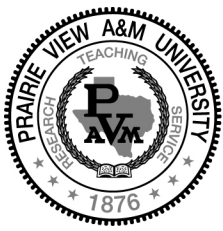


# PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY



## ASSESSMENT RESOURCE MANUAL



# PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas A&M University System

August 21, 2008

The Assessment & Data Analysis Team welcomes you to the Annual Faculty & Staff Conference.

Under the advisement of the Provost and the Associate Provost, the Assessment & Data Analysis Team is commissioned to assist in the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Accreditation of Colleges and Schools (SACS) by providing the necessary resources, data, expertise, and information needed for the development and execution of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and the Compliance Certification. Additionally, the Assessment & Data Analysis Team is in place to support administrators, deans, department heads, and faculty in determining the extent to which student learning is taking place and how our University can improve student learning. The rising standard of accountability across institutions of higher education motivates our institution to assess, demonstrate and improve institutional effectiveness.

Assessment efforts are critical to the vitality and sustainability of our institution. Therefore, we urge you to review the information herein and consider both the importance of your role in the SACS reaffirmation project and the ways in which we can assist you in this effort.

We hope that you find the conference rewarding and beneficial in assisting you in your roles and responsibilities at Prairie View A & M University. Further information concerning assessment efforts for our institution is forthcoming. Until that time please do not hesitate to contact our offices with questions, comments, or feedback.

Sincerely,

Kenyatta Phelps, Ph.D., College of Arts and Sciences  
Assessment & Data Analysis Team, Chair

## **Purpose of the Assessment & Data Analysis Team**

The purpose of the Assessment & Data Analysis Team is two-fold. Primarily the Team is charged to assist PVAMU SACS committees in demonstrating compliance with standards outlined by SACS. The Assessment & Data Analysis Team will assist in developing and completing the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). According to the Commission on Colleges and SACS, an institution is in compliance when:

The Institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that (1) includes a broad-based institutional process identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment, (2) focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution, (3) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP, and (5) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement (Core Requirement 2.12)<sup>1</sup>.

The secondary purpose of the Assessment & Data Analysis Team is to demonstrate and improve institutional effectiveness. The Commission on Colleges and SACS require the following:

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 (Comprehensive Standards 3.3.1):

- educational programs, to include student learning outcomes (3.3.1.1)
- administrative support services (3.3.1.2)
- educational support services (3.3.1.3)
- research within its educational mission, if appropriate (3.3.1.4)
- community/public service within its educational mission, if appropriate (3.3.1.5)

By meeting these standards, the Team will assist the University in fulfilling its mission.

## **Services Provided**

The Assessment & Data Analysis Team will provide a variety of support including, but not limited to:

- assisting SACS committees and colleges in analyzing and summarizing data.
- disseminating assessment reports to the campus community.
- assisting academic programs in designing instruments to assess student learning.
- providing workshops and trainings on program and course assessment.

## **What is Assessment?**

PVAMU seriously takes into consideration the extent to which students are learning and developing. Significant student learning occurs when there is a change in knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In essence, did the college and/or program significantly impact student learning? To determine if our students are learning and where improvement is needed, we engage in a variety of institutional assessments. Assessment is the process of gathering information using various methods to systematically gauge the effectiveness of the institution and academic programs to document student learning, knowledge, behaviors, and skills as a result of their collegiate experiences. The University's mission is fulfilled when these findings are used to inform program development, instruction, and subsequently enhance student learning<sup>2</sup>.

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1 Commission on Colleges/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement. 2008 Edition.

2 Palomba, Catherine A. and Trudy W. Banta. 1999. Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in



There are many instruments available to assess student learning. PVAMU utilizes direct and indirect measures. Direct assessments are techniques that require students to demonstrate knowledge and skills in a particular area. Alternatively, indirect assessment techniques ask students to reflect on their institution and academic program, and indicate if they believe they have learned and changed as a result. Below are examples of the types of instruments used for direct and indirect measures.

### **Direct Measures**

Capstone projects	Case Studies
Standardized Tests (GRE subject exams)	Reflective Journals
Comprehensive exams	Certification Exams/Licensure Exams
National Major Field Achievement Tests	Course Embedded Assessments
Internships/Clinical Evaluation	Pre and Posttests
Reflective Journals Portfolio Evaluation	
Senior Thesis or Major Project	

### **Indirect Measures**

Alumni Survey	Graduation and Retention Rates
Focus Groups	Exit Interviews
Departmental Survey	Employer Survey
Graduation and Retention Rates	

### **Using Assessment Results**

Assessment is the continuous process of gathering and using student learning and development information. Student learning outcome data should be used by University Units in the implementation and development of curricular, co-curricular, environmental, and institutional improvement. Assessment results are used not to evaluate individuals or programs. Rather, assessment results provide a gauge of the extent to which the department, unit, school, college and/or institution is achieving its mission. Student learning is the paramount goal of assessment.

As Units respond to the results questions (What does your assessment data tell you about student learning and/or service delivery? How will the assessment data be used to improve student learning and/or service delivery?), they should continue to:

1. determine how to best use assessment data to improve student learning and teaching,
2. determine how to best use assessment data to inform external constituencies, and
3. collaborate with Student Affairs to implement strategies that promote learning outcomes.

Institutional effectiveness requires the successful use of assessment plans. A culture of assessment reflects that a climate exists in which focused examination is occurring regarding “what we say we are doing” and “what we want to do.” The administration, faculty, and staff must understand and be responsive to the context of assessment from external agencies.

### **Why should we conduct assessment?**

There are numerous benefits to conducting assessment.

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## **Students benefit because:**

- they receive feedback from faculty regarding the strengths and weaknesses regarding their work.
- they are able to use their documented performance for employment opportunities and graduate school admission.
- they are able to perform better when expectations are clearly outlined.

## **Faculty benefit because:**

- they can use the assessment data to modify their courses to enhance student learning experiences.
- the assessment data can be used as evidence of quality teaching for promotion.

## **Administrators benefit because:**

- the information gathered from assessments can be used to demonstrate that campus resources are used effectively.
- they can document the quality of the institution or program to external constituents, including an accreditation agency (e.g., SACS).

## **Available Institutional Data**

Given the culture of research and assessment on our campus, PVAMU faculty, staff and students have consistently been involved in many surveys to assess their opinions, attitudes, behaviors, and skills. Some of the instruments used are national surveys that allow comparisons with benchmark institutions. In addition, some surveys are used to provide multiple perspectives. For example, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) asks students to indicate how many hours they spend per week on school-related activities (e.g., homework, studying for exams, projects, etc.). The faculty companion to NSSE, The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, asks faculty to indicate how many hours their students spend on the same school-related activities. Therefore, responses between faculty and student are compared. The following are instruments which are either currently used, or will be used in the future at PVAMU:

**National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE):** The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) obtains, on an annual basis, information from hundreds of four-year colleges and universities nationwide about student participation in programs and activities institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college. Survey items on The National Survey of Student Engagement represent empirically confirmed “good practices” in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college. The project is coordinated by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.

Website: <https://websurvey.indiana.edu/cpr/login.cfm>

**Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE):** The Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE) was designed to complement the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which is administered to undergraduate students. The faculty version focuses on:

- Faculty perceptions of how often students engage in different activities.
- The importance faculty place on various areas of learning and development.
- The nature and frequency of faculty-student interactions.
- How faculty members organize their time, both in and out of the classroom.

The project is coordinated by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research. FSSE is designed to measure faculty expectations for student engagement in educational practices that are empirically linked with

high levels of learning and development. Since 2003, over 99,000 faculty members from more than 465 different colleges and universities have responded to the survey. Population: faculty members.

Website: <http://fsse.iub.edu/index.cfm>

**Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE):** The Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement collects data about entering college students' high school academic and co-curricular experiences, as well as their expectations for participating in educationally purposeful activities during the first college year. BCSSE administration usually takes place prior to start of fall classes and is designed to be paired with a NSSE administration at the end of the first college year, providing an in-depth understanding of first-year student engagement on campus. The project is coordinated by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research.

Website: <http://bcsse.iub.edu/>

**Measures of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP):** The Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) test assesses 4 core skill areas — critical thinking, reading, writing and mathematics — in a single test that the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) has selected as a gauge of general education outcomes. Institutions can also add an optional essay for additional insight into students' general knowledge and critical thinking skills.

Website: <http://www.ets.org/portal/site/ets/menuitem.1488512ecfd5b8849a77b13bc3921509/?vgnextoid=ff3aa5e44df4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD&vgnnextchannel=f98546f1674f4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD>

**Academic Program Survey (APS):** The Academic Program Survey is a locally designed survey distributed to all graduating students each semester. The survey is designed to ascertain a student's exiting feelings concerning his experience at PVAMU, both in general and within a particular major. The survey was given only in paper form until 2006, when it migrated to an online format. Participation has always been a problem; even when the surveys were handed to each student, barely half of the students responded. The current online version is designed for the student to complete before obtaining the online graduation forms.

Website: <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/667.asp>

**Program Review:** Program Review is a locally designed statistical summary of all PVAMU colleges, departments, and programs. The document is produced every semester using Coordinating Board certified data. Information includes number of faculty, number of students, ethnic/gender breakdowns, and semester credit hours earned within the program each semester.

**Cooperative Institutional Research Program Survey (CIRP):** The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey is designed to be of immediate use to institutions. Participating institutions receive a detailed profile of their entering freshman class, as well as national normative data for students in similar types of institutions (e.g., public four-year colleges, moderately selective Protestant colleges, highly selective Catholic colleges, public two-year colleges). These campus profile reports, together with the national normative profile, provide important data that are useful in a variety of program and policy areas.

Website: <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/cirpoverview.php>

**Collegiate Learning Assessment:** The Collegiate Learning Assessment test (CLA) combines two types of

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testing instruments: a) Performance Tasks- students must complete an authentic activity (such as preparing a memo or policy recommendation) by using a series of documents that must be reviewed and evaluated. Completion of these instruments does not require the recall of particular facts or formulas; instead, the measures assess the demonstrated ability to interpret, analyze and synthesize information; and b) the Analytic Writing Tasks evaluate students' ability to articulate complex ideas, examine claims and evidence, support ideas with relevant reasons and examples, sustain a coherent discussion, and use standard written English. Each academic year, a sample of 100 freshmen and 100 seniors are assessed. Total testing time for each group is only 90 minutes.

Website: [http://www.cae.org/content/pro\\_collegiate.htm](http://www.cae.org/content/pro_collegiate.htm)

**Higher Education Research Institute:** The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) Faculty Survey is designed to provide colleges and universities with timely information about the attitudes, experiences, concerns, job satisfaction, workload, teaching practices, and professional activities of collegiate faculty and administrators. Information resulting from the survey can be used to facilitate self study and accreditation activities; inform campus planning and policy analysis; enhance faculty development programs; and improve students' educational experiences. Population: faculty and administrators.

Website: <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/index.php>

**PVAMU's Factbook:** PVAMU's Factbook is the combination of student and faculty demographic, degrees awarded, headcount, operating expenditures, and enrollment information.

Website: <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/665.asp>

**Survey of Organizational Excellence:** The Survey of Organizational Excellence ("The Governor's Survey") was developed in Texas in 1979 in response to Governor William Clements' desire to gauge employee views toward working for the State of Texas. Essentially our charge was to create an instrument that would assess the working climate of Texas State government from the perspective of the employee. Over time the Survey has increasingly become a tool to build quality and excellence in organizations, not just a gauge for employee opinions of work and working conditions. The Survey is now an instrument utilized by both public and private organizations in an effort to continuously improve and meet the challenges of the future.

Website: <http://www.utexas.edu/research/cswr/survey/site/index.html>

**Student Opinion Survey (SOS):** The Student Opinion Survey is a locally designed survey distributed campus wide each semester. The survey is designed to ascertain a student's exiting feelings concerning his experience in each class. The survey is voluntary, although all faculty and students are strongly urged to participate. It has been proposed to adopt TAMUS opinion survey, which compares system institutions to replace the SOS.

Website: <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/667.asp>

**Grade Distribution Report:** The Grade Distribution Report is a locally designed statistical summary of all grades awarded at PVAMU for each course each semester. The document shows the grade distribution for each course, department, and college.

Website: <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/664.asp>

**LBB Performance Measures:** The Legislative Budget Board (LBB) performance measures are the basis for university funding in Texas. The thirty measures cover such areas as persistence, graduation rates, and pass rate in professional programs and are submitted twice annually (November and April). The data appears in the biennial appropriations bills.

Website: <http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/>

**THECB Accountability Measures:** The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) annually collects data on a variety of subjects, including persistence, graduation rates, pass rates in professional programs, and enrollment. The data is open to the public at the THECB Accountability Website.

Website: <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/>

**Closing the Gaps:** The Closing the Gaps Plan, updated annually, benchmarks enrollment and graduation rates for each Texas state university. The plan stems from a legislative mandate to increase the number of Texans who attend college and graduate. Each institution's plan is available at the Closing the Gaps website at THECB.

Website: <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/ClosingTheGaps/default.cfm>

## Resources

PVAMU Office of Institutional Research <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/627.asp>

PVAMU SACS Document Portal <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/4041.asp>

Institutional Review Board <http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>

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