

**Project South Texas  
Academic Administration Working Groups  
FINAL Report**

February 14, 2014

<b>Working Group Name</b>	Academic Assessment
<b>Working Group Co-Chairs</b>	Blanca Bauer (UTB), Laura Saenz (UTPA)
<b>Working Group Members</b>	UTB: Ethel Cantu, Celina Garza, Kenneth Pruitt, Alma Rodriguez, Steve Wilson  UTPA: Joel Pagan, Constantine Tarawneh, Melinda Rodriguez, Sandra Tijerina, Xiaohui “Sophie” Wang

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction**

At UTPA, Academic Assessment is coordinated under the division of Academic Affairs, reports to the Provost, and has approximately 6 faculty and staff members supporting the academic assessment processes and ensuring it remains continuous and integrated. At UTB, Academic Assessment is centralized under the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness (OIRPE), reports to the Provost, and has 2.75 FTE staff supporting the coordination of academic assessment processes.

For a list of key services and the processes used at each institution, refer to **Appendix A —Key Services Offered**

Key policy differences generally relate to the reporting structure for academic assessment activities at UTB and UTPA. All assessment and institutional effectiveness processes are centralized at UTB in the OIRPE reporting to the Provost, while at UTPA, OIRE at UTPA oversees administrative plans and assessment, and reports to the President. The academic assessment function at UTPA is coordinated by the Office of Undergraduate Studies/University College and reports to the Provost, with the Office of Graduate Studies coordinating the Academic Program Review function.

### **Philosophy**

The Philosophy guiding the work of the Academic Assessment Work Group was based around the goal of creating an authentic culture of evidence-based decision-making.

Because Academic Assessment represents critical compliance areas and encompasses the interwoven processes of continuous improvement and accountability through multi-faceted assessment functions that include the assessment of program-level student learning outcomes, core curriculum assessment, academic program review, administrative goal setting and evaluation in support of institutional and college strategic plans, and ongoing evaluation of the academic program and/or the learning environment, the Work Group agreed that Academic Assessment must be assigned greater value and given priority attention at UTRGV.

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#### Context of Academic Assessment at UT RGV

##### ***Process for development of recommendations:***

The members of the Academic Assessment Work Group representing UTB and UTPA met formally on five occasions and supplemented the meetings with research and discussions via email between meetings. The process followed included a discussion about current practices at UTB and UTPA, research into best practices (including organizational structures at multi-campus institutions), and consultations with experienced national leaders involved in academic assessment.

##### ***Key Issues:***

Both the situation analysis of each institution's processes and research into best practices led to early consensus about key issues facing the development of a robust assessment function at UTRGV, with both institutions finding similar issues and struggles at each institution.

Essentially, representatives from both UTB and TSC found that because assessment is "everyone's responsibility," but has not been given the value and importance it requires, neither institution has been able to move beyond assessment as a function of compliance to assessment as a worthy function that demonstrates the significance of faculty's work, while charting the course for continuous quality improvement. Key issues, their prevention, and mitigation strategies served to guide recommendations regarding both effective assessment practices and how institutional structures would best support the work. Key issues include:

- Not charging individuals with the direct ownership of assessment, documentation of results, and demonstration of improvement based on assessment results, therefore it is not fully supported by all deans, chairs, faculty, and other participants in the assessment process;
- Assessment processes continuing to be equated to compliance activities, thus diminishing the value it brings to the improvement of programs and instruction;
- Faculty charged with assessment of their programs and the core curriculum do not feel supported through the assessment process resulting in the paradigm that assessment is an obstacle as opposed to an opportunity; and
- Assessment is not valued by executive administrators and as result, is presented as an additional "other duties as assigned" task without recognition that the work is involved and time-consuming, warranting course releases, stipends, professional development, incentives, and acknowledgement that faculty time must be dedicated to the processes.

#### Key Recommendations

Thirteen recommendations are being submitted by the Academic Assessment Work Group. The following briefly summarizes them:

1. Academic assessment should be a faculty driven process overseen by Academic Affairs and should be purposely designed and viewed as an integral component of institutional effectiveness, with Deans and other administrators clearly communicating the value of academic assessment and its importance.
2. A one-stop-shop should be created that will serve colleges, programs and faculty in the form of access to data, faculty workshops, and technology training so that faculty, programs, and colleges should not have to seek assistance beyond this office to complete assessment tasks.
3. The roles and responsibilities of faculty, department chairs, deans, staff, directors, and others in the academic assessment process must be clearly delineated and include identification of assessment directors/coordinators/assistant deans of assessment within each college who will take the lead roles in assessment efforts
4. Incentivize participation in academic assessment by program faculty assessment leaders through stipends and/or release time.
5. Create a permanent core curriculum committee responsible for evaluating the alignment of assessment to curriculum, and create a SLO review committee responsible for providing feedback to programs on their student learning outcome assessment plans, student learning outcome data, and program improvements. Additionally, create a program review

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oversight or advisory committee to provide input on the institution's periodic review process for all academic undergraduate programs and graduate programs to assure its efficacy and consistency from program to program.

6. Develop or identify technology to be used consistently among all academic units.
7. Expand SLO assessment to all co-curricular events, initiatives, programs, and activities designed or developed to benefit students (e.g., student organizations, residence life, and orientation) as a complement to the assessment work of Academic Affairs.
8. Create opportunities for faculty development on the topic of academic assessment in partnership with a Center for Teaching and Learning and ensure that academic assessment training is included in new faculty development initiatives.
9. Allocate a healthy budget for academic assessment that includes staffing, technology, professional development, faculty mini-grants, workload incentives and other direct activities designed to embed assessment into the work of Academic Affairs to ensure a culture of evidence is supported by executive administrators.

## FINDINGS

### **Innovative Initiatives Currently in Place**

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As noted in the Executive Summary, there are minimal faculty and staff members assigned at both UTB and UTPA to coordinate and facilitate the work of academic assessment. Please refer to **Appendix B for a complete list of activities and initiatives already in place, constituents served, and technologies used.**

In addition to the list of activities in Appendix B, the Work Group is recommending the following activities currently in place at each institution continue at UT RGV:

#### UTPA:

- External review of both graduate and undergraduate programs for Academic Program Review
- Faculty conduct the work of training for academic assessment and program review to help build faculty buy-in
- Faculty are compensated with course releases to attend to assessment and program review responsibilities
- Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are reported on an annual update basis, but also require a summary report to be submitted biennially
- Development of a rubric for the evaluation of the quality of SLO assessment plans

#### UTB:

- Use of comprehensive assessment platform for SLOs and Academic Program Review, including rating artifacts against established rubrics in the system
- Assessment of SLOs in Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, Institutional Advancement for co-curricular learning assessment
- Central location for help and assistance for all forms of assessment and training

### **Innovative Initiatives not Currently in Place**

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The initiatives detailed below fulfill the philosophy/framework defined by the Academic Assessment Work Group. First the recommended initiatives comply with "integration of next generation technology and customized learning..." (Guiding Principle #1) in that assessment solutions are proposed to be met by new and integrated streamlined technologies. They also support guiding principle #3, by "employing the highest quality faculty members and staff...who pursue global excellence in teaching, etc." as assessment is faculty based and driven. **Now is the time to build outcomes assessment into the culture of the new institution so that all faculty and staff understand that assessment is part of the job, not an afterthought.** The initiatives further support Guiding Principle #4 in that they "streamline academic and administrative programs and re-design processes to increase productivity and promote a student- and service- centered mode of operation." Again, both UTB and UTPA have recognized where we do assessment well, and where we are weak. The Work Group sees this as an opportunity to increase needed resources for these responsibilities and develop a plan with built-in

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support to ensure assessment is a critical part of our work. Finally, recommendations align to Guiding principle #15 that encourages that we “Leverage the size, strength, and excellence of the UT System...” This ability to leverage the strength of the UT System will be critical to assessment as we establish essential new partnerships with Texas Workforce Commission and other entities that own critical data that speaks to the success of our students as UTS can help facilitate these new partnership and information exchanges.

Moreover, the initiatives recommended below are fundamental to the success of students, programs, colleges and the institution. Assessment information is the primary source of data that will demonstrate the impact of instruction and program quality—first on the students we serve, but then as an indicator of UT RGV’s influence on the region. Assessment data will need to be presented quickly after the establishment of UT RGV to answer the questions about the quality and effectiveness of the institution’s core mission. Only through the overt and evident assignment of value and provision of currently insufficient resources can such a critical function truly benefit UT RGV in its agile ability to demonstrate accountability and success in relation to other institutions.

Recommended initiatives NOT currently in place include:

1. Assessment processes of all types (including academic assessment of SLOs and Program Review) should be formalized and part of the official HOP policies guiding these key aspects of each unit’s responsibilities.
2. All faculty and staff must be taught to plan all programs, new initiatives, grants, and activities with its assessment and evaluation structure in mind so that assessments are seamless and embedded into the programs, operations and activities.
3. The creation of a “one-stop” assessment umbrella within the structure of the new university so that all faculty and staff will know that if they need assistance with any type of assessment, there is a central place in the institution that can provide assessment help and guidance needed within the IE and assessment umbrella—pieces of the responsibilities can be assigned to faculty or staff employees as appropriate for each type of assessment activity.
4. Ensuring that each college has an assigned assessment director/coordinator/assistant dean of assessment as a full-time position that responsible for coordinating all assessment activities for the college. This individual will be the contact person to a formal Assessment Unit or Operation within the new university. Furthermore, each program of study needs an assigned “assessment liaison” with sufficient release time to conduct all the assessment work of the program (curriculum maps, SLO development and revision, calendars for the collection of artifacts, coordination of scoring/aggregation of student artifacts, analysis of results by program faculty and development and documentation of improvements based on assessment results). The college level assessment director/coordinator/assistant dean of assessment would be charged with ensuring that each department and program within the college keeps up with assessment requirements, provides guidance and training, and is the point person at the college to help facilitate institutional documentation of key assessment and accountability reporting. This structure allows for a “two-direction flow” of assessment data between an institutional assessment unit and the academic assessment activities occurring within each department and college at the new university. The college level assessment director/coordinator/assistant dean of assessment should have a faculty assignment to facilitate overall faculty buy-in, and should be a full-time position. These positions within the colleges will also nurture education related research and strongly motivate faculty buy-in of assessment requirements and processes as work that is beyond mere compliance in nature.
5. Development of an “app” or other innovative technology-based outcomes collection method to allow faculty to collect informal assessment data “on the fly” and allow unplanned collection of pre- and post- test information that does not require it to be formally structured and planned.
6. The need to schedule official “assessment days” into the academic calendar each fall and spring to serve as the official time programs set aside for faculty to come together to analyze and discuss assessment data in a formalized and comprehensive manner.
7. Coordinate the seamless collection of student artifacts in courses so that student artifacts can be uploaded seamlessly for program SLO data. Where possible, identify technologies that allow for pre-programmed results of student attainment against established SLOs to be done automatically, including line item analyses of exams or other relevant student artifacts lending themselves to easy aggregation of results for faculty analysis.

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8. Create a standing “Core Curriculum and Program Assessment Committee” as a formally recognized standing committee in the new institution.
9. Develop a pre-established timeline/calendar at least five years into the future to be able to prepare and inform and prepare programs scheduled for reviews and reports with plenty of lead time in order to produce a quality Academic Program Review and identify appropriate external reviewers. It is recommended that UG and GR Academic Program Reviews are aligned under the same calendar.
10. Implement a structure for faculty in each program who are charged with the responsibility for SLO assessment and/or Academic Program Review to be compensated. The group strongly advises against this level of work being an “add on” to teaching, service, and research. There is a serious need to incentivize time spent by faculty on this work (release time, stipends)
11. The provision of regular and consistent training opportunities for faculty and staff, including an orientation to SACS and assessment for all new faculty must be continuous and ongoing.
12. There must be evident specific and demonstrable involvement in the Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness processes from executive administrators who must help to truly develop an authentic “culture of evidence” and assessment in the new institution. Executives must view assessment as a substantial and meaningful part of the job, not as an add-on to faculty’s “real” responsibilities. Executive must “own” the communication to all faculty and staff about important assessment and institutional effectiveness activities.
13. Coordinate the automatic and seamless collection of and access to employment information from the Texas Workforce Commission to be able to determine true employment outcomes of the graduates of the new university.
14. Employ assessment specialists in an institutional IE unit that are available to look at documentation and reports as “editors” who can assist programs to improve on narrative and documentation to increase quality of the reports and teach faculty how to comprehensively document their outcomes and reviews.
15. Develop an annual or biennial “report card” that summarizes the institution’s assessment activities and the institutions’ progress on continually improving programs and services.
16. Build flexibility built into the assessment system since every program of study is unique.
17. Adopt technology that is consistent among all units doing assessment and that has multiple reporting features for SLO assessment, Program Review, and other unit and institutional planning and includes robust features for capturing, and if possible, scoring data and student artifacts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Key Recommendations for the Final Report

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The following is a list of the Academic Assessment Work Group’s Key Recommendations that were summarized in the Executive Summary and fulfill the philosophy established by the group.

1. Academic assessment, including core curriculum assessment, program (majors, minors, certificates) student learning outcome assessment, and program review should be a faculty driven process overseen by Academic Affairs.
2. Academic assessment should be purposely designed and viewed as an integral component of institutional effectiveness. The work group recommends the establishment of a formal council within the Academic Affairs division: ***the Council on Academic Assessment and Evidenced Based Decision Making.*** This council will receive information from each college that synthesize the results of academic assessments occurring within the division (Core curriculum assessment, academic program review, SLO assessment, strategic planning and evaluation) and fuse that information with that of other colleges to determine emerging institutional trends, shared concerns, and identify best practices in assessment for replication among other colleges and programs. This council, or “fusion team” will be responsible for analyzing and amalgamating information from throughout the academic affairs division and formulating assessment and improvement-related recommendations to be considered for all programs and colleges. ***SEE APPENDIX C—ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT***

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3. Deans and other administrators must clearly communicate the value of academic assessment and its importance.
4. UTRGV must create a one-stop-shop that will serve colleges, programs and faculty that need assistance or support for core curriculum assessment, student learning outcome assessment, and program review. This support may come in the form of access to data, faculty workshops, and technology training. The one-stop-shop can work in coordination with other university offices or structures; however, faculty, programs, and colleges should not have to seek assistance beyond this office to complete assessment tasks.
5. Executive leadership must clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of faculty, department chairs, deans, staff, directors, and others in the academic assessment process.
6. Academic Affairs leadership must identify assessment directors/coordinators/assistant deans of assessment (title to be coordinated within the organizational structure of the new university) within each college who would take the lead role in assessment efforts within the college and liaise with faculty, staff and others. The recommendation is that colleges identify an academic leader among a college's respective faculty to oversee and guide all aspects of assessment. Ideally, the person holds no other position or responsibility within the institution or college; however, the role could be assigned to an associate dean if the duties of the position establish academic assessment as a high priority.
7. Academic affairs leadership must incentivize participation in academic assessment by program faculty assessment leaders through stipends and/or release time.
8. UTRGV must create a permanent core curriculum committee responsible for evaluating the alignment of assessment to curriculum. The committee would also be responsible for considering, recommending and approving changes to the core curriculum and its delivery. The core committee should include faculty representation from all component areas.
9. UTRGV must create a SLO review committee (or other named committee or structure) responsible for providing feedback to programs on their student learning outcome assessment plans, student learning outcome data, and program improvements. The committee would not function as a reporting or compliance body, rather the purpose of the committee would be to support the improvement of academic programs. The SLO review committee should include the college level assessment directors from each college and one other faculty involved in the assessment process.
10. UTRGV must create a program review oversight or advisory committee to provide input on the institution's periodic review process for all academic undergraduate programs and graduate programs to assure its efficacy and consistency from program to program. The program review committee would also resolve any issues of academic program definitions and maintain the multi-year schedule for reviews. The committee would include faculty representation, but would not necessitate representation from each college. The committee would not be responsible for conducting program reviews.
11. Stakeholders in the assessment process must develop or identify technology to be used consistently among all academic units. The technology should include features for capturing, and if possible, scoring data and student artifacts.
12. Expand SLO assessment to all events, initiatives, programs, and co-curricular activities designed or developed to benefit students (e.g., student organizations, residence life, and orientation).
13. Academic Affairs leadership must create opportunities for faculty development on the topic of academic assessment in partnership with a Center for Teaching and Learning, and ensure that academic assessment training is included in new faculty development initiatives.
14. UT RGV must allocate a healthy budget for Academic Assessment that not only considers the faculty and staff resources required for efficient coordination and facilitation, but that provides for program mini-grants, the inclusion of many faculty in assessment professional development opportunities, allows for the purchase of standardized instruments or supports innovative data collection techniques at the program level, and supports the level of time and effort required by administrators, faculty and staff in an ongoing, continuous manner.

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#### Required Actions for Implementation – Fall 2015

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The list below represents items that were identified as required to be in place in order for recommendations to be successful or operational when UTRGV opens its doors in Fall 2015.

- The development of the UTRGV Strategic Plan with supporting strategic plans for each college/division of the institution
- A well-defined process for assessment and reporting of all required functions (SLO assessment, academic program review, core curriculum assessment, administrative/strategic planning and goal setting at the program level). This includes drafts of new processes that includes timelines, calendars, handbooks, websites, assessment committees, training and professional development.
- The adoption and identification of Student Learning Outcomes for each consolidated program of study as well as an assessment methodology for AY 16 to ensure evidence of new assessment processes in place at time of SACS COC visit in Spring 2016.
- The identification of key individuals at UT RGV who will coordinate and facilitate planning and assessment processes within the new university and within Academic Affairs to ensure consistency across the multi-site institution.
- The identification of technologies to be used to document and provide efficiencies in the documentation, data collection, and artifact scoring processes.
- A newly adopted core curriculum for UTRGV with its own methodologies and processes for assessment across colleges and disciplines.
- Healthy budgets and sufficient human resources to ensure that assessment, evaluation and accountability functions are embedded in all work conducted by UT RGV.

#### Possible Consultations

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Site visits were not needed. The Work Group consulted in person with Michelle Hanson, Academic Assessment expert from Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), looked at model assessment offices within the US and Texas, including A&M College Station and UT Arlington. Furthermore, the Association for Institutional Research, CHEA, and other assessment organizations were studied to determine practices and processes that would enhance and strengthen current processes currently in place at UTB and UTPA.

The chairs of the Academic Assessment work group would like to attend the Performance Assessment in Higher Education Institute in Boston being held in early April to familiarize ourselves with the new and emerging practices in assessment of higher education. (see **Appendix D for travel costs**)

## Appendices

- Appendix A Key Services Offered at UTB and UTPA**
- Appendix B Activities and Initiatives Currently In Place**
- Appendix C Organizational Structure for Academic Assessment**
- Appendix D Travel costs for co-chairs to attend Performance Assessment in Higher Education Institute**
- Appendix E Meeting Agendas and Minutes**

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**APPENDIX A  
Key Services Offered at UTB and UTPA**

Area		UTB Current State	UTPA Current State
<b>Key Services Offered</b>	Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment for academic and non-academic units is coordinated and managed by Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness (OIRPE) including training, quality review coordination, and compliance monitoring.	√	
	Academic Program Review self-study is coordinated by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness, including production of self-study document templates, training, coordination of internal and external reviews, and production of data tables as they relate to performance outcomes and other quality metrics.	√	
	Academic program faculty are appointed by chairs to serve as Assessment Liaisons charged with coordinating and reporting annual/biannual SLO assessment and improvement documents.	√	√
	Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education oversees the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment process for undergraduate and graduate degree programs at UTPA including, but not limited to SLO training, TracDat training, evaluation and feedback and compliance monitoring.		√
	Vice Provost for Graduate Education oversees the Program Review process at UTPA including the review calendar, the appointment of the review panel, and preparation of the self-study.		√

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**Appendix B  
Activities and Initiatives Already in Place**

Area		UTB Current State	UTPA Current State
<b>Key Stakeholders for Whom Services are Provided</b>	President	√	
	Provost	√	√
	Vice Presidents	√	
	Deans	√	√
	Department Chairs	√	√
	Faculty	√	√
Area		UTB Current State	UTPA Current State
<b>Key Stakeholders for Whom Services are Provided</b>	President	√	
	Provost	√	√
	Vice Presidents	√	
	Deans	√	√
	Department Chairs	√	√
	Faculty	√	√
Area		UTB Current State	UTPA Current State
<b>Information Technology Systems Used</b>	Blackboard Outcomes for Assessment	√	
	SharePoint	√	
	Microsoft Office Suite	√	√
	SPSS	√	√
	Qualtrics for online surveys	√	
	Datatel	√	
	Blackboard Outcomes System	√	
	TracDat - assessment management software		√
	WebFocus		√
	Banner (Data repository)		√

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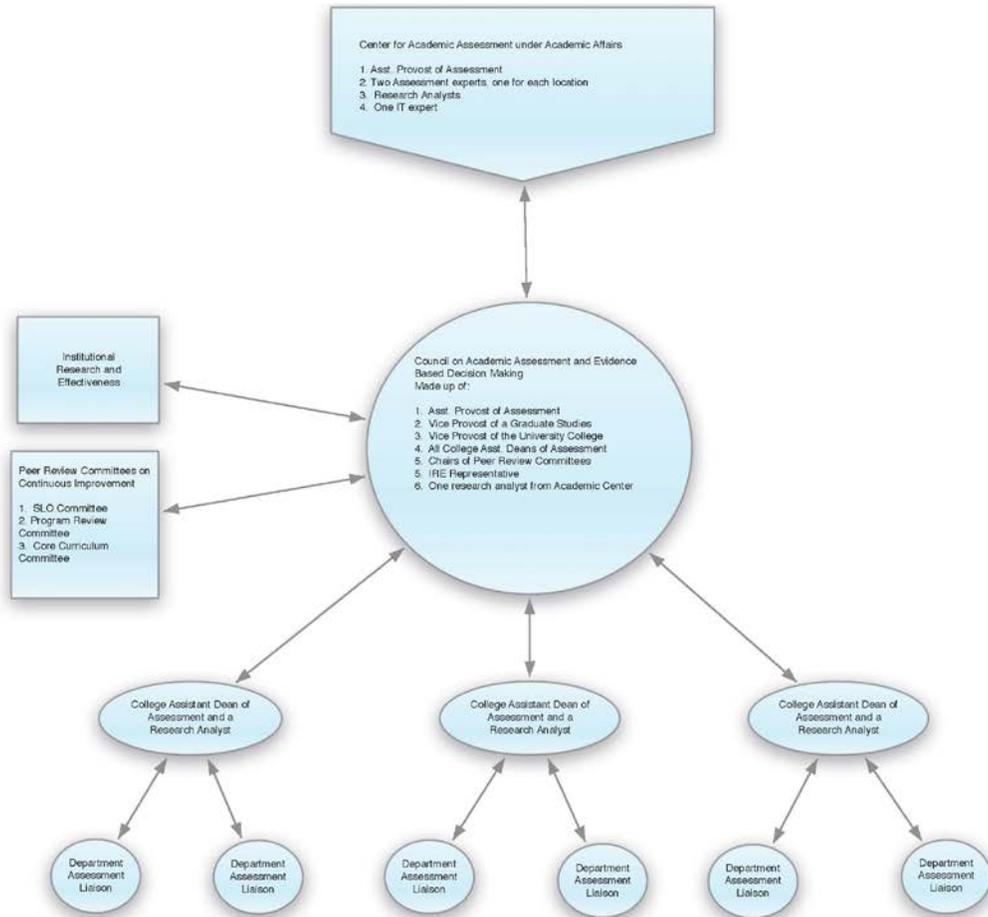
Area		UTB Current State	UTPA Current State
<b>External Compliance Responsibilities</b>	<b>SACS submissions</b>		
	The OIRPE coordinates submittal of compliance documentation for Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1, Educational Programs to include student learning outcomes, for Fifth Year Interim Report and Decennial Reaffirmation in accordance with all applicable governing policies.	√	
	The OIRPE coordinates submittal of all compliance documentation, including CR 3.3.1.1 as it applies to prospectus applications for substantive change for new off-site locations.	√	
	The OIRPE coordinates compliance documentation required of On-Site Review Committees and Off-Site Review Committees for all core requirements, comprehensive standards, and with federal regulations.	√	
	NCATE, CACREP, ABET, AACSB self-study reports and compliance documentation is coordinated by respective department faculty to include assessment of student learning.	√	
	The Office of Undergraduate Studies coordinates submittal of compliance documentation for Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1, Educational Programs to include student learning outcomes, for Fifth Year Interim Report and Decennial Reaffirmation in accordance with all applicable governing policies.		√
	The Office of Undergraduate Studies coordinates submittal of all compliance documentation, including CR 3.3.1.1 as it applies to prospectus applications for substantive change for new off-site locations.		√
	The Office of Graduate Studies coordinates compliance documentation required of On-Site Review Committees and Off-Site Review Committees for all core requirements, comprehensive standards, and with federal regulations.		√
The Office of Undergraduate Studies support programs reporting to external accrediting bodies.		√	

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Area		UTB Current State	UTPA Current State
<b>Other Key Data</b>	<b>Institution-wide key data requirements -</b>		
	OIRPE coordinates collection of information to update accreditations for university	√	
	OIRPE prepares data tables for Program Reviews	√	
	OIRPE prepares academic planning research briefs and performance outcomes data each term to support Program Review.	√	
	Department faculty and administration prepare specific compliance documentation for self-study process on assessment of student learning for external accreditors.	√	
	At the request of programs under review, OIRE runs and provide student demographic data needed for the self-study.		√
	Department faculty and administration prepare program review self-study documents.		√

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## Appendix C Proposed Organizational Structure for Academic Assessment



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**Appendix D  
Travel Costs for Co-chairs to attend  
Performance Assessment in Higher Education Institute**

**Performance Assessment in Higher Education  
April 6-8, 2014**

*Program Overview*

Guided by expert faculty, accomplished practitioners and policy leaders, Performance Assessment in Higher Education addresses current developments in the assessment of student learning outcomes and their practical ramifications for you and your institution. The program will consider competency-based education, online learning initiatives including MOOCs, and plans to create a national college-rating system. Important lessons and insights about performance assessment drawn from non-higher education settings will also be considered.

Through interactive case discussion, question-and-answer sessions and small-group idea sharing, the program will provide an invaluable opportunity to become familiar with current developments and identify steps your institution should take to cultivate and sustain evidence-based cultures of assessment and accountability.

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/ppe/programs/higher-education/portfolio/performance-assessment.html>

Registration fee	=	\$2,000.00
Roundtrip Airfare	=	\$417.00 (Southwest airlines)
Lodging	=	\$916.00 (allowable \$229 x 3 nights max; hotel rates \$185 to\$235)
Per diem	=	\$338.00 (\$71 a day x 4 days + \$54 fifth day of travel)
Taxi	=	\$70.00 (round trip)
Total Cost	=	\$3,741/each (2 co-chairs to attend)

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**Appendix E  
Meeting Agendas and Minutes**

**October 18, 2013 Minutes from Kick-off**

**Academic Assessment Working Group  
Kickoff /First Meeting Minutes  
10/18/2013 (at UTB)**

**Members present:** Blanca Bauer, Laura Saenz, Joel Pagan, Constantine Tarawneh, Melinda Rodriguez, Xiaohui “Sophie” Wang, Celina Garza, Kenneth Pruitt, Alma Rodriguez, and Steve Wilson.

- Introductions
- Discussion of the role and expectations of the Academic Assessment Working Group
  - Charged with recommending process and a possible administrative structure for the delivery of services of Student Learning Outcomes assessment, Academic Program Review self-study and General Education (core curriculum) assessment.
- Overview of current Academic Assessment functions at UTB & UTPA
  - Current administrative structures
    - UTB: The Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Effectiveness oversees compliance with academic Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment for undergraduate and graduate academic programs as well as the Academic Program Review self-study process. Faculty groups serve as assessment liaisons that design and implement annual assessments and improvement plans.
    - UTPA: The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education oversees the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment process for undergraduate and graduate degree programs at UTPA including, but not limited to SLO training, TracDat training, evaluation and feedback and compliance monitoring. The Vice Provost for Graduate Education oversees the Program Review process at UTPA including the review calendar, the appointment of the review panel, and preparation of the self-study.
- Discussion on researching best practice models to recommend an innovative “one-stop-shop” approach to coordinating academic assessment.
  - How do we handle a distributed campus for supporting and monitoring compliance of SLO, Program Review and Gen Ed assessment? Innovation? A support center with satellite offices?
  - What does faculty feel is the best model and approach to support their efforts?
- Homework and Next Steps
  - Research innovative models of best practices for delivery of programming and services in the academic assessment functional area.
  - Complete Situation Analysis document to expand on the current state of SLO, Program Review and General Education functions unique to each campus.
- Next meeting: Friday, November 1, 2013, at the TSTC University Center in Harlingen.

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[November 1, 2013 Agenda and Minutes](#)

**Academic Assessment Working Group**

November 1, 2013

3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

TSTC University Center, Room 132

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review Situational Analysis
3. Discuss Potential Risks and Mitigation Strategies
4. Discuss Innovations Researched
5. Next Steps -
  - a. Progress Report due on November 18th
  - b. Future Meetings

**Academic Assessment Working Group  
11/01/18/2013, University Center, Harlingen**

**Members present:** Blanca Bauer, Laura Saenz, Joel Pagan, Melinda Rodriguez, Xiaohui “Sophie” Wang, Ethel Cantu, Celina Garza, Kenneth Pruitt, Alma Rodriguez, and Steve Wilson.

**Member not present:** Constantine Tarawneh and Sandi Tijerina.

- **Welcome and review of meeting agenda**
- **Discussion and overview of Program Review self-study process at UTPA and UTB**
  - UTPA: Current process is led by Joel Pagan who serves as Provost Fellow charged with oversight and coordination of academic program review for all academic programs at the University. The current process is outlined in the UTPA Academic Program Review Guidelines and has been uploaded to the working group SharePoint site for reference. Key process points shared during the meeting including the following:
    - All UTPA academic programs are review every seven years.
    - Graduate programs are reviewed in accordance with the schedule approved by the THECB in 2012.
    - Both undergraduate and graduate program review self-studies are externally evaluated by a reviewer from outside the state.
    - Programs are notified one year in advance of scheduled review.
    - Trainings and workshops are provided for scheduled programs; representatives from upcoming review groups are invited to attend to anticipate what is expected and resources needed.

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- UTB: Current process is coordinated collaboratively by the OIRPE and Associate VP of Academic Affairs. Comprehensive review forms and templates are hosted in the Blackboard Outcomes Learning Management System, allowing scheduled programs to share access, updates, and on-going edits during the review process. Key self-study processes as they are conducted at UTB include:
  - All UTB undergraduate programs undergo review every 6 years
  - Graduate programs are reviewed in accordance with the THECB approve schedule every 7 years.
  - Undergraduate program reviews are evaluated by a panel of peer reviewers, faculty colleagues from outside of the program/department identified by the AVPAA.
  - Trainings and workshops are scheduled throughout the academic year, including one kick-off workshop for all scheduled programs and individual program-level support trainings as requested.
  - Performance and other outcome data is provided by the OIRPE, however, some data, such as budget and faculty credentials, are the responsibility of each unit.
  
- Questions for follow-up:
  - What is considered acceptable limits of time by the THECB for externally-accredited programs to use their comprehensive self-studies in place of institutional program reviews?
  - College-Level Self-Study: Follow-up on whether UT System has or will release a template, guidelines and other process documents for this new initiative.
  - What type of incentives (monetary and other) can be embedded in the process to ensure active participation as well as appropriate compensation for appointed review members?
  
- **Discussion of Best Practices in Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**
  - Important to establish a cultural of continuous improvement that is supported by upper level administration.
    - Important to help those involved “think beyond compliance” and to do what makes sense for each individual program.
  - Notion that faculty who are involved in outcomes assessment have better buy-in and attention to the process when those guiding them are also faculty or have a faculty background (current culture at UTPA). Would faculty feel better guided by a discipline specific representative?
  - Agreement that student learning outcomes assessment should be a faculty driven process. Guidance and recommendations for compliance and improving quality can be provided by an experienced faculty or staff member.
  - Paradigm of Institutional Effectiveness
    - How does SACS Commission on Colleges Define IE: “Institutional effectiveness is the systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution.” (*SACS/COC Resource Manual*).
    - How does SLO assessment, Program Review and General Education Assessment fit into the paradigm of institutional effectiveness? How can a “one-stop-shop” be designed to support faculty and staff in all aspects of the IE paradigm, including but limited to performance measures and reviews, outcomes data, student learning assessment, administrative outcomes assessment, general education, QEP, program review, etc.

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- How can SLO assessment be innovative? What types of trainings, software, technology, and other support mechanisms can be embedded into the process to ensure compliance but also a process that is effective and straight forward.
- How do we measure the quality of assessment plans? Suggestion that all SLO assessment plans should be assessed for quality by peers in each College/School for format, appropriateness, quality of rubrics and other instruments, clarity and level of elaboration. Point: Assessment should focus on the quality of the plan and not the content to ensure faculty buy-in and leadership in the process is not compromised.
- **Mutual Areas of Weakness include general education assessment and programs that do not follow-through with reporting of results, implementation of improvements and closing the loop.**
- **Homework and Next Steps**
  - Continue to research innovative models of best practices for delivery of programming and services in the academic assessment functional areas.
  - First Academic Assessment Working Group Progress Report of activities due November 18, 2013.
- **Next meeting:** Friday, November 15, 2013, in Weslaco at a location TBD.

**November 15, 2013 Agenda and Minutes**

**Academic Assessment Working Group**  
November 15, 2013  
3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Weslaco ISD Professional Learning Center  
**Agenda**

1. Welcome
2. Recap of November 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and Situation Analysis
3. Brainstorming: Faculty Needs Assessment for SLOs and PR
4. Briefly Discuss Content of First Progress Report Due 11/18/13
  - A. Innovative initiatives currently in place
  - B. Innovative initiatives currently not in place
  - C. Possible Consultations
  - D. How Guiding Principles addressed in proposed initiatives
  - E. Deliverables for Preliminary Report
  - F. Deliverables for Final Recommendation

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- G. New Start up Activities?
- H. Key Deliverables for Implementation

- 5. Next Steps -
  - a. Progress Report due on November 18<sup>th</sup>
  - b. Preliminary Report Due 1/14/14
  - c. Final Recommendations Due 2/14/14
  - d. Next meeting?

**Assessment Working Group  
11/15/2013, Professional Learning Center, Weslaco**

**Members present:** Blanca Bauer, Laura Saenz, Melinda Rodriguez, Sandi Tijerina, Ethel Cantu, Celina Garza, Alma Rodriguez, and Steve Wilson.

**Members not present:** Constantine Tarawneh, Joel Pagan, Kenneth Pruitt and Xiaohui “Sophie” Wang

- **Welcome and review of November 1, 2013, meeting minutes.**
- **Discussion of Needs Assessment**
  - **Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):**
    - A **well-defined and streamlined process** to ensure assessment activities are documented in a timely manner and in accordance with institutional and regulatory standards. Example: annual update with biannual summary.
    - **Establishing a culture of assessment**
      - Need to ensure academic freedom is not compromised. Concern regarding Academic Course Guide Manual that includes defined minimum outcome learning standards for lower division, transferable courses (may be confusing to faculty). Question on whether ACGM applies only to community colleges.
    - **Building Buy-In**
      - Communication regarding assessment deliverables should come from Deans and Chairs to ensure attention is given to timelines and continued buy-in to the process.
      - Idea to establish an **Office of Assessment within each College/School** charged with oversight and coordination of all areas of assessment. Trainings, knowledge and strategies will be shared among departmental faculty and peers groups will review and make recommendations on quality of assessment plans.
    - **Training Needs**
      - Establish departmental committees to regularly review and discuss mission as part of process to determine/define annual SLOs.
      - Training and communication must be tied to reinforcing culture of assessment.
      - Building assessment activities into an annual calendar, such as a scheduled “Assessment Day” with human and other support resources for faculty to document and post assessment plans.

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- Important for all faculty, not just those involved in learning assessment activities, should be included in trainings to promote buy-in, build strong teams and to prevent knowledge fall-out from potential turn-overs.
- **Data Collection Needs**
  - Data collection and timelines should be planned accordingly through curricula mapping to ensure efficiency.
  - Data collection and timelines have to be streamlined as efficiently as possible through the use of technology to collect artifacts and to score and aggregate data.
  - Must design a mechanism for tracking students post-graduation to collect placement and other employment data, such as through the Texas Workforce Commission. As an example of best practices, Nursing programs require student completers to sign a release authorizing the University to collect data and information from their employers for assessment purposes.
  - Idea to have UT System establish an agreement with organizations such as TWC for the automatic collection of post-graduate outcomes data for all exiting students.
- **Other General Recommendations**
  - Establish a one-stop center for faculty to have access to a comprehensive level of resources for all assessment activities.
  - Establish and share a comprehensive assessment calendar well in advance, including timelines for submittal of institutional reports.
  - Develop an SLO Handbook that provides a detailed review of the assessment process, calendar of deliverables, and program assessment examples to help faculty build and execute their plans.
  - Ensure flexibility is built into the process to enable programs to design an assessment plan that is meaningful to their programs.
  - Recommended that externally accredited programs design SLO plans that serve compliance needs of both regulators, AACSB, NCATE and SACS for instance, to prevent duplicated work.
- **Program Review**
  - **Data Needs**
    - Data for program review should be provided in a consistent format and in a periodic basis; common set of metrics such as an institutional, department and program report card.
    - Important to involve other campus units where data is “owned” to make data collection less burdensome for faculty.
- **Discussions of Innovations (To Be Reported on Nov 18, Progress Report)**
  - Create an assessment “app” to allow faculty to collect informal assessment data “and allow unplanned collection of pre- and post- test information that does not have to be formally structured and planned
  - “Directors” or “Coordinators” formally assigned as a position in each college to be responsible for the coordination and ongoing documentation of all learning outcomes assessment and academic program review activities.
  - Develop an annual assessment calendar with specified deliverables and timelines.

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- Adopt a common technology (i.e., TK20, Bb Outcomes, etc) for the seamless collection of student artifacts in courses that can be uploaded for aggregation and analysis of program SLO data.
- **Homework and Next Steps**
  - Invitation will be extended to Michele Hansen with IUPUI and a UTB Title V Evaluator to meet with assessment working group to discuss ideas for assessment innovations. Ethel Cantu will follow-up and report options.
  - First Academic Assessment Working Group Progress Report of activities due November 18, 2013.
- **Next meeting:** Tentative date options: December 16 or 18 at UTB campus, contingent upon meeting availability with Michele Hansen.

**December 17, 2013 Agenda and Minutes**

**Academic Assessment Working Group**

December 17, 2013

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Videoconference Meeting (UTPA @ ACSB 2.122; UTB @ UBLB 2.206)

**Agenda**

1. Welcome
2. Feedback and Review of First Interim Report submitted 11/18/2013(on SharePoint site under "Deliverables" titled "UTB and UTPA AAWG Academic Assessment Progress Report 111813 Draft 2")
3. Discuss and determine consensus on philosophy and framework guiding committee's work (to be included in Second Interim Report)
4. Format and most critical content of Second Interim Report (DUE 1/14/14)
5. Advantages/disadvantages of oversight models for academic assessment within new university
6. Important dates:
  - Working group co-chair conference call (January 7<sup>th</sup>; 11:00 a.m. to noon)
  - **Meeting with IUPUI Assessment Consultant, Michelle Hansen, in Brownsville on January 9<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.**
  - Second Interim Report due January 14<sup>th</sup>
  - **Academic Administration WG members joint meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup> at UTB at 1:30 p.m.**
  - Final Report due February 14<sup>th</sup>
7. Other Business:
  - January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting; date for February meeting

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- Goals for next meetings/homework:
  - (a) required actions for implementation of academic assessment in Fall 2015; and,
  - (b) statement of current activities and functions (including faculty and staff counts, numbers served, technologies used)

13 . Adjourn

**Academic Assessment Working Group  
12/17/2013, Videoconference UTPA@ACSB 2.122, UTB@UBLB 2.206**

**Members present:** Blanca Bauer, Laura Saenz, Constantine Tarawneh, Melinda Rodriguez, Ethel Cantu, Celina Garza, Alma Rodriguez, and Steve Wilson, Sandra Tijerina, Joel Pagan

**Members not present:** Kenneth Pruitt and Xiaohui “Sophie” Wang

- **Welcome and review of November 15, 2013, meeting minutes.**
- **Review of philosophy statement and recommended initiatives**
  - Primary goal driving assessment philosophy is to establish a culture of evidence based decision making at UT-RGV.
  - Recommendation on action item #7 regarding incentivizing participation (reward system) is to leave compensation language more general and not so specifically defined to enable flexibility in the implementation as some may be assigned duties as a service.
  - Question arose regarding need for *annual* assessment as some programs can only collect data once a year due to course offerings with improvements and/or interventions implemented the subsequent term. Members recommend a 2-year cycle as annual cycles could compromise quality.
    - Emphasis on making assessment flexible with faculty able to design plans during the curriculum mapping process that work for their programs.
    - Idea to design a system where programs submit annual progress reports and have up to 2 years to “close the loop” on a particular assessment cycle as well as submit a 5-Year Retrospective report that provides a comprehensive summary of assessment findings, improvements and impacts.
  - Recommendation to create a policy of assessment compliance and that it is adopted as part of the institutional Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP).
  - **Bottom line is that academic assessment needs to be intentionally designed and implemented as a critical component of institutional effectiveness and planning.**
- **Oversight structure and SACS**
  - Oversight/structure models should include references to advantages and disadvantages.
  - Need for a central division or unit leading assessment activities.
  - Need for a person in a leadership position with knowledge of discipline to oversee assessment activities within each college/school, such as an Assistant or Associate Dean position.
    - In the current capacity, the Dean of a College/School decides the role and responsibilities of an Assistant Dean.

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- Idea that an additional position should be established, such as an Assessment Coordinator or someone in a similar capacity at the Department level, due to the multiple roles Assistant Deans play for their respective Colleges/Schools.
- Recommend establishing a center under the Division of Academic Affairs that oversees academic assessment, co-curricular assessment and general education assessment; with support and linkages established to units that provide data.
- Question as to how to address the need for human resources in a multi-campus institution?
- SACS is now adding a “new layer” in outcomes assessment – specifically SACS is expecting program level outcomes (non-academic) to be assessed in addition to assessment of student learning; examples of non-academic outcomes include program annual assessment of student retention; examine licensure pass rates; graduating student employment rates; degrees awarded; etc.
- **General Education Competencies**
  - Question arose on whether general education competencies should be assessed by programs, i.e., achieving intended gen ed core competencies by major? Reference to Texas A&M model which has broad institutional competencies assessed by every major with the option to include specific learning competencies unique to each program.
  - Point that some faculty will not be happy about doing this as it may compromise academic freedom and the movement toward establishing and sustaining a culture of assessment.
- **Homework and Next Steps**
  - Blanca will design a table that profiles the broad standards of SACS dealing with institutional assessment to determine distribution of academic and non-academic component areas with a consideration as to how the two fall under the larger paradigm of institutional effectiveness.
  - Consideration that training and professional development need to be built into report and recommendations.
  - January 24<sup>th</sup> is the next joint meeting for the academic workgroups.
  - Final Report due February 14, 2014.
- **Next meeting:** Tentative date option: January 8 or 9 videoconference contingent upon meeting availability with Michele Hansen, IUPUI Assessment Specialist and UTB Title V Evaluator, on best practices and innovations.

**January 9, 2014 Agenda and Minutes**

**Consultation with Michele Hanson, PhD from IUPUI Academic Assessment Function**

**Academic Assessment Working Group  
01/09/2014, Videoconference UTPA@ HSW 2.228, UTB@UBLB 2.206**

**Members Present:** Laura Saenz, Constantine Tarawneh, Sandie Tijerina, Ethel Cantu, Celina Garza, Alma Rodriguez, Steve Wilson and Kenneth Pruitt.

**Members Not Present:** Blanca Bauer, Joel Pagan and Xiaohui “Sophie” Wang

# Project South Texas

## Academic Administration Working Groups

### FINAL Report

- Welcome and introduction of assessment expert Michele Hansen with Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI).
- Review of academic assessment working group role and charge for UT-RGV.
- Michelle provided information on her educational and professional background, including having served under the Trudy Banta, Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Academic Planning and Evaluation; having worked in the purview of institutional research, assessment and program evaluation and educational for over 12 years. She has a Ph.D. in social psychology and is a researcher by nature.
- Under the current structure at IUPUI, Michelle oversees assessment as it relates to student learning outcomes and institutional research and her unit is under the Division of Academic Affairs. Trudy Banta oversees academic program review, planning and accreditation/compliance and she reports directly to the Chancellor. While separate, Michelle pointed out that both offices function under the paradigm of institutional effectiveness.

#### Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

- Michelle shared that assessment of student learning is most directly the work of academic programs, departments, and centers responsible for fostering the desired learning. All academic and administrative units, however, are encouraged to periodically evaluate their work and identify opportunities to improve their services and to link this process with the institutional planning and budgeting cycle. As part of its core mission and values, IUPUI thus fosters a culture of improvement, including provision of resources to support learning outcomes assessment.
- A **Program Review and Assessment Committee (PRAC)** is composed of representatives of a broad range of academic and support units. The activities of the committee are supported by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Institutional Improvement. The PRAC includes at least 2 representatives from each school appointed by the deans. The role of the PRAC is to establish guidelines for comprehensive program review of academic and administrative units and provides guidance for student outcomes assessment throughout the institution. This committee **funds grants** that promise innovative approaches or improved practice in assessment and/or program review.
- **Learning outcomes for all IUPUI undergraduates.** The General Education Core Competencies (formerly the Principles of Undergraduate Learning) describe the expectations for what IUPUI undergraduates will know and be able to do upon completing their degrees, regardless of major. ***Faculty are required to link these general principles with the disciplinary learning outcomes of individual majors, students are provided multiple opportunities to gain increasing mastery of the PULs across their entire undergraduate experience, including general education courses and those in their major fields of study.*** Faculty identifies signature assignments to tap these critical competencies. In addition, the Division of Student Life has adopted the PULs as the basis for its varied co-curricular programs, including leadership development, residence life, campus recreation, and student involvement.
- **Learning outcomes for all IUPUI graduate students.** The Principles of Graduate and Professional Learning (<http://academicaffairs.iupui.edu/plans/graduatePrinciples.cfm>) were adopted by the Graduate Affairs Committee in 2010 and similarly represent common expectations for all students who earn graduate and professional degrees from IUPUI, regardless of the field of advanced study.
- **Performance indicators** have been an integral part of IUPUI's accountability practices. Campus performance indicators have been published as part of the **Annual Campus Performance Report**. These indicators undergo evaluation and revision in parallel with the refinement of the campus mission, vision,

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values and goals. A PRAC sub-committee manages performance indicators and decides how to integrate them into the measure of learning effectiveness.

- Each year, **educational units are asked to prepare summary reports of their assessment activities** for the Program Review and Assessment Committee and are posted on the PRAC web site at <http://www.planning.iupui.edu/64.html#12>. Each unit's approach to reporting is organized to meet its particular number, range, and types of programs. Most units identify student learning outcomes for their programs and describe approaches to helping students achieve the outcomes, methods of assessing this achievement, assessment findings, and improvements they have made or plan to make based on these assessment findings. Some large schools report on half or a third of their programs in alternating years; others provide comprehensive summaries every year but only periodically detail such items as learning outcomes or assessment procedures that may change very little from one year to the next. Reports from the following schools and educational units are available.

## Other Considerations

- Important to have a strong relationship with the Office of Teaching and Learning to coordinate on-going professional development related to assessment, especially for new faculty.
  - Decisions on new technologies adopted for managing assessments should be made with strong input from faculty; idea to form a faculty committee and let them decide.
  - IUPUI does not offer course release or other incentives related to assessment work; instead, they offer grants and recognitions of best practices that help drive and sustain the culture of assessment.
  - Important to have a strong and well-developed template for documenting assessments. She mentioned "ABE" assessment as a good example and Trudy Banta's "assessment matrix".
  - Model practices in assessment should be shared with assessment committees and other university stakeholders.
  - Important to encourage departments to have "conversations" and a continuing dialogue on how to use assessment for improvement.
  - Good Point: A strong professional development model (i.e., such as opportunities to attend assessment conferences), help to build and sustain culture of assessment!
- **Homework and Next Steps**
    - January 24<sup>th</sup> is the next joint meeting for the academic workgroups.
    - Final Report due February 14, 2014.

## January 31, 2014 Agenda and Minutes

### Academic Assessment Working Group

Friday, January 31, 2014

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

TSTC Harlingen University Center Room 231

### AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Old Business

**Project South Texas  
Academic Administration Working Groups  
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- A. Review of meeting and innovative or strategic ideas with IUPUI Consultant, Michelle Hansen
  - B. Reflections on Joint AAWG presentations from January 24<sup>th</sup>
  - C. Additional revisions or discussions regarding content of progress report to date
- II. New Business
- A. SACS/THECB assessment requirements for Academic Programs and Academic Assessment
  - B. Discussion regarding proposed structure for Academic Assessment activities at UT RGV
  - C. Other discussion related to academic assessment processes for UT RGV and reporting functions of academic assessment
- III. Important Dates
- **Final Report due February 14<sup>th</sup>**
- IV. Adjourn

**Academic Assessment Working Group  
01/31/2014, TSTC University Center**

**Members Present:** Laura Saenz, Blanca Bauer, Sandie Tijerina, Joel Pagan, Xiaohui “Sophie” Wang, Ethel Cantu, Celina Garza, Alma Rodriguez, Steve Wilson and Kenneth Pruitt.

**Members Not Present:** Constantine Tarawneh and Melinda Rodriguez

- **Review of meeting on innovative assessment strategies with Michelle Hansen, IUPUI Consultant**
- **Points of Discussion SACS/THECB requirements for academic programs and academic assessment**
  - Recommend academic assessment fall under the purview of Academic Affairs.
  - See need for a high level position within AA charged with evaluation and assessment related compliance requirements
  - If there is a lack of leadership, important links to IE and compliance can get lost.
  - Question as to how we get away from this being an add-on to everyone’s jobs; ensure significance as a division and/or a unit that reports directly to the Provost.
  - Idea of having a Director of Assessment in AA, also responsible for communicating changes in curriculum or program; assessment has to be tied in the curriculum process (i.e., substantive changes).
  - Annual goals for academic department level assessment will be moving to Laura’s area; IR still handles non-academic and student support assessments at UTPA.
  - At UTPA, the Division of AA has annual objectives and every unit is required to pick the one’s they will assess that year.

# Project South Texas

## Academic Administration Working Groups

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#### ▪ Proposed Structure:

- Academic Affairs Assessment Unit under the Provost overseen by a Senior administrator
  - Example: Director of Assessment for Undergraduate and Graduate Studies
    - Function of Unit:
      1. SLO Assessment
      2. Program Review
      3. General Education
      4. Administrative Goals/Strategic Plans
      5. Curriculum Change Reporting
      6. Responsiveness to data
      7. Review of Agreements and Assessment Processes
- Idea of having about 3 *Core Committees* overseeing curriculum and assessment; i.e., SLO review as a faculty council or committee such as by an operations and quality control committees
  1. Committee for SLO
  2. Gen Ed: to include curriculum changes
  3. Program Review: also reviewing strategic plan goals continuously

*Working to attain the goals of the mission, the goals of the strategic plan should also be designed in the template to force programs to consider and reflect about how their assessment plans align up to meeting the goals of the department strategic plan, mission and institutional goals...etc.*
- Idea of Assessment Coordinators at Each College.
- Operations should be led by staff and QC by Faculty (consider turnover with faculty)
- **Academic Assessment Council:** represented by Assistant Deans of Assessment and representatives from Undergrad and Grad studies
  - Quality Control Committees or Peer Review or Continuous Improvement Committees: outside the College level, an interdisciplinary review set-up
  - Idea of a holistic approach
  - Example of Program Review every 7 years that is informed by annual reports
  - Quality Control or Council functioning as a **Fusion Center** as in Law Enforcement
- Structure as such:
  - Assessment Unit
  - Colleges Assistant Dean of Assessment (who is faculty) who come together to form the Academic Assessment Council. They work closely to monitor and enforce assessment reporting with department chairs
    - Idea of A College level committee made up of coordinators to review assessments and one or more assigned to interdisciplinary peer review (quality control) committee
  - Quality Control Committee at the Institutional Level
    - *Note: Concern that this may be asking too much as one person, especially faculty. Not to be recommended as an add-on but as a full-time position.*
  - Idea that every college has a Research Analyst and other staff to help do the work
  - *Some members expressed concern that this structure adds more bureaucracy*
  - Program level coordinator: first couple of years perhaps coordinators get 2 course releases; can be scaled to size of the program; other idea: one course release for managing SLO assessment and two releases for SLO and Gen Ed assessment management. When due for PR, they get another course release.

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- Assessment Unit: Leader of Unit that Reports to the Provost
- Resources Needed (can be duplicated on each campus):
  - o Training: Center for Teaching and Learning can coordinate and training from someone with expertise.
  - o Research/Data Analyst for each College
  - o Assessment Specialist (Minimum of 1 on each campus)
  - o IT Technician (idea for managing the deployment of end-of-course evaluations b/c the data that informs the effectiveness comes from these surveys).
    - End-of-course evaluations are more often used for personnel actions (tenure and promotion);
    - Blanca: should be a part of assessment of educational programs.
  - o AES: Recommend that all academic units complete administrative goals that is fed into an annual report
  - o Program Review: adopt UTPA guidelines; but add a PR committee that provides input on the process. Also from UT System, starting next year, are college reviews.
- **Other considerations:**
  - o One central unit that works with Undgrad and Grad Studies; IRE and Center for Teaching and Learning. Structure that includes undergraduate and graduate.
  - o Key is going to be building the template.
  - o Concern: are there any designees from Undergrad and Grad involved in any of these processes? Such as with curriculum changes, processes are separate.
  - o Stick to principles: A high level office that is under Academic Affairs
  - o Needs to be a faculty driven office.
- **Required Action by fall 2015:**
  1. Mission and Strategic Plan
  2. Timeline in Place
  3. Matrix of what's going to be assessed for the next five year (e.g., Gen Ed).
  4. Process for SLO, Gen Ed and PR assessment
  5. All academic degree programs have to have assessment plans
  6. Training Plan
  7. Staff in place
  8. Identification of Software
  9. Handbook and Guidelines
  10. Budget for Professional Development and Budget for Program and College External Review Requirements
  11. Gen Ed Assessment Plan (plan for harvesting artifacts for gen ed)
- **Homework and Next Steps**
  - o Final Report due February 14, 2014.