

**Ferris State University
Academic Affairs Assessment Plan
2011-2013**

Goal 1 – Program-Level Assessment of Student Learning

The leadership (deans, department heads or chairs, coordinators, etc.) of each academic unit that offers programs, working collaboratively with faculty and other stakeholders, will create methods to progress programs through the expectation levels outlined below. All programs should have reached level 1g by Fall 2011, and thereafter continue to engage in an assessment cycle based on their assessment plans and schedules, reporting and analyzing results annually. Academic unit leaders and the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee will annually review the progress of programs' assessment efforts. The Office of the Provost and the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee will require an annual report of program assessment progress. A template/guide for this annual program assessment report will be provided by early January of each academic year.

Program Expectation Levels:

1. All programs will have entered into TracDat:
 - a. Clear and measurable student learning outcomes.
 - b. Appropriate assessment methods for each outcome.
 - c. Criteria for success for each assessment method.
 - d. Assessment schedule for each assessment method.
 - e. A complete curriculum map.
 - f. Results of assessment methods.
 - g. Implementation of improvement efforts or other actions resulting from analysis of the results/data.
 - h. Evidence of success of improvement efforts resulting from data analysis and action plans/implementation.

2. Program personnel will use assessment data in TracDat for improvement of educational practices (pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, etc.) and include action plans, action results, and analysis of success of interventions regularly in TracDat.

Goal 2 – Course-Level Assessment of Student Learning

The leadership of each academic unit that offers courses, working collaboratively with faculty and other stakeholders (such as administrators, staff, FCT, and/or mentors) , will create methods to progress courses through the course expectation levels outlined below. Once courses have reached level 1f, they will continue to engage in cyclical assessment based on their assessment schedules. Course-level plans and results will periodically be reviewed by the academic leadership of the College, in collaboration with the faculty and the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee. The Office of the Provost and the Academic Affairs Assessment Committee will require an annual report of course assessment progress. A template/guide for this report will be provided by early January of each calendar year.

Course Expectation Levels:

1. All courses will have entered into TracDat:
 - a. Clear and measurable student learning outcomes.
 - b. Appropriate assessment methods for each outcome.
 - c. Criteria for success for each assessment method.
 - d. Assessment schedule for each assessment method.
 - e. Results of assessment methods.
 - f. Implementation of improvement efforts or other actions resulting from the analysis of the results.
 - g. Evidence of success of improvement efforts resulting from data analysis and action plans/implementation.
2. Course-level student learning assessment results will be integrated into program assessment efforts and used in the Academic Program Review process.
3. By December 2011, all courses will have course outcomes, assessment methods, and criteria entered into TracDat. At least 70% of courses in each program will also have assessment results for at least one student learning outcome entered into TracDat by the end of May 2012.

Goal 3 Reporting and Collaboration

The Academic Affairs Assessment Committee (AAAC) will continue to support college-wide and university-wide assessment, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. At least one representative from each educational unit will participate in the AAAC to advance University efforts and serve as a liaison between the AAAC and the academic unit.
2. During the spring semester, each academic unit will be invited to present the results of its assessment efforts, as reflected within the TracDat entries. A template for these presentations will be provided in January of each year.
3. These academic unit reports will form the basis for the University's reporting externally, including the Higher Learning Commission Results Forum in June 2012 and the ongoing participation in the President's Alliance for Excellence in Student Learning and Accountability.
4. College representatives will provide an update each semester to the AAAC regarding their college's progress and efforts in meeting program and course assessment goals and will keep the AAAC informed of any support needed to achieve their goals.
5. The AAAC will be responsive to and supportive of the General Education Taskforce and its efforts to enhance General Education assessment.
6. The AAAC will collaborate with the General Education Coordinator and other relevant groups to administer, interpret, and analyze the results of any university-wide assessments of General Education, such as the Proficiency Profile and NSSE.

Goal 4 Professional Development

Professional development programs will be offered to engage faculty in increasingly effective assessment practices.

1. The sharing of best practices in assessment will continue to be encouraged through competitions with course-assessment rewards, a best practices showcase in the spring semester, workshops coordinated with Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning

- (FCTL), and through postings on the Academic Affairs website in Ferris Best Practices, Sharing Our Learning, and Strategies for Effective Assessment, as examples.
2. Mentors will continue to be supported in their responsibilities and funding through the guidelines in the Mentor Program with a goal of reviewing whether this role is still required for 2012-13.
 3. Faculty attendance at assessment conferences will continue to be funded adhering to the Assessment Funded Travel Process.
 4. Program Improvement Grants and Assessment Enhancement Grants will continue to be funded according to the value of the project and the availability of funds.
 5. The *Inquiries into Teaching and Learning Initiative* will continue to be funded through the end of 2012 and then be reevaluated.
 6. The Higher Learning Commission Academy Team will act as a subcommittee of the AAAC and the AAAC will provide support for the Academy for Assessment of Student Learning Project to its completion and the development of reports for the June 2012 Results Forum.
 7. FCTL will provide continued support for assessment training of new faculty, staff, and faculty returning the week before fall semester and workshops throughout the year.
 8. The AAAC and the Academic Affairs Office will coordinate the provision of guidance to departmental leaders in the oversight of program- and course-level assessment outcomes, including an annual report to the Academic Leadership Council that reviews the assessment plan and the University's assessment progress.

Goal 5 Integration and Alignment

Assessment will be an integral part of regular institutional practices. The Academic Affairs newsletter or its sequel communication vehicle(s) will continue to report on the current state of assessment.

1. Data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) will continue to be analyzed to improve student and faculty engagement in improving educational practices.
2. During Spring 2012, the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) will be administered so that faculty perceptions can be benchmarked.
3. Effective assessment practices will be counted positively in pre/post tenure review and in promotion/merit processes.
4. A program's assessment progress will be considered as a significant component in the Academic Program Review Process.
5. Academic Departments will engage in discussions of the use of assessment data for improvement of educational practices in at least one department meeting per academic semester, including the use of the guiding questions provided by the Higher Learning Commission to stimulate important assessment conversations, that are reproduced below:

Fundamental Questions for Conversations on Student Learning

Six fundamental questions serve as prompts for conversations about student learning and the role of assessment in affirming and improving that learning:

- 1. How are your stated student learning outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, degrees, and students?*
- 2. What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?*
- 3. In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?*

4. *How do you ensure shared responsibility for student learning and for assessment of student learning?*
5. *How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of your efforts to assess and improve student learning?*
6. *In what ways do you inform the public and other stakeholders about what students are learning---and how well?*

Source-Higher Learning Commission

Goal 6: Transparency

The University will publicly communicate its assessment findings, as appropriate, through efforts such as active participation in the Presidents' Alliance, posting on the University's website, and ongoing communications with students, faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees.