
- Resources needed and available.

### **Evaluation of Measures or Methods**

- Use of multiple measures or methods (2-3)
- Assessment instrument is provided
- Assessment instrument(s) is appropriate and feasible
- Sampling measure or method is described
- Sampling measures methods are appropriate

## **Step 5: Collect and Summarize Data/Results**

The data must be collected for each measure or method. Summarize the findings for each learning outcome/objective.

### **Observations**

Compare your data/results with the criteria set forth in your learning outcomes/objectives. Summarize your assessment process and results.

## **Step 6: Use of Results (“Closing the Loop”)**

The results could be used to determine if there are any specific strengths or weaknesses within your department or unit; subsequently, a plan may be developed to address the weakness(es) or accentuate the strengths. What actions will you take to improve as a result of your new-found information? Document these.

Once all components of the assessment cycle are complete (Steps 1-6) return to the Mission Statement or other component to further evaluate the extent to which the Unit has achieved the intended goals. The assessment process is continuous.

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