

University Assessment Policy 1018

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish integrated and institution-wide planning and assessment processes for ensuring continuous improvement in the quality of all aspects of the institution and accomplishment of the university's mission. In addition, the policy fulfills an internal system through which institutional self-examination is an ongoing process that supports data-informed decision-making, policy formation, budgeting, and programming and fulfills federal, regional, and state requirements and their associated reporting requirements. The policy provides a framework necessary for compliance with the institutional effectiveness standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

II. Definitions

1. Assessment – Ongoing process of: 1) defining specific, measurable outcomes, linked to institutional/divisional/departmental missions and strategic planning goals; 2) identifying how to measure for success; 3) collecting data to determine how well expectations were met; and 4) using the results to evaluate and plan for improvement.
2. Action Item – Documented event, task, activity, or action that needs to take place for unit/program improvement.
3. Planning and Assessment System – Electronic system used to document all parts of the planning and assessment process, including but not limited to ~~goals~~, outcomes, assessment targets and measures, assessment results, analysis of assessment results, action items for improvement based on analysis of results, resources required for action items, and documentation of actual improvement.
4. Academic Program – Educational program of study, including general education, majors, and certificates regardless of the location or form of instructional delivery.
5. Administrative/Non-Academic Unit – Any unit that is not an academic program, including administrative, co-curricular, outreach, and academic support entities.

III. Applicability

Institutional effectiveness should be demonstrated in all aspects of the university's activities. As such, this policy applies to all university academic programs and administrative/non-academic units, hereafter referred to collectively as "units." Although not part of the institutional effectiveness standards, the Board of Visitors conducts an annual self-evaluation in order to reflect upon its role in institutional improvement.

IV. Responsibilities

1. The Office of Assessment and Institutional Research (OAIR) operates under the leadership of the Provost and functions as coordinator, facilitator, and consultant for university-wide planning and assessment processes. The Director of Assessment is the

primary administrator of the planning and assessment system and serves as an internal consultant for Longwood's planning and assessment process.

2. Administrative managers and directors (including deans and academic department chairs) of units are responsible for ensuring that: 1) program and student learning outcomes are identified and assessed and that evidence of improvement based on analysis of results is documented; 2) ~~Program Effectiveness Plans~~, Annual Assessment Reports, and Program Reviews are submitted in a timely manner and of acceptable quality; 3) ~~Program Effectiveness Plans and~~ Annual Assessment Reports are reviewed to maintain effective unit planning and budgeting.
3. Vice presidents are responsible for: 1) ensuring that units in their division develop, implement, review, and assess outcomes; and 2) reviewing assessment results, action items, and budget requests associated with those units as part of the strategic planning process.
4. The University Planning Council (UPC) is responsible for ensuring that assessment results are systematically reviewed as part of an ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation process.
5. The University Assessment Committee (UAC) is responsible for setting standards related to institutional effectiveness, including overall implementation of this policy.
6. The Administrative Assessment Committee (AAC) is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on the quality and effectiveness of the assessment and planning processes of administrative/non-academic units.
7. The Committee on Academic Program Assessment and Review (CAPAR) is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on the quality and effectiveness of the assessment and planning processes of academic programs.
8. The Core Curriculum Committee (CCC) is responsible for coordinating, overseeing, assessing, and making recommendations for changes about Longwood's Civitae Core Curriculum program.

V. Policy

1. General Provisions

Unit-level planning and assessment are ongoing processes that occur throughout the year and provide the means by which the university demonstrates achievement of its mission and strategic priorities. Assessment results are used to inform programmatic and administrative decisions, strategic planning, budget requests, and resource allocations. It is an institutional expectation that each division and unit will reference and incorporate its assessment outcomes during the annual budgeting process.

This policy is informed by the best practices for excellence in assessment as set forth by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA).

2. Organizational Structure

1. **Committee on Academic Program Assessment and Review (CAPAR).** The CAPAR is appointed by and reports to the Faculty Senate. It is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on the quality and effectiveness of

academic programs. See the *Faculty Policies and Procedures Manual* for more information.

2. **Core Curriculum Committee (CCC).** The CCC is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. It is responsible for coordinating, overseeing, assessing, and reporting about the Longwood University Civitae Core Curriculum program. The CCC consolidates and evaluates information about the performance of the Core Curriculum program's curricular and co-curricular elements on a rotating three-year cycle. See the *Faculty Policies and Procedures Manual* for more information.
3. **Administrative Assessment Committee (AAC).** The AAC is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on the quality and effectiveness of the planning and assessment processes of administrative/non-academic units. To promote quality and effectiveness, the AAC will monitor, oversee, and provide feedback on Annual Assessment Reports from each administrative/non-academic unit. ~~The AAC will also develop a schedule and requirements for periodic in-depth program reviews of each major functional administrative/non-academic unit.~~ All AAC findings will be reported to the University Assessment Committee to ensure compliance with the current Longwood assessment policy. The AAC will make recommendations to the University Assessment Committee on issues related to assessment of administrative/non-academic units.
 1. Membership: Up to two representatives from each of the major administrative divisions (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Strategic Operations, Athletics, Advancement, Administration and Finance).
 2. Ex-Officio Members: Director of Assessment (non-voting).
 3. Term of Office: The term of office shall be for three years and the terms of service may be staggered. Members may be reappointed for a maximum of two consecutive terms.
 4. Method of Selection: Staff members will be nominated by the leadership of each division and approved by the University Assessment Committee.
 5. Chair: Elected by the membership.
 6. Reporting Route: University Assessment Committee.
4. **University Assessment Committee (UAC).** The UAC is a standing committee of the University Planning Council (UPC) and functions as a conduit among academic colleges, programs, and institutional divisions, providing a university-wide assessment perspective for informed decision-making, planning, and resource allocation. The UAC will set standards and guide implementation of the university's assessment policy. The UAC will develop strategies for communicating assessment data and the use of results for improvement to both internal and external stakeholders. The UAC will also examine assessment results tied to strategic priorities and work with the UPC Finance Committee to ensure that these assessment results are used to make decisions and allocate resources at the institutional and major division levels. The UAC will make recommendations to the UPC on assessment-related issues and trends at Longwood.
 1. Membership: The following must be represented:
 1. One representative each from ~~CAP~~OPR, AAC, and CCC.

2. Representatives from three of the major administrative divisions (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Strategic Operations, Athletics, Advancement, Administration and Finance).
 3. One faculty member from each academic college.
 4. One student representative.
 5. One alumni representative.
 6. Director of the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research or designee.
 7. Academic Affairs Accreditation and Compliance Officer.
2. **Term of Office:** The term of office shall be for three years and the terms of service may be staggered. Members may be reappointed for a maximum of two consecutive terms.
 3. **Method of Selection:** As with other standing committees of the UPC, the President will appoint the co-chairs in consultation with the UPC. One co-chair must be a faculty member and one must be an administrative staff member. The co-chairs will appoint other members in consultation with the appropriate leadership or governing body.
 4. **Chair:** As with other standing committees of the UPC, the UAC will have two co-chairs who will also serve on the UPC.
 5. **Reporting Route:** University Planning Council.
5. **University Planning Council (UPC).** The UPC is established by the President and serves as a means of aligning the university's operations and budgeting with the strategic priorities of the university and as a forum for discussion of key issues. The UPC's standing committees represent key pathways and forums for advancing the strategic priorities of the university through an integrated, institution-wide, and data-driven approach.
3. **Planning and Assessment Cycle.**
Academic programs and administrative/non-academic units are required to: 1) define specific, measurable outcomes, linked to institutional/divisional/departamental missions and strategic planning goals; 2) identify assessment measures and appropriate performance criteria or targets for success; 3) collect data to determine how well expectations are met; 4) analyze the results; 5) develop action items for improvement; and 6) measure the effectiveness of action items.

The cycle year is defined as Summer, Fall, and Spring.

The Office of Assessment and Institutional Research will monitor the status of annual planning and assessment submissions to the online management system and will provide updates to the CAOPAR, AAC, CCC, vice presidents, and administrative managers and directors (including deans and department chairs).

4. **Annual Assessment Reports.**
Annual Assessment Reports are reviewed by vice presidents, deans, and managers of major functional units to inform division priorities and resource allocation for the upcoming year. Reports must be completed in the planning and assessment system by July 1 for administrative/non-academic units and by October 1 for academic programs.

Plans for the new academic year for both academic programs and administrative/non-academic units must be added in the online management system by October 1. Units are encouraged to enter assessment results and progress on action items in the planning and assessment system throughout the year.

To ensure quality and effectiveness of planning and assessment processes, the CAP~~OP~~APR, CCC, and AAC will be responsible for determining guidelines and templates consistent with the online management system and providing timely feedback.

5. Program Review.

Each academic program ~~and each major functional administrative/non-academic unit~~ must conduct an in-depth program review on a periodic basis, preferably at least every six years. Each major functional administrative/non-academic unit may also conduct an in-depth program review if requested by the appropriate vice president. Academic programs and administrative/non-academic units that conduct self-studies for specialized accreditation are exempt from this requirement.

All program reviews are due by July 1 for relevant administrative/non-academic units and by October 1 for academic programs. Recommendations from the appropriate committee's evaluation of the program review will be shared with the unit, the unit's supervisor, and the appropriate vice president.

6. Academic Program Accreditation.

Programmatic and discipline-specific accreditations have significant impact on regional accreditation and operation of the university. All correspondence with external accreditors, including annual and multi-year reports and self-studies, responses, and actions, must be shared with the Office of Accreditation and Compliance. The Academic Affairs Assistant Vice President for Accreditation and Compliance Officer is available to collaborate on reporting requirements for those programs accredited or certified by any external body. Annual and multi-year reports and self-studies are to be made available through the planning and assessment system.

VI. Enforcement/Compliance

Assessment responsibilities will be considered in the annual performance evaluation of vice presidents and of unit administrative managers and directors (including deans and academic department chairs).

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years by the University Assessment Committee. Changes to the policy must be approved by the University Planning Council and the Board of Visitors.

Approved by the Board of Visitors, March 23, 2018

Revised and approved by the Board of Visitors, June 11, 2021.