

# Marquette University

## PROCEDURES FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING In Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

### ASSESSMENT PLANS

The assessment plan provides the framework for how assessment will be carried out in the program or unit. All certificate and degree programs and designated co-curricular units are expected to produce a plan for assessment of student learning or development. Required plan elements include:

- 1) Statements detailing what students should know and be able to do upon completion of the learning experience (learning outcomes). A program can have any number of learning outcomes, not all of which need to be assessed every year. Most programs define 3 – 5 learning outcomes. See [SLO FAQs](#) and [checklist](#) on how to write effective learning outcomes.
- 2) Specification of how and where students will demonstrate the learning described in the outcome statements; how that learning will be evaluated, and by whom (methods and measures). See [M&M guidelines](#) on identifying and designing tasks to assess student learning.
- 3) Description of how student learning evidence will be compiled, shared and used.

Assessment plans may also include statements of program goals and objectives, student learning outcome rotation, benchmarks and targets, and dates for program review/discipline accreditation visits.

The University Assessment Committee reviews all new assessment plans and any for which programs request advice or feedback. Assessment plans are posted on the [assessment website](#). Programs are encouraged to review these plans annually and make changes as warranted.

### ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Assessment results are reported annually in the University's Assessment Reporting and Management System (ARMS). Reports include:

- 1) A program overview page with program and Program Assessment Leader (PAL) identification, optional statement of program goals and objectives, optional curriculum map, and an indication of whether the department chair has read and approved the report;
- 2) Statements of student learning outcomes with links to relevant institutional core learning outcome(s);
- 3) Descriptions of methods and measures, including number of students assessed, optional upload of rubric or other instrument, categorization of type of direct or indirect measure used, discussion of evidence (results), and benchmark or target against which actual performance is compared;

4) A reflection page that describes the conclusions reached about student learning based on analysis of assessment evidence, and follow-up actions.

Results can be summarized in any way that yields meaningful information for faculty or staff. There is no threshold number of participants for reporting assessment results; programs with few students should enter results but may want to collect data for several years before reaching conclusions or taking follow-up action.

To gain access to ARMS, contact Sharron Ronco, Assessment Director, at 414-288-6390 or Sharron.Ronco@Marquette.edu. Administrative access to ARMS is granted to all program assessment leaders for creating/editing their own program reports, and to all faculty for viewing.

### **DISSEMINATION OF ASSESSMENT FINDINGS**

Once assessment results are collected for an academic year or other assessment cycle, program faculty meet to discuss findings and their implications for the program. These are recorded in the assessment reports in ARMS.

PALs convene once a year in November to share assessment reports with colleagues, and provide a written record of feedback and advice.

Programs are expected to share key findings from the assessment of on-going student performance with their students. At a minimum, this would include action steps to improve student learning and how assessment data was used to make programmatic or instructional changes.

An annual Institutional Assessment Report is made available to internal and external audiences in April. The report typically includes:

- A summary of program and co-curricular assessment reports (number of programs assessed, types of measures used, planned program improvements, best practice examples);
- Selected student survey results on self-reported development of abilities;
- Key dashboard indicators (retention and graduation rates, job placement information, graduate school going rate, pass rates on licensure/certification exams);
- Summary information from assessment of knowledge areas and institutional core learning outcomes.

## Annual Assessment Activity Calendar

### Academic and Co-curricular programs

Timeline	Month	Activity	Responsibility
<b>Fall Semester</b>	August - September	<p>Program faculty/unit staff review assessment results from previous academic year.</p> <p>Review assessment plans and make any needed adjustments.</p> <p>Training for new Program Assessment Leaders</p>	<p>Academic and co-curricular programs</p> <p>Academic and co-curricular programs</p> <p>University Assessment Committee</p>
	October	<p>Training in ARMS for new and current Program Assessment Leaders (PALS).</p> <p>Complete assessment reports for previous academic year in ARMS</p> <p>Fall Assessment Newsletter</p>	<p>Assessment Data Coordinator</p> <p>PALs</p> <p>Assessment Director and Coordinator</p>
	November	<p>Peer Review Working Seminar</p> <p>Peer Review feedback shared with PALS, Chairs and Deans</p>	<p>University Assessment Committee</p> <p>Assessment Director and Coordinator</p>
	December	<p>Individual follow-up on assessment reports in need of revision.</p> <p>Complete data collection for fall semester assessments</p>	<p>Assessment Director</p> <p>Academic and co-curricular programs</p>

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Spring Semester</b>	January	ARMS rollover to current academic year.	Assessment Data Coordinator
	February – March	Workshops for faculty and staff on various assessment topics	Assessment Director
	March	Spring Assessment Newsletter	Assessment Director and Coordinator
	April	Institutional Assessment Report	Assessment Director
	May	Complete data collection for current academic year assessments	Academic programs and co-curricular units
<b>Summer Semester</b>	June		
	July	Prepare report for CCRC on core learning outcomes.  Prepare report for Knowledge Areas results for CCRC.	Assessment Director  Assessment Director
	August		

## Assessment Terms Used at Marquette University

Terms	Definition
Action Steps	Describe the actions to be taken based on student learning evidence. Action Steps are reported with program assessment reports on the Reflection page in ARMS.
Analytic Rubric	Lists each criterion or component that scorers rate as they read or observe student work. Analytic rubrics produce multiple ratings for a single product. <a href="#">Example 1</a> <a href="#">Example 2</a>
ARMS	Acronym for <b>A</b> ssessment <b>R</b> eporting <b>M</b> anagement <b>S</b> ystem, Marquette’s online assessment reporting tool. Access is located on the <a href="#">Assessment webpage</a> .
Authentic Assessment	Asks students to demonstrate learning using real-life tasks. Example: Having students analyze a case study with actual data.
Benchmarks	Empirically-developed standards or criteria against which actual results can be measured. Benchmarking with student learning outcomes is a multi-step process that includes choosing the type of benchmark, agreeing on performance standards, and setting targets for students’ collective performance.
Capstone Course	Integrates knowledge, concepts, and skills associated with an entire sequence of study in a program. This method of assessment is unique because the capstone itself becomes an instrument to measure student learning in the program. Capstone projects typically require higher-level thinking skills, problem-solving, creative thinking, and integration of learning from various sources.
Co-Curricular program	Planned activities and formal programs that add to and support student learning. Example units include Service Learning, Study Abroad, Campus Ministry and the Career Services Center.
Curriculum Map	A matrix that displays where program learning outcomes are addressed in the program’s courses or experiences. Typically, outcomes are listed down the left-hand column and courses across the top. A letter indicator is used to show where the outcomes are introduced, reinforced, or assessed. <a href="#">Example</a>
Direct Measures	Measures that examine or observe student knowledge, skills, attitudes or behaviors. Examples include tests, written work, portfolios, and observations of student behavior. <a href="#">Measures List</a>
Embedded Assessment	A means of gathering information about student learning that is built into and a natural part of the course. Embedded assessments do double-duty: They yield information to assign grades to individual students, and provide evidence of collective student progress in achieving learning outcomes.

Evidence	In ARMS, evidence refers to the results of measuring student learning. Evidence typically is reported as data tables or summaries of performance.
Holistic Rubric	Used to evaluate student work as a whole. Lists features of a work that scorers use to make global judgments. Holistic rubrics produce a single rating for a student product. <a href="#">Example</a>
Indirect Measures	Measures that evaluate the perceived extent or value of learning. They are proxy signs of what students may be learning. Examples include surveys and other self-reports, retention and graduation rates, job placement rates. <a href="#">Measures List</a>
Inter-rater reliability	The degree to which different individual raters or observers agree in their scoring.
Learning Outcomes	Statements detailing what students should know and be able to do upon completion of the learning experience (course, academic or co-curricular program, core curriculum, etc.)
Methods & measures	In ARMS, these describe how, when and where the learning outcome was assessed.
Program Goals/Objectives	Broad statements of what the program or curriculum hope to achieve. Goals provide a framework for determining more specific objectives, and should be consistent with program or institutional mission.
PAL	Acronym for <b>Program Assessment Leader</b> . PALs are responsible for coordination of the assessment processes in their designated programs: Defining measurable student learning and development outcomes; broad dissemination of these outcomes in web-based and print documents; collecting and summarizing data on student learning and development; disseminating results to faculty and staff for discussion; and formally reporting results and areas for improvement to the university's assessment reporting system.
Peer Review	Marquette University's peer review assessment process sets aside one day each year for academic and co-curricular program assessment leaders to convene as a group and review each other's assessment activities, offering feedback and advice.
Portfolio	A purposeful collection of artifacts that demonstrate a student's development or achievement.
Reflection	In ARMS, the reflection describes the conclusions that the program faculty/staff reached about student learning based on their analysis of assessment evidence.

Rubric	A set of criteria used to assess student work products or performance accompanied by a rating scale or descriptors of various levels of student performance.
S.M.A.R.T.	Acronym for characteristics of good learning outcome statements: <b>S</b> pecific, <b>M</b> easurable, <b>A</b> ttainable, <b>R</b> esults-oriented, <b>T</b> ime-Bound.
Student learning outcomes assessment	A form of systematic inquiry that includes: Statements of expected learning outcomes; defined methods and ways to measure learning; gathering evidence and comparing results with expected learning; making decisions about how to improve program content and practices.
Value-Added	The notion of ascribing any pre- to post gain in student performance to the educational experience.