



# **Comprehensive Plan for Sustaining Assessment Practices to Enhance Student Learning at The University of Scranton**

**Office of Educational Assessment**

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*Approved by Faculty Senate, March 8, 2016*

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## Introduction and Background

Student learning assessment has long been part of the academic life of the University of Scranton. The University instituted a decentralized model for assessment of student learning in the late 1990s. Following an effort to centralize efforts under a Comprehensive Assessment Plan in 2004, the University returned to a decentralized model in the latter part of that decade, in which each administrative area with a role in student learning assumed responsibility for assessment: The College of Arts & Sciences (CAS), the Leahy College of Health Sciences (LCHS)<sup>1</sup>, Kania School of Management (KSOM), The Weinberg Memorial Library (WML), and Student Affairs (now the Division of Student Life). Following its 2013 Periodic Review by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), the University launched a significant overhaul of its student learning assessment structure and processes, returning to a more centralized model that retained key distribution of areas of responsibility. The development and launch of this new Comprehensive Plan for Assessment of Student Learning and its systematic, mission-oriented approach to academic and co-curricular learning, guided by a new faculty-led Office of Educational Assessment (OEA), and collaborative Educational Assessment Advisory Committee (EAAC)<sup>2</sup> are at the heart of this approach. The Comprehensive Plan and our commitment to well-defined and executed coordination of its aims and practices through the work of the OEA, EAAC, and faculty and academic leaders across campus, continue to drive a culture of assessment at the University of Scranton.

## Purpose

This Comprehensive Plan for Student Learning Assessment outlines a comprehensive, systematic strategy for the University's approach to student learning assessment. The plan describes processes and cycles for the development and assessment of learning outcomes, and associated reporting and application procedures, at the institutional and program levels, for the undergraduate general education curriculum, and within co-curricular learning programming within Student Life. Grounded in learning outcomes at program and institutional levels, and for general education<sup>3</sup>, and supported through course and co-curricular learning experiences, improvements to student learning are thus part of a formal cycle of gathering, analyzing, disseminating, and acting upon evidence gathered.

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly the Panuska College of Professional Studies (PCPS).

<sup>2</sup> First named the Assessment Advisory Committee (AAC), renamed in 2023 to more clearly communicate its specific role in educational assessment activities.

<sup>3</sup> In 2022, the University's Faculty Senate began a review of the General Education Curriculum. In May 2025, the revised curriculum, known as the Ignatian Core Curriculum (ICC), was approved and is scheduled to launch in fall 2028. The University is in the midst of a multi-phase review of the general education curriculum. The general education assessment framework is in the process of being revised and transitioned to support the new ICC.

In shaping our direction, the University community considers best practices in higher education, including those developed and endorsed by scholars and practitioners within the field of learning assessment. Our ethical commitment to reflective accountability, evaluating our programs and activities with honest candor in the spirit of better serving our students through the best possible programming, is closely tied to our Catholic and Jesuit mission and ways of proceeding. Our practices are also designed to address external accountability obligations, including addressing Middle States' Standards of Accreditation and those of other programmatic and disciplinary accreditation bodies. While outlining standard expectations, the plan supports flexibility in student learning and educational effectiveness assessment practices that are meaningful and useful to programs given their varying disciplinary and professional requirements, including those with disciplinary accreditations.

### **Goals & Guiding Principles: Assessment and Overall Institutional Effectiveness**

The University of Scranton has developed a set of guiding principles that outline our commitment and approach to assessment at the institution. The goal of *institutional effectiveness* at The University is evaluating, documenting, and communicating what the University does well, identifying areas where we can improve, and applying assessment results to guide our application of resources and realize improvements. This discipline combines both *institutional assessment* (the practices used to assess achievement of mission and goals, and evaluation of non-academic areas) and educational and *student learning assessment* (the practices used to assess achievement of student learning outcomes, both directly within academic programs, and through co-curricular and related learning and formation activities).

At each level, goals and outcomes are monitored and measured through both formative and summative assessment strategies. Findings from these evaluations are used to inform decision making, planning and improvement, and resourcing of programs and services.

- Assessment is mission-driven, in the particular context of the Ignatian educational paradigm and our Catholic, Jesuit character.
- Assessment is integrated within appropriate advisory and decision-making processes and structures.
- Assessment is iterative, adapting to changing needs and new opportunities.
- Assessment is collaborative and participatory, engaging all members of the University community in reflection.
- Assessment is transparent, its processes and outcomes communicated clearly and frequently.
- Assessment is evidence-based, supported by quality data and evidence that show how institutional and student learning goals are being met.

- Assessment is useful, designed and pursued in ways that are practical and relevant to unit and program needs, and cycles for decision making and resource allocation.
- Assessment results are used to “close the loop,” with results applied through planning, resourcing, and continuous improvement of programs and services.
- Assessment is ongoing and cumulative, reflecting our performance over time.
- Assessment is itself assessed, its processes and structures evaluated and refined through ongoing reflection and planned cycles of review.

### **Mission Connections**

The Plan pays particular attention to the importance of the University’s Catholic and Jesuit mission: namely, its dedication to freedom of inquiry and to the development of wisdom and integrity of all members of its community. Drawing on underlying concepts from the Ignatian pedagogical paradigm,<sup>4</sup> the University’s student learning assessment plan ensures ongoing evaluation to build a sustained, evidence-based process for assessing student learning outcomes across programs and curricula.

In 1599 the Jesuit *Ratio Studiorum* [*Rule of Studies*, which is largely understood to outline the educational system of the Jesuits] articulated five key elements of Jesuit Education: (1) context, through which the material conditions of the student’s learning are considered, as well as the predispositions of the student; (2) experience, through which students move beyond rote learning to something more active and personal; (3) reflection, during which students apply the subject matter to their own lives and processes, and where meaning is said to be made in this paradigm; (4) action, which involves change in students’ attitudes and behaviors through the application of and reflection upon knowledge; and (5) evaluation, through which students’ mastery of subject matter is assessed with a view toward identifying gaps in students’ knowledge, the need for alternate methods of teaching, and individualized approaches to encouraging and advising students.<sup>5</sup> These same principles for evaluation of individual students can be applied to evaluation of groups of students who are enrolled in various programs and general education. It is the last of these elements, Evaluation, with which Educational Effectiveness Assessment most closely aligns as a discipline.

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<sup>4</sup> A framework describing core tenets and approaches to education and learning in the Jesuit tradition. See: Duminuco, V. J. (Ed.) (2000). *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary perspectives* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Fordham University Press: NY, NY.

“Ignatian” is a term used to describe the traditions, spirituality, and values inspired by Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits)

<sup>5</sup> Witek, D. and Grettano, T. (2016). Revising for metaliteracy: Flexible course design to support social media pedagogy. In T. E. Jacobson and T. P. Mackey (Eds.), *Metaliteracy in practice* (pp. 1-22). Chicago, IL: Neal-Schuman.

### **Institutional Goals: Our Strategic Plan and Institutional Learning Outcomes**

Supporting our mission, the University's current [Strategic Plan](#) outlines our focused institutional goals. In addition to guiding institutional growth and development, the plan also addresses broad aims for student learning and formation, including educational emphases in the liberal arts and humanities, co-curricular learning through high impact practices, and student success initiatives. A variety of institutional assessment processes are employed to monitor and reflect on the progress and impact of our mission and institutional goals.

Student learning assessment efforts are directly connected to this framework via the intersecting relationships of institutional strategic plan goals, our mission and Ignatian educational tradition, and institutional learning outcomes (ILOs). The ILOs seek to ensure all students:

1. Develop and use the intellectual and practical competencies that are the foundation of personal and professional development and lifelong learning including oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, and technological competency and information literacy.
2. Exhibit broad knowledge of the human condition, understanding the world in its physical and natural aspects, as well as the philosophical and theological basis for modern thought, faith and belief.
3. Demonstrate competence in their chosen field of study, using the knowledge and ability to address the most significant questions, and advancing towards positions of leadership.
4. Employ their knowledge and intellect to address situations in a way that demonstrates a devotion to the spiritual and corporal welfare of other human beings and by a special commitment to the pursuit of social justice and the common good of the entire human community.

These learning outcomes are directly explored via programmatic learning outcomes, and other educational and formational experiences across the University.

### **Assessment Structure**

Overall responsibility for educational assessment rests with the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and, as assigned by the Provost, the Assistant Provost for Planning & Institutional Effectiveness. The Assistant Provost supports the work of the faculty-led Office of Educational Assessment (OEA), which leads educational assessment activities, including responsibility for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The organizational structure is detailed in Attachment B. The following pages, and the University's "Role and Responsibilities for Educational Assessment" companion document (Attachment D), provide a more detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of the OEA and others involved.

**The Office of Educational Assessment (OEA)** is the central hub for student learning assessment activities at the University of Scranton. As a faculty-led and driven office, it serves the institution as both a coordinating and a consultative body, developing faculty and staff expertise in methods of collection, analysis, and action so that program improvements, including curricular changes, are driven by constructive attention to evidence. The OEA oversees and documents assessment processes and cycles, developing a repository of teaching and learning information that is central to evidence-based decision-making. The OEA is responsible for reporting on the state of learning assessment at the University. The OEA is comprised of a Director, Faculty Fellows representing each of the three academic colleges and the Weinberg Memorial Library<sup>6</sup>, and the General Education Assessment Coordinator. The Director and GE Assessment Coordinator are appointed by the Provost following an application process. Faculty Fellows are appointed from the full-time faculty by the Provost with the recommendation of the Assistant Provost and OEA Director through an application and selection process.

The OEA is advised by the Educational Assessment Advisory Committee (EAAC), comprised of faculty, staff, and administration from across the University. The Faculty Senate approves faculty representation appointments to the EAAC. In addition to the EAAC, other advisory groups included in the learning assessment process include college curriculum and assessment committees, and assessment advisory committees within the Weinberg Memorial Library and Student Life. The Assistant Provost for Planning & Institutional Effectiveness/MSCHE Accreditation Liaison Officer engages regularly with OEA leadership to build linkages between learning and institutional assessment. The Assistant Provost for Institutional Reporting and Data Analytics plays an important role in support of the technical and data needs of the OEA.

## **Educational Assessment Procedures & Responsibilities<sup>7</sup>**

### **1. Academic Degree-Granting Programs**

The Comprehensive Plan requires that all academic degree-granting programs<sup>8</sup> conduct assessment of all Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) on a three-year cycle (Figure 1). This means

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<sup>6</sup> In 2025, the University moved one of two Faculty Fellows within the CAS to the WML, to ensure that WML faculty were represented with their peers as part of the OEA.

<sup>7</sup> See “Assessment Roles and Responsibilities at The University of Scranton” document for additional details.

<sup>8</sup> Degree granting programs include undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs. Based on degree program scope, some programming, such as associate’s degrees and low-enrolled programs, may be assessed in a manner differing from the standard program assessment process, including review of course-level and general education assessment data. Departments are responsible for identifying and assuring regular review of these assessment data as part of overall program effectiveness activities, such as program and accreditation review.

that programs will: a) identify appropriate approaches and artifacts for direct assessment, which may be embedded in courses whose Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) most closely map to PLOs for the given cycle and/or b) identify and assess indirect evidence of PLOs.<sup>9</sup> PLOs are established for each undergraduate and graduate degree program. The OEA collates and maintains an active list of current PLOs, which are posted on the OEA web site. Given the central role faculty play in the development and implementation of the curriculum, it is necessarily the responsibility of all full-time faculty to participate in the University's assessment efforts. As a fundamental part of teaching excellence, the application of regular assessment and reflection on student learning that leads to course improvement is one of several elements included in the Faculty Handbook's norms for evaluating faculty for rank and tenure.

In support of these efforts, the chair of the department and/or its program director, should lead the coordination of assessment activities defined within the scope of this Comprehensive Plan. Academic departments and programs shall:

1. Develop learning outcomes appropriate to the program(s) of study.
2. Post and maintain up-to-date PLOs on the program and/or department web page and notify the OEA of any changes to PLOs via annual reports or other methods.
3. Ensure that SLOs for every course are communicated in course syllabi.
4. Prepare curriculum maps to document associations between course learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, and, where applicable, institutional learning outcomes. As a recommended best practice, ensure that, for every course, one or more SLOs aligns with a PLO through curriculum mapping. Departments should also demonstrate alignment of PLOs to relevant ILOs.
5. Develop and refine a plan to assess all PLOs on a three-year cycle. The plan should include both direct and indirect assessment evidence using the Program Assessment Report (PAR) template or other approved reporting method(s).
6. Gather and analyze evidence collected from key assessments according to the plan.
7. Describe how evidence is used to improve student learning and promote overall program improvement. Report and describe evidence of student achievement of PLOs, according to OEA's established procedure for each college. This includes submission of annual assessment-related materials and documentation via the Annual Planning and Reporting process required of all academic departments.

Timeline:

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<sup>9</sup> These activities, however, do not preclude programs or individual faculty members from conducting assessment at the course level for their own interest, curriculum development, or to align with expectations of disciplinary (specialty) accreditation. Dean's Offices consult with the OEA on determining any scheduling/cycle changes appropriate for departments within their respective college.

Academic degree-granting programs shall conduct assessment planning and reporting on the cycle developed and communicated by OEA in consultation with their Dean's Office. Assessment reports must be submitted as part of the Annual Planning & Reporting materials submitted by the department in which it resides each spring, or via other means established conjointly by the OEA and Dean. PLOs should be reviewed and reaffirmed with the OEA on an annual basis, and/or as part of other program, college, or accreditation reviews. Changes in PLOs must be communicated to the OEA and Dean when they occur.

If an Academic Program Review or other college review is being conducted for a program and/or department, these Program review documents may serve as a PAR in the spring of the academic year in which program review took place. Likewise, disciplinary accreditation reports that address learning assessment may serve as a PAR in the spring before the scheduled site visit. Departments should consult with the OEA to discuss the status of these activities.

In addition, non-degree, interdisciplinary and other high impact programs may conduct regular learning assessment activities in line with the expectations or requirements of their departments and/or college. Such assessment should also be reported to the OEA via the Annual Planning & Reporting process.

## **2. General Education**

Learning outcomes for the General Education Curriculum are developed by the Faculty Senate. Assessment activities for courses with General Education attributes are guided by the General Education Assessment Cycle. Currently, the cycle includes two groups of general education attributes, each group assessed every other year.

1. In each academic year, the General Education Assessment Coordinator reaches out to faculty teaching courses carrying the GE attributes to be assessed in that year; this outreach occurs in the fall, and again in the spring.
2. Faculty teaching in courses or programs within the specified attributes are responsible for assessing learning outcomes according to the schedule and describing the results in a report submitted to OEA.
3. Assessments should be based on attribute specific GE learning goals and objectives.

The role and responsibilities of the General Education Assessment Coordinator are described later in this document.

### **3. Academic Colleges**

The Dean of each college, in keeping with their responsibility to oversee academic programs and continuous improvement in their areas, shall:

1. Prepare a college-wide assessment plan/document outlining the steps used by the college to fulfill the Comprehensive Plan and addressing other college-specific assessment needs and practices, such as those for disciplinary accreditation.
2. Receive and review assessment plans and reports for each academic program in his or her college/division.
3. Ensure that academic program learning outcomes and assessment plans are reviewed and/or updated on a regular cycle, such as with Program Review schedules or in accordance with an accreditation cycle. Ensure that educational effectiveness assessment is appropriately incorporated into other academic renewal activities, such as program review.
4. Document, disseminate, and communicate assessment results throughout their respective colleges and, where appropriate, with other campus groups and members of the faculty, staff and administration, through committee and other meetings, annual assessment days/retreats, and other mechanisms.
5. Lead discussions related to the use of assessment data for program improvement within their college with college-level Dean's Conferences and curriculum and assessment committees, which will review assessment evidence reported by programs, and identify and recommend to their Dean and to the OEA opportunities for improvement based upon those data.
6. Provide an annual report to the OEA on college-wide assessment evidence, demonstrating the way in which attainment of PLOs in the college supports ILOs, and any programmatic changes or improvements made to address assessment results.
7. As part of their own Annual Report to the Provost, summarize assessment activities within the college/division, including successful outcomes, and the application of assessment results for improvement and/or resource allocation.

### **4. Weinberg Memorial Library**

The Weinberg Memorial Library faculty are integral to student learning, especially regarding Library initiatives in assessment of information literacy. The Library's Information Literacy Curriculum reflects the guidelines and frameworks for information literacy developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Information literacy is a fundamental component of the

core curriculum and is included amongst our ILOs. The Library conducts Information Literacy Curriculum assessment on a 3-year cycle.<sup>10</sup> In support of educational effectiveness assessment:

1. Library faculty define, review, and revise where needed Information Literacy Curriculum Learning Outcomes in ways that are responsive to the evolving needs of students, to changes in the information environment, to developments in the information disciplines, and to ongoing assessment of information literacy student learning in the Library.
2. Library faculty develop student learning outcomes for information literacy instruction and a plan for their assessment. They map these outcomes to the Information Literacy Curriculum Learning Outcomes to demonstrate how the instructional work of the Library contributes to the development of information literacy in learners at the University.
3. Library faculty identify direct and indirect evidence that information literacy classes, research consultations, research services interactions, and other activities (e.g., exhibits, outreach programming) assist students in the achievement of one or more outcomes.
4. Library faculty share evidence related to information literacy outcomes and assessments including connections to the ILOs, core curriculum, and other learning experiences. This includes sharing summary reporting and analyses with the Dean of the Library, through appropriate Library and University communication channels, and with the OEA and EAAC and other assessment partners.
5. Library faculty articulate changes or improvements in the methods used in information literacy instruction and in the design and delivery of learning experiences outside the classroom (e.g., exhibits, outreach programming) based on assessment results, reporting through the Annual Planning and Reporting process and other means, including through appropriate Library and University communication channels.
6. Library faculty have representation through the WML Faculty Assessment Fellow and on the EAAC to support active engagement and to offer input in assessment planning and overall assessment strategies. The Dean of the Library provides administrative oversight of the Library's assessment activities and reviews assessment findings and resulting plans for improvement.
7. The Library also engages in other assessment activities for the improvement of Library services.

## **5. Student Life**

The Division of Student Life strives to foster extraordinary student formation of mind, body, and soul through a distinctly Jesuit educational experience that prepares reflective, compassionate,

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<sup>10</sup> From 2013-2025, the Library conducted Information Literacy Assessment on an annual cycle. With the adoption of new Information Literacy Curriculum Learning Outcomes in 2025, the Library is transitioning to conducting assessment of the outcomes on a 3-year cycle.

courageous, and capable graduates who thrive in justice, spirit and truth. To support this goal, Student Life departments engage in a variety of assessment activities. For some departments, these assessments are directly connected to student learning outcomes and experiences; for departments that are service rather than student learning oriented, other evaluative measures and activities are routinely employed, including point-of-service surveys, program evaluation, and achievement of goals as articulated in each Annual Planning and Reporting cycle<sup>11</sup>.

The assessment approach utilized by the Division of Student Life is as follows:

1. Departments identify relevant learning outcomes appropriate to their type of programming and intended student learning & formation.
2. Departments gather direct and indirect evidence that programs and services are assisting students in the achievement of one or more SLOs, which often map to one or more ILOs.
3. Departments articulate changes or improvements in programs or services based on assessment results. This application of assessment findings is described in annual assessment reports prepared by each department.
4. Departments submit assessment reports and plans to the Vice President for Student Life & Dean of Students and Director of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution each June. Based upon reporting lines, the Vice President for Student Life & Dean of Students or Assistant Vice President review and provide feedback to departments, including that related to assessment activity, following receipt of these reports. This information is also made available to the Assistant Provost for Planning & IE and OEA via the Annual Planning & Reporting process.

## **5. Institutional Planning, Effectiveness, and Reporting**

The Offices of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE) and Institutional Reporting and Data Analytics (OIRDA) regularly work with administrative departments to provide data and information for planning, and other improvement and decision-making needs. These departments assist in learning assessment in the following ways:

1. Develop and maintain a calendar of institutional assessments and other surveys. Administer key surveys (e.g. NSSE, Noel Levitz), conduct analysis of survey data, map and provide data that may serve as indirect assessment evidence for learning assessment, particularly for the ILOs; and assist others in exploring the use of these surveys for their own assessment needs.

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<sup>11</sup> As described in the University's *Integrated Planning & Institutional Effectiveness Model*.

2. Prepare reports of institutional assessment and other data. Share and guide review of assessment results with members of the campus community, including the EAAC and University Planning Committee.
3. Promulgate and archive information on surveys and other evaluative tools currently in use across the University that capture indirect evidence of academic and co-curricular student learning.
4. Consult with the OEA, Academic Programs, Colleges, and Student Life for the purpose of identifying and supplying evidence for indirect assessment, including data relative to the University's ILOs.
5. Coordinate the Annual Planning and Reporting process, infrastructure and cycle.

#### **6. The Office of Educational Assessment (OEA)**

Comprised of its Director, Faculty Assessment Fellows, and GE Assessment Coordinator, the OEA guides the development of effective assessment processes; gathers and collates assessment documentation; and reviews evidence of educational effectiveness assessment in academic and co-curricular programs, including General Education. The OEA shall:

1. Ensure that PLOs are in place for each academic degree granting program and are made available to students via program web pages and other communication vehicles. Monitor changes to PLOs, and prepare an annual, comprehensive listing of all PLOs on its own web site.
2. Establish a cycle of assessment for ILOs, including through curricular, co-curricular, and institutional effectiveness activities. Monitor PLO connections to the ILOs, reviewing evidence of ILO assessment provided by Deans reports and other sources. Prepare broad reporting on the state of ILO assessment, and ILO outcomes.
3. Develop and oversee templates, reporting tools, and data management platforms for collecting, analyzing and reporting evidence of student learning. Collaborate with the Center of Teaching Excellence and other administrative areas to ensure systematic use of technologies and tools to support assessment as part of pedagogy support.
4. Review assessment plans and other core assessment documents prepared by departments. Make recommendations for improvements to program assessment processes.
5. Review assessment evidence submitted through the Annual Planning & Reporting process and other methods.
6. Consult with colleges, departments, individual faculty and others on best practices in assessment. Serve on college assessment committees.
7. Identify areas for faculty and staff development with regard to assessment of student learning; plan, implement, and evaluate resources and programs for faculty and staff

- development. Work with other University departments, such as the Center for Teaching Excellence, to provide assessment-related skills development.
8. Host gatherings and events to facilitate broad discussion of the use of assessment results to monitor and improve academic and co-curricular programs.
  9. Prepare and submit an annual report on the plans, goals, and activities of the OEA to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs via the Annual Planning & Reporting process.
  10. Report evidence of student achievement of PLOs and ILOs, as well as the use of evidence for academic programs and co-curricular offerings to the following entities:
    - i) The EAAC.
    - ii) The Faculty Senate, and appropriate committees.
    - iii) The Office of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness for communication to the Board of Trustees, MSCHE, and other internal and external stakeholders.
    - iv) The Provost, Associate Provost, and Deans, to apprise academic leadership of assessment activities, their application, and
    - v) Students, faculty, staff and others by way of internal communications and the OEA website.
  11. Develop and communicate resources and programming to support best practices in student learning assessment, conveying these to the University community via means that include the OEA website, [www.scranton.edu/assessment](http://www.scranton.edu/assessment).
  12. Coordinate specific duties related to the assessment of general education.

**General Education Assessment Coordinator:** Under the leadership of the Coordinator of General Education Assessment, the OEA will oversee a regular GE assessment cycle. The GE assessment coordinator will:

1. Maintain an internally available dashboard of assessment results and explanations of how evidence is used for program improvement and decision-making.
2. Promote best practices in GE assessment through information sharing, faculty workshops during the semesters and summer, and through other activities, including collaborations with the Faculty Senate and Center for Teaching Excellence.
3. Routinely communicate and collaborate with the GE program coordinator and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

## 7. Educational Assessment Advisory Committee

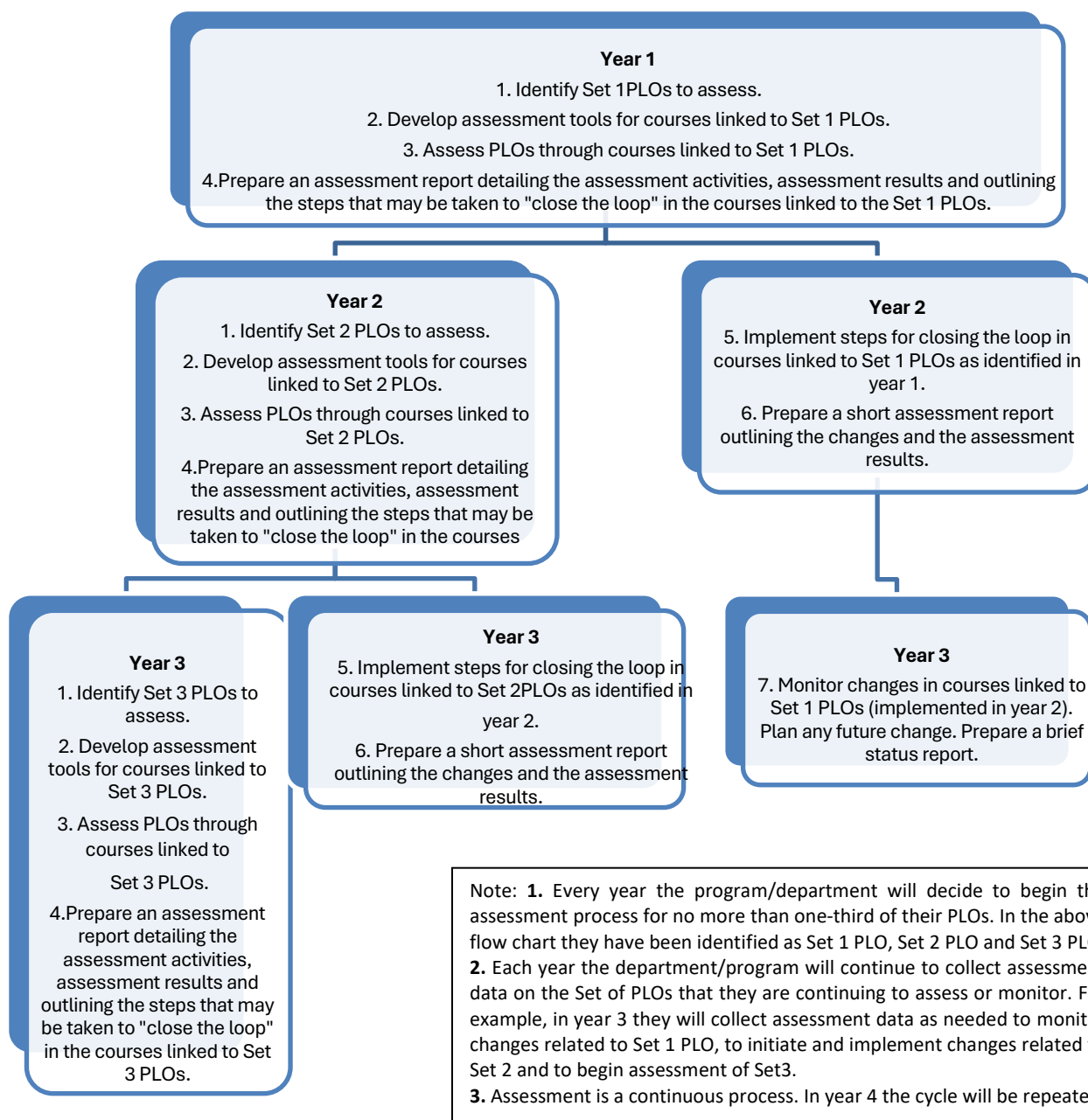
In support of these efforts, the Educational Assessment Advisory Committee (EAAC) will:

1. Advise the Director of the OEA on the impact and effectiveness of OEA processes, and annual assessment priorities.

2. Regularly review the Comprehensive Plan and other core assessment documentation & materials to ensure they are current, understood, and appropriately promulgated.
3. Monitor the state of assessment at the University, including reflection on the sufficiency of evidence of student learning assessment to ensure attainment of our assessment goals, and conducting regular analysis of our body of work in the context of MSCHE standards.
4. Recommend and explore assessment strategies for the assessment and renewal of the University's Institutional Learning Outcomes. Support the work of ILO assessment through analysis, reflection, and recommendations for the application of results.
5. Review institutional, programmatic, and general education assessment results, including institutional assessment materials such as student survey data, to identify successes and make recommendations for opportunities for improvement.
6. Develop, review and recommend a variety of assessment support resources, including those for faculty development.
7. Identify opportunities for cross-college and department collaboration to support educational effectiveness activities.
8. Serve as a liaison body between the OEA and the Faculty Senate, with faculty representation appointed through the Senate.

### Appendix A: Figure 1 - Cycle for Program Assessment

Program outcomes are generally assessed over a three-year cycle, with two learning outcomes assessed in any given year. This arrangement may vary based upon college and other disciplinary needs.

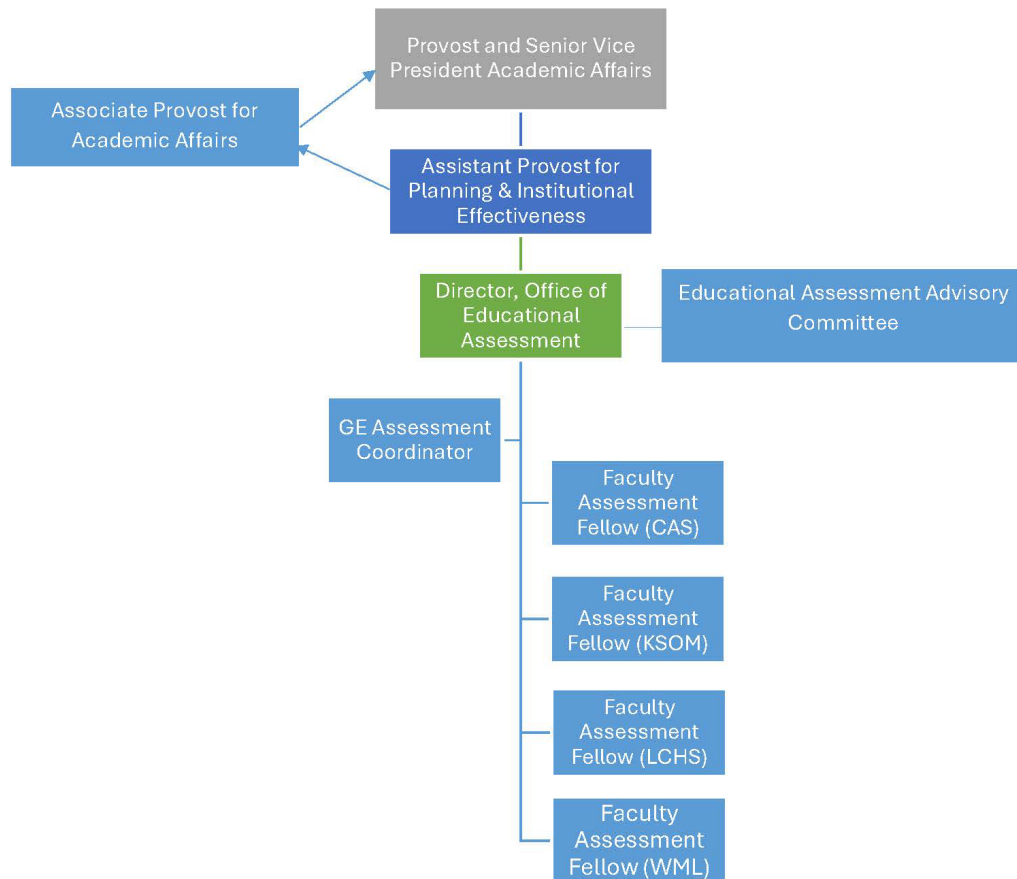


## Appendix B: Educational Assessment Organizational Structure

### Office of Educational Assessment Organizational Structure

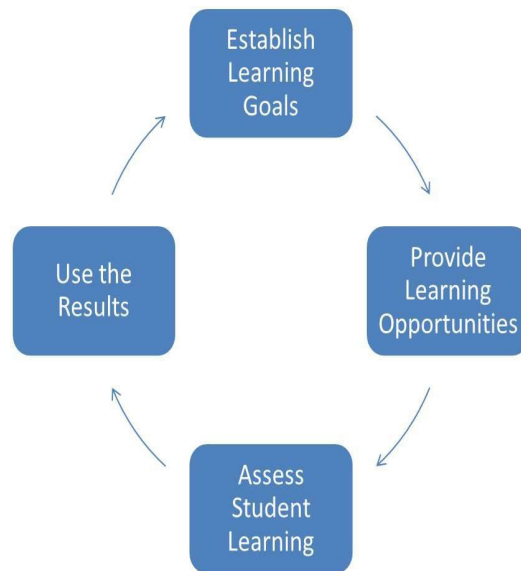
Originated 2018. Updated Fall 2025 to reflect change in administrative reporting for OEA, and addition of WML Faculty Assessment Fellow.

*Reflects change in OEA Faculty Fellows model to introduce one Fellow within the Weinberg Memorial Library.*



## Appendix C: Assessment Brief - A Guide for Using Results for Program Improvement

Student learning assessment is all about determining essential student learning outcomes – what we want students to know or be able to do as a result of their learning experiences – and how well they are meeting those goals. To help illustrate this process, visuals such as the one below are commonly used:



The fourth phase of assessment planning – using results - is often referred to as “closing the loop.” Taking the time to review, discuss, and reflect on assessment results is an important part of supporting continuous improvement in our programs. To facilitate this process, it is essential to share assessment findings amongst faculty, as well as others involved in academic leadership – department chairs, college curriculum and assessment committees, deans, and governance groups. Sample questions to guide the review of assessment results:

- Do the results suggest the need to pay more particular attention to the predisposition and life experiences of the learner? What changes might be made? How and when will they be made? How and when will the effects of these changes be assessed?
- What did the assessment results indicate about the level of achievement of the student learning outcomes?
- Do the results suggest areas where improvements or changes should be made within the program, its curriculum, or its courses? Or, are there outcomes that we can celebrate – which describe success?
- Do results describe or connect to broader learning goals, such as those at the program level and/or institutional learning outcomes or other goals?

## Attachment D: Assessment Roles and Responsibilities

**Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs:** Provides administrative oversight and support for a campus-wide program of educational assessment. Works with the Associate Provost for Institutional Planning & Effectiveness, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, academic deans, and the Director of the Office of Educational Assessment to ensure assessment efforts are appropriately structured and effectively resourced. Monitors assessment activities across academic units, including alignment with curricular and other academic review and development processes.

**Associate Provost for Academic Affairs:** Reporting to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, supervises the operations of the Assistant Provosts/Office of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE), and Institutional Reporting & Data Analytics. As advised by the Assistant Provost OPIE, monitors the effectiveness of educational and institutional assessment activities, and institutional research support within Academic Affairs, ensuring such efforts are appropriately resourced and regularly reviewed.

**Assistant Provost for Planning & Institutional Effectiveness:** Reporting to the Associate Provost, provides leadership and managerial oversight for student learning assessment and institutional assessment activities. Serves as the University's Middle States Accreditation Liaison Officer, and, in this capacity, as a guide and resource to internal groups in understanding and conforming to Middle States expectations and requirements for institutional assessment and the assessment of student learning. Responsible for the coordination and official submission of all Middle States reporting and documentation.

**Office of Educational Assessment:** The Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) provides oversight and coordination of the development of a campus-wide culture of assessment at The University of Scranton. Provides support for developing faculty and staff expertise in the development, measurement and analysis of student learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, and leads a program of direct and indirect assessment of institutional learning outcomes. In consultation with faculty, departments, school/colleges, the OEA provides direction and consultation in analyzing and reporting assessment results. Promotes best practices in learning assessment. The OEA is comprised of a Director, a General Education Assessment Coordinator, and faculty assessment fellows representing the different colleges and the Weinberg Memorial Library.

**Director, OEA:** Reporting to the Assistant Provost for Institutional Planning & Effectiveness, the Director of the Office of Educational Assessment leads the OEA and is responsible for the implementation of learning assessment activities at the University, including those outlined in the Comprehensive Plan for Student Learning Assessment. Supports and guides the OEA team in working with academic colleges and departments, and those with in Student Life and other student support areas, in developing and implementing assessment strategies and promulgating the results and implications of various student learning assessment projects. Consults with faculty and staff on developing and implementing assessment plans and reports, developing appropriate student learning outcomes, and choosing effective approaches

and measurement instruments. Reports on the plans and activities of the OEA, the overall state of educational assessment, assessment reporting and analysis, and related initiatives.

**Coordinator, General Education Assessment:** Reporting to the OEA director, the GE assessment Coordinator provides leadership for the assessment of the General Education curriculum. Prepares and carries out, with faculty across colleges and departments that provide GE coursework, GE assessment plans and timetables that support the curriculum and the needs of colleges and programs. Responsibilities include planning, locating, or developing tools to assess student learning outcomes and GE curriculum evaluation needs; providing opportunities for faculty and staff to learn and share methodologies and results; assisting University offices and its leadership in ensuring that results of student learning outcomes assessment are used effectively for GE improvement; and producing regular reports on the results of GE assessment to the Faculty Senate and other stakeholders. As part of the OEA team, the GE Assessment Coordinator advises on the connections of GE assessment to other aspects of the student learning experience. The GE Coordinator serves as the OEA representative to Faculty Senate General Education committees and activities.

**Faculty Assessment Fellows:** Faculty assessment fellows are an integral part of the Office of Educational Assessment, directly involving faculty in developing and leading assessment strategy. Fellows are selected from amongst the full-time faculty, one each from the College of Arts & Sciences, the Kania School of Management, the Leahy College of Health Sciences, and the Weinberg Memorial Library. Fellows work with the OEA Director to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and established OEA procedures. Fellows identify and implement best practices in learning assessment and facilitate assessment strategies between and amongst faculty. In specific connection to their home academic college/area, collaborate with deans, department chairs and program directors to navigate assessment milestones and responsibilities outlined in the Comprehensive plan, assure development of learning outcomes and plans, and timely reporting and end of semester/academic year program reports. Introduce and encourage student learning assessment activities, as well as:

- Support faculty development, in collaboration with CTE and Academic Departments, to promote faculty participation in Assessment.
- Advise faculty, departments, and colleges on assessment procedures and methods.
- Assist departments and programs to complete the assessment process (close the loop) to maintain and improve the student learning experience.
- Review of institutional and program level learning assessment reports.
- In addition to above OEA responsibilities, Fellows may also serve as members of their home college's curricular/assessment committee.

**Educational Assessment Advisory Committee:** Chaired by the OEA director, the Educational Assessment Advisory Committee serves to develop and enrich effective assessment of the student learning experience at The University of Scranton. Members include: OEA staff; assessment staff from CAS, KSOM, LCHS and Weinberg Memorial Library; representatives from the CTE, Institutional Reporting, Student Life; and faculty representatives as appointed by the Faculty Senate; and others as invited or elected to serve. The committee collaborates with and makes recommendations to the OEA to support ongoing systems of

assessment, including development, implementation, and maintenance of the plan for assessment of the student learning experience.

**Dean CAS:** Responsible for the leadership of assessment activities within the CAS. In support of the Comprehensive Assessment Plan, together with the OEA sets expectations for annual cycles of assessment planning and reporting, and communicates those expectations to individual faculty, department chairs, and others. Provides regular reports to the OEA and Office of the Provost on learning assessment activities occurring within the CAS and their application for improvement, including through the Dean's Annual Report to the Provost, and summary reflections from the work of the curriculum and assessment committee. Oversees the college-wide Academic Program Review and Program Impact Reporting process, which includes a review of the development and implementation of program assessment plans.

**Associate Dean CAS:** The Associate Dean chairs the Assessment Committee for CAS (ACCAS), which functions to oversee Program Learning Outcome refinement and implementation, assure a reliable six-year assessment cycle, and follow up on PLO and learning outcomes from the annual report review of each program's assessment work. To facilitate this work, the Associate Dean provides department-level analyses of enrollment, retention and attrition, student credit hour production, course fill rates, academic profile trends, and other data as requested by either the Dean or the Departments, and provides this data to the departments for their program review. The Associate Dean serves on the Educational Assessment Advisory Committee (EAAC) and reports directly to the Dean. The associate dean also assures a close relationship between assessment at the program and College levels, Academic Program Review, and program development, leading the process for the regular CAS Academic Program Review and Program Impact Reporting.

**CAS Dean's Conference:** To assure a broad-based review of programs and a fuller understanding of assessment practices, assessment in The College of Arts and Sciences includes consultation and input from the College's two governance bodies: the Dean's Conference and the Assessment Committee for the College of Arts and Sciences. The Dean's Conference includes all department chairs in the College, as well as the Dean, the Associate Dean, and the Assistant Deans. The Dean's Conference meets regularly throughout the academic year—ordinarily once each month in addition to occasional meetings of smaller disciplinary groups—to advise the Dean on a wide range of issues affecting the College. Programs report the outcomes of their targeted Program Review at the first Dean's conference of the Fall semester, and the last Dean's conference of the Spring semester (or the next opportunity to do so for external review).

**Assessment Committee for the College of Arts and Sciences (ACCAS):** While department and program faculty have primary responsibility and authority for the assessment of student learning at the program level, ACCAS also reviews and provides feedback on this assessment and Academic Program Review, as well as the Program Learning outcomes for each program. The OEA CAS Faculty Assessment Fellow is a standing member of the committee. The ACCAS meets monthly (except during the summer) and provides feedback on Program Learning Outcomes and reporting on assessment outcomes to programs and departments. The members of the Assessment Committee also consult with the College faculty, as needed.

**Dean LCHS:** Responsible for the leadership of assessment activities within the Leahy College of Health Sciences, including the development, maintenance, and implementation of the PCPS assessment plan and related activities. Sets expectations for annual cycles of assessment reporting at the course, department/program, and college levels, and communicates those expectations to individual faculty, department chairs, and others. Reports to the OEA and Office of the Provost on college-level learning assessment activities and their application for improvement. With other college deans, collaborates with Provost to monitor assessment activities across academic units.

**Associate Dean, LCHS and Assistant Dean of Assessment, Finance and Communications, LCHS:** Aids departments in gathering data and developing alumni surveys electronically on employment. Publishes assessment data to the web and directs outcomes results to the relevant web sites and other communication venues. Serve as members of the EAAC, and liaisons to the OEA to assure linkage of LCHS assessment activities to the University's Comprehensive Plan and assessment structure.

**LCHS Dean's Conference:** The monthly LCHS dean's conference includes department chairs and program directors where assessment information is shared. The LCHS dean's conference reviews the results of the assessment information from the LCHS Board of Visitors.

**LCHS Curriculum and Assessment Committee:** Coordinated by the Associate Dean, reviews LCHS program learning outcomes and curricular maps, which include specific direct and indirect strategies for assessing mastery of learning competencies, in order to ensure high quality, academically rigorous learning experiences for all LCHS students. Verifies that programmatic student learning outcome assessment activities are taking place and consult with the program about how its plan (rationale and method) may be strengthened and improved. Provides a structured forum for faculty from all LCHS programs to report on assessment activities, discuss best practices, and for showcasing examples of closing the loop in using assessment data to improve student learning.

**Dean KSOM:** Responsible for the leadership of assessment activities within the KSOM, including the development, maintenance, and implementation of the KSOM assessment plan and related activities. Sets expectations for annual cycles of assessment reporting at the course, department/program, and college levels, and communicates those expectations to individual faculty, department chairs, and others. Reports to the OEA and Office of the Provost on college-level learning assessment activities and their application for improvement. With other college deans, collaborates with Provost to monitor assessment activities across academic units.

**KSOM Assessment Committee:** chaired by a member of the KSOM faculty and comprised of faculty and the Dean and Associate Dean of the college, the committee coordinates the college-wide assessment process and collection, documentation, review, and communication of assessment data and information to faculty, staff, and students.

**Dean Library and Library Faculty:** The Weinberg Memorial Library, under the administrative leadership of the Dean of the Library in collaboration with the Library Faculty, supports the development of information literacy in University of Scranton students at all levels of study. This is accomplished through collaboration with course faculty to integrate information literacy student learning outcomes into their courses. The Library contributes to students' formation and development toward University institutional learning outcomes through an outcomes-based approach to assessing information literacy instruction sessions and through Library programming and activities in all functional areas of the Library.

**Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee (FSCC):** A standing committee of the Faculty Senate, responsible for the review of all proposed changes to curriculum, including new courses and programs.

**Faculty Senate Conference Committee on Curriculum (CCC):** A standing committee of the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee, primarily responsible for the implementation and oversight of the general education curriculum, and the assignment of general education attributes. These attributes form the organizational foundation for the general education assessment structure and phasing.

**Academic Department Chairs and Program Directors:** Provide leadership within the department and/or program for the development of student learning outcomes for their programs (some of which are in support of general education program learning outcomes, and/or institutional learning goals) and a program assessment plan. Oversee the implementation of the program assessment plan, and fulfil responsibilities for department/program reporting of assessment activities as guided by their department/program, college, or other assessment plans, and in relation to institutional and any relevant program accreditation requirements.

**Individual Faculty:** Responsible for the development of learning outcomes for courses in support of program learning outcomes, general education outcomes, and or institutional learning outcomes, and the inclusion of those outcomes on all course syllabi, as required by the Faculty Handbook. Support departmental/program learning outcome development and assessment activities. Administer course embedded assessment of learning outcomes and reporting of assessment activities as guided by their department/program, college, or other assessment plans.

**Student Life:** The Director of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution serves as a support for assessment efforts within the Division of Student Life. Each department within the Division is responsible for its own assessment, but the Director helps to support these efforts while focusing on increasing communication, clarity, and collaboration. The director serves as a member of the EAAC.

## **Appendix E: The Evolution of the Comprehensive Plan**

Following the University's MSCHE Periodic Review (PRR), in November 2013, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) issued a warning expressing concerns with the University's compliance with its (then) Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning (now Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment). The University responded by creating a more visible and coherent infrastructure, namely the faculty-led Office of Educational Assessment (OEA). The Office operates under the supervision of the Assistant Provost for Planning & Institutional Effectiveness. It is staffed by a faculty Director, four Faculty Fellows, and a Coordinator for General Education Assessment. The Educational Assessment Advisory Committee (EAAC) counsels the OEA.

Further considering a more effective approach to learning assessment processes, The OEA undertook an analysis of the findings of the University's reports to MSCHE, and the structures and processes already in place in AY 2014-15. Data for the analysis included college and University documents, as well as formal and informal conversations with those involved in assessment at all levels. From this analysis, the OEA concluded the following:

- Existing assessment structures and processes operated in silos.
- Evidence of student learning was inconsistently reported and communicated.
- Program improvement was infrequently driven by evidence.
- Program assessment was more limited and inconsistent across programs that do not have external, professional accreditation requirements.

This analysis, coupled with guidance and input from Academic Affairs leadership, the Faculty Senate, and other stakeholders, guided the Office of Educational Assessment in preparing a Comprehensive Plan for Student Learning to outline a new, systematic approach to student learning assessment for the University. The OEA and EAAC regularly review the substance and procedures of the Plan. The initial Comprehensive Plan was approved by the Assessment Advisory Committee and Faculty Senate in early 2016 and has been subsequently revised to address institutional changes and opportunities to refine and improve practice since that time. The Plan was most recently updated in fall 2026.

End.