Welcome and Happy New Year!  The purpose of the newsletter is to provide information regarding planning and assessment at Texas Tech and other universities. This issue provides specific information for academic areas and units regarding assessment of student learning outcomes.

2004 ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORTS TIMELINE

Assessment Reports are open for report preparation http://techdata.irs.ttu.edu/stratreport/

March 11 – Friday – Academic departments, centers/institutes, and support departments submit reports to Deans and VPs.

April 25 – Deans and other Area Leaders reporting to the Provost submit reports to Provost.

May 9 – Provost and VPs submit reports to President.

June 3 – University Assessment Report is completed.

SOME BASIC HOUSEKEEPING TASKS

- Verify that the strategic plan for the area/unit is linked to the Strategic Planning and Assessment homepage.
- Check the contact information for the area and unit leader.
- Assign others with specific privileges for the assessment reports.

Instructions for linking strategic plans, updating contact information, and assigning others with privileges were included in the first newsletter which is now posted to our Strategic Planning home page.

TROUBLESHOOTING

On the Strategic Planning and Assessment Report homepage are links for instructions and guidelines for preparing the assessment reports. Use the pull-down menu for TTU-SPAR HELP to open the Instructions and Guidelines. If you are experiencing trouble using the assessment report Web pages or cannot login, contact us at StatPlanHelp@ttu.edu.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

A goal for the university and all academic colleges and departments is academic excellence. To demonstrate academic excellence, assessment of student learning outcomes in the undergraduate and graduate programs is critical.

During the past two summers, outcome assessment workshops have been offered for department chairs to focus on developing appropriate assessments for their academic programs. The materials from these workshops are posted on the Strategic Planning homepage in the Related Links – Outcomes Assessment Resources menu. Other outcomes assessment resources are available from the same menu option.

The next section of this newsletter presents an overview of how to include outcomes assessment results in the annual assessment reports.
Outcomes Assessment of student learning is one part of the planning cycle.

**PLANNING**
Program Purpose and Goals

**IMPLEMENTING**
Program courses

**ASSESSING**
Student Learning

**REVISING/UPDATING**
Program goals and courses as appropriate

Based on the results from the outcomes assessment, one of four options is possible:

1. No changes are required;
2. Program purpose and goals need to be revised;
3. Program courses and curriculum need to be revised;
4. Assessment measures need to be revised.

In most cases, the revisions involve changes to the courses and curriculum to achieve the intended purposes and goals.

The strategic planning and annual assessment reporting allows academic departments to report outcomes assessments. All academic programs have a goal for academic excellence. For this goal, the specific measures to be used for assessment of student learning should be identified and reported in Sections 3.a and 3.b of the department’s annual assessment report.

**Plans for revising programs, curricula, and courses based on the assessment data** can be indicated in Section 4 of the annual assessment report. The assessment data should be discussed in the Commentary part of Section 4, and an overview the changes to be made should be indicated in the Implementation Plan part of Section 4.

**Improvements that have been made and implemented** should be identified in Section 1 of the annual assessment reports as accomplishments for the goal on academic excellence.

**Department strategic plans** are to state the measures for outcomes assessments of student learning in the goal for academic excellence.

**Resources regarding outcomes assessment** are presented on the Strategic Planning homepage:

http://techdata.irs.ttu.edu/strareport/

See the related links to outcomes assessment resources. These links include internet resources and the information from the 2003 and 2004 outcomes assessment workshops.

The attached page provides a hypothetical example for including outcomes assessment of student learning in the strategic plan and the annual assessment report.

**WHAT ABOUT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES?**

All areas of the university are to state expected outcomes and to assess their success in achieving those outcomes. In the same manner that the academic departments report their assessments of student learning, other areas and units of the university should do the same for their specific goals.

**If you have questions or comments**, please contact Gil Reeve, Director of Strategic Planning, 742-2121 or Gilmour.Reeve@ttu.edu.
HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE FOR INCORPORATING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENTS IN STRATEGIC PLANS AND ASSESSMENT REPORTS

The purpose of this example is to show how specific measures of outcome assessment can be included in the strategic plans and annual assessment reports. A similar example was presented and discussed during the 2003 Outcomes Assessment workshop. Possible measures for outcomes assessment include students’ performances in capstone courses and internship experiences, comprehensive examinations, performance-based mastery tests, certification tests, embedded course assessments, evaluation of portfolios of students’ work, results of satisfaction surveys and focus groups. Other outcomes assessment examples are found in the Related Links on the strategic planning home page (http://techdata.irs.ttu.edu/stratreport/).

In the hypothetical example below, only those parts of the strategic plan and annual assessment report that include outcomes assessment for the Department XYZ are presented. Obviously, both the strategic plan and the annual assessment report include information other than that only related to outcomes assessment. For most departments, outcomes assessment would include measures for undergraduate and graduate programs.

Strategic Plan for Department XYZ

Goal 2. Academic Excellence. The department of XYZ will attain national recognition through its educational and research programs.

Critical Success Factors:
Graduates of the XYZ undergraduate program will achieve a 75% pass rate on the National Exam for the discipline.
Graduates of the XYZ undergraduate program will report a 4.0 average score or above on the Graduating Senior Survey.
60% of all students enrolled in XYZ 4300 will achieve an 80 or better score on the mid-term test.
Departmental faculty will maintain a 4.0 average score or above on student evaluations of teaching.
Graduating seniors from the XYZ program will provide positive comments during Senior Focus Group Sessions.

Objective 2.1 Review and revise undergraduate curriculum to ensure program alignment with national and state standards.

Strategies:
- Assign undergraduate curriculum committee responsibility to review standards and to recommend program revisions.
- Faculty annually update course syllabi to meet current standards
- Track changes in program revisions to demonstrate annual reviews

Assessment:
- Changes documented in Strategic Planning Assessment Report
Strategic Planning Annual Assessment Report for Department XYZ

Section 1. Goals and Accomplishments

Goal 2. Academic Excellence. The department of XYZ will attain national recognition through its educational and research programs.

- Students graduating from the XYZ program achieved a 76% pass rate on the national exam.

Section 3a. Area/Unit Specific Quantitative Data

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<tr>
<th>Program Assessments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program XYZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pass Rate on National Exam (%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduating Senior Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 or better score on test in XYZ 4300 (%)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Faculty Instruction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student Evaluations of Teaching</td>
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Section 3b. Area/Unit Specific Qualitative Indicators

XYZ Focus Group: “Courses were valuable in preparing for the national exam.”
XYZ Focus Group: “Internships should require a greater variety of experiences to better prepare the student for real-world employment.”

Section 4. Strategic Planning Update

Goal: Academic Excellence. The department of XYZ will attain national recognition through its educational and research programs.

- Review internship assignments and requirements
- Develop strategies to improve graduating senior survey scores

Commentary: The Department of XYZ is committed to maintaining a quality undergraduate program... Although the average score on the Graduating Senior Survey continues to improve, a clear need exists to further increase these scores by enhancing the content of our program. Review of course content and instructional approaches is needed to improve students’ performances in the undergraduate course XYZ 4300. The internship experience must be revised to provide the best educational opportunities for our students....

Implementation Plan: The Department of XYZ ... Additionally, the need exists to assign a coordinator and supervisor for the internship experience. Resources to provide appropriate workload assignment for a faculty member to serve in this capacity are needed.