



Title: Academic Program Assessment Policy
Effective Date: December 2, 2024
Issuing Authority: Provost
Policy Contact: Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness
(478) 301-2892

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that academic programs at Mercer University uphold student learning assessment obligations for institutional and, if applicable, disciplinary accreditation. This policy requires assigned personnel to identify expected student learning outcomes, assess the extent to which those outcomes are achieved, and provide evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results for each academic program.

Scope

This policy applies to all academic programs within the University.

Exclusions

None

Definitions

As used in this policy, the following term(s) have the meaning specified below:

Academic program: a set of courses leading to a credential. This definition includes all degrees with a defined major and all stand-alone certificates.

Policy Statement

Personnel responsible for each academic program, as assigned by the dean or designee, must submit an annual assessment report by the date selected by the provost and published by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Each report must contain two or more student learning outcomes and, for each outcome, must include:

- One or more direct measurements of the extent to which the outcome was achieved
- Results for those measurements
- Evidence of seeking improvement to student learning based on the analysis of the results
- A plan to seek improvement to student learning and to reassess one or more outcomes

For a program with low or no enrollment, a report must be submitted that contains as many required elements as possible, though with limited or no results.

Additional Resources

SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation: <https://sacscoc.org/accrediting-standards/>

Website Address

Office of Institutional Effectiveness – Assessment: <https://oie.mercer.edu/assessment/>

History

Approved by the Provost, December 2, 2024

Appendix

Procedures

Various offices/units and employees have responsibility to ensure that this policy and related processes are executed. The subsections below describe the process and who is responsible for ensuring compliance.

1. Office of Institutional Effectiveness

- a. Conduct an annual review of this policy to assess its relevance and alignment with current practice and the SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation.
- b. Maintain the Assessment website with linked resources and examples to aid program directors/coordinators in completing their annual assessment.
- c. Oversee the vehicle by which assessment reports are submitted.
- d. Provide program directors/coordinators with professional development opportunities related to academic program assessment.
- e. Conduct an audit of assessment report completion at the time of the annual due date and communicate with program directors/coordinators whose reports have not been submitted.
- f. Archive all annual assessment reports.

2. Program Directors/Coordinators

- a. Ensure academic program assessment processes are planned and completed.
- b. Submit annual academic program assessment reports by the due date published by OIE.
- c. Communicate with the Director of University Assessment in the event that an extension is needed.
- d. Implement necessary revisions to assessment reports if they are deemed to be non-compliant upon review by the Director of University Assessment and/or the University Assessment Council.