USING WEAVE FOR ASSESSMENT
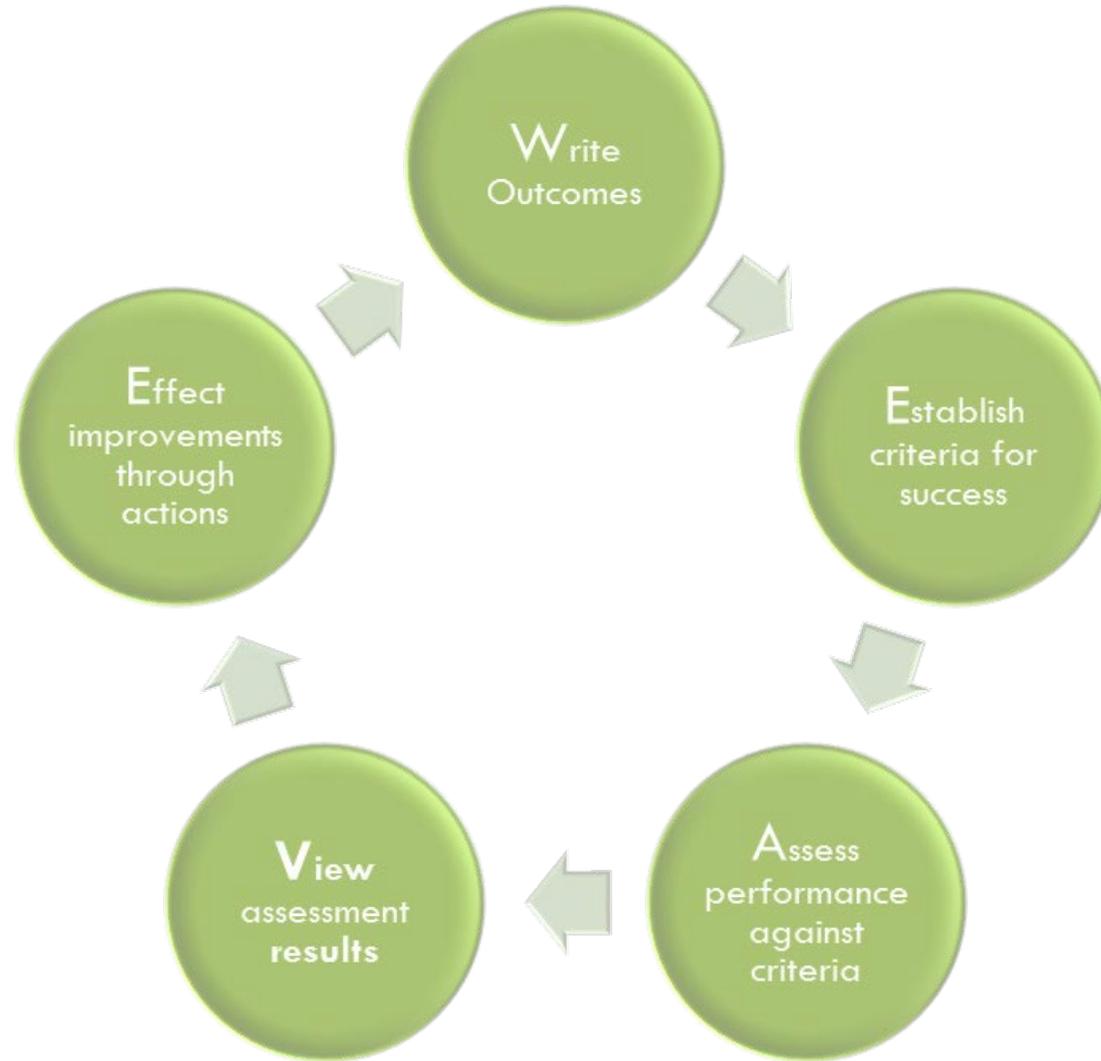
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SACSCOC PRINCIPLES OF ACCREDITATION

SECTION 8

2. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

a. Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs. (Student outcomes: educational programs)

b. Student learning outcomes for collegiate-level general education competencies of its undergraduate degree programs. (Student outcomes: general education)

…IDENTIFIES EXPECTED OUTCOMES…

What is a Student Learning Outcome?

▶ A Student Learning Outcome (SLO) is a statement regarding knowledge, skills, and/or traits students should gain or enhance as a result of their engagement in an academic program.

▶ SLOs are the items that complete the sentence, "When they complete our program, students will be able to….."

▶ A program does not need to state all possible student learning outcomes, but it should try to articulate those that are fundamental. A program may choose to rotate SLOs.

▶ Graduate Program Student Learning Outcomes/Measures must demonstrate (1) knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (2) ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training experiences.

▶ Student learning outcomes should show progressive distinction between degree levels (BA, MA, PhD) in the same academic unit.

Expressing Learning Outcomes

- Student Learning Outcomes should be neither too broad nor too specific:
  - Too vague: Students will demonstrate information literacy skills.
  - Too specific: Students will be able to use the college's online services to retrieve information.
  - Better: Students will locate information and evaluate it critically for its validity and appropriateness.
- *(Suskie, 130)*

…ASSESSES THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT ACHIEVES THESE OUTCOMES…

Measures

▶ A measure identifies evidence and methods used to determine achievement of expected outcomes.

▶ Targets show criteria for success for each student learning outcome. The findings that result from these measures should be used to demonstrate student learning and provide direction for improving learning.

▶ Measures and Targets should show progressive distinction between degree levels (BA, MA, PhD) in the same academic unit.

▶ Simple rates, frequencies, or percentages of activities are not true measures of student learning outcomes.

Direct Measure

▶ The best measures for student learning are **direct measures** in which students demonstrate that they know or can do the specified learning outcome.

▶ Direct measures directly evaluate student work.

▶ Examples of direct measures include portfolios, exams, papers, projects, presentations, performances, standardized tests, licensure exams, comprehensives, and internship evaluations.

Direct Measure

- An overall course grade is NOT an acceptable direct measure.

- And in various cases, an overall exam, project, or paper grade is not an appropriate measure.

- However, the grading process can be used for assessment, if the classroom exam or assignment actually measures the learning outcome and the criteria for evaluating student work is stated explicitly in writing (usually in the form of a rubric).

Indirect Measure

- Indirect methods such as surveys and interviews ask students to reflect on their learning rather than to demonstrate it.
- Indirect measures also include
  - job placement rates
  - admission rates into graduate programs
  - employer surveys
  - alumni surveys
  - focus groups
  - honors/awards earned by students & alumni
  - student participation rates in research publications
  - conference presentations

Expressing Measures

► Measures should be detailed and specific.

► Measurement should ensure that comparisons are "apples to apples"

► For those programs/courses that are offered at more than one site or by more than one mode, the measure must be duplicated at all sites/modes and the findings must be separated by site/mode.

Expressing Findings Statements

▶ A quantitative finding must be entered for each measure.

▶ Findings should mirror phrasing in the target description.

▶ Begin with a numeral when possible.

▶ Specific numbers are essential for findings; give the actual percentage or numbers that resulted from the measures.

▶ **Include SAMPLE SIZES**

  ▶ The sample size is reported to provide context and add validity to the results.

▶ If a quantitative finding cannot be entered for the measure, please insert a detailed statement to explain why findings are not entered for that particular measure.

Expressing Findings

Example A – One site; reported by semester

 Target: 90% will receive an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

 Findings: Summer 12: 72% (18/25) received an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

   Fall 12: 90% (47/52) received an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

   Spring 13: 77% (35/45) received an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

Example B – One site; combined semesters

 Target: 90% will receive an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

 Findings: 79% (37/48; fall & spring semester combined) received an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

Example C – Dual site; assessment only occurs once a year

 Target: 90% will receive an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

 Findings: Hattiesburg - 81% (22/27; spring-only assessment) received an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

   Gulf Park - 100% (11/11; spring-only assessment) received an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

Example D – Dual site/mode; combined semesters

 Target: 90% will receive an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

 Findings: F2F Fall & Spring--83% (n=12) received an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

   Online Fall & Spring--100% (n=5) received an overall rubric score of 80 or greater.

…PROVIDES EVIDENCE OF SEEKING IMPROVEMENT…

The End of Assessment Is Action

In *Assessment Clear and Simple*, Barbara E. Walvoord (2010) states the goal of assessment is information-based decision making.

"Assessment helps the program determine how well it is achieving its outcomes and suggest effective steps for improvement. That means you should conduct assessment for yourselves and your students, not just for compliance with accreditors. You don't need to collect data you don't use; it's much more important to collect a small amount of useful data than to proliferate data that sit in a drawer or on a computer file. If you are collecting information you are not using, either start using it or stop collecting it. Instead of focusing on compliance, focus on the information you need for wise action." *(Walvoord, 2010, p. 5)*

Action Plans

- An Action Plan is an organized activity undertaken to help programs more effectively achieve intended outcomes

- An Action Plan can be an activity developed by program faculty to improve and grow the program for the future.

- The results of action plans should provide evidence of continuous improvement activities.

- Action Plans do not contain vague phrases such as "we will look into this" or "No Action Required."

The Most Common Actions Resulting from Assessment

Three common actions that result from assessment:

- ▶ Changes to curriculum, requirements, programmatic structures, or other aspects of the students' course of study

- ▶ Changes to the policies, funding, and planning that support learning

- ▶ Faculty development

(Walvoord, 2010, p.5)

Are the Actions Working?

To **close the loop**, programs should not only use assessment information to inform action, but should come back and examine (and document) whether the action led to improvement of student learning.

…BASED ON ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS…

Analysis

- Analysis is the reflection of the program's findings within/for the criteria set for success on the program's intended outcomes.

- The Analysis is a summary of strengths and areas in which improvement is needed.

Analysis

- What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?

- What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?

SACSCOC PRINCIPLES OF ACCREDITATION

SECTION 8

1. The institution identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success. (Student achievement) [CR]

Student Achievement Program Objective

▶ To ensure continued compliance with this SACSCOC Core Requirement all programs must have at least **one Program Objective** focused on student achievement.

▶ *This Objective is labeled O/O in WEAVE.*

▶ Student achievement includes enrollment and retention rates, graduation rate, job placement rate, licensing, and certification.

▶ At least one measure is required for Program Objectives.

Program-Level Assessment Guidelines
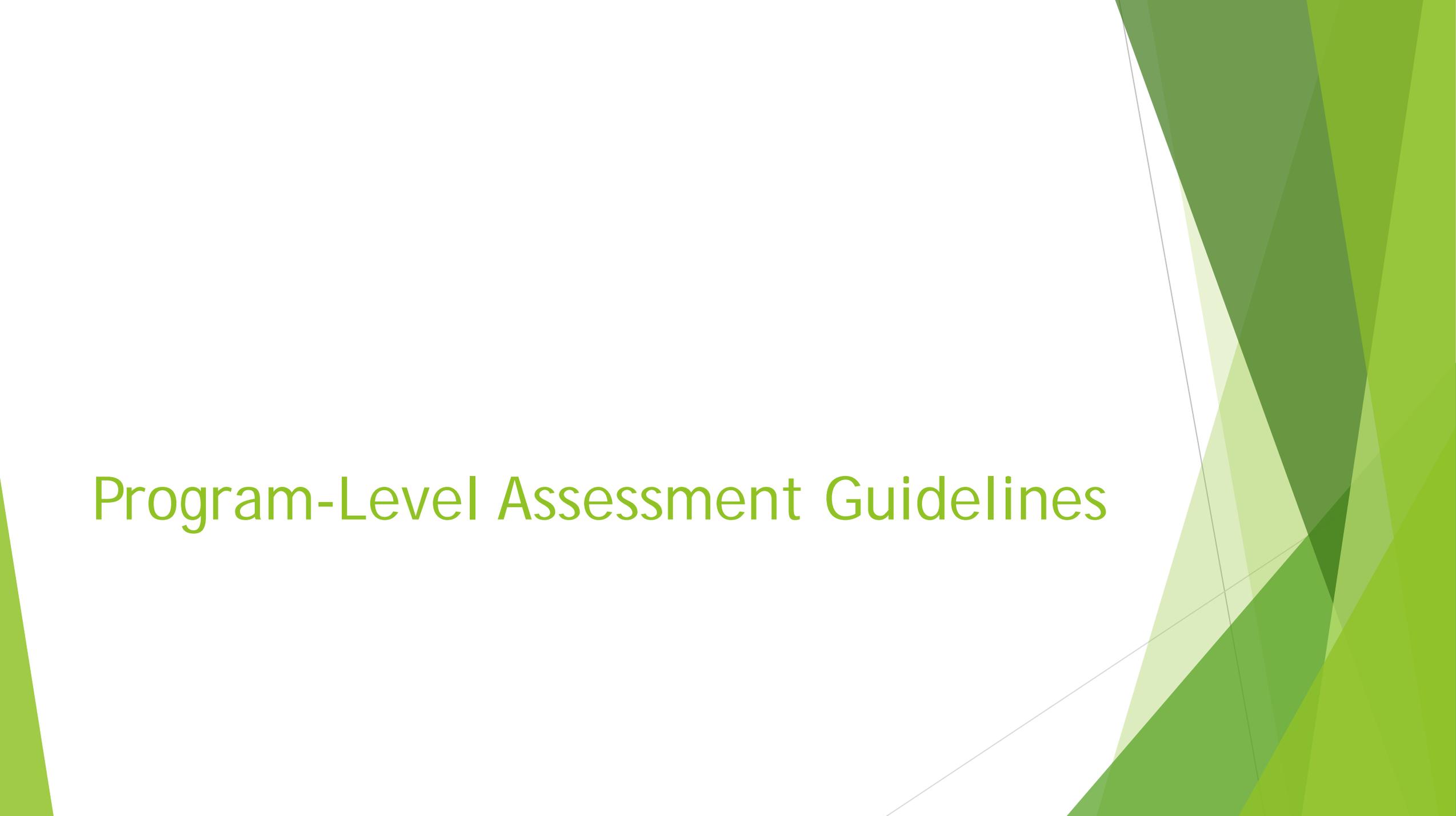
Who Assesses?

- [IHL Academic Program Inventory](#)

- [IR Program Inventory](#)

  - Licensure programs

  - distinct emphasis areas

- Sister Degrees

- En Route Degrees

- Stand-Alone Minors

- Certificate Programs

Who Guides this Assessment?

▶ The **University Assessment Committee** (UAC) directs the assessment process at the University of Southern Mississippi.

▶ Southern Miss follows a two-year planning and annual reporting cycle.

▶ With this cycle, **assessment plans** are in place for **two years**, **action plans** are developed every **two years**, and **assessment reports** are **annual**.

University Assessment Committee

The University Assessment Committee reviews assessment reports in the fall semester to determine if:

- ▶ Assessment Plan and Report Guidelines were followed

- ▶ The Assessment Report supports appropriate SACSCOC standards

▶ These reviews are returned to the departments and presented to the deans and the provost in the spring semester.

# Assessment Plan Requirements

▶ Program-level Assessment Plans have a minimum of five outcomes.

▶ At least four outcomes must be Student Learning Outcomes

▶ At least one outcome must be a Program Objective focused on student achievement

▶ **Each student learning outcome** must have **two measures**; one must be a direct measure.

▶ At least **one measure** is required for **program objectives**.

▶ Overall course grades cannot be used as measures.

Assessment Report Requirements

▶ Findings

▶ Action Plans

▶ Updated Implemented Action Plans

▶ Analysis

▶ Program Summary

▶ Continuous Improvement Initiatives/Additional Action Plans

▶ Closing the Loop/Action Plan Tracking

Certificates and Stand-Alone Minors Assessment Plan & Report Guidelines

▶ Minimum of _two_ student learning outcomes

▶ Each student learning outcome must be assessed with at least _one_ direct measure.

▶ Findings (separated by site/mode if applicable)

▶ Action Plans

▶ 2-part Analysis to include Closing the Loop as applicable
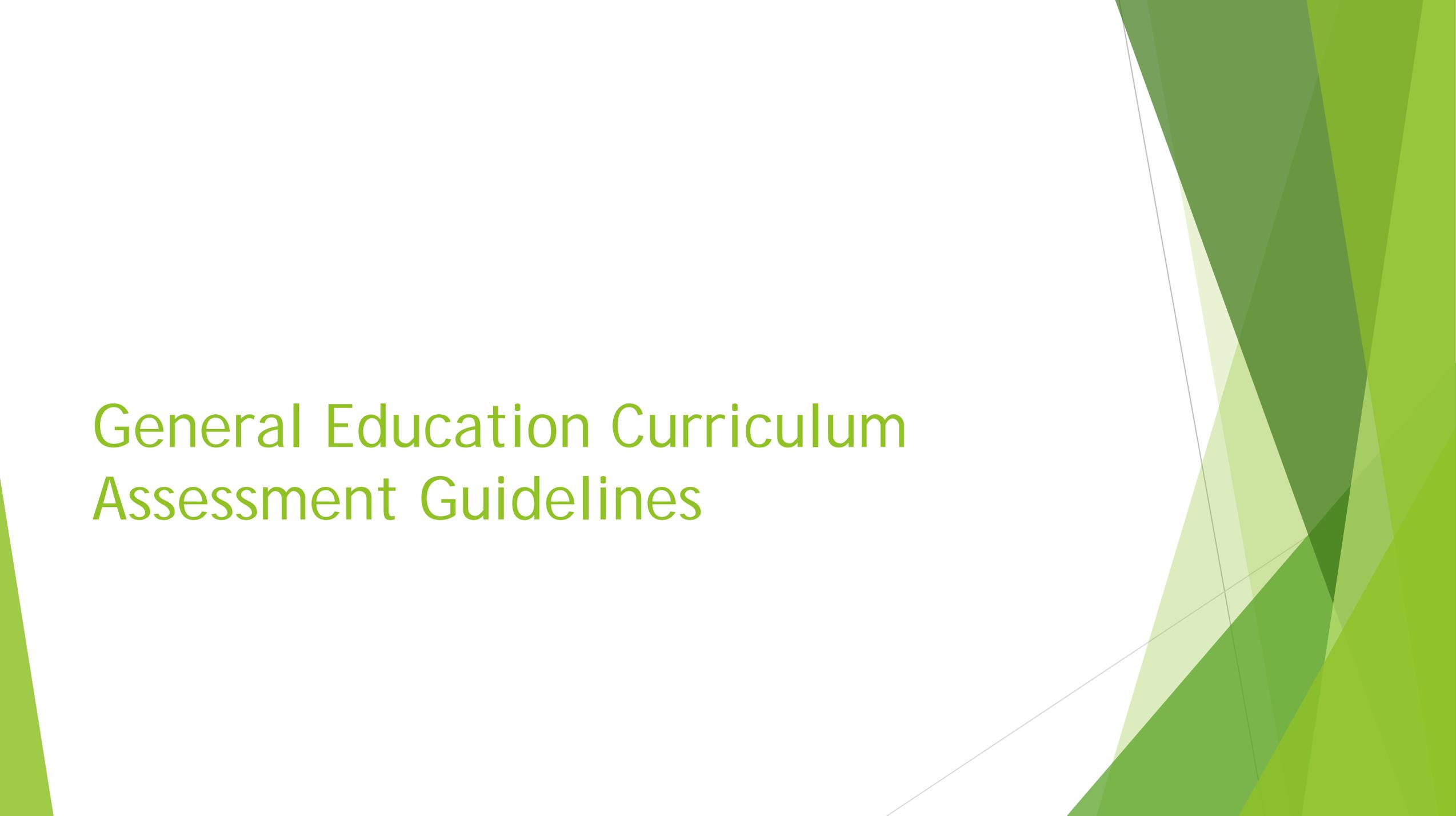
General Education Curriculum Assessment Guidelines

Who Assesses?

All GEC 01- 06 courses and select Communication Studies (CMS) courses are required to be assessed based on the GEC student learning outcomes.

- **GEC 01. Written Communication (6 hours)**
  - ENG 101: English 101 (Composition 1)
  - ENG 102: English 102 (Composition 2)
- **GEC 02. Natural Science (8 hours minimum)**
- **GEC 03. Humanities (9 hours)**

Students complete:

- ENG 203 - World Literature 3 hrs.

Students complete two courses; one history course required:

- HIS 101 - World Civilizations: Beginnings to 1500 C.E. 3 hrs.
- HIS 102 - World Civilizations: 1500 to the present 3 hrs.
- PHI 151 - Introduction to Philosophy 3 hrs.
- PHI 171 - Ethics and Good Living 3 hrs.
- REL 131 - Comparative Religion 3 hrs.

Who Assesses?

- **GEC 04. Aesthetic Values (3 hours)**

  Students complete one course:

  - ART 130 - Art Appreciation 3 hrs.
  - DAN 130 - Dance Appreciation 3 hrs.
  - MUS 165 - The Enjoyment of Music 3 hrs.
  - THE 100 - Theatrical Expressions 3 hrs.

- **GEC 05. Social and Behavioral Sciences (6 hours)**

  Students complete two courses:

  - ANT 101 - The Human Experience: A Global Perspective on Human Diversity 3 hrs.
  - ECO 101 - Basic Economics 3 hrs.
  - GHY 101 - World Geography: Dynamics of a Changing Earth 3 hrs.
  - PS 101 - American Government 3 hrs.
  - PSY 110 - General Psychology 3 hrs.
  - SOC 101 - Understanding Society: Principles of Sociology 3 hrs.

Who Assesses?

- ▶ GEC 06. Mathematics (3 hours)

  Students complete one course:

  - ▶ MAT 100 - Quantitative Reasoning 3 hrs.
  - ▶ MAT 101 - College Algebra 3 hrs.
  - ▶ Higher-numbered mathematics course

- ▶ GEC 08. Speaking-Intensive Requirement (3 hours)

  Select 1 course:

  - ▶ CMS 111 - Public Speaking 3 hrs.
  - ▶ CMS 305 - Interpersonal Communication 3 hrs.
  - ▶ CMS 320 - Professional Communication 3 hrs.
  - ▶ CMS 330 - Small-Group Communication 3 hrs.

Who Guides this Assessment?

▶ The **General Education Committee** of the **Academic Council** establishes policies and procedures for and monitors the ongoing development of the General Education Curriculum through annual evaluation of courses included in the General Education Curriculum. The General Education Curriculum Committee works **in tandem with the University Assessment Committee** in undertaking the annual evaluation of the General Education Curriculum.

New Assessment Process for GEC Courses

▶ GEC Course Assessment is now in WEAVE

▶ WEAVE submissions for GEC courses are due on the same dates as programs

▶ Action plans are to be submitted at least every other year

▶ Separate WEAVE field for GEC writing requirement

▶ A Syllabus from each site and mode of delivery is required

2016 SACSCOC Reaffirmation

2016 SACSCOC Reaffirmation

- The Off-site Reaffirmation Committee noted that institution provided samples of Detailed Assessment Reports for all degree levels (including certificates), teaching sites, and modes of delivery for a variety of academic programs in its six colleges. The reports included the identification of expected learning outcomes for the students, how those outcomes are assessed, targets for successful outcomes achievement, and discussion regarding how the collected data is used to make improvements.

- Additionally, the institution described how the assessment cycle is directed, and by whom. Guidelines, policies, and administration were included in this description. Samples of the reviewers' reviews of reports were included as well.

2016 SACSCOC Reaffirmation

▶ Following a review of the detailed assessment reports provided by the institution and conversations with University personnel, the On-site Reaffirmation Committee noted that is clear that the institution identifies student learning outcomes, assesses the achievement of those outcomes and makes improvements based on those assessments. The institution deploys assessment for program-level student learning outcomes assessment; emphasis-level for plans of study that vary greatly; certificate programs and distance education, dual-site, and teaching sites.

▶ On-site interviews with the Director, Institutional Effectiveness and several present and past members of the University Assessment Committee demonstrated a culture of assessment that enables the university to achieve its educational mission. In summary, the Committee reviewed documents, conducted interviews in support of the institution's case for compliance, and affirms the findings of the Off-site Review Committee.

Let's Look at WEAVE