

Southwestern University

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS/PROGRAMS ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This handbook is inspired by, and draws heavily from, the document entitled Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment for Academic Majors and Programs at Roanoke College, (2000) by Gregory L. Weiss, Professor of Sociology and Director of Assessment at Roanoke College.

The structure and content of this handbook have also been influenced and strengthened by reference to the Handbook for Academic Assessment, Rhodes College, (1998) developed by the Office of Planning and Institutional Analysis. This was provided by William D. Berg who served as the external reviewer of the Institutional Research office at Southwestern University in August of 2002.

Finally, the content and structure of this handbook have been shaped by the Resource Manual on Institutional Effectiveness produced by the commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Examples have also been drawn from The Departmental Guide and Record Book for Student Outcomes Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness (2000) and General Education Assessment for Improvement of Student Academic Achievement Guidance for Academic Departments and Committees (2001) both by James O. Nichols and Karen W. Nichols.

A number of faculty at Southwestern University also helped provide information for the resources section at the end of the handbook. Their names are listed in that section. The handbook has gone through at least six revisions during the semester it was first created. Members of the faculty, staff, and administration have given helpful feedback. In particular, Julie Cowley, Jim Hunt, and Ron Swain have provided valuable suggestions on earlier drafts of the handbook.

This manual is considered a living document, that will be refined and improved over time as academic departments and programs use it in our continual process of planning, assessment and the evaluation of our effectiveness as an institution. This document should be considered an internal document to be used as a guide in developing and improving our process of assessment for institutional effectiveness. The structure and content are directly based upon the sources cited above. Direct quotes have been placed within quotations, and most of the remaining material is also based upon those sources. As a result, this document should not be released as a public document of Southwestern University.

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to help academic departments and programs as they work on the continuous process of planning and assessment, with the ultimate goal of continuing to improve our effectiveness as an institution. The manual is divided into five sections:

1. The first section briefly talks about institutional effectiveness, and the role of planning and assessment in the process of evaluating and improving institutional effectiveness. It provides some background concerning the growth of the academic assessment movement, and outlines the basic five-stage model of assessment that currently is used nationally.
2. The second section focuses upon writing an assessment plan for the academic program or major. It carefully examines the five aspects of preparing a program of annual assessment, and gives some suggestions that may help in the process.
3. The third section focuses upon how an assessment plan is implemented and walks through the process using one specific example.
4. The fourth section provides a timeline for the assessment process.
5. Finally, this manual provides a set of resources that may be helpful in the assessment process.

Using this manual. This manual can be used in several ways. As a whole, it gives both an overview of assessment and practical tips on how to develop and implement an assessment plan. **Practical tips are included in lists of numbered suggestions. These are found throughout the manual, beginning on page 8.**

Assessment is an integral part of the Academic Department and Program review process, which is outlined on pp. 102-105 of the Faculty Handbook, Southwestern University, 2001-2002. Focusing upon assessment enhances department and program reviews. Each academic department or program undergoes a “full review every ten years and an update review five years after every full review.” (Faculty Handbook, p. 102). Department and programs undergoing review should be certain that external reviewers comment upon their assessment plans and provide feedback and guidance that may be helpful in the planning and assessment process. A schedule of departmental and program reviews can be found in Appendix A.

As is noted later in this handbook, department annual reports include a section on assessment, and should address the improvements based upon the assessment process that will serve as the basis for budget planning for the upcoming year.

I. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, ASSESSMENT, AND PROGRAM REVIEW—AN OVERVIEW

Recent decades have seen the growth and institutionalization of the assessment movement in higher education in the United States. This change has taken place within the context of a paradigm shift. That shift has involved a movement from a focus upon teaching to a focus upon student learning. Up until twenty years ago, when an educational institution thought about assessing its quality, the focus upon teaching meant that the measures used consisted of things like class size, number of courses taught, number of students taught, and course/faculty evaluations. The shift to a focus upon student learning means that assessment now turns to an examination of specific student outcomes. While some of these changes are relatively recent, the regular review of academic programs has a long history. A brief review of this history can be found in an article by Sheila Bassoppo-Moyo (2001), which examines the relationship between department chairs and academic program review.

The Basic Model of Assessment

The Resource Manual on Institutional Effectiveness, from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), clearly outlines the four key components of any planning and evaluation process: 1) a statement of purpose, 2) the “formulation of goals or expected educational results” that are “consistent with the institution’s purpose”, 3) assessment of the extent to which these goals or expected educational results are met, and 4) use of the results of these evaluations to modify programs so that they are more effective. (Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association, 1996: 6).

This handbook is designed to help academic programs and majors in the development and implementation of effective assessment plans that can be used to continually improve our academic program at Southwestern University. The philosophy underlying this process is that systematic and comprehensive assessment leads to a stronger institution. SACS makes it clear that there is no single standard for assessment, suggesting rather that “it must be stressed that the substance, relevance, and use of evaluation procedures are much more important than the specific evaluation methods employed. The institution’s task is to identify the specific means of evaluating each of the significant goals which the components of the institution have set forth.” (1996: 9).

Given that this is the task, each academic program and major needs an assessment plan that is a living document—something that guides decisions within the program and major and helps to strengthen the major and the institution as a whole. At the level of the major, many possible student outcomes might be measured. Some examples given by SACS (p. 9) include:

- “student achievement in the major field
- student perceptions of their development toward educational objectives
- opinions of program quality given by student, alumni, employers, and drop-outs

- rates of placement and indicators of performance in graduate/professional education
- external recognition of achievements of students and graduates”

SACS goes on to suggest that planning and evaluation takes place in a series of five steps: “state purpose, define goals/results, describe means of evaluation, assign responsibility, and describe use of evaluation results.” (1996: 11)

This is the basic model described above, but adds the step of assigning responsibility.

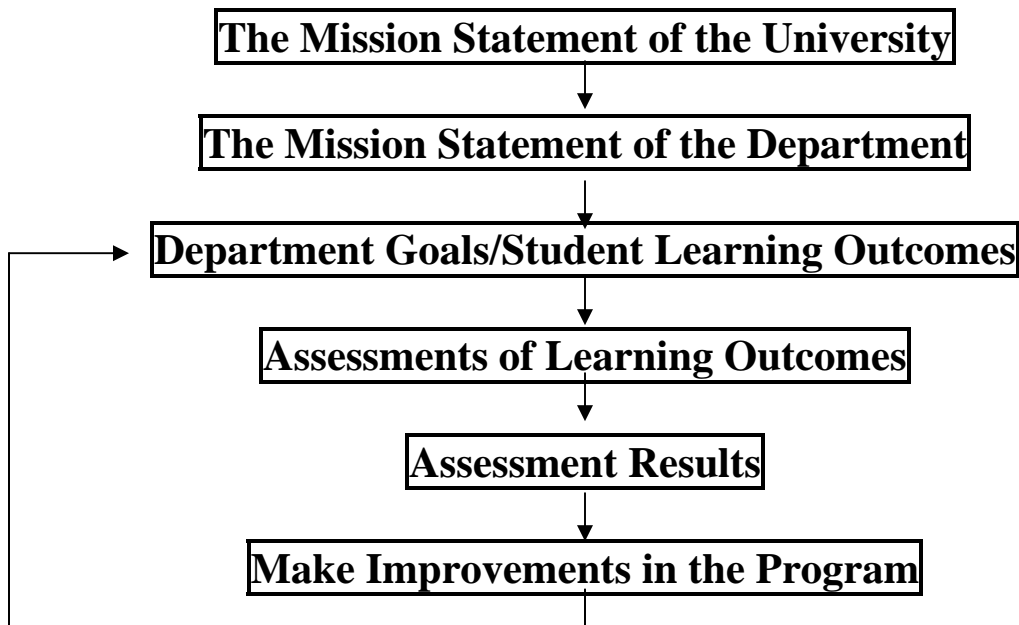
This handbook is designed to help departments and programs walk through the process of assessment in a step-by-step manner. Examples are drawn from the sources noted in the acknowledgements and in the reference list. This handbook is designed as a tool that is to be useful to departments. The philosophy here is parallel to that in the guide developed by Nichols and Nichols, in which they suggest that most users of their guide “do not have time to ‘reinvent the assessment wheel’ and hence, the ‘cookbook’ approach offered [there]. . . there is no implication that the methodology proposed herein is the only one through which successful implementation can be achieved. . . the value of [their publication]. . . is not in providing a fixed set of activities for departmental implementation, but in offering a ‘starting place’ which will raise many of the issues that must be resolved on each campus and in each department for implementation to successfully proceed.”

Scheduling

The process of developing and implementing an assessment plan can seem daunting. One thing to keep in mind, however, is that not all assessment activities are done every year. SACS indicates that “the most effective planning and evaluation systems are likely to be those characterized as systematic, continuous, and (ultimately) comprehensive. These desired characteristics do not imply, however, that all elements of the system should be undertaken simultaneously or even annually. On the contrary, the various activities encompassed within a planning and evaluation system should be scheduled at periodic intervals that make sense under given circumstances. . . for example, intensive reviews of academic programs might be scheduled on a five- or ten-year cycle [as in Southwestern’s cycle of departmental and program reviews]. . . and graduating student performance in the major area annually.” Thus, one part of developing an assessment plan will include creating a schedule for the various assessments that are to be done at the departmental level. (As noted earlier, a schedule of departmental and program reviews is included in Appendix A.)

II. SOME GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AN ASSESSMENT PLAN

Combining material from the various sources reviewed above, there is agreement that any assessment plan follows a general model that begins with the mission statement of the institution, and moves through a set of stages, ending with program improvements that are based upon the results of an assessment program. A flowchart illustrating this process includes the basic steps that have been outlined earlier:



(modified and adapted from Berg, 1998, p. 6)

This section of the handbook walks through the flowchart in a general way. Section III of the handbook walks through each step of this flowchart with one specific example, using a grid that has five columns. The first column corresponds with the mission statement of the department. This mission statement must be related to institutional goals, as indicated by the flowchart. The second column lists department goals stated in terms of student learning outcomes. The third column indicates specific ways that the learning outcomes will be assessed. The fourth column summarizes the results of those assessments. The fifth column indicates how the results of the assessment will be used to make improvements in the program.

As indicated the Faculty Handbook (addendum to p. 8), each departmental annual report is to include “a set of goals and measurements for the following year and an assessment of goals for the previous year.” The same page says “The Provost will meet with each department and program chair to discuss the chair’s annual report and to formulate an assessment of goals in a written action plan for the following year.” These two statements encompass the broader process that is outlined in the previous flowchart.

The foundation of this process is the development of careful assessment plans at the department/program level. This section now walks through each of the stages of the

flowchart with the goal of providing some guidance to departments as they move through the process.

The Mission Statement of the University:

As indicated in the flowchart, the institutional mission statement provides the framework for the department or program Assessment Plan. Because it provides the foundation for the mission statement of the department, it is a critical part of the process. Mission statements of the top liberal arts institutions in the country vary in their length and structure. Some are clearly labeled as mission statements. Others are presented as history and aims of the institution. In the case of Southwestern, this is found in the opening pages of the college catalog. In the Southwestern University 2003-2004 Catalog it is found in a section entitled “Southwestern University: A Statement of Who We Are”, pp. 5-7. A copy of this statement is included as Appendix B. The goals of the 2010 Strategic Plan are found in Appendix C.

The Mission Statement of the Department (column 1 in the grid found in Section III):

Each academic department/program at the university has developed a mission statement that is linked to the broader mission statement of Southwestern University. Because the assessment plan is viewed as a living document that changes over time, here are a few issues and guidelines to consider as you think about your department/program mission statement:

Berg (1998: 7) suggests that departments ask: “How does your department support the College’s Mission? How would you describe your department’s contribution to the College’s Mission? What are the strengths and weaknesses of your department? [and] What would be good indicators of quality for your department?”

Both Berg and Weiss suggest that the department/program mission statement should:

- 1) Be short. Berg suggests a maximum of three sentences. Weiss says one to three paragraphs.
- 2) Clearly indicate how the major/program contributes to the mission of the institution.
- 3) Be explicit about the contribution of the program to the institution (in Berg’s words: “answer why you do what you do, as well as state what you do.”)

An Example (Southern Association, 1996: 31)

Excerpt from a statement of purpose related to curriculum: “Prepare graduates for admission to programs in graduate and/or professional education.”

Department Goals/Student Learning Outcomes (column 2 in the grid found in Section III):

Returning to the flowchart, the next step in the process is developing a short set of department/program goals that flow directly from the mission statement of the department. Again, each department and program at Southwestern University has already developed this set of goals. (In some documents these are called program objectives. In this handbook these terms are used interchangeably. Whatever term is used, however, these need to be conceptualized in terms of student learning outcomes)

When formulating department/program goals, the basic question to be answered is “What are our central aims for the major/program?” Essentially, you are asking, “What do we want our students to have at the end of the program that they did not have at the beginning?” Again, it is important to remember that the focus is upon student learning outcomes.

Several things to keep in mind as you formulate and reformulate your department goals:

- 1) Focus upon thoughts, behaviors, or abilities of students. (Blake and Tamada, 2003)
- 2) These should be continuing goals for the program or major, and not just short-term goals or the aims of individual faculty members. (Weiss, 2000: 9)
- 3) They should be linked to the department/program mission statement, and consistent with the institutional mission statement. (Berg, 1998: 8)
- 4) Learning objectives are stronger if they “include an action verb and a statement of ability. Use meaningful verbs: better objectives use action verbs like ‘paraphrase,’ ‘compute,’ ‘describe,’ and ‘construct’; poorer objectives use verbs that are too general like ‘understand’ and ‘appreciate.’” (Weiss, p. 9)
- 5) Department goals need to strike a balance between being reasonably attainable and challenging. (Berg, p. 8)
- 6) The objectives need to clearly delineate outcomes that are specific enough that they can be measured. (Berg, p. 8, Weiss, p. 9)
- 7) One common mistake in developing objectives is to talk about the process (“what we will do”) as opposed to the outcome or result (“what will occur”). (Weiss, p. 10)
- 8) A second common error is to talk about how the goals will be measured. This is part of the next step, assessment of learning outcomes. (Berg, p. 8)

There are a number of ways that objectives can be presented. One useful conceptualization is that presented by Weiss (pp. 10 and 11). He suggests that programs and majors can either: 1) “articulate broad goals each of which is followed by two or more specific outcomes objectives” or 2) “articulate specific outcomes objectives that are consistent with the institutional and major/program goals but without a specific reference to them in the list of objectives.”

An Example

To take an example from our general education program here at Southwestern, the institutional mission statement (p. 9 of our catalog) includes a statement that our general requirements and the major are “designed to develop basic intellectual skills of analysis and communication. . .” From this, a department mission statement might include the development of basic communication skills, congruent with the broader institutional mission. Following the department mission statement (and using the first format suggested by Weiss), the objectives might be:

One goal of the (X) major is that students should develop their ability to communicate effectively within their disciplinary focus upon (X). Two specific outcomes objectives are related to this broader goal:

- *Students will develop an ability to give an effective oral presentation based upon research within the discipline.*
- *Students will be able to write a research paper following the conventions of the discipline, using proper grammar, organization, syntax, and punctuation.*

Assessments of Learning Outcomes (column 3 in the grid in Section III):

Once clear learning objectives have been delineated, the next step in the process is assessing the extent to which students in the major/program have achieved those objectives.

The basic purpose of assessment is to answer two questions: “Are we accomplishing what we want to accomplish?” and “How do we know that we are accomplishing our goals?”

Each department needs to identify a series of mechanisms by which learning objectives will be measured and assessed. These can typically be divided into four categories, based upon the source: current students, graduating seniors, alumni, and external reviewers and institutional data. Given this range of sources, some possible assessment tools include: student portfolios, performance in the senior capstone course, major papers/projects/performances, an in-house examination, surveys of students, focus groups, a standardized examination (such as the Major Field Achievement Tests produced by ETS), senior exit interviews, placement records of graduates, alumni surveys, etc.

In considering the range of options, several guidelines that can help shape your decisions are:

- 1) A mixture of qualitative and quantitative measurements is the ideal (Berg, p. 10; Weiss, p. 11)

- 2) Consider using measures that you already have in place (like materials from the capstone course, a required senior exam, or information from the external reviews done on a 10-year cycle) combined with new assessment tools. (Berg, p. 10; Weiss, p. 12)
- 3) Make certain that you are measuring things for a reason—don't choose an assessment tool simply because it is easy to use or looks at something that is easy to measure—rather, make certain that your goals (the previous step) are useful in improving the quality of the program/major, and that the assessment tool actually measures the goal. (Berg, p. 10; Weiss, pp. 11-12)
- 4) Assessment is strengthened when information is collected from multiple sources and constituencies. You can learn more about a department/major/program if you collect information from majors, non-majors (both in POK's and in upper-level electives), alumni, staff in Academic Services, faculty in other departments, etc. (Weiss, p. 12)

An Example

A department may decide to use a combination of assessment tools:

From Current Students: evaluation of students on specific examinations and exercises used in courses at different levels of the curriculum; course evaluation forms

From Graduating Seniors: a senior oral examination; a standardized test in the major produced by ETS

From Alumni: Alumni surveys

From External Reviewers and Institutional Data: information on placement of graduates from Career Services; information from the external reviewer(s) in the cycle of department/program reviews

As noted earlier in this handbook, each department/program also needs to develop a schedule by which each of the objectives will be assessed using these measures. Not all objectives need to be assessed every year. Indeed, some assessment tools will only be used on a periodic basis. It is necessary, however, to develop a schedule, and think about what time intervals are appropriate. The external reviewer, for example, typically comes to a department/program every ten years. There is an interim self-study every five years. In contrast, when using oral examinations or standardized tests with seniors, the decision may be to use these assessment tools every year.

Assessment Results (column 4 in the grid in Section III)

The next step in the assessment process involves collecting and reporting data using the specific measurement tools that have been identified in the previous step.

Using the Assessment Results to Make Improvements in the Program (column 5 in the grid in Section III):

Once the assessment plan is in place for a department or program, then implementation becomes a continuous process. As noted earlier, the Faculty Handbook indicates that in the departmental annual report, the program/department chair is to include “a set of goals and measurements for the following year and an assessment of goals for the previous year.” Further, “The Provost will meet with each department and program chair to discuss the chair’s annual report and to formulate an assessment of goals in a written action plan for the following year.” These two steps complete the series of five steps in the process outlined at the beginning of this handbook—using the assessment results to make improvements in the program. Further, the action plan would indicate ways in which needs of the department/program have budget implications. This would directly feed into the planning and budgeting process of the University.

A full assessment plan includes all goals for the program, a complete list of the measures used to assess those goals, and a timetable for when the goals will be assessed. The next section focuses upon how the plan can be implemented in any particular year.

III. IMPLEMENTING AN ASSESSMENT PLAN

To implement an assessment plan, each department/program must develop an annual model for assessment of the major. Southwestern University has adopted the five-column model developed by James Nichols at the University of Mississippi. **All Departments/Programs must complete the standard University form for this Assessment Process. The form is located on the following Web link: www.southwestern.edu/planning. The Assessment Plans MUST be submitted on this form using the same formatting as described in this handbook.** This follows the format reviewed thus far. (This is an approach adopted at many institutions, and this section is based upon the approach suggested in Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment for Academic Majors and Programs at Roanoke College.) Annually, each major/program completes a grid for their goals. This section walks through one example. Two more examples (taken from General Education, and a department of English) are included in Appendix D and E, respectively.

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
Goal 1				
Goal 2				
Goal 3, etc. . .				

Goals

Column 1 – In the first column, the department/program chooses an important goal that is linked either to the University’s mission statement, institutional goals, the general curriculum goals, or the mission statement of the department/program. As noted earlier, in anticipation of the next year, the first three columns would typically be completed for the department annual report in March of each year and revisited in the late summer and early fall as the department/program begins the new academic year. (A complete grid would be included for the assessment of the academic year covered in the annual report.) These first three columns would be revisited in the late summer-early fall of each year, as departments/programs think about the new year.

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
1. Students should be able to communicate effectively				

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

Column 2 – In the second column, a limited number of student learning outcomes/objectives (3 or 4) is selected from a longer list of learning outcomes/objectives found in the Assessment Plan. This indicates which specific learning outcomes will be the focus of assessment activity for that year. The outcomes that are chosen typically change from year to year (and a complete assessment plan would outline the tentative schedule for the alternation of outcomes that will be assessed over time). To continue this example with a single learning outcome:

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
1. Students should be able to communicate effectively	1. An ability to write effectively			

Assessment Mechanisms

Column 3 – In the third column, departments/programs need to identify what mechanisms will be used to assess the student-learning outcome. These can be chosen from the list of possibilities that are found in the previous section of this handbook. Weiss (p. 15) notes that “Each mechanism should contain a criterion or threshold of success; this is the level at which faculty would conclude that the objective has been reasonably met.” The whole purpose of examining institutional effectiveness is to honestly assess the success of attaining objectives (student learning outcomes) and then uses this information to improve the quality of our departments and programs. Thus, to continue the example:

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
1. Students should be able to communicate effectively	1. An ability to write effectively	1a. 90% of final papers in the required capstone will be rated by department faculty as ‘adequate’ or better. 1b. 60% of respondents on the HEDS (Higher Education Data Sharing) alumni survey will respond “greatly” to the item on whether or not their ability to “write effectively” was “enhanced by [their] undergraduate experience”		

Assessment Results

Column 4 – As noted several times, the first three columns of the assessment plan for a year are typically completed at the end of the previous academic year, and included in the annual report from the department/program. These are revisited in the late summer/early fall, as each department/program begins the new academic year. Column 4 will indicate the results of the assessments that are chosen. This will be completed at the time in the year when the data become available. For example, the HEDS alumni survey is distributed in the spring semester, and data are not analyzed until the summer. Departments using that assessment mechanism will complete Column 4 when these data become available from HEDS. To continue with our example:

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
1. Students should be able to communicate effectively	1. An ability to write effectively	<p>1a. 90% of final papers in the required capstone will be rated by department faculty as “adequate” or better.</p> <p>1b. 60% of respondents on the HEDS alumni survey will respond “greatly” to the item on whether or not their ability to “write effectively” was “enhanced by [their] undergraduate experience”</p>	<p>1a. 75% of the final papers in the capstone were rated by department faculty as “adequate” or better. The main cause of lower ratings was related to poor literature reviews.</p> <p>1b. 81% of respondents on the HEDS alumni survey responded “greatly” to the item.</p>	

Program/Department Improvement

Column 5 – This last column indicates any efforts necessary to improve ways in which the department/program works to achieve the particular students learning outcome/objective. The criterion in column 3 will be compared to the outcomes in column 4, and this will be used to develop a strategy in Column 5, indicating how the assessment results will be used to improve the program. If the threshold is met or achieved, this is simply reported. If not, the final column indicates program changes that will be explored to improve performance.

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
1. Students should be able to communicate effectively	1. An ability to write effectively	<p>1a. 90% of final papers in the required capstone will be rated by department faculty as “adequate” or better.</p> <p>1b. 60% of respondents on the HEDS alumni survey will respond “greatly” to the item on whether or not their ability to “write effectively” was “enhanced by [their] undergraduate experience”</p>	<p>1a. 75% of the final papers in the capstone were rated by department faculty as “adequate” or better. The main cause of lower ratings was related to poor literature reviews.</p> <p>1b. 81% of respondents on the HEDS alumni survey responded “greatly” to the item.</p>	<p>1a. Department faculty will meet to talk about places in the curriculum that specifically teach students to develop skills in writing literature reviews. This skill will be build directly into the syllabi and projects of courses required of all majors.</p> <p>1b. Alumni satisfaction exceeds our stated criterion for success.</p>

IV. TIMING OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

As noted earlier, for academic programs/departments, the cycle of assessment is a continuous process. At the end of each academic year, the annual report for a department/program will include a complete assessment of the goals for the year (including the grid with all five columns completed). When the department/program report is completed in March, it needs to include a complete section on assessment. Some measures, however, may not have been collected until the end of the academic year. It will also include a plan for assessment for the upcoming academic year, with the first three columns of the grid completed.

In the late summer/early fall, each department/program will review its plan for the upcoming year, and make any appropriate modifications. (This parallels the way in which departments/programs submit tentative course schedules in the spring, and then return to them in the fall to update and modify them.)

Throughout the year, appropriate assessment measurements will be collected. The scheduling of this will obviously vary depending upon the measures that are chosen. Thus, if a department/program uses a senior oral final examination to measure one or more of the student learning outcomes, those data will be collected at the time the senior oral examinations are administered. If a department/program uses something like juries (as in the music department), then these data will be collected at the end of each semester. Appendix F is a Checklist for Completing the Assessment Report for Academic Departments/Programs. A glossary of Planning and Assessment terms is also included in Appendix G.

Tentative Timeline

August September	Review plan and update it based upon Assessment Reports
October November December	Collect data using any of the appropriate measures—for example, in the Music department, the juries that are done each semester might provide data; in Sociology/Anthropology, any fall graduating seniors will take their Senior oral examination as well as the sociology subject area test from the ETS
January February	Work on finalizing the department/program annual report, including the section on assessment.
March	Department/program annual reports are due March 1, including a section on assessment
April May	Department/program chairs schedule meetings with the Provost to discuss the assessment plans and results from their annual reports

RESOURCES

A number of resources are available to help departments and programs think about assessment. As a start, here are a number of electronic discussion lists that focus upon assessment. This is taken directly from the newsletter of the Department Resources Group of the American Sociological Association:

“Assessment Electronic Discussion Lists

Electronic discussion lists are an excellent way to network with colleagues and quickly learn about the latest assessment practices. The following lists discuss issues relevant to higher education assessment practitioners and maybe of interest:

- * ASSESS discusses assessment in higher education. To subscribe, send a message to LISTSERV@LSV.UKY.EDU with the following command in the body of the message: SUBSCRIBE ASSESS.

- * FYA-LIST discusses first-year assessment issues. To learn about it and sign up, visit its Web site at <<<http://www.brevard.edu/fyc/ListservHome.htm>>>.

- * QUALRS-L discusses qualitative research issues. To subscribe, send a message to LISTSERV@LISTSERV.UGA.EDU with the following command in the body of the message: SUBSCRIBE QUALRS-L

- * AREA-D discusses issues in measurement and research methodology and is sponsored by Division D of the American Educational Research Association. To subscribe, send a message to LISTSERV@ASU.EDU with the following command in the body of the message: SUB AERA-D

- * AERA-J discusses issues in postsecondary education and is sponsored by Division J of the American Educational Research Association. To subscribe, send a message to LISTSERV@ASU.EDU with the following command in the body of the message: SUB AERA-J

- * EVALTALK discusses evaluation and associated issues; many of the threads are relevant to assessment practitioners. Although sponsored by the American Evaluation Association (AEA), the list is open for use by anyone. To subscribe to EVALTALK, send a message to LISTSERV@UAIVM.UA.EDU with the following command in the body of the message: SUBSCRIBE EVALTALKYOURFIRSTNAME YOURLAST NAME (replacing YOURFIRSTNAME and YOURLASTNAME with your first and last names).”

Disciplinary Websites

In addition, websites for disciplinary associations may provide useful information. The following sources were provided by Professors Bednar, Chamier, Dawson, Ferrari, Juhl, Kain, Lowe, Molitorisz, Muir-Broaddus, Rawji, Selbin, Sheller, Shelton, Varner, and Visser. The committee would like to thank them for their help in gathering this list.

www2.hawaii.edu/athe/ - Theatre in Higher Education
www.womenandtheatre.com

www.theaha.org - American Historical Association.
www.aaas.org - American Association for the Advancement of Science
www.nabt.org - National Association of Biology Teachers

www.apa.org/
www.psychologicalscience.org/

www.arts-accredit.org/nasm/nasm.htm - National Association of Schools of Music
www.menc.org - Music Educators National Conference

www.collegeart.org - College Art Association

www.asanet.org
The October, 2002 issue of the journal Teaching Sociology (Volume 30, Number 4) is entirely dedicated to the topic "Teaching sociology with a purpose: issues in curriculum design and assessment."

www.georgetown.edu/crossroads/asainfo.html - American Studies

www.aatsp.org - Am Assoc Teachers of Spanish
www.aatf.org - Am Assoc Teachers of French
www.aatg.org - Am Assoc Teachers of German
www.actfl.org - Am Council on Teaching Foreign Languages
www.mla.org - Modern Language Association
www.councilnet.org/pages/CNet_Members_CLTA.html - Chinese Language Teachers Association
deall.ohio-state.edu/clta/

TESOL: www.tesol.edu

ACTFL:

www.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/otherresources/actflproficiencyguidelines/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines.htm

AATG: www.aatg.org

ADFL: www.adfl.org

www.maa.org/saum/index.html - Supporting Assessment in Undergraduate Mathematics
www.acm.org/sigcse/cc2001/ - a work in progress on computer science curriculum

www.isanet.org/ - International Studies Association

www.chemistry.org/portal/Chemistry?PID=acsdplay.html&DOC=education\cpt\index.html - American Chemical Society Committee on Professional Training
www.cur.org - Council on Undergraduate Research

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APPENDICES

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM REVIEWS
Approved 4/20/99 by Academic Affairs Council

Department/Program	Last 10-year Review	Next 10-year Review Initiated (notification sent by Provost's Office)	Next 10-year Review to be Completed	Next 5-year review to be submitted to AAC
American Studies	1996	Spring 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2001
Animal Behavior	1991	Spring 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2007
Art	1991	Spring 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2007
Biology	1984	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2004
Chemistry	1988	Spring 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2005
Classics	1984/1991	Spring 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2007
Communication	1994	Spring 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 1999
Economics and Business	1997	Spring 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2002
Education	1998	Spring 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2003
English	1997	Spring 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2002
Environmental Studies	NA	Spring 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2010
History	1997	Spring 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2002
International Studies	1987	Spring 1999	Fall 2000	<i>Fall 2005</i>
Kinesiology	1989	Spring 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2004
Mathematics and Computer Science	1994	Spring 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 1999 ^^
Modern Languages and Literatures	1991	Spring 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2007
Music	1988	Spring 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2005
Philosophy	1996	Spring 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2001
<i>Physical Science</i> (reviewed with Physics)	NA	NA	NA	NA
Physics	1989	Spring 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2005
Political Science	1990	Spring 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2006
Psychology	1991	Spring 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2004
Religion	1992	Spring 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2008
Sociology and Anthropology	1992	Spring 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2008
Theatre	1996	Spring 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2001
Women's Studies	1992	Spring 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2008

^^ Moved back to Fall 2000

5/10/99;rev.9/00
g:fac:review timeline

SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY: A STATEMENT OF WHO WE ARE

(Excerpted from the Southwestern University Catalog)

Southwestern possesses a historic and continuing mission that has guided our development from frontier origins in the Republic of Texas to the complex international society we confront today. A defining heritage has emerged from our response to these challenges.

Southwestern originated in pioneering Texas and finds its identity in entering unfamiliar environments with confidence and vigor. We were not founded to defend an established order, but to generate creative responses to altered opportunities and resources. We have surmounted severe hardship, as in the adversities that led to our arrival in Georgetown, and subsequently in the Great Depression. Southwestern has also known times of abundance, and at the beginning of the 20th century it possessed financial strength and academic distinction. In the 21st century, we face an unprecedented opportunity, that of attaining national leadership as a liberal arts and sciences college.

Southwestern stands in a United Methodist tradition of higher education. Non-sectarian and diverse in its collective life, Southwestern's character is shaped by John Wesley's famous appeal: "Let learning and vital piety be joined." Dogmatic rigidity is alien to our institutional spirit; we hold that ethical commitments and spiritual identities must welcome and support the swift advance of knowledge. Believing that none has a permanent monopoly on truth, Southwestern is fundamentally committed to academic freedom, to the informed debate in which new knowledge, new ethical insights, and richer spiritualities are grounded. Southwestern also shares the traditional Methodist concern for social justice: we seek to promote a sense of social responsibility, and are committed to offering the benefits of higher education to those who confront adverse financial and social circumstances.

Southwestern is a human-scale community, at whose center are meaningful human relationships rather than bureaucratic routines. Students and faculty, administration and staff, as well as the board of trustees—all are answerable to face-to-face relationships that impose a level of responsibility unknown in very large institutions. Our small size and private character do not mean seclusion from the broader world of social and political conflict, but afford a distinctive and humane way of engaging that world.

Participants in this community are citizens; each has a stake in the destiny of the whole, and all play parts in the decisions that shape the common life. An emphasis on the fine arts, and the liberal arts and sciences has taken precedence at Southwestern during the last two decades, and the quest for national standing has moved toward a successful completion. Southwestern's tradition of communal responsibility has provided mutual support and encouragement amid the rigorous individual and collective striving to excel. The tradition of mutual cooperation and nurture sustains the environment of teaching and learning, supporting the ethical development and personal wholeness of students as their intellectual capacities are challenged.

Southwestern occupies a culturally diverse and vital setting. In coming to Williamson County, Southwestern entered a community of farmers and ranchers with distinct economies that faced each other across the Balcones Fault; here Tejanos, Swedes, Czechs, Germans, Anglos and African Americans retained their cultural identities. The cultural, intellectual and social life of

Austin—the state capital—enriches this diversity, and multiplies the resources for personal and collective development available to members of the Southwestern community.

Sunbelt prosperity has brought economic vitality and cultural leadership, placing Central Texas on a national stage. Austin has become an international center for the emerging information society, and is a focal point for developing relations between the United States and Latin America. Southwestern is now responding to the challenges of a global community, in the effort to move from national standing to national leadership as a liberal arts and sciences college.

AIMS, CORE PURPOSE, AND CORE VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY

Officially adopted by the faculty and Board of Trustees in 1972 and amended in 2001:

Southwestern University, under the auspices of the United Methodist Church, is committed to undergraduate liberal education involving both the study of and participation in significant aspects of our cultural heritage, expressed primarily through the arts, the sciences, the institutions, and the professions of society. As defined by the members of the Southwestern University community, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and trustees, the core purpose of Southwestern University is that of fostering a liberal arts community whose values and actions encourage contributions toward the well-being of humanity. To this end, the Southwestern University community has agreed upon a set of core values, that serve as the guiding principles for the institution:

Promoting lifelong learning and a passion for intellectual and personal growth.

Fostering diverse perspectives.

Being true to one's self and others.

Respecting the worth and dignity of persons.

Encouraging activism in the pursuit of justice and the common good.

As a teaching-learning community, Southwestern encourages rigorous inquiry and scholarship, creative teaching, and the expression of free human life. The University seeks to involve the student in finding a personal and social direction for life, developing more sensitive methods of communication, cultivating those qualities and skills which make for personal and professional effectiveness, and learning to think clearly and make relevant judgments and discriminations.

THE EDUCATIONAL VISION

A university is more than a collection of courses or programs. At its best a university provides a coherent and interrelated vision of learning. At Southwestern, we believe that individual programs should be seen against the background of this fundamental concept of a university. In a liberal arts university, the major is accomplished within the context of a student becoming a broadly educated person. In other words, at Southwestern University, there is one overarching educational goal that all students pursue: the goal of a liberal education.

A liberal arts education ranges across many disciplines. It exposes the student poet to physics and technology and the young accountant to the history of art. It takes advantage of each subject's potential for posing value questions and for displaying problems, facts,

ideas, events, and situations in their full contexts—cultural, scientific, aesthetic, political, historical, and technological. At its best, it produces generalists who can think critically and creatively, exercise judgment, sort through complexities, tolerate ambiguity, communicate effectively, and adapt to change.

At Southwestern, we believe a liberal education is the most important educational goal because it offers personal enrichment, broadening one's comprehension and deepening one's capacities for a fuller, more rewarding life. Concurrently, a liberal education is an excellent foundation for most careers. A liberal education teaches communication skills, sharpens decision-making capacities, and develops analytical abilities. Most importantly, a liberal education is based on a course of study that conveys the skills and habits for continued learning. It provides an understanding of global events and the context from which to speculate about tomorrow.

In addition to exploring new areas of inquiry through elective options, every student's academic program at Southwestern has two distinct elements—the General Education program and the major or area of concentration.

Southwestern's General Education Requirements offer students a common experience by bringing them face-to-face with the principles and methods of the chief branches of human thought and creativity. At Southwestern, all entering first-year students begin the General Education program with Foundation courses. These courses satisfy English composition and mathematics proficiency requirements, as well as provide a common intellectual experience for first-year students through the First-year Seminar.

These Foundation courses require students to develop competence in writing, critical analysis, and problem solving at the very beginning of their college career. In addition, all students must take courses to satisfy a requirement of computer literacy. Students must be able to demonstrate knowledge of the operation of computers and understand how they can be used in problem solving, particularly in relation to their chosen major field. Building upon these communication and quantitative skills, all students continue the General Education Requirements by choosing representative Perspectives on Knowledge courses from the humanities, social sciences, fine arts, and natural sciences. The Perspectives on Knowledge courses are so-named because through those requirements, students acquire a broad perspective, enabling them to graduate with considered values, perceptive awareness, and purpose, knowing and understanding more about the complexity and richness of the world around them.

The General Education program and the major or area of concentration program are complementary, with the General Education program serving as a foundation upon which students can build a successful academic program in a field of specialization.

Southwestern undergraduates can choose from approximately 35 majors, many of which offer a choice of several emphases or concentrations and include a variety of special, double, and interdisciplinary majors. Maintaining the balance between required general learning and the major is one of the hallmarks of the quality education available at Southwestern.

While the Perspectives on Knowledge requirements ensure a breadth of exposure to the liberal arts, the major allows for the deeper exploration of a specific discipline. As a part of the major, students are required to complete an integrative or “capstone” experience. The precise nature of this obligation depends on each student’s major as well as particular interests. Most fulfill the requirement with an extended research paper, a final project, or a special senior seminar. The purpose of this requirement is to allow students to demonstrate their overall grasp of their chosen major and show their ability to interrelate that knowledge.

This combination—general requirements and a major—taken within a personalized setting where close association with the faculty is the norm, is designed to develop basic intellectual skills of analysis and communication, to examine the moral and aesthetic dimensions of human culture, and to foster breadth and depth in theoretical knowledge. It is our belief that all of these build a foundation for success and fulfillment in personal, professional, and civic life after graduation.

POLICY STATEMENTS

Southwestern University is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all persons without regard to sex, race, color, religion, age, disability, national or ethnic origin, or any other impermissible factor. Southwestern University’s commitment to equal opportunity includes nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. It is also committed to taking affirmative steps to see that such opportunities are made available for personnel in employment, promotion, transfer, recruitment, rates of pay and other forms of compensation, and selection for training.

Southwestern University is also committed to equal opportunity for all persons to complete a Southwestern degree program. Therefore, no academically qualified applicant will be refused admission on the basis of factors listed above. Recruitment and the administration of student financial aid will be conducted on the same non-discriminatory basis.

Southwestern University, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, recognizes that qualified students who have made Southwestern University aware of diagnosed disabilities, including specific learning disabilities, are entitled to an equal opportunity to benefit from the educational program of the University and that reasonable academic accommodations may be necessary to provide that opportunity to students with disabilities.

General Education Assessment Plan

Mission Statement: To provide a liberal arts education focused on developing literate, informed persons whose values and actions encourage contributions to the well-being of humanity.

Individual Completing Form: Jim Hunt, Provost and Dean of the Faculty, in collaboration with Academic Affairs Council

School Year: 2002-2003

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
<p>Achieve the goal of fostering a liberal arts institution of the highest rank and quality.</p> <p>Develop a self-critical, tough-minded community of scholars that maintain rigorous academic standards.</p>	<p>1. Students demonstrate fluency in written and spoken English.</p>	<p>1a. 70% of respondents to the HEDS Alumni Survey will answer “greatly” to question under A1 regarding writing effectively and communicating orally.</p> <p>1b. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 1.</p> <p>1c. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 1.</p> <p>1d. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 1.</p> <p>1e. 70% of respondents to the NSSE will answer “Often/Quite a bit” or higher to questions 1b, 11c, and 11d.</p> <p>1f. Paideia Portfolio (under development).</p>	<p>1a. 1992 survey – 58.3% 1997 survey – 73.8%</p> <p>1b. Assessment goal met – 91%</p> <p>1c. Assessment goal met – 93%</p> <p>1d. Assessment goal met – 86%</p> <p>1e. Assessment goal met – 1b- 70%; 11c-87%; 11d- 78%</p>	<p>1a. Reconsider percentage threshold</p> <p>1b. On 03-04 surveys, separate written and spoken English into two questions</p> <p>1c/d/e. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p>
	<p>2. Students demonstrate competency in analytical and critical thinking.</p>	<p>2a. 70% of respondents to the HEDS Alumni Survey will answer “greatly” to question under A1 regarding critical thinking.</p>	<p>2a. 1992 survey – 62.5% 1997 survey – 82%</p>	<p>2a. Reconsider percentage threshold</p>

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
	<p>3. Students demonstrate ability to do mathematics and carry out quantitative analysis.</p>	<p>2b. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 2.</p> <p>2c. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 2.</p> <p>2d. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 2.</p> <p>2e. 70% of respondents to the NSSE will answer “Quite a bit” or higher to questions 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e and 11e.</p> <p>2f. Paideia Portfolio (under development).</p> <p>2g. 60% of respondents to the FYS Student Evaluation will answer “3” or lower to question 2d.</p> <p>2h. 60% of respondents to the FYS Faculty Evaluation will answer “3” or lower to question 2d.</p> <p>3a. 70% of respondents to the HEDS Alumni Survey will answer “greatly” to question under A1 regarding quantitative tools.</p> <p>3b. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 3.</p> <p>3c. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer</p>	<p>2b. Assessment goal met – 92%</p> <p>2c. Assessment goal met – 99%</p> <p>2d. Assessment goal met – 95%</p> <p>2e. Assessment Goal met – 2b-89%; 2c-88%; 2d-74%; 2e-84%; 11e-91%</p> <p>2f.</p> <p>2g. Assessment Goal met – 91%</p> <p>2h. Not enough respondents in fall 2002</p> <p>3a. 1992 survey – 30.6% 1997 survey – 20%</p> <p>3b. Assessment goal not met – 65%</p> <p>3c. Assessment</p>	<p>2b. No recommendations for improvement at this time</p> <p>2c/d/e/g. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p> <p>3a. Reconsider percentage threshold</p> <p>3b/c/d. The policy allowing for exemption from math requirement based on SAT scores has been eliminated – all students must take a math course or present AP credit</p>

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
	<p>4. Students demonstrate understanding of electronic computers, their operation, and their role in problem solving.</p> <p>5. Students demonstrate ability to use bibliographic data to seek out new information and assess its</p>	<p>“good” or higher to question 3.</p> <p>3d. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 3.</p> <p>3e. 70% of respondents to the NSSE will answer “Quite a bit” or higher to question 11f.</p> <p>4a. 70% of respondents to the HEDS Alumni Survey will answer “greatly” to question under A1 regarding technology.</p> <p>4b. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 4.</p> <p>4c. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 4.</p> <p>4d. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 4.</p> <p>4e. 70% of respondents to the NSSE will answer “Quite a bit” or higher to questions 11g.</p> <p>4f. Paideia Portfolio (under development).</p> <p>5a. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 5.</p>	<p>goal met – 72%</p> <p>3d. 42% of those who responded – 51% responded n/a</p> <p>3e. Assessment goal not met – 62%</p> <p>4a. 1992 survey – 16.4% 1997 survey – 19.7%</p> <p>4b. Assessment goal not met – 67%</p> <p>4c. Assessment goal met – 77%</p> <p>4d. 77% of those who responded – 21% responded n/a</p> <p>4e. Assessment goal not met – 69%</p> <p>5a. Assessment goal met – 92%</p>	<p>3e. Academic Affairs Council is slated to discuss program improvements during the 2003-04 academic year.</p> <p>4a. Reconsider percentage threshold</p> <p>4b/c/d. Reassess the validity of this objective – eliminate the word “electronic” – consider whether or not this can be addressed in the general education program</p> <p>4e. Academic Affairs Council is slated to discuss assessment results and the assessment process itself during the 2003-04 academic year.</p> <p>5a. No recommendations for improvement at this time</p>

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
	<p>relevance.</p> <p>6. Students demonstrate ability to relate diverse information and techniques from different subject areas in order to understand and assess problems.</p>	<p>5b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 5.</p> <p>5c. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 5.</p> <p>5d. 70% of respondents to the NSSE will answer “Often” or higher to questions 1d.</p> <p>5e. 60% of respondents to the FYS Student Evaluation will answer “3” or lower to question 2e.</p> <p>5f. 60% of respondents to the FYS Faculty Evaluation will answer “3” or lower to question 2e.</p> <p>6a. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 6.</p> <p>6b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 6.</p> <p>6c. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 6.</p> <p>6d. 70% of respondents to the NSSE will answer “Quite a bit” or higher to questions 1i.</p> <p>6e. Paideia Portfolio (under development).</p>	<p>5b. Assessment goal met – 87%</p> <p>5c. 81% of those who responded – 12% responded n/a</p> <p>5d. Assessment goal met – 90%</p> <p>5e. Assessment goal met – 88%</p> <p>5f. Not enough respondents in fall 2002</p> <p>6a. Assessment goal met – 94%</p> <p>6b. Assessment goal met – 95%</p> <p>6c. 86% of those who responded – 5% responded n/a</p> <p>6d. Assessment goal met – 80%</p>	<p>5b/c/d/e. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p> <p>6a. No recommendations for improvement at this time</p> <p>6b/c/d. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p>

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
	<p>7. Students demonstrate proficiency in a classical or modern language other than English at the fourth-semester level.</p> <p>8. Students demonstrate an understanding of our cultural past and an appreciation of its impact on the present.</p> <p>9. Students demonstrate an understanding of other cultural traditions in order to expand students' cultural experience and to provide fresh perspectives on their own cultural assumptions and traditions.</p>	<p>7a. 70% of respondents to the HEDS Alumni Survey will answer "greatly" to question under A1 regarding speaking/reading a foreign language.</p> <p>7b. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 7.</p> <p>7c. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 7.</p> <p>8a. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 8.</p> <p>8b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 8.</p> <p>8c. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 8.</p> <p>8d. Paideia Portfolio (under development).</p> <p>9a. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 9.</p> <p>9b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 9.</p> <p>9c. 70% of respondents to the</p>	<p>7a. 1992 survey- 23.3% 1997 survey- 21.3%</p> <p>7b. Assessment goal not met – 62%</p> <p>7c. 33% of those who responded – 48% responded n/a</p> <p>8a. Assessment goal met – 81%</p> <p>8b. 68% of those who responded – 26% responded n/a</p> <p>8c. 72% of those who responded – 21% responded n/a</p> <p>9a. Assessment goal met – 88%</p> <p>9b. 60% of those who responded – 37% responded n/a</p> <p>9c. 64% of those</p>	<p>7a. Reconsider percentage threshold</p> <p>7b/c. Ask Language Department to explain how they define and measure 4th semester proficiency</p> <p>8a. No recommendations for improvement at this time</p> <p>8b/c. Consider moving percentage thresholds on sophomore and faculty</p> <p>9a. No recommendations for improvement at this time</p> <p>9b/c. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p>

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
	<p>10. Students demonstrate an appreciation of the impact of religious ideas and traditions on the development of human consciousness.</p> <p>11. Students demonstrate an understanding of the place of value questions in human knowledge and the development of skills to assess value considerations within one's own life.</p> <p>12. Students demonstrate an understanding of how</p>	<p>Faculty Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 9.</p> <p>9d. POK Committee Assessment--TBA.</p> <p>10a. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 10.</p> <p>10b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 10.</p> <p>10c. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 10.</p> <p>10d. POK Committee Assessment--TBA.</p> <p>11a. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 11.</p> <p>11b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 11.</p> <p>11c. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer "good" or higher to question 11.</p> <p>11d. POK Committee Assessment--TBA.</p> <p>12a. 80% of respondents to the Senior</p>	<p>who responded – 21% responded n/a</p> <p>10a. Assessment goal met – 86%</p> <p>10b. 32% of those who responded - 64% responded n/a</p> <p>10c. 59% of those who responded – 33% responded n/a</p> <p>11a. Assessment goal met – 87%</p> <p>11b. 68% of those who responded – 30% responded n/a</p> <p>11c. 71% of those who responded – 21% responded n/a</p> <p>12a. Assessment</p>	<p>10. The comment section related to this question revealed a great deal of dissatisfaction with the availability of religion courses – The elimination of the "upper level" religion requirement beginning in the 03-04 academic years should reduce these concerns.</p> <p>11a. No recommendations for improvement at this time</p> <p>11b/c. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p> <p>12a. No recommendations</p>

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
	<p>knowledge of the natural world is acquired by the use of scientific methods of inquiry and application of experimental techniques.</p> <p>13. Students demonstrate an appreciation of the creative dimension of human existence and of aesthetic experience as a distinctive mode of understanding.</p> <p>14. Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the individual and the social environment and of the ways in which that relationship can be understood.</p>	<p>Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 12.</p> <p>12b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 12.</p> <p>12c. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 12.</p> <p>12d. POK Committee Assessment-TBA.</p> <p>13a. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 13.</p> <p>13b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 13.</p> <p>13c. 70% of respondents to the Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 13.</p> <p>13d. POK Committee Assessment-TBA.</p> <p>14a. 80% of respondents to the Senior Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 14.</p> <p>14b. 70% of respondents to the Sophomore Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 14.</p> <p>14c. 70% of respondents to the</p>	<p>goal met – 80%</p> <p>12b. 60% of those who responded – 35% responded n/a</p> <p>12c. 57% of those who responded – 33% responded n/a</p> <p>13a. Assessment goal met – 95%</p> <p>13b. 76% of those who responded – 14% responded n/a</p> <p>13c. 69% of those who responded – 24% responded n/a</p> <p>14a. Assessment goal met – 96%</p> <p>14b. 88% of those who responded – 9% responded n/a</p> <p>14c. 78% of those who responded –</p>	<p>for improvement at this time</p> <p>12b/c. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p> <p>13a. No recommendations for improvement at this time</p> <p>13b/c. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p> <p>14a. No recommendations for improvement at this time</p> <p>14b/c. Consider moving percentage thresholds</p>

Goals	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanisms	Assessment Results	Improvements
		Faculty Survey will answer “good” or higher to question 14. 14d. POK Committee Assessment- -TBA.	17% responded n/a	

Administrative/Educational Support Unit Annual Assessment

Administrative/Educational Support Unit Name: Department of English

Individual Completing Form: Jim Kilfoyle, Interim Chair, English

School Year: 2002-03

Program Mission: To provide a grounding in English and American literature strong enough to support a life of continued reading and reflection, with the deepened understanding of human experience that this makes possible, and to impart skills of writing, research, analysis and interpretation. Also to become skilled at reading literature and at reading and writing about literature, to understand the relations among literature, culture, and history, and to be familiar with some of the basic questions of literary and cultural theory.

Goal	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanism	Assessment Results	Improvements
1. To develop English majors' skills in reading literature.	1. Students will demonstrate a strong knowledge of English and American literature.	1a. All majors will score at the 70 th percentile or above on the Major Field Test administered by ETS (annually, beginning in 2003-04—evaluate every three years) 1b. Our strongest majors will score at the 95 th percentile and above on the Major Field Test (annually, beginning in 2003-04—review every three years) 1c. In all relevant courses, in papers and exams, students will earn a cumulative score of C or better in the “Knowledge” category of the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)	1d. 100% of graduating seniors responding (37% of the group)	1d. No programmatic change necessary at this time regarding instruction in

Goal	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanism	Assessment Results	Improvements
	<p>2. Students will demonstrate a strong knowledge of emerging literatures.</p>	<p>will “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement: “I feel I have received a strong grounding in English and American literature.” (annually—evaluate every three years)</p> <p>2a. All majors will score at the 70th percentile or above on the Major Field Test administered by ETS (annually, beginning in 2003-04—evaluate every three years)</p> <p>2b. Our strongest majors will score at the 95th percentile and above on the Major Field Test (annually, beginning in 2003-04—review every three years)</p> <p>2c. In all relevant courses, in papers and exams, students will earn a cumulative score of C or better in the “Knowledge” category of the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)</p> <p>2d. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 80% of majors will “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement: “I feel I have received a strong grounding in emerging literatures.” (annually—evaluate every three years)</p>	<p>either agreed or strongly agreed that they had received a strong grounding in English and American literature.</p> <p>2d. Only 40% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they had received a strong grounding in emerging literatures.</p>	<p>national literatures. Graduating senior self-assessment will be yoked with departmental review of student writing beginning next year to corroborate or challenge these positive results.</p> <p>2d. Department will review course offerings to determine where greater emphasis might be placed on emerging literatures. Begin to explore possibility of creating a position whose primary focus is in emerging literature.</p>

Goal	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanism	Assessment Results	Improvements
	<p>3. Students will demonstrate that they are familiar with some of the basic questions of literary and cultural theory.</p> <p>4. Students will demonstrate competency in analyzing and interpreting texts.</p>	<p>3a. In all relevant courses, in papers and exams, students will earn a cumulative score of C or better in the “Theory” category of the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)</p> <p>3b. In reviewing final papers written for the Capstone seminar, department faculty will determine that all papers reach or exceed the level of “Acceptable” regarding use of theory (each semester—review every three years).</p> <p>3c. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 80% of majors will “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement: “I feel I have received a strong grounding in some of the basic questions of literary and cultural theory.” (annually—evaluate every three years)</p> <p>4a. In all relevant courses, in papers and exams, students will earn a cumulative score of C or better in the “Analysis” category of the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)</p> <p>4b. In reviewing final papers written for the Capstone seminar, department faculty</p>	<p>3b. Department faculty agreed that 86% of spring semester’s capstone papers demonstrated a familiarity with some of the basic questions of literary and cultural theory.</p> <p>3c. 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they had received a strong grounding in some of the basic questions of literary and cultural theory.</p> <p>4b. In reviewing spring capstone papers, department faculty determined that 71% of</p>	<p>3b. Department will review the charge given to students enrolled in capstone for their seminar paper to determine whether a greater emphasis should be placed on integrating theory into the final papers. The department will consider making 10-503, Literary Criticism/Literary Theory, a required course for majors.</p> <p>3c. No change needed at this time. Continue to promote exposure to some of the basic questions of literary and cultural theory across a broad range of courses.</p> <p>4b. The department will develop a set of guidelines for what constitute acceptable forms of analysis and interpretation to be</p>

Goal	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanism	Assessment Results	Improvements
		<p>will determine that all papers reach or exceed the level of “Acceptable” as set forth in the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)</p> <p>4c. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 80% of majors will “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement: “I feel I have received a strong grounding in analyzing and interpreting texts.” (annually—evaluate every three years)</p>	<p>them demonstrated competency in analyzing and interpreting texts.</p> <p>4c. 90% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they had received a strong grounding in analyzing and interpreting texts.</p>	<p>distributed and discussed in introductory courses, especially introduction to literary studies, and in capstone.</p> <p>4c. Continue to provide opportunities for 4students to enhance their reading and interpretive skills.</p>
<p>2. To develop English majors’ skills at literary research.</p>	<p>1. Students will demonstrate an ability to access scholarly resources and conduct literary research.</p>	<p>1a. In all relevant courses, in papers, students will earn a cumulative score of C or better in the “Research” category of the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)</p> <p>1b. In reviewing final papers written for the Capstone seminar, department faculty will determine that all papers reach or exceed the level of “Acceptable” as set forth in the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)</p> <p>1c. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 80% of majors will “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement: “I feel I have received a solid</p>	<p>1b. In reviewing spring capstone papers, department faculty found that 71% adequately deployed scholarly resources or were adequately grounded in literary research.</p> <p>1c. 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they had received a strong grounding in conducting literary research.</p>	<p>1b. The department will develop a set of guidelines for what constitute acceptable uses of scholarly resources and for conducting literary research to be distributed and discussed in introductory courses, especially introduction to literary studies, and in capstone.</p> <p>1c. Continue to create opportunities for research and writing from research in upper-level courses.</p>

Goal	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanism	Assessment Results	Improvements
		grounding in conducting literary research.” (annually—evaluate every three years)		
3. To develop English majors’ writing skills.	<p>1. Students will demonstrate an ability to write effectively about literature.</p> <p>2. Graduates will be able to critique a brief draft essay on the basis of its rhetorical efficacy as well for sentence-level errors.</p>	<p>1a In all relevant courses, in papers, students will earn a cumulative score of C or better in the “Effective Writing” category of the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)</p> <p>1b. In reviewing final papers written for the Capstone seminar, department faculty will determine that all papers reach or exceed the level of “Acceptable” for writing as set forth in the department evaluation rubric (each semester—review every three years)</p> <p>1c. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 80% of majors will “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement: “I feel my writing skills have been enhanced through my work as an English major.” (annually—evaluate every three years)</p> <p>2a. As part of the Capstone seminar, students will be asked to critique a short essay, focusing on its argument, use of evidence, and persuasive force in addition to looking at errors in grammar, etc. All</p>	<p>1b. In reviewing spring Capstone papers, department faculty found that 62% of the papers demonstrated that their authors possessed the ability to write adequately about literature.</p> <p>1c. 80% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their writing skills had been enhanced by their work as English majors.</p>	<p>1b. The department will develop a set of guidelines for what constitute acceptable ways of writing about literature to be distributed and discussed in introductory courses, especially introduction to literary studies, and in capstone.</p> <p>1c. Review and enhance writing instruction in literature courses to build on existing strengths. Explore possibility of a regular visiting appointment in creative writing, an absence a number of students noted in their responses to this question.</p>

Goal	Learning Outcomes	Assessment Mechanism	Assessment Results	Improvements
		critiques will be judged “Acceptable” or better by department faculty (each semester—reviewed every three years)		
4. To promote life-long learning through continued reading and reflection.	1. Students will evince a marked commitment to life-long learning	<p>1a. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire, 80% of students will “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement: “I feel my work in the English major has enhanced my interest in reading and reflection.” (annually—evaluate every three years)</p> <p>1b. On an Alumni Survey, 80% of alumni will “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statement: “My time at Southwestern continues to inform my reading and thinking.” (Every five years)</p>	1a. 100% of respondents agreed that their work as English majors had enhanced their interest in reading and reflection.	1a. Continue to cultivate thoughtful enthusiasm for reading and critical thinking among majors.

SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
Checklist for Completing Assessment Report
For Academic Departments/Programs

Relationship to Institutional Level

_____ Linkage of the instructional program to the University has been made through its *Core Purpose* and *The Strategic Plan for 2010* for Southwestern University (direct quote is needed).

Intended Educational (Student) Outcomes

_____ The statements of educational outcomes have been limited in number to three to five.

_____ The statements were all formulated in terms of what the graduates or program completers as a group would be able to think, know, or do as a result of completing the program.

Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success

_____ The selected Means of Assessment measured the accomplishment of the intended outcomes described.

_____ The Means of Assessment were feasible and appropriate given the time and resources available.

_____ Multiple Means of Assessment have been utilized for most intended outcomes.

_____ A "Criteria for Program Success" has been established for each Means of Assessment.

Assessment Results

_____ Sufficient data have been provided in the summary of assessment results to convince the reader that the assessment described actually took place?

_____ Assessment results have been analyzed in such a way as to focus on the accomplishment of the intended outcomes cited?

Use of Results

_____ There is evidence of faculty involvement in deciding which outcomes are assessed and how assessment results are being used to improve the educational program.

_____ The described use of assessment results relates to the intended outcome, is substantial, and the uses described seem reasonable.

Southwestern University
Planning and Assessment Glossary
(Abbreviated)

Academic Focus - a section of the University's planning document, which discusses the University's academic mission and purpose

Accreditation - the designation that an institution functions appropriately in higher education with respect to its purpose and resources (Regional accrediting agencies accredit an entire institution; Southwestern University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Professional accrediting agencies accredit professional programs. For example, the department of Chemistry is accredited by the American Chemical Society)

Administrative or Educational Support Unit Mission Statement - the part of the administrative department's unit mission statement that best (1) fits the linkage to the University's mission and purpose and (2) fits with the *Intended Administrative Objectives* being assessed

Assessment - the process of determining whether an *Intended Educational (Student) Outcome or Intended Educational Support or Administrative Objective* has been achieved and to what degree

Assessment Committee - the group of faculty and staff selected each fall to review and evaluate the *Assessment Records* for the departments and programs in that Cycle

Assessment Plan - the initial assessment document that describes the assessment strategy for a department or unit of the University

Assessment Record - the collection of *Assessment Reports* submitted annually by each department and unit to the University's *Assessment Committee* documenting assessment activities

College/University Goal(s) Supported - the goal(s) for the University planning document that best fit(s) the instructional department's function or the administrative/educational support unit's function at Southwestern University

Column and Row Model - an evaluation format to be used by *Instructional Departments* to assess student demonstration of knowledge, skills, and abilities

Criteria for Accreditation - the *SACS* publication that describes the minimum standards of quality expected from higher education institutions

Criteria for Success - the numeric level (e.g., 80%)-the benchmark-in the department's assessment of an *Intended Outcome or Objective* used with *Means of Assessment* and necessary to assess the degree to which the outcome or objective was achieved

Cycle A - the group of *educational support/administrative departments/units* and instructional programs assessed in the academic period September through August of even-numbered years (e.g., 1998-2000)

Cycle B - the group of *educational support/administrative departments/units* and instructional programs assessed in the academic period September through August of odd-numbered years (e.g., 1999-2001)

Departmental Guide - a publication by Dr. James O. Nichols used as a reference for the Institutional Effectiveness program

Description of Data Collection - a description of the source of data and the discussion of the results of assessment (data analysis) in an *Assessment Record*

Dozen Questions - a checklist to determine if an *Assessment Record* contains the appropriate information

Educational Support/Administrative Department/Unit - any department of Southwestern University that is not instructional but supports the educational and operational functions of the University

Evaluation - to determine the value of an instructional program, educational support service, or student outcome; interchangeable with Assessment

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose Linkage - the part of an *Assessment Record* that is necessary to establish the department's, unit's, or program's link to the University's purpose

Goals for the University - a part of the University's planning document that gives the goals of the University

Institutional Effectiveness - the process of improving quality by assessing achievement goals and adjusting services to achieve future goals

Institutional Mission Reference - the focus area from University's planning document that best fits the *instructional department's* function as a member of Southwestern

Institutional Mission/Goals(s) Reference - the goal(s) from the University planning document that best fit(s) the *instructional departments* or *administrative or educational support department's* function as a member of Southwestern University

Instructional or Academic Department - any department of Southwestern that is responsible for the educational functions of the institution

Intended Administrative Objective - the three to five goals the educational support or administrative unit intends to assess during an *Assessment Period*

Intended Educational (Student) Outcome - the three to five goals (what students will be able to think, know, or do because of their Southwestern educational experiences) the *instructional department* intends to assess during an *Assessment Period*

Means of Program Assessment - the tool used to assess the intended outcome or objective

SACS - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; the accrediting agency of higher education institutions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia

SPA - Strategic Planning and Assessment; responsible for coordinating the *institutional effectiveness* program

Student Outcomes - the results (i.e., knowledge, skills, abilities) of education

Use of Results to Improve Instructional Program - how the Assessment Results will be used by the *instructional department* to improve its student outcomes

Use of Results to Improve Unit Services - how the *Assessment Results* will be used by the *educational support* or *administrative unit* to improve the services it provides to its customers

References:

by James O. Nichols, Director Emeritus, University Planning and Institutional Research,
University of Mississippi

and

Karen W. Nichols, Executive Director, Institutional Effectiveness Associates

*A Practitioner's Handbook for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Outcomes Assessment
Implementation*

*Assessment Case Studies: Common Issues in Implementation with Various Approaches to
Resolution*

*The Departmental Guide and Record Book for Student Outcomes Assessment and
Institutional Effectiveness*

*The Department Head's Guide to Assessment Implementation in Administrative and
Educational Support Units*

*General Education Assessment for Improvement of Student Academic Achievement:
Guidance for Academic Departments and Committees*