Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Policy

**Custodian of Policy:** Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs

**Effective Date:** Fall 2020

**Last Review:** Fall 2024

**Next Review:** Fall 2031

**Relevant Minnesota State System Policy:**

Policy

The University Assessment Committee oversees assessment planning and reporting for all departments involved in student learning across the university, including both curricular and co-curricular areas. The committee is charged with assuring that these areas have a commitment to student learning that aligns with the mission, vision, and strategic priorities of the university. The Committee reports directly to the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs.

Program Learning Outcomes Assessment

1. The University Assessment Committee oversees the assessment procedure for academic programs at MSUM, approves all assessment plans, and reviews all assessment reports. The University Assessment Committee reports directly to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.
2. Each baccalaureate, Master’s, specialist, or doctoral degree program will upload assessment data in the established format each year. Every three years, each program will review its assessment plan and file an assessment report based on the assessment data. It is expected that programs will routinely gather and analyze assessment data and make appropriate changes to the programs.
3. Each program will specify a set of student learning outcomes for the students who graduate in that program. Each program should also identify multiple measures to assess those learning outcomes. If a measure is not identified for each outcome, the program should clearly identify which are not being assessed and why. Each program will have assessed each outcome at least once during a three-year review cycle. At least one assessment measure used by a program must be direct.
4. Each degree program’s list of student learning outcomes will be published in the appropriate MSUM Bulletin. Prior to their publication, the University Assessment Committee must approve the student learning outcomes. Any changes to those outcomes must be approved by the University Assessment Committee during the curriculum review and approval process.
5. The department chair, or designee, is responsible for initiating assessment planning and reporting within the department/program. Departments and/or programmatic committees will formally approve the assessment plans and reports for which they are responsible.
6. Programs that have external accreditation that requires assessment of student learning may upload any reporting for the current year and indicate on the MSUM Assessment Report cover sheet where in the report the relevant assessment data and/or discussion can be found.
7. Upon approval, each program’s plan and report will be posted to the assessment site. The Assessment Coordinator will provide regular information to the appropriate Dean or Director regarding a program’s status in the assessment review cycle.
8. Members of the University Assessment Committee will provide a written response to the department and dean/director following submission of the department or program’s assessment plan and report.
9. Each year, the University Assessment Committee chair will report on assessment of student learning to the Academic Affairs Council and/or the President’s Cabinet.

General Education Assessment Policies

1. The University Assessment Committee will be responsible for gathering and analyzing data about how effectively the general education program achieves its learning outcomes.
2. The University Assessment Committee will develop a timeline for assessing each course in the general education program (LASC, WI, and FYE).
3. When a particular course is being assessed, departments teaching that course will be required to participate in assessment measures developed by the University Assessment Committee.
4. The University Assessment Committee will publish the results of general education assessment measures. To the extent possible, departments will be provided feedback.
5. The University Assessment Committee will recommend to the Policy Custodian changes that should be made to the general education program as a result of its assessment.

The following procedure has been approved to determine continuing approval of general education courses.

1. Courses designated as LASC, WI, and/or FYE shall be reviewed every 3 years.
2. The review process could lead to reaffirmation or general education (LASC, WI, FYE) designation; the general education designation may also sunset.
3. All courses with general education designation for which substantial assessment has been submitted, as determined by the University Assessment Committee, shall be considered to have completed LASC or WI review.  
   Substantial includes, but is not limited to:
   * Assessment is regularly submitted (every 3 years),
   * More than half of the student learning outcomes for the designation are assessed,
   * Assessment is across either a majority of the sections of this course offered during the three-year cycle (>50% Fall/Winter/Spring/Summer) or a majority of the students enrolled in the course during the three-year cycle,
   * Assessment is across a majority of the instructors who taught the course in the three-year cycle (>50%), and
   * Assessment includes thoughtful reflection (see the current rubric developed by the University Assessment Committee).
4. A summary of the courses for which substantial assessment has and has not been completed and a recommendation on whether to reaffirm the general education designation will be submitted by the University Assessment Committee to the Policy Custodian or designee. The Policy Custodian or designee will determine the response, which may include requiring departments to reapply for the respective designation for a course or putting a course on a probation status.
5. Courses that were not taught during a 3-year cycle are not expected to submit assessment for that cycle.

Co-Curricular Department Assessment Policies

1. A Co-curricular department is a non-academic department that is responsible for fostering student learning. An extra-curricular department is a non-academic department that is not responsible for fostering student learning. Extra-curricular departments do not need to submit an assessment plan or report.
2. Each Co-curricular department director, or designee, is responsible for initiating assessment planning and reporting within the department. These efforts should be aligned with the mission, vision, and strategic priorities of the university.
3. Each Co-curricular department will routinely gather and analyze assessment data and plans to ensure they are leading to program improvement. Each department will maintain records on the status of the development, modification, and implementation of these assessment plans.
4. Each Co-curricular department, if applicable, should specify a set of student learning outcomes to guide professional practice in a framework provided by the University Assessment Committee. Each department should also identify measures to assess each student learning outcome.
5. Each Co-curricular department will review its assessment plan and file an assessment report to the University Assessment Committee on an annual basis.
6. Each Co-curricular department’s list of student learning outcomes will be available at a location determined by the University Assessment Committee.
7. Upon review by the University Assessment Committee, each Co-curricular department’s plan and report will be posted at the location determined by the UAC.
8. Each Co-curricular department is responsible for sharing assessment information with constituencies including students and stakeholders.

Rationale

Student learning at Minnesota State University Moorhead happens both in and out of classrooms. The assessment of student learning ensures that our offerings are facilitating the student growth and learning that is central to a university education. It facilitates a culture of continuous learning and continuous improvement, and ensures that we keep our educational offerings up-to-date in meeting the needs of our current student body.