ARTICLE 1: Name
University Assessment Committee

ARTICLE 2: Purpose
The purpose of the University Assessment Committee is to support the process of continual self-evaluation and improvement across all academic and administrative units at The University of Southern Mississippi. The committee’s primary responsibility is to ensure that the institution complies with the Principles of Accreditation for Quality Enhancement published by the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools with regards to assessment as stated in Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1:

3.3.1. The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: (Institutional Effectiveness)
   3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
   3.3.1.2 administrative support services
   3.3.1.3 educational support services
   3.3.1.4 research within its educational mission, if appropriate
   3.3.1.5 community/public service within its educational mission, if appropriate

ARTICLE 3: Relationships and Responsibilities

Section 3.1. Relationships
Chain of Accountability:
University Assessment Committee
   Office of Institutional Effectiveness
   Associate Provost
   Provost
   University President
   Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Section 3.2. Responsibilities
The University Assessment Committee:
   • Advises and supports the Office of Institutional Effectiveness in all assessment matters
   • Assists in reviewing continuous improvement as demonstrated by action plans, analysis, annual reports, and other assessment documentation.
Section 3.2.1. Responsibilities of the Chair
The Co-Chairs of the University Assessment Committee are responsible for establishing membership, calling and presiding over meetings, acting as spokesmen for the University Assessment Committee when required, and organizing the annual Assessment Showcase. One Co-Chair represents Academic Programs and one Co-Chair represents Administrative Units. The Administrative Co-Chair assists in notifying Administrative Units of assessment responsibilities/cycles.

Section 3.2.2. Responsibilities of the Director of Institutional Effectiveness
The Director of Institutional Effectiveness is responsible for providing clerical support to the UAC, recording meeting minutes, placing minutes on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website, guiding the assessment process, assisting in organizing the annual Assessment Showcase and intersecting with the Southern Associations of Colleges and Schools. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness establishes routine meetings with the Administrative Co-Chair to review administrative assessment progress.

Section 3.2.3. Responsibilities of the Voting Members
Voting members of the University Assessment Committee are responsible for representing their academic or administrative unit on the committee, attending all meetings, reviewing assigned assessment reports and plans, voting on agenda items, reporting on and promoting assessment matters to their respective academic or administrative units, and attending the annual Assessment Showcase. In the review of assessment reports, members serving as university representatives will be assigned departments as needed, independent of home college or unit.

ARTICLE 4: Members

Section 4.1. Faculty Representatives
Faculty members are appointed by the respective deans, with at least two representatives from each college and one from the University Libraries. If a college has 35 or more academic programs that require the submission of an assessment report, additional members may be appointed by the respective dean at the ratio of one additional member for every 15 additional academic programs or fraction thereof. Every third year, beginning with 2013-14, the number of representatives will be reviewed and reallocated based on the number of programs.

In addition, the President of Faculty Senate, the Chairs of Academic Council, Graduate Council, and the Council of Chairs will be invited to participate on the committee or they may designate a representative from their respective bodies. A representative from the QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan) Advisory Board Assessment Committee and a representative from Academic Council’s General Education Committee will be invited to participate on the committee.

Section 4.2. Administrative Representatives
The Executive Cabinet appoints eight committee members from administrative units. In addition, the president of Staff Council will be invited to participate on the committee or he/she may designate a representative from his/her respected body.

Section 4.3. Ex Officio Members
Ex Officio members of the committee include the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, and a representative from the Office of the Provost. Ex Officio members do not vote.

Section 4.4. Co-Chairs
One Co-Chair represents Academic Programs and one Co-Chair represents Administrative Units. The co-chairs of the University Assessment Committee are elected for a one year term by the committee, by the end of spring semester for the following academic year. The co-chairs serve for one year, and may serve two additional years (for a total of three years). Members rotating off the committee are not eligible to be elected as co-chairs. Ex-officio committee members are not eligible for election to chair. The chair of one University Standing Committee may not chair another University Standing Committee.

Section 4.5. Term of Service and Rotation
Each year, in August, one third of the committee is rotated off and a new third is seated. Appointed at the end of the spring semester, the faculty and administrative unit committee members serve a three-year term, beginning with the fall semester. Members may not serve more than two consecutive terms; however, former members are eligible to serve again after a one-year absence from the committee.

Representatives from the Faculty Senate, Academic Council, Graduate Council, Council of Chairs, and Staff Council will be appointed annually by the current president or chair of the respective body. Representatives from the General Education Committee and Quality Enhancement Plan Assessment Committee will be invited annually.

Section 4.6. Unexpired Terms of Service
If a member leaves the committee before the three-year term is completed, a replacement will be appointed, as described in Sections 4.1 and 4.2.

ARTICLE 5: Meetings

Section 5.1. Regular Meetings
The co-chairs of the committee, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, or the representative from the Office of the Provost may call meetings. Monthly meetings are held during the academic year. In special circumstances, additional meetings may be called as needed. Meeting dates must be announced at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meetings and included in meeting minutes. Meetings are open to the University Community and to the public in accordance with the Mississippi Meetings Open Act (MCA § 25-41-1).

Section 5.2. Quorum
A quorum shall consist of not less than a simple majority of the voting members of the committee. No business shall be conducted if less than a majority of voting members is present.

Section 5.3. Voting
A motion carries when a majority of voting members present cast an affirmative vote.
Section 5.4. Proxy
For business conducted at the University Assessment Committee meeting, voting members may designate a proxy. Written notification of proxy must be sent to the Committee Chair and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness. Only a voting member of the committee may serve as a proxy for another member. No member can hold more than one proxy at a time.

Section 5.5: Removal for Cause
Committee members who fail to attend meetings or to actively engage in the business of the committee may be removed by a majority vote of the remaining members of the committee.

Section 5.6. Meeting Minutes
Minutes of each meeting of the University Assessment Committee for the past five years must be maintained in the Office of the Institutional Effectiveness and posted on the Web site of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The Recording Secretary will be the Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

ARTICLE 6: Changes to University Assessment Committee Bylaws
The Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the University Assessment Committee by a two-thirds vote, provided that a quorum (a majority of all voting members) is present and that the changes were submitted in writing at a previous meeting.

ARTICLE 7: Annual Report and Recommendations
At the conclusion of the academic year, the Co-Chairs of the University of Assessment Committee and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness will prepare an annual report of the committee’s activities and any recommendations for submission to the Associate Provost by June 1 of each year.