A FRAMEWORK FOR CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING A UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PLAN

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Anne Figus, Ed.D.
Assistant Provost,
Faculty Center for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning

LEWIS University
Who are we?

Level of experience with Assessment:
• Beginners?
• Intermediate?
• Experts?

Position at Your Institution:
• Faculty Members?
• Administrators who have been doing this a long time?
• Victims who were thrust into being the assessment officers because nobody else would do it?
Creating and Implementing an Assessment Plan – The Nuts and Bolts

1. Establish the 5-Step Assessment Cycle
2. Identify your Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) at all levels
3. Align program-level outcomes with institution-level outcomes
4. Establish committees, accountabilities and a communication plan
5. Select an assessment platform - Collects, stores and reports data
6. Create measurable outcomes
7. Map your outcomes at all levels
8. Identify key measurement methods (key assignments)
9. Collect and analyze the data, identify changes needed and make improvements
10. Create a schedule for assessing outcomes (all levels)
11. Measure student learning again and compare to prior results
12. Determine impact on student learning and report results
Step 1: Establish your Assessment Cycle

Create measurable outcomes

Conduct activities to achieve the outcomes

Measure how well the outcomes are achieved

Compile and analyze results, implement improvements

Determine how learning was impacted by the changes

Plan

Assess

Respond

This is what HLC wants to see...
How do you get people to listen? Make it less frightening.

Step 1: Establish Assessment Cycle
Step 2: Identify Your Student Learning Outcomes - All Levels

There are generally three levels of outcomes:

1. **Course outcomes or Co-curricular initiative outcomes**

2. **Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes**
   a. Academic: Program-Specific and General Education Outcomes
   b. Co-curricular (Student Services, Ministry, Study Abroad, Career Services, etc.)

3. **Institutional-Level Outcomes**
   a. Baccalaureate Characteristics (BC)
   b. Graduate Student Learning Outcomes (GSLO)
Lewis University Institution-Level Outcomes

• Baccalaureate Characteristics (BC):

The baccalaureate graduate of Lewis University will...

1. read, write, speak, calculate, and use technology at a demonstrated level of proficiency.
2. understand the major approaches to knowledge.
3. understand the place of faith, religion, and spirituality in the search for truth and meaning.
4. understand and prepare for moral and ethical decision-making.
5. become an informed, involved, and responsible citizen of a diverse yet interconnected national and global community through a grounding in economic, political, social, and historical influences that are inherent in shaping, developing, and advancing nations and the world.
6. think critically and creatively.
7. possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to enter or advance a career, or to begin graduate study.

• Graduate Student Learning Outcomes (GSLO):

The Lewis University graduate student will be able to...

1. Synthesize theoretical and research concepts from multiple perspectives to inform inquiry and practice.
2. Formulate creative responses to complex issues through critical analysis.
3. Model ethical and professional behaviors to guide inquiry and practice in a global and diverse society.
Step 3: Align Your Outcomes

University-Level Assessment

Alignment with Strategic Priorities
Aggregation of BC’s and GSLO’s & Other University Assessments (CLA, etc.)

Program-Level Assessment

Alignment with BC’s / GSLO’s
Program Level Outcomes, General Education Outcomes

Alignment with BC’s / GSLO’s
Co-Curricular Outcomes

Course & Co-Curricular Assessment

Course Level Outcomes
Weekly Objectives

Academic Co-Curricular Initiatives
- Leadership
- Service Learning
- Ministry
- Athletics
Step 4: Establish Committees

- University Assessment Committee
  - Assessment of BCs & GSLOs
  - Represents Programs and/or Initiatives
  - CBE Assessment Committee
  - CDE Assessment Committee
  - CONHP Assessment Committee
  - CAS Assessment Committee
  - Graduate & Adult Assessment Committee
  - Co-Curricular Assessment Committee
  - UAAC Assessment Team

  - Program Assessment
  - Program Assessment
  - Program Assessment
  - Program Assessment & GSLO Assessment
  - Institutional Assessment
  - General Education Assessment
Establish Accountabilities

Accountability

Deans and unit heads report results of annually using assessment template and rubric

Deans and unit heads will provide oversight for the assessment of all programs within their colleges. Effective Fall 2016, all programs began implementing the following:

• Development of clearly articulated measurable outcomes
• Outcome mapping
• Established benchmarks
• Gathering and analysis of evidence
• Determine how data are used to guide improvements in curriculum, pedagogy, systems and practices
• Establish an action plan and implement improvements based on results of program assessment
Establish Accountabilities

Assessment Committee - Advisory

Effective Fall 2016, the primary charge of the AC is to:

- Provide guidance and support to the development of program and course assessment plans;
- Advise, support and provide training for assessment efforts related to student learning;
- Manage the implementation of University-level assessment
- Three-year appointment – In addition, membership needs will be reviewed every three years
- Collaborates with Institutional Research and various other entities interested in assessment data

Members:
- Assistant Provost, Faculty Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, Co-chair
- Faculty representatives from each college, designated by the Dean
- Faculty representative from Graduate Studies, designated by the Dean
- Dean of Curriculum
- Student Affairs
- Faculty Development
- Academic Technology
- IR Office
- Office of the Provost
- UAAC Committee
Create a Communication Plan

How will you communicate and document the plan, the progress, the results?

Transparency is vital.

- University Assessment Committee members report out to respective sub-committees
- Sub-Committee report at University Assessment Committee meetings
- Program Directors report to Deans
- Campus-wide annual Assessment Symposium

Website:

- Outcomes
- Mapping
- Data
- Improvement plans
- Committee members
- Access to assessment platform/repository
Keep a Sense of Humor
Step 5: Select an assessment platform

Criteria for adoption:
1. User-friendly
2. Integrate with LMS
3. Integrate with Banner
4. Replace LiveText
5. Track field experience
Step 6: Create Measurable Outcomes

### The Importance of Action Verbs

Action verbs result in overt behavior that can be observed and measured. Sample action verbs are:

- analyze, apply, argue, arrange, assemble, assess, calculate, categorize, choose, classify, compare, compile, compute, create, criticize, critique, defend, define, demonstrate, describe, design, develop, differentiate, discuss, distinguish, estimate, examine, explain, formulate, identify, illustrate, indicate, interpret, label, list, locate, manage, memorize, order, operate, organize, plan, practice, predict, prepare, propose, question, rate, recognize, repeat, report, reproduce, review, revise, schedule, select, solve, state, translate, use, utilize, write

Certain verbs are unclear and call for covert, internal behavior which cannot be observed or measured. These types of verbs should be avoided:

- appreciate, become aware of, become familiar with, know, learn, understand

### Examples – TOO general and VERY HARD to measure…

1. ...will appreciate the benefits of exercise.
2. ...will be able to access resources at the Cañada College.
3. ...will develop problem-solving skills and conflict resolution.
4. ...will be able to have more confidence in their abilities.

### Examples – Still general and HARD to measure…

1. ...will value exercise as a stress reduction tool.
2. ...will be able to develop and apply effective problem solving skills that would enable one to adequately navigate through the proper resources within the college.
3. ...will demonstrate ability to resolve personal conflicts and assist others in resolving conflicts.
4. ...will demonstrate critical thinking skills, such as problem solving as it relates to social issues.

### Examples – Specific and relatively EASY to measure…

1. ...will be able to explain how exercise affects stress.
2. ...will be able to identify the most appropriate resource that is pertinent to their college concern.
3. ...will be able to assist classmates in resolving conflicts by helping them negotiate agreements.
4. ...will demonstrate the ability to analyze and respond to arguments about racial discrimination.
Course vs. Program vs. Institutional Outcomes

**Course outcomes** – All weekly objectives within a course should build a mastery of the course outcomes.

**Program outcomes** - All of the courses within a program should build a mastery of the program outcomes.

**Institutional outcomes** - are assessed across *multiple* programs and co-curricular activities.

*For example:*

**Baccalaureate Characteristic #2:**

The baccalaureate graduate of Lewis University will read, write, speak, calculate, and use technology at a demonstrated level of proficiency.

**Measurable Student Learning Outcome:**

*Advocate for a cause or idea, presenting facts and arguments, in an organized and accurate manner using some form of technology. Include qualitative and quantitative reasoning.*
Course and Program Outcomes

**Courses**
Just as vegetables have their own characteristics, courses have their own outcomes.

**Course Outcomes**
Incremental knowledge and skills that students develop bit by bit throughout the program

**Programs**
Just as a salad is a combination of veggies, programs are the combination of multiple courses.

**Program Outcomes**
Students’ cumulative learning by the end of the program

Step 6: Create Measurable Outcomes
Institutional Outcomes

Orientation
  + Program Outcomes
+ General Education Outcomes
  + Mission
+ Student Life Experience
  + Library Experience
  + Study Abroad
  + Residence Life
  + Arts & Ideas
+ Extracurricular Activities
= Institutional Outcomes
(Baccalaureate Characteristics)
Make Sure Everyone is Following the Same Process
### Step 7: Map Your Outcomes

**I** = Introductory  
**R** = Reinforcement  
**M** = Mastery

#### Provide a template!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLO 1: Demonstrate knowledge of common origin through evolution.</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLO 2: Apply the scientific method.</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 3: Communicate knowledge and logical progression of thought.</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 4: Provide evidence of the interactions between biological entities and their environment.</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 5: Demonstrate ability to link concepts for meaningful comprehension.</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Biology, B.A. & B.S.**  
**SLO/ Courses**  
I = Introductory  
R = Reinforced  
M = Mastery  

**Program Mapping 2016-2017**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B.S. Biology Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)</th>
<th>Baccalaureate Characteristics (BC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BC 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 1 Demonstrate knowledge of common origin through evolution.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 2 Apply the scientific method.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 3 Communicate knowledge and logical progression of thought.</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 4 Provide evidence of the interaction of biological entities and their environment.</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO 5 Demonstrate the ability to link concepts for more meaningful comprehension.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 8: Identify Key Measurement Methods (key assignments)

1. How is the outcome measured?
   Key assignments are identified in your LMS (Blackboard, Canvas, etc.) based on the I, R or M from the Course Mapping template.

2. Link the key assignments to the outcomes in the assessment platform (Tk20).

3. When you select an outcome to assess, the system will collect all evidence (student work) linked to that outcome.
Step 9: Collect and Analyze the Data, Identify Changes, Make Improvements

Measures and Findings:

1. Outcome being measured

2. Status – Target Met/Target Not Met (Example: 90% of the students will achieve an 85% or better on key assignment.)

3. Action plan for improvement

4. Findings after actions were implemented – Target Met/Target Not Met

5. How was learning impacted?
Step 10: Create a Schedule for Assessing Outcomes

It is not necessary, or recommended, to assess every outcome every year.

Year 1 – Program Outcome 1
Year 2 – Program Outcome 2, re-measure Program Outcome 1
Year 3 - Program Outcome 3, re-measure Program Outcome 2
Year 4 - Program Outcome 4, re-measure Program Outcome 3
Year 5 – Program Outcome 1, re-measure Program Outcome 4
Etc...
### Step 11: Measure Again and Compare to Prior Results

#### Lewis University Assessment Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Program/Unit:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome being measured:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
<th>Targets/Benchmarks</th>
<th>Completion/Timeline</th>
<th>Use of Results</th>
<th>Impact on Student Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Maximum of five measurable objectives for each outcome</td>
<td>✓ What methods will be used to measure progress toward the outcome?</td>
<td>✓ What is the nature of the target/benchmark?</td>
<td>✓ When will the assessment be completed/when was the assessment completed?</td>
<td>✓ How will the results be used? If completed:</td>
<td>✓ What decisions/changes have been made?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ What data will be used to assess the outcome?</td>
<td>✓ What is the minimally acceptable result?</td>
<td>✓ How often is the assessment performed?</td>
<td>✓ Are the results being used to inform decisions?</td>
<td>✓ What issues have been revealed?</td>
<td>✓ Has the data been analyzed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ What tools will be used?</td>
<td>✓ What is the desired result?</td>
<td>✓ By whom?</td>
<td>✓ How can those issues be addressed/what actions are recommended?</td>
<td>✓ Are the improvements documented?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. |
2. |
3. |
4. |
5. |
## Assessment Template Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This semester or academic year</th>
<th>Name of the Program and person making this report</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of the Measurement Method</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Brief Description**
- Format
- Targeted students
- Location or method by which the measurement method is administered
- Scoring method

**Program Student Learning Outcomes covered by this measurement method**

**Benchmark** individual student score for meeting the expectations. Shown in % or numbers

**Target aggregate** % of students expected to meet the benchmark score.

### CURRENT YEAR ASSESSMENT DATA BEGINS BELOW

Identify the locations and modalities through which student data is included in this report. Check all that apply.

- [ ] Face-to-face at Romeoville
- [ ] Online (full or hybrid)
- [ ] Albuquerque
- [ ] Tinley Park
- [ ] Oak Brook
- [ ] Hickory Hills

**Total number of students taking the measurement method**

**Determination of the aggregate results**
- [ ] Met
- [ ] Partially Met
- [ ] Did not meet

Results compared to the Target

Further information about the data

**Findings**

New insights about student learning, and strengths and weaknesses in the program

**Action Plan for next academic year 2017-18**

Plan for improvements to program curriculum and instruction

1. Recent improvements made to curriculum and instruction based on assessment findings.
2. Ways in which improvements have impacted or increased students learning.

Use data to document when possible.

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Step 11: Measure Again and Compare to Prior Results  26
### Continuous Improvement Rubric

**PROGRAM NAME:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Evidence (0)</th>
<th>Minimal Evidence (1)</th>
<th>Clear Evidence (2)</th>
<th>Strong Evidence (3)</th>
<th>Advanced Evidence (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No information provided for current assessment year <strong>OR</strong> Described data collection efforts only</td>
<td>Discussed data collection without connecting it to any improvement efforts <strong>OR</strong> Analyzed data from secondary sources and made no improvements <strong>OR</strong> Described program improvements without linking to assessment data</td>
<td>Analyzed and used data from secondary sources to make changes to any of the following: ✓ Improvements to student learning ✓ Curriculum ✓ Instructional strategy ✓ Professional development ✓ Assessment processes ✓ Support services <strong>OR</strong> Analyzed and used student learning outcomes results and provided documented explanation as to why changes were not needed at this time</td>
<td>Analyzed and used student learning outcomes results to provide documented explanation of evidence of improvements to any of the following: ✓ Student learning ✓ Curriculum ✓ Instructional strategy ✓ Professional development ✓ Assessment processes ✓ Support services <strong>AND</strong> Provided explanation for why changes were needed and described plans for follow-up with a focus on long-term continuous improvement</td>
<td>Analyzed and used student learning outcomes or program assessment results to provide documented explanation of evidence of improvements to several of the following: ✓ Student learning ✓ Curriculum ✓ Instructional strategy ✓ Professional development ✓ Assessment processes ✓ Support services <strong>AND</strong> Provided results that show the improvement to student learning as a result of changes made to the program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overall Rating:** Please Circle One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 - No Evidence</th>
<th>1 - Minimal Evidence</th>
<th>2 - Clear Evidence</th>
<th>3 - Strong Evidence</th>
<th>4 - Advanced Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Comments:
Step 12: Determine Impact on Student Learning and Report Results

The assessment reporting cycle provides an in-depth look at campus-wide assessment practices.

The overarching goals for the annual cycle and reporting process are to

1. highlight student learning outcomes achievement across Lewis University;
2. determine how data are used to guide improvements in curriculum, pedagogy, systems and practices; and
3. determine how to better support program level assessment practices across the university.

Assessment Begins
August

Evaluation Process
January - June

Analyze, Improve, & Measure Impact on Learning
July - August

Reporting Session
October