

Savannah State University

**Academic Program
Assessment Guide**



SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)	
Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Programs	2
SACSCOC Region and Accrediting Standards	2
Federal Requirements	3
SACSCOC Fifth-Year Interim Report & Decennial Reaffirmation of Accreditation	3
SACSCOC Requirements for Educational Program Assessment: Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1	4
SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1 (General Education Competencies)	8
SSU Academic Program Assessment	
Assessment of Educational Programs at Savannah State University	9
SSU Student Learning Outcomes	9
<i>*Assessment Process for the Educational Programs at Savannah State University Flow Chart (??)</i>	10
Faculty (full-time, full-time temporary, part-time temporary) Responsibilities	11
Program Coordinator Responsibilities	12
Department Chair Responsibilities	13
Dean Responsibilities	13
Provost Responsibilities	13
Institutional Effectiveness, Planning, and Assessment Office (IEPA) Responsibilities	14
LiveText, SSU Assessment Management Software	15
Other Important Software Used by Savannah State University	15
Assessment Calendars and Important Deadlines for Educational Programs at Savannah State University	
- SACSCOC: Important Deadlines for Savannah State University	16
- Assessment Cycles at Savannah State University	16
- Fall Assessment Calendar for Educational Programs at SSU	17
- Spring Assessment Calendar for Educational Programs at SSU: 1st minimester	18
- Spring Assessment Calendar for Educational Programs at SSU: 2nd minimester	19
Assessment Glossary	20
Contact Information	25

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

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

Savannah State University (SSU) is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) to award associate, baccalaureate, and master's degrees.

Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Programs

Accreditation is intended to assure constituents and the public of the quality and integrity of higher education institutions and programs, and to help those institutions and programs improve. These outcomes are achieved through rigorous internal and external review processes during which the institution is evaluated against a common set of standards.

When accreditation is awarded to an institution of higher education by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), a regional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education, it means that the institution has (1) a mission appropriate to higher education, (2) resources, programs, and services sufficient to accomplish and sustain its mission, (3) clearly specified educational objectives that are consistent with its mission and appropriate to the degrees it offers, and that it is (4) successful in assessing its achievement of these objectives and demonstrating improvements. Accreditation by SACSCOC is a statement of the institution's continuing commitment to integrity and its capacity to provide effective programs and services based on agreed-upon accreditation standards.

Source: www.sacscoc.org/faqs.asp

SACSCOC Region and Accrediting Standards

SACSCOC is the regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. It serves as the common denominator of shared values and practices among the diverse institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Latin America and other international sites approved by the Commission that award associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees.

To gain or maintain accreditation with SACSCOC, an institution must comply with **the standards contained in the *Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*** and with **the policies and procedures of the Commission**. The Commission applies the requirements of its Principles to all applicant, candidate, and member institutions, regardless of type of institution (public, private for-profit, or private not-for-profit).

Source: www.sacscoc.org/principles.asp

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is a regional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education.

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

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

Federal Requirements

The U.S. Secretary of Education recognizes accreditation by SACSCOC in establishing the eligibility of higher education institutions to participate in programs authorized under Title IV of the *Higher Education Act*, as amended, and other federal programs. Through its periodic review of institutions of higher education, the Commission assures the public that it is a reliable authority on the quality of education provided by its member institutions.

The federal statute includes mandates that the Commission review an institution in accordance with criteria outlined in the federal regulations developed by the U.S. Department of Education. As part of the review process, institutions are required to document compliance with those criteria and the Commission is obligated to consider such compliance when the institution is reviewed for initial membership or continued accreditation.

Implicit in every federal requirement mandating a policy or procedure is the expectation that the policy or procedure is in writing and has been approved through appropriate institutional processes, published in appropriate institutional documents accessible to those affected by the policy or procedure, and implemented and enforced by the institution.

Source: <http://sacscoc.org/pdf/2012PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf>

Institutions that do not demonstrate that they meet accreditation standards may be asked for monitoring reports, placed on the public sanctions of “Warning” or “Probation,” or dropped from status as a candidate or an accredited institution.

(For additional information, please see Sanctions, Denial of Reaffirmation, and Removal from Membership.)

Source: <http://www.sacscoc.org/faqs.asp>; www.sacscoc.org/pdf/081705/sanctionpolicy.pdf

SACSCOC Fifth-Year Interim Report & Decennial Reaffirmation of Accreditation

All institutions accredited by the SACSCOC are required to undergo a review for reaffirmation of accreditation every ten years. After being granted initial accreditation by the Commission, new member institutions will be reviewed for reaffirmation of accreditation after five years, then every ten years thereafter. The Commission’s reviews of institutions between decennial reaffirmation reviews in accordance with policies governing fifth-year interim reviews, special committee visits, and substantive change visits, normally will not alter the specified date for the decennial reaffirmation review. During the fifth-year interim reporting period, a summary of the institution’s Quality Enhancement Plan impact is due.

Source: sacscoc.org/subchg/policy/reaffirmationpolicy.pdf

IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR SAVANNAH STATE UNIVERSITY

DUE DATE FOR SACSCOC FIFTH-YEAR INTERIM REPORT: March 15, 2017

NEXT SACSCOC DECENNIAL REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: March 2021

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

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

SACSCOC Requirements for Educational Program Assessment

The process for initial and continued accreditation involves a collective analysis and judgment by the institution's internal constituencies, an informed review by peers external to the institution, and a reasoned decision by the elected members of the Commission on Colleges' Board of Trustees.

The Commission evaluates an institution and makes accreditation decisions based on the following:

- Compliance with the Principle of Integrity (Section 1)
- Compliance with the Core Requirements (Section 2)
- **Compliance with the Comprehensive Standards (Section 3)**
- Compliance with additional Federal Requirements (Section 4)
- Compliance with the policies of the Commission on Colleges

The Comprehensive Standards set forth requirements in the following four areas: (1) institutional mission, governance, and effectiveness; (2) programs; (3) resources; and (4) institutional responsibility for Commission policies. The Comprehensive Standards are more specific to the operations of the institution, represent good practice in higher education, and establish a level of accomplishment expected of all member institutions. **If an institution is judged to be significantly out of compliance with one or more of the Comprehensive Standards, its reaffirmation of accreditation may be denied.**

SSU Educational Programs are judged according to Comprehensive Standard *Institutional Effectiveness*, more specifically under item 3.3.1.1.

3.3 Institutional Effectiveness

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: (Institutional Effectiveness)

3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

3.3.1.2 administrative support services

3.3.1.3 educational support services

3.3.1.4 research within its educational mission, if appropriate

3.3.1.5 community/public service within its educational mission, if appropriate

Source: www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2012PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf

Under 3.3.1.1, an educational program must identify measurable student learning outcomes and assess them regularly (at least twice within the assessment cycle) and clearly document and demonstrate use of data collection on student learning for continuous improvement to the program. Further, programs must establish and measure more broadly-construed program goals that evidence program outcomes that show attention and effort for enhancement.

Source: Reprinted from the SACSCOC *Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, 2012 Edition, pps. 48-51.

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: (*Institutional effectiveness*)

- 3.3.1.1. educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
- 3.3.1.2. administrative support services
- 3.3.1.3. academic and student support services
- 3.3.1.4. research within its mission, if appropriate
- 3.3.1.5. community/public service within its mission, if appropriate

Rationale and Notes

This standard addresses the process of assessment that supports the institution's educational programs, its administrative support services, its academic and student support services, and, as appropriate, its research and community/public service; this process serves as the cornerstone of institutional effectiveness. Institutional effectiveness focuses on the design and improvement of educational experiences to enhance student learning.

Guiding statements designed to assist institutions in documenting compliance:

1. Institutions should interpret "outcome" in a manner consistent with an academic program or a given service unit's mission and role in the institution. It is the institution's responsibility to explain how each unit's outcomes are related to its mission and role in the institution.
2. While it is clear from the standard that assessment is at the program level for academic programs, institutions should determine the organizational levels at which assessment is useful and efficient for administrative and for academic and student support units. It is incumbent on the institution to explain how this determination follows from its mission and organizational structure.
3. Institutions are not required or expected to use the same assessment procedures in each of the four areas; in particular, administrative support services, academic and student support services, research within the mission, and community/public service within the mission need not be assessed in the same way as educational programs. However, institutions are expected to use multiple assessments in each area. Consequently, grades alone for the assessment of educational programs or student learning outcomes are insufficient.
4. Institutions that engage in research or public service should carefully frame the scope of their discussion of CS 3.3.1.4 and CS 3.3.1.5 by identifying their research and their service missions, explaining the ways in which the institution has chosen to evaluate the effectiveness of each. This may include a connection with its educational programs and discussing its assessment of the impact of research and service on the institution and its programs, as appropriate.
5. There is a clear expectation that an institution be able to demonstrate institutional effectiveness for all its diplomas, certificates, and undergraduate and graduate educational degree programs.
6. The expectation is that the institution will engage in on-going planning and assessment to ensure that for each academic program, the institution develops and assesses student learning outcomes. Program and learning outcomes specify the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes students are expected to attain in courses or in a program. Methods for assessing the extent to which students achieve these outcomes are appropriate to the nature of the discipline, and consistent over time to enable the institution to evaluate cohorts of students who complete courses or a program. Shared widely within and across programs, the results of this assessment can affirm the institution's success at achieving its mission and can be used to inform decisions about curricular and programmatic revisions. At appropriate intervals, program and learning outcomes and assessment methods are evaluated and revised.

7. An institution may provide a *sampling* of its programs as long as it is representative of its mission and includes a valid cross-section of programs from every school or division and at each degree level. Sampling should also include programs offered at off-campus instructional sites and course work offered through distance or correspondence education. It is the institution's responsibility to make a compelling case as to why the sampling and assessment findings are an appropriate representation of the institution's programs. This sampling, however, does not preclude the institution from having data/analysis available on the effectiveness of all programs in case evaluators request to review it. It is the evaluators' prerogative to conduct a more in-depth review of an institution's data/findings/analysis on the effectiveness of its educational programs.
8. Institutional effectiveness can be achieved in a variety of ways and the mentality that "one size fits all" is inappropriate and diminishes the individual missions of institutions. The institution should develop and/or use methods and instruments that are uniquely suited to the goal statements and that are supported by faculty.
9. At the time of its review, the institution is responsible for producing mature data. Mature data can be defined as sufficient information used as a basis for sound decision making.
10. At the time of its review, the institution is responsible for providing *evidence* of improvement, based on the analysis of the assessment results, as opposed to a *plan* for improvement.

Notes: For consistency in rhetoric, the Commission uses "assessment" in place of evaluation, and "outcomes" instead of objectives/goals.
 The institution should define "units" based on its organizational structure.
 While institutions may organize functions differently, it is expected that all services, whether administrative or academic student support services, engage in the institutional effectiveness processes

3.3.1.1 Educational programs, to include student learning

Note: In this standard, the Commission expects the review of the effectiveness of educational programs and of student learning.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- How are expected outcomes clearly defined in measurable terms for each educational program?
- What is the evidence of assessment activities for each program?
- How are periodic reviews in which programmatic outcomes assessed, reviewed, and used for improvements?
- How does the institution's use of assessment results improve educational programs?
- If the institution used sampling, why were the sampling and findings an appropriate representation of the institution's programs?
- What assessment instruments were used and why were they selected? Were multiple assessment methods used? If so, describe.
- Have the programs assessed the extent to which they have been successful in achieving their learning outcomes?
- If called for, have program improvements been made as a result of assessment findings?
- How does the institution's use of assessment results improve educational programs?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Documentation of expected outcomes for educational programs and for student learning outcomes
- Documentation of the evaluation of those outcomes
- Evidence that the student support services and programs effectively meet the needs of students of all types
- Documentation of the use of the findings from assessment to improve the institution
- If sampling is used, (1) how the sampling is representative of the institution's mission, (2) documentation of a valid cross-section of programs, and a (3) case as to why sampling and assessment findings are an appropriate representation of the institution's programs.

Source: Reprinted from the SACSCOC *Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, 2012 Edition, pps. 65-66.

3.5.1 The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them. (General education competencies)

Rationale and Notes

Since general education requirements are central to educational programs, this standard assumes that the institution will define specifically which competencies are appropriate to the goals of its general education program and consistent with principles of good practice. The institution is responsible for identifying measures to determine the extent to which students have attained those competencies during their course of study as well as the extent to which students have actually attained those competencies.

Note: This standard addresses college-level competencies within the general education core; it does not require a specific course to address each competency. In addition, there is no requirement regarding when the institution must determine student attainment of competencies.

Relevant Questions for Consideration

- What are the specific college-level competencies within the general education program?
- What evidence is available to show the extent to which students have attained these competencies?
- What evidence exists that demonstrates that the institution identifies competencies that are college-level?
- What criteria does the institution use to set an acceptable benchmark for student attainment of competencies?

Documentation

Required Documentation, if applicable

- Identification of competencies
- Justification that all competencies are at the college level and the degree to which students have attained them are acceptable
- Evidence of the extent to which students of undergraduate degree programs have attained the college-level competencies

Examples of other Types of Documentation

- Follow up studies of graduates

Reference to Commission Documents, if applicable

“The Quality and Integrity of Undergraduate Degrees”

Cross References to other related Standards/Requirements, if applicable

Core Requirement 2.7.3

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1

Federal Requirement 4.1

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

Assessment of Educational Programs at Savannah State University

The assessment process for educational programs at Savannah State University guides Faculty, Program Coordinators, Department Chairs, and Deans in the systematic evaluation of all program and student learning outcomes in alignment with SSU's mission, vision, goals, and institutional learning outcomes. The aim is the constant improvement of the academic programs and student learning at our institution, based on principles of shared governance, participative management, and transparency.

What is assessment?

“...a systematic way of paying attention to our curriculum.”

Source: Nancy Metz, English Faculty, Virginia Tech

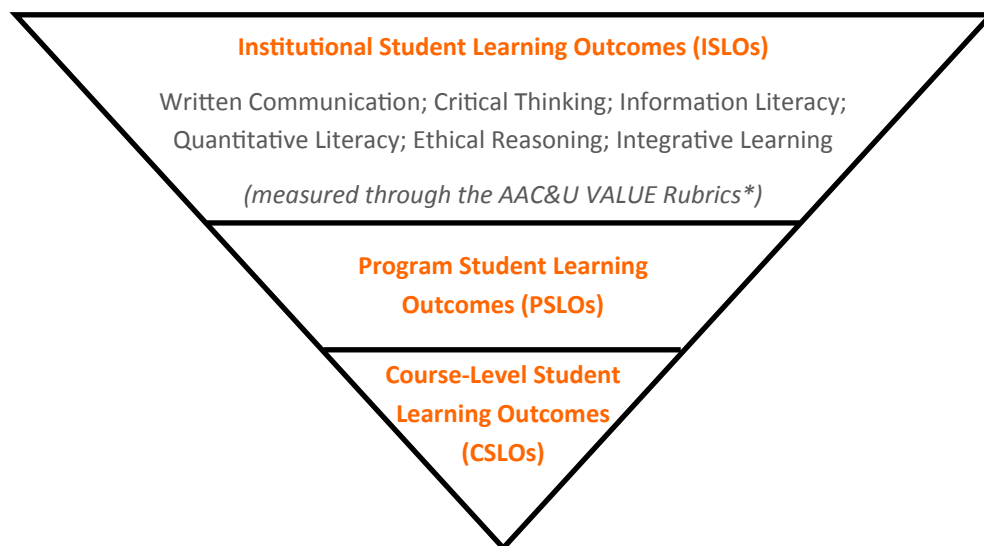
“...the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning.” Source: Mary E. Huba & Jann E. Freed, *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses (2000)*

“Assessment is an integral part of instruction, as it determines whether or not the goals of education are being met. Assessment affects decisions about grades, placement, advancement, instructional needs, curriculum, and, in some cases, funding. Assessment inspires us to ask these hard questions: ‘Are we teaching what we think we are teaching?’ ‘Are students learning what they are supposed to be learning?’ ‘Is there a way to teach the subject better, thereby promoting better learning?’”

Source: www.edutopia.org/assessment-guide-importance

“...the systematic gathering of information about student learning, using the time, resources, and expertise available, in order to improve the learning.” Source: Barbara Walvoord, *Assessment Clear & Simple (2004)*

SSU Student Learning Outcomes



*The original VALUE initiative in 2007-09 involved teams of faculty and other educational professionals from over 100 higher education institutions engaged over many months to develop 16 VALUE rubrics for the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes. Each rubric was developed from the most frequently identified characteristics or criteria of learning for each of the 16 learning outcomes. Drafts of each rubric were then tested by faculty with their own students' work on over 100 college campuses.

As part of Association of American Colleges & Universities' (AAC&U) Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) initiative, the VALUE rubrics contribute to the national dialogue on assessment of college student learning.

Source: www.aacu.org/value/rubrics

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

Assessment Process for Educational Programs at Savannah State University Flow Chart



SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

Faculty (full-time, full-time temporary, part-time temporary) Responsibilities

- Attends a required training related to the Assessment Process at SSU, Assessment Plan, Assessment Report, Curriculum Map, Rubrics, Syllabus and Assignments Design, and LiveText, developed by the Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment Office (IRPA) and the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE).
- Develops a Syllabus for each class a faculty member teaches, includes content, goals, Class Student Learning Outcomes - CSLOs, Program Student Learning Outcomes - PSLOs, and Institutional Student Learning Outcomes—ISLOs, instruments used to measure the CSLOs, and target levels.
- Develops assignments for students.
- Requests students upload their assignments on D2L and LiveText. Note: Student work must be uploaded to D2L and LiveText. It is recommended that students upload their own work, so faculty members do not need to do it.
- Selects one key assignment per class to be assessed (if several sections are taught by the same faculty member, select just one assignment of one section to represent the course).
- Develops a rubric to assess the key assignment in accordance with CSLOs, PSLOs, and ISLOs. Note: The IRPA team will include the rubrics on LiveText.
- Assesses the key assignment through LiveText (according to the rubrics already available on LiveText).
- Selects six samples that better represent student work (2 Excellent, 2 Satisfactory, 2 Unsatisfactory).
- Gets report by clicking on Reports button (LiveText Dashboard) associated with the assessed assignment. Note: Faculty will have an overview of their class.
- Takes a screenshot or downloads the report prepared by LiveText.
- Submits important assessment information via online form. Note: the form is sent to faculty members by the Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment Office (IRPA).

To be submitted in the beginning of the semester	To be submitted in the end of the semester
Professor, Semester, Courses	Screenshot of the report prepared by LiveText
Selected Assignment(s) to be assessed and justification	Improvement plan for the upcoming semester
Assignment(s) rubric(s) including CSLOs, PSLOs and ISLOs	Justification for the improvement recommendations/actions
Instruments used to measure the selected assignment(s)	Samples of the selected assignments
Target level for the selected assignment(s)	* submitted to Dep. Chair/Program Coordinator, IRPA & CFE

- Participates in assessment meetings to discuss their students performance and strategies for improvement.
- Uses the Syllabus and the Assessment Plan and Report as tools for class and student learning improvement: implements the improvement actions and evaluates them in the upcoming semester, following the same process as previously described.
- Respects and enforces assessment deadlines.

Notes:

- Faculty are strongly encouraged to invite one or more faculty members from outside the department to review and comment on the program assessment plan itself, the implementation of that plan, and the appropriateness of analysis and response to collected evidence of student learning.
- Programs with disciplinary or professional accreditation requirements are encouraged to coordinate their assessment plan with those requirements in a manner consistent with college and/or university standards for program assessment.
- The Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment Office (IRPA) will prepare the LiveText system with information submitted in the beginning of the semester by Faculty members, so it will be ready by the time Faculty members will assess their selected assignment(s).

SSU Academic Assessment

Program Coordinator Responsibilities

Assessment Cycle

1. Coordinators will ensure that the program is assessed according to a regularly scheduled cycle of data collection during the semester, review of data at the end of the semester, and planning for the next semester at the end of the semester.
2. Coordinators will ensure that all Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) will be assessed twice in each 3 year assessment cycle. Note: it is preferable to assess each PSLO 3 times in each cycle to obtain a baseline, an intervention, and a test of the efficacy of the intervention over time.
3. Over the course of the assessment cycle, Coordinators will ensure that all appropriate, data-driven changes are made to the curriculum, PSLOs, curriculum maps, and all assessment tools.

Documents

1. Coordinators will ensure that all appropriate documents are generated and stored in the Assessment Management System (AMS) so department, college, and university leadership will have access to them. Also, digital storage of the documents ensures that future faculty and leadership will have access to them.
2. All assessment artifacts should be stored digitally in the Learning Management System (LMS) for future use. Coordinators will work with faculty to facilitate student use of the LMS and the AMS.
3. Over the course of a 3 year cycle, programs should generate 3 Assessment Plans and 3 Assessment Reports, one of each at the beginning (plans) and end (reports) of each academic year. The Assessment Plans and Reports will assist the program faculty in making the appropriate changes to the curriculum and the assessment tools.
4. Plans will include student learning expectations, which are set in accordance with a curriculum map. They will also include targets for overall student performance to be reviewed at the end of the semester after assessing the data.
5. Reports will include all assessment of the data collected, including a determination of whether targets were met and whether changes need to be made to the curriculum or the assessment process.
6. Coordinators will ensure that Program Outcomes are developed and assessed on a yearly basis. Program Outcomes set the goals for the program not to include student learning outcomes. Program Outcomes may include goals such as enrollment, graduation rates, etc.
7. Coordinators will ensure that program meeting agendas and minutes are generated and stored in the AMS.

Alignment

1. All PSLOs should be aligned with Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs) to assist the administration of the university with assessment. The alignment of the PSLOs with the ISLOs should be communicated to the Institutional Assessment Committee via the AMS.
2. Coordinators should note that not all PSLOs will align with an ISLO, so there is no expectation that all ISLOs will be assessed through a single program's assessment.

Program Review

1. Coordinators are expected to conduct regular program review by requesting that someone outside of the department (or even the university, if appropriate) review the program, including all elements of curriculum, staffing, and assessment. Since this will likely involve funding, Department Chairs will help facilitate program review.
2. The Program Review Report should be stored with all other assessment reports in the AMS.

SSU Academic Assessment

Department Chair Responsibilities

1. Department chairs should ensure that all programs are developing assessment plans and reports in accordance with the scheduled assessment cycle.
2. Chairs should also ensure that the appropriate digital tools are being used to store assessment data/artifacts, plans, and reports, so that these documents/artifacts will be available for future faculty and leadership.
3. Chairs should ensure that all faculty are participating in the assessment process. Coordinators oversee the programs. Chairs oversee the faculty of the programs.
4. Chairs should assist Program Coordinators in conducting regular program review since this may involve funding, travel, or networking.
5. Chairs will ensure that all appropriate information from the administration is conveyed to coordinators and faculty about the assessment process, including scheduled assessment cycle, ISLOs, and due dates for plans and reports.

Colleges, School of Teacher Education and Library Dean Responsibilities

1. Develops a Strategic Plan for the College/School/Library, including mission, goals, and Program Student Learning Goals. Note: the plan needs to be aligned with SSU Strategic Plan, SSU Academic Strategic Plan and the SSU Student Learning Goals).
2. Shares and discusses SSU Strategic Plan, SSU Academic Strategic Plan, Institutional Student Learning Goals, and the College Strategic Plan with the Department Chairs and Program Coordinators.
3. Gives support to the Department Chairs and Program Coordinators in terms of assessment.
4. Reviews plans and reports (related Program Outcomes and Program Student Learning Outcomes) developed by the Department Chairs and Program Coordinators.
5. Develops a summary/presentation reflecting all programs of the College/School/Library and attaches the Department Chairs and Program Coordinators reports to it.
6. Submits the College summary/presentation and Department Chair Reports to the Provost, and shares results with Department Chairs and Program Coordinators, IRPA, and CFE.
7. Respects and enforces assessment deadlines.

Provost Responsibilities

1. Develops SSU Academic Strategic Plan, based on SSU Strategic Plan and SSU Student Learning Goals
2. Presents and discusses the **SSU Strategic Plan and SSU Academic Strategic Plan** with the Deans, reinforcing the institutional mission, goals and student learning outcomes for the current and upcoming academic years.
3. Reviews/discusses the College Strategic Plans developed by the Deans
4. Reviews/discusses the summary/presentation/reports developed by the Deans.
5. Approves the reports/summary/presentation developed by the Deans.
6. Analyzes information, develops presentation/summary/report reflecting all Colleges/SSU student learning scenario, provides improvement recommendations, and shares results with the Executive Leadership Council, Deans, IRPA, and CFE.
7. Respects and enforces assessment deadlines.

SSU Academic Assessment

Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment Office (IRPA) Responsibilities

1. Ensures SSU meets all standards for regional accreditation (Regional Accreditation Body: SACSCOC), by articulating standards of assessment which must be met in both university and program assessment efforts and ensuring that all departmental assessment efforts clearly demonstrate that they are meeting these standards.
2. Reviews assessment reports and indicates which program assessment efforts are meeting university and accreditation standards and, if standards are not met, identifies specific deficiencies and reports these to the appropriate department, college/school Dean or division head, and to the IRPA Director and Associate Provost.
3. Provides consultation to help programs develop and implement an assessment plan that meets the required standards.
4. Supports the integration of systems through which assessment data can be gathered and analyzed, including surveys, online course assessment systems, learning management systems and/or ePortfolio systems.
5. Maintains a repository of assessment data and assessment reports so that the university can provide evidence of systematic and comprehensive assessment of academic programs.
6. Develops and maintains reports tracking the performance of systematic assessment across all academic programs and the level of student achievement of university learning outcomes.
7. Provides assessment training and consultancy to Faculty, Program Coordinators, Department Chairs, Deans, and Provost, in partnership with the Center for Faculty Excellence. Training examples: Assessment Process at SSU, Assessment Plan, Assessment Report, Curriculum Map, Rubrics, Syllabus and Assignments Design, and LiveText, developed by the Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment Office (IRPA) and the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE).
8. Supports the Provost coordinating Faculty, Department Chairs and Deans' assessment tasks and deadlines.

SSU Academic Assessment

LiveText, SSU Assessment Management Software

LiveText is a team of education professionals dedicated to assessment best-practices, as well as technology implementation to improve learning for individuals and organizations. LiveText offers a comprehensive and easy-to-use learning outcomes assessment solution with data collection and analytics features. It is designed to help all users – individuals, coaches/teachers, administrators, and organizations – realize their possibilities faster and more effectively.

Everything you need to track progress and provide instant feedback for learning can be done through LiveText's use of rubric assessment and commenting capabilities, surveys, video assessment, drill-down reporting, and more – all of which serve as evidence of learning.

All SSU students have a LiveText account, so they can upload their assignments and faculty members can assess them directly in LiveText.

Other Important Software Used by Savannah State University

Blackboard Analytics: with the help of Blackboard Analytics' data-driven solutions, colleges, universities, and systems can identify and overcome barriers to student success and keep learners on track for graduation.

D2L: classroom management, electronic grade book, and e-learning platform

DegreeWorks: helps students and their advisors successfully navigate curriculum requirements.

Digital Measures: manages Faculty Credentials and Faculty Development.

GradesFirst: provides the tools to streamline the advisor's workday leaving needed room for more student engagement.

SSU Academic Assessment

Assessment Calendars and Important Deadlines for Educational Programs at Savannah State University

To accomplish SACSCOC deadlines and to reinforce the importance of the development of a culture of assessment, constant student learning improvement, and student-centered environment enhancement, all classes must be assessed every semester. Please see below the Assessment Cycles determined by Savannah State University, SACSCOC upcoming deadlines and detailed tasks, and responsible professionals for meeting SSU Fall and Spring Calendar deadlines.

SACSCOC: Important Deadlines for Savannah State University

DUE DATE FOR SACSCOC FIFTH-YEAR INTERIM REPORT: March 15, 2017

NEXT SACSCOC REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: 2021

Assessment Cycles at Savannah State University

Savannah State University defined the following Assessment Cycles:

Fall 2013 to Spring 2016:

to be reported in the SACSCOC Fifth-Year Interim Report on March 15, 2017

Fall 2016 to Spring 2019:

to be reported in the SACSCOC Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2021

Important:

1 - Savannah State University SACSCOC reports developed by Program Coordinators and Department Chairs need to be ready at least two months before SACSCOC deadline, so external consultants can review them before final submissions.

2 - SSU Academic Strategic Plan, College Academic Strategic Plan, and Program Academic Strategic Plan must be developed for the 3-year assessment cycle and reviewed and updated in the end of each academic year. Planned improvement strategies and actions must be implemented and assessed every year.

SSU Academic Assessment

SACSCOC—Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

Fall Assessment Calendar for Educational Programs at SSU

Task	Responsible Party	Deadline
Develops or reviews /updates SSU Academic Strategic Plan , discusses and shares SSU Strategic Plan, SSU Academic Strategic Plan, and Institutional Student Learning Goals (for the new academic year) with Deans	Provost	By the First week of August
Elaborates or reviews/updates, discusses, and shares College Strategic Plan with team, peers, and supervisor and shares SSU Strategic Plan, SSU Academic Strategic Plan, and Institutional Student Learning Goals with Department Chairs & Program Coordinators	Deans	By the First week of August
Elaborates or reviews/updates, discusses and shares Program Strategic Plan (including Program Goals) with team; elaborates, discusses and shares Program Student Learning Goals with team, peers and supervisor; and shares SSU Strategic Plan, SSU Academic Strategic Plan, College Strategic Plan, Program Strategic Plan, and Institutional Student Learning Goals and Program Student Learning Goals with Faculty	Department Chairs & Program Coordinators	By the First week of August
Elaborates or reviews/updates, discusses and shares Syllabus (including Class Goals) and Class Student Learning Goals (based on the material shared by Department Chairs and Program Coordinators) with students, peers, and supervisor	Faculty	By the Second week of August
Assesses Class Outcomes and Class Student Learning Outcomes—CSLOs , selects one key assignment per class per semester to be assessed (if several sections are taught, selects just one assignment of one section), analyzes data, submits a report (prepared automatically by LiveText), includes improvement recommendations/actions to be implemented in the upcoming semester, select six samples that represent student work (2 Excellent, 2 Satisfactory, 2 Unsatisfactory), and submits to Department Chairs/ Program Coordinators; shares results with peers (suggested)	Faculty	By one week after Final Exams (December)
Reviews/ discusses Faculty members' reports, assesses Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) , selects key classes to be assessed, analyzes data, writes a report/presentation, includes improvement recommendations/actions to be implemented in the upcoming semester, includes samples that represent student work, and shares results with teams and supervisor. Note: Attaches material developed by Faculty	Department Chairs & Program Coordinators	Before Winter Break (December)
Reviews Department Chairs/Program Coordinators' Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) reports, writes a report/summary/presentation showing the College scenario, includes improvement recommendations/actions to be implemented in the upcoming semester (to improve PSLOs), and share results with supervisor and team	Deans	Before Winter Break (December)
Reviews Deans' reports/summaries/presentations, analyzes information, develops presentation/report showing Student Learning scenario (Institutional Student Learning Outcomes—ISLOs and Program Student Learning Outcomes— PSLOs/ can include Class Student Learning Outcomes—CSLOs, as needed), provides improvement recommendations to be implemented in the upcoming semester and share results with supervisors and team	Provost	Before Winter Break (December)

SSU Academic Assessment

SACSCOC—Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

Spring Assessment Calendar for Educational Programs at SSU: beginning in the 1st minimester

Task	Responsible	Deadline
Provides feedback to Deans and facilitates the implementation of strategies/actions to improve Program Student Learning Outcomes—PSLOs , in accordance with feedback received by the Executive Leadership Council, based on the report developed by the Deans.	Provost	Feedback: By the First week of January Facilitation: entire semester
Provides feedback to Department Chairs & Program Coordinators and facilitates the implementation of actions to improve Program Student Learning Outcomes—PSLOs , in accordance with feedback received by the Provost, based on the report developed by the Department Chairs & Program Coordinators .	Deans	Feedback: By the First week of January Facilitation: entire semester
Implements improvement actions and updates the Programs' Student Learning Goals/ Outcomes .	Department Chairs & Program Coordinators	Feedback: By the First week of January
Provides feedback to Faculty and facilitates the implementation of actions to improve Class Student Learning Outcomes , in accordance with feedback received by the Deans, based on the report developed by the Faculty members.		Program Improvement Actions & Facilitation: entire semester
Implements improvement actions and updates in the Syllabus, reflecting the Class Goals and Class Student Learning Goals/Outcomes .	Faculty	Feedback: By the First week of class
Provides feedback to Students and implements actions to improve students academic performance , in accordance with feedback received by the Department Chairs & Program Coordinators, based on the report developed by LiveText reflecting students' academic performance		SSU Class Improvement Actions & Facilitation (Student Academic performance): entire semester

SSU Academic Assessment

SACSCOC—Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

Spring Assessment Calendar for Educational Programs at SSU: 2nd minimester

Task	Responsible	Deadline
<p>Assesses Class Outcomes and Class Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs), selects one key assignment per class per semester to be assessed (if several sections are taught, select just one assignment of one section), analyzes data, submits a report (automatically prepared by LiveText), includes improvement recommendations/actions to be implemented in the upcoming semester, selects six samples that represent student work (2 Excellent, 2 Satisfactory, 2 Unsatisfactory).</p> <p>Submits results to Department Chairs and Program Coordinators, and shares results with peers (peers: suggested)</p>	Faculty	By the third week of May
<p>Reviews Faculty members' reports, assesses Program Strategic Plan, including Program Outcomes (POs) and Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs), selects key classes to be assessed, analyzes data, writes a report for the POs and a report for the PSLOs, includes improvement recommendations/actions to be implemented in the upcoming semester (PSLOs) and in the upcoming year (POs), includes samples that represent student work.</p> <p>Submits results to Deans (attaches Faculty reports and samples), and shares results with teams and peers (peers: suggested)</p>	Department Chairs & Program Coordinators	By the first week of June
<p>Reviews Department Chairs/Program Coordinators' POs and PSLOs reports, writes a report/summary/presentation showing the College scenario (and College Outcomes), includes improvement recommendations/actions to be implemented in the next academic year (POs) and in the next semester (PSLOs).</p> <p>Submits results to the Provost (attaches Department Chairs/Program Coordinators/ Faculty members' reports and samples), and shares results with teams and peers (peers: suggested)</p>	Deans	By the last week of June
<p>Provost reviews Deans' reports/summaries/presentations, analyzes information, develops presentation/report showing SSU Academic Outcomes, Student Learning scenario (Institutional Student Learning Outcomes—ISLOs and Program Student Learning Outcomes— PSLOs/ can include Class Student Learn Outcomes-CSLOS), College Outcomes and Program Outcomes—POs, provides improvement recommendations to be implemented in the upcoming semester and academic year.</p> <p>Submits results to the Executive Leadership Council, and shares results with teams</p>	Provost	By the second week of July

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

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

Assessment Glossary

** Developed by the Institutional Assessment Committee in September 2014.*

Alignment: The process of linking content and performance standards to assessment, instruction, and learning.

Analytics: The transformation of raw data into actionable information by analyzing various data points to gain insight and make informed decisions about complex issues.

Assessment: Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning and service delivery. It involves making our expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and standards for learning and service quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance.

(adapted from Tom Angelo, 1995)

Assessment Measure: An assessment measure is a data source or tool used to indicate outcome attainment. While it is desirable to use multiple assessment measures over different points in time, each outcome must have at least one assessment measure. Assessment measures for programmatic outcomes may include survey data (e.g., Graduate, Employer, and Transfer Student Surveys), and other routine data reports posted on the IRPA webpage (e.g., headcounts, FTES, graduates). Assessment measures may include direct and/or indirect measures.

Assessment Tools: Assessment tools are the instruments used to gather data about student learning and service delivery. Tools can be both quantitative and qualitative.

Benchmark: A standard, usually showing the best performance possible at a certain time.

Capstone Project: A project planned and carried out by the student during the final semester as the culmination of the educational experience. These projects typically require higher-level thinking skills, problem-solving, creative thinking, and integration of learning from various sources.

Capstone Assessment: Assessment of outcomes structured into learning experiences occurring at the end of a program. The experiences involve demonstration of a comprehensive range of program outcomes through some type of product or performance. The outcomes may be those of the major and of the general education program or of the major only.

Capstone Course: An upper division class designed to help students integrate their knowledge. For assessment purposes student work needs to be evaluated by faculty members responsible for the program, not just the instructor of the course. Capstone experiences and standardized exams are sometimes part of a capstone course.

Capstone Experience: An activity for graduating seniors that is designed to demonstrate comprehensive learning in the major through some type of product or performance.

Case Studies: Detailed analyses of projects or problems that result in exemplary models.

Competitions/Meets: Experiences during which students demonstrate their expertise and are judged or rated by experts in the field while in competition with other students.

Competency Test: A test intended to establish that a student has met established minimum standards of skills and knowledge and is thus eligible for an acknowledgment of achievement such as graduation, certification, etc.

Course-Embedded Assessment: Data gathering about learning that occurs as part of the course, such as tests, papers, projects, or portfolios; as opposed to data gathering that occurs outside the course, e.g., student placement testing.

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

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

Assessment Glossary

Criteria: Statements about the dimensions of competency that will be assessed; they specify important components of the desired knowledge or skill that the student should learn and be able to demonstrate. For example, for oral communication, one criterion could be maintaining eye contact with the audience.

Demonstration: Performance that show how skills have mastered.

Direct Assessment Methods: These methods involve students' displays of knowledge and skills resulting from learning experiences in the class/program.

Direct Assessment of Learning: Direct assessment is when measures of learning are based on performance or demonstrates the learning itself. Scoring performance on tests (academic and non-academic) or the execution of skills, would all be examples of direct assessment of learning.

Embedded Assessment: A means of gathering information about learning that is integrated into the teaching-learning process. Results can be used to assess individual performance or they can be aggregated to provide information about the course or program; can be formative or summative, quantitative or qualitative.

Evaluation: A value judgment about the results of data collected. Evaluation requires that the data collected to a pre-defined outcome expectation in order to determine what was learned and how well; may involve recommendations for changes.

Exam/Examination: The act of looking at something closely and carefully, using oral or written methods, for the purpose of determining progress, knowledge or ability.

External Assessment: Use of criteria or an instrument developed by an individual or organization external to the one being assessed. This kind of assessment is usually summative, quantitative, and often high-stakes, such as the SAT or GRE exams or a fiscal audit.

Focus Groups: A carefully planned group discussions conducted by trained moderators. A small number of questions, developed in advance, is used to generate in-depth consideration of a narrowly defined topic. Focus groups examine perceptions, feelings, attitudes and ideas.

Formal Observation: Involves experts watching and evaluating student performance.

Formative Assessment: Assessment conducted during a performance/course/program with the purpose of providing feedback that can be used to modify, shape, and improve a performance/course/program.

Goals: Express intended results in global terms. A goal might describe such broad learning concepts as clear communication, problem solving, or ethical awareness. Goals are further defined by being broken down into measurable objectives.

Grading: Values placed on varying levels of achievement (e.g., assignments, examinations, projects, performances). Course be used for assessment if it is clearly linked to course/program goals and if the assessment is based on established criteria and standards.

High Stakes Assessment: The decision to use the results of assessment to set a hurdle that needs to be cleared for completing a program of study, receiving certification, or moving to the next level. Most often, the assessment so used is externally developed, based on set standards, carried out in a secure testing situation, and administered at a single point in time.

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

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

Assessment Glossary

Holistic Assessment: Making a judgment about a learner using an overall appraisal of their entire performance, rather than by scoring or analyzing separate dimensions of the performance individually. Used in situations where the demonstration of learning is considered to be more than the sum of its parts, and so the complete final product or performance is evaluated as a whole. The evaluator matches his or her overall impressions to pre-defined expectations for learning outcomes and makes a judgment.

Holistic Scoring: A type of grading in which an assignment is given an overall score. Possible scores are described in a rating scale. A high score indicates achievement of all aspects of the assignment, while a low score means few if any of the desired outcomes have been achieved. The score levels need to be specific enough to reveal meaningful, diagnostic information when the scores are aggregated.

Indicator: An indicator is a piece of information about the performance of a learner/course/program.

Indirect Assessment Methods: These methods provide opportunities for students to reflect on their learning experiences and inform the reviewers of their perceptions of their learning experience (e.g. alumni surveys, employer surveys, exit interviews).

Indirect Assessment of Learning: Indirect assessment is when measures of learning are based on looking at indicators of learning other than student work output. This assessment approach is intended to find out about the quality of the learning process by getting feedback from the student or other persons who may provide relevant information. It may use surveys of employers, exit interviews of graduates, focus groups, or any number of Classroom Assessment Techniques (e.g. minute papers, muddiest point papers or one sentence summaries).

Individual Assessment: Uses the individual's learning as the level of analysis. Can be quantitative or qualitative, formative or summative, standards-based or value added (in any combination) to be used for improvement.

Institutional Assessment: Uses the institution as the level of analysis. The assessment can be quantitative or qualitative, formative or summative, standards-based or value added (in any combination) and used for improvement or for accountability.

Institutional Effectiveness: Consists of a set of ongoing and systematic institutional processes and practices that include planning, the evaluation of programs and services (including administration), the definition of institutional outcomes and their measurements across all units and the use of data and assessment results to inform decision-making and improve programs and services. The systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution.

Internship: An experience that allows the student to apply what has been learned to a professional situation within a close mentoring relationship. The mentor evaluates student performance. That evaluation is used as the assessment tool.

Interviews: Conversations beginning with a predetermined set of questions to ascertain students' reflections on their learning experiences. Interviews can be structured or open-ended. A carefully constructed data collection instrument is necessary.

Journal: A written record made by a student on a regular basis, for example, daily or weekly. It may also be called a log, notebook, diary, or progress sheet. It may be a collection of facts, an account of experiences, and/or reflective comments on facts or experiences. May be kept on paper or by computer.

Juried Activities: Performances that are evaluated by experts in the profession. Recitals, art shows and conference presentations are examples of juried activities.

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

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

Assessment Glossary

Local Assessment: Means and methods that are developed by an institution's faculty based on their teaching approaches, students, and learning goals. An example would be an English Department's construction and use of a writing rubric to assess incoming freshmen's writing samples, which might then be used assign students to appropriate writing courses, or might be compared to senior writing samples to get a measure of value-added.

Methods of Assessment: Methods of assessment are selected procedures used to gather data on learning. These methods are selected in relation to the specified learning outcome to be assessed; the type of evidence of learning available; the type of performance to be observed; and the agreed-upon scoring procedures. Methods may involve paper-and-pencil tests; alternative methods are often referred to as performance based, authentic, or complex-generated.

Metrics: Standards of measurement by which efficiency, performance, progress, or quality of a plan, process or product can be assessed. A set of measurements that quantify results.

Objectives: Brief statements that describe specific action taken to achieve an associated goal.

Oral Presentations: An address delivered to an audience, including experts who evaluate the work presented. Theses or senior project defenses are examples of oral presentations.

Outcome: Statements that describe qualitatively or quantitatively measurable results of the activity assessed.

Performance Measure: Assessment methods based on student activities or products, as opposed to tests or surveys, to evaluate students' knowledge, skill and development.

Portfolio: Systematic collection of work that are evaluated by set standards for evidence of learning and development.

Primary Trait Analysis: Factors or characteristics that are considered in scoring an activity generally stated in a hierarchical scale of three to five incremental levels of achievement quality. For each level on the scale there is a specific statement that describes expected behavior (criterion) at that level.

Program Assessment: An ongoing process for understanding and improving learning and performance. It involves making expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and standards; systematically gathering, analyzing and interpreting evidence to determine whether those expectations and standards are met, and using the resulting information for improvement.

Progression Based Funding: Appropriations issued based on level of achievement toward predetermined metrics.

Qualitative Assessment: Collects data that does not lend itself to quantitative methods but rather to interpretive criteria.

Quantitative Assessment: The collection of data that can be analyzed with systematically defined criteria using numbers, statistical analysis and computational technologies.

Reliability: The production of consistent results over time using the same assessment instrument. With a reliable instrument, differences in results among subjects will be due to differences in knowledge or opinions, rather than as a result of measurement error. In performance-based assessment, a participant should receive similar scores from the evaluators.

Rubric/Scoring Guide: A holistic or primary trait scoring instrument in which detailed criteria are delineated and defined to distinguish among levels of achievement in assignments, performances, products and/or activities.

SSU Academic Program Assessment Guide

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

Assessment Glossary

Self-Assessment: A process in which an individual or program engages in a systematic review of performance or learning, usually for the purpose of improving in the future.

S.M.A.R.T.: An acronym that stands for: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely, represents a guiding standard for writing outcomes.

Standard: A description of the expected level of performance.

Standardized Test: A measure of student learning (or other ability) that has been widely used with other students. Standardized scores (e.g., mean, standard deviation, percentiles) have been developed so that a student taking the test can compare his or her score to the historical data. These are also sometimes called achievement tests. Examples are the SAT, GRE, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT, etc.

Survey: A method of collecting information from people about their characteristics, behaviors, attitudes, or perceptions.

Summative Assessment: Assessment conducted after a program has been implemented and completed to make judgments about its quality or worth compared to previously defined standards.

Target: Numerical value assigned to quantify level of achievement towards a goal.

Validity: The extent to which an instrument's content is representative of the actual skills learned and whether the instrument can allow accurate conclusions concerning achievement.

Value Added: The increase in learning that occurs during a course/program/activity.

SSU Academic Assessment

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