Planning and Assessment Guidelines & Practices for Academic, Student Support, and Administrative Divisions

State University of New York at New Paltz

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I. Introduction

SUNY New Paltz (New Paltz), like its higher education peers, exists in an era of external pressures and increasing public attention and regulatory scrutiny on the cost of attendance, student outcomes, and student learning. Colleges and universities, even the most successful ones, are expected to measure the degree to which they are achieving their mission and goals. Quality assurance entities, such the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), our accreditors, face increasing scrutiny about their effectiveness in assuring higher education quality. In response to this appraisal, MSCHE reprised its accreditation standards and criteria in 2014 and amplified its expectations for systematic institutional effectiveness systems and explicit evidence of the implementation, use, and assessment of such systems and processes. Systems and processes that are mission-centric; ethical; attentive to the rigor and coherence of students' learning and their in-class and out-of-class experiences; assess students' learning and achievement; and that inform resource allocation, financial, and future planning decisions enable SUNY New Paltz to document and demonstrate to stakeholders how well it serves its students.

Consistent with our commitment to continuous improvement, we have documented our institutional effectiveness systems and processes. The information in this guide is intended to inform planning and assessment activities and to generate data that are useful and actionable. Because a variety of readers may choose to read only specific sections of this guide, information is repeated throughout for clarity. The guide's content illustrates that all divisions and levels of the College (e.g., institutional, program, and service-area) provide data that is vital to effective decision-making. Fundamental to this decision-making process is our collective commitment to achieving the College's mission and Strategic Plan.

II. Institutional Planning at New Paltz

Maintaining our well-earned reputation as an excellent institution requires ongoing planning that connects institutional mission, priorities, faculty, staff, and facilities in a flexible system of evaluation, decision-making, and action. In other words, planning makes more manageable and meaningful assessment of overall institutional effectiveness goals and objectives, which, in turn, informs decision-making and resource allocation, and measurement of the College's health. Planning also enables the College to maintain a proactive stance toward fulfilling its promises and commitments in the face of changing demands and declining state support.

Elements of institutional planning at New Paltz include strategic and integrative planning. Strategic planning involves making decisions about such matters as our mission and goals, the College, and institutional strengths and opportunities. Planning guides institutional decision-making regarding "what an institution is, what it does, and why it does it" (Society for College and University Planning, 2016, p. 54). Strategic planning examines response to such broad questions as:

1. Are we achieving our stated mission and goals?
2. Are students meeting institutional and programmatic learning outcomes?
3. Are we ensuring efficient and effective use of resources (i.e., fiscal, physical, human, and technological)?

Conversely, integrative planning is "a sustainable approach to planning that builds relationships, aligns the organization, and emphasizes preparedness for change" (Society for College and University Planning, 2016, p. 53). Integrative planning connects different institutional planning efforts and is a process of planning within each of the institution's planning efforts (Society for College and University Planning, 2016).

The College's Strategic Plan was developed through an inclusive process, involving broad input from faculty, staff, administrators, students, and others. The President, who led the development of the Strategic Plan, retained a strategic planning consultant. The consultant, following recommendations from the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, conducted confidential interviews with a range of campus constituents (e.g., students, faculty, staff, administrators, Foundation Board, and College Council members) and external stakeholders (e.g., alumni, SUNY System leaders, and community members). The consultant facilitated a daylong retreat with 75 campus leaders regarding their sense of direction for the College. During the spring 2013 semester, the Steering Committee developed a first draft of the Strategic Plan that the College's senior leadership reviewed and edited. The Committee presented the revised plan (via open forums, meetings, and online with an email address for comments and feedback) to the college community for input. A final draft was submitted to the President, who accepted it in June 2013.

Our Strategic Plan focuses on Seven Essential (Strategic) Initiatives, based on the themes that emerged from our campus-wide engagement, as areas on which we need to focus to position ourselves for continued success in meeting our mission and objectives. These themes are: creativity in learning (including online); creating and sustaining a vibrant, diverse and inclusive living/learning community; strengthening philanthropic relationships; engaging alumni; telling the New Paltz story; improving institutional processes and capacity; and engaging the community and region.

The process of strategic planning gave us a structure through which we could move into a more integrated planning process across campus, focused on the essential initiatives. These initiatives have been communicated across campus, verbally, electronically, and visually to let every campus community member know of their existence.

Who drives planning at New Paltz?

The President's Cabinet drives planning. Made up of vice presidents who head the six divisions of the institution, Cabinet meets weekly. The President sets the theme for the year through his State of the College address to the campus at the start of classes in the fall semester. Prior to that, during the summer, Cabinet meets in a two-day retreat where it sets divisional goals for the year based on strategic and operational needs. Each vice president submits and discusses these goals with the President and uses them to set the annual divisional plan. Vice presidents meet with their unit heads/directors and use the goals established in Cabinet to develop Unit goals for the year.

The President and Cabinet measure the College's well-being each year, in conjunction with the Strategic Planning & Assessment Council and the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment. The annual Strategic Plan goals are evaluated using data from a variety of sources (e.g., academic and administrative departments, annual assessment reports, financial reports, Integrated Postsecondary

Data System, National Survey of Student Engagement, Graduating Senior Survey, and Alumni Survey). See Appendix A for examples of reports and data that are available from Institutional Research for use in planning and assessment. Other planning documents such as the Academic Plan, Facilities and Master Plan, Instructional Technology Plan, Advancement Plan, and Sustainability Plan are used to measure the College's health. The President updates the campus on the College's accomplishments and well-being in his annual State of the College address. Progress reports are also disseminated to the College by the vice presidents, Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment, and Strategic Planning & Assessment Council.

III. Foundations for Planning and Assessment

Faculty are to work together to develop an annual assessment plan, assess the curriculum, determine the implications of assessment results, and develop an assessment summary report for submission to the associate dean. Appendix B is an Assessment Plan and Assessment Summary Report Template for Academic Areas. The assessment plan will follow the Academic Planning and Assessment Framework (APAF) outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Academic Planning & Assessment Framework
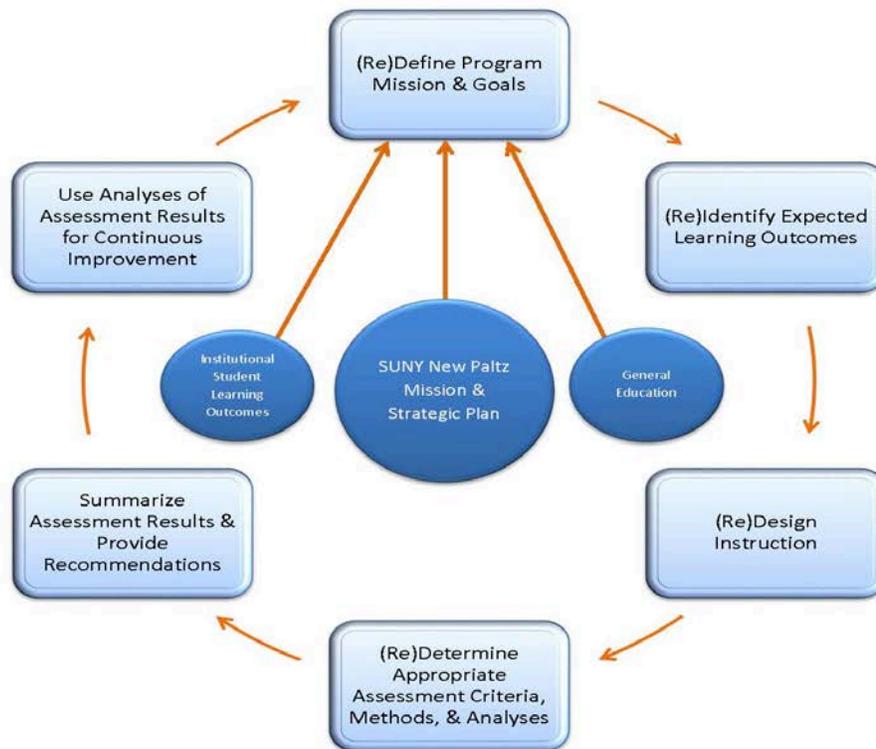
What are the components of the Academic Planning & Assessment Framework?

The six components in the APAF are described as follows.

1. (Re)Define program mission and goals
2. (Re)Identify expected student learning outcomes
3. (Re)Design instruction
4. (Re)Determine appropriate assessment criteria, methods, and analyses
5. Summarize assessment results and provide recommendations
6. Use analyses of assessment results for continuous improvement

1. (Re)Define Program Mission and Goals

This component involves the succinct articulation of each program's mission, values, and philosophy. It also involves a clear delineation of the program's goals; that is, the general purposes of the program. Program goals answer such fundamental questions as: What do we expect graduates from this program to be able to know, do, or value? In other words, what are the exit knowledge, skills, and values that we want from these program graduates? Program mission and goals must relate to the College's mission, Strategic Plan Essential Initiatives, Institutional Student Learning Outcomes, and—if applicable—GE program outcomes. Program goals provide a framework for determining the more specific program-level SLOs of a program and should be SMART:

- *Specific* (Use clear and definite terms describing knowledge, skills, and attitudes/dispositions).
- *Measurable* (It is feasible to get data, data are accurate and reliable, and there are multiple methods of assessment. It is advisable to have at least three methods to measure each outcome).
- *Attainable* (The outcome has the potential to improve/move the program forward).
- *Results-oriented* (Describe the expected standard).
- *Time-bound* (Describe a specified time period for accomplishing the outcome).

To the extent possible, both full- and part-time faculty should participate in ongoing conversations about the program's mission, goals, and SLOs.

2. (Re)Identify Expected Student Learning Outcomes

Each academic program and some academic support units (e.g., Student Affairs, Academic Advising) will have SLOs. These SLOs are stated in an active voice and students are the subjects to facilitate the measurement of observable student knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or dispositions. Only critical outcomes that effectively define what students should know (cognitive), think (affective), or do (behavioral) should be included. This ensures the development/identification of sound assessment tools and implementation of the assessment process.

SLOs can be assessed at the institutional level, academic program level (e.g., at the introductory, intermediary, or advanced levels), and/or in capstone courses. Assessment should be carried out with some degree of regularity but at least annually. Everyone is responsible for institutional level student outcomes (e.g., assessment of Institutional Student Learning Outcomes and GE), students' readiness for advanced study, careers, and students' social growth. Outcomes are typically assessed

using a variety of metrics. These include graduation rates and survey results showing students' degree of satisfaction with their engagement and performance in various college activities (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement, Student Opinion Survey). Academic program and course level assessments are the responsibility of the program chair and faculty. Programs should include at least one direct measure of student learning in their annual assessments.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (published in 1956 and revised in 2001) provides a format to express SLOs in a way that reflects cognitive skills, affective skills, and psychomotor skills (see http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html#cognitive). You also may find a sampling of SLOs resources at:

http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/TFComponentSLOS.htm
http://oie.gsu.edu/assessment-and-review-academic-and-adminstrative/academic-assessment-and-review/assessment-manual/writing-meaningful-student-learning-outcomes-slos/
https://www.ctl.uga.edu/pages/writing-slos

The chair and faculty should create a curricular map listing the program's learning outcomes and indicating how each course in the program contributes to achievement of those outcomes at the Introductory (Beginning), Developing (Intermediary), and Mastery (Advanced) levels. The program faculty are expected to engage in periodic review of the program's curriculum map.

3. (Re)Design Instruction

Broadly speaking, instruction includes all the resources and strategies (e.g., courses, textbooks, curriculum, advising, tutoring, mentoring, and multi-media) used to enhance student learning. For purposes of assessing what students should know and be able to do, this component requires that specific integrative courses or experiences in which the outcomes are most directly manifested are identified. Examples include capstone courses, core courses, internships, clinical experiences, and practical teaching.

4. (Re)Determine Appropriate Assessment Criteria, Methods, and Analyses

This component addresses the designing or selecting of assessment tools that are most appropriate for the stated program outcomes. Assessment tools should be thoughtfully selected. They should help the program to determine the extent to which students graduating from the major can demonstrate proficiency on expected SLOs. The selection and/or design of the tools is the responsibility of the faculty involved in program delivery. The tools may be quantitative (e.g., test, paper, or project scores; survey data; behavioral/performance data) and/or qualitative (i.e., portfolio, public performance, and/or juried competition). Because of inherent inadequacies in assessment approaches, the use of multiple measures, including but not limited to direct assessment measures, is advocated and expected (Appendix C provides examples of direct and indirect measures of assessment for academic departments). Scoring rubrics serve multiple purposes, including helping to identify areas in need of improvement, areas of strength that should be encouraged, and increasing intra-rater reliability when a single rater evaluates multiple students. Multiple raters/scorers also are used to ensure score inter-rater reliability, especially for subjective

assessment tools. Additionally, rubrics allow for the identification of benchmark criteria to clearly articulate the acceptable levels of achievement and performance (e.g., exceeds, meets, approaches, does not meet) for individual students and the program.

5. Summarize Assessment Results and Provide Recommendations

Using the analysis of assessment results and the criteria defined in the fourth component, the fifth component focuses on summarizing the assessment results in a way that meaningful recommendations or conclusions can be made about student learning. The emphasis is on identifying programmatic strengths and areas in need of improvement. If the department makes recommendations that involve a major policy change, they should be reviewed and approved by relevant campus personnel.

6. Use Analyses of Assessment Results for Continuous Improvement

Finally, the sixth component closes the continuous improvement loop by documenting how the assessment results and recommendations are used to effect change. This is the point at which individual program reports can review summary outcome assessment analyses of results and share ways in which those results were used to bring about improvements in student learning, curriculum, etc. Remember that each academic program is expected to implement an annual assessment plan, systematically collect and analyze data, make changes based on the data as necessary, and assess the changes made to determine achievement of desired outcomes. Departments or individuals will be recognized for best practices in Student Learning Outcomes Assessment periodically.

Taken together, the six components of the Academic Planning and Assessment Framework (APAF) demonstrate a commitment to ongoing inquiry, growth, renewal, and continuous improvement. The APAF conveys that, as a channel for improvement, the **process** of assessment is as important as the **product.** Central to the APAF is the linking of assessment activities to the College's mission and Strategic Plan. Tying academic planning and assessment to the College's mission and strategic initiatives conveys our commitment to creating, sustaining, and demonstrating an organized and visible culture of assessment. Assessment information is used as a medium for marshaling evidence to demonstrate the continuous improvement of the College and its students, programs, and support services.

Of importance to the APAF, is the involvement of our students, faculty, and administrators in the assessment process. Assessment systems are constructed, implemented, maintained, and utilized through the cooperative efforts of several stakeholders, and the success of any assessment system is directly related to the degree to which those stakeholders value the resulting data. We realize that assessment data must be meaningful to all stakeholders, and as such, our students, faculty, and administrators are an integral part of the APAF.

IV. Assessing Learning Outcomes at the Institutional & Program Levels

Planning and assessment are inextricably linked and, although addressed separately in this document, should be conceptualized together. An important aspect of strategic planning at New Paltz is assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs) at the institutional, program, and co-curricular (student support) levels. These multiple levels of assessment foster examination of trends across student performance and experiences, allow inferences about how well students are achieving learning outcomes, and enable departments to take action on the information collected. By embracing an approach of overlapping SLOs at the institutional and program levels, and by centering assessment on student learning, the College is able to establish whether students are achieving learning goals. Students who engage in and achieve institutional learning outcomes, undertake intellectual explorations within general education (GE) and their majors, and embrace opportunities encountered outside the classroom (e.g., through Student Affairs, Residence Life, and other co-curricular activities) will graduate from New Paltz prepared to contribute responsibly to society.

Outcomes assessment that attends to both the *process* and *product* of assessment is an essential component of our work with students. This kind of assessment is interconnected to the teaching-learning process as part of a continuous improvement loop that informs institutional effectiveness. The outcomes assessment feedback loop consists of:

1. defining (or re-defining) desired performance levels
2. collecting meaningful data to assess the actual performance levels
3. taking actions based on the assessment data
4. assessing whether these actions achieved the desired results

It is important that programs link SLOs to institutional mission and planning goals as this allows the College to evaluate its progress in meeting its mission and to improve in accord with its vision. It also enables programs to evaluate what students know and are able to do as they complete their program of study and to make adjustments to enhance students' learning and experiences.

What are New Paltz's Institutional Learning Outcomes?

The motto of the State University of New York is "To Learn To Search To Serve." An education at SUNY New Paltz develops knowledge. More than that, it helps our students recognize that life is complex and worthy of endless curiosity. Our students come away from their classrooms, residence halls, and service activities with an understanding of how the thoughtful application of knowledge and collaborative learning promote active engagement in communities (from local to global), critical reflection, and personal responsibility.

As a student at SUNY New Paltz, you will:

1. acquire a foundation of knowledge that will enable you to engage with different aspects of our world. You will gain exposure to the ways in which artists, humanists, mathematicians, and natural and social scientists address questions about the world and ourselves. You will explore

and learn to apply quantitative reasoning, qualitative interpretation, and creative activity as means of addressing those questions.

2. explore questions of identity and community, including reflecting on who you are and your commonality and difference with respect to others. Through interacting with our diverse student body, studying or visiting regions of the world, exploring the activities and communities within and surrounding the university, and learning about diversity within the US and elsewhere, you will become an informed global citizen.

3. learn how to organize, synthesize, and apply many types of information in a variety of formats; make and critique arguments; and express yourself clearly in multiple modes. These analytical, critical, and communicative skills will serve you at the university and beyond.

4. specialize in at least one disciplinary area of knowledge so you can succeed in that field, apply your expertise in other arenas, and/or go on to advanced study prepared to engage confidently with other practitioners or scholars.

As a student at SUNY New Paltz, you will have the opportunity to:

5. apply your learning within and outside the classroom. Through directed research, internships, and service learning, you experience what you can do with what you know.

6. develop the tools to become a lifelong learner and a productive contributor to learning communities, including SUNY New Paltz.

7. attain an understanding of yourself as a citizen and community member with the knowledge and ability to engage others in progress toward a more sustainable world.

What is the General Education program and who assesses it?

General education (GE) is foundational for all academic majors and for students' preparation for graduate study or a career. GE requirements include the ten SUNY Board of Trustees (BoT) mandated content areas (i.e., Mathematics - MATH, Basic Communication - BC, Natural Sciences - NSCI, Social Sciences - SSCI, American History - USST, Western Civilization - WEST, World Civilizations - WRLD, Humanities - HUM, The Arts - ART, and Foreign Language - FLNG). Prior to spring 2016, Diversity (DIVR) was a requirement within our GE program. However, consistent with the College's emphasis on diversity and inclusion, DIVR is now a university requirement. Completion of a Writing Intensive course also is a university requirement for undergraduate students. Our GE program has two competencies: Critical Thinking (CT) and Information Management (IM). The competencies are included in each program at the introductory, intermediary, and advanced levels.

The process for assessing GE will be as follows. Each of the GE categories and competencies (listed above) is formally assessed on a three-year cycle. Although faculty are continually observing student work, sharing information about student success, and making adjustments, formal assessment is

conducted for approximately 4 areas each fall, following the schedule below. CT and IM are assessed within majors at the advanced level.

- Spring 2019 - HUM, NSCI, SSCI, WEST, and IM
- Spring 2020 - USST, WRLD, and BC-Oral
- Spring 2021 - ART, FLNG, BC-Written, MATH and CT
- HUM, NSCI, SSCI, WEST, and IM cycles back for formal assessment in spring 2022.

The process below is followed in assessing the ten BoT GE content areas.

Process:

1. The semester before the assessment, the GE Board will convene a group of faculty who teach in the areas up for GE assessment. Each group will develop reflective prompts for students to answer in capstone courses (1 hour or less per prompt). Prompts address all the learning outcomes for the relevant content area. Faculty groups also develop model answers or guidelines for reviewing student answers to the prompts.

2. Shortly before the semester the assessment takes place, instructors teaching capstone courses Receive notices that their students will complete a GE assessment activity. The sample will include approximately 25% of the students taking capstone courses in each content area scheduled for that year. This will typically result in all capstone courses being selected, but they will be selected for only one content area each. By the beginning of the semester, the prompt for the relevant content area and any model answers will be provided to capstone course instructors.

3. Instructors will explain the purpose of the assessment (as a reflection on student's educational experiences) and provide the required amount of class time (no more than 1 hour) for students to answer the prompt. They will collect students' answers and provide those to the GE Board during the first weeks of the semester.

4. During the second five weeks of the semester (typically), a group of faculty assessors will review students' answers in each content area. Typically, GE Board members and instructors teaching the relevant content areas will comprise the groups, with each person focusing on one of the three or four content areas up for assessment. Faculty assessors will use a standard rubric to score students' answers. They will enter numerical results and answer discursive questions regarding students' work for each learning outcome.

5. Instructors in GE courses for the areas up for assessment that year will answer a brief survey at the end of the term regarding student learning for the appropriate content area.

6. Results will be aggregated, analyzed, and reported back to all faculty, programs, departments, and schools connected to the content area, by the end of the semester that the student answers were collected.

Faculty Survey Questions

Faculty teaching courses in GE categories that are up for assessment will complete a short survey at the end of the semester. The survey's purpose is to gather information about teaching practices and faculty understanding of student learning in GE courses. This information, which relies on faculty expertise, will be looked at in combination with the reflective direct assessment results from the capstone courses.

Sample Faculty Survey Questions

- How do you help students understand your course within the broader context of the General Education (GE) Program?
- What work do your students complete that aligns with the GE SLOs for the content area assigned to your course?
- Based on performance in the assignments noted above, fill in the following boxes to estimate how many students in your course met/did not meet the GE SLOs.

Learning Outcome	# of students in course section	# of students Meet (Conveys at least basic understanding of the learning outcome material; makes implicit connections between the Goals, Assumptions, & Objectives of the GE Category and the assigned task.)	# of students Do Not Meet (Provides minimal or confused understanding of the learning outcome material; makes virtually no connections between Goals, Assumptions, & Objectives of the GE Category; and makes unclear or unwarranted connections to the assigned task.)
Students will…learning outcome 1			
Students will…learning outcome 2			

GE: Closing the Loop

The associate provost summarizes the spring GE assessment results each year and disseminates the campus summary report to the provost, deans, associate deans, chairs, faculty, GE Board, and Presiding Officer of the Faculty. Departments submit "close the loop" assessment reports to the associate provost (via the associate dean/dean) in the fall semester. The reports address what faculty actually *did* to improve student learning in the year after an initial assessment (e.g., What changes did you make to your course/teaching? Did the changes actually improve student learning? Your teaching? The course?). Administrators, departments, and the GE Board consider the data collected from direct student assessments to determine what the College's current status is for each of the GE content areas/SLOs and to address recommendations.

What does departmental assessment entail?

Assessment at the departmental level entails gathering evidence of program effectiveness (see also section on program reviews) and of student learning. The evidence should cover core knowledge and skills that are developed throughout the program's curriculum; involve multiple measures of student performance; and should be *useful*, verifiable, representative, and actionable.

A necessary first step in assessing students' performance within a major is developing SLOs. SLOs (discussed in detail below) describe what students should know, be able to do, and value by the end of a course or program. At the program level, SLOs are typically written using a stem such as: *"Students who complete this program will …"* or *"Graduates of this program will be able to …"* followed by a listing of specific learning outcomes. At the course level, SLOs also are written with a stem such as: *"Students who complete this course will write persuasively using a variety of rhetorical strategies (e.g., expository, argumentative, and descriptive)."*

Discussions about program learning outcomes should involve all who are involved in teaching students. Each course should outline the SLOs students are expected to achieve when they complete it. Course-level learning outcomes synthesize across the courses in a program to develop into program LOs that detail the knowledge, skills, abilities, and dispositions a student will have achieved upon program completion. Ideally, faculty should collaborate in developing programmatic and course level SLOs.

What is the importance of connecting institutional, GE, and program learning outcomes?

Information on the relationship between institutional, GE, and program learning outcomes can be found at https://sites.newpaltz.edu/spa/2019/11/20/the-difference-between-institutional-ge-program-and-course-learning-outcomes/. It is important to examine the relationship between learning outcomes at the institutional, GE, program, and course levels to ensure that the different elements create a unified whole in educational design. As discussed earlier, it also is essential to assess institutional, GE, program, and course learning outcomes on a consistent basis and to use the assessment data to improve curriculum, teaching, and learning.

Expectations for faculty and chairs

- Faculty are responsible for developing syllabi for each course that include SLOs and other essential components.
- Chairs are to review syllabi to ensure SLOs and other essential components are included.
- Chairs are to support their department in developing an annual assessment plan, implementing the plan, collecting and analyzing assessment data, using the assessment data for continuous improvement, and writing the department's summary report of its assessment activities.
- Departments are to actively monitor how well curricular maps link course SLOs to program outcomes.
- Program reviews, annual assessment plans, and annual assessment summary reports should be posted to Blackboard (or elsewhere as directed by the chair in consultation with the dean and/or

associate dean). This recommendation is based on the expectation that information from these documents will be used for planning and budgetary decision-making, close the loop assessment activities, and be included in reaccreditation and other internal and external reports and applications.

What is program review and what is involved in the program review process?

Program reviews are self-studies of individual programs. An integral part of the student learning process, program reviews allow departments opportunities to assess program quality, vitality, currency, and effectiveness; to modify programs to improve their efficacy; and to ensure proper utilization of resources. Program reviews also provide opportunities for academic and budgetary planning. Because of the centrality of program reviews, we provide the following framework and guidelines to assist departments in conducting academic program reviews.

We adhere to SUNY's five-to-seven-year cycle for academic program reviews and assessment of student learning in the major. However, specialized program accreditation satisfies SUNY's requirement for program review in the major *if* (1) the accrediting agency is recognized by the Commission on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the U.S. Secretary of Education and (2) the assessment cycle is ten years or less. The SUNY Faculty Senate's *Guide for the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs* provides a framework and guidelines for the New Paltz program review process. Departments will find the information on pages 17-36 especially relevant to the self-study process. See also Figure 2, which illustrates the progression of the self-study.

The Self-Study Process

***The Self-Study*:** The dean's office notifies chairs and program directors of upcoming program reviews. Programs scheduled for review will conduct a self-study, which is a department's evaluative summary of its stated mission, programs, students, faculty, services, assessment-based plans for improvement, and vision for the future. The self-study covers all undergraduate and graduate programs offered. The dean will review the self-study and either return it to the department for further work or authorize the chair to send it to the external reviewers (approximately one month prior to the external reviewers' campus visit). The chair should copy the provost, Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment, and academic program specialist on the email to the external reviewers.

Although formal program review happens every five to seven years, all programs should continually engage in a self-study process. Assessment data on student performance, student competence, program effectiveness, and student success—for example—should be collected annually, analyzed, reported, and acted upon, informing and shaping curricular content, structure, and delivery to meet students' educational needs. To facilitate the process of preparing the self-study, it is prudent to build on existing resources (such as departmental annual reports and assessment plans—discussed elsewhere in this document) and to draw upon data routinely collected by the department and the College (see the Institutional Research website for common data sets).

***Organizing and Writing the Self-Study*:** The following is suggestive rather than prescriptive. As an initial step in the self-study process, after reviewing the last self-study, the chair should meet with the dean to discuss the self-study's focus, design, etc. The chair or chair designee should take the lead role and assign tasks, remind members of deadlines, provide feedback, and ultimately serve as the lead author of the self-study. The self-study should be conducted by a cross-section of the department and its programs. An important function of conducting the self-study is to ensure that *all* faculty are aware of the process and are invited to participate by providing information, reading drafts, and offering feedback at appropriate times in the process. Input should be sought from students, administrators, and colleagues in allied departments. Once the self-study has been drafted, the chair or chair designee should submit it to the dean for review and feedback.

***External Reviewers*:** SUNY requires that each academic program enlist the services of an external reviewer. The chair is responsible for securing three to five potential external reviewers who will provide an objective critique of the program and suggestions for improvement. External reviewers will be selected from appropriate sources (e.g., faculty colleagues, professional associations, the Council of Graduate Schools). The chair and dean will discuss the names and vitae and, following approval from the provost, the dean directs the chair to contact two of the external reviewers (an alternative may be designated). Upon acceptance by phone or email, the dean sends an offer letter (Appendix D—SUNY External Evaluator Offer Letter or Appendix E—Non-SUNY External Evaluator Offer Letter) and the External Evaluator's Payment Process (Appendix F).

In general, external review teams should:

1. consist of no fewer than two individuals who are detached enough from program faculty and the College to provide a critical program review. In selecting program reviewers, conflicts of interest must be avoided.
2. come from a comprehensive institution belonging to a peer or aspirational peer group (equivalent to being in the same Carnegie class and having similar program size and programmatic scope or perceived reputational ranking). We recommend inviting one SUNY reviewer and one non-SUNY reviewer.
3. preferably hold full professor rank although associate professor rank is acceptable if full professors are not available to serve. They can be chairs, former chairs, or program directors but not exclusively so.
4. have broad knowledge of the discipline and expertise in a specialization in the program(s) at another institution.

***Payment*:** The external reviewer will receive an honorarium of $500.00, if the report meets departmental expectations. For travel reimbursement, the reviewer will submit original receipts for airfare, car rental, and meals to the chair for submission to the Provost's Office immediately following the site visit. The Provost's Office will process all reimbursement (Appendix F—External Evaluator Payment Process). Payment will be mailed to the address provided by the external reviewer.

Site Visit: Prior to the campus visit, the host department should develop an itinerary for the site visit. While the exact schedule may vary depending on the wishes of the external reviewers and the nature of the self-study, the following should be considered:

1. meeting with the dean (and the professional staff, if appropriate) at the beginning and end of the campus visit.
2. individual meeting with the chair and group meetings with faculty and students.
3. meeting with faculty in related departments and programs.
4. meeting with the assistant vice president for Graduate and Extended Learning, if graduate programs are involved.
5. examination of appropriate support services and facilities (e.g., Sojourner Truth Library, labs, Academic Computing, Center for Student Success, Reading Clinic).
6. meeting with the provost near end of the visit.

External Reviewers' Report: External reviewers are to prepare a single report evaluating the program and curriculum, quality of student learning and achievement of SLOs, faculty, students, facilities, resources, etc. The report, which should be in writing, should identify the program's strengths and provide recommendations such as those that can guide future direction for the program and for its continued development. The external review report should be sent to the chair and dean. The dean should forward it to the provost, academic program specialist, and Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment.

Following Campus Visit: After the formal, comprehensive program review has been completed, the chair should ensure that external reviewers are sent a formal letter of appreciation for their services.

Closing the Loop: After the external reviewers' report has been received, the following actions should occur:

1. The chair and faculty meet to discuss the external reviewers' report, the self-study recommendations, and an action plan for addressing findings and recommendations from the self-study and the external reviewers.
2. The chair discusses the action plan with the dean.
3. The department incorporates elements from the action plan into the annual assessment plan and report findings in "close the loop" assessment report(s).

Self-Study Timetable for Program Review Process

> This timetable is an approximation based on an academic year review – the dates provided are benchmarks. All components of the program review process are included, as are the tasks needed to complete them. ***Please note:*** The timetable for calendar-year review of programs may differ from the one presented here (e.g., based on requirements of the accrediting body concerned).
>
> The dates given below are based on an academic year review and are associated with two consecutive academic years:
>
> **AY1** = Academic year *prior to* that in which the self-study and campus visit are completed.
>
> **AY2** = Academic year in which the self-study is completed and the campus visit takes place.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TASKS</u>
Mid-January, AY1	• Dean notifies chair and program director of upcoming program review.
Spring semester, AY1	• Organize and define faculty responsibilities for conducting the self-study (i.e., beginning ~18 months before the self-study is to be completed). To the degree possible, involve *all* department/program faculty.
Fall semester, AY2	• The department conducts the self-study, consulting students and others at appropriate times in the process. Complete draft by **December 1**.
Meanwhile: **Early November (AY2)**	• Chair/program director submits to dean the names, contact information, and vitae of three to five potential external reviewers.
November 15 (AY2)	• Dean reviews department's recommendations and selects two to three names.
December 1 (AY2)	• Dean notifies chair and chair invites reviewers to visit campus.
Early December (AY2)	• Chair submits self-study to faculty for review; document is revised as necessary.

December 15 (AY2)	• Chair submits revised self-study to dean for review. • Chair confirms external reviewers and finalizes campus visit dates, and dean sends confirmation letter.
January 15, AY2	• Dean reviews self-study and recommends revision as needed. • Chair/director makes necessary revisions and resubmits to dean. • Dean sends self-study to provost and associate provost for review. • Provost and associate provost review and authorize distribution to external reviewers (~4-6 weeks prior to campus visit).
February 15, AY2 **or 4-5 weeks prior to campus visit**	• Dean sends self-study and required paperwork for stipend and travel reimbursement.
March/April, AY2	• Campus visit takes place. • **Immediately after the campus visit,** all remaining external-review expenses must be submitted to the Provost's Office (Appendix F—External Evaluator Payment Process).
April/May, AY2 **(within one month of campus visit)**	• External reviewers submit report to department. • Department sends external report to dean and provost, copied to academic program specialist and Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment.
May/June, AY2	• Department reviews external reviewers' report in conjunction with department self-study. • Dean and department chair discuss external reviewers' report in conjunction with department self-study; chair develops response for dean's and provost's review. • Department conducts follow-up meeting(s) to address concerns and recommendations and to develop an action plan.

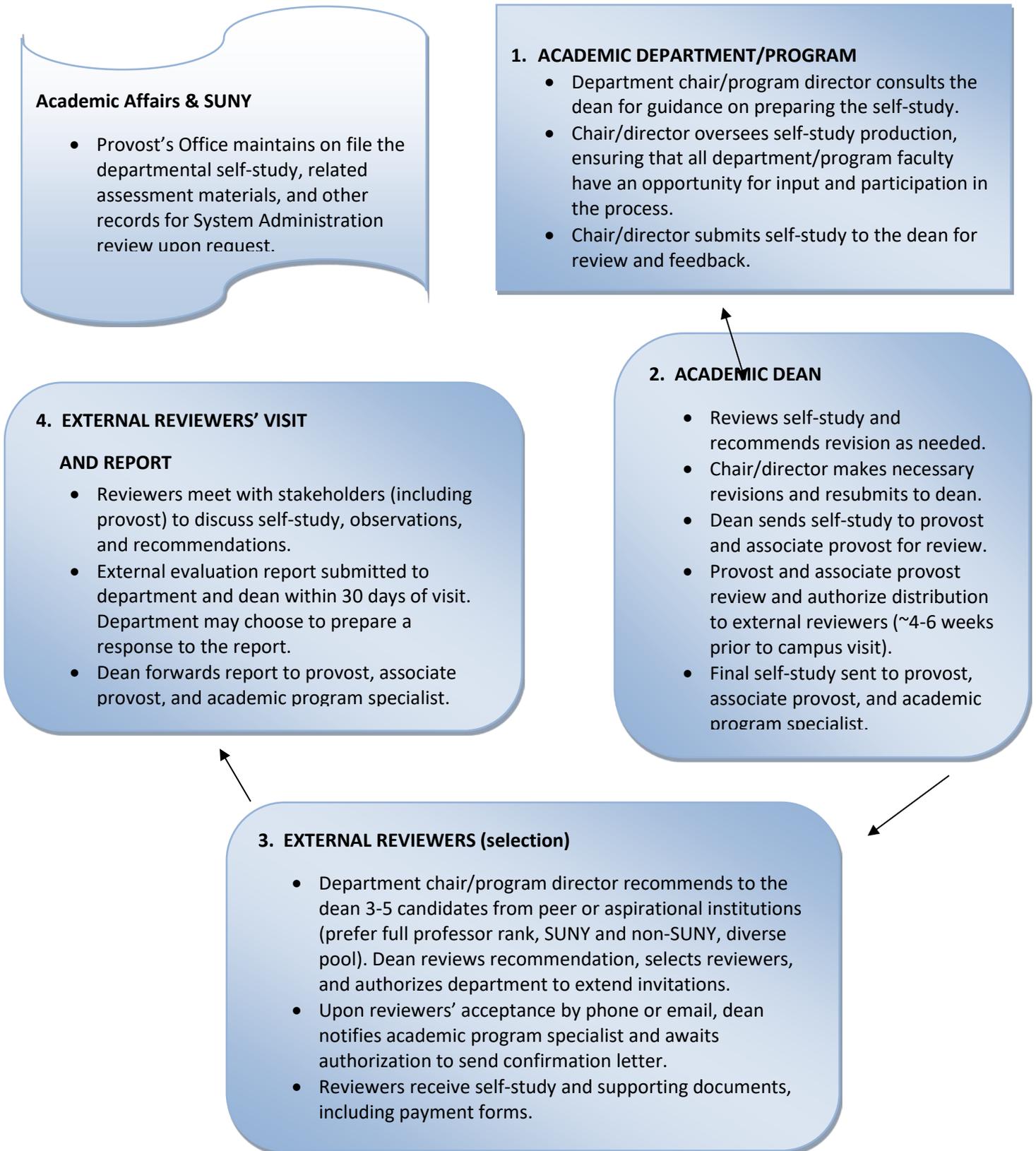|	
September 1, AY2	• Provost's Office files self-study, external reviewers' report, and departmental response for System Administration review upon request

_____

Ongoing, with annual reports	• Department implements improvements and submits annual reports of improvements to dean and associate provost.

Note: The campus-wide budget allocation process will inform when and how resource needs are addressed.

Figure 2: Progression of the Departmental Self-Study

Academic Affairs & SUNY

- Provost's Office maintains on file the departmental self-study, related assessment materials, and other records for System Administration review upon request.

1. ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM

- Department chair/program director consults the dean for guidance on preparing the self-study.
- Chair/director oversees self-study production, ensuring that all department/program faculty have an opportunity for input and participation in the process.
- Chair/director submits self-study to the dean for review and feedback.

2. ACADEMIC DEAN

- Reviews self-study and recommends revision as needed.
- Chair/director makes necessary revisions and resubmits to dean.
- Dean sends self-study to provost and associate provost for review.
- Provost and associate provost review and authorize distribution to external reviewers (~4-6 weeks prior to campus visit).
- Final self-study sent to provost, associate provost, and academic program specialist.

4. EXTERNAL REVIEWERS' VISIT

AND REPORT

- Reviewers meet with stakeholders (including provost) to discuss self-study, observations, and recommendations.
- External evaluation report submitted to department and dean within 30 days of visit. Department may choose to prepare a response to the report.
- Dean forwards report to provost, associate provost, and academic program specialist.

3. EXTERNAL REVIEWERS (selection)

- Department chair/program director recommends to the dean 3-5 candidates from peer or aspirational institutions (prefer full professor rank, SUNY and non-SUNY, diverse pool). Dean reviews recommendation, selects reviewers, and authorizes department to extend invitations.
- Upon reviewers' acceptance by phone or email, dean notifies academic program specialist and awaits authorization to send confirmation letter.
- Reviewers receive self-study and supporting documents, including payment forms.

V. Planning and Assessment in Administrative & Academic Support Areas

Institutional effectiveness at New Paltz also encompasses ongoing planning and assessment within administrative and academic support areas regarding their effectiveness and efficiency. Administrative and academic support areas are those within the College that provide services to students and/or employees. These divisions/units are required to engage in planning and to assess their performance on an annual basis, using the process outlined in Figure 2. The process is designed to benefit the unit, allowing for identification of outcomes and measures that are most useful to accomplish the unit's mission and goals. As data are collected, reviewed, and used, the unit develops strategies for ongoing improvement based on unit level requirements.

Figure 3: Planning & Assessment Processes in Administrative & Academic Support Areas

What is a mission statement?

The mission statement tends to be broad and aspirational. It should be clear and succinct (one sentence or a short paragraph), identifying the department's primary purpose (what you do and how you do it),

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primary activities, stakeholders, and impact. The division's or unit's mission statement should align with the institution's mission.

What are goals?

Goals are broad-based descriptions of the fundamental purpose of the division or unit. They outline the general direction of the division's or unit's long-term and strategic expectations as reflected in its mission statement. Goals should be specific enough to reflect the division's or unit's primary functions and purpose, while broad enough to demonstrate their relevance to the goals and aspirations outlined in the College's Strategic Plan Essential Initiatives. Establishing goals occurs through discussion with key stakeholders, informed by experiences of the department, internal and external data, projections, and direct student feedback. Goals are derived from the needs of the unit, but also with stated consideration of how they relate to the College's mission and Strategic Plan Essential Initiative(s).

What are objectives?

Objectives are the more concrete tasks that need to be accomplished in order to achieve a specific goal. Objectives can address procedural modifications, programmatic changes or implementations, staff development and/or restructuring, etc. It is important to measure the outcomes of various objectives to determine effectiveness in achieving the related goal(s). Objectives for how to accomplish the unit's goals should be established on a more frequent basis than the goals. Criteria for determining the acceptable levels of performance should be specified (e.g., response time for xyz will decrease 10 percent; student involvement in xyz will increase 15 percent).

Non-academic departments sometimes carry out activities and programs that contribute to students' knowledge and skills. Therefore, when appropriate, student learning outcomes (SLOs) should be assessed. SLOs are the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students will be able to demonstrate after participating in a program or activity. They are specific and measurable, and must be differentiated from measures of student satisfaction and program evaluation. When writing SLOs, it is helpful to use "action verbs" that refer to outcomes that are observable (see Appendix G—Bloom's Taxonomy).

Objectives should be assessed on an annual basis and the information collected and used. To facilitate this process and ensure consideration of results in aggregate, administrative units are tasked with completing assessment plans and assessment summary reports (Appendix H--Templates) annually. Vice presidents are encouraged to review data trends related to divisional/unit operations, discuss alignment with best practices, and engage in any other activities that review the role of the department holistically. Assessment liaisons, the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment, and the Strategic Planning & Assessment Council (SPAC) also support administrative unit assessments. For this reason, the associate provost and SPAC are tasked with supporting the assessment efforts of each unit, helping synthesizing area data across the College, and considering the utility of the assessment process and results. These data feed into the planning processes for the institution as well as inform the assessment of the institution as a whole.

What are direct and indirect measures of assessment?

Assessment measures that can provide meaningful, valid, reliable, and actionable data for each objective should be used. Measures can be direct or indirect, but should always be planned and purposeful, rather than accidental. Direct measures of assessment in non-academic areas are intended to gauge efficiency of services, programs, processes, initiatives, etc., in areas that have objectives/ outcomes that are not immediately related to student learning. Conversely, indirect measures in non-academic areas may focus on students' self-perceptions of their learning, satisfaction in terms of impact of a program or service, or value of programs and services. Indirect measures should be supplemented with direct measures, when possible. Figure 3 provides examples of direct and indirect measures of assessment for non-academic areas.

Figure 4: Direct & Indirect Measures of Assessment for Non-Academic Areas

Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
Attendance at events Average wait/service time Count of program participants Dollars raised Number of applicants Number of complaints Number of staff trained Number of users Processing time for requests Student participation in clubs or activities Staff training hours	Focus group interviews Letters or emails regarding the target outcome (e.g., an email thanking the unit for a job well-done) Opinion surveys Satisfaction surveys

What is the planning and assessment timeline for administrative areas?

Figure 4 describes the assessment timeline for administrative areas. The schedules for conducting assessment may vary. For some departments, assessment may be performed on a rotating basis, with a more detailed emphasis if the department is undergoing significant changes or if the department is undergoing an outside review. To prevent discontinuity of effort, units should carry out some assessment annually on a calendar year cycle. Below is a suggested timeline:

Figure 5: Assessment Timeline for Administrative Areas

July - August

Begin to review previous year's (1) assessment plan and (2) program outcomes with VPs and staff for update and review. Department heads confer with staff.

August - September

(1) Revise department goals, (2) identify means of assessment and (3) write new assessment plan. Have a department planning session to gain consensus on short- and long-term goals, set priorities, and establish a resource plan if necessary.

September - October

Get feedback on plan from department, staff, and VP. If requested, the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment and Strategic Planning & Assessment Council will also provide feedback.

September - May

Collect data. Review and share the information collected with staff.

May - July

VP and department make Planning and decisions to improve services or programs. Improvement activities are implemented. Periodic updates are provided to VP by department head. Administrative Assessment Report (Closing the Loop) written and presented at department meeting.

August - September

Final Administrative Assessment Report is made available in an online environment to relevant personnel.

October - November

Final assessment plan and Close the Loop Report are submitted to vice president and the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment.

VI. Interrelationship among Planning, Budgeting/Resource Allocation, & Assessment

Institutional effectiveness places achievement of the College's mission and Strategic Plan Essential Initiatives at the center of the three interrelated dimensions of planning, budgeting/resource allocation, and assessment. Planning involves determining the priorities and initiatives that best support achievement of the College's mission and Strategic Plan Essential Initiatives. Budgeting ensures that financial and other resources are allocated appropriately to support the mission as well as continuous improvement. Assessment involves the regular and consistent review of outcomes and objectives at the institutional, program, and student support levels, summative reporting of assessment results, and use of results to improve programs and services. It also involves examining assessment information from various sources to inform planning and resource allocation decisions at the institutional level. To elaborate, planning and assessment enable the College to evolve a budget process that prioritizes requests and initiatives to advance mission and Strategic Plan goals.

VII. Planning & Assessment Support Structures

Maintaining an organizational structure where administrators, faculty, and staff share participation and ownership of institutional effectiveness is important. Accordingly, our planning and organizational structure includes representation from the administrative and academic divisions of the College. Each member of the College community is responsible for fulfilling the College's mission of educating students. Thus, planning and assessment is everyone's responsibility.

Presidential & Cabinet Leadership: The President, supported by his Cabinet/vice presidents, leads planning and assessment efforts at New Paltz. In addition to directing and planning in their areas, the vice presidents oversee the development and implementation of annual divisional planning and assessment goals and activities. They also integrate assessment and other information into ongoing operational and strategic planning as well budgetary decision-making.

Associate Provost Leadership: The Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment supports and coordinates assessment and strategic planning activities campus-wide. She collaborates with various campus constituencies and the Strategic Planning & Assessment Council (SPAC) to engage ongoing strategic planning and to implement a systematic assessment process within administrative and academic divisions. The associate provost is charged with making recommendations to the President, Cabinet, and other campus administrators related to the College's mission, strategic planning, and assessment. She is supported by the SPAC to develop communication and training regarding planning and assessment as well as an institutional scorecard, assessment reports, and opportunities for institution-wide discussion of assessment findings.

Other responsibilities of the associate provost include monitoring compliance with regional and disciplinary accreditation expectations for institutional assessment and reviewing the institutional assessment process. The associate provost serves as the College's Middle States Accreditation Liaison Officer for New Paltz, monitors the College's compliance with Middle States Commission on Higher Education policies and procedures, and coordinates the College's Middle States reaccreditation events.

She collaborates with the GE Board to coordinate GE assessments and assists with the academic program review process.

Strategic Planning & Assessment Council: The Strategic Planning & Assessment Council works with the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment to provide oversight and support necessary to ensure institutional assessment data are utilized in strategic and operational planning, programmatic, and budgetary decisions. The committee monitors the implementation of all strategic initiatives resulting from these decisions and forwards any recommendations to the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment. The SPAC also collaborates with the associate provost to:

- develop and provide oversight to the institutional and academic planning processes.
- provide follow-up and accountability for the implementation of plans.
- oversee the iterative strategic planning process and its implementation.
- monitor and adjust the ongoing planning processes to meet the College's needs.
- strengthen and focus the analytics required for planning, assessment, and student success.
- communicate assessment and planning progresses to faculty, staff, and students on a regular basis
- share information and assessment results with the Middle States Reaccreditation Committee for possible inclusion in self-study materials.
- develop recommendations for actions and goals within the broad parameters of the Strategic Plan and the College's mission for submission to the President and Cabinet.

Further, the SPAC works with Cabinet members and other organizational leaders to implement and assess select high-priority Strategic Plan elements. The SPAC receives communication from Cabinet members regarding completed cycles of planning, implementation, assessment, and revision, and utilizes that information to further inform planning, assessment, and reporting. It then provides recommendations as needed or requested regarding the content of the Strategic Plan. The SPAC also assists the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning & Assessment to develop communication and training regarding planning and assessment.

The SPAC includes two members each from the previous Strategic Planning Council, Academic Assessment Committee, and Administrative Assessment Council; one each from Budget and Finance and Student Success; one faculty member from each school; one faculty member selected by faculty governance; one member from the GE Board; one member from Institutional Research; one associate/assistant dean, and additional members as needed based on focus. Membership for most positions is on a rotating basis, with terms of three years and a limit of two consecutive terms. Initial terms range from two-four years to establish a rotational process. Some positions do not rotate or do not have a term limit, as there are few members of campus with the needed expertise (e.g., Institutional Research, Budget and Finance). Additional members may be selected for two year terms based on issues of particular focus in that period of time.

Senior/Mid-Level Administrators & Directors, Deans, Associate/Assistant Deans, & Chairs: These individuals provide leadership, support, and accountability for assessment. It is the role of these individuals to review annual assessment activities within their units, ensuring completion, accuracy, and effectiveness. These individuals are supported by the Associate Provost for Strategic Planning &

Assessment, who encourages engagement in planning, development, and implementation of annual assessments; use of assessment information to improve student learning, teaching, and/or programs and processes; and submission of annual assessment reports. Through these activities and reports, the associate provost is able to make recommendations to the President and other senior administrators related to institutional effectiveness, planning, and operations.

VIII. Concluding Comments

In closing, a few final reminders. Keep your assessment plan simple, meaningful, manageable, and sustainable. Ask meaningful questions such as: What is the most important thing we want to accomplish? How can we improve students' experiences in this program? How can I reduce the time it takes to process this application? A well-conceived assessment plan that can be completed under realistic constraints is more sustainable than one that has a complicated design. Use resulting insights from assessments for decision-making about student learning and experiences, programs, and services and to guide requests for resources and resource allocation decisions. Be flexible and ask for help when needed. Remember that we are engaging in these activities to advancing institutional effectiveness.

Appendix A

Data/Information for Planning & Assessment Available from Institutional Research

Department Profiles – information at the department level on trends in expenditures, instructional cost, faculty FTE, courses and enrollment, majors, minors, and degrees awarded. Files are available on the campus H: drive at H:\Institutional Research\Department Profiles.

Enrollment Trends – trends in enrollment by level, race/ethnicity, first-generation, and Pell recipient. Files are available on the Institutional Research website http://www.newpaltz.edu/oir/facts.html.

Retention and Graduation Rates – trends in graduation rates by admit type, gender, race/ethnicity, EOP, Pell recipient, and first-generation. Files are available on the Institutional Research website https://www.newpaltz.edu/oir/facts.html.

Student Tracker – through the National Student Loan Data Center, New Paltz has access to enrollment data of New Paltz graduates at other institutions. We can use this data to see how many of our students go on to graduate school.

Survey – Alumni. Once a year Institutional Research sends a survey to alumni who graduate 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years ago.

Survey – First Destination. This survey goes out every September to alumni who graduated in the past year. The goal of the survey is to find out what our students are doing three-six months after they have graduated from New Paltz.

Survey – Graduating Senior Survey. New Paltz administered a survey every April to students planning to walk in the May commencement ceremony. The survey results are on the Institutional Research website at http://www.newpaltz.edu/oir/gss.html. As of spring 2018 the survey administration will change; the survey will go out each semester to students who applied to graduate that semester.

Survey – National Survey of Student Engagement. New Paltz participates every three years in this national survey instrument. The last year we participated was spring 2017. The survey results are available on the campus H: drive at H:\Institutional Research\NSSE.

Survey – Student Opinion Survey. New Paltz participates every three years in this SUNY-wide survey. The last year we participated was spring 2018. As part of the final report, we receive a ranking for each question comparing our results to the other SUNY campuses. The survey results are in the Institutional Research office.

Appendix B

Assessment Plan & Assessment Summary Report Template for Academic Areas

State University of New York at New Paltz

Academic Department/Program Name: _____

Assessment Period: _____

Submission Date: _____

Contact Person: _____

I.   **Mission Statement:** What is your department's/program's main purpose?

II.   **Main Activities:** What are your department's/program's primary tasks, duties, and/or responsibilities?

III.   **Goal(s):** Based on your mission and main activities, what are your primary goals for this year? Program goals answer such fundamental questions as: What do we expect graduates from this program to be able to know, do, or value? In other words, what are the exit knowledge, skills, and values that we want from these program graduates?

IV.   **College Strategic Plan Essential Initiative(s) Alignment:** (Explain how the department's/program's goal(s) and outcomes support the College's strategic planning constructs. Specify the Strategic Plan Essential Initiative to which each Department/Program goal links).

V. **Student Learning Outcomes**: Describe the SLOs that you plan to assess. SLOs are stated in an active voice and students are the subjects to facilitate the measurement of observable student knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or dispositions (concrete activities or ways of observing goal attainment). Remember to include the criterion for success for each student learning outcome.

VI. **How will you help students achieve the learning outcomes?**

VII. **Measures:** Describe the assessment measures. What will you use to measure the extent to which the student learning outcomes have been met? How will you collect the assessment data?

VIII. **Assessment Findings:** For each student learning outcome that you assessed, summarize the assessment results. In other words, describe the SLOs and tell us about the findings; whether expectations were exceeded, met, or not met; and what you did in response to the findings. What improvements have been made? What has been the impact of improvements?

IX. **Discussion of Key Findings:** With whom were the key assessment findings discussed? What resulted from the discussion of the findings?

X. **Submission of Assessment Plan & Report:** Have you sent your assessment plan and assessment report to your associate or assistant dean? Follow the instructions from your associate or assistant dean about when you are to submit your annual assessment plan and assessment summary report.

Appendix C

Examples of Direct and Indirect Measures of Student Learning at the Course, Program, & Institutional Levels

	DIRECT MEASURES	INDIRECT MEASURES
Course	- Course and homework assignments - Exams and quizzes - Standardized tests - Term papers and reports - Observations of field work, internship performance, service learning, clinical experiences - Research projects - Class discussion participation - Case study analysis - Rubric scores for writing, oral presentations, and performances - Artistic performances and products - Grades based on explicit criteria related to clear learning goals	- Course evaluations - Test blueprints (outlines of the concepts and skills covered on tests) - Percent of class time spent in active learning - Number of student hours spent on service learning - Number of student hours spent on homework - Number of student hours spent at intellectual or cultural activities related to the course - Grades that are not based on explicit criteria related to clear learning goals
Program	- Capstone projects, senior theses, exhibits, or performances - Pass rates or scores on licensure, certification, or subject area tests - Student publications or conference presentations - Employer and internship supervisor ratings of students' performance	- Focus group interviews with students, faculty members, or employees - Registration or course enrollment information - Department or program review data - Job placement - Employer or alumni surveys - Student perception surveys - Proportion of upper-level courses compared to the same program at other institutions

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	DIRECT MEASURES	INDIRECT MEASURES
Institutional	- Performance on tests of writing, critical thinking, or general knowledge - Rubric scores for class assignments in General Education, interdisciplinary core courses, or other courses required of all students - Performance on achievement tests - Explicit self-reflections on what students have learned related to institutional programs such as service learning (e.g., asking students to name the three most important things they have learned in a program)	- Graduate school placement rates - Locally developed, commercial, or national surveys of student perceptions or self-report of activities (e.g., National Survey of Student Engagement) - Transcript studies that examine patterns and trends of course selection and grading - Annual reports including institutional benchmarks (e.g., graduation and retention rates, grade point averages of graduates, etc.)

[Middle States Commission on Higher Education](). Student Learning Assessment: Options and Resources. Chapter 3, Evaluating Student Learning: 27-53; 2007.

Appendix D

SUNY External Evaluator Offer Letter

Date

Name & Title
Institution **(ANOTHER SUNY ONLY)**
Street Address
City / State / Zip

Dear _____:

On behalf of President Donald Christian, I am pleased to offer you an extra-service appointment as an external reviewer for the Department of _____ [or, if a program rather than a department, the _____ Program] at the State University of New York at New Paltz. This appointment is subject to the policies and practices outlined in the *SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees,* the UUP contract, and general college policies. A $500 stipend is offered for this work, and your allowable travel expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with New York State travel policy.

As you know, SUNY requires periodic review of academic programs, typically on a five- to seven-year cycle. We are grateful for your willingness to support this effort in collaboration with [co-evaluator's name] of [institution], who will serve as a co-evaluator. My colleagues in the Department of _____ [or _____ Program] and in the campus administration are very interested in your informed view of our programs' strengths relative to similar institutions; we also need your frank assessment of areas for improvement. We will benefit most from your advice about how we can most effectively move forward to achieve the goals the department/program has identified for itself.

The program-review process begins with a self-study in which faculty evaluate their department's/program's mission, programmatic goals and outcomes, student learning and performance, and available resources. New Paltz's institutional mission and Strategic Plan, as well as those of the School/College of_____, inform and provide context for this self-evaluation. A copy of the self-study report and relevant supporting materials are enclosed for your review in preparation for your campus visit on [insert dates].

Professor _____, chair/director of the _____ department/program, will contact you soon to discuss arrangements for your campus visit, including your itinerary of meetings with faculty, students, and administrators. Within the month following your visit we will expect a brief report, written collaboratively with your co-evaluator, summarizing your assessment and recommendations.

The forms required to process payment of your stipend and travel reimbursement are enclosed. For expedited processing, please complete all forms in advance and return them to the address below *prior*

to your campus visit. Completion and return in advance gives us an opportunity to review the forms and, if necessary, follow up with you while you are here. If speed of payment is not a concern for you, you may bring the completed forms with you to New Paltz. Should you have questions about any of the paperwork, please contact _____, department/program secretary, for assistance (845-257-____ or _____@newpaltz.edu).

To indicate your acceptance of this extra-service appointment, **please sign the enclosed copy of this letter** *(on pages 2 <u>and</u> 3)* **and return it within five (5) days** to the Office of Academic Affairs – HAB 802A, SUNY New Paltz, 1 Hawk Drive, New Paltz, NY 12561. **Retain this original for your records.**

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Professor _____ or me. We are grateful that you have agreed to help us with this important task, and I look forward to meeting and speaking with you.

Sincerely,

_____, Dean
School/College of _____

Addendum: Memorandum of Understanding
Enclosures:
Appointment letter (2, including copy to be returned)
Required stipend and travel forms
Self-study

cc: Academic Affairs (attention Valerie McAllister)
         Department/Program chair/director and secretary

I, _____, accept the terms and conditions of this contract as outlined above and understand that I am responsible for reviewing and observing all policies during my appointment term.

<u>**Addendum**</u>**: Memorandum of Understanding**

Employment Type: Part-time temp appointment (extra service) for the purpose of conducting an external evaluation of academic program(s). Please refer to Article XI, Title F, and Article XIV, Title A, of the *SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees.*

NYS Retirement: Part-time appointees are not required to join a retirement system but are eligible to join either the NYS Teachers Retirement System (TRS) or the NYS Employees Retirement System (ERS). Please check the appropriate box below*****:

Failure to check any box will indicate that you are not currently a member of any NYS retirement system and that you decline to enroll in such a system.

☐ I am currently a member of NYS Teachers Retirement System (TRS).
    Date of membership _____ and membership # _____ (if known)
☐ I am currently a member of NYS Employees Retirement System (ERS).
    Date of membership _____ and membership # _____ (if known)
☐ I am currently a member of SUNY ORP.
    Date of membership _____ and TIAA/CREF contract # _____ (if known)
☐ I wish to enroll in a retirement system and will contact the Employee Benefits Office at
    benefits@newpaltz.edu.
☐ I decline to enroll in a retirement system.

I understand that failure to elect a retirement system within 30 days of my signing this document will indicate that I hereby decline.

Attestation:
I have read and understand this Memorandum of Understanding as well as the attached employment contract. I attest by my signature that the information I have provided on any forms submitted in connection with employment are correct and true representations and that any misrepresentation or omission may be cause for refusal of employment or termination of employment. A signed original of this document should accompany your employment contract and must be returned to Academic Affairs for transmission to the Human Resources Office.

Printed name: _____   **Signature: _____**
Date: _____

Appendix E

Non-SUNY External Evaluator Offer Letter

Date

Name & Title
Institution
Street Address
City / State / Zip

Dear _____:

After appropriate consultation, I am pleased to offer you an appointment as an external reviewer for the Department of _____ [or, if a program rather than a department, the _____ Program] at the State University of New York at New Paltz (SUNY New Paltz). A $500 stipend is offered for this work, and your allowable travel expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with New York State travel policy.

SUNY requires periodic review of academic programs, typically on a five- to seven-year cycle. We are grateful for your willingness to support this effort in collaboration with [co-evaluator's name] of [institution], who will serve as a co-evaluator. My colleagues in the Department of _____ [or _____ Program] and in the campus administration are very interested in your informed view of our programs' strengths relative to similar institutions; we also need your frank assessment of areas for improvement. We will benefit most from your advice about how we can most effectively move forward to achieve the goals the department/program has identified for itself.

The program-review process begins with a self-study in which faculty evaluate their department's/program's mission, programmatic goals and outcomes, student learning and performance, and available resources. New Paltz's institutional mission and Strategic Plan, as well as those of the School/College of_____, inform and provide context for this self-evaluation. A copy of the self-study report and relevant supporting materials are enclosed for your review in preparation for your campus visit on [insert dates].

Professor _____, chair/director of the _____ department/program, will contact you soon to discuss arrangements for your campus visit, including your itinerary of meetings with faculty, students, and administrators. Within the month following your visit we will expect a brief report, written collaboratively with your co-evaluator, summarizing your assessment and recommendations.

The forms required to process payment of your stipend and travel reimbursement are enclosed. For expedited processing, please complete all forms in advance and return them to the address below *prior to your campus visit*. Completion and return in advance gives us an opportunity to review the forms and,

if necessary, follow up with you while you are here. If speed of payment is not a concern for you, you may bring the completed forms with you to New Paltz. Should you have questions about any of the paperwork, please contact _____, department/program secretary, for assistance (845-257-____ or _____@newpaltz.edu).

To indicate your acceptance of this appointment, **please sign the enclosed copy of this letter and return it** within five (5) days to the Office of Academic Affairs – HAB 802A, SUNY New Paltz, 1 Hawk Drive, New Paltz, NY 12561. **Retain this original for your records.**

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Professor _____ or me. We are grateful that you have agreed to help us with this important task, and I look forward to meeting and speaking with you.

Sincerely,

_____, Dean
School/College of _____

Enclosures:
Appointment letter (2, including copy to be returned)
Required stipend and travel forms
Self-study

cc: Academic Affairs (attention Valerie McAllister)
         Department/Program chair/director and secretary

I, _____, accept the terms and conditions of this appointment as outlined above and understand that I am responsible for reviewing and observing all applicable policies during my term.

Date: _____   Signature: _____

Appendix F

External Evaluator Payment Process

> **PLEASE NOTE that payment processes for SUNY/NYS reviewers differ significantly**
>
> **from those for non-SUNY reviewers.**
>
> **ALL external evaluators will receive an <u>appointment/confirmation letter</u> (original + one copy) signed by the dean. (<u>*Deans, please note:*</u> For reviewers from another SUNY, this letter <u>cannot</u> be sent until HR has received a completed "Fair Chance" form). To accept the appointment, evaluators must *sign one copy of the letter and return it to Academic Affairs (HAB 802A) within five (5) days of receipt.***
>
> **Other documents required for stipend payment and travel reimbursement are listed below. Submission of all completed forms *prior to the campus visit* will help to expedite processing.**

- **For a reviewer who is *not* from another SUNY or NYS agency (this *includes* CUNY employees), the following forms are required to process the stipend payment (currently $500) and travel reimbursement:**
  - ☐ **Signed confirmation letter accepting assignment** (this will be returned directly to the Provost's Office)
  - ☐ **Consultant/Lecturer Reimbursement Requisition** (enter totals for honorarium <u>and</u> travel): http://www.newpaltz.edu/media/purchasing/consultantreimbreq.pdf
  - ☐ **Consultant Agreement Attachment**: http://www.newpaltz.edu/media/purchasing/consultantagreement.pdf
  - ☐ **NYS Substitute Form W-9: Request for Taxpayer ID Number & Certification –** provided via email
  - ☐ **NYS Standard Voucher**: http://www.newpaltz.edu/media/accounts--payable/Standard Voucher Form.pdf
  - ☐ **NYS Travel Expense Report**:
  - ☐ https://www.newpaltz.edu/media/travel/Travel Expense Report 52-019.fill.EXT.pdf
  - ☐ **NYS Statement of Automobile Travel**, if applicable: https://www.newpaltz.edu/media/travel/statement_automobile_travel.pdf
  - ☐ **Original receipts *(must show method of payment)***
  - ☐ **Campus visit itinerary**

  Submit the above items, fully completed, to Academic Affairs (HAB 802A) prior to, or at the start of, the campus visit. This allows time to review the forms and follow up with the reviewer(s) before they leave campus.

- **For a reviewer from another SUNY (or other NYS agency) <u>who is not currently employed by SUNY New Paltz</u>, the following forms are required for <u>stipend payment</u> (currently $500):**

  » <u>**Employment forms**</u>

  - ☐ **Signed confirmation letter accepting appointment.** *The confirmation letter must be sent <u>after</u> the reviewer has returned a "Fair Chance" form to Human Resources.*
  - ☐ **Employment application –** <mark>provided via email</mark>
  - ☐ **Personal Information Form**
  - ☐ **Form I-9 (Employment Verification Form) –** <mark>provided via email</mark>**:** Employee completes Section 1; employer (i.e., a representative of SUNY New Paltz) completes Section 2 and must examine evidence of identity and employment eligibility. *Original documents must be verified in person; a list of acceptable documents appears on p. 9 of Form I-9.*

  - ☐ **State Employee Statement in Lieu of Oath and New York State Public Officers Law:** Employee must review the excerpted sections of the Public Officers Law and then complete and return the oath form.
  - ☐ **Retirement Program History Sheet**
  - ☐ **RSSL Information & Acknowledgment Form** (for public retirees of NYS only)
  - ☐ **Veteran Status Form**
  - ☐ **Dual Employment/Extra Service Approval Form:** Employee completes top section; employee's <u>home-agency supervisor</u> completes the bottom section, granting permission for the employee to render service at New Paltz.

  » <u>**Payroll forms**</u> (links embedded below; see also http://www.newpaltz.edu/payroll/forms.html):

☐ **Form W-4**	VPAA will prepare an ARF (for HR records) and a Fee/Extra Service
☐ **Form IT-2104**	Payment Authorization (for Payroll).
☐ **Direct Deposit Form**	

  Submit the above employment and payroll forms, fully completed, to Academic Affairs (HAB 802A) prior to, or at the start of, the campus visit. This allows time to review the forms and follow up with the reviewer(s) before they leave campus.

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  » <u>Travel reimbursement for SUNY/NYS reviewers</u>: *Reviewers from another SUNY must submit receipts to their <u>home agency (campus)</u> for processing and reimbursement.* **Home campus and New Paltz Accounts Payable staff will consult, the home campus will reimburse the reviewers, and New Paltz will process a funds transfer to reimburse the home campus.**

Appendix G

Bloom's Taxonomy

Action Verb List for the Cognitive Domain

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
Define	Convert	Apply	Abstract	Advise	Appraise
Describe	Defend	Carry out	Analyze	Arrange	Assess
Identify	Describe	Change	Appraise	Assemble	Choose
Label	Discuss	Code	Audit	Categorize	Compare
List	Distinguish	Comply	Breakdown	Collect	Conclude
Match	Estimate	Demonstrate	Calculate	Combine	Contrast
Name	Explain	Discover	Category	Communicate	Criticize
Outline	Express	Dramatize	Compare	Compile	Describe
Recall	Extend	Employ	Contrast	Compose	Discriminate
Record	Generalize	Follow	Criticize	Conduct	Enforce
Relate	Give example	Follow up	Debate	Construct	Estimate
Repeat	Identify	Illustrate	Determine	Contribute	Evaluate
Reproduce	Infer	Interpret	Distinguish	Coordinate	Explain
Select	Locate	Interview	Edit	Counsel	Interpret
State	Paraphrase	Maintain	Examine	Create	Judge
Underline	Predict	Manipulate	Experiment	Design	Justify
	Recognize	Modify	Identify	Develop	Measure
	Report	Operate	Illustrate	Devise	Monitor
	Restate	Perform	Infer	Establish	Rate
	Review	Practice	Inspect	Explain	Relate
	Rewrite	Predict	Inventory	Formulate	Review
	Summarize	Prepare	Investigate	Gather	Score
	Tell	Produce	Outline	Generate	Select
	Translate	Relate	Point out	Incorporate	Summary
		Respond	Question	Instruct	Support
		Retrieve	Relate	Manage	Value
		Schedule	Review	Modify	
		Screen	Select	Organize	
		Shop	Separate	Plan	
		Show	Solve	Prepare	
		Sketch	Subdivide	Propose	
		Solve	Test	Rearrange	
		Transcribe		Recognize	
		Use		Recommend	
				Reconstruct	
				Relate	

				Review Rewrite Set up Summarize Supervise Tell Update Write	

Bloom, B. S., Mesia, B. B., & Krathwohl, D. R. (1964). Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Vol. 2: The Affective Domain & Cognitive Domain). New York. David McKay.

Appendix H

Assessment Plan & Assessment Summary Report Templates for Administrative Areas

Assessment Plan Template

Department Name: _____

Assessment Period: _____

Contact Person: _____

1. Mission Statement (What is the main purpose of your department?)

2. Main activities (List the primary tasks, duties, and/or responsibilities of your department).

3. Goal(s): Based on your mission and main activities, what are your primary goals for the next year? (Please focus on the goals that are most important to you in the upcoming year. List no more than five goals).

4. Please keep in mind the Strategic Plan Essential Initiatives. Describe the Strategic Plan Essential Initiative to which each goal links.

Goal (Desired outcome)	Objectives (Concrete activities or ways of observing goal attainment)	Measure (What can you use to measure the extent to which the goal has been met?)	When? (Date to be accomplished)	By whom?
(e.g., Increase students' awareness of outreach programs)	(e.g., Recruit 3 students from each residence hall to talk about program)	(e.g., Pre- and post-test surveys of students' awareness of outreach programs)	(e.g., September 2013 and December 2013)	(e.g., Student Services Office administrative assistant)

Assessment Summary Report Template

NAME OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT: _____

Period Covered: _____ (e.g., August 1, 20-- to July 31, 20--)_____

Date Submitted: _____

Goals:

Data Collected/Findings:

Programmatic and Budgetary Changes/Implications:

Use of Results for Improvements: