

Program Learning Outcomes Rubric

Assessment Plan Evaluation Rubric Introduction

This rubric is used by the University Center for Assessment, Teaching, and Technology (UCATT) Assessment Team to review the annually submitted program student learning assessment cycles for all degree-granting programs at the University of Arizona. This is not an evaluation of degree program quality, and not a means to tally 'Met' vs 'Not Met' Program Learning Outcomes. Instead, it is a means to provide formative and summative feedback on the process of assessment of student learning outcomes. For the basic assessment cycle component definitions, please go to our [guide](#).

What is the intrinsic value of doing program assessment of student learning?

- Transparency
- Commitment to closing the loop
 - How do you utilize data to inform changes in a program?
 - What are the pertinent changes to implement?
 - “Commitment to using assessment to review program success and, if necessary, make changes”
 - Assessment, reflection, action
- Improvement (both of student learning and academic program quality)
- Collegiality
- Awareness (of how and why we monitor student learning)

Who should be involved in program assessment?

- Faculty of all tracks and titles
- Students
- Staff and advisors
- Industry partners and stakeholders

Notes:

- While every program is required to submit an annual assessment report, not all outcomes have to be measured every cycle. You can rotate them. However, we do recommend that every outcome be measured at least every 2 years. If alternating outcomes, be sure the measures are still included in each cycle and a timeline for when it will be measured is included in the measure description.
- Every outcome should have a minimum of one direct and one indirect assessment measure (please refer to the [Assessment Guide](#) for examples).
- The process by which the faculty, staff, and students define and implement assessment needs to be documented.

Resources:

[How to Access Assessment Reporting Feedback](#) (video 2:22)

[How to Create and Edit Mission Statements](#)

[How to Create and Edit Curriculum Maps](#) (includes a section on How to Add/Remove Courses from a Program Curriculum Map)

[How to Enter Results, Findings, and Actions in an Assessment Plan](#) (includes a section on how to Analyze an Outcome)

[Tracking Actions and Adding Updates](#)

[Reporting Results and Findings in Planning & Self-Study](#) (video 7:31)

Mission Statement

The mission statement serves as a foundation for goals and student learning outcomes and should distinguish it from other programs. It should include the description of the broad purposes the program is aiming to achieve; the general activities the program engages in related to those purposes; the community and stakeholders the program serves; and the values and principles that guide the program's purposes and activities.

	Yes	Partly	No
The Mission Statement is specific to the program and describes its purpose, values, activities, and larger impact; it aligns with the University's mission, reflects stakeholder input, and is clearly understandable and accessible.			

Process of Assessment

The Process of Assessment reflects how the faculty, staff, and students of a department design, implement, communicate, and maintain their assessment plan. This should be included at the end of your mission statement in one or two sentences.

	Yes	Partly	No
The program's assessment processes are transparent, including roles and responsibilities. The process explains how faculty work together to develop scoring tools and targets and communicates how the student voice is integrated into the process. It also describes how faculty and stakeholders analyze and discuss results, reflect on ways to improve student learning, and communicate essential elements of the assessment plan to students.			

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

The Program Learning Outcomes identify the intended knowledge, abilities, skills, or values that students will be able to demonstrate upon successful completion of the academic program. The outcomes should be clear and specific (e.g. not at too high a conceptual level or with too many concepts per outcome), measurable, and at a high cognitive level (please refer to the **Assessment Guide** for examples). They should be widely communicated, and, at the undergraduate level, should align with the **Institutional Learning Outcomes** (ILOs).

No more than 3-5 outcomes are recommended unless dictated by an outside accreditor.

Outstanding	Excellent	Acceptable	Developing	Unacceptable
All outcomes are student-focused, clear, specific, measurable, at a high cognitive level, and aligned with the mission statement. If applicable, they align with Institutional Learning Outcomes.	Most outcomes are student-focused, clear, specific, measurable, and at a high cognitive level. If applicable, they align with Institutional Learning Outcomes.	Most outcomes are clear and measurable. If applicable, they align with Institutional Learning Outcomes.	Outcomes are not very clear, or measurable. If applicable, they align with Institutional Learning Outcomes.	No Outcomes are provided.

Curriculum Map

The curriculum map is a matrix that visually represents the alignment between program learning outcomes and required courses/experiences. It can document what is taught, reveal gaps in the curriculum, and serve as the basis of an assessment plan.

Outstanding	Excellent	Acceptable	Developing	Unacceptable	Beginning
The Map lists all core courses/ milestones (electives optional) aligned with outcomes at the introduced, reinforced, and/ or mastered levels; it also indicates the assessed points as presented in the plan.	The Map lists all core courses/ milestones (electives optional) that are aligned with outcomes. The map also indicates the assessed points as presented in the plan.	The Map lists all core courses/ milestones (electives optional) that are aligned with outcomes.	The Map lists courses/milestones (electives optional), some of which are aligned with outcomes.	No map has been created.	New program.

The Assessment Plan

An Assessment Plan is the structured evaluation of how well program learning outcomes are attained, utilizing both direct and indirect measures, and drawing conclusions based on valid principles supported by reliable and relevant evidence.

The plan consists of the following for each measure:

- Measures and Descriptions
- Targets
- Results
- Findings
- Actions

Assessment Plan: Measures and Descriptions

Every outcome needs at least one timely, direct (learning is demonstrated) and indirect (learning can be inferred) measure for assessing learning. When selecting measurement tools, we recommend considering if exam grades or total rubric scores align with appropriate outcomes. A best practice is using only scores on outcome-specific questions or criteria. The measure, the target, and the data-collection process should be clearly and concisely, yet sufficiently, described for general audiences to understand. (please refer to the **Assessment Guide** for examples).

Outstanding	Excellent	Acceptable	Developing	Unacceptable	Beginning
The plan includes both direct and indirect measures for each outcome; measures are appropriate and aligned as evidenced by the evaluation tools (rubrics, surveys, etc.); the method for scoring the measure is specified and appropriate; and the timeline for data collection for each measure is included. If appropriate, the measures should align with the curriculum map.	The plan includes both direct and indirect measures for each outcome. The evaluation tools (rubrics, surveys, etc.) evidence that the measures are appropriate and aligned. The method for scoring the measure is specified and appropriate. If appropriate, the measures should align with the curriculum map.	The plan includes both direct and indirect measures for each outcome. Some of the measures are appropriate and aligned, as evidenced by the evaluation tools (rubrics, surveys, etc.). Some of the methods for scoring the measure are specified and appropriate. If appropriate, the measures should align with the curriculum map.	The plan only includes direct or indirect measures for each outcome; few measures are appropriate and aligned, as evidenced by the evaluation tools (rubrics, surveys, etc.). If appropriate, the measures should align with the curriculum map.	The plan only includes direct or indirect measures for some outcomes.	New program.

Assessment Plan: Targets

The target is the performance level considered the threshold for success in achieving the learning outcome. Targets must coordinate with the measurement tool. If a target has been repeatedly “Met,” program faculty should discuss setting a more aspirational target.

	Yes	Partly	No	Beginning
The targets are aligned with the evaluation tools and represent a clear level of student performance. The wording is consistent with the measure description. Targets provide a meaningful benchmark and are specified for each measure.				

Assessment Plan: Results

Results are reported from direct and indirect measures being engaged in the cycle. (While we recommend results from a minimum of 5 students, less may be reported at the program’s discretion). Results should never contain student names or other identifying information. They are provided in a clear, readable format that includes: the number of students measured (n), the student population (if sampling is used), and the response rate for surveys. Disaggregation of data is highly recommended, especially if a program is offered through different modalities, or if enrollment is robust enough to allow breakdown by student demographics without identifying individual students. Note in the summary if a measure was not used in a particular cycle or if the number of students was too few and no results were reported.

Outstanding	Excellent	Acceptable	Developing	Unacceptable	Beginning
Results are reported for each engaged measure. They are clear, readable, organized, and related to the outcome. Data are disaggregated by degree modality, by student demographics, or other meaningful attribute(s). The summary clearly identifies if data for a measure was not collected and when the data will be next collected.	Results are reported or attached for each engaged measure. They are clear, readable, organized, and related to the outcome. Data is disaggregated by degree modality or by student demographics. The summary clearly identifies if data for a measure was not collected and when the data will be next collected.	Results are attached for each engaged measure. They are clear, readable, organized, and related to the outcome. The summary clearly identifies if data for a measure was not collected and when the data will be next collected.	Results are attached for some of the engaged measures. They are clear, readable, and organized.	No Results are presented.	New program.

Assessment Plan: Findings

Findings are the faculty’s interpretations of the data and the conclusions they come to based on the data. They should include what the faculty discussed when reviewing the results. If a measure has been collected for multiple years, faculty should consider past findings and look at the big picture for trends. If findings were not collected or if there were too few students, please note why they were not reported and when the findings will be reported.

Outstanding	Excellent	Acceptable	Developing	Unacceptable	Beginning
Findings are reported for each measure that has results. Findings are clearly and meaningfully interpreted with respect to results and targets. Interpretation of trend data and outlier data and a discussion of the data in light of previous action plans, as applicable, are included.	Findings are reported for each measure that has results. Findings are clearly and meaningfully interpreted with respect to results and targets. Interpretation of trend data, outlier data, and a discussion of the data is limited.	Findings are reported for each measure that has results. Findings are minimally interpreted with respect to results and targets. Interpretation of trend data, outlier data, and a discussion of the data is limited or not present.	Findings are reported for some of the measures that have results. Findings are minimally interpreted with respect to results and targets.	No findings are reported.	New program.

Assessment Plan: Actions

The findings are used to inform action plans to improve student learning. These actions may include changes in instruction, curriculum, strategic planning, etc. Actions from previous cycles should be evaluated by assessing students after changes have been implemented. If no actions are indicated by the results and findings, the program should choose “maintain assessment strategy” with a comprehensive explanation of why no changes are indicated. All actions should have an associated timeline for completion.

Outstanding	Excellent	Acceptable	Developing	Unacceptable	Beginning
Action plans for all measures are based on findings and explained in detail. Actions from previous years should be addressed to close the loop on assessment, and an appropriate timeline is included for each action.	Action plans for all measures are based on the findings. To close the loop on assessment, actions from previous years should be addressed; an appropriate timeline is included for each action.	Action plans for most measures are based on the findings. To close the loop on assessment, actions from previous years may be addressed; an appropriate timeline is included for each action.	Action plans for some measures are based on the findings. Actions from previous years may be addressed to close the loop on assessment.	No action plans.	New program.

The Final Piece

Since the assessment cycle is never ending, the loop needs to be closed in order to start all over again. This includes reviewing and addressing the feedback provided to you from your annual assessment review in Planning and Self Study.

It is also good practice to look at the big picture of each outcome and its collective measures over time, not necessarily just from the current cycle. Planning and Self Study allows you to look at your findings and actions from previous cycles so trends and discrepancies can be identified. It can also show you any positive progress you have made over the years as well.

Closing the Loop on Feedback

Feedback received on previous assessment plans needs to be addressed substantially.

	Yes	Partly	No	N/A
The program addressed previous feedback received from the Assessment team reviews.				Will be used for programs that did not receive feedback on previous plans or are new programs.

Assessment Plan: Outcome Analysis

Outcome analysis is an interpretation of the direct and indirect results at the outcome level; it includes a reflection of what the combined results mean and a discussion of appropriate actions that should be taken in light of this reflection.

	Yes	Partly	No	N/A
An analysis is provided for each outcome with reported results. The analysis provides an interpretation of findings across the measures. Based on this analysis, appropriate action plans may be developed.				