

Guidelines for the Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional Effectiveness Statement

Institutional effectiveness is integral to the maintenance and development of high-quality academic programs and support services. It is the systematic process of collecting, analyzing, and acting on data and information relating to the goals and expected outcomes developed to support the University's role, scope, and mission. Institutional effectiveness is a process that uses outcome assessment results to aid in decision-making and improvement. The process ensures the University will continually seek to improve students' educational experiences and outcomes. Institutional effectiveness is important to University stakeholders as well as to institutional and specialized, program-specific accreditation.

Purpose of the Guidelines for the Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness

These guidelines provide procedures for accomplishing the two general reasons for institutional effectiveness: improvement and accountability. The guidelines provide direction for ensuring the University will identify, evaluate, and publish university-wide student achievement goals and outcomes appropriate to the University's mission. They ensure the use of evidence-based means for continually seeking improvements in student outcomes within each degree and credit-bearing certificate program, General Education, and critical academic and student support services

Applicability

These guidelines apply to the identification and evaluation of overarching, university-wide student achievement goals and outcomes as well as to each degree and credit-bearing certificate program and to academic and student support services that play a substantial role in furthering the mission of the University.

Guideline Procedures

University-Wide Student Achievement Goals and Outcomes

As a representative university-wide body, the University Planning Council (UPC) is responsible for identifying the overarching, University-wide student achievement goals and the means and timelines for assessing those goals. Working with the University President, Provost, Director of Assessment and Accreditation, SACSCOC liaison, and other individuals as appropriate, the Director of Institutional Research is responsible for data collection and analyses. The Director of Institutional Research, the Director of Assessment and Accreditation, and the SACSCOC liaison are responsible for ensuring the accurate and current publication of the university-wide student achievement goals and outcomes on the University's website.

The Institutional Effectiveness Cycle

The institutional effectiveness process includes an ongoing planning- assessment- improvement cycle. Each instructional program and unit (administrative, educational support, research, and public service) is required to define outcomes, perform an annual assessment of its degree programs or operations, and report results and improvements from this self-assessment.



Academic and support units are expected to complete assessment of all outcomes within a three-year cycle. However, findings and improvements based on results are reported yearly in WEAVE, an assessment and planning management system that houses all assessment plans and reports for Southeastern Louisiana University.

Planning

- Identify expected outcomes aligned with the departmental/program primary functions and the University's mission
- Assign specific assessment activities for measuring each
- Check for alignment of outcomes with curriculum (Academic units)

Assessment

- Conduct assessment
- Evaluate the data to determine the extent to which outcomes have been accomplished
- Identify possible explanations for results

Improvement

- Develop and implement specific strategies for program enhancement and/or improvement based on assessment results
- Modify expected outcomes based on improvements to repeat the cycle

Institutional Effectiveness Model

Southeastern has developed a standardized process for implementing and reporting assessment activities that provides consistency and uniformity among the diverse reporting units. All units use a conceptual model for assessment plans/reports that includes:

- *Purpose/Mission.* Statement of unit's mission and linkage to the University's mission and strategic plan

- *Goals*. Mission-driven, broad statements about what services or processes the unit will accomplish with respect to each of the constituencies they serve.
- *Measurable Outcomes/Objectives*. Clear concise statements that describe outcomes or objectives for educational programs, educational and administrative support units, and public service and research centers
- *Measures*. Description of the instruments that are used to collect information.
- *Targets*. Criteria for an overall level for satisfactory performance on a Measure
- *Findings*. Brief summary of assessment data collected. In WEAVE this is limited to 250 characters.
- *Analysis*. Analyze the results of the assessment data collected to see whether outcomes were met.
- *Action Plans (Use of Results)*. Identification of the improvements in programs and services that resulted from data collection and analysis.

General Education: Special Note

The Louisiana Board of Regents identifies General Education requirements for all state universities, and Southeastern identifies expected outcomes in relation to those requirements. The General Education Assessment and Innovation Committee and the Director of Assessment and Accreditation are responsible for ensuring the expected outcomes are assessed, the results are documented and reported, and the results are used to improve the effectiveness of General Education requirements.

Committee Structure

The assessment process is coordinated by the Director of Assessment and Accreditation through the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, the University Academic Assessment Committee, the University Support Services Committee, and the General Education Assessment and Innovation Committee. The Provost appoints the members of each committee.

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee is charged with developing, reviewing, and recommending policies and procedures for institutional effectiveness. On a periodic basis, the committee reviews the University's institutional effectiveness policies and procedures to determine what revisions, additions, and clarifications are needed.

All academic programs (degree and credit-bearing certificate programs), academic and student support services, and General Education assessment plans and reports are peer reviewed by the appropriate assessment committee using defined criteria to increase the reliability of feedback given to the units. The University Academic Assessment Committee evaluates all academic plans and reports including General Education. The University Support Unit Assessment Committee evaluates assessment plans and reports of non-degree-granting units that play a substantial role in furthering the University's mission.

Assessment Review Schedule

Cycle Based on Calendar Year January 1 - December 31

February 15 – Assessment Coordinators

- Add Items for New Cycle
- Input Findings
- Update / Create Action Plans
- Upload Category of Changes

March 15 - University Assessment Committees

- Complete Review
- Email Report to Program/Unit Assessment Coordinators

April 15 – Program/Unit Assessment Coordinators

- Respond to Committee Review by posting Response in WEAVE and e-mailing copy to Director of Assessment and Accreditation

April 30 - Department Heads

- Deadline to Approve Report and Add Information for Faculty and Student Accomplishments

May 10 - Deans

- Deadline to Approve Report

May 13 - June 1- Director of Assessment and Accreditation

- End Cycle and Begin New Cycle

Assumptions Underlying Institutional Effectiveness at Southeastern

1. The main purpose of Institutional Effectiveness is program improvement. While Southeastern recognizes that the institution must be accountable to accrediting agencies, the legislature, the public, and students, accountability is secondary to program improvement.
2. Institutional effectiveness results are to be used for program/ department/unit assessment and improvement. They are not to be used for tenure and/or promotion review, merit review, or any other personnel decisions.
3. Southeastern Louisiana University has focused on outcomes assessment as one of the key components of our commitment to excellence. Considerable effort has been focused on refining and implementing a comprehensive, effective, and efficient assessment program to determine the extent to which students' learning needs are met. Assessments may consist of activities such as standardized tests, computerized exit surveys, paper-and-pencil questionnaires, exit interviews, and other means. Although not all students complete the same set of assessment activities, all students will be asked to participate at some points in their academic careers. Since student involvement is critical to the success of outcomes assessment, student participation in assessment activities is both necessary and required.

[End of Policy]