

Assessment Impact Report **“Glossary of Terms”**

Outcome: These are the intended student learning outcomes or objectives from your assessment plan. All of the following items should be addressed for each outcome.

Tracks: These are typically the degree options or programs within the department. This section is used to indicate when an outcome applies to majors in one area but not to the majors in another, or to graduate students but not undergraduate students. For example, a department may have an outcome for graduate students addressing their understanding of research methodology, while undergraduates have an outcome addressing their ability to apply the findings of research. Some departments have written their assessment plans to include all majors in all outcomes and may therefore simply indicate “all” under this heading.

Assessment Plan Review Process:

In your assessment plan, you were asked to indicate a timeline for the review of the plan. Often, departments indicated that their assessment committees would review the plan annually. Some departments have planned a review cycle, with groups of outcomes reviewed in alternate academic years. The information from the department assessment plan referring to the review process should be included in this section.

Assessment Methods for this Outcome:

This section addresses the ways in which you will find out whether your students are meeting the intended learning outcomes. Each outcome will have one or more methods for determining student achievement of the intended outcome.

Method: This is the specific method for collecting data addressing the outcome. It may include surveys, test results, portfolio assessments, targeted assignments in required courses, etc. The assessment plan you developed should have indicated the methods for each outcome.

Criterion: The criteria should indicate how well your students must perform in order for you to determine that they have achieved the intended outcome. Often, this is indicated by a “cut off” score on a test, a percentage of respondents who indicated satisfaction, a level of proficiency required for moving forward in a program, or some other indicator of satisfactory performance. Remember that the assessment plan does not address individual students, but rather the overall performance of students in your program. A criterion for a licensure test, for example, might be “80% of the students in our program met or exceeded the cut score on the licensure exam in their first attempt.”

Schedule: This should answer the question “How often (or when) will you assess the students in your program using the indicated method?” If you receive the results from a licensure test once a year, your schedule will be based on that annual report. If you are using performance evaluations from internships that occur over the summer, you will indicate that schedule.

Feedback Loop:

The feedback loop indicates how the results of the assessment will be shared with the department. In order for your assessment plan to be useful, the department faculty will need to have access to the results of assessments and use those results in making decisions and program improvements.

Findings for this Outcome:

This section describes the “findings” indicating the results of assessment and how the data are being used to make decisions about program improvements. For each finding, indicate whether the finding is a strength or limitation. Provide information about any remedies implemented to address limitations and any follow-up to the remedy.

Finding (date): This should include the results of the assessment and the judgment of the faculty regarding student performance. If the licensure test results show that 70% of your candidates reached the cut score, you would state those results and indicate that the faculty see these results as a weakness, based on the criterion of 80%. (The “date” simply shows when your assessment committee examined the results.)

Remedy (date): If the finding is a “weakness,” you should describe your plans for making improvements. In the example of the licensure test, faculty might decide to examine course syllabi to determine whether the course content reflects that of the test. Other remedies might include re-examining admission policies, providing test preparation assistance through student organizations, etc. Again, the date indicates when the faculty discussed and proposed the remedy.

Follow-Up (date): Now that a remedy has been proposed, you will need to show how/when you determined the success of the remedy. Often, the follow up will be after the next administration of the assessment.

Resolved: This is a “yes or no” item, showing whether the faculty are satisfied with the remedy and results.