# ASSESSMENT PLAN
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## ROGERS STATE UNIVERSITY
### Claremore, Oklahoma

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## University Assessment Committee

Revised March 2023

ROGERS STATE
UNIVERSITY

## OVERVIEW

Purpose of assessment

The purpose of assessment is to measure student learning in a systematic fashion in order to improve student academic achievement and development. The goals of this assessment plan are: 1) to improve teaching and learning, and 2) to support accountability and institutional effectiveness.

The principles of student learning assessment are:

a. The value of informed assessment and subsequent planning will serve as a basis for institutional and program effectiveness.

b. The assessment plan will provide a context for developing and reviewing institutional and departmental mission statements, goals, and objectives.

c. The plan will provide a useable body of knowledge to strengthen services, instruction, and institutional planning.

d. The plan will link assessment to program review, instructional and student support improvement, institutional strategic planning, and the budgeting process.

e. Departmental assessment plans will include multiple measures of cognitive skills, attitudes/values, and behaviors described in program outcomes.

f. Departments will use the information from assessment to enhance student academic achievement and to support student retention.

g. Data from assessment is to be used as a means to identify the need for faculty and staff development activities, which will enhance the institution's ability to meet student needs.

Oversight of assessment

Oversight of the assessment of student learning at Rogers State University is the shared responsibility of faculty and administration. Two faculty senate subcommittees and two administrative offices currently share responsibility for oversight of assessment.

h. University Assessment Committee

The University Assessment Committee (UAC) is the primary faculty committee tasked with oversight of the assessment of student learning among the institution's programs of study. This committee provides leadership on issues related to assessment, provides feedback on assessment findings for degree programs and developmental studies, and evaluates the use of assessment by departments to improve student learning. Membership consists of a faculty representative from each academic department and the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (ex-officio member). Smaller departments may be exempt from providing a representative with committee approval.

i. General Education Committee

The General Education Committee (GEC) is responsible for oversight of all issues

related to general education at the institution. This committee assesses and evaluates the general education curriculum, recommends improvements, reviews general education proposals, and reports annually on the effectiveness of general education. Membership consists of at least nine senate-appointed faculty, with at least two from each School.

j. Office of Accountability and Academics

The Office for Accountability and Academics (OAA) is the primary administrative office responsible for oversight of the assessment of student learning at the institution. This office manages institutional data, supports the assessment of learning outcomes, disseminates assessment data and findings to faculty, and reports to regulatory and accreditation agencies. This office is overseen by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

k. Office of Student Affairs

The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) is responsible for oversight of all aspects of co-curricular student learning at the institution. Co-curricular learning provides avenues for personal enhancement, including leadership development, civic engagement, community service, critical thinking, social expression, organizational involvement, wellness programming, and cultural enrichment. This office is governed by the Vice President of Student Affairs.

Revising the RSU Assessment Plan Executive Summary

OSRHE requires institutional assessment plans be reviewed, revised as needed, and submitted to the Regents every five years with 2023 as a baseline. RSU's assessment plan will be reviewed every other year and revised as appropriate. The OAA and UAC are tasked with oversight of this process with appropriate contributions from the GEC, University Curriculum Committee (UCC), and OSA. Revisions are forwarded to the University administration for review.

## 1. ENTRY-LEVEL ASSESSMENT AND COURSE PLACEMENT

### 1.1 Purpose

Entry-level assessment analyzes the college preparedness of all new students to ensure they have the best possible chance of success in attaining their academic goals. Assessment results are used in the placement and advising process to ensure students are enrolled in courses appropriate to their skill level. As students matriculate through their academic programs, their progress is tracked, analyzed, and reported. The information gained is used to evaluate and strengthen programs and services. An important component of entry-level assessment is the provision of student support activities. This requires collaboration between the UAC, GEC, UCC, Persistence Task Force, and OSA.

The specific priorities for entry-level assessment are to:

a. Ensure that entering students have basic skills adequate to succeed in college.

b. Improve retention rates of entering students as they matriculate through the system.

c. Provide entering students with experiences that will help them clarify their educational and personal goals.

d. Evaluate the effectiveness of the entry-level assessment/placement process.

e. Provide university-wide student support services, activities, and resources which complement academic programs.

f. Strengthen the delivery of student services to improve access, placement, and advisement through integration of assessment and activities with emphasis on at-risk students.

g. Produce useable centralized, qualitative and quantitative information for use in institutional decision making.

1.2 <u>Assessment methodology</u>

Because RSU is an open door institution, ACT and SAT scores have historically been used to place entering students into bachelor's degree or associate's degree programs. Because RSU has been approved by OSRHE for the Test Optional Pilot Initiative, all entering students, both first-time freshmen and entering transfer or "adult" students, are eligible to enroll in a bachelor's degree program; however, they must still be placed appropriately in developmental or college-level coursework. Consequently, other means of placement must be available. Students who do not meet the cut-score of 19 on each ACT subtest or do not submit ACT or SAT scores are referred for secondary testing in the deficient content area. Notwithstanding, students who successfully complete the College Career Math Ready (4550) course in high school with an A or B in every unit will be considered proficient in math.

RSU Testing Center staff administer the College Board Accuplacer Next Generation to place students, who are deficient in reading, writing or mathematics, in appropriate developmental courses. The University also accepts classic Accuplacer test results. The Stanford Science (STASS) test is used as the developmental tool to assess student readiness in science. There is no charge to the student for the Accuplacer or the STASS.

A Next Generation score of 250 on the English subtest or score of 80 on the classic Accuplacer English subtest is required for college level placement in English Composition I. A Next Generation subtest score below 250 qualifies a student to enroll in the Composition I Supplemental course concurrently with Composition I.

For students scoring below 19 on the ACT Reading subtest, a Next Generation score of 250 on the Reading subtest equates to college-level reading. A classic Accuplacer score of 75 is required on the Reading subtest in order to test out of developmental Reading I.

A Math Next Generation subtest score of 250 or a classic Accuplacer subtest score of 66 places students in college-level mathematics. A Next Generation subtest score of 236-249 or a classic Accuplacer subtest score of 40-65 places students in supplemental/co-requisite math, allowing them to enroll concurrently in a corresponding college-level math course. A Next Generation math subtest score of 0-235 or a classic Accuplacer score below 40 requires Elementary Algebra.

A score of 56 on the STASS is required for college level science. Students whose scores do not qualify them for immediate college-level course work in science must enroll in BIOL 0123, Science Proficiency, to prepare them for success.

First-time entering students are assessed following application to RSU and prior to enrollment, and those who do not meet the cut score of 19 on each ACT subtest or submit

no scores are referred for secondary testing at one of the RSU Testing Centers. With the exception of the STASS test, students who do not pass secondary testing on the first attempt can retake the test one time after a one-week waiting period. First-time freshman must complete all required zero-level courses within the first 24 semester hours attempted. Transfer students must complete all required zero-level courses within the first 12 semester hours attempted.

Student achievement toward learning goals in developmental studies is assessed in two ways:

    a.  Course-embedded assessment

Developmental studies faculty have articulated student learning outcomes for each zero-level course that address the minimum skill proficiencies for entry-level college study. These outcomes address four skill areas: 1) basic writing, 2) reading comprehension, 3) mathematical reasoning, and 4) science proficiency. Student achievement towards these outcomes is assessed with a variety of course-embedded direct measures, such as exams and pre/post-tests.

    b.  Student progress in entry-level study

The OAA tracks the progress of developmental students through their zero-level courses, co-requisite courses, and collegiate-level coursework. Co-requisite studies allow for students who score between 17-18 on the ACT subtests for math and/or writing to complete their developmental coursework in the same semester as the related college-level course(s) in math and/or writing. Student success in these courses are analyzed and compared with those of students completing traditional developmental studies and with students who place directly into college-level coursework.

1.3   <u>Collecting and disseminating assessment findings</u>

    a.  Admissions testing

The Admissions Office is responsible for collecting ACT and SAT scores and documentation of previous course work from incoming students. Students not meeting basic skills competencies are referred to the university Testing Center. Testing Center personnel are responsible for administering secondary tests and reporting results to Admissions and the OAA. In addition, this office inputs individual scores into the student information system for tracking purposes. The OAA analyzes entry-level assessment data and reports the results on an annual basis to the Academic Council and administration, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, and other accrediting agencies.

    b.  Developmental studies

Developmental Studies faculty submit Student Learning Reports (SLRs) to the OAA at the end of each Spring semester. These reports summarize and interpret course-embedded assessment data collected in all zero-level courses over the previous year. SLRs are subsequently subject to peer-review by the UAC. Data collected by the OAA on student progress in entry-level coursework are analyzed and reported in an annual Entry-Level Assessment Report. Electronic copies of the above reports are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

1.4   <u>Using assessment to improve student learning</u>

The OAA collects data necessary for making informed changes to improve instruction and student services. Specifically, changes are made to ensure that entering students have the

necessary skills and are provided with the support needed to succeed academically. Students are encouraged to work closely with advisors throughout their academic careers to assist them in making appropriate short- and long-term academic decisions. The Academic Departments, UAC, GEC, and UCC recommend program or process changes to improve student academic achievement, and to enhance student development.

1.5   Modifying the assessment process

The Office of Admissions, the Academic Policy Committee, the UAC, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs are responsible for the evaluation and modification of entry-level assessment/placement processes. Academic Affairs will make decisions to maximize student success by: 1) assessing the validity of current cut-scores and placement procedures, 2) examining whether current assessment instruments are measuring skill competencies as determined for mastery of subsequent college-level work, and 3) evaluating the effectiveness of current measures of student satisfaction in regard to activities that impact students upon entry to the institution.

Priorities:

a.   Determine the effectiveness of current cut-scores and assessment instruments

b.   Coordinate assessment initiatives with The College Experience (ORIE 1151) course to provide a means of gathering important entry-level assessment data.

c.   Assess the effectiveness of basic skills courses in preparing students for more advanced course work.

d.   Use entry-level assessment and placement to build a strong foundation for student success at all levels of assessment.

## 2.   GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT

2.1   Purpose

General education assessment measures student achievement toward the following five student learning outcomes. These outcomes reflect those capabilities essential for all college-educated adults living and working in the twenty-first century.

a.   Think critically and creatively.

b.   Acquire, analyze, and evaluate knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world.

c.   Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively.

d.   Develop an individual perspective on the human experience, and demonstrate an understanding of diverse perspectives and values.

e.   Demonstrate civic knowledge and engagement, ethical reasoning, and skills for lifelong learning.

a.   Assessment methodology

Assessment of student achievement in general education is achieved using a mixture of the following metrics.

a.   Course-level assessment

Primary assessment of student learning in general education relies largely

on course-embedded measures.  RSU currently offers over 40 general education courses within the five core curriculum areas: 1) communications, 2) social and behavioral sciences, 3) science and mathematics, 4) humanities, and 5) global studies. All of these courses, including those using blended and online teaching modes, are subject to regular assessment.  No single course is expected to address all five student learning outcomes, but faculty are encouraged to address at least two outcomes in every course.   Departmental faculty are charged with devising and implementing appropriate measures for assessing student achievement in one or more of the general education learning outcomes. Measures used by faculty consist of pre/post tests, examinations, oral and written student presentations, and other student assignments.  Nationally standardized measures are used as appropriate and available. Performance standards for each measure are set by the faculty and serve as the basis for evaluating student achievement.

b.  Institutional-level assessment

  i. Cognitive and direct measures

RSU uses a third-party criterion-referenced instrument to assess student achievement in several general education thinking skills. The instrument currently in use is the ETS® *Proficiency Profile* published by the Education Testing Service. This examination assesses student proficiency in four core skill areas:  reading, writing, mathematics, and critical thinking. It also assesses student proficiency in three context-based areas: humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences.

Three cohorts of bachelor degree-seeking students are tested annually to assess student learning in these skill areas.

Cohort 1:  Bachelor degree-seeking first-time freshmen who have not completed general education courses or have not taken general education courses at other institutions or concurrently.

Cohort 2:  Sophomores with 31-60 credit hours completed at RSU.  Students with concurrent or transferred general education courses are excluded.

Cohort 3:  Seniors within one semester of graduation.

A summary of test results and raw data for broader analyses are provided by ETS together with comparative data of student performance at peer institutions. Student learning in each skill area can be gauged by comparing proficiency levels across the three cohorts. Test data from peer institutions also provides a means of benchmarking the performance of RSU students against those of similar schools.

  ii. Indirect measures

The Office of Accountability and Academics (OAA) implements a graduating student survey and student satisfaction survey each year to

garner feedback on the student experience. Within the instruments are dedicated questions to collect feedback on the effectiveness of student learning for the five general education SLOs.  Every other year the OAA implements an alumni survey for RSU alumni who have graduated within the previous five years. Within this instrument are embedded questions collecting feedback regarding how well alumni believe their education at RSU contributed their growth in each of the general education SLOs.

2.2  <u>Collecting and disseminating assessment findings</u>

Academic departments, GEC, UAC, and the OAA share responsibility for the collection and dissemination of assessment findings.

a.  Course-level assessment

Academic departments with one or more general education courses submit an annual General Education SLR at the end of the spring semester.  These reports compile and interpret assessment data collected from general education courses taught by the respective departments over the preceding academic year.  They represent a collaborative product of departmental faculty with distributed duties of data collection, data tabulation and analysis, and interpretation of findings.  SLRs are reviewed by the department head and school dean and forwarded to the OAA and GEC for review, discussion, scheduled feedback to faculty, and archiving.  Electronic copies of all learning reports are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

b.  Institutional-level assessment

i.  Cognitive and direct measures

The ETS® *Proficiency Profile* is coordinated by the OAA with the support of RSU Testing Center staff. The exam is taken online at any of the three campus testing centers. Student scores, together with comparable data of students at peer institutions, are provided by ETS through a secure data portal.  A breakdown of the exam results by cohort is included in the annual assessment report made by the OAA to the state regents.  These reports are archived on the institutional website.

ii.  Indirect measures

General education assessment results that are reported in the *Graduating Student Survey Report* and the *Alumni Survey Report* are summarized in the *Annual Report of Student Assessment Activity*, which is submitted to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and shared with the General Education Committee and Academic Council after being published on the OAA website. Academic Department Heads are asked to share results with their faculty to inform curricular decision making.

2.3  <u>Using assessment to improve student learning</u>

An effective assessment process helps instructors identify student strengths and weaknesses, shape instruction, and monitor teaching effectiveness.  RSU academic

departments are charged with using assessment findings to improve student achievement toward the general education outcomes in their respective courses. General Education SLRs provides a venue for faculty to reflect on student progress and formally propose changes to either instruction or assessment to improve learning. Each year the faculty chair of the GEC is invited to present the previous year's results at an Academic Council meeting to summarize and update student learning outcomes to department heads and deans. In this way department heads are directly informed of strengths and gaps in RSU's General Education Program. All proposed assessment-related changes are tracked in subsequent years to evaluate their effectiveness.

Faculty governance and the OAA play key oversight roles in this process. All general education assessment is subject to regular review by the GEC and UAC, who may forward recommendations for improvement to individuals departments or the university-at-large. Departmental proposals for instructional changes are collated at the end of each academic year by the OAA and communicated to state regents in the *Annual Report of Student Assessment Activity*. These reports are published on the OAA website.

2.4   Modifying assessment procedures

Evaluation and modification of assessment procedures and methodologies occur at several levels:

a.  Faculty evaluate student learning through assessment processes within their respective departments.

b.  The GEC, University Curriculum Committee (UCC) and UAC periodically review course objectives and assessment processes at the institutional level to ensure linkage with the five general education learning outcomes.

c.  The GEC reviews departmental general education student learning reports and provides recommendations for the assessment process.

d.  Aggregated feedback informs faculty discussion regarding coordinated curriculum modifications and improvements. These changes are implemented regardless of class modality, including on-ground/face-to-face, blended, and online.

General education assessment (i.e., mid-level assessment) measures student achievement toward five general education student learning outcomes (identified below) and in five core curriculum areas: 1) communications, 2) social and behavioral sciences, 3) science and mathematics, 4) humanities, and 5) global studies. The general education program at RSU integrates a broad foundation of knowledge and skills with the study of contemporary concerns. The five general education student learning outcomes are reflective of those capabilities essential for all college-educated adults living and working in the twenty-first century:

a.  Think critically and creatively.

b.  Acquire, analyze, and evaluate knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world.

c.  Use written, oral, and visual communication effectively.

    d. Develop an individual perspective on the human experience, and demonstrate an understanding of diverse perspectives and values.

    e. Demonstrate civic knowledge and engagement, ethical reasoning, and skills for lifelong learning.

2.5   <u>Assessment methodology</u>

Assessing Student achievement toward learning goals in RSU's general education program is carried out in three ways:

    a. Course-embedded assessment

Primary assessment of student learning in general education has relied largely on course-embedded measures. The University currently offers over 40 general education courses within the five core curriculum areas (per 3.1). All of these courses, including those using blended and online teaching modes, are subject to regular assessment. While no single course is expected to address all five student learning outcomes, faculty are encouraged to address at least two outcomes in every course. Departmental faculty are charged with devising and implementing appropriate measures for assessing student achievement cover one or more of the general education learning outcomes. Measures used by faculty consist of pre/post-tests, examinations, oral and written student presentations, and other student assignments. Performance standards for each measure are set by the faculty and serve as the basis for evaluating student achievement.

    b. Institutional assessment

       i. Cognitive and direct measures

RSU uses a criterion-referenced instrument to assess students' critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematics skills. The instrument currently in use is the *Proficiency Profile*, which is published by the Education Testing Service (ETS) and is approved by the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA). ETS provides test results together with comparative data of student performance at peer institutions. These data can help RSU identify areas of strength and opportunities for curriculum improvement. Three cohorts of bachelor degree-seeking students at RSU are tested annually to assess student learning in these skill areas.

          Cohort 1:  First-time freshmen who have not completed general education courses or have not taken general education courses at other institutions.

          Cohort 2:  Sophomores with 31-60 credit hours completed at RSU. Students with concurrent or transferred general education courses are excluded.

          Cohort 3:  Seniors within one semester of graduation.

A measure of student learning is obtained by contrasting skill proficiency levels for the cohorts. This approach offers a global perspective on the effectiveness of the general education program and provides actionable score reports to pinpoint strengths and areas of improvement.

       ii. Indirect measures

Student evaluation of instruction is routinely conducted at RSU. Between 2009 and 2018, the institution utilized the IDEA Center® Student Ratings of

Instruction (See 6.2). One component of this instrument measures student self-reported progress against twelve standard course-related objectives. As these objectives comprise a conceptual subset of the five RSU general education learning outcomes (see Section 3.1), these data are used as an additional measure of student achievement in their general education. Note: A new instrument for student evaluations of instruction is being developed at this time.

2.6 Collecting and disseminating assessment findings

The GEC, UCC, academic departments, and the OAA share responsibility for creation, implementation, and assessment of the general education program at the institutional level. These constituencies recommend and evaluate curricular and assessment changes to strengthen programs on a continuing basis. The processes followed by the departments and committees reinforce the linkage between the institutional mission and the five general education learning outcomes of Section 3.1.

a. Course-embedded assessment

All academic departments with one or more general education courses are required to submit a General Education SLR at the end of the spring semester. These annual reports compile and interpret assessment data collected from general education courses taught by the respective departments over the preceding academic year. They represent a collaborative product of course-related faculty with distributed duties of data collection, data tabulation and analysis, and interpretation of findings. SLRs are reviewed by the department head and school dean and forwarded to the OAA and GEC. General Education SLRs are subject to regular peer-review by the GEC. Electronic copies of all SLRs are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

b. Institutional Assessment

i. Cognitive and direct measures

The Proficiency Profile is coordinated by the OAA with the support of RSU Testing Center staff. The exam is taken online at one of the three campus testing centers. Student scores, together with comparisons of RSU student to peer institutions, are obtained through a secure data portal at the ETS website. These results exam are shared with the faculty at large by the OAA.

ii. Indirect measures

See Section 6.3 within Student Satisfaction Assessment for a description of the indirect measures, including student evaluations of instruction, used in reviewing, evaluating, and informing the process to improve student learning outcomes. All assessments are included in the Annual Student Assessment Report, which is shared with the University community and reported to Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education by the OAA. Electronic copies of these reports are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

2.7 Using assessment to improve student learning

All RSU departments associated with the general education program are charged with using course-embedded assessment data to improve student achievement toward the general education learning outcomes in their respective courses. Assessment can help instructors identify student strengths and weaknesses, monitor student learning and

progress, plan and shape instruction, and monitor teaching effectiveness. The GEC and UAC play key oversight roles in this process.

2.8 Modifying assessment procedures

Evaluation and modification of assessment procedures and methodologies occur at several levels:

a. Faculty evaluate student learning through assessment processes within their respective departments.

b. The GEC, UCC and UAC periodically review course objectives and assessment processes at the institutional level to ensure linkage with the five general education learning outcomes.

c. The UAC and GEC review departmental student learning reports and provide recommendations for the assessment process.

## 3. PROGRAM OUTCOMES

3.1 Purpose

Program-level assessment measures student achievement toward the learning goals established by the institution's degree-granting undergraduate and graduate programs. Major fields of study give students the opportunity for in-depth study of the theories, knowledge, and methods of an academic discipline. Snapshots of student achievement in these areas can be captured through the assessment of program learning outcomes. Continuous program-level assessment provides faculty with an understanding of how their program is meeting its objectives, with the ultimate goal to foster student learning.

3.2 Assessment methodology

Departmental faculty, with the oversight of the respective chair and dean, are responsible for the assessment of each degree program. Program assessment plans are developed collaboratively by the faculty associated with each program.

Each program assessment plan will:

a. Review institutional, school, departmental, and program missions/goals and establish the desired levels of assessment.

b. Identify and update student learning outcomes in relation to the planned level of assessment. Outcomes define the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that a student can expect to acquire in completing the degree.

c. Determine methods and tools for assessing student performance for each learning outcome. Such measures include portfolios, capstone projects, licensure and certification exams, course-embedded tests and assignments, standardized exams, student surveys, focus groups, exit interviews, and employer surveys. Additionally, other degree programs, such as the BS in Nursing program, also assess student learning outcomes in this way. Measures and methodology must be sufficiently rigorous to ensure confidence in the findings.

d. Establish criteria for determining the degree to which students have achieved the established learning outcomes.

e. Decide how results will be gathered, analyzed, and disseminated.

f. Establish timelines for implementing elements of an assessment plan.

3.3   Collecting and disseminating assessment findings

Academic departments submit an annual Degree Program SLR for each degree-granting program under their purview at the end of each spring semester. These annual reports present the compilation and interpretation of the assessment data collected over the preceding academic year.  They are a collaborative product of program-related faculty, who distribute duties of data collection, data tabulation and analysis, and interpretation of findings.  Each report is reviewed by the respective department head and school dean and forwarded to the OAA.  All Degree Program SLRs are subject to biennial oral and written peer-review by the UAC.  The UAC examines the assessment data for any notable trends, identifies strengths and weaknesses of the report, and provides recommendations to academic departments.  Electronic copies of all annual SLRs are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

3.4   Using assessment to improve student learning

Program-level assessment focuses on what and how an academic program is contributing to the learning, growth, and development of students as a group. Findings should then be used to inform, confirm, and support program-level change and facilitate continual program-level improvement. Such assessment helps programs:

   a.   Provide empirical evidence of what students are learning

   b.   Identify gaps in student learning areas

   c.   Inform teaching pedagogy by aligning best practices with learner needs

   d.   Make informed decisions to guide curriculum growth and revision

   e.   Demonstrate overall program effectiveness and showcase student learning

The annual Degree Program SLR (see SLR Section H: Conclusions and Part 5: Proposed Changes) provides program faculty with the ability to: 1) make written proposals for changes to their program curriculum and/or assessment plan, 2) provide feedback to reviewer comments from the previous peer- review, and 3) follow up on proposed changes made in earlier assessment cycles.

3.5   Modifying assessment procedures

Evaluation of assessment activities and processes occurs at several levels:

   a.   Faculty evaluate student learning through assessment processes within their respective departments.

   b.   The UCC and the UAC periodically review course objectives and assessment processes at the institutional level.

   c.   The UAC peer reviews departmental student learning reports and provides recommendations for the assessment process.

## 4.   STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND SATISFACTION

4.1   Purpose

Understanding students' experiences and satisfaction is important to the University's efforts to enrich the student collegiate experience and to make RSU a more student-centered university. RSU undertakes student satisfaction surveys to elicit student opinion and viewpoints regarding university programs and services, to gauge student perspectives regarding the institution generally, to meet post-secondary educational mandates, and to

expand the institution's overall effort.  These instruments serve as diagnostic tools to help faculty and administrators pinpoint strengths and identify areas for improvement. Data gleaned from student satisfaction surveys are used to:

    a.  Improve university programs and services

    b.  Guide strategic action planning

    c.  Strengthen student retention initiatives

    d.  Meet accreditation requirements

    e.  Identify areas of strength for institutional marketing and promotion

4.2   <u>Assessment methodology</u>

Multiple measures with different student populations are performed to gauge satisfaction.

   a.  Student Satisfaction Survey

This is a locally-developed survey in which respondents are asked to rate the importance of and satisfaction with university operations and services using a 5-point Likert scale. It compares student importance and satisfaction with university and program instruction, support services, engagement, and general day-to-day educational experiences. All enrolled students are invited to participate, and results are disaggregated by course modality and relevant student demographics.

   b.  National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

The NSSE is a national survey instrument that measures the quality of students' educational experiences at RSU in four broad areas: academic challenge, learning with peers, experiences with faculty, and campus environment.  This standardized

norm-referenced instrument is used to compare RSU student responses to external benchmarks. The survey is published by Indiana University School of Education Center for Postsecondary Research. The NSSE is administered at RSU on a regular three-year cycle.  Cluster sampling is used to select a representative sample of RSU freshmen and seniors at each of the three RSU campuses.

   c.  Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey (SSI)

Beginning in spring 2022, the SOS is administered every third year, alternating with the NSSE and RSU Student Satisfaction Survey. It provides an alternative means of identifying quality of student life and learning. It measures student satisfaction and priorities, reporting how satisfied students are as well as what issues are important to them.

   d.  Student Evaluation of Instruction

Student evaluation of instruction is conducted each semester at RSU. The University uses Anthology software to implement this assessment to all students enrolled in each course offered at RSU despite modality. The survey was developed by RSU faculty and pilot tested with student focus groups and classes.  It measures student opinion on the quality of course instruction.  Quality of instruction is measured using three overall outcomes: a) student progress on relevant course objectives, b) the excellence of the teacher, and c) the excellence of the course. This evaluation of instruction results in individual class reports, department summary reports, and an institutional summary report. .

   e.  Graduating Senior Survey

The University uses a locally-developed survey in which graduating seniors are

asked to rate their satisfaction on 13 items relating to their RSU experiences and outcomes.  This instrument is designed to measure satisfaction with teaching and instruction, faculty, courses, advising, and student learning outcomes. It also measures how well students believe they have achieved each of RSU's five general education student learning outcomes. Additional items collect information regarding continuing educational objectives and employment status. This survey is emailed to all graduating students during their last semester prior to graduation. Participation is voluntary.

    f.   Alumni and Employer surveys

The OAA has developed an instrument, in conjunction with the Alumni Office, to measure perceptions of recent alumni on experiences at RSU and their progress in their general and degree program education. The instrument also measures how well students believe they have achieved each of RSU's five general education student learning outcomes, as well as key performance indicators related to their degrees and employment expectations.  Students are asked for consent to contact their employers for a follow-up survey regarding employer satisfaction with student academic preparation for employment.

4.3   Collecting and disseminating assessment findings

    a.   Student Satisfaction Survey

This survey is coordinated by the OAA.  An annual summary report of survey results is made available to faculty and departments.  Copies are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

    b.   National Survey of Student Engagement

This survey is coordinated by the OAA.  A summary report is made available to faculty and departments.  Copies are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

    c.   Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)

This survey is coordinated by the OAA.  A summary report is made available to faculty and departments.  Copies are archived in MyRSU for internal review.

    d.   Student Evaluation of Instruction

This survey is coordinated by the OAA.  Surveys for each course being evaluated are made available to students through MyRSU after the course is 75% complete, which allows students ample exposure to the course before evaluation. Individual faculty summary reports are shared with faculty, department heads, deans, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

    e.   Graduating Senior Survey

This survey is coordinated by the OAA.  An annual summary report of survey results is made available to faculty and departments.  Copies are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

    f.   Alumni and employer surveys

This survey is coordinated by the OAA.  An annual summary report of survey results is made available to faculty and departments.  Copies are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

Results from these indirect assessments are included in the Annual Student Assessment Report, which is shared with the University community and reported to Oklahoma State

Regents for Higher Education by the OAA.  Electronic copies of these reports are archived on the institutional website and are publicly accessible.

4.4   Modifying the assessment plan

The process for evaluating student satisfaction includes ongoing review of self-referenced (i.e., ipsative) and norm-referenced (i.e., normative) outcomes.  Results are analyzed for identification of strengths and areas for improvement.  They are shared with academic departments, student services, and staff for clarity and use in decision making processes.

## 5. CO-CURRICULAR ASSESSMENT

5.1   Purpose

It is widely acknowledged by numerous scholarly associations within higher education that student learning and development occurs both inside and outside of the classroom. This learning takes shape across several critical domains: knowledge acquisition,

construction, integration and application; cognitive complexity; intrapersonal development; interpersonal competence; humanitarianism and civic engagement; and practical competence. Furthermore, student learning and development can occur through both formal and informal activities during the collegiate experience. While it is not possible to capture and document every instance where students make progress across all of these domains, it is possible to ascertain instances of such growth in order to evaluate program effectiveness that can inform future enhancements. In addition to measuring student learning and development, co-curricular assessment also entails tracking student engagement to understand the ways in which, and extent to which, students take advantage of various resources offered on campus.

The Division of Student Affairs implements an annual assessment cycle to measure student engagement in co-curricular activities and certain campus resources, and to understand how students are learning and developing through their experiences. Students and organization leaders evaluate how well they have experienced specific co-curricular (COCU) activities in meeting COCU student learning outcomes, which are aligned with RSU's general education student learning outcomes. Data collected are used to:

   a.   Improve university programs and services

   b.   Guide future program development

   c.   Support student retention initiatives

   d.   Meet accreditation requirements

   e.   Identify areas of strength for institutional marketing and promotion

5.2   Assessment methodology

Each year student leaders in university clubs and organizations review their schedules of activities and determine/update which of the COCU student learning outcomes are embedded within each activity. Students who participate in these activities are invited to provide feedback via survey regarding how well they believe they achieved one or more of the COCU outcomes as a result of participating in the activity.  Additionally, the Honors Program and Athletics Programs collect narrative and student focus group feedback to inform their program planning.

5.3  <u>Collecting and disseminating assessment findings</u>

Student Affairs tracks and reports COCU student learning outcomes as they are embedded in activities implemented by student clubs and organizations. In collaboration with the OAA, Student Affairs and other areas offering COCU activities review student feedback regarding the efficacy of outcome achievement. The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs presents results to the Student Government Association (SGA) at the end of the spring semester to provide feedback and help organizations plan the coming year's activities.

5.4  <u>Modifying the assessment procedures</u>

The process for evaluating student engagement, learning, and development includes ongoing review and programmatic adjustments to continually enhance the student experience. By sharing feedback from the student experiences, student leaders and their faculty and staff sponsors can "close the loop" and improve or replace activities with modifications to enhance the co-curricular experience.

# APPENDIX: Common Assessment Terms[1]

**Course competency** – A course competency is a general statement that describes the desired knowledge, skills and/or behaviors required to satisfactorily achieve a specific outcome of a course. It is written to describe the learning gained by students in individual courses, and can be disaggregated into unit, module, or chapter sub-competencies.

**Course-embedded assessment** – Course-embedded measurements are those which are integrated into the teaching-learning process and are part of the course environment. Results can be used to assess individual student performance or they can be aggregated to provide information about the course or program. As such, they can be formative or summative, quantitative or qualitative.

*Example: as part of a Capstone course, a final project is evaluated for evidence of a specific student learning outcome, would be a course-embedded assessment.*

**Direct assessment of learning** – Direct assessment is based on student performance or demonstrates the learning itself. Performance on cognitive measures such as tests, term papers, or the execution of lab skills, would all be examples of direct assessment of learning. Direct assessment of learning can occur within a course (e.g., performance on a series of tests) as with a cross-sectional analysis, and it may occur longitudinally, such as comparing writing scores from sophomore to senior year.

**Formative assessment** – Formative assessment refers to the gathering of information or data about student learning during a course or degree program that is used to guide improvements in teaching and learning. Formative assessment activities are usually low-stakes or no-stakes; they do not contribute substantially to the final evaluation or grade of the student or may not even be assessed at the individual student level. They are formative because they provide for feedback to the instructor before the end of a course or degree program so that an instructor can modify delivery during the learning process.

*Example: posing a question in class and asking for a show of hands in support of different response options would be a formative assessment at the class level. Observing how many students responded incorrectly would be used to guide further teaching.*

**Indirect assessment of learning** – Indirect assessment uses perceptions, reflections or secondary evidence to make inferences about student learning.

*Example: student satisfaction surveys and student evaluations of instruction are indirect evidence of learning.*

**Individual assessment** – Individual assessment refers to the individual student, and his/her learning, as the level of analysis. Such evaluations can be quantitative or qualitative, formative or summative, standards-based or value added, and used for improvement. Most of the student assessment conducted in higher education is focused on the individual. Student test scores, improvement in writing during a course, or a student's improvement presentation skills over their

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[1] Adapted from *Assessment Glossary* compiled by American Public University System, 2005 www.apus.edu/Learning-Outcomes-Assessment/Resources/Glossary/Assessment-Glossary.htm

undergraduate career are all examples of individual assessment.

**Institutional assessment** – Institutional assessment is generally conducted through a college or university office and evaluates an institutions' overall effectiveness in achieving its mission, goals, and its compliance with accreditation standards. Institutional assessment can be quantitative or

qualitative, formative or summative, standards-based or value added, and used for improvement or for accountability. Ideally, institution-wide goals and objectives would serve as a basis for the assessment.

*Example: to measure the institutional goal of developing collaboration skills, an instructor and peer assessment tool could be used to measure how well seniors across the institution work in multi-cultural teams.*

**Local assessment** – Means and methods that are developed by an institution's faculty based on their teaching approaches, students, and learning goals are local assessments.

*Example: an English Department's construction and use of a writing rubric to assess incoming freshmen's writing samples, which might then be used assign students to appropriate writing courses, or might be compared to senior writing samples to get a measure of value-added.*

**Program assessment** – Program or Degree Program Assessment uses the department or program as the level of analysis. Course competencies aggregate into program outcomes, and program assessment is designed these student learning outcomes. A program assessment can be dual purpose; it can be used as evidence of achievement of a program-level student learning outcome *and* as evidence of course competency if the competency is a congruous with the program-level outcome. Program assessments can be quantitative or qualitative, formative or summative, standards-based or value added, and they can be used for improvement or for accountability. Ideally, program goals and objectives would serve as a basis for the assessment.

*Example: A capstone project may be selected for evidence of a program-level assessment (this would be summative rather than formative) by combining performance data from multiple senior level courses, collecting ratings from internship employers, etc. If a goal is to assess value added, some comparison of the performance to newly declared majors would be included.*

**Qualitative assessment** – Qualitative measures collect data that are descriptive and/or subjective rather than objective and empirical "hard" data. Qualitative assessment lends itself towards interpretive criteria but can be just as meaningful as quantitative data.

*Example: focus group feedback categorized into constructs is representative of qualitative data.*

**Quantitative assessment** – Quantitative measures collect data that are numerical and can be analyzed using objective, empirical methods. These data are less vulnerable to interpretation and conform to specific levels of measurement. Quantitative data can be collected for both direct and indirect assessment measures.

*Example: student ratings of a faculty member's quality of instruction over a semester (indirect assessment) collected using a Likert-type preference scale represent quantitative data.*

**Rubric** – A rubric is a scoring tool that explicitly represents the performance expectations for an assignment or piece of work. A rubric divides the assigned work into component parts and provides clear descriptions of the characteristics of the work associated with each component, at varying levels of mastery. Rubrics can be used for a wide array of assignments: papers, projects, oral presentations, artistic performances, group projects, etc. Rubrics can be used as scoring or grading guides, to provide formative feedback to support and guide ongoing learning efforts, or both.

**Standards** – Standards refer to an established level of accomplishment that all students are expected to meet or exceed. Standards do not imply standardization of a program or of testing. Performance or learning standards may be met through multiple pathways and demonstrated in various ways.

*Example: instruction designed to meet a standard for verbal foreign language competency may include classroom conversations, one-on-one interactions with a faculty member, or the use of computer software. Assessing competence may be done by carrying on a conversation about daily activities or a common scenario, such as eating in a restaurant, or using a standardized test, using a rubric or grading key to score correct grammar and comprehensible pronunciation.*

**Student learning outcome or student learning objective** – Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are statements that specify what students will know, be able to do or able to demonstrate when they have completed or participated in a program. Outcomes are usually expressed as knowledge, skills attitudes or values. Generally degree programs can be described by a set 4-12 SLOs.

**Summative assessment** – The gathering of information at the conclusion of a course, program, or undergraduate career to improve learning or to meet accountability demands. When used for improvement, summative results can impact the next cohort of students taking the course or program.

*Example: examining student final exams in a course to see if certain specific areas of the curriculum were understood less well than others.*

**Value added** – As the name implies, "value added" is the increase in learning that occurs during a course, program, or undergraduate education. It can either focus on the individual student (how much better a student can write, for example, at the end than at the beginning) or on a cohort of students (whether senior papers demonstrate more sophisticated writing skills-in the aggregate-than freshmen papers). To measure value-added, a baseline or benchmark measurement is needed for comparison. The baseline measure can be from the same sample of students (longitudinal design) or from a different sample (cross-sectional).