

Fostering a New Culture of Academic Assessment

Institutional / Essential Learning
Outcomes (ELO's)
Program Learning Outcomes (PLO's)

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD ASSESSMENT TEAM

MASSACHUSETTS STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

CONFERENCE 2023

**UNIVERSITY
OF HARTFORD**

Padlet Activity



Instructions

1. Pull up your camera up on your phone and point your camera at the QR code. A website link should appear as you hover over the QR Code Image.
2. Click “Add Comment” underneath a post question to post an anonymous comment.
3. Click Post after typing your comment.
4. If you want to edit or delete your comment, you can click on the three dots next to your comment.

About the University of Hartford



- Chartered in 1957 after several individual colleges merged to one university.
- Not-for-profit private school based in the Hartford Area of Connecticut.
- UHart has 7 schools and colleges.
- Student enrollment:
 - 3,977 undergraduates
 - 1,763 graduates
- Count of Degrees:
 - 97 majors
 - 64 Graduate degrees

Overview

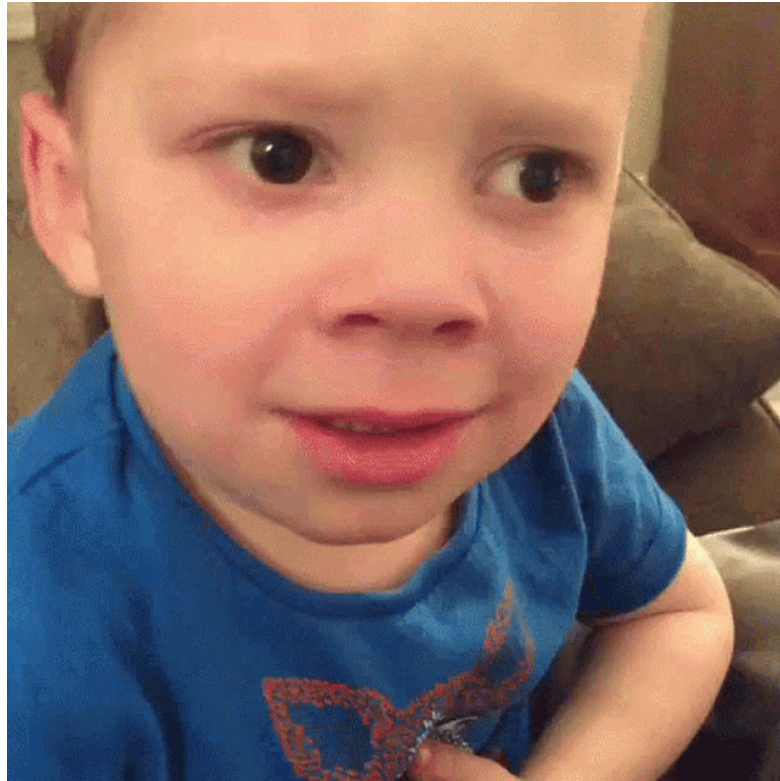
In this presentation, we will share how we:

1. reorganized resources to strengthen faculty support;
2. measure our institutional learning outcomes (ELOs) and program learning outcomes on a cyclical basis (PLOs);
3. centralize assessment data through a Watermark product, Planning & Self Study.

Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs)	Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
What every undergraduate should know.	Acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes intended in the major
Four-Year rotation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written communication• Oral communication• Critical thinking• Teamwork/Collaboration	Completed annually
Based on AAC&U	Developed by the departments

Reorganize Resources to Strengthen Faculty Support

Why now?



Our Steps

1. Identify an Assessment Team

- Assessment Team:
 - Assistant Provost for Graduate Studies and Research
 - Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies
 - University Coordinator for Essential Learning Outcomes Assessment (faculty)
 - Executive Director for the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation
 - Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness
 - Assistant Director of Assessment
- Process:
 - Meets bi-weekly
 - Oversees policies & procedures
 - Involved in program review

Our Steps

2. Identify a Point Person for Institutional Assessment

- This point person determines which program is going to assess which Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs).
- Also provides norming and training on how to use and apply the AAC&U rubrics.

Our Steps

3. Identify a Point Person for Program-Level Assessment

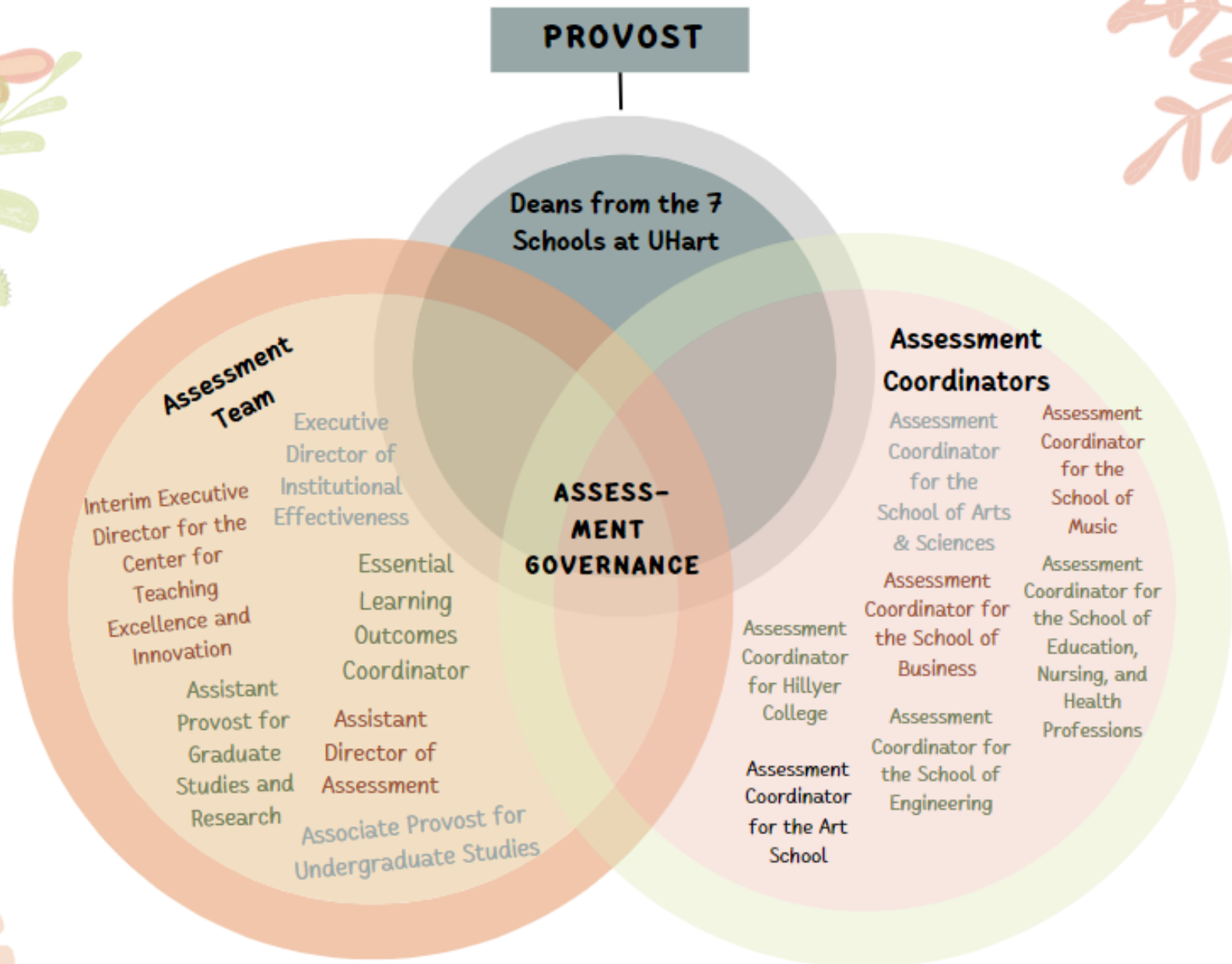
- This point person helps programs measure their program learning outcomes.
- This individual also oversees assessment software like Planning & Self Study, as well as Student Learning & Licensure.

Our Steps

4. Identify a Point Person to be an Assessment Coordinator for each College and School

- This point person works with the assessment team and the departments to help measure program learning outcomes.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Measurement of institutional learning outcomes (ELOs) and program learning outcomes on a cyclical basis (PLOs).

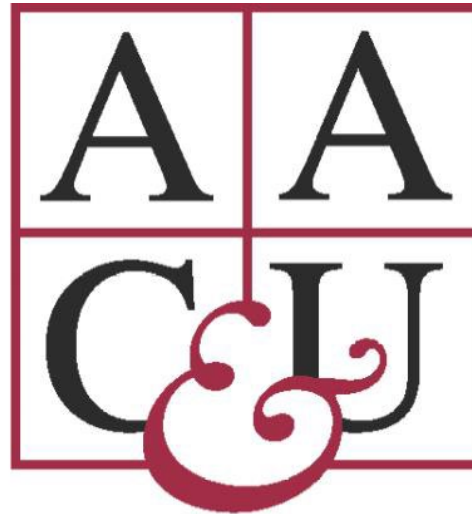
Institutional-Level Assessment: Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs)

- The declaration of campus-wide achievements that **ALL** students will demonstrate by completing any Baccalaureate undergraduate academic program.
- Liberal Learning Outcomes relevant to all majors and useful in all careers.
- Originated from employers from all disciplines with basic skills for success.
- Written Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Oral Communication
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Intercultural Knowledge and Competence*
- Quantitative Literacy*
- Integrative Learning*

**In development*

Institutional-Level Assessment: Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs)

- The VALUE rubrics are available for download—at no cost—on the AAC&U website (<https://www.aacu.org/value>)
- Importance of assignment alignment



*Association
of American
Colleges and
Universities*

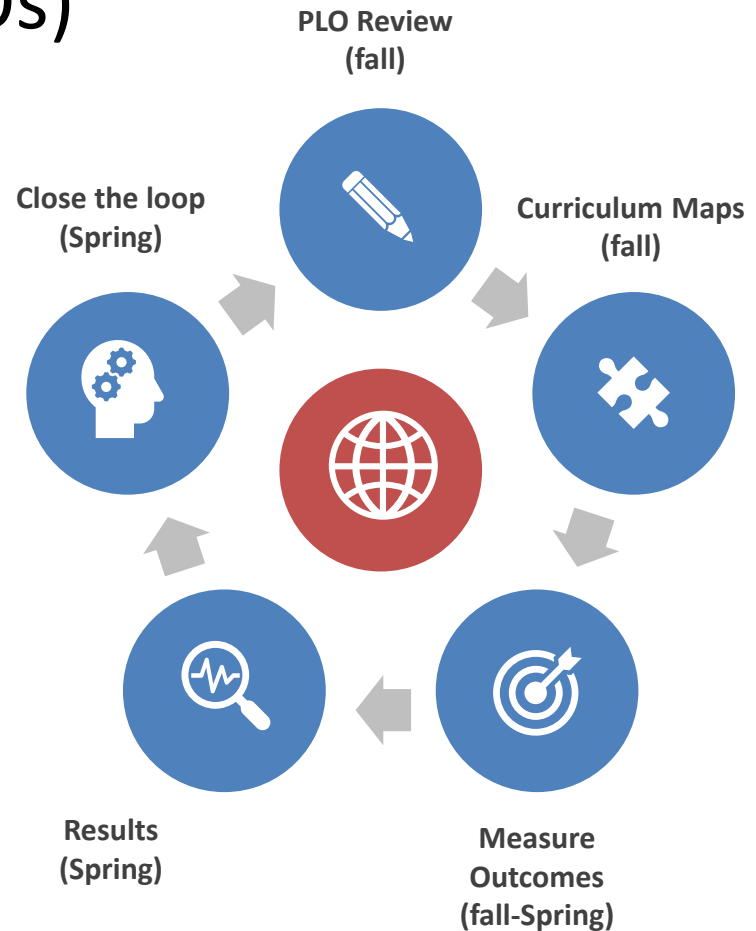
Institutional-Level Assessment: Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs)

- Assess 25% of senior class
- Two-year cycle over a four-year cohort
- Year 1:
 - Written Communication
 - Critical Thinking
- Year 3:
 - Oral Communication
 - Teamwork/Collaboration

- Two faculty per ELO assessed
- Annual Fall training sessions on using the rubric and for score calibration.
- Modest stipend for completing training and submitting data by annual Spring deadline.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Program Learning Outcomes are the “compass” for what faculty will teach students in their academic program.



[University of Hartford Website and Assessment Page](#)

Academic Year Assessment 2021-22

Baking Learning Outcomes

Teamwork and Oral Communication

Students will effectively communicate with team members to successfully bake a product, as intended.

MEASURES
No measures have been added.

Food Safety **MET**

Students will be able to apply food safety techniques when preparing food.

MEASURES	RESULTS	ACTIONS												
<p>Food Safety Demonstration during Class</p> <p>This assignment challenged students to prepare a simple 10-minute meal while keeping food safety in mind. The students did not have access to any notes while preparing their meal. They were being closely observed and evaluated by their instructor during their demonstration.</p> <p>Direct - Assignment</p> <p><i>Baking 101: Baking 101</i></p> <p>Target</p> <p>The target will be for 70% of the students taking the class to score "Proficient" and/or higher.</p> <p>Baking 101 Rubric for Kitchen Safety.docx</p> <p>Instructions for Assessment.docx</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Overall Proficiency</p> <p>■ Exceeded ■ Met ■ Approached ■ Not Met</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Exceeded:</td> <td>29%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Met:</td> <td>43%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Approached:</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not Met:</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Met Total:</td> <td>72%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not Met Total:</td> <td>28%</td> </tr> </table> <p>Baking 101 Reporting Form.xlsx</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>Students seemed to be confused about the directions in person during class. Also, some students did very well on the "Safety in the Kitchen" and "Hand Washing" criteria of the rubric. However, there were some issues with students applying prior knowledge learned in class the week before, which resulted in lower scores for the "Food preparation safety" portion of the rubric.</p>	Exceeded:	29%	Met:	43%	Approached:	14%	Not Met:	14%	Met Total:	72%	Not Met Total:	28%	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>Though for the most part, students did well on the assignment, there is room to better learn what concepts students may need to spend more time learning; for instance, it may be worth spending time on more difficult concepts than information that students already know.</p> <p>For this reason, it might be helpful for the instructor to learn what students already know entering the course.</p> <p>It may be helpful to see what information students already know when they enter the course; for that reason, the instructor will likely implement a pre-test to test students' knowledge when entering the course, and a post-test to see how much students learned.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 09/25/2025</p>
Exceeded:	29%													
Met:	43%													
Approached:	14%													
Not Met:	14%													
Met Total:	72%													
Not Met Total:	28%													

Conclusion

After sharing the data with some faculty at a departmental meeting, there has been a decision to make an adjustment to Weeks 1, 2, and 3 of the course. Although the assessment technically met the target, there is still room to improve for students to reach a higher target in future Baking 101 classes. If students have prior knowledge about hand washing already, it may be worth focusing on that concept for only one class only.

The next few classes should focus on safety in the kitchen and food preparation safety, specifically on actions that could lead to bacterial growth.

In other words, certain concepts, like safety in the kitchen and food preparation, could be discussed earlier in the course. The faculty in the department have provided some material to help the instructor make the change and offer new activities for Week 2 and 3.

Example
Assessment
Report
shared
with
faculty
2022-23



Assessment Checklist: Circle or highlight the appropriate level

This checklist is intended to provide guidance in creating the assessment report and to support meaningful assessment practices at the University of Hartford. *It aims to help faculty 1) to identify areas of strength in current assessment practices and 2) to identify opportunities for refinement that may help generate more useful data.* The 'Goals and Objectives' listed underneath the criteria for each category explain why a particular rating was selected.

Criteria	Exemplary	On the Right Track	Developing	Underdeveloped
	A program that is a model for useful and comprehensive program assessment	A program that has a useful assessment process with some room for improvement	A program that made some progress toward implementing a comprehensive assessment process	A new program that just started and/or needs attention
A. Program learning outcome(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> A1. The program denotes measurable, achievable, and relevant program learning outcomes, (e.g., what students will know, do, or act).	<input type="checkbox"/> A1. Program learning outcomes are identified. Language could be strengthened so that the program learning outcome is measurable, achievable, and relevant.	<input type="checkbox"/> A1. Program learning outcomes are not fully developed, or might be made more measurable, achievable, and/or relevant.	<input type="checkbox"/> A1. Program learning outcomes are not fully developed and require significant revision so that they are measurable, achievable, and/or relevant.
Goals and Objectives:	<p><i>When looking at assessment plans, please focus on the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Did the assessment report identify program learning outcomes (SLO's)? <input type="checkbox"/> Are the program learning outcomes measurable? Are the program learning outcomes specific, as opposed to being too broad? <input type="checkbox"/> If helpful, language for program learning outcomes can be found in Bloom's Taxonomy or the Digital Taxonomy 			
Comments				
B. Measures: How is the program measuring achievement?	<input type="checkbox"/> B1. The program implemented measures to assess more than one program learning outcome (at least 2-3). <input type="checkbox"/> B2. There are targets for performance for each program learning outcome assessed that year (an example of a target could be 70% of students will score "Proficient"). <input type="checkbox"/> B3. The measures thoroughly specify what instrument (e.g., checklist, scoring guide, blueprinting exams, etc.) and assignment was used in the assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/> B1. The program implemented a measure to assess one program learning outcome. <input type="checkbox"/> B2. There are targets for performance for most program learning outcomes assessed that year (an example of a target could be 70% of students will score "Proficient"). <input type="checkbox"/> B3. The measures identify what instrument (e.g., checklist, scoring guide, blueprinting exams, etc.) and/or assignment was used in the assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/> B1. The program implemented an incomplete measure of a program learning outcome. <input type="checkbox"/> B2. There are targets for performance for some program learning outcomes or there need to be more added (an example of a target could be 70% of students will score "Proficient"). <input type="checkbox"/> B3. The measures hint at what instrument (e.g., checklist, scoring guide, blueprinting exams, etc.) or assignment was used for assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/> B1. There is only a plan for assessment activity & a future timeline. <input type="checkbox"/> B2. There are no targets for performance for program learning outcomes or there need to be more added (an example of a target could be 70% of students will score "Proficient"). <input type="checkbox"/> B3. The measures do not include an instrument (e.g., checklist, scoring guide, blueprinting exams, etc.) to specify how program learning outcomes were measured. Assignment assessed may or may not have been identified.

Criteria	Exemplary	On the Right Track	Developing	Underdeveloped
	A program that is a model for useful and comprehensive program assessment	A program that has a useful assessment process with some room for improvement	A program that made some progress toward implementing a comprehensive assessment process	A new program that just started and/or needs attention
Goals and Objectives:	<p><i>When looking at assessment plans, please focus on the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Each program learning outcome has a set performance standard (for example, 80% of students will score a 4 or 5 on the checklist for all criteria on the checklist). <input type="checkbox"/> For each measure, it is clear what instrument was used for assessment (i.e. specific assignment used, survey used, focus group questions, faculty reflection prompt, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> For each measure, the data collected should be relevant to whether the program learning outcome was met or not met. <input type="checkbox"/> If not using checklists or scoring guides, how was student work assessed? 			
Comments				
C. Results and Actions	<input type="checkbox"/> C1. The report interprets all of the results in the context of students meeting or not meeting the program learning outcome.	<input type="checkbox"/> C1. The report interprets what some of the results mean in the context of students meeting or not meeting the program learning outcome.	<input type="checkbox"/> C1. The report begins to interpret what the results mean in the context of the program learning outcome.	<input type="checkbox"/> C1. The report does not interpret what the results mean in the context of students meeting or not meeting the program learning outcome.
	<input type="checkbox"/> C2. Based on assessment results, the program documented potential future improvements to more than one of the following: Pedagogy, course, curriculum, measure, program learning outcome, or some other factor important for student success in meeting target or criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/> C2. Based on assessment results, the program began to document potential future improvements to in one of the following: Pedagogy, course, curriculum, measure, program learning outcome, or some other factor important for student success in meeting target or criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/> C2. The program suggests the possibility of making improvements to the academic program, but action steps are vague.	<input type="checkbox"/> C2. The program is not using assessment data to make improvements either to the academic program or to the assessment plan and process.
Goals and Objectives:	<p><i>When looking at assessment plans, please focus on the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Did the assessment report clearly state if the data from the measure show that the goal was met for each Program Learning Outcome (PLO)? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the assessment report explain the results clearly? <input type="checkbox"/> Most important: Did the academic program describe how they used assessment to improve their program? Did they use assessment data to make a change (like curriculum adjustments)? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the assessment report identify areas that the program needs to continue to monitor? 			
Comments				

Suggestions, Resources, and Considerations! Below, is a compiled a list of actions the program can take if it is struggling with meeting a criterion.

Bullet Points	Actions and Resources
<i>A. Program Learning Outcomes</i>	If the program needs help with program learning outcomes being measurable, feel free to watch a 7-minute YouTube Video about how to write or edit a program learning outcome, by clicking this link. A faculty can also contact the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation or the Assistant Director of Assessment.
<i>B. Measures</i>	If the program needs help with assessing more than one outcome, feel free to watch a 10-minute YouTube Video about how to write or edit a program learning outcome, by clicking this link. A faculty can also contact the Assistant Director of Assessment.
<i>C. Results and Actions</i>	If the program needs help with determining whether students met their target, feel free to watch a 3-minute YouTube Video about how to write or edit a program learning outcome, by clicking this link. A faculty can also contact the Assistant Director of Assessment.

Feedback on the 2021-22 Academic Assessment Report

In Fall 2022, the Assessment Team reviewed program learning outcome assessment reports in an academic assessment software called Planning & Self Study to share strengths and considerations for the reports. The intention of this process is to create a common institution wide framework and help program leaders utilize best practices in assessment, to make the assessment process meaningful and useful.

Feedback:

Feedback on the 2021-22 Academic Assessment Report

Strengths	Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Learning Outcomes:</u> The wording of the program learning outcomes is good though there is room for them to be strengthened so they are more measurable and easier to assess in the future. • <u>Measures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are targets for performance for each program learning outcome assessed that year (an example of a target could be 70% of students will score "Proficient"). ○ The measures identify what instrument (e.g., checklist, scoring guide, etc.) and assignment were used in the assessment. ○ The attachments are really helpful for historical documentation and future assessors. • <u>Actions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The report thoroughly interprets results in the context of students meeting or not meeting the program learning outcome. ○ There is evidence that the department may meet and reflect on the data together, which is huge for closing the loop. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Measures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thanks for your work in assessing your outcome! In future reports, we suggest assessing two to three program learning outcomes per year, so that we can reflect on the program often and make edits to continuously improve the program. Fortunately, you only need to do 1 measure per 1 outcome. ○ The data that you've collected and reported shows that your students are doing well. That's great news! In moments like these, you could reflect with your faculty: are there other areas within the program you'd like to assess? Or, would it make sense within the program to raise the target? The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation are available to help brainstorm ideas. • <u>Actions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue asking yourself: How would you use the data to make improvements either to the academic program or to the assessment plan and process? • <u>Suggestion:</u> If the program needs help with determining whether students met their target, feel free to watch a 3-minute YouTube Video, by clicking this link. A faculty member can also contact the Assistant Director of Assessment.





STEPS FOR CREATING ASSESSMENT REPORTS IN PLANNING & SELF STUDY

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

UNIVERSITY
OF HARTFORD

1 PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

When writing your report in Planning & Self Study, review your outcomes from last year OR create new outcomes. Consider having 3-5 outcomes for your major or degree. Make sure they are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. Consider using measurable verbs from [Bloom's Taxonomy](#) or the [Digital Bloom's Taxonomy](#).





2 CHOOSING MEASURES

Choose a project to directly measure student learning for 2-3 program learning outcomes. Make sure the projects are related to the outcomes. Create a target for how you would like students to meet each outcome (an example of a target could be: 60% of students will score a 3 or 4). Make sure to write about these projects in Planning & Self Study.



3 CONDUCT ASSESSMENT

Choose a selection of student work to review. Choose a way to measure how students are learning (this could be through using a rubric, scoring guide, looking at how students are scoring on specific exam questions, etc.).
Collect data. Include how information on student learning was collected in addition to the data in Planning & Self Study.

4 RESULTS

Ask yourself: Using the target you set for yourself, did students meet or not meet what we wanted them to learn this year? Make sure to include whether the outcome was met or not met in Planning & Self Study.



Next, write a brief analysis (1-3 sentences) interpreting the results from the specific project.

Make sure to analyze what the results mean for every project.

5

ACTIONS

After analyzing how each student did on each project, analyze how the students met each outcome in 1-3 sentences. Also note in Planning & Self Study if there are any areas that the program needs to monitor to ensure student learning.

Finally, and most importantly, create an "Action" to document ideas for how to improve the curriculum or program (e.g., modify an assignment, modify policies, additional training, modify the outcome, etc.). From there, you can implement any changes suggested as a result of assessment.



Centralize assessment data
Watermark product, Planning & Self Study

Planning & Self Study Demo

Other Resources

- There is more information about how to complete the academic assessment cycle at the University of Hartford, though this link:
- <https://www.hartford.edu/about/campus-leadership/office-provost/assessment.aspx>

Areas for Opportunity

- 12 Months in
- Prevention of mixed messages
- Efficiency
- Faculty responsiveness

Padlet Activity



Key Takeaway

- You can't succeed in building an Academic Assessment Culture alone.



Questions/Comments?

QUESTIONS? FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US!

JESSICA NICKLIN

Assistant Provost for Graduate Studies and Research, Associate Professor

Provost, Psychology, Administration

nicklin@hartford.edu

860.768.5103

KATHLEEN NEAL

Executive Director

Institutional Effectiveness

kaneal@hartford.edu

860.768.4408

NATALIA ZAGULA

Assistant Director of Assessment

Institutional Effectiveness

zagula@hartford.edu

860.768.5482

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