<center>

Wilmington University

Academic Affairs Outcomes Assessment Plan

Introduction

</center>

The mission of Wilmington University is rooted firmly in building exemplary and innovative academic programs within the context of a student-centered learning environment. Faculty, staff, and administration at Wilmington University genuinely care about their students which is expressed in a number of ways including individual attention to students, small class size, mentoring of new students and flexible course delivery formats. Further, "excellence in teaching" and "relevance of the curriculum" are viewed as foundational criteria for excellent student service. It is in this spirit that we routinely assess our academic programs to determine the extent to which learning has occurred and student educational needs have been met.

<center>

A Context for the Assessment

</center>

The Academic Affairs Outcomes Assessment Plan (AAOAP) is a component of the institutional effectiveness assessment plan which is entitled: Proof Positive[3.] A Framework for Institutional Assessment (PP[3]). It is within the context of PP[3] that Academic Affairs has established its planning and data reporting cycles. Our approach to outcomes assessment is consistent with the Mission of Wilmington University, as it emphasizes a focus on the teaching/learning experience in all programs.

The foundation of this assessment plan is the concept that "good assessment must begin in the classroom and end there" (Walvoord & Anderson, 2010, p. 149). Additionally, according to Suskie (2018), the major purposes of assessment are threefold – to improve educational quality, employ stewardship (using quality evidence of student learning to inform resource deployment), and to demonstrate accountability in the effectiveness of our current efforts. Therefore, academic assessment must be developed and owned by the faculty – in essence, developed by the faculty for the faculty. As a result, the Wilmington University AAOAP is intended to be a vehicle for faculty to make what they already do more public (Walvoord & Anderson, 2010). As written by Middle States (2007, p.74), "Assessment, first and foremost, is a tool for faculty members to use as they do their very best to teach their students well."

<center>

A Four-Pronged Approach to Assessment

</center>
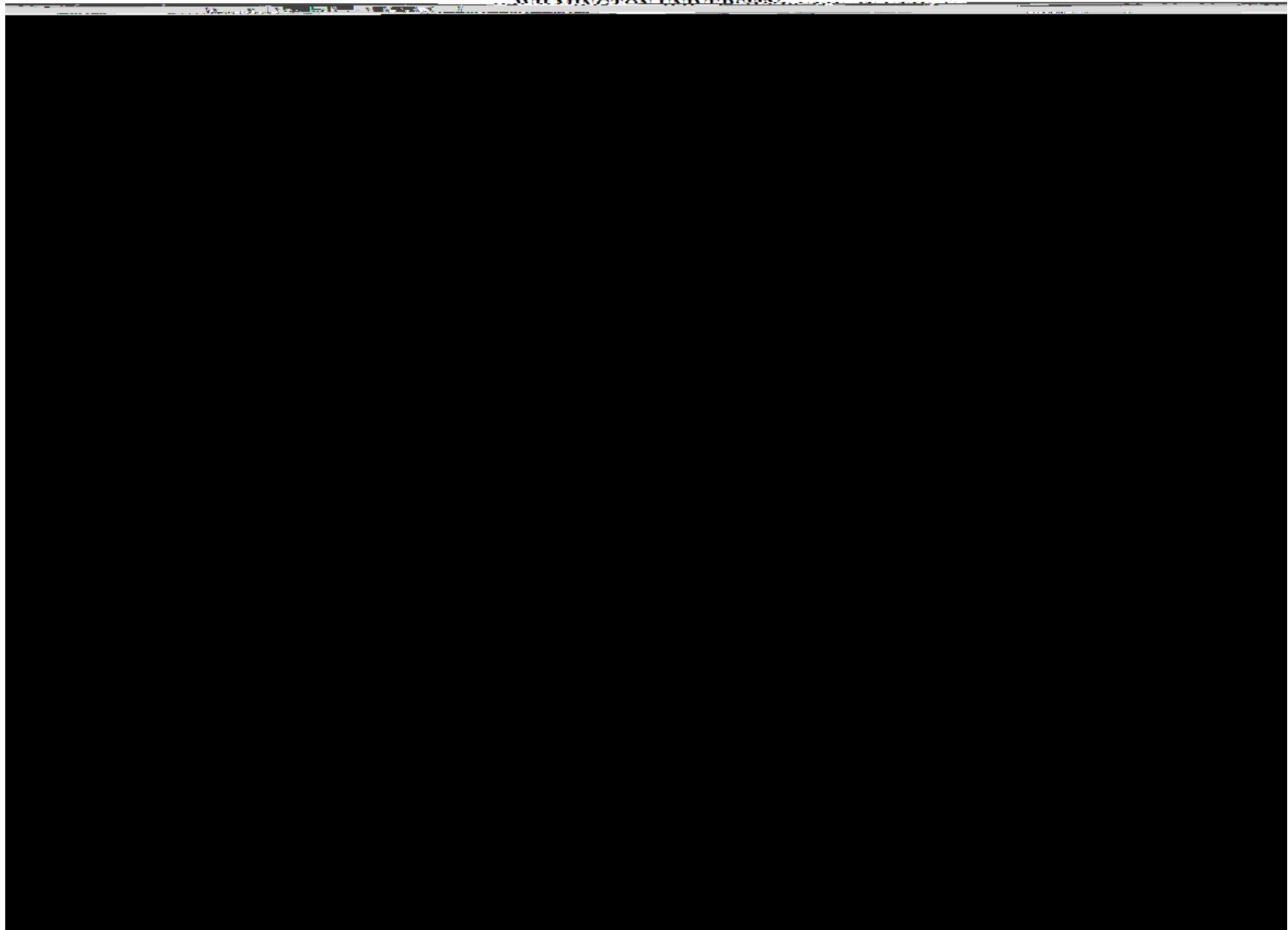
I.

One primary method of assessing student learning is through **course-embedded, criterion** referenced assessment measures (**CECRAM**) This approach was developed by consensus of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and all College

Academic Program Improvement

The AAOAP indicates a clear linkage between graduation competencies and student learning. The true value of the assessment of student learning may be found in improvements made to specific programs. Osguthorpe, Bradley and Johnson (2010) present a framework of questions which link student learning outcomes, student performance and program improvement. These questions are utilized by faculty in order to improve the process of student learning. Faculty are urged to frame assessment measures around these questions.

(Kramer, & Swing, 2010, p.122)

II. **Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness:**

Teaching effectiveness is essential to fulfilling the Mission of Wilmington University. Therefore, teaching effectiveness is the second arm of the assessment plan for Academic Affairs. The basis for assessing teaching effectiveness includes the review of the faculty evaluation process, GPA reports, and analysis of the Course and Teaching Survey (CATS) reports as well as an annual review of institutional results. Students are given the opportunity to provide evaluative data at the conclusion of each course. Although each faculty can review an analysis of their individual course evaluation, an institutional as well as academic college analysis is examined. Moreover, Teaching Expectations for WilmU Instructors established by the faculty and implemented in August 2022, guide expectations to ensure good care of our students. Educational Effectiveness Coordinators support academics in monitoring predefined tasks for setup and maintenance of course engagement (instructor access, welcome announcement, personalized syllabus, and assignment due dates). Collaboration between IR, Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), Academic Support Services, and Academic Affairs ensures data analysis and review continues.

III.   Assessment of Student Satisfaction with the Academic Experience:
Wilmington University is a student-centered institution. Therefore, student satisfaction with the academic experience is an obvious parameter in our assessment plan. Growth in institutional enrollment, as well as by college and academic program, is an indicator of student satisfaction. Further analysis includes new student enrollment in comparison to the number of

graduating students. Beyond enrollment, 1st to 2nd year retention is analyzed institutionally and per level (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral).

Additionally, we measure student satisfaction via an internally developed Graduating Student Satisfaction Survey administered once a year for graduating students (Graduate and Undergraduate). This survey seeks student input related to their experience at the University, re-enrollment interest, employment, and work in the degree disciplineaellud rhe1(t)-22 (un)5fe (he)-1 (r)-2t. Ttu t

the Faculty Senate. Results of each one-year program review snapshot report are disseminated by the academic leadership to their respective colleges.

The Academic Affairs Outcomes Assessment Summit

An annual Summit is held to review progress to date of the outcomes assessment process, discuss strengths and weaknesses of the process, and most importantly, present, analyze, and discuss examples of data-based decision making ("closing the loop") related to Academic Assessment. Attendees at the Summit include the Chief Academic Officer, the Assistant Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, the College Deans, and the Senior Director of Institutional Research, as well as other invited guests. As per our Institutional Assessment process (PP[3]), a summary report is presented to the Faculty Senate. In addition, regular reports are offered throughout the academic year to the Faculty Senate by the Deans as a way to inform and motivate faculty regarding the effective use of outcomes assessment data and subset data anddemiche ao (al)-1 (a

Additional Information

Guidelines for Benchmarks

The following guidelines have been established for summative assessments.

- ¾ The benchmark for program/graduation competencies should be recorded as a mean score.

- ¾ The benchmark for rubric-based assignments at the graduate and undergraduate level is a mean of 4.00/5.00.

- ¾ For data reported as percentage (e.g., comprehensive examination scores), the target for graduate level programs is a mean of 90% unless otherwise benchmarked by the outside accrediting bodies. For undergraduate programs reporting data as percentage, the target is a mean of 80%.

- ¾ The benchmark for teaching effectiveness, as measured by the CATS results , was first established in 2022 after the initial pilot. Respondents rated each question > 4.0 out of 5.0 scale with a response rate ≥ 65%.

- ¾ Teaching Expectations for Instructors, which began in fall 2022, are another barometer in support of Teaching Effectiveness (a faculty's presence in a course, welcome announcements, personalized syllabi, and assignment due dates). Although not yet an official measure of the AA OA Plan, the college's Educational Effectiveness Coordinators (EEC) audit courses utilizing Canvas Analytics for identified data points. A Teaching Effectiveness Committee was established in October 2023 to draft recommendations for (1) establishing benchmark of current 4 data points, (2) determining metric and benchmark for attendance and/ or faculty feedback to student, (3) mechanism for enhancing faculty literacy of the teaching effectiveness assessment process, and (4) capabilities for individualized faculty report (and proposed plan for use).

- ¾ The CATS survey offers questions #19 and #20 in support of student satisfaction. The benchmark with course and faculty satisfaction expects >80% respondents to rate > 4.0 out of 5.0 scale on each question.

- ¾ The University conducts an alumni survey for program review at one year and five years post

Use of Representative Sampling

A representative sampling of course selections can be utilized for the collection of outcomes assessment data. The following guidelines have been established for representative sampling.

- ¾ As a goal, data collection should be statistically meaningful;
- ¾ Data should be collected from all course sections if seven or fewer sections are offered in a data collection year.
- ¾ All University sites and instructional formats (face-to-face, hybrid, on-line, etc.) should be included.
- ¾ Outcomes Summit 2023 discussion surrounded survey fatigue and respondent disengagement (over-surveying our students, declining response rates, and/ or better way to capture our students' thoughtful feedback). A Survey Etiwao cap4 >>BD(e)-1 vttnta-4 (et)-6 (

Opportunities for Enhancement

A review of the status of academic assessment at Wilmington University presents several opportunities for growth and improvement, include the following:

- ¾ Further develop an institutional understanding of student learning assessment as a key component of teaching and learning.
- ¾ Clearly link the learning which occurs within individual courses to an integrated programmatic whole.
- ¾ Implement multiple forms of assessment of graduation competencies including direct and indirect measures.
- ¾ Ensure that assessments are yielding results appropriate to the amount of time and expense incurred.
- ¾ Continue to improve the level of systematic and clear feedback of academic outcomes to internal and external constituents (faculty, students, parents, alumni, future students, accreditation agencies, employers, etc.).
- ¾ Further promote a "culture of evidence" (Kramer, Hanson & Olsen, 2010, p. 43) throughout Academic Affairs.
- ¾ Ensure that the curricula of the varied course delivery formats are "coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor" (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2011, p. 9).
- ¾ Ensure that general education course work provides a strong foundation for student learning in the major course of study.

Appendix A
The Evolution of Academic Assessment at Wilmington University

In 2000, Wilmington University began to develop a comprehensive academic outcomes assessment plan which continues to evolve. Early efforts focused almost entirely upon course-embedded assessment. At that time, several difficult obstacles were encountered and eventually worked through. In 2003, the Academic Affairs Outcomes Assessment Plan (AAOAP) was written and slightly revised in 2004. Over the years we have implemented every aspect of the plan which included gathering data, drawing conclusions and in some cases, acting upon the results.

In January 2006 an initial evalua (r)0.7 (ua)-2 r 0 Td( )es cngtemi-2 (us)-1 (it)3 (i) 0 -1.15 TDegs alrtt6T

¾

APPENDIX B
GRADUATION COMPETENCIES (evolution)

In 1987, the Faculty Senate adopted a list of expected graduation competencies for undergraduate students. Undergraduate and graduate competencies were adopted in November 1994. Both of these sets of competencies were reviewed, revised, and adopted by the Faculty Senate in 2007. In 2010, the competencies received some minor revision which

Information Literacy

    x   Using information in any format to research, evaluate, and ethically utilize information effectively and with appropriate attribution.

Ethics

    x   Demonstrate knowledge and application of prescribed ethical codes and behaviors promoted by the student's chosen profession.

Additional Program Competencies

    x   Additional program competencies as prescribed by the academic college.

Note: Additional competencies may be included as per external accreditation requirements.

Academic Affairs Program Review and Accreditation Schedule

<u>Undergraduate Programs</u>

All Undergraduate Programs are scheduled to undergo Program Review or external accreditation during the identified Academic Year. The Program Review process was revised in 2018 and is

References

Hollowell, D., Middaugh, M.F., and Sibolski, E. (2006). Integrating higher education
plan,-6 (-21.83 -1.15 Tde (-1 (duc)-1 (a1.1 (l)0.6 ( )]TJ -0.007s)-1)0 0d7s)- 07sg   u