



**POLICY TITLE: Annual Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes and Student Achievement**

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICE(S): Office of the Provost**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: October 6, 2020**

**LAST REVISION DATE: October 8, 2020**

## **PURPOSE**

In order to support the University's mission to offer "undergraduate, graduate, and professional students the knowledge and skills needed to succeed as persons and professionals, and the values and sensitivity necessary to be . . . [people] for others," the University is committed to continuous improvement informed by assessment of student learning.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements of annual program learning outcomes assessment and graduate program alignment with the following three dimensions: Jesuit Mission Alignment, Academic Rigor, and Professional Relevance.

## **WHO IS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY**

This policy applies to the following: academic programs and co-curricular programs

## **POLICY**

The University of San Francisco requires that all academic and co-curricular programs prepare and submit an updated assessment plan as part of their program review. Assessment reports must be completed annually and submitted to the Dean's Office. These reports are in addition to any other assessment related reporting requirements that may occur, such as those for specialized accreditation or program review.

### Co-curricular Programs

Annual Assessment reports must include, at a minimum, assessment of at least one PLO, a description of the assessment methodology and process, rubrics or evaluation metrics descriptions, results of assessment findings, and a description of how the results will be used to make changes to the program and improve student learning.

All PLOs must be assessed at least once between program reviews or accreditation cycles. In addition to assessing PLOs, or if all PLOs have been assessed, the program may address a significant question they have that impacts student learning and drives decisions about the program.

### Undergraduate Programs

Annual Assessment reports must include, at a minimum, assessment of at least one PLO, a description of the assessment methodology and process, rubrics or evaluation metrics descriptions, results of assessment findings, and a description of how the results will be used to make changes to the program and improve student learning.

All PLOs must be assessed at least once between program reviews or accreditation cycles. In addition to assessing PLOs, or if all PLOs have been assessed, the program may address a significant question they have that impacts student learning and drives decisions about the program.

### Graduate Programs

Annual Assessment reports must include, at a minimum, assessment of at least one PLO, a description of the assessment methodology and process, rubrics or evaluation metrics descriptions, results of assessment findings, and a description of how the results will be used to make changes to the program and improve student learning.

All PLOs must be assessed at least once between program reviews or accreditation cycles. Programs may choose to also indicate which PLOs align with the dimensions of academic rigor, USF's Jesuit mission and values, and professional relevance, and include data in support of high-level functioning in each dimension. Doing so will assist the Provost's Office in its annual review of graduate programs.

In addition to assessing PLOs, or if all PLOs have been assessed, the program may address a significant question they have that impacts student learning and drives decisions about the program.

### Academic Libraries

Annual Assessment reports must include, at a minimum, assessment of at least one PLO, a description of the assessment methodology and process, rubrics or evaluation metrics descriptions, results of assessment findings, and a description of how the results will be used to make changes to the program and improve student learning.

All PLOs must be assessed at least once between program reviews. In addition to assessing PLOs, or if all PLOs have been assessed, the academic libraries may address a significant question they have that impacts student learning and drives decisions about the program.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Program Learning Outcome (PLO): a statement that identifies what all students within a program should be able to know, do, and value by the time they graduate. It should be specific, demonstrable/operational, measurable, understandable, and aligned with the field of study.

Assessment Plan: a plan, included as part of program review, that details the program mission statement, the program learning outcomes, the method of assessment, the time frame for collecting and reviewing data to support the assessment, and the individual(s) responsible for assessment.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Provost's Office has overall oversight responsibility for outcomes assessment for academic programs.

The deans of the colleges, schools and libraries have responsibility for ensuring that programs comply with all assessment policies, setting Annual Assessment report deadlines, and developing policies regarding feedback and acknowledgment of receipt of Annual Assessment reports.

The Vice Provost/President for Student Life has overall oversight responsibility for outcomes assessment for the co-curricular programs of the Student Life division.



Program faculty are responsible for assessment of academic PLOs, writing the assessment plan and report, and implementing any changes necessary based on assessment findings.

The Director of Organization Effectiveness for Student Life is responsible for ensuring the departments and centers units of Student Life assess program learning outcomes, write assessment plans and reports, and implement changes based on assessment findings.

The Office of Assessment & Accreditation (OAAS) Support is responsible for training and providing support and guidance to faculty and staff about effective assessment practices. OAAS will review assessment plans and reports and provide feedback as necessary. OAAS will maintain a public website which serves as a repository for all assessment plans and reports.



## **2020-2021 ADDENDUM TO THE ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT POLICY**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: October 6, 2020**

USF recognizes that the COVID-19 outbreak may pose challenges to the standard assessment process. While assessment reporting should continue, USF and WSCUC understand the need for flexibility in our assessment processes for the 2020-21 academic year. The purpose of assessment at the program level is to understand how our students are doing so we can plan and implement change as needed to improve student learning. This may be even more important during the time of COVID-19.

Academic and co-curricular programs may choose to forgo traditional assessment of PLO's and instead adapt their annual assessment for the 2020-21 academic year to be more reflective of the current situation.

The assessment conducted this academic year should be meaningful and allow you to implement changes to improve student learning. You may wish to begin your assessment by asking yourself what you want to know.

Suggestions for assessment this academic year include, but are not limited to:

- Analyzing what we have learned during the transition to remote learning.
- Looking at what worked for certain classes and programs, but not others, and why.
- Focusing on whether or not learning happened the 2019-2020 academic year.
- Conducting an analysis of how the change to remote teaching and learning has impacted the program.
- Building on what we learned during the transition to remote learning to do better in the future.
- Using data to answer meaningful questions, e.g. which students are at risk of not returning.
- Using data to check for equitable outcomes, e.g. do we have student populations that are having problems with technology and how has that impacted outcomes.

The assessment report should still include, at a minimum, a description of the assessment methodology and process, results of assessment findings, and a description of how the results will be used to make changes to the program and improve student learning. Reports should now also include a description of what was assessed.