

PROTOCOL FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN RESEARCH, PUBLIC SERVICE, ACADEMIC SUPPORT, AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

The following template outlines the information to be incorporated into school/college and vice presidential plans for assessing administrative unit contributions to institutional effectiveness through contributions to strategic goal attainment.

The degree to which administrative units contribute to campus strategic goal attainment is the organizing framework for and the focus of the assessments. The means to demonstrate unit effectiveness must be based on documented (observed/measurable) performance.

Administrative unit assessments shall be phased in according to the schedule outlined in Attachment A. The administrative unit assessments are phased in in order to reflect upon and learn from each prior assessment, and in order to shape and inform succeeding assessments. The assessment process may include a systematic gathering of feedback from faculty/staff and students served by (and serving within) the units of focus without overburdening both of them and the campus community to provide feedback on all administrative units every year. Units within a vice presidential area may themselves be phased in over time rather than assessing all of the units within a vice presidential area at the same time

The following outline shall be used to guide the construction of the assessments and self-study reports of research, public service, academic support, and administrative service units. Additional elements or components, such as utilizing external reviewers and/or site visits by external reviewers, may be incorporated into the outline at the unit's discretion with supervisory level approval.

Finally, while a formal self-study report, as outlined below, is required only once in a five-year cycle for each vice presidential area or school/college, it is expected that an annual report will be provided once each unit establishes its multi-year assessment plan. The annual report will, at minimum, detail: the outcomes of that year's particular assessments as aligned to the unit's mission, goals, and objectives, and to campus strategic objectives; their findings; and any changes in programs, procedures, or operations informed by information gathered during the assessment process.

Self-study Guidelines for Research, Public Service, Academic Support, and Administrative Service Units

I. Formally Specify Mission and Goals

- A. Review University and division mission statements and strategic goals. Review and/or develop unit mission statements which include unit goals aligned to the campus's strategic goals.
- B. It is highly recommended that defining unit mission statements and program goals should be a collaborative process within the unit or department to ensure buy-in from unit constituents. Three to five unit goals are recommended.
- C. If applicable, review criteria and external standards of certification and be sure that goals are aligned to external standards of certification.
- D. Prioritize goals to assist in developing a timetable for implementing an assessment plan that is targeted to specific goals. Again, this should be a collaborative and participatory process within the unit or department.

II. Formulate Detailed Objectives for Each Goal

- A. Identify current and anticipated outcome metrics for each goal. Metrics should be measurable and observable. Identify activities that may affect multiple goals, and implications for those that do.
- B. List anticipated outcomes (end products) that should occur as a result of activities to be undertaken, and also think about possible unintended outcomes that might result from such activities.
- C. Establish performance benchmarks, either internally developed or aligned to national benchmarks or standards if available.

III. Describe Unit Budget, and Allocation of Resources Toward Achieving Goals and Objectives.

- A. Using standard information provided by the Office of Financial Management and Budget, Describe the unit's overall budget and resource trends over the past five years:
- B. Describe how unit and other funds, as well as staff resources, are intended to support the attainment of the unit goals and objectives.
- C. Identify challenges and resource adequacy toward achieving unit goals and objectives.

IV. Develop Assessment Metrics (preferably qualitative and quantitative) to Gauge the Achievement of Goals and Objectives

- A. Consider assessment methods already in use (e.g., satisfaction surveys, work flow monitoring, resource utilization, service levels, etc.).
 - i. Appendix F contains numerous metrics, currently or previously used, for assessing the campus's strategic goals, many of which can be disaggregated to the unit level. Use of these particular metrics are encouraged, but not mandatory. Units should use assessment metrics that make the most sense to effectively evaluate their particular goals and objectives within the scope of their mission.
- B. Use assessment instruments already accepted in the field (e.g., professional associations, accrediting boards, accepted best practices, etc.) to identify benchmarks and assessment tools. [\[comment – make the instruments avail to other units\]](#)
- C. Use multiple (direct and indirect) assessment activities to assess outcomes and processes if possible.
 - i. Direct assessment relies on observation of outputs or samples of outputs or actual work products that reviewers can use to assess how well the outputs or work products meet expectations.
 - ii. Indirect assessment methods are based upon perceptions, often self-reported, of particular outcomes. Satisfaction or point of service surveys are good examples of indirect measures. That said, we as a campus do need to be judicious with survey efforts, especially if direct measures meet needs.
- D. Both qualitative and quantitative measures are acceptable, however, some quantitative measures must be included as part of the analysis.
- E. It is recommended that the views of faculty/staff and students served, as well as the views of faculty/staff who comprise the units themselves are taken into account.
 - i. Units are also encouraged to consult with IRPE on how to best gather input from faculty/staff and/or students on their performance.

It is worth reiterating that units should use whatever assessment metrics make the most sense to evaluate their particular goals and objectives, within the scope of their mission. Consulting with IRPE will help ensure that valid and reliable metrics are employed.

V. Identify the Logistics of the Assessment Plan

- A. Create a five-year timeline for the unit's assessment activities.
 - i. Each goal and objective need not be assessed every year, and may only be assessed once or twice in the five-year period. Some goals and their associated objectives would, by their critical to mission status, require more frequent assessments.
 - ii. While spacing out the assessments allows for reflection and consideration of assessment findings to modify programs, procedures, and policies in the

intervening years, building assessments into what the unit does – rather than creating an add-on activity – has the potential to provide yearly feedback on the success of the unit.

- iii. Identify important business and technological processes that impact unit operations and assess their efficacy.
 - a. An inventory of any major operational systems may prove helpful.
 - b. It may be useful to consult with Enterprise Applications Services (EAS) of the Division of Information Technology Services (ITS) and the UAlbany Comptroller’s Office about how these processes and systems are functioning and ways to gauge their effectiveness.
- B. Identify individuals, committees, or groups and what each is responsible for (e.g., instrument design, data collection, analysis, report writing, communicating results back to students, staff, and faculty).
- C. Identify resource needs.
- D. Where appropriate, identify how faculty/staff/student input should be built into the assessment process.
- E. Engage IRPE early on in your assessment planning for advice.

VI. Collect and Analyze Data

- D. Collect data.
- E. Analyze assessment results noting important patterns and trends. Discuss opportunities and challenges to help the unit maintain success.

VII. Describe the Unit’s Improvement Loop

- A. Describe how the unit or department will use the information generated from assessment activities to improve effectiveness.
- B. Describe the change plan to be implemented
 - a. Identify the steps to be taken
 - b. Identify the groups and individuals responsible for each step
- C. Identify target audiences, including students, where appropriate.
- D. How will results be disseminated and feedback solicited?
- E. ~~Describe how the unit or department will use the information generated from assessment activities to improve effectiveness.~~
- F. Describe assessment activities to be performed in the future related to the improvement plan executed, and be sure to include when and how the unit will evaluate the assessment plan.

Attachment A - Units to be assessed and rotating year of review (1-5):

Units within:

- College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s Office
- College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity Dean’s Office
- College of Engineering and Applied Sciences Dean’s Office
- President
- Provost and Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs
- Rockefeller College of Public Affairs Dean’s Office
- School of Business Dean’s Office
- School of Criminal Justice Dean’s Office
- School of Education Dean’s Office
- School of Public Health Dean’s Office
- School of Social Welfare Dean’s Office
- University Libraries
- Director of Athletics Administration
- VP for Communications and Marketing
- VP for Finance and Administration
- VP for Information Technology Services and Chief Information Officer
- VP Planning, Policy, and Compliance
- VP for Research
- VP for Student Affairs
- VP for University Development

Will revisit this w/an eye toward specialized accreditation reports

Table 1: Schedule of Units to be reviewed

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
VP Research	Director Athletics	Provost & VP Academic Affairs	VP Finance & Administration	VP Communications & Marketing
VP Student Affairs	VP ITS & CIO	School of Education Dean’s Office	President’s Direct Reports	School of Social Welfare Dean’s Office
Rockefeller College Dean’s Office	College of Arts & Sciences Dean’s Office	School of Criminal Justice Dean’s Office	University Libraries	College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity Dean’s Office
VP University Development	School of Business Dean’s Office	School of Public Health Dean’s Office	VP Planning, Policy, and Compliance	College of Engineering and Applied Sciences Dean’s Office

Year 1 would start September 2017, with a report to the President and to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and to the appropriate shared governance body by May 2018.