

ASSESSING TEACHING AND LEARNING OUTCOMES IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

1. Define Student Learning Goals

- Consider student needs and expectations, as well as other key issues
- Establish clear and shared goals for specific educational programs, services, courses and stages (e.g., the “first-year experience,” “major,” or “capstone experience”)
- Confirm that learning goals cover the full range of relevant learning opportunities and activities – academic as well as co-curricular
- Communicate goals to students, colleagues in the institution, and other appropriate constituency groups

2. Evaluate Learning Outcomes

- Develop appropriate learning outcomes indicators, measures and measurement procedures
- Confirm that specific teaching and other instructional activities within the institution cover all of the defined goals, including general education goals, at increasing levels of difficulty and with effective coordination across the institution (e.g., assurance of appropriate coherence and avoidance of unnecessary duplication)
- Assess the extent to which established goals are being met with specific programs, services and courses

3. Use the Outcome Information

- Communicate results to colleagues in the institution and, as appropriate, to students and external constituents
- Use outcomes information to improve teaching and learning in all programs and at all levels
- Compare outcomes, as appropriate, with results from previous years and with those from peer, competitor, and/or leading institutions
- Integrate results from student learning assessment with overall institutional assessment
- Use the results to guide academic planning, resource allocation, and day-to-day decision making
- Periodically review and, as appropriate, refine and update goals and the effectiveness of the processes involved in defining learning goals, evaluating outcomes, and using evaluative information for improvement