The College of Charleston Assessment Guide was developed under the auspices of the College’s Office for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (OIEP) and is intended to provide current and accurate information regarding assessment reporting. OIEP works collaboratively with faculty, staff, students and other stakeholders and welcomes feedback and suggestions.

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Assessment at the College of Charleston

Assessment is an ongoing process of systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well goals are being achieved and expectations are being met. The resulting information is used to enhance the learning environment, improve learning outcomes, and renew learning procedures. Academic, administrative, and educational support services are all integral to the assessment process and aligned with the mission. The College of Charleston Mission Statement and the Strategic Plan’s Purpose, Values, Goals and Strategic Initiatives are found in Appendix A.

The primary function of assessment is to improve educational programs and practices. Assessment feedback is essential to helping faculty and staff identify what is and is not working and what changes, if any, are warranted (Suskie, 2009)\(^1\). Assessment is also mandated by federal and state government systems as well as regional and professional accrediting agencies. Core requirement (C.R.) 2.5 and comprehensive standard (C.S.) 3.3.1 from SACSCOC address the need to assess student learning outcomes\(^2\).

- **C.R. 2.5:** The institution engages in **ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide** research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. *(Institutional Effectiveness)*

- **C.S. 3.3.1:** 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.

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Higher education institutions accredited by SACSCOC must demonstrate:

- that specific assessment initiatives are implemented to measure designated student learning outcomes;
- that assessment results are shared with appropriate persons;
- that results of specific assessment initiatives are used to improve student learning.

College of Charleston program assessment plans include learning outcomes and/or program goals and the assessment strategies used to measure achievement of student learning and program goals. A description of assessment strategies might include methods, instrumentation, rubrics, targeted performance levels, locus of responsibility, timing of the assessment, and data analysis among others. A multiple method assessment is considered best practice and often involves the use of both direct and indirect assessment methods to measure a single learning outcome or goal. Using the results from multiple methods of assessment leads to action plans for improving the program or learning.

Roles and Responsibilities

For academic units, program assessment begins with faculty members in the discipline or field articulating measurable student learning outcomes and program goals that are aligned with College Strategic Initiatives. Each unit then develops performance expectations and finally, analyzes and uses assessment results to improve learning and programs. Staff and administrators in academic support and administrative units follow the same steps in the assessment process. Completed program assessment plans/reports are submitted using Compliance Assist! (an online system), which is accessible from the OIEP/Assessment website. See Appendix B for the Assessment Template and Appendices C and D Compliance Assist! Quick Reference Guides. The Program Improvement Summary and Impact Report for each program is shared publicly on the OIEP website.

The College has two key committees that collaborate with OIEP in promoting best assessment practices and ensuring the College’s compliance with SACSCOC Core Requirement 2.5 and Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1. For academic units, the Deans’ Assessment Committee (DAC) members are responsible for coordinating the submission of assessment plans/reports to the academic dean. For administrative units, the Administrative Assessment Committee (AAC) members serve as assessment liaisons among the administrative programs within their division.
Other responsibilities of the assessment liaisons include:

- helping to create and maintain a culture of assessment in each school/major/program at the College of Charleston.
- motivating faculty and staff participation in all steps of the assessment process.
- providing feedback to program directors/chairs on assessment plans/reports to promote continuous improvement and maturation of the assessment process.
- involving students in the assessment process to ensure their awareness of major/program goals and their important role in the process.
- working with the department program directors/chairs to coordinate assessment efforts.
- generating ways to involve external stakeholders in meaningful assessment activities.
- working with other campus entities to include available data in direct or indirect measures of learning.
- coordinating and collaborating with other campus programs to encourage student learning, rubric development, or faculty development.
- ensuring that new faculty and staff orientation includes information about assessment.

College of Charleston Assessment Feedback Process
Feedback should be provided by assessment liaisons and by administrative unit heads and/or Deans, as appropriate (see Appendices E and F). It is important that all academic and administrative programs close the loop, showing alignment with College mission and Strategic Initiatives.

The Assessment Cycle at College of Charleston

Each year, program personnel select at least one outcome to measure and provide evidence that results are being used for continuous improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>► Academic Assessment Plans due</td>
<td>September 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► Academic Plan Rubrics due</td>
<td>October 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► Administrative Assessment Plans due</td>
<td>October 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► Administrative Plan Rubrics due</td>
<td>November 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► Academic Assessment Reports due</td>
<td>May 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► Dean/Administrative Unit Reports due</td>
<td>June 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► Academic Report Rubrics due</td>
<td>June 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► AVP/EVP Reports due</td>
<td>June 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► Provost/EVP review</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► Administrative Report Rubrics due</td>
<td>July 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>► President review</td>
<td>August</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steps in the Program Assessment Process

1. Begin with a brief statement of the program mission and document how the program mission supports the College of Charleston Institutional Mission.

   - Prepare a brief paragraph describing the purpose of the program. A mission statement should tell the reader what the organizational unit is about and why the unit exists. If your program already has a mission statement, confirm that it is in alignment with the College’s mission. See Appendix G for more information on writing mission statements.

Sample Mission Statements

The business administration major prepares students for careers in today’s challenging world of business by delivering a comprehensive
program of academics, technology, and leadership. A diverse business core and a variety of electives constitute an accredited curriculum that is based on the liberal arts and sciences foundation for which the College is so well known. (B.S. Business Administration)

The English department is dedicated to the teaching and study of literatures through attentive reading, critical thinking, effective speaking, and skillful writing. English is an excellent liberal arts major, in that it provides a basis for those beginning careers in teaching, law, medicine, journalism, government, and business, as well as for those pursuing graduate study in literature or creative writing. (B.A. in English)

The Division of Student Affairs at the College of Charleston is dedicated to facilitating the cultural, social, emotional, physical, ethical and intellectual development of all students so that they may become responsible and effective individuals. (Student Affairs)

2. Identify goals for the program.

- For institutional assessment purposes, goals are statements about the key work of the program. Goals are typically more broad and general than learning outcomes and focus on activities in which program faculty, staff, and administrators engage.

- Student learning outcomes focus on what students will know and be able to do when they successfully complete their particular academic programs at CofC. Habits, attitudes, and dispositions students demonstrate may also be measured. The list of outcomes may include those that distinguish one program’s graduates from other university students. See Appendix H for more information on writing student learning outcomes.

- While no upper limit is set on the number of program goals and student learning outcomes required, ALL program goals and student learning outcomes should be assessed within a single five-year assessment cycle. Therefore, as a general guideline, three to five outcomes and/or program goals are usually adequate for showing program improvement, and all programs should be assessing at least one goal/outcome every year.
Sample Programmatic/Administrative Goals

Increase number of Bonner Leader participants to 40 students by 2018 while maintaining a five-year graduation rate higher than 90% and focus on serving a diverse student population. (Center for Civic Engagement)

Increase visitor traffic during gallery hours by 25%. (Halsey Institute)

Increase total annual giving by 3% per year. (Institutional Advancement)
Submit accreditation reports that are accurate, on time and meet standards and best practices. (Office for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning)

Track educational and cultural programs for students and the community that encourage/facilitate life-long learning. (School of the Arts)

Provide quality healthcare in a supportive, safe and inclusive environment. (Student Health Services)

Sample Student Learning Outcomes

Students analyze the grammar of music in varying historical eras and styles and demonstrate fluency in analytical practices. (Music BA)

Students communicate effectively in writing using APA (American Psychological Association) style, the accepted publication style of the discipline. (Psychology BS)

Students recognize and explain the major theoretical perspectives and key issues of debate in the academic study of religion. (Religious Studies BA)

Students design and conduct a research project relevant to Urban Studies. (Urban Studies BA)
Benjamin Bloom created a taxonomy with three categories for classifying learning outcomes in educational settings: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive* (knowing, awareness, insights)</th>
<th>Possible verbs to use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (Recalling information)</td>
<td>define repeat memorize list recall name state relate label select</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension (Explaining information)</td>
<td>restate discuss describe identify locate report explain recognize interpret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application (Solving closed-ended problems)</td>
<td>translate apply practice illustrate operate express recognize interpret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis (Solving open-ended problems)</td>
<td>identify analyze criticize compare differentiate contrast examine test infer distinguish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis (Creating “unique” answers to problems)</td>
<td>design compose plan create formulate manage construct revise rewrite explain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation (Making critical judgments based on a sound knowledge base)</td>
<td>judge evaluate value compute assess appraise conclude critique discriminate support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affective (attitudes, appreciations, relationships)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>claim cooperate defend join share avoid assist help select attempt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychomotor (action)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>create design compose place align follow display move show reproduce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The cognitive category shows the progression of lower-level skills to higher-level skills.

In 2001, Anderson and Krathwohl revised the taxonomy to include active verbs that are well suited for outcome-oriented language and workable objectives.
3. **Map the student learning outcomes through the curriculum.**

- The curriculum map tells *where* in the curriculum the students obtain the knowledge and skills associated with the goal or learning outcome. This can include specific classes as well as any extra-curricular opportunities that provide students with the opportunity to gain knowledge or skill in the goal area. See Appendix I for more information on curriculum maps.

**Sample Curriculum Map**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Learning Outcome 1</th>
<th>Learning Outcome 2</th>
<th>Learning Outcome 3</th>
<th>Learning Outcome 4</th>
<th>Learning Outcome 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course # 101</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 201</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 230</td>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 310</td>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 360</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 480</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* I, R, and D describe the students’ experiences with the learning outcome. I = Student *Introduction* to the learning to occur; R = Student *Reinforcement* of the learning; D = Student *Demonstration* that learning has occurred. Every course should contribute to at least one learning outcome.

4. **Identify useful and feasible methods of measurement.**

- Each program should use multiple measures, one of which is a direct measure.
- Each learning outcome should have at least one measurement.
- To inform improvement efforts, select measures that will identify relative strengths and weaknesses among students’ (aggregate) achievement of the learning outcome. For example, by using oral presentations as a measure of students’ communication skills, faculty may learn that collectively, students’ skills are weaker in the areas of delivery and organization, and stronger in content and adaptation to audience.
- Consider using rubrics to score subjective assessments. Rubrics provide detailed descriptions of what is being learned and students’ collective strengths and weaknesses. A rubric bank is available on the OIEP/Assessment website.
• One assessment activity may be used to assess multiple learning outcomes. For example, a thesis defense could assess both content knowledge and oral communication skills. If using a single measure to assess multiple outcomes, it is best to use a rubric that evaluates the outcomes independently.

• **Remember:** course grades are poor measures of program learning outcomes because they do not reflect the students’ strengths and weaknesses in specific areas.

**Sample Direct and Indirect Measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Measures</th>
<th>Indirect Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course assignments</td>
<td>Surveys (student satisfaction, employer, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded test items</td>
<td>Focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capstone projects</td>
<td>Case Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolios</td>
<td>Retention/Persistence rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre/Post testing</td>
<td>Counts/tallies of workshop offerings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research projects or papers</td>
<td>Participation rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript submissions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive exams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis/dissertation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensure/Certification exams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/standardized exams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Programs should have an assessment criterion for each assessment measure; acceptable levels of performance need to be established for aggregate performance for each measure (not for individual student performance, but for students as a group). Examples: 80% of students pass with a score of 8 or higher on a 10-point rubric; 85% of students are satisfied or very satisfied.

• Criteria should be both ambitious and attainable. It is okay if all criteria are not met; the point of assessment is to improve the program and student learning. **Unreached goals often provide direction for program change and renewal.**

**Sample Criteria**

**Criterion for a comprehensive exam:** At least 90% of students earn a 7 or better (on a 10-point scale) on each of the following dimensions of the comprehensive exam: basic knowledge of general______; basic knowledge of _____; application of knowledge to a given problem.
Criterion for a national exam: The average _____ score of all students who take the national _____ examination, administered twice each year, will equal or exceed the national average for the _____ section.

Criterion for an employer survey: Based on an employer survey, which is administered once every two years, at least 80% of the employers will be satisfied with the knowledge of ethics and conduct of our student interns.

Criterion for a course evaluation: At least 90% of our students who complete the ____ course evaluation will report that the course was “beneficial” or “very beneficial” in enhancing understanding of self and others and the ability to work with others.

5. Communicate the assessment plan via the College’s assessment template.
   - Program coordinator/committee or designees will complete the assessment template, including mission, measurable goals and/or student learning outcomes, assessment method(s), level of performance, and contact information.
   - Program coordinators or their designees enter plans into ComplianceAssist! for review by their unit director/college dean, OIEP, the Provost and the President. Program personnel will receive feedback regarding goal alignment and measurability from their deans/institutional directors, and Institutional Effectiveness as appropriate. The process is repeated annually.

6. Develop and implement the method of assessment process.
   - Detailing the assessment implementation process involves answering the following basic questions: Who will be involved in each aspect of the assessment? When will specific tasks be completed? Program coordinators are responsible for providing their deans or unit directors with the implementation details.

Sample Methods of Assessment

Career Services will develop a list of employers to survey based on student exit interviews. Employers will be interviewed by Career Services one year after the student begins work. Career Services will collect, aggregate, and analyze the data and prepare a report. A written report of employer interviews will be presented to the director of the program every summer, and shared with faculty at the annual program retreat in August.
Capstone instructors will collect all student portfolios at the end of the semester. The Capstone instructors will evaluate each portfolio using an established rubric. The Capstone Coordinator will compile and analyze the data. The results will be presented to the department chair late fall, and then presented to faculty during at the department’s end-of-the-year meeting in May.

7. **Tabulate, analyze, and report assessment results.**

   - After assessment data are collected, scored, and analyzed, the tabulated results need to be summarized, presented to program faculty, staff, and administrators, and discussed in useful ways with **findings used to improve policies, procedures, teaching, and learning practices.**
   - Patterns, predictions, problems, and questions should become apparent while summarizing the data.

**Questions to Address in Reviewing Results**

Did students meet defined standards, criteria, and/or expectations?

Why did some students learn X but not Y?

Have students’ knowledge and skills increased over time?

Is the assessment tool (rubric, test) valid and reliable? In other words, did the methods used measure what you intended to measure (validity) and are the methods likely to yield the same findings each time they are employed (reliability)?

- Program assessment results should be reported on the assessment template in **Compliance Assist!** and available to deans and unit directors. Anticipated changes to an existing program are included as part of these results. The annual reports are summarized and used for institutional planning.

8. **Use assessment results to improve all programs.**

   - Participants (including students) should discuss the results of the assessment, review original goals and outcomes, and make programmatic decisions based on the findings.
### Examples of Closing the Loop at the Program Level

| Changes to Assessment Plan | • Revise intended outcomes.  
|                          | • Revise assessment measure (performance expectations, rubric, or survey instrument).  
|                          | • Collect additional data to support and align with institutional outcomes.  
| Changes to Curricula, Pedagogy, or Programming | • Revise course content.  
|                                                      | • Revise course objectives.  
|                                                      | • Revise course sequence.  
|                                                      | • Modify program offerings.  
| Changes to Processes | • Modify frequency or schedule of course/program offerings.  
|                                                      | • Revise advising processes.  
|                                                      | • Create co-curricular activities.  
|                                                      | • Implement training or workshops.  

Appendix A

College of Charleston Mission Statement

The College of Charleston is a state-supported comprehensive institution providing a high-quality education in the arts and sciences, education and business. The faculty is an important source of knowledge and expertise for the community, state, and nation.

Consistent with its heritage since its founding in 1770, the College retains a strong liberal arts undergraduate curriculum. Located in the heart of historic Charleston, it strives to meet the growing educational demands primarily of the Lowcountry and the state and, secondarily, of the Southeast. A superior undergraduate program is central to the mission of the College of Charleston. As a prominent component of the state’s higher education system, the College encourages and supports research.

In addition to offering a broad range of baccalaureate degree programs, the College incorporates the University of Charleston, South Carolina (UCSC), established by state statute in 1992, which serves as a research institution where the graduate and research programs associated with the College are housed. UCSC provides master’s degree programs and anticipates offering a limited number of doctoral degrees should location and need warrant. The College also provides an extensive credit and non-credit continuing education program and cultural activities for residents of the Lowcountry of South Carolina.

The College of Charleston seeks applicants capable of successfully completing degree requirements and pays particular attention to identifying and admitting students who excel academically. The College of Charleston serves a diverse student body from its geographic area and also attracts students from national and international communities. The College provides students a community in which to engage in original inquiry and creative expression in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom. This community, founded on the principles of the liberal arts tradition, provides students the opportunity to realize their intellectual and personal potential and to become responsible, productive members of society.

The Mission Statement (also called the Statement of Purpose) has been approved or revised by the State College Board of Trustees or the College of Charleston Board of Trustees on January 16, 1974; March 12, 1986; January 16, 1991; February 15, 1994; July 13, 2006; July 23, 2014; and August 25, 2014.
The College of Charleston Strategic Plan: Purpose, Values, Goals, and Strategic Initiatives

In order to achieve its envisioned future the College has identified the following goals that will enable it to combine the personalized, student focus of a small teaching institution with the breadth of curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities of a research university.

Core Purpose

To pursue and share knowledge through study, inquiry and creation in order to empower the individual and enrich society

Values

☐ Academic excellence that furthers intellectual, creative, ethical and social development through a broad range of programs centered on the liberal arts and sciences

☐ Student-focused community that embraces mutual respect, collaboration and diversity for the welfare of the individual and the institution

☐ The history, traditions, culture and environment of Charleston and the Lowcountry that foster distinctive opportunities for innovative academic programs and relationships that advance our public mission in the city of Charleston, the state of South Carolina and the world.

Goals

1. Provide students a highly personalized education based on liberal arts and sciences core and enhanced by opportunities for experiential learning.

2. Develop or enhance nationally recognized undergraduate, graduate and professional programs in areas that take advantage of our history, culture and location in Charleston and contribute to the well-being of the region.

3. Provide students the global and interdisciplinary perspectives necessary to address the social, economic, environmental, ethical, scientific and political issues of the 21st century.

4. Establish and promote a vibrant campus-life atmosphere dedicated to education of the whole person through integration of curricular and co-curricular or extracurricular activities.

5. Achieve financial security by creating a new financial model for the College of Charleston.
Strategic Initiatives

1. Enhance the undergraduate academic core.

2. Develop nationally recognized graduate programs.

3. Develop and retain a highly qualified and diverse faculty and staff.

4. Recruit, enroll and retain an academically distinguished, well-prepared and diverse student body.

5. Enhance co-curricular and extracurricular programs for the holistic education of students.

6. Align administrative and academic policies and procedures to support the College’s purpose and achieve its envisioned future.

7. Provide up-to-date facilities and infrastructure to enhance academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs.

8. Collaborate with local, national and international institutions to leverage higher education for a stronger South Carolina.

9. Establish campus wide policies and practices to generate new resources and foster greater self-sufficiency.

10. Pursue national recognition for the College of Charleston’s personalized liberal arts and sciences education and for distinctive features of its undergraduate and graduate programs.

This statement was approved by the State College Board of Trustees in October, 2009 and revised in the strategic plan in February, 2013.
## Program Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Unit Name and Type</th>
<th>Undergraduate degree, Graduate degree, Academic Support, Administrative, Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Coordinator(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Coordinator’s Email</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigned assessment committee member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC/AAC representative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Unit director</td>
<td>(deans, vice presidents, etc.) receiving assessment updates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does this program follow specialized accreditation standards (e.g., CAEP, AACSB)?  
Yes  
No  

Name of the accrediting organization  

Date of last program review for the accrediting organization  

Date of next program review for reaccreditation  

Program/Unit Mission Statement:  

Unit/School/College Mission:  

### Assessment Process

The assessment process describes how evidence-based decision making leads to improvement for the Program/Unit and how the plan evolves over time. The assessment process description should present a clear understanding of how the Program/Unit utilizes assessment data for continuous quality improvement. A strategy is a plan of action intended to accomplish a specific outcome or measure.

#### Assessment Plan (Fall) – Complete Items 1 and 2

1. **Outcome**
   
   The outcomes are specific, measurable, attainable, results oriented, and time bound. The outcomes are clearly related to the mission and focus on activities of the Program/Unit. If community service and/or research is aligned to the program/unit’s mission, enter at least one outcome to assess each area.

2. **Assessment Method(s)**
   
   The measure matches the outcome, uses appropriate direct and indirect methods, indicates desired level of performance, helps identify what to improve, and is based on tested, known methods. The performance target is meaningful; based on existing benchmarks, previous results, and existing standards. Please enter at least 2 measures. Grades and/or GPA should not be used as measures.

   **Measure 1:**
   
   **Performance**
   **Target:**

   **Measure 2:**
   
   **Performance**
   **Target:**
College of Charleston Assessment Guide

Assessment Report (Spring) – Complete Items 3 through 7

3. Assessment Results
Reported data are aligned and appropriate to the outcome and the corresponding measure. Sampling methodology, population size (N), and sample size (n) must be provided. If there are extenuating circumstances that lead to missing data, an explanation must be provided. Missing data for extenuating circumstances is only permitted for one assessment cycle. If appropriate, data should be disaggregated by distance learning, off-site locations, and mode of delivery.

Target met for measure 1? [ ] Yes [ ] No
Did results for measure 1 demonstrate improvement from previous assessments? [ ] Yes [ ] No
Target met for measure 2? [ ] Yes [ ] No
Did results for measure 2 demonstrate improvement from previous assessments? [ ] Yes [ ] No
Please describe:

4. Use of Assessment Results
With whom did you discuss your assessment findings? What changes were made after reviewing the results (i.e.; revisions to course content or course offerings, revise admission standards, revising program offerings, implementing training or workshops, modify service or business processes, revise measurement approach)?

5. Budget Changes
Describe ways in which results/changes affect budget.

6. Comments and Attachments
Add any additional comments and upload relevant assessment instruments (e.g., rubrics, survey instruments, etc.) using the file library.

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement
Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the annual assessment report(s). Also, describe other influences that have caused changes to occur (i.e.; changes in state regulations, recommendations from regional or specialized accreditation reviews).

Assigned Assessment Committee Member Review: [ ]

DAC/AAC Review: [ ]

Dean/AVP/EVP Initial: [ ]

Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning (oiep.cofc.edu); Revised June 2015
Appendix C

ComplianceAssist! Assessment Quick Reference Guide
Building an Assessment Plan

ComplianceAssist! is a web-based tool for documenting, tracking and reporting unit assessment efforts. The following is a brief step-by-step summary with video tutorials for entering/updating assessment plans.

Steps for Completing an Assessment Plan

STEP 1: Accessing Compliance Assist
1. Use the link on OIEP’s website: https://cofc.compliance-assist.com (Google Chrome is preferred)
2. Login with CofC Username and Password
3. Select Planning
4. Select My Dashboard
5. Select Assessment Plans tab
6. Select program name using organizational chart on left (to expand chart, select the plus button)
7. Select Edit Filter to change the year, if needed
   ➢ Click here for a brief video tutorial on STEP 1

STEP 2: Entering and Updating Program Information and Assessment Process (Assessment Plans tab)
1. To enter new program information, select New Item and Program Information and Assessment process
2. To update program information, select the underlined program name and select Edit tab
3. To enter/update Program Assessment Coordinator and/or Administrative Unit Director, enter information in the appropriate fields
4. To enter/update mission statements, select Edit, enter the information, and select Update
5. To enter/update assessment process, select Edit, enter the information, and select Update
6. To add supporting documentation, expand Comments and Attachments, and select Upload File(s), Select your file, select Upload File
7. Select Save
   ➢ Click here for a brief video tutorial on STEP 2

STEP 3: Entering and Updating Outcomes (Assessment Plans tab)
1. To enter a new outcome, select New Item and Outcome
2. To update an existing outcome, select the underlined outcome name and select Edit tab
3. To enter/update an outcome, select Edit, enter/update outcome and select Update
4. To enter/update assessment methods, select Edit, enter/update assessment methods and select Update
5. To add supporting documentation, expand Comments and Attachments, and select Upload File(s), Select your file, select Upload File
6. Select the Progress status from the drop-down list at the bottom of the page
7. Select Save to continue working in this box to relate outcomes in Step 4
   ➢ Click here for a brief video tutorial on STEP 3

STEP 4: Relating Outcomes to Program Information and College of Charleston Strategic Plan
1. Select Related tab at top within program outcome
2. Select Add
3. Select the checkbox for the program name
4. Select College of Charleston from the organizational chart on the left
5. Select the checkbox(es) for the appropriate Strategic Initiatives
6. Select Add
7. Select Close
8. Complete these steps for each outcome
   Note: School of Business and Student Affairs must also relate to division goal
   ➢ Click here for a brief video tutorial on STEP 4

Compliance Assist Symbol Legend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bubble</td>
<td>Provides Instruction/Descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star</td>
<td>Program Information and Assessment Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Circle</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightbulb</td>
<td>Assessment Report Summary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

ComplianceAssist! Assessment Quick Reference Guide

Building an Assessment Report

Steps for Entering an Assessment Report

STEP 5: Entering Assessment Results and Use of Results (Assessment Plans tab)
1. Select the underlined outcome name and select Edit tab
2. To enter/update Assessment Results, select Edit, enter the information, and select Update
3. From the drop-down lists, select if the targets were met and if the results demonstrated improvement from previous assessments
4. To enter/update description of selections for each measure, select Edit, enter the information, and select Update
5. To enter/update Use of Assessment Results, select Edit, enter the information, and select Update
6. To enter/update Budget Changes, select Edit, enter the information, and select Update
7. To add supporting documentation, expand Comments and Attachments and select Upload File(s), Select your file, select Upload File.
8. Select the Progress status from the drop-down list at the bottom of the page
9. Select Save and Close after all fields have been entered or updated
10. Complete these steps for each outcome

➢ Click here for a brief video tutorial on STEP 5

STEP 6: Assessment Report Summary (Assessment Plans tab)
1. To enter assessment report summary, select New Item, and Assessment Report Summary
2. Enter Assessment Report Summary title
3. To enter/update Summary of Assessment Results, select Edit, enter the information and select Update
4. Enter Assigned Assessment Committee Member Review and Date, DAC/AAC Review and Date, Dean/AVP/EVP Approval and Date
5. Select the Progress status from the drop-down list at the bottom of the page
6. To enter/update Responsible Roles, select Manage, search by name in User Name field, and select the checkbox next to the name in Available Roles
7. From the Add Roles drop-down list on the right, choose Selected and then select Add Roles
8. Select Save and Close

➢ Click here for a brief video tutorial on STEP 6

STEP 7: Viewing an Assessment Report
1. Select Reports at top of page
2. Select program name using organizational chart on left (to expand chart, select the plus button)
3. Select Generate under Actions column for the Program(s) Assessment Report
4. In the Generate Report Request window, select PDF, Word, or Excel from the drop-down
   Note: PDF is the recommended format for printing and saving
5. Select Generate Report
6. Select Download to view generated reports
   Note: The system will send an email when the report is ready to be viewed

➢ Click here for a brief video tutorial on STEP 7

Compliance Assist Symbol Legend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Instruction/Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Provides Instruction/Descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star</td>
<td>Program Information and Assessment Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Circle</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightbulb</td>
<td>Assessment Report Summary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix E
College of Charleston Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing</td>
<td>Three or fewer indicators from the Developing category are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>Five or fewer indicators from the Developing category are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing (Level 3)</td>
<td>ALL of the Developing indicators (R1-R6) are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient (Level 4)</td>
<td>ALL of the Developing indicators plus at least one of the Proficient Indicators (R7 &amp; 8) are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary (Level 5)</td>
<td>ALL nine indicators are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Academic/Administrative Unit:**

Rubric Completed By: Date Completed: Reviewed with Assessment Coordinator (Initial/Date): Rating:

Instructions: Please review the assessment plan and check which indicators are met as well as provide necessary comments. Based on the number of indicators met, please identify the rating (Level) of the assessment plan and indicate above.

- **Establishing** (Level 1)
  - Three or fewer indicators from the Developing category are met.

- **Emerging** (Level 2)
  - Five or fewer indicators from the Developing category are met.

- **Developing** (Level 3)
  - ALL of the Developing indicators (R1-R6) are met.

- **Proficient** (Level 4)
  - ALL of the Developing indicators plus at least one of the Proficient Indicators (R7 & 8) are met.

- **Exemplary** (Level 5)
  - ALL nine indicators are met.

1. **Program/Unit's mission statement:outline about the purpose, functions, and key constituents.**
   - [Program/Unit's mission is aligned to the School/Division/College Strategic Plan.]

2. **The assessment process describes:**
   - Strategies to assess the outcomes. A strategy is a plan of action intended to accomplish a specific outcome/measure.
   - A plan to use the data for improving student learning and/or operations.
   - How the data will be shared within the Program/Unit and the College.
   - [The assessment process describes how evidence based decision making leads to improvement for the Program/Unit and how the plan evolves over time. The assessment process description should present a clear understanding of how the Program/Unit utilizes assessment data for continuous quality improvement.]

3. **Number of outcomes:**
   - Academic Programs (undergraduate, graduate, stand-alone minors, certificates) - minimum of three learning outcomes.
   - [The outcomes are specific, measurable, attainable, results oriented, and time bound. The outcomes are clearly related to the mission and focus on activities of the Program/Unit.]

4. **Measures and Performance Targets:** a minimum of two appropriate, quantitative measures, with at least one being a direct measure, per outcome. Measures for the outcomes define specific performance targets and strategies to achieve the targets.
   - [The measure matches the outcome, uses appropriate direct and indirect methods, indicates desired level of performance, helps identify what to improve, and is based on tested, known methods. The measure is meaningful based on existing benchmarks, previous results, and existing standards. Grades and/or GPA should not be used as measures.]

5. **The assessment plan directly links outcomes to the School/Division/College Strategic Plan:**
   - [Relevant assessment instruments (e.g., rubrics, survey instruments, logs, reports, etc.) are uploaded in ComplianceAssist (e.g., via URL, as attachments, etc., if not proprietary).]

6. **Clear and defined curriculum or functional map is provided:**
   - [Course functions are listed and linked to outcomes. Clear levels of learning defined for all outcomes at all levels (Introduce, Enforce, Reinforce).]

7. **The assessment plan promotes continuous quality improvement by having outcomes and measures that are formative in nature.**
   - Formative assessments provide ongoing feedback that can be used to improve student learning and operations.
   - [The primary purpose of IE assessment is to collect data to identify gaps in student learning and operations. This is demonstrated when assessment data presents an opportunity for improvement and a new strategy is implemented to remove the gap. For best practices, when a measure has a performance target of 100%, or is constant for 2-3 assessment cycles, it is advisable to conduct a gap analysis (diagram) analysis to identify areas in learning and/or operations.]

8. **The assessment plan "closes the loop" by linking new strategy changes to previous assessment results:**
   - [Program/Unit collects data to evaluate the impact of implemented change to improve student learning and operations. The use of prior year’s results to improve student learning and operations demonstrates a "closed loop" process.]
# Appendix F
## College of Charleston Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Results Rubric

**Academic/Administrative Unit:** __________________________

**Rubric Completed By:** _______________________  **Date Completed:** __________  **Reviewed with Assessment Coordinator (Initial/Date):** __________________________  **Rating:** _________

**Instructions:** Please review the assessment plan and check which indicators are met as well as provide necessary comments. Based on the number of indicators met, please identify the rating (Level) of the assessment plan and indicate above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing</td>
<td>Three or fewer indicators from the Developing category are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>Five or fewer indicators from the Developing category are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>1. Complete, aggregated, and relevant data are provided for each measure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[If there are extenuating circumstances that lead to missing data, an explanation must be provided. Missing data for extenuating circumstances is only permitted once per assessment cycle. If appropriate, data should be disaggregated by distance learning, off-site locations, and mode of delivery.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Data reporting is complete, concise, and well-presented.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Reported data are aligned and appropriate to the outcome and the corresponding measure. Sampling methodology, population size (N), and sample size (n) must be provided.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Results clearly specify whether the performance target (performance expectations) for each measure have been met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Assessment results are used for comparison of actual vs. expected performance targets. Data provides evidence of performance targets met, partially met, or not met.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Results provide evidence that the assessment findings informed discussion and improvements in the Program/Unit.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Results include at least one applied and/or planned change(s) based on the assessment data to improve student learning, program quality, or unit operations. If no changes are provided, results should identify an area of improvement for the next cycle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[The discussion of the results should specifically identify any curricular/operational/budget changes as a result of assessment.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Relevant assessment instruments (e.g., rubrics, survey instruments, etc.) are uploaded in ComplianceAssist (e.g., via URL, as attachments, etc., if not proprietary)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>ALL of the Developing indicators plus indicator #7 are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>ALL eight indicators are met.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix G
How to Write a Program Mission Statement

Mission Statement of the Program
The Program Mission Statement is a concise statement of the general values and principles that guide the program, describe the community the program is designed to serve, and define its standards. Accrediting bodies expect program mission statements to be aligned with the mission statements of the institution, school/division, and department.

A Program Mission Statement:
• Is a broad statement of what the program or unit is, what it does, and for whom.
• Is a clear description of the purpose of the program or unit.
• Reflects how the program contributes to the education and careers of students graduating from the program or how the unit supports its stakeholders.
• May reflect how the teaching, research and/or support efforts enhance the student experience.
• Should be distinctive for the program or unit.
• Explicitly promotes the alignment of the program with college, school/division, and department missions.

Structure of a Program Mission Statement
“The mission of (name of your program or unit) is to (your primary purpose) by providing (your primary functions or activities) to (your stakeholders).”  (Additional clarifying statements)
Note: the order of the mission statement may vary from the above structure.

Sample Program Mission Statement

Another simple format:

The _______ (organization) will _________ (for) __________ (by) ___________.
This tells who the organization is, what it intends to do, for whom it intends to do it, and by what means (how).
Appendix H

Writing Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes (SLOs):

- Help students learn more effectively.
- Make clear what students should expect from their educational experience.
- Encourage students to be intentional learners who direct and monitor their own learning.
- Help faculty design courses, curriculum, and programs.
- Make graduates’ skills and knowledge clear to employers, accrediting agencies, etc.

Questions that student learning outcomes address:

- What knowledge, skills, abilities, and values should the ideal student graduating from our program demonstrate?
- How well does our program prepare students for careers, graduate school, professional study, and/or lifelong learning?
- What evidence can be used to demonstrate growth in students’ knowledge, skills, abilities, and values as they progress through our program?

Program student learning outcomes:

- Describe what students will learn, rather than what faculty will do.
- Are framed in terms of the program and not individual courses.
- Are observable and/or measurable.
- Align with school and institutional mission.
- Rely on verbs that specify definite, observable behaviors [link to Bloom’s].
- Focus on the central abilities of the discipline. Incorporate or adapt professional organizations’ outcome statements when they exist.
- Are collaboratively authored and collectively accepted.

Sample Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students analyze the grammar of music in varying historical eras and styles and demonstrate fluency in analytical practices. (Music BA)
- Students communicate effectively in writing using APA (American Psychological Association) style, the accepted publication style of the discipline. (Psychology BS)
- Students recognize and explain the major theoretical perspectives and key issues of debate in the academic study of religion. (Religious Studies BA)
- Students design and conduct a research project relevant to Urban Studies. (Urban Studies BA)
Appendix I

Mapping Student Learning Outcomes through the Curriculum

A curriculum map tells where in the curriculum the students obtain the knowledge and skills associated with the goal or learning outcome. This can include specific classes as well as any extra-curricular opportunities that provide students with the opportunity to gain knowledge or skill in the goal area.

Develop a curriculum map

1. List the program outcomes across the top of table and all required program courses (in the order in which they are generally taken) down the left hand side of the table.
2. As a faculty, examine each outcome in the context of each course to determine if the course addresses the outcome in a meaningful way. There are 3 ways a course might be related to an outcome:
   - I = Student Introduction to the learning to occur;
   - R = Student Reinforcement of the learning;
   - D = Student Demonstration that learning has occurred.
3. In building a map, place an I, R, or D in the table cell for each course that meaningfully assesses something related to the outcome at one of those levels. Simply touching on a topic is not sufficient; the topic related to the outcome should be covered in some depth and assessed (e.g., by a paper, test, presentation) in some way in the class. Every course should contribute to at least one learning outcome.

Sample curriculum map:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course # 101</th>
<th>Outcome 1</th>
<th>Outcome 2</th>
<th>Outcome 3</th>
<th>Outcome 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 201</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 230</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 310</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 401</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # 480</td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assess the overall alignment of the curriculum with the learning outcomes

1. Each learning outcome (each column) should be introduced, developed and mastered at least once across multiple courses.
   - If every cell in the column is filled, it suggests the outcome might be over-covered in the curriculum.
   - If few cells are filled or an I, D, or M is missing, it suggests the curriculum might not be covering the outcome as completely as faculty would like.
2. Each course (each row) should support at least one and ideally more than one learning outcome.
   - Meaningfully addressing all learning outcomes in a single course is difficult, unless it is at an introductory level in a survey course.
   - If a required course does not seem related to any program learning outcomes, address whether the course should still be required or whether an important learning outcome has been missed.
Glossary of Terms

The Glossary of Terms contains a number of definitions adapted from assessment resources developed by other institutions and entities. The major resources listed below were used to compile the present glossary. The resources listed below are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive.


Accreditation - A certification awarded by an external, recognized organization, that the institution or program meets certain requirements overall, or in a particular discipline. The SACSCOC accreditation process assumes that all programs and services are reviewed as part of the institutional effectiveness process.

Accrediting Organization - Decision-making bodies (commissions) made up of administrators and faculty from institutions and programs as well as public members. These commissions may affirm accreditation for new institutions and programs, reaffirm accreditation for ongoing institutions and programs, and deny accreditation to institutions and programs.

Aggregated Data – Statistics which relate to broad classes, groups, or categories, so that it is not possible to distinguish the properties of individuals within those classes, groups, or categories. Aggregated data should be collected for program or unit level assessment.

Assessment - The ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning and institutional effectiveness; the systematic collection, review and use of information about educational programs and administrative units undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning, development, and institutional effectiveness.
Assessment Plan - The document that presents goals/student learning outcomes, how those outcomes will be measured, and the performance expectations for each goal. The two key components of the plan include the Goals and the Assessment Method.

Assessment Report - The document that presents data and discusses how assessment results will be used to change curriculum and/or assessment procedures for the coming year. The two key components of the report include the Results and Use of Results.

Assessment Template - The form that demonstrates how the academic program or administrative unit will assess the upcoming year’s performance. Appendix B

Benchmark - A criterion-referenced objective. Performance data can be utilized to create a baseline of acceptable performance or to create a standard when setting target levels of performance.

Best Practice - Compares your results against the best of your peers.

Bloom’s Taxonomy - Six levels in which cognitively related objects can be categorized by levels of increasing complexity; the revised levels are Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create.

Closing the Loop - Using assessment results for academic program/administrative unit change and improvement.

Coherence - A critical component of a program which should demonstrate an appropriate sequencing of courses, so that the student learning is progressively more advanced in terms of assignments and scholarship required and demonstrates progressive advancement in a field of study that allows students to integrate knowledge and grow in critical skills.

Cohort - A group whose progress is followed by means of measurements at different points in time. A group of persons sharing a particular statistical or demographic characteristic.

Competency - Level at which performance is acceptable.

ComplianceAssist! - The online-based tool adopted by the College to track and report planning, assessment, and accreditation efforts for the College of Charleston.

Course Assessment - Using direct and indirect measures to determine if the student outcomes at the course level have been met and using this data to enhance student learning.
Course Embedded Assessment – Assessment methods designed to be a part of the curricular structure and take place in the normal operation of the class e.g., tests, portfolios, papers, etc.

Criteria – Describes relevant measures that will be used; states precisely what student or support unit will be doing; explains the conditions under which student learning outcomes and program goals should be accomplished; states an acceptable level of aggregate performance.

Criterion-referenced – A test or other type of assessment designed to provide a measure of performance that is interpretable in terms of a clearly defined and delimited domain of learning tasks. Criterion-referenced assessments report how well academic programs and administrative support units are doing relative to a pre-determined performance level on a specified set of program goals or student learning outcomes.

Curriculum Mapping – Curriculum maps demonstrate where in the program’s curriculum learning outcomes are being addressed. Mapping program outcomes to course outcomes shows how students develop skills and knowledge in courses that are required for their programs of study.

Direct Assessment Measures – Examination or observation of student knowledge or skills against measurable student learning outcomes.

Effectiveness – How well an approach, a process, or a measure addresses its intended purpose. Extent to which an institution/division/department meets its unique mission.

Externally-developed Assessment – Commercially available assessment instruments.

Focus Group – A carefully planned discussion to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment. It is conducted with approximately 7-12 people by a skilled interviewer.

Formative Assessment – An assessment of ongoing program/project activity that provides information to improve the project.

General Education – A collegiate level general education program should 1) be a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, 2) ensure breadth of knowledge, and 3) be based on a coherent rationale. It is essential to understand the general education component of the degree program within the context of the institution’s mission and within the expectations of a college-level institution. Through general education, students encounter the basic content and methodology of the principal areas of knowledge: humanities and fine arts, social and behavioral sciences, and natural sciences and mathematics.
**Goal** - Overall outcomes that define how the institution/division/department expects to fulfill its mission.

**Indirect Assessment Measures** - Assessment methods that involve perceptions of learning rather than actual demonstrations of learning. For example, a student survey about whether a course helped develop a greater sensitivity to diversity or an employer survey asking for feedback on graduate’s skills. Compare with direct measures.

**Institutional Assessment** - Assessment of the institutional mission and goal statements including student services, financial stability, business and industry training, as well as academic programs.

**Institutional Effectiveness** - The systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution. It includes all programs, services, and constituencies and is strongly linked to the decision making process at all levels, including the institution’s budgeting process. According to SACSCOC:

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

**Integrity** - As it relates to accreditation, integrity functions as the basic contract defining the relationship between the Commission and each of its member and candidate institutions to deal honestly and openly with their constituencies and with one another.

**Internally-developed Assessment** - Assessment instruments developed by College of Charleston faculty, staff, and/or administrators. Compare to externally-developed assessment.

**Learning Outcomes** - A statement that describes the measurable skills, knowledge, and attitudes that students should be able to do or demonstrate as a result of the course or program. Learning outcomes should be specific, measureable, agreed upon, realistic, and time framed.
Longitudinal Assessment - Assessments that collect data from the same population at different points in time.

Methods - Describes how and when the outcomes will be assessed, and who will conduct the assessment; describes how assessment data will be disseminated to faculty and staff as appropriate.

Mission Statement - The mission statement is usually a short, one paragraph general explanation of what the program is, and why the program exists.

Norm-reference - A test or other type of assessment designed to provide a measure of performance that is interpretable in terms of a student or support unit’s relative standing in some known group. A norm-referenced test is designed to highlight achievement differences between and among students or administrative support units to produce a dependable rank order across a continuum of achievement from high achievers to low achievers.

Peer Review - An accreditation review conducted primarily by faculty and administrative peers in the profession. These colleagues review the self-study and serve on visiting teams that review institutions and programs after the self-study is completed. Peers constitute the majority of members of the accrediting commissions or boards that make judgments about accrediting status.

Portfolio - Collections of multiple student work samples usually compiled over time and rated using rubrics. The design of the portfolio is dependent upon how the scoring results are going to be used.

Program Assessment - Program outcomes based on how well courses and other experiences in the curriculum fit together and build on each other throughout the undergraduate years.

Program Objectives - Outcomes or student learning outcomes.

Program Review - Evaluation of the effectiveness of an institution/division/department based primarily on indicators, objectives, and outcomes.

Qualitative Assessment - Assessment that relies on description rather than numerical scores or ratings. The emphasis is on the measurement of opinions, reflections and/or judgments. Examples include interview, focus groups, and observations. Compare with quantitative assessment.

Qualtrics - The online-based tool adopted by the College for design and implementation of surveys.
Quantitative Assessment - Assessment that relies on numerical scores or ratings. The emphasis is on the use of statistics, cumulative numbers, aggregated data, and numerical measurements. Compare with qualitative assessment.

Random Sample - A sample drawn from the population such that every member of the population has an equal opportunity to be included in the sample.

Reliability - Reliability is the extent to which an experiment, test, or any measuring procedure yields the same result on repeated trials.

Rigor - From an accreditation perspective, rigor is the demonstration that post-baccalaureate degree programs are progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate programs.

Rubrics - A set of categories that define and describe the important components of the work being completed, critiqued, and assessed. It evaluates performance and quality of work in attaining learning outcomes; assists in identifying strengths and weaknesses in performance based on department expectations or standards.

Self-study - Institutions and programs prepare a written summary of performance, based on accrediting organizations’ standards.

Site visit - Accrediting organizations normally send a visiting team to review an institution or program. The self-study provides the foundation for the team visit.

Summative Assessment - An assessment that is done at the conclusion of a course or some larger instructional period (e.g., at the end of the program). The purpose is to determine success or to what extent the program/project/course met its goals and learning outcomes. Compare with formative assessment.

Tracking/Reporting - Quantitative method for evaluating program effectiveness and for systematic direct comparison.

Use of Results - Explains how specific results from assessment activities will be used for decision-making, strategic planning, program evaluation and improvement; assists in documenting changes and the reasons for the changes.

Validity - Degree to which a method or study accurately reflects or assesses the specific outcome that the institution/division/department is attempting to measure.

Value-added (growth or pre-post) - Compares results against student scores when they started or entered the program to the end of the program or course of study.

Variable - Observable characteristics that vary among individual response.