

Policy for Doing Assessment  
Approved by the Department of Computer Science and Operations Research  
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Vocabulary

1. "The Chart": A table of all current learning outcomes, and associated assessment activities. "The Chart" is organized into a separate table for each degree program and an additional table for service courses;
2. Learning outcome: one of the goals of our curriculum;
3. External learning outcome: a goal which is associated with an entire degree program and evaluated by an entity outside of the university such as alumni or potential employers;
4. Internal learning outcome: a goal which is associated with one or more courses and evaluated by the Department Assessment Committee;
5. Learning activity: a student activity intended to improve student achievement of one or more external or internal learning outcomes. Any learning activity can become a point associated with an assessment activity;
6. Evaluation activity: a student or external entity activity intended to measure student achievement of one or more internal learning outcomes;
7. Assessment target: a result of an evaluation activity that will be used in the assessment process.

Responsibilities for each individual and committee are collected following this itemized policy.

1. Assessment shall be coordinated by a Departmental Committee consisting of the Associate Chair who will serve as chair of this Committee, the Undergraduate Coordinator, the Graduate Coordinator and two students (one undergraduate and one graduate). This Committee will be the Departmental Assessment Committee;
2. Each assessment activity described in the current version of "The Chart" shall be performed at least once every three years;
3. Each outcome shall be assessed every year except for a course with more than three outcomes such as the capstone course. In that case, each outcome will be assessed at least once every two years;
4. Several internal (within the degree program) and external (with alumni or employers) assessment activities will be done every year;
5. Assessment activities shall be split between fall and spring semesters approximately equally;

6. Assessment activities for the fall semester shall be selected during the previous April by the Assessment Committee. While this policy is being implemented, assessment activities will be selected as soon as feasible;
7. Assessment activities for the spring semester shall be selected during the previous November by the Assessment Committee. While this policy is being implemented, assessment activities will be selected as soon as feasible;
8. Instructors of each section of a course to which an assessment activity has been assigned will be given the assessment activities assigned to that course for the upcoming semester by the end of the month in which those activities are assigned except that newly hired or reassigned faculty shall receive their assessment responsibilities as soon as practical. This information shall be provided by the undergraduate or graduate coordinator as appropriate;
9. All assessment activities required of a course must appear in that course's syllabus. A copy of the syllabus must be provided by the instructor to the undergraduate or graduate secretary as appropriate before the course is taught;
10. Student assignments, and other assessment targets shall be given to the undergraduate or graduate secretary as appropriate by the section instructor of a course being assessed;
11. The undergraduate and graduate secretaries shall archive all results and raw data for a period of at least five years;
12. The Department Assessment Committee shall use the assignments and other assessment targets collected by the undergraduate and graduate secretary to perform internal and external assessments;
13. Assessment results shall be given to a Committee consisting of the Undergraduate or Graduate Coordinator as appropriate and at least two faculty who regularly teach that course or any following courses during the following semester for generation of specific suggestions for improvement. Each of these Committees should include two students who have recently completed the course. These committees will be referred to as Course Improvement Committees;
14. All improvement suggestions shall be considered by the Department faculty at least yearly for possible inclusion in course requirements or possible changes to curricula as appropriate;
15. The secretaries shall maintain records of these suggested improvements, the assessment results that motivated them, and future assessment results that demonstrate their effectiveness or lack of effectiveness;
16. This policy shall be reviewed by the Assessment Committee and the Department faculty every two years. The Department faculty shall consider the recommendations of the Assessment Committee;
17. Work on assessment and evaluation activities shall be considered in the annual review of each faculty member.

## **Responsibilities:**

1. A course instructor:
  - a. Determine how to perform required assessment activities for that course offering before the course is offered;
  - b. Indicate how each assessment activity will be done in that course in the official course syllabus;
  - c. Provide the syllabus to the Department Assessment Committee through the appropriate secretary before the course is offered;
  - d. Do the assessment activities and collect results;
  - e. Provide all assessment results to the Department Assessment Committee through the appropriate secretary;
  - f. Participate on Course Improvement Committees for those courses you teach that have recently completed assessment activities.
2. The Department Assessment Committee:
  - a. Determine the assessment activities that will be attempted during the following semester;
  - b. Associate the internal assessment activities with specific courses and inform the instructors (through the Undergraduate and Graduate Coordinators) of those courses;
  - c. Perform selected external assessment activities;
  - d. Receive syllabi from course instructors and ensure that they implement the assigned assessment activities. If syllabi are not forthcoming when required, inform the Department Chair/Head who will take appropriate action to procure the needed syllabi;
  - e. Receive assessment data from the undergraduate and graduate secretaries. Ensure that necessary data is being provided. If not, remind involved instructors. If data is still not provided, inform the Department Chair/Head as soon as possible who will take appropriate action to procure the needed data;
  - f. Oversee the assessment data archiving by the undergraduate and graduate secretaries;
  - g. Analyze the external assessment data and prepare course and curriculum improvement recommendations;
  - h. Evaluate the semester's assessment results and prepare recommendations to the Department Chair/Head and Department for improvements in the assessment process at least every two years;
  - i. Create the needed Course Improvement Committees;
  - j. Receive the results of those Course Improvement Committees and produce a coherent, consistent set of recommendations for course and curriculum improvement. These recommendations will go to the Department faculty for consideration each semester.

3. Course Improvement Committees:
  - a. Meet for one to two hours to review assessment data related to that course;
  - b. Make specific recommendations for improvement in that course and related courses and/or curricula to the Department Assessment Committee.
4. Undergraduate and Graduate Secretary:
  - a. Support the Department Assessment Committee in their activities;
  - b. Remind faculty of the assessment targets they are expected to provide;
  - c. Organize all assessment data by date, outcome and course;
  - d. Maintain files of current assessment data for use by Department Assessment Committee, Course Improvement Committee and others;
  - e. Keep archives of all assessment data for at least five years.
5. Department Chair/Head
  - a. Monitor all assessment activities to ensure that they are being done in a timely fashion;
  - b. Use rewards and coercion as needed to ensure that assessment activities are completed when needed;
  - c. Prepare the annual university-required assessment report.