

**Assessment Consulting Team  
Rowan University**

**Self-Evaluation of Programmatic Assessment in Your Department**

The attached questionnaire is designed to help your department evaluate your programmatic assessment processes. Programmatic assessment involves the following steps:

- Identification of your department's core values and educational objectives (what students should know, understand, and appreciate upon completion of your program)
- Analysis of your curriculum and pedagogy to determine whether the core values and educational objectives are adequately and consistently represented in your courses
- Identification and/or development of appropriate methods of gathering evidence of student achievement of the intended educational objectives
- Analysis of findings regarding student achievement and use of these findings to improve your curriculum and pedagogy

Programmatic assessment should be an ongoing and systematic activity within your department and should engage faculty (part-time and full-time, temporary and permanent), administrators, and students in continual improvement of student learning. Periodic reports on assessment results and how they have been used to improve the program are an important part of self-studies conducted for program review or accreditation purposes.

If your department does not conduct ongoing and systematic programmatic assessment or has not recently reviewed its assessment processes, this self-evaluation is a very useful first step. The questionnaire will help you document your current status and identify areas where your department needs to improve or expand what you are doing. There are three parts:

1) **Assessment Practices Inventory**; 2) **Assessment Status Level**; and 3) **Assessment Priorities**. The entire department should participate in responding to the questionnaire and should reflect carefully on the responses.

The results of the self-evaluation are for your department to use as you see fit. The Assessment Consulting Team is available to consult with your department on any aspect of this self-evaluation. If you would like feedback on your self-evaluation or any other assistance, please contact us at [act@rowan.edu](mailto:act@rowan.edu) or visit our website at <http://www.rowan.edu/provost/act/> for further information and resources.

## 1. Assessment Practices Inventory

For each item, check all that apply. Additional responses or clarifications may be added; you are not constrained to the responses that are listed. Explanations should be noted when “Other” is checked as a response. Supporting examples or documentation should be attached.

- a) How has your department articulated your program’s core values and educational objectives (what graduates of the program should know, understand, and appreciate)?
- Mission statement for the program
  - Statement of learning goals for the program
  - Other
  - Unknown
- b) Who participated in composing your department’s statement(s) regarding core values and educational objectives?
- Current department chair
  - Current committee of selected members of the department
  - All current members of the department
  - Past department chair
  - Past committee of selected members of the department
  - Past members of the department
  - Other
  - Unknown
- c) When did your department last review its statement(s) regarding core values and educational objectives?
- Within the last year
  - Within the last two years
  - Within the last five years
  - Over five years ago
  - Unknown
- d) What expectations and/or constituencies inform the core values and educational objectives of your program?
- Workplace expectations
  - Disciplinary values
  - Professional practices
  - Accreditation criteria
  - Campus culture/mission
  - Department culture/mission
  - Student culture
  - Market demands
  - Other
  - Unknown

e) How does your department communicate the core values and educational objectives of your program?

- Description of program (catalog, website, etc.)
- Course descriptions (catalog, website, etc.)
- Course proposals
- Curriculum guides
- Course objectives (syllabi)
- Assignment objectives
- Other

f) How do you gather evidence of student learning?

**Direct methods:**

- Student work products (tests, papers, projects)
- Standardized tests
- Juried/refereed reviews, publications, exhibits, performances, or presentations
- Student reflective statements
- Common (signature) assignments
- Capstone courses
- Portfolios
- Employer satisfaction with employee skills
- Performance on licensing/certification exams
- Other

**Indirect methods:**

- Analysis of educational offerings (e.g., courses offered; percentages of courses that are taught by full-time faculty, offer active learning experiences, or involve service learning)
- Student perception surveys
- Alumni surveys
- Retention and graduation data
- Placement data
- Graduate school data
- Honors and awards
- Course grades
- Other

g) In what ways do you analyze/interpret evidence of student learning to measure/describe student achievement and/or improvement?

- Comparison of student performance to standards (e.g., national test scores, disciplinary standards)
- Comparison of student performance to objectives (e.g., outcomes-based rubrics, course or program objectives)
- Comparison of student performance to peers (e.g., among students in a course or program)
- Analysis of student performance over time (e.g., pre- and post-measures, improvement over a semester or from beginning to end of a program)
- Evaluation of relative strengths and weaknesses (e.g., in terms of a target set of skills or knowledge)
- Other

h) How do you document and disseminate findings on student learning?

- Regular internal reports
- Regular internal meetings (department or committee)
- Occasional internal reports
- Occasional internal meetings (department or committee)
- Regular external reports (program review or accreditation)
- Occasional external reports (program review or accreditation)
- Infrequent or informal communication
- Other

i) How have you used findings on student learning to improve curriculum, pedagogy, or other aspects of your educational offerings?

- Curricular decision (adding or changing a course offering)
- Pedagogical decision (changing how a course is taught)
- Support services decision to address student learning needs
- Staffing or hiring decision to address curricular, pedagogical or student learning needs
- Resource decision to address curricular, pedagogical, or student learning needs
- Other

## 2. Assessment Status Level (Beginning, Intermediate, or Advanced)

Reflecting on the results of Section 1, use the indicators below to characterize your department's status level with respect to the development and implementation of an assessment cycle.

### Beginning

- Assessment is primarily conducted at the course level.
- Some direct methods of program-wide assessment may be used, such as capstone courses or standardized tests.
- Program-wide assessment is conducted largely through indirect methods (student perception surveys, alumni surveys, program indicators).
- Educational values may be recognized or tacitly agreed on, but are not formally documented or communicated or may not have been recently reviewed.
- Communication and application of assessment findings is informal or sporadic.

### Intermediate

- In addition to course-level assessment and indirect methods of program-wide assessment, some direct methods of program-wide assessment are used, such as capstone courses or standardized tests.
- Educational values have been articulated and documented and/or recently reviewed.
- Learning goals reflecting the program's values have been identified and are communicated to the department's faculty, students, and other constituencies.
- The curriculum and/or pedagogy have been evaluated against the goals and may be under revision or redevelopment.
- Methods of describing or measuring student learning in the context of the program's educational values have been identified or created and have been or will be implemented.
- Formal communication and application of assessment findings has occurred or is planned.

### Advanced

- Educational values have been articulated and documented and/or recently reviewed.
- Learning goals reflecting the program's values have been identified and are communicated to the department's faculty, students, and other constituencies.
- The curriculum and/or pedagogy have been evaluated against the goals and may be under revision or redevelopment.
- Methods of describing or measuring student learning in the context of the program's educational values have been identified or created and have been implemented.
- Multiple methods of describing or measuring student learning outcomes are being implemented.
- Assessment data are regularly communicated and used to refine the program's educational offerings.
- The program's processes at all levels are well documented.

Department's overall status:     **Beginning**     **Intermediate**     **Advanced**

### 3. Assessment Priorities

As a next step, we recommend that you identify **at least one goal** your department will work toward during the next academic year that will advance your assessment status as identified above. The goal should be something your department agrees is both **useful and feasible** and **will lead to real improvement of student learning**. This section of your self-evaluation should:

- 1) state the goal;
- 2) explain your choice and the process by which you decided that it should be a priority;
- 3) outline the steps you will take to achieve it.

Some examples of possible assessment priorities are provided below:

#### **Beginning status:**

- A department that currently relies primarily on indirect methods of assessing educational effectiveness could identify a key area in which to develop a direct method.
- A department that provides learning opportunities for students that clearly address core educational objectives but does not currently document achievement of those objectives could focus on developing an assessment approach that captures evidence of student learning in a creative and compelling manner.

#### **Intermediate status:**

- A department that has recently articulated or reviewed its educational objectives could evaluate its curriculum to identify key areas in which the objectives are or are not being met and redesign an existing course or propose a new one to meet its goals.
- A department that conducts various assessments of student learning but does not regularly communicate or implement its findings could develop a formal process by which the department shares and acts upon assessment findings, assesses the impact of the actions, and continues the process of improving its educational offerings.

#### **Advanced status:**

- A department that undergoes external accreditation could identify a local educational objective that is not accounted for within the assessment processes conducted for accreditation and gather evidence of how well the objective is met.
- A department that conducts regular assessment of student learning could review its assessment tools to assure that the tools effectively measure or describe the desired outcomes and/or effectively represent the educational objectives of the program.