Extended Assessment Cycle as a Catalyst for Connecting Assessment Results with Curricular Improvements

Kayla Steele Payne, M.A.
ksteel2@clemson.edu

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Learning Outcomes

As a result of this session, participants will be able to:

- identify the framework needed for implementing an extended assessment cycle, and
- recognize how existing committees and faculty roles can be utilized as facilitators of the process.
Overview

- Implementing extended assessment cycle
- Connecting assessment results and curriculum committees
- Necessary framework
- Identifying individuals, processes, and policies
## Clemson By The Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Students</td>
<td>20,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Students</td>
<td>5,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Retention Rate</td>
<td>93.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>80+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minors</td>
<td>90+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree Programs</td>
<td>130+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six-Year Graduation Rate</td>
<td>84.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-to-Faculty Ratio</td>
<td>16:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding for External Research 2019</td>
<td>$106.3M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Founded in:** 1889

**Located in:** Clemson, South Carolina

**President:** James P. Clements
University Background

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

7 degree-granting colleges

Distributed assessment liaison system
5 Departments
35 Assessed Degree Programs
3 Professionally Accredited Programs
1,771 undergraduate students
337 graduate students
6 Research & Education Centers (RECs) across the state
1 faculty assessment coordinator per degree program
Faculty & Staff in every county of South Carolina
Previous Annual Cycle

1. Select Outcomes
2. Measure Performance
3. Report Findings
4. Use Results to Improve
Stakeholder Needs

**Administrators**
- Usability
- Relatability

**Faculty**
- Intentionality
- Community
- User-friendliness

**SACSCOC Reviewers**
"...improvement based on analysis of results..."
(Standard 8.2.a)
Pilot Program: A Response

• Allow for an extended, 3-year cycle to identify baselines and observe trends.

• Programs design strategies to improve based on those observed trends.

• Strategies to improve are implemented during the following 3-year cycle.

• Results are reported annually through lens of improvement strategy.
Pilot Program Model

2020-2021

Baseline Collection

Strategy Implementation and Impact
The AVS B.S. program uses a capstone project to measure several student learning outcomes. After 3 years of collecting data, the program has identified a trend—average student performance on the “oral communication” component of the project is consistently at or below expectations. In response, faculty design an improvement strategy whereby students give an additional, mid-term oral presentation about their project and receive feedback from their peers.

Over the next 3-year cycle, this improvement strategy will be implemented, and faculty will look for changes in student performance.
Curriculum & Assessment

Curriculum Committee creates initial program SLOs

Assessment Coordinator designs methods for measuring SLOs

Faculty aggregate student performance data

Assessment Coordinator synthesizes & reports results, identifies trends

Curriculum Committee uses results & trends to design & execute solutions
Examples: Curricular Improvements

- Smaller adjustments
- Capstone course/rubric
- Course-level student learning outcomes
- Sequence of required courses
- Creation/deletion of courses
- Acceptable courses related to competencies or electives
- Transfer course acceptances
- Emphasis areas and concentrations
Building the Framework

Roles and Organizational Culture
Skillset & Reporting Maturity
Leadership
Technology and Resources
Timeline
Roles & Organizational Culture

• Program-designated assessment coordinators
• Relationship between assessment coordinators and curriculum committees
• Sense of community
• You!

Missing | Problematic | Helpful
Skillset & Reporting Maturity

- Knowledge of assessment components
- Quality of reporting efforts
- Consistency of assessment coordinators/contacts

Missing | Problematic | Helpful
Leadership

- Department Chair advocacy
- Associate Dean and Dean support
- Institutional support
Technology & Resources

• Reporting platform that can be substantially formatted or tailored
• Man/woman-power and time to develop and manage platform
• Man/woman-power and time to create new messaging and resources
Timeline

- Regional and professional accreditation
- Strategic planning expectations
- Departmental, college, institutional, or state committee cycles
Connecting Curriculum & Assessment

Individuals

Processes

Policies
Individuals

- Assessment coordinators
- Program coordinators
- Curriculum committee members
- Department chairs
Processes

- Assessment reporting timelines
- Curriculum committee timelines
- Faculty meetings
- Formal or informal data sharing events
• Faculty by-laws
• Assessment reporting policies
• Other institutional, college, or departmental policies
Comments from Faculty

- “This new format and procedures are so much easier for me to follow...”
- “[The process] will produce some good dialogue between [faculty] and actions we can move forward with to improve.”
- This means our COVID-19 results can be evaluated within a greater context
- This will make it easier to bring in the entire faculty to the improvement process
Lessons Learned

• Requires substantial initial effort to update SLOs, measures, resources, relationships

• Promoted assessment as a component of a whole, not a standalone exercise

• Communication and flexibility are key
  • Checklists
  • Zoom hours
  • Department-wide meetings
  • Chair involvement
Questions?

Kayla Steele Payne, M.A.
ksteel2@clemson.edu
864.656.3225