

ABHE Standards and Assessment

Connecting the Dots

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The institution's system of ongoing institutional planning and assessment demonstrates that it accomplishes and can continue to accomplish its mission and provides opportunities for systematic institutional and program improvement.

Standard 2

“Ongoing”

The assumption of the standard is that your institution does these things, and then subsequently provides the information to the Commission on Accreditation.

The assumption is NOT that your institution “does these things for accreditation,” as in for accreditation cycle reporting and self-studies.

“Demonstrates Mission Accomplishment”



The assumption of the Standard is that the Essential Elements described will lead to the preponderance of evidence that your institution is achieving its mission.



The purpose of the phrase “and can continue” is rooted in the concept of professional judgment that past patterns give evidence of future sustainability.

“Opportunities for Improvement”

- However, the assumption of the Standard is ALSO that these processes will provide opportunities for improvement, not simply opportunities to show that you achieve your mission.

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 1

A written, comprehensive assessment plan that describes the systematic and ongoing collection of evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of the institution's operations and services and the fulfillment of student learning outcomes at institutional and program levels.

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ Assessment Plan

Parsing the Assessment Plan:

- Written
- Comprehensive
- Systematic Collection of Evidence
 - Explains How Data are Gathered
 - Explains When Data are Gathered
 - Data Gathering is Ongoing
 - Data Gathering is Structured
- Demonstrating the Effectiveness of Operations
- Demonstrating the Effectiveness of Services
- Demonstrating the Fulfillment of Student Learning Outcomes at 2 Levels:
 - Institutional Level
 - Program Level

Assessment Plan

Intended Outcome	Assessment Tool	Achievement Target	Cycle (Frequency)	Next Collection Date	Person(s) Responsible

Quick Note About Institution Level Intended Learning Outcomes

- These are the same conceptually as Student Learning Outcomes that you have for each degree program, except that these outcomes apply to every student regardless of what program they are a part of.
- They are not EQUAL TO program learning outcomes NOR ARE THEY EQUAL TO general education learning outcomes.

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 2

Clearly defined and measurable outcomes for operational effectiveness, (including support services and academic programs) that align with institutional mission.

Parsing Outcomes:

- Clearly Defined
- Measurable
- For Operational Effectiveness:
 - Support Services
 - Academic Programs
- Aligned with Institutional Mission

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ Assessment Plan and Reports

Writing Intended Outcomes for Operational Effectiveness

- What are Operational Effectiveness Intended Outcomes?
 - Outcomes are statements of intended result. Connected to the university's strategic plan, mission and/or institutional outcomes, they describe some of the unit's important intended results for the year.
 - They are specific, measurable, and quantifiable or qualifiable statements that can be used to determine progress towards the overall mission of the unit.
 - They can reasonably be achieved within a specific timeframe and with available resources.
 - Units may set outcomes pertaining to enhancement of their normal operations but should also focus on special projects or new initiatives; outcomes often focus on areas where improvement is needed.
 - There's no magic "right number" of intended outcomes for a unit within a year, just make sure the choices are logical, strategic, attainable, and consistent with the overall assessment plan.

Writing Intended Outcomes for Operational Effectiveness

- How might these differ from Student Learning Intended Outcomes?
 - Educational taxonomies don't typically serve administrative units in the same way that they do academic programs (it is hard to apply Bloom's Taxonomy to the Financial Aid Office, for instance)
 - Administrative Units have much different needs, goals, and aims than groups of students in a major (for instance), which is why the taxonomies don't fit as well
 - Administrative Units have to think particularly hard about contributions that their units make to the overall mission and goals of the institution as a whole, including strategic goals and plans and sometimes student learning

Writing Intended Outcomes for Operational Effectiveness

Formula

A general formula for writing an outcome can be employed, although the order of the items may differ:

Outcome = Administrative Unit + Stakeholder/subject + verb/action + object + modifiers

Administrative Outcome Examples:

The Library will increase (verb) research skills (object) of HCU students (stakeholders) by developing and conducting workshops and seminars on research methodology (modifiers).

The Library will enhance (verb) the availability of print and electronic resources (object) for HCU students (stakeholders)

The Library will support (verb) the intellectual growth (object) of HCU students (stakeholders)

Human resources will retain (verb) highly qualified professional faculty and staff (object and stakeholders) through competitive salary and benefits packages (modifiers)

Writing Administrative/Unit Objectives

VERY IMPORTANT: You should use explicit verbs such as increase, enhance, minimize, provide, reduce, promote, rather than vague verbs such as understand, know.

Types of Admin. Objectives	Definition/Sample
Access	Broadly defined, reporting on participation (student, faculty, staff), affirmative action, immigration, program/resource availability, accessibility
Accountability	Overall institutional and program specific quality, assessment policies, performance indicators (e.g., persistence, time-to-degree, degree completion, job placement rates), governance activities, and system/process reform strategies
Affordability	Costs to students/family, sources, adequacy of financial aid, family income and ability to pay, students education-related indebtedness, loan default rates
Climate	Racial/Ethnic and gender relations, sexual harassment, crime, speech code

Educational Effectiveness/Quality	Review of the relationship of instructional content to College-School-Department Goals, place of instruction, time of instruction, workforce-preparedness, and who teaches, sponsors or credentials, and assesses
Facilities and Equipment	Condition of space, capital investment, tech upgrades, deferred maintenance
Faculty	Workloads (volume and nature), reward systems, tenure, compensation, relations of faculty research to state and local needs, distribution of full/part time, diversity, faculty development
Financial Support	Trends in sources and amounts of revenues, cost of instruction, privatization, total-costs of programs/curriculum/instruction, level and composition of private/state/federal funding for research, indirect-cost recovery, performance-based funding
Student Preparation	Remediation needs and intervention efficacy, admissions standards, secondary-postsecondary linkages, teacher preparation
Productivity	Program/activity duplication, cost savings, efficiency studies, academic & administrative program reviews/cost-benefit analysis, incentive program outcomes
Technology	Learner access and productivity, investment costs, impact on current policies review, organizational structure impacts, financing and accounting procedures/mechanisms, instructional support services review, personnel, curriculum and credentialing relationships, impacts on course content, instructional methods accounting, role of faculty, employment skills

Where Do I Place These Intended Outcomes in My Assessment Plan?

Intended Outcome	Assessment Tool	Achievement Target	Cycle (Frequency)	Next Collection Date	Person(s) Responsible

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 3

Clearly defined and measurable student learning outcomes (including for general studies and Bible/theology cores for undergraduate degree programs) appropriate to the credential awarded and accompanied by multiple measures that effectively assess the extent to which students are achieving the program's stated outcomes.

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ Assessment Plan and Reports

Parsing Outcomes:

- Clearly Defined
- Measurable
- Student Learning Outcomes for:
 - General Studies (for UG Programs)
 - Bible/Theology (for UG Programs)
 - All credentials (Certificate, Degree, Diploma)
- Student Learning Outcomes:
 - Appropriate to the Credential Awarded
 - Accompanied by Multiple Measures
 - Measures Effectively Assess the Extent to Which Students Are Achieving the Outcomes

Crafting Program Level Student Learning Intended Outcomes

- What are student learning intended outcomes?

Student learning outcomes describe what students should know, be able to do, and/or value by the end of their educational program. Four general dimensions of learning objectives are commonly identified, but taxonomies differ greatly in how they are classified:

- Knowledge objectives pertain to grasp of fundamental cognitive content, core concepts or questions, basic principles of inquiry, a broad history, and/or varied disciplinary techniques.
- Skills objectives focus on capacity for applying basic knowledge, analyzing and synthesizing information, assessing the value of information, communicating effectively, and collaborating.
- Attitudes and values objectives encompass affective states, personal/professional/social values, and ethical principles.
- Behavioral objectives reflect a manifestation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes as evidenced by performance, contributions, etc.

Key Things to Remember When Writing Intended Outcomes

- Select outcomes to assess because they are meaningful, not because they are easy to measure.
- Make sure your outcomes are expressed in terms of how students are impacted by your program.
- Make sure that your outcomes reflect a faculty consensus in the discipline under consideration and not just the views of one or a few individuals.
- Where possible, have your outcomes reflect higher order thinking/skills.
- Make sure that all faculty and students involved with the program are familiar with the outcomes.

Taxonomies of Learning

- I highly recommend the work of Leslie Owen Wilson at this link:
<https://thesecondprinciple.com/essential-teaching-skills/taxonomies-of-learning/>
- Taxonomies assist faculty in determining how to “classify” what they intend students to learn in a program. They often also provide verbs that faculty can use in crafting statements of intended outcomes.
- When in doubt, you can always begin a student learning outcome with “The student will... OR The graduate of X program will...”

Selecting Verbs (Example)

	I. Remembering	II. Understanding	III. Applying	IV. Analyzing	V Evaluating	VI. Creating
Bloom's Definition	Exhibit memory of previously learned material by recalling facts, terms, basic concepts, and answers.	Demonstrate Understanding of facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptions, and starting main ideas.	Solve problems to new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way.	Examine and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Make inferences and find evidence to support generalizations.	Present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas, or quality of work based on a set of criteria.	Compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions.
Verbs	• Define • Find • Label • List • Match • Name • Relate • Select • Show	• Classify • Compare • Contrast • Demonstrate • Explain • Extend • Illustrate • Infer • Interpret	• Apply • Build • Choose • Construct • Develop • Experiment with • Identify • Interview	• Analyze • Categorize • Conclude • Discover • Dissect • Distinguish • Examine • Function • Inspect	• Appraise • Assess • Criticize • Defend • Determine • Estimate • Evaluate • Explain • Interpret	• Adapt • Build • Change • Compose • Construct • Create • Design • Develop • Discuss

Where Do I Place These Intended Outcomes in My Assessment Plan?

Intended Outcome	Assessment Tool	Achievement Target	Cycle (Frequency)	Next Collection Date	Person(s) Responsible

For Essential Elements 1-3 Please Consult the Policy on Academic Quality as Related to Institutional Mission

This policy provides a rationale for how these elements integrate into an overall ABHE perspective on academic quality within the context of each institution's individual mission.

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 4

Implementation of the assessment plan evidenced by documented analysis of assessment data and use of results by appropriate constituencies for the purpose of improvement and planning.

Parsing Implementation:

- Documented Analysis of Assessment Data
- Documented Use of Results
- Carried Out by "Appropriate Constituencies"
- Purpose of Improvement
- Purpose of Planning

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ Assessment Reports
- ✓ Documented Analysis of Assessment Data
- ✓ Documented Use of Results

Assessment Reporting

Intended Outcomes	Assessment Tool	Achievement Target	ACTUAL OUTCOME	ANALYSIS OF RESULTS	IMPLICATIONS AND ACTION PLANS

DECIDING WHAT TO ACT ON

Analysis

The **(individual or group)** examined **(what)** **(when)** and determined **(conclusions)** based on **(rationale)**.

The **library staff and advisory board** reviewed the **annual library survey results** (survey data attached) at our wrap up meeting on **May 22** (minutes of meeting attached). We were pleased with the number of faculty who responded (46 out of 71) and feel that the survey results give us a valid sample of the population. However, **only 62% of faculty indicated that they are familiar or somewhat familiar with how to access OER** which fell short of our target.

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

Action Plan

Write at least
one action
plan

- What will the area do differently in the future?
- Who will be responsible for implementing actions?
- What resources are needed?
- When will the outcome be reassessed? (timeline)

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 5

Learning outcomes data disaggregated in missionally relevant ways and used to demonstrate a commitment to the success of all students in attaining intended learning outcomes.

Parsing Learning Outcomes Data:

- Disaggregated in Missionally Relevant Ways
- Used to Demonstrate a Commitment to the Success of All Students
- Purpose of Examining Commitment to the Attainment of Intended Learning Outcomes

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ Assessment Reports
- ✓ Outcomes Data Reports Disaggregated in Institutionally-Decided Ways
- ✓ Rationales and Explanations for Disaggregation Categories
- ✓ Plans for Closing Gaps if Identified

Assessment Reporting

Intended Outcomes	Assessment Tool	Achievement Target	ACTUAL OUTCOME	ANALYSIS OF RESULTS	IMPLICATIONS AND ACTION PLANS

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 6

The ongoing provision of reliable and current information to the public including graduation and retention rates, employment rates for professional programs, and licensure pass rates for programs where licensure is expected. Required outcomes data are available via the institution's website through an easily identified link on the homepage.

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ Website

Parsing Public Information:

- Ongoing
- Reliable
- Current
- Graduation Rates
- Retention Rates
- Employment Rates for Professional Programs
- Licensure Pass Rates for Programs where Licensure is Expected
- Available Via the Institution's Website
- Easily Identified Link on the Homepage

For Essential Elements 2-5 Please Consult the Policy on Outcomes

This policy outlines expectations for outcomes and how they are described.

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 7

Written institutional improvement plans describing future objectives informed by stakeholder input, assessment results, and institutional needs; aligned with realistic resource projections; and accompanied by consistent reporting on plan achievement.

Parsing Improvement Plans:

- Describe Future Objectives
- Informed by stakeholder input
- Informed by Assessment Results
- Informed by Institutional Needs
- Aligned with Realistic Resource Projections
- Accompanied by Consistent Reporting on Plan Achievement

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ All Improvement Plans
- ✓ Improvement Plan Process Documents
- ✓ Evidence of Assessment, Needs Assessment, and Budgeting Integrated Into Plans
- ✓ Minutes and Artifacts from Reporting on Plans

Assessment Reporting

Intended Outcomes	Assessment Tool	Achievement Target	ACTUAL OUTCOME	ANALYSIS OF RESULTS	IMPLICATIONS AND ACTION PLANS

Institutional Planning

An ongoing systematic procedure involving institutional personnel in analyzing and evaluating assessment results and determining the future direction of the institution.

- **Strategic planning** (multi-year plans attached to institutional mission/vision)
- **Annual planning** (operational plans tied to budget)
- **Improvement planning** (plans resulting from assessment reporting, program review, and/or self-study tied to budget)

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 8

Evidence that assessment results inform institutional decision-making and a sound budgeting process in alignment with institutional planning.

Parsing Assessment Results:

- Inform Ongoing Institutional Decision-Making
- Inform Sound Budgeting Process
- Aligned with Institutional Planning

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ Evidence of Assessment Data in Ongoing Institutional Decision-Making
- ✓ Evidence of a Data-Driven Budgeting Process Influenced by Assessment
- ✓ Evidence of Alignment Among All Institutional Processes: Assessment, Planning, Decision-Making, and Budgeting

Assessment Reporting

Intended Outcomes	Assessment Tool	Achievement Target	ACTUAL OUTCOME	ANALYSIS OF RESULTS	IMPLICATIONS AND ACTION PLANS

Standard 2: Institutional Planning and Assessment

Essential Element 9

Leadership of planning and assessment by a director or directors with related job responsibilities.

Evidence Needed:

- ✓ Job Descriptions for All Personnel Involved in Planning and Assessment Leadership