Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

This Guide for Planning and Assessing Instutional Efectveness is presented as an instrucve overview of the planning and assessment process at the University of North Alabama. It recognizes that each department or unit of the University is required to plan and assess its acivies in a meaningful way, primarily for the purpose of conuous improvement. As such, speci planning and assessment acivies are intended to be supported rather than prescribed.

Some deviaon from the process outlined, when useful for the department or unit, may be appropriate. Innovaon in programs, procedures, and assessment techniques is encouraged. Examples of required reports and/or documents are referenced in this guide and can be found, alo 0 d (tu)Tj9a76.5 7 (e r)13.2 r6Tf 0.0i.2 (a)uoy 0 Tw 11 fenced3

of the nature and concept of the
institution's purpose

4. To gain understanding and support from
those people outside the organization
who are important to its success.

UNA's Mission Statement reads as follows:

"As a regional, state-assisted institution of
higher education, the University of North
Alabama pursues its Mission of engaging
in teaching, research, and service in order
to provide educational opportunities for
students, an environment for discovery and
creative accomplishment, and a variety of
outreach activities meeting the professional,
civic, social, cultural, and economic
development needs of our region in the
context of a global community."

ASSESSMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OVERVIEW

Institutional Effectiveness is "the process of
articulating the mission, setting goals, and
using data to form assessment in an ongoing
cycle of goal se

Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning are:

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.
2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and

through their Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement (2018), and the Core Requirements (CR), Comprehensive Standards (CS), and Federal Requirements (FR) included therein.

As a general rule, success in demonstrating compliance with an accreditation requirement typically involves responding to all key phrases embedded in the core requirement or comprehensive standard. Crafting responses that thoroughly address the literal interpretation of all keywords and phrases is vital. This is especially important in the institutional effectiveness requirement of CR 7.1, 7.3, 8.1, 8.2, 8.2.a, 8.2.b., and 8.2.c.

The key points of this requirement that typically must be interpreted literally and addressed satisfactorily are:

x The institution is the primary focal point for a cas (4.567 -1.a56 o585 Tw .sis 89 04.567 -1.a56 o585 T0 demoA6 1.6 1.6c1.6

currently reads as follows:

The institution identifies college-level
general educa

the planning/assessment process and in the implementaƟon of indicated improvements.

- Vice Presidents are responsible for reviewing all departmental reports within their division, coordinaƟng departmental goals with divisional goals, and developing a divisional Annual Report
- Deans are responsible for developing, collecƟng, reviewing, and approving new goals to be added to the unit's long-term strategic goals as well as compiling the Annual Report. Deans also have the responsibility of reviewing the five-year program reviews with each department chair.
- Department chairs and program faculty are responsible for recommending changes in curriculum and departmental goals and student learning outcomes as a result of the five-year program reviews and assessment of the student learning outcomes. Changes should typically be recommended in the academic year following each program review. This process is documented and approved through the departmental, college, and insƟtuƟonal curriculum commiƩee structure. The department chair is also responsible for compleƟon of the Annual Report.
- Strategic Planning and Budget Study CommiƩee is responsible for aligning resources to specific insƟtuƟonal effecƟveness goals as well as serving in an advisory capacity to strategic, annual, and budget planning.
- The President is responsible for iniƟaƟng approval of any changes to the University Mission Statement. Following compleƟon of the University Mission Statement Review every fiŌh year and with consideraƟon of any resulƟng

particiaption must be real and based on the principles that each group has the largest influence in matters that concern it most, and that decisions made by shared governance bodies must have actual influence in University decision-making. Shared governance includes mutual particiaption in the development of policy and decisions in the areas of strategic and budget planning, faculty and staff welfare, selection and retention of academic and administrative officers, campus planning and development, and organizational accountability. Shared governance at UNA is composed of 5 strategic committees, 14 task committees, and the Executive Committee. The Instituational Effectiveness Commttef .r9et2.5(a)2J -15.132 -1.2 T -52.1(oupSt11.2(t)0(r)20.5(a)9

Eﬀecῧve assessment should answer three basic quesῧons:

Where has the...

The timeline for completing the Annual Report is shown in Figure 4.

In September, the chairs/directors will submit their annual goals along with their long-term goals which range the next two to five years. In October, the Deans and Vice Presidents will review the reports created by their direct reports, and enter their own annual and long-term goals. Any new budget requests must be reported in the Annual Report such that it is evident that planning is occuring before requests are brought before the Strategic Planning and Budget Study Committee.

Five-Year Program/Department Review Assessment

The second, critically important, phase of assessment for each academic and student support/administrative support department consists of a Program/Departmental review These comprehensive reviews were internally created through a joint effort of faculty, department chairs, directors, deans, vice presidents, OIRPA, and the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. As shown back in Figure 3, program/department reviews are an integral part of UNA's overall institutional effectiveness process because they are buttressed by the previous year's annual reports, and they serve as catalysts for the creation of key goals contained within annual reports. The timeline for completing the Program/Departmental Review is shown in Figure 4.

Within the academic division, the five-year schedule is determined by OIRPA with input from the academic unit department chairs and academic support unit directors. Furthermore, the academic departments should assess themselves at both the department and program levels. In the case where an academic department is responsible for more than one program, each program should complete a separate review by a qualified coordinator for that program.

In addition to addressing program viability, productivity, and efficiency, all academic departments are to focus on the extent to which student learning outcomes and/or departmental goals are achieved, and to identify opportunities for improvement. The University's seven Core Competencies are to be included in the learning outcomes for all academic programs. June 30 is the target date for completion, and the program review report should go to the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment. After OIRPA reviews the report, it is sent to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, and assigned to a committee member, who will determine if all requirements of the report have been met. Once this process is complete, OIRPA will provide feedback to the originating department, and the department chair should meet with the appropriate dean in order to discuss progress and problem areas that the report indicates. The meeting conformation form is to be completed at this meeting and returned to OIRPA as confirmation that this meeting has taken place.

The educational support/administrative departments of the University also undergo an extensive review that is conducted on a five year cycle. These reviews address viability, productivity, and efficiency of the unit, while focusing on the extent to which departmental goals are achieved, and opportunities for improvement are identified. The educational support/administrative reports will follow the same review process as the academic reports. Department chairs and directors are notified the October prior to the year in which their five year review report is due.

Templates and rubrics for both the Educational Support/Administrative Department Review and the Academic Department Review can be found at https://www.una.edu/research/five-year-review-resources.html.

Assessment of UNA's Core Competencies

The University of North Alabama has seven college-level general education competencies that students are expected to acquire during their undergraduate course of study. UNA's Core Competencies are as follows:

- x Information Literacy
- x Critical Thinking
- x Effective Communication
- x Scientific Literacy
- x Aesthetic Awareness and Creativity
- x Cross-Cultural and Global Perspective
- x Informed Citizenship

The University of North Alabama's approach for assessing the extent to which students have achieved the above core competencies, which includes 1) the assessment of student learning outcomes in the General Education Component courses, and 2) the assessment of specific student learning outcomes that also support UNA Core Competencies within each academic program.

Assessment of Core Competencies through the General Education Component

All academic departments that offer a General Education Component course are required to complete a General Education Audit. In prior years, this audit has been administered in paper format. It will be integrated into the Annual Report System for 2017-18, and accessible to every chair of a department in which a general education course is housed. This form consists of an assessment matrix for the General Education Component program. More specifically, this matrix demonstrates that each department has identified the extent to which UNA students are obtaining the Core Competencies through the General Education Component courses. Assessment of these courses ensures that program learning outcomes are established and related Core Competencies have been identified,

assessments of student learning outcomes are ongoing, and program modifications are taking place as needed.

Assessment of Core Competencies within each academic program

As part of the Annual Report, academic departments at UNA are surveyed to ascertain progress within each department toward establishing and assessing student learning outcomes within each program.

As part of the overall assessment of learning outcomes, each program must specify its outcomes, how each outcome is assessed, the results of the assessment(s), and what improvements were made based upon the results of the assessment(s). Therefore, program learning outcomes that support UNA's Core Competencies are adequately assessed and improved within the academic department in which the program resides.

University Level Assessments

The University's assessment process calls for systematic assessment in at least the following areas: evaluation of the Mission Statement (five-year cycle), evaluation of University Goals, and evaluation of the effectiveness of administrative processes and/or systems within the University (five-year cycle). University-level assessment will be administered by the President's Office, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, the Strategic Planning and Budget Study Committee, and OIRPA.

University Mission Statement

The evaluation of the University Mission Statement is to occur every five years. The evaluation should answer two questions: first, is the Mission Statement appropriate, and second, how well is the mission being fulfilled? Each five-year period, the Mission statement should be evaluated by a leadership task force appointed by the President. Membership

should be broad based and include board members, administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community representatives. The task force should report to the President and then share the results of the evaluation widely within the University community. The University Executive Council, with the assistance of the Director of OIRPA, will be responsible for conducting appropriate review, seeking input from the appropriate Shared Governance committees, and recommending to the President and the Board of Trustees any changes needed as a result of the review of the Mission Statement.

University Strategic Goals

Evaluation of the University's goals will occur every five years. As with the University's Mission Statement, the evaluation process should focus on two questions: 1) are the goals appropriate, and 2) how are they being achieved? The responsibility for evaluating the University's goals lies first with an assessment of these goals by OIRPA, and second through oversight by the University's Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The results of the evaluation will be shared widely within the University community. The President, working with the appropriate committees of the Shared Governance system, will initiate changes as needed through the Strategic Planning process and will make appropriate recommendations for any needed changes in the goals to the University Board of Trustees.

Administrative Systems

The evaluation of the effectiveness of administrative systems within the University consists of determining the effectiveness of existing administrative functions and processes, and assessing the effectiveness of the University's Shared Governance committee structure. Each of these separate evaluations is to be conducted on a five year cycle and will be the responsibility of separate task forces appointed by the President. These ad hoc groups will work with and coordinate their work through the University's Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The results of the assessment of administrative functions/systems and the shared governance committee

Post-Assessment Activities

The various assessment reports are typically due to each unit's respective approving authority on September 30 annually or every five years, depending upon the assessment schedule. While the report brings closure to the previous period's assessment cycle, it also represents the beginning of the next stage of the planning and assessment cycle.

The typical planning process is outlined below:

Assessment Reports (completed by September 30) are reviewed by appropriate administrator(s) and constituent groups over the summer and fall following their completion. Each approving authority is to provide effective feedback to the reporting unit at every level in order to achieve the goal of continuous improvement.

- Some adjustments to the upcoming Annual Report and budgets may result from immediate problems and opportunities that are identified. These immediate adjustments will be made to the Annual Report and/or budget in September. Two-way feedback is essential in the budget request process and should include documentation of the improvements or modifications made as a result of approved or denied requests for funding.
- Upon reviewing assessment reports, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee may make recommendations concerning changes to the assessment process. While it is not the function of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee to recommend changes to a program, department, or support units, this committee does have the responsibility of assessing the overall assessment process.
- Results of assessments will be used

primarily to develop new initiatives, goals and budgets for the upcoming academic year. In some cases, the results will impact planning for several years into the future.

Institutional Effectiveness/Planning/Budgeting/Assessment Timeline

Planning, budgeting, and assessment activities are ongoing and overlapping, with some activities focused on current year plans and budgets, and concurrent activities meant to address future year plans and budgets. A formal procedure for submitting annual and interim requests for new or additional funding has been established. Budget requests may be wholly/partially funded at the unit, college, division, or University level. Feedback from each applicable level to the unit level is necessary for effective unit planning and budgeting. In order to provide guidance in implementation of planning, budgeting and assessment activities for both current and future activities, this document integrates the two timelines – one for current year plans/budgets and the other for future year plans/budgets. The following general combined timeline is suggested:

September:
- Departments will submit an Annual Report for the current fiscal year and may include strategic goals for the next two to five years.
- Departments that underwent five-year review last year may include these goals in the current year's Annual Report.

October:
- x Academic departments and support departments that are scheduled for the Five-Year Department/Program review will begin process.
- x Vice Presidents and Deans will review the annual reports submitted by their direct reports, and submit an annual report for their own areas.

November:
- OIRPA meets with departments undergoing five-year department/program review.

December:
- OIRPA completes Five-Year Data report, and makes it available to academic departments.

January:
- Departmental strategic goals are reviewed by Deans.
- President submits budget/initiatives for the next Fiscal Year
- President's proposed budget/initiatives are articulated to:
  » Council of Academic Deans
  » Institutional Effectiveness Committee
  » Strategic Planning and Budget Study Committee

February:
- Departmental strategic goals

University and look at the extent to which the department successfully accommplishes its mission and goals.

Operational Outcome– A clear, concise statement that describes how a department (academic/administrative/educational support) can demonstrate the completion of a goal.

Performance Indicators –Performance Indicators are the metrics used to measure how well a goal is being achieved. Depending on the goal, the metric or performance indicator might be the results from nationally normed tests or exams scores on various surveys of constituents or some other specific measure that helps determine the degree to which a University or Unit Goal is being accomplished.

Goals –Specific items that an academic, educational support, or administrative unit wants to pursue during the course of a defined period. For each goal, the unit identifies several specific strategies, or actions to be taken in support of the goal. For most of the academic, educational support, and administrative units of the University these goals should guide certain actions at the unit level.

Program Assessment– An ongoing process designed to monitor and improve student learning. Faculty develop explicit statements of what students should learn, verify that the program is designed to foster this learning, collect empirical data that indicate student attainment, and use these data to improve student learning.

Student Learning Outcomes–Student learning outcomes are at the core of the academic program or General Education Component courses. They represent the minimum learning objectives for a given program or General Education Component course. Each academic department is to identi

16

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