University Plan for the Continuous Assessment of Student Learning

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Approved:

_______________________________________________________  ______________
Julia E. Wallace, Provost and Vice Chancellor                Date
Since its inception, the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay has fostered innovative approaches to teaching and learning, in large part due to the unique principles upon which the university was founded (i.e., interdisciplinarity and problem-focused education). This educational culture has produced a rich learning environment that has been cultivated by faculty members who are recognized internationally for their expertise and scholarship. The University Plan for the Continuous Assessment of Student Learning was developed in order to ensure that the unique educational experiences, programs, and learning environment provided to students at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay continue to be aligned with the institution’s select mission: “to provide an interdisciplinary, problem-focused educational experience that prepares students to think critically and address complex issues in a multicultural and evolving world. The University enriches the quality of life for students and the community by embracing the educational value of diversity, promoting environmental sustainability, encouraging engaged citizenship, and serving as an intellectual, cultural and economic resource.” The University Assessment Plan will help to focus our collective attention on our institution’s specific Mission Level Learning Outcomes:

• to provide students with an interdisciplinary, problem-focused education;
• to expose students to diversity;
• to encourage environmental sustainability; and
• to promote engaged citizenship.

The following principles of assessment guided the development of this University Assessment Plan:

• Meaningful assessment recognizes the developmental nature of student learning, and thus involves the use of multiple measures conducted at significant time points during a student’s academic career, in order to ensure the progressive acquisition of the knowledge and skills expected of a UW-Green Bay graduate.
• Coordination of university assessment efforts is essential for ensuring that all students, regardless of academic program, have acquired a set of minimum competencies (e.g., in writing and information literacy) upon completion of their degree.
• Program-specific assessment of student learning is vital for ensuring that students acquire the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and habits of mind that faculty intend to cultivate within their disciplines.
• Assessment is most effective at improving programs when those programs have clear, measurable goals that are in line with the institution’s mission and with faculty’s intentions for their program.
• Effective assessment is ongoing and conducted with an eye toward continuous improvement, as the institution regularly monitors progress toward intended goals and refines approaches when warranted.
• Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and thus meaningful assessment involves the collaboration of individuals representing multiple facets of the educational community, including (but not limited to) the faculty, librarians, and staff within Student Life.
• Assessment works best when it addresses questions that are meaningful specifically to our institution.

With these guiding principles in mind, the University Plan for the Continuous Assessment of Student Learning will focus assessment efforts on **four specific areas within the educational community** at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay. These areas include:

1. **Academic Programs.** Assessment of program-specific student learning outcomes—with an emphasis on continual curricular improvement—will be conducted annually and as part of each undergraduate and graduate program’s seven year review cycle.
2. **General Education.** Systematic inquiry into student learning will take place within the context of the general education curriculum, in order to ensure that this common educational experience continues to effectively address our institution’s select mission.
3. **Co-curricular Programs and Resources.** Regular assessment of academic- and student-support services will take place in order to identify the most effective approaches to supporting student learning on our campus.
4. **Innovations in Teaching and Learning.** UW-Green Bay has a history and national reputation for innovative pedagogical approaches, and thus it is fitting that our institution’s assessment plan documents the impact of these unique innovations on students’ educational experience.

**ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

Assessment practices for all four areas within the educational community at UW-Green Bay (**Academic Programs, General Education, Co-curricular Programs and Resources, and Innovations in Teaching and Learning**) are based on a five component assessment cycle that has the goal of continuous assessment of student learning outcomes. These components of the assessment cycle include:

1. identifying student learning outcomes;
2. establishing methodologies to assess the achievement of student learning outcomes;
3. gathering and analyzing the evidence with the methodologies;
4. sharing the results of the analysis; and
5. making evidence-based improvements as needed.

All components of the assessment cycle should be reflected in the Assessment Plans for each of the four areas of the university. Improvements may not be needed if evidence confirms that student learning outcomes or program outcomes have been achieved.
Overview

Faculty members in the academic programs are the most qualified to determine what the student learning outcomes for their programs should be, and therefore they are the most qualified to assess those student learning outcomes.

Each academic program will have an approved Program Assessment Plan as part of the seven-year program review cycle. Each program will also submit an Annual Update on assessment.

Each Program Assessment Plan includes:

- the identification of student learning outcomes;
- the mapping of those student learning outcomes on the program’s curriculum;
- an explanation of the direct and indirect methods used to assess the student learning outcomes;
- a timeline for the implementation of the methods; and
- the identification of those responsible for coordinating data collection.

Each Annual Update includes:

- the student learning outcomes measured by assessment activities;
- the findings from assessment activities conducted during the current year;
- any actions taken on these findings; and
- any plans for changes and follow-up.

Undergraduate and graduate programs will upload copies of their Program Assessment Plans and Annual Updates to the University Assessment website, where they will be accessed by the deans and the University Assessment Council (UAC). The Academic Program Assessment Subcommittee (APAS) of the UAC will review the plans and updates and, if necessary, will forward recommendations to the dean regarding any changes in the program’s reported set of assessment activities to ensure that sufficient evidence of student learning outcomes is included.
**Guidelines for Academic Program Assessment Plans**

A program’s Assessment Plan should have the following components:

1. **Student Learning Outcomes.** Create a list of specific student learning outcomes unique to each program and how they relate to UW-Green Bay’s Mission Level Learning Outcomes.

2. **Mapping of Curriculum.** Indicate how the program’s courses relate to the student learning outcomes.

3. **Methods.** Describe all of the methods used to assess the identified student learning outcomes. This should include an explanation of how evidence/information/data are gathered, including systematic methods for gathering quantitative and/or qualitative data as well as anecdotal information. Clearly indicate which student learning outcome or outcomes each method addresses. All student learning outcomes should be assessed by at least one direct method.

4. **Evidence.** Gather information and data through the program’s assessment activities that show the extent to which student learning outcomes are being met. Please report data by outcome.

5. **Use of Results.** Describe how the evidence that has been gathered is used systematically to make a determination that the students are achieving the learning outcomes at an appropriate level and to make programmatic improvements.

6. **Further Information Needed.** Provide an analysis of results to uncover gaps in current information and data or problematic findings that indicate a need for further study.

7. **Timeline.** Establish a timeline for collecting additional information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Action:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1 (following program review)</td>
<td>Continue to implement assessment program and review the information and data from assessment activities. Make evidence-based decisions concerning students’ attainment of the learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Submit Annual Assessment Update</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2 (five years prior to program review)</td>
<td>Continue to gather evidence on how students are attaining learning outcomes and conduct a thorough review of the assessment program. Modify assessment program if needed.</td>
<td>Submit Annual Assessment Update</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 3 (four years prior to program review)</td>
<td>Continue to gather evidence on students’ attainment of learning outcomes, and review the information/data from assessment activities. Make evidence-based decisions concerning students’ attainment of the learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Submit Annual Assessment Update</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4 (three years prior to program review)</td>
<td>Continue to gather evidence on students’ attainment of learning outcomes, and review the information/data from assessment activities. Make evidence-based decisions concerning students’ attainment of the learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Submit Annual Assessment Update</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 5 (two years prior to program review)</td>
<td>Continue to gather evidence on how the program is meeting its objectives and make comparisons of the findings from the evidence collected since the program review. Make evidence-based decisions concerning students’ attainment of the learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Submit Annual Assessment Update</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 6 (one year prior to program review)</td>
<td>Begin preparation of program review documents, including the program’s complete Assessment Plan and any changes to the program student learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Submit Annual Assessment Update</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 7 (program review completed)</td>
<td>Program Review submitted to Academic Dean. The program review includes a self-study report, complete Assessment Plan, and supporting data and documentation. (See the Procedures for Academic Program Review and Student Learning Outcomes Assessment for full details.)</td>
<td>Submit Program Review</td>
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Overview

Continuous assessment of student learning outcomes within the General Education Program ensures that all UW-Green Bay students achieve the following upon graduation:

- an introduction to interdisciplinary education;
- an adequate breadth of knowledge and course work that is representative of distinct ways of thinking;
- an understanding of problems and issues from global and multicultural perspectives; and
- a development of academic skills including communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and quantitative and information literacy.

The General Education Council is responsible “for curriculum development, regular course review, and general education assessment” within UW-Green Bay’s General Education Program (UW-Green Bay Faculty Handbook, 54.03C). The dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is responsible for the overall quality of the program. The General Education Program will be treated in a manner similar to that of academic programs, with the GEC acting as a kind of executive committee for the General Education Program. The Associate Provost for Academic Affairs will coordinate the assessment of General Education according which is based on the Annual Updates.

Each Annual Update on General Education includes:

- student learning outcomes assessed by assessment activities;
- findings from assessment activities conducted during the current year;
- actions taken on findings; and
- plans for changes and follow-up.
**Guidelines for Assessing General Education**

The General Education Council uploads copies of its Assessment Plans and Annual Updates to the University Assessment website, where they will be accessed by the deans and the University Assessment Council (UAC). The Academic Program Assessment Subcommittee (APAS) of the UAC will review the plans and updates and, if necessary, make recommendations for changes in the General Education Program’s reported set of assessment activities to ensure that sufficient evidence of program outcomes is included.

The General Education Assessment Plan should have the following components:

1. **Student Learning Outcomes.** Include a list of the current General Education student learning outcomes (both content- and skills-based outcomes). *What do we expect all students to know or be able to do by the time they receive their degree from UW-Green Bay?*

2. **Relationship to Mission.** Indicate how General Education’s student learning outcomes relate to UW-Green Bay’s Mission Level Learning Outcomes (to provide students with an interdisciplinary, problem-focused education; to expose them to diversity; to encourage environmental sustainability; and to promote engaged citizenship).

3. **Methods.** Describe all of the methods used to assess the identified student learning outcomes. This should include an explanation of how evidence/information/data are gathered, including systematic methods for gathering quantitative and/or qualitative data as well as anecdotal information. Clearly indicate which student learning outcome or outcomes each method addresses. All student learning outcomes should be assessed by at least one direct method.

4. **Evidence.** Describe the information/data gathered through General Education’s assessment activities that show the extent to which student learning outcomes are being met. Please report data by outcome.

5. **Use of Results.** Provide a description of how the evidence that has been gathered is used systematically to make a determination that the students are achieving the student learning outcomes at an appropriate level and/or to make General Education Program improvements.

6. **Further Information Needed.** Conduct an analysis of results to uncover gaps in current information/data or problematic findings that indicate a need for further study.

7. **Timeline.** Provide a timeline for collecting additional information.
Overview

For assessment in the academic- and student-support divisions, the focus is at the division level (or department level, if appropriate) where the staff determines the appropriate outcomes for their programs.

Each Assessment Plan includes:

- the identification of program outcomes;
- an explanation of the direct and indirect methods used to evaluate the achievement of the program outcomes;
- a description of which methods are used to assess each of the program outcomes;
- a timeline for the implementation of the methods; and
- the identification of the individual(s) responsible for coordinating data collection.

Each Annual Update includes:

- findings from assessment activities conducted during the current year;
- UAC outcomes assessed by assessment activities;
- actions taken on findings; and
- plans for changes and follow-up.

Each Status Update includes:

- a description of findings from assessment data;
- the conclusions drawn from the findings indicating that the evidence supports attainment of the program outcome(s) or the need for changes to improve outcomes;
- plans for changes to improve program outcomes, if needed; and
- the identification of gaps in data, if appropriate.

Guidelines for Assessing Co-Curricular Programs and Resources

Divisions that provide academic- and student-support services are central to student success in the university and play a crucial part in the delivery of academic programs. Therefore, it is important that they also engage in the assessment process to demonstrate the quality of services; to identify ways to improve services; and to record improvements. The evidence that is compiled through assessment will assist the university in demonstrating accountability to its internal and external audiences.

The Dean of Student Affairs and the Dean of Enrollment Services will submit copies of their Division Assessment Plans (or Department Assessment Plans, where appropriate), Annual Update, and Status Updates to the UAC according to the schedule provided below. The UAC will review the report and, if necessary, make recommendations for changes in the division’s
reported set of assessment activities to ensure that sufficient evidence of student learning outcomes is included.

A Division’s Assessment Plan should have the following components:

1. **History.** Include a brief history of the division (and its respective departments), which provides a solid contextual background in which to understand the mission of the division and its departments, as well as the information in the assessment report.

2. **Mission, Goals, and Objectives.** Provide a stated mission that is logically linked to the goals and objectives (stated as program outcomes) unique to each unit/department. Some outcomes will be student learning outcomes if appropriate. Objectives should include stated targets for performance.

3. **Methods.** Describe all of the methods used to gather evidence used in determining if the program outcomes are being met, including systematic methods for gathering quantitative and/or qualitative data as well as anecdotal information, with a clear indication of which outcome or outcomes each method addresses.

4. **Evidence.** Describe the information gathered through the unit’s assessment activities that show the extent to which program outcomes are being met, and indicate which data address which program outcome.

5. **Use of Results.** Describe how the evidence that has been gathered is used systematically to make programmatic improvements and how the results could answer questions about how the unit/department relates to the institutional mission.

6. **Further Information Needed and Timeline.** Provide an analysis of results to uncover gaps in current information or problematic findings that indicate a need for further assessment. A timeline for collecting additional information is presented.

**REVIEW SCHEDULE FOR CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES**

The Dean of Student Affairs and the Dean of Enrollment Services will complete a full Division Assessment Plan and provide Annual Updates each year. Every four years, Divisions will be asked to provide a Status Update.

Divisions may find it is more beneficial to write Assessment Plans, Annual Updates, and Status Updates by department. Departmental Assessment Plans and updates are acceptable to the UAC, so long as these reports follow the same procedures as outlined below. If completing departmental level plans, a division may also work with the UAC to create a staggered timeline, keeping from having all departments due in the same year.
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| Year 1 (four years prior to Update of Division Assessment Plan Report) | Divisions (or departments, where appropriate) will begin by reviewing their assessment plans for clarity of program objectives and appropriate methods to document success in meeting objectives. The division or department should begin or continue to collect longitudinal evidence to demonstrate that objectives are being met.  
**Action:** Submit Annual Assessment Update |
| Years 2 and 3 | Divisions or departments will continue to gather evidence of program outcomes and refine assessment activities to ensure that all outcomes are supported by evidence.  
**Action:** Submit Annual Assessment Update |
| Year 4 (Status Update) | During this year the divisions or departments will provide a Status Update, including a program history, mission, goals, program outcomes (or student learning outcomes, if appropriate), methods used, evidence from analysis of findings, use of results, and further information needed. Any revisions in future assessment plans are to be reported.  
**Action:** Submit Status Update |
Overview

In order to recognize the significant, positive impact that teaching innovations have upon student learning—as well as to ensure continuation of those efforts that perpetuate a culture of innovation—regular assessment of campus teaching and learning initiatives will be conducted. The Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) will be responsible for conducting regular reviews, which include a CATL Assessment Plan, Annual Updates, and a Status Update (during Year 4 of the cycle) to be reviewed by the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and the UAC.

Each Assessment Plan includes:

- the identification of program outcomes;
- an explanation of the direct and indirect methods used to evaluate the achievement of the program outcomes;
- a description of which methods are used to assess each of the program outcomes;
- a timeline for the implementation of the methods;
- the identification of the individual(s) responsible for coordinating data collection.

Each Annual Update on Innovations in Teaching and Learning includes:

- findings from assessment activities conducted during the current year;
- UAC outcomes assessed by assessment activities;
- actions taken on findings; and
- plans for changes and follow-up.

Each Status Update includes:

- a description of findings from assessment data;
- the conclusions drawn from the findings indicating that the evidence supports attainment of the program outcome(s) or the need for changes to improve outcomes;
- plans for changes to improve program outcomes, if needed; and
- the identification of gaps in data, if appropriate.

Guidelines for Assessing Innovations in Teaching and Learning

CATL is to submit a copy of their Assessment Plan, Annual Updates, and Status Updates to the UAC through the University Assessment website provided below. The UAC will review the report and, if necessary, make recommendations to the Associate Provost for changes in the reported set of assessment activities to ensure that sufficient evidence of program outcomes is included.
The Innovations in Teaching and Learning Assessment Plan should have the following components:

1. **Program Outcomes.** Include a list of the intended outcomes for teaching and learning initiatives on our campus. *How do we expect these outcomes to affect the teaching and learning environment for faculty and students at UW-Green Bay?*

2. **Relationship to Mission.** Indicate how the outcomes identified for Innovations in Teaching and Learning relate to UW-Green Bay’s Mission Level Learning Outcomes (MLLO).

3. **Methods.** Describe all of the methods used to assess the identified outcomes. This should include an explanation of how evidence/information/data are gathered, including systematic methods for gathering quantitative and/or qualitative data as well as anecdotal information. Clearly indicate which outcome or outcomes each method addresses.

4. **Evidence.** Describe the information/data gathered through assessment activities that show the extent to which outcomes for Innovations in Teaching and Learning are being met. Please report data by outcome.

5. **Use of Results.** Provide a description of how the evidence that has been gathered is used to make a determination that CATL- and IDC-sponsored programs are achieving their identified outcomes at an appropriate level and/or to make improvements in teaching and learning initiatives on our campus.

6. **Further Information Needed.** Conduct an analysis of results to uncover gaps in current information/data or problematic findings that indicate a need for further study.

7. **Timeline.** Provide a timeline for collection of additional information.
REVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INNOVATIONS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

CATL is required to complete Annual Updates as well as a Status Update during year four (4) of the cycle.

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| Year 1                 | CATL will begin the cycle by reviewing its assessment program for clarity of program objectives and appropriate methods to document success in meeting objectives. Begin or continue to collect longitudinal evidence to demonstrate that objectives are being met.  
**Action:** Submit Annual Assessment Update |
| Years 2 and 3          | CATL will continue to gather evidence of outcomes and refine assessment activities to ensure that all objectives are supported by evidence.  
**Action:** Submit Annual Assessment Update |
| Year 4 (Status Update) | During this year CATL will provide a complete Status Update, including a program history, mission, goals, objectives, methods used, evidence from analysis of findings, use of results, and further information needed. Any revisions in future assessment plans should be noted.  
**Action:** Submit Status Update |
THE UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT COUNCIL (UAC)

1. The University Assessment Council shall be composed of sixteen (16) appointed members including the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (Chair) and representatives from the Provost area divisions including: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Professional Studies, Outreach and Adult Access, Dean of Students, Information Services, Enrollment Services, a student representative, the chair of the Academic Affairs Council, the chair of the Graduate Studies Council, the chair of the General Education Council, and two faculty members with a background and interest in assessment methods. The Coordinator of Assessment and Testing Services, the Director of Institutional Research, and Special Assistant to the Provost will serve as ex officio, non-voting members.

2. Appointment of representatives of the Provost area divisions is the responsibility of the respective division head.

3. Nomination of faculty candidates for appointment to the University Assessment Council is the responsibility of the Committee on Committees and Nominations. Appointments are made annually by the Provost. Faculty members serve three-year staggered terms to ensure continuity.

4. The University Assessment Council is advisory to the Provost and Vice Chancellor and Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and her/his designee and serves the following functions:
   a. Guides UW-Green Bay as it transitions to the “Open Pathways” reaccreditation process including (i) regularly communicating back to the campus community regarding Higher Learning Commission (HLC) related activities; (ii) providing advice related to the University’s efforts to document compliance with the HLC Assurance and Quality Initiative components of the new accreditation process; and (iii) preparing and planning for the HLC site visits.
   b. Develops and monitors the implementation of the University’s Assessment Plan.
   c. Promotes and supports the institution-wide assessment activities related to the assessment of student learning outcomes, particularly in the context of the seven-year academic program review cycle.
   d. Integrates all assessment activities carried out by academic programs, student affairs and other support areas.
   e. Provides advice on assessment related issues.

5. The University Assessment Council shall establish an Academic Program Assessment Subcommittee (APAS) for the purpose of reviewing and discussing the Annual Updates submitted by the academic programs. The APAS will meet annually and provide recommendations to the academic deans and to the Provost. The APAS will consist of all unit chairs (or designees), chairs of the graduate programs (or designees), the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Dean of Professional Studies, the chair of the Academic Affairs Council, the chair of the Graduate Studies Council, and the chair of the General Education Council. The Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, who will convene the annual meeting, and the Special Assistant to the Provost on Assessment will be non-voting, ex-officio members of the APAS.

6. The chair of the Council must submit a report of its activities at the end of each academic year to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the Secretary of the Faculty and Academic Staff.