

Questions to Ask Assessing Student Learning Outcomes

Jackson State University
Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment

Mission Statement

1. Do you have a mission statement?
2. Does this mission provide the framework for your goals?

Goals

1. What major concepts and experiences do you want your students to have?
2. What are the broad-based areas you want to assess?
3. Are these consistent with your mission statement?

Objectives

1. What are your desired specific student learning outcomes?
2. Are these learning objectives related to and in alignment with your goals and your mission statement?
3. Are your objectives written in terms of what impact your program should be having on the students?
4. Are your objectives too vague (i.e. like an objective that begins: Students will understand...)?
5. Are your objectives measurable?

Curriculum

1. Where in the curriculum are students having certain experiences that lead to your desired outcomes?
2. Where in the curriculum are students applying concepts learned in your program?
3. Do you have a course matrix that represents/illustrates where students meet learning objectives and apply knowledge?

Assessments

1. What measures are already in place? Which new ones will be implemented?
2. Are you collecting data from a variety of sources including students, faculty, employers, community, etc.?
3. What instruments need to be developed (if any)?

Process of Assessment and Analysis

1. Will you look at data in a longitudinal manner?
2. Are you assessing each of the goals and objectives?
3. Are you assessing the skills students have or are you only getting at the attitudes/perceptions students have of what they learned (the latter is important but not sufficient).
4. Are both faculty and students (and possibly other groups such as alumni) assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum through multiple measures such as exams and evaluations?
5. What do scores represent (if you are using instruments to assess)?

Next Steps in Assessment and Program Evaluation

1. What are your next steps in assessment?
2. Are there other questions you need answered about your program? If so, will you use, for example, focus groups, portfolios, surveys, etc. as measures?

Program Improvement

1. What is the process you'll use to revise programs as feedback from assessment is received?