

Point Loma Nazarene University

Assessment Guidelines For Academic Programs



PLNU Photographer Marcus Emerson

Educational Effectiveness Committee
(Revised spring 2015)

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A. PLNU Academic Assessment Guidelines and Purpose

The Academic Assessment Guidelines present an overview of the PLNU assessment processes, policies and responsibilities. The development and continuous improvement of the Guidelines is the responsibility of the Educational Effectiveness Committee. The Guidelines will be annually reviewed and updated to better serve faculty in their important task of delivering a quality education to PLNU students. The most recent version of the Guidelines will be maintained in the assessment section of the PLNU web pages (assessment.pointloma.edu). The Guidelines apply to all academic programs including traditional undergraduate, graduate, distance and adult education.

PLNU's academic assessment program is based on a three-year assessment cycle during which the academic unit faculty assess their assigned General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs), all Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), and the annual assessment of the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC formerly WASC) five Core Competencies. Academic units rotate through the three-year assessment cycle based on the unit's program review schedule. At the end of each three-year cycle the Educational Effectiveness Committee reviews the academic unit's progress in assessment and where appropriate makes recommendations in assessment processes. Following the Committee's review the program faculty receives an in-depth report including an overview of the Committee's findings, commendations and recommendations for the next steps for improving their assessment planning and activities.

Program faculty are ultimately responsible for the assessment for their respective academic programs and using their assessment findings to improve the academic program and curriculum. At the end of each academic year the faculty is asked to write a reflection on what they have learned through their assessment activities and how this will lead to program and student learning improvements. This is referred to as "closing the loop" on assessment. The Educational Effectiveness Committee faculty will establish institutional expectations and standards for assessment and will support the academic unit's faculty in their assessment responsibility. The Provost, or designee, provides leadership to the assessment process and will determine the planning, direction and timing of assessment activities for the University's academic programs.

These Guidelines outline the processes and policies for academic assessment, the roles and responsibilities, history and philosophy of assessment, sets expectations, and identifies elements of assessment planning and activities. If you should have any questions or comments, please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness or contact the chair of the Educational Effectiveness Committee.

1. The Purpose of Assessment

Assessment of student learning is the process PLNU uses to evaluate whether or not students are achieving the learning outcomes the program faculty have established for an academic program.

Faculty define the program and course learning outcomes based on the university's mission and Institutional Learning Outcomes, national practices, accreditation, subject matter expertise, and guild standards. Faculty designs the assessment activities for the learning outcomes and processes to evaluate whether or not students are able to meet these outcomes. The faculty will evaluate student achievement through the use of assessment tools, such as rubrics, and set the criteria for success they want the students to achieve. In Linda Suskie's book, *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide (Jossey-Bass, 2009)*, she uses Thomas Angelo's definition of assessment of student learning and emphasizes the continuous cycle.

Assessment is the ongoing process of:

1. Establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of student learning
2. Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve those outcomes
3. Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches our expectations
4. Using the resulting information to understand and improve student learning

Linda Suskie, *Assessing Student Learning: A Common Sense Guide (Jossey-Bass, 2009)*

The foundation of student learning takes place in the student's courses. Courses form the building blocks of an academic program, and it is in the courses that much of the assessment of student learning takes place. However, the assessment of an academic program requires a holistic view of the student's entire educational experience and how each element of the program builds, supports, integrates and enhances the learning environment for the students to achieve the faculty defined learning outcomes. Thus the assessment of a program may include co-curricular or academic unit activities that are not directly assessed in the classroom. The faculty should consider all of the aspects of the academic program and their contribution to the students' rich learning environment. Successful program assessment requires all of the program faculty to actively engage in creating the learning outcomes, designing the assessment measures, establishing where learning will be introduced, developed and mastered, and how the learning outcome will be assessed by multiple program faculty.

2. Academic Program Assessment Expectations

Academic units should frequently review PLNU's assessment expectations (Table 1) for each of the programs in the academic unit to ensure all aspects of the program assessment infrastructure are current and complete. While the assessment expectations list does not tell the whole story about program assessment, it can provide faculty a tool for a quick audit of the program to ensure their program assessment is current. The assessment inventory closely follows the rubric used by the Educational Effectiveness Committee faculty in their review of academic program assessment at the end of each three-year cycle.

Every academic unit faculty will conduct a complete assessment of their programs in their area of responsibility within a three-year cycle, and a more in-depth assessment in preparation of program

review on a six-year rotation cycle. The Student Learning Outcomes, assessment plans, assessment assignments, evidence of student learning are to be continuously updated in the academic unit's Assessment Wheel and will serve as the body of evidence leading to programmatic changes. The increased transparency resulting from the use of the assessment wheel leads to a high level of accountability as well as facilitating cross departmental learning and collaboration. The wheel also serves as a record of annual achievements in student learning and programmatic excellence; and forms the supporting documentation for the Program Review.

TABLE 1. PLNU EXPECTATIONS FOR ASSESSMENT (Bolded assessment components correspond to sections of the assessment wheel)	
1.	Student Learning Outcomes: All Program Learning Outcomes and assigned GE Learning Outcomes will be assessed within a three-year assessment cycle and the assessment wheel will be frequently updated.
2.	Student Learning Outcomes: All PLOs are well developed, clearly align with the academic mission, and cover multiple levels of mastery including the highest cognitive levels (Bloom's Taxonomy). All PLOs reflect what students will know, understand or be able to do to demonstrate learning at the completion of the program.
3.	Syllabi: All course LOs (CLOs) are well developed and are clearly identified in the program syllabi. PLOs identified in the curriculum map , including core competencies, are in the specified course syllabus. Assignments are appropriate for the CLOs and PLOs with the designated level of mastery.
4.	Syllabi: All program courses have program faculty- reviewed syllabi with course learning outcomes (CLOs), and PLOs to be assessed in the course are identified and aligned.
5.	Syllabi: A master syllabus is a framework that faculty use to build their syllabus. The master syllabus will conform to the APC and GESC approved templates. When the same PLO is being assessed in a course with multiple sections, the same assessment assignment for the PLO is used in each of the course sections. Course syllabi will be made available to students and faculty on the web.
6.	Curriculum Map: Mastery levels (I, D, M) of each outcome will be presented in a curriculum map and progression throughout the curriculum is described leading to a cohesive curriculum.
7.	Assessment Plan and Use of Evidence of Student Learning: The academic unit has a coherent and sustainable plan to improve student learning. The plan may include improvements in instruction (curriculum or pedagogy), assignments, course materials, or assessment. The plan includes rationale for how these modifications will achieve desired improvements in student learning
8.	Assessment Plan: All programs will have a well-developed multi-year assessment plan that identifies where, when and how all of the PLOs will be assessed and the criteria for success are identified with a strong rationale. The plan requires an appropriate level of assessment activities and is clear and well developed. The assessment plan will include direct and indirect assessment, as well as formative and summative assessment.
9.	Assessment Plan: The Plan describes how assignments will be assessed including multiple faculty assessors and calibration. Instruments, assignments and measurement tools (rubrics, etc.) are identified and description of their use is clearly articulated and developed enough to be meaningfully and consistently applied.
10.	Assessment Plan: All PLOs are assessed with a minimum of two assessment activities (preferably three

assessments for triangulation)... Both direct and indirect assessment assignments are used to assess each PLO. There is at least one direct measure for each learning outcome.

11. **Assessment Plan:** PLOs are assessed by multiple faculty involving inter-rater reliability and calibration activities. The Assessment Plan describes how all faculty, including part-time and adjuncts, will participate in the assessment process.
12. **Evidence of Student Learning:** All PLOs are supported by the evidence of student learning that is well developed and includes data, some of which can be benchmarked to national standards, subject matter criteria for program excellence, or external measure of aspirant programs. The academic unit should collect longitudinal data over multiple years that are both reliable and valid.
13. **Use of Evidence of Student Learning:** Each year the faculty is to prepare a program analysis report where they articulate a well-reasoned critique of assessment data, which is presented in summary formats in the assessment wheel. The report leads to conclusions for improved student learning that are clearly drawn from the analysis of data.

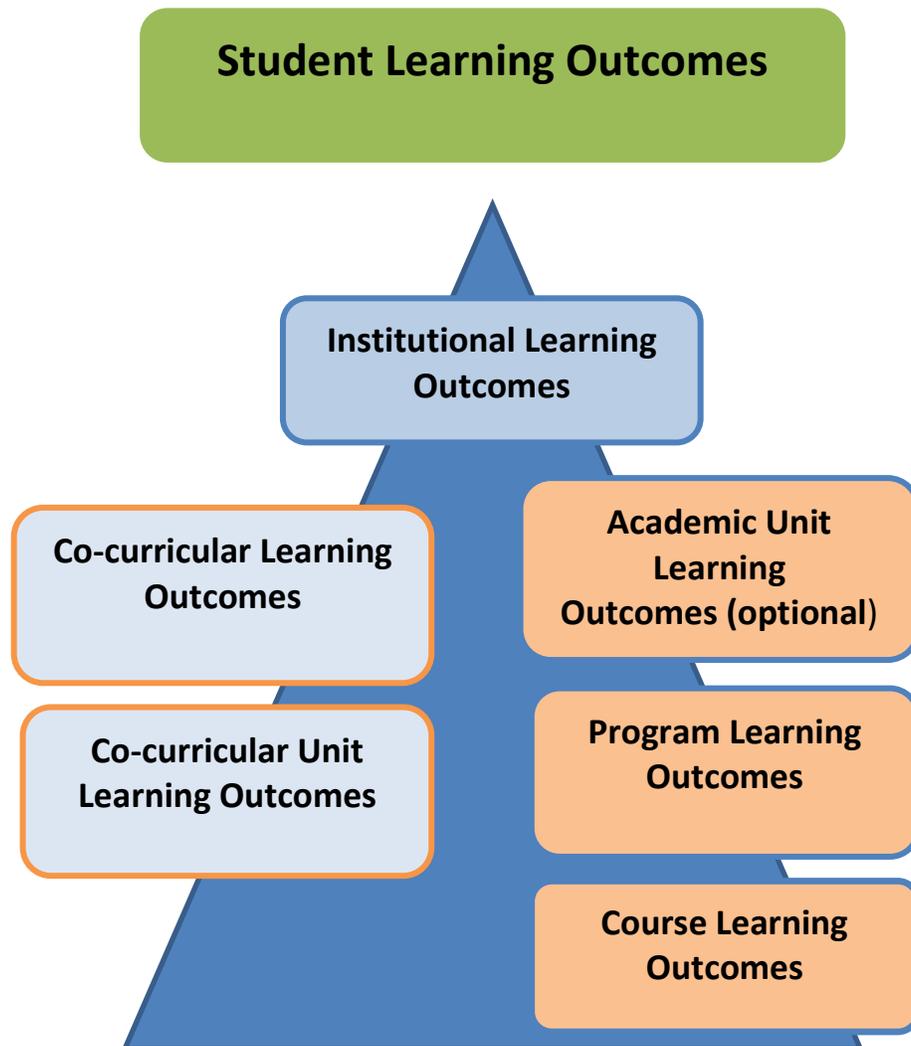
B. Academic Assessment Process

1. Levels of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

Academic assessment at PLNU is our commitment to our students to provide them with excellent educational opportunities and programs and to continuously evaluate and improve these programs to ensure they meet and exceed national standards. Assessment begins with inquiry into student learning in the classroom context, an examination of the curriculum, and faculty commitment to professional development. The PLNU Assessment Wheel (assessment.pointloma.edu) is the repository for the evidence; assessment data; analysis of learning outcomes; and other artifacts leading to the enhancement educational effectiveness.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are at all levels of the University and are aligned to achieve the University's Mission and core values as well as excellence in academic endeavors. The most comprehensive learning outcomes are the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to which each curricular and co-curricular unit aligns its mission and department and program learning outcomes. The next level of learning outcomes is the departmental level, and individual programmatic learning outcomes (PLOs) (e.g. B.S. Biology, M.A. Special Education, Discipleship Ministries, and Residential Life). In addition to the PLOs, each program also has an assessment plan to determine when, where and how each learning outcome will be assessed (see template # 2). All assessment plans and activities are available in the assessment wheels. In academic programs each course in turn has course learning outcomes that support and align with the program learning outcomes.

here are several levels of student learning outcomes that are aligned to strengthen the learning achievements of the PLNU student. This alignment focuses and coordinates the curricular and co-curricular learning activities. The graph on the following page shows the alignment of the various levels of curricular student learning outcomes.



a. Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment

The highest order of assessment of student learning is at the University level of mission and institutional learning outcomes (ILO). As part of the continuous improvement in PLNU's processes for the assessment of student learning, it was recognized in 2009, that the institution would be well served by having a set of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to help unify programmatic student learning outcomes. The Educational Effectiveness Committee worked on developing these outcomes over an 18-month period and the first ILOs were approved by the faculty in November of 2010 ([Institutional Learning Outcomes](#)) and later revised in fall 2013 and again in fall 2014.

Mission Statement

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Institutional Level Outcomes

To Teach - Learning, Informed by our Faith in Christ

1. Students will acquire knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world while developing skills and habits that foster life-long learning

To Shape - Growing, In a Christ-Centered Faith Community

2. Students will develop a deeper and more informed understanding of self and others as they negotiate complex environments.

To Send - Serving, In a Context of Christian Faith

3. Students will serve locally and/or globally in vocational and social settings.

b. Academic Unit assessment

An academic unit refers to an academic department (e.g., Music) or school (e.g., School of Education). For those academic units with very complex combination of programs, degree levels, centers or institutes, and degree requirements, they may choose to have academic unit learning outcomes in order to align all of their programs and supporting activities. This is not required and does add another layer of assessment; however, the benefit of a more unifying approach to assessment may outweigh the additional work. Academic unit learning outcomes are aligned to the Institutional Learning Outcomes and all programs within the academic unit will map their program learning outcomes to the academic unit outcomes.

c. Program Level assessment

A program is an academic degree or major within the academic unit and listed in the PLNU catalogs. A program is comprised of a set of degree requirements including a defined set of courses and other requirements that students must successfully complete to obtain a specific degree, credential or certificate, as indicated in the University academic catalogs. *The academic unit with more than one program and/or center is required to assess each individually. This includes providing in the assessment wheel a separate program learning outcomes, curriculum map, assessment plan, evidence of learning in the program and use of evidence.* The Educational Effectiveness Committee will carefully review the assessment infrastructure for each program and provide a summary and recommendations to the academic unit faculty and curricular and program review committees.

d. General Education Assessment

The General Education (GE) Committee is responsible for the development and updating the General Education (GE) Learning Outcomes (see Appendix C) and that they are aligned with the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). The GELOs were initially approved by the faculty in December 2010 and revised in December 2013 and again in fall 2014. Since PLNU first began the process of creating the GE Learning Outcomes, three key events occurred in higher education that helped inform and shape the PLNU process: (1) AAC&U created and pilot tested VALUE Rubrics and the Essential Learning Outcomes; (2) the Degree Qualification Profile was piloted (PLNU participated in both the CIC and WSCUC pilot tests 2010-2012); and (3) WSCUC introduces the requirement to assess the core competencies: oral and written communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, and critical thinking. In the GE Learning Outcomes framework, the GE committee incorporated many of the ideas contained in the AAC&U's Essential Learning Outcomes, embedded the WSCUC Core Competencies for formative assessment, and decided the direct assessment methods for each Outcome.

The General Education Committee provides oversight for the assessment of the GE program and setting the framework for assessment including: GE Learning Outcomes, curriculum map, assessment plan, review of assignments and rubrics, ensuring the collection of data and updating of the General Education Assessment Wheel. In addition, the General Education Committee will review and analyze the assessment data and make recommendations to the Provost when changes are needed to improve student learning. Each academic unit with General Education courses is required to assess their GE courses based on the approved assessment plan, to maintain the assessment results in the General Education assessment wheel.

e. Core Competencies (undergraduate: traditional, online, and degree completion)

The WSCUC 2013 Handbook of Accreditation requires accredited universities with undergraduate programs to assess the five "Core Competencies" at the end of a student's academic program and prior to graduation (students in senior standing). The core competencies include: 1) written communication, 2) oral communication, 3) information literacy, 4) critical thinking, and 5) quantitative reasoning. The core competencies are to be assessed in the student's academic major using the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics corresponding to the five core competencies. The results are to be posted in the academic unit's assessment wheel under the section, Evidence of Student Learning. Assessment is to be conducted in LiveText, thus allowing the university to collect data across majors and create institutional level reports aggregated and disaggregated on a wide range of variables (e.g. major, demographics, transfer student, etc.). Through LiveText the University will also be able to compare this summative data with the formative data in General Education assessment.

Core competency assessment is to be part of the academic program assessment plan and the courses where the assessment will take place mapped on the curriculum map. Unlike the program learning outcomes, the core competencies are assessed every year with the graduating cohort. While it is desirable to assess every senior, it is also challenging to capture all of them. The faculty should make every attempt to assess all of the seniors in their major but as a minimum cannot fall below the PLNU random sampling policies in these Guidelines (see also Section B. 6). The Offices of Institutional

Effectiveness and Instructional Technology will work with the faculty to set-up their core competency assignments in LiveText with the appropriate AAC&U VALUE Rubric, and if requested embed the links to these assignments in the courses built out in Canvas.

WSCUC Standard 2, Criteria for Review (CFR) 2.2a—*Baccalaureate programs engage students in an integrated course of study of sufficient breadth and depth to prepare them for work, citizenship, and life-long learning. These programs ensure the development of core competencies including, but not limited to, written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking. In addition, baccalaureate programs actively foster creativity, innovation, and appreciation for diversity, ethical and civic responsibility, civic engagement, and the ability to work with others.*

WSCUC Institutional Review Report

Educational Quality: Student Learning, Core Competencies, and Standards of Performance at Graduation (CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3)

The five core competencies listed in the Handbook are relevant in virtually any field of study, though different fields may define these outcomes in different ways and may also include other outcomes. At many institutions, it is the assessment of learning in the major or professional field that engages faculty and produces the most useful findings. Thus institutions may wish to embed assessment of core competencies in assessment of the major or professional field. Capstones, portfolios, research projects, signature assignments, internships, and comprehensive examinations provide rich evidence that can be analyzed for multiple outcomes, both specialized and common to all programs, at a point *close to graduation* as determined by the institution. Whatever the expectations and findings, they need to be contextualized and discussed in this component of the institutional report.

WSCUC 2013 Handbook of Accreditation, July 1, 2013, p.30

f. Meaning, Quality and Integrity of the Degree and the Degree Qualification Profile

In the WSCUC 2013 Handbook revision there is a new requirement for universities to describe and verify the meaning, quality and integrity of the degrees PLNU awards. The revised assessment wheel has the central location of the wheel to house the data to support this new requirement. Below is an excerpt from the WSCUC Handbook that provides guidance to faculty. At the heart of this new requirement is the expectation that faculty will be able to articulate and support with evidence, in mission related terms, what it means to have a PLNU degree, and that this is more than the sum of all of the degree requirements.

PLNU uses the framework of the Degree Qualification Profile (DQP) to support the universities work in this area. The Degree Qualification Profile has five learning areas: Specialized Knowledge, Broad and Integrative Knowledge, Civic and Global Learning, Intellectual Skills, and Applied and

Collaborative Learning. PLNU maps the assessment work of each academic unit to all five areas of the DQP framework.

WSCUC Institutional Review Report

Degree Programs: *Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees* (CFRs 1.2, 2.2-4, 2.6, 2.7, 4.3)

Institutions are expected to define the meaning of the undergraduate and graduate degrees they confer and to ensure their quality and integrity. “Quality” and “integrity” have many definitions; in this context WSCUC understands them to mean a rich, coherent, and challenging educational experience, together with assurance that students consistently meet the standards of performance that the institution has set for that educational experience. Traditionally, institutions have described their degrees either very generally (i.e., as something of self-evident value) or very concretely (in terms of specific degree requirements and preparation for specific professions). This component of the institutional report asks for something different: a holistic exploration of the middle ground between those two extremes, expressed in terms of the outcomes for students and the institutional mechanisms that support those outcomes. Defining the meaning of higher degrees can provide clarity for institutions, for students, and for a public that seeks to understand what unique educational experience will be had at that particular institution and what makes the investment in that experience worthwhile. CFR 2.2 indicates that the degree as a whole should be more than the sum of its traditional parts: courses, credits, and grades.

Exploring the meaning of a degree thus involves addressing questions about what the institution expects its students--undergraduates and graduates alike—to know and be able to do upon graduation, and how graduates embody the distinct values and traditions of the institution through their dispositions and future plans. It leads to analysis of how effectively courses, curricula, the co-curriculum, and other experiences are structured, sequenced, and delivered so that students achieve learning outcomes at the expected levels of performance in core competencies, in their majors or fields of specialization, in general education, and in areas distinctive to the institution. It means ensuring alignment among all these elements, and maintaining an assessment infrastructure that enables the institution to diagnose problems and make improvements when needed. Not least of all, it means developing the language to communicate clearly about the degree—what it demands and what it offers—to internal and external audiences.

- *WSCUC 2013 Handbook of Accreditation, July 1, 2013, p.29.*

g. Course Syllabi

The course syllabi are to conform to APC and GESC guidelines for syllabi (see Faculty FAQ in my.pointloma.edu) and are to be available for review by the Educational Effectiveness Committee

during the in-depth three-year cycle review and to the Program Review Committee. Courses with multiple sections will have a master syllabus approved by the program faculty. PLNU course syllabi are available on the web in the academic unit's assessment wheel. The syllabi will be eventually linked to the catalog course description allowing students to be fully informed of the course learning outcomes, assessment assignments, learning modules, etc.

For assessment purposes, the assessment wheel webpage includes: 1) syllabi aligned to the curriculum map and program learning outcomes, 2) syllabi with program faculty approved course learning outcomes and PLOs assessed in the course, and 3) a description of the assignments and rubrics to be used for the assessment of the program learning outcomes (assignments and rubrics also included in the Assessment Plan section of the wheel). Course faculty will also want to ensure that all assignments are aligned to the course learning outcomes and that this alignment is clear to students. During the course of the Educational Effectiveness Committee's three-year cycle review the Committee will review the syllabi and look for examples that can serve as models and make recommendations where appropriate.

2. Educational Effectiveness Committee Review and Actions

At the end of each three-year assessment cycle, the Educational Effectiveness Committee works with the academic unit faculty to undertake a complete review of their assessment practices, planning, activities, and course syllabi included in the assessment wheel. The Committee will consider the assessment planning and activities for each program separately and the academic unit as a whole. The Educational Effectiveness Committee writes a report on their findings, including findings, commendations and recommendations for improvement. The report presents a summary overview of the entire assessment process quality for the academic unit and each program. Based on the Educational Effectiveness Committee's rubric review, the committee embeds in the report is a single rubric score indicating the overall quality of the program assessment (below) and additional rubric score for each of the academic unit programs.

Educational Effectiveness Committee Criteria Embedded in the Program Review Rubric				
Criteria	Highly Developed	Developed	Emerging	Initial
Assessment Wheel (Educational Effectiveness Committee Report & Score)	Excellent assessment program in all aspects with few areas needing improvement.	Strong assessment program with some areas needing further development.	Building of assessment program begun, but needs significant improvement.	Have made very little progress on building out the assessment structure for the program.
Score ___	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0
Program Assessment (1...2...3...) A different criteria row for each of the academic programs	Excellent assessment documentation and evidence for Program (1) with few areas needing improvement.	Strong assessment documentation and evidence for Program (1) with few areas needing improvement.	Building of the assessment for Program (1) documentation and evidence has begun, but needs significant improvement.	Have made very little progress on building out the assessment structure and evidence for Program (1).
Score ___	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0

The Educational Effectiveness Committee will recommend to the academic unit one of the following: (1) the quality of the assessment program and use of evidence is excellent with recommendations for continuous development, (2) the quality of the assessment program is adequate but needs improvement and revision, or (3) the academic program assessment is sub-standard and needs significant improvement. Copies of the report are provided to the Provost, College Dean, and Curricular Committees including General Education Committee where appropriate.

3. Educational Effectiveness Committee Rubric for Academic Program Assessment

The Educational Effectiveness Committee has two rubrics (rubrics in the appendices) to assess the quality of the academic unit's assessment program. The rubrics can also be found in the Assessment section of the web where the academic Assessment Wheels are housed. The first rubric is for Assessment Planning and includes a review of the Student Learning Outcomes, Curriculum Map, and Multi-Year Assessment Plan. The second rubric focuses on the Methods of Assessment, Direct and Indirect Assessment, Summative and Formative Assessment, Quality of the Evidence of Student Learning, Analysis of findings and Recommendations for Change. In addition, the Committee will review the program syllabi for alignment of Program Learning Outcomes with Institutional Learning Outcomes, signature assignments, and rubrics. The Committee rubrics are used as the basis for Committee discussion in the draft of their report including clear action for improvement.

C. PLNU Assessment Wheel (NILOA Transparency Framework)

PLNU adopted the National Institute Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) Transparency Framework in late 2011 as the repository for PLNU public assessment data. This new approach was adapted to PLNU's assessment needs and is known as the Assessment Wheel ([assessment cycle guidelines](#) and [assessment cycle wheel](#)) and integrated well with the redesigned program review process. The Assessment Wheel is both a storage location and tells the story of each academic unit's student learning achievements and provides the foundation for effective growth and program innovation. The Assessment Wheel is intended to provide full transparency and in spring 2014 WSCUC began requiring all of its accredited universities to provide similar evidence of student learning on their public website. It is grounded in the academic discipline, simple to understand, informative, and a meaningful process based on continuous improvement. It is flexible enough to adjust to the Academic Unit's unique needs and highlights the distinctives of each program.

Each academic unit and General Education has an Assessment Wheel to house their assessment documents. The Educational Effectiveness Committee faculty is responsible for reviewing the Assessment Wheel documents and make recommendations about ways to strengthen their assessment processes and activities. The Educational Effectiveness Committee conducts a full review for each academic unit over a three-year period assessment cycle and a very in-depth review and report in the first year of the academic unit's program review.

1. ACADEMIC UNIT MISSION STATEMENT

The overarching University mission statement and Institutional Learning Outcomes define PLNU's distinctives and help faculty and staff to center all academic units to avoid mission drift. All academic and administrative units are to align their mission and learning outcomes with the purposes of the university. The Educational Effectiveness Committee and the Program Review Committee carefully examine mission alignment of each academic program to ensure it supports and furthers the University mission and is aligned to the University core values. Some academic units have well-crafted curriculum maps that graphically demonstrate the alignment of the program learning outcomes with those of the Institution. While this alone will not prevent mission drift, it is an excellent exercise to continually remind the program faculty the important role of program assessment in maintaining mission focus.

Guideline for the Mission Statement or Statement of Purpose

The Academic Unit's mission statement (or statement of purpose) is a brief statement describing how the Academic Unit programs support the Institution mission and the educational goals of the University. The mission statement should follow these guidelines:

- Specify the purpose of the department/program
- How the academic unit aligns to the PLNU Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Core Values and Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
- The mission statement should be succinct and student-centric

Example: University Mission

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Example: School of Education

Point Loma Nazarene University School of Education is a vital Christian learning community that exists to develop high-performing, reflective educators of noble character who impact the lives of learners to influence the broader community.

Example: Literature, Journalism, and Modern Languages

Embodying the core values of a Christian liberal arts education in the Wesleyan theological tradition, and focusing on the power of language and story to shape us and our world, the LJML department and programs will provide students with knowledge, skills, and experiences to equip them to understand, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and create texts as linguistic and/or artistic expressions of diverse human experiences. We value reading, writing, researching, speaking, and discussing as profound means of participating in the redemptive work of God in all of creation.

Example: Department of Psychology Statement of Purpose

Our programs emphasize several features:

- Develop mature personalities in students, so they are able to meet problems of adjustment with realism and intelligence;
- Integrate the religious faith of students with the study of psychology;
- Prepare students who plan to undertake graduate study in psychology for careers related to mental health, such as Marriage and Family Therapy, Clinical/Counseling Psychology, Social and Community Psychology, and Health Psychology; and

- Educate students preparing for careers in non-mental health-related fields, such as Church Ministry, Business, Medicine, and Law.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) is the overarching terminology used to refer to all learning outcomes. The different levels of learning assessment are: Institutional, co-curricular, academic unit (optional), program, and course. Course Learning Outcomes are in the syllabus and align with the Program Learning Outcomes which are in turn determined by the program faculty. There are many excellent resources on how to write effective outcomes. The faculty should be guided by Bloom's Taxonomy of higher order of cognitive ability. Another resource faculty is encouraged to consider is the Lumina [Degree Qualification Profile](#) which PLNU piloted for WSCUC and the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC). For more information and resources please contact the Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

Guideline for Program Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes

Definition of Program Learning Outcomes:

- Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) describe what students will KNOW – UNDERSTAND - DO as a result of their learning experience in program
- A program is a major in a discipline for undergraduates (traditional, degree completion, and online)
- A program is a degree for the graduate programs and in some cases a concentration or specialization within the degree (e.g. Master of Art in Education with a specialization in Education Leadership)

Characteristics of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

- Describes what *student will learn* in the program
- Sets a context of the program
- Align with the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
- Focuses on the central concepts of the discipline; such as national standards (learning outcomes) from the national or professional organization of the discipline

Course Learning Outcomes – a description how the academic unit incorporates the PLOs at the course level and method of verifying all session syllabi and engaging full-time and adjunct faculty in the assessment process. This might include assessment department workshops, department faculty meetings, rubric scoring parties, Institutional Effectiveness and CTL training, etc.

- Limit the course-level expected learning outcomes to 5 – 8 statements for the entire course (more detailed outcomes can be developed for individual units, assignments, chapters, etc.)
- If a Program Learning Outcome is assessed and embedded in the course, list it in the syllabus and provide the students the assignment and assessment rubric or other tools for evaluation
- Focus on overarching or general knowledge and/or skills (rather than small or trivial details).

- Focus on knowledge and skills that are central to the course topic and/or discipline.
- Create statements that are student-centered rather than faculty-centered (e.g., “upon completion of this course students will be able to define and properly use the principal terms in the field, both historical and contemporaneous”).
- Focus on the learning that *results* from the course rather than describing activities or lessons in the course

3. CURRICULUM MAP (see Template # 1)

The Curriculum Map identifies each of the courses required for the major and the Learning Outcomes for the program that will be emphasized in each of the required courses. PLOs are embedded in courses and are mapped across the whole curriculum and the faculty identify where a specific learning will be introduced (I), developed (D) and mastered (M). All PLOs are assessed at the mastery level (summative assessment) and at different stages when the PLO is introduced and developed (formative assessment). The curriculum map draws attention to the sequencing of classes and assists the faculty in identifying areas of the curricular programming that may need strengthening. The curriculum map also includes the courses where the five core competencies are assessed. PLNU faculty has created a variety of very excellent curriculum maps and can be viewed in the Assessment Wheels. Excellent examples can be found in Kinesiology, Mathematical, Information & Computer Sciences, and School of Education).

	Program Learning Outcomes				Five Core Competencies (CC) ^{1,2,3,4,5} and courses where assessed
	PLO 1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4	
SCI 101	I		I, D* ¹	I	CC ^{1 & 3} CC ^{2,4, & 5}
SCI 203	D* ¹	I,D* ¹		I,D* ¹	
SCI 342			M* ¹		
SCI 487	M* ¹	M* ²		M* ²	
SCI 490	M* ¹		M* ¹		
(*) Identifies where PLO assessments occur and the number ^{1,2,3,....} of assessments					Senior Year

4. ASSESSMENT PLAN (see Template # 2)

The Assessment Plan includes all assessment activities for the three-year assessment cycle. This includes a schedule when PLOs will be assessed along with courses, assignments for both direct and indirect measures, formative and summative assessment, rubrics, and other assessment documents. Each PLO should have multiple assessments including; formative and summative, and indirect and direct. There must be at least one direct assessment at the mastery level. Faculty is encouraged to conduct both formative and summative assessment for each PLO, but as a minimum must have a direct assessment of each PLO at the mastery level of development. The program faculty is to decide if they will focus on a single PLO each year, assessing it in multiple ways during the year, or spread the assessments over the three-year cycle and focusing on multiple PLOs each year at different levels of development. The Plan also provides a rationale for the Criteria for Success for each of the assignments.

Every academic year, two or three areas of each program should be scheduled for evaluation. For those academic units with more than one program, each program is to assess learning outcomes. All class sections of the course where a PLO is to be assessed are to be included in the evaluation process including those courses taught by adjunct faculty. Faculty members in the selected courses are required to agree on one or more assignments (signature assignments) that they have been approved by the program faculty and are aligned with the learning objective(s) being evaluated. The Assessment Wheel should include all signature assignments along with scoring rubrics for these assignments. Program assessment is not an evaluation of a student, professor, or course performance. For all assessment assignments the data are treated in the aggregate and are used to review student learning in terms of articulated program learning outcomes.

Assessment Plan

The following documentation is to be provided in the Assessment Plan section of the Assessment Wheel

1. PLO 3-year Assessment Cycle rotation

Example (1) Biblical Studies PLO 1

- Academic Year 2011-2012: Biblical Studies PLO 1 (CMI 300), spring semester
 - Indirect assessment (formative, survey)
- Academic Year 2012-2013: Biblical Studies PLO 1 (BLA 205-8, Or 337), fall semester
 - Direct assessment (formative, ePortfolio assignment)
- Academic Year 2013-2014: Biblical Studies PLO1 (BIB 495) fall and spring semesters
 - Direct assessment (summative/ mastery, signature assignment)

Example(2) MICS PLO 3 – Direct assessment, summative/ mastery

- Students will understand the theory of algorithms and computation
 - Means of Assessment (annual): ETS Major Field Test in Computer Science: Structures and Algorithms sub score
 - Criteria for Success: 50% of the students achieve above the 50% percentile

2. Faculty assignments: PLO assessment responsibility, methods and processes

Assessment of the academic program is a shared responsibility. The program faculty has responsibility for the course learning outcomes and designing courses to achieve those goals as well as the assessment of student achievement. The academic unit dean or chair provides leadership to the assessment process and the faculty in the academic unit collaborates throughout the assessment process to ensure the appropriateness of the assessment process and alignment of the Learning Outcomes with the academic unit goals and the University mission.

3. PLO assessment activities: signature assignments, rubrics, faculty calibration

Signature assignments are scored by multiple readers to verify reliability. The resulting scores are analyzed by the academic unit. These reports are used by faculty to reflect on the program courses and make warranted adjustments and improvements. Follow up workshops are offered in collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning to support the faculty in areas of assignment design and mapping assignments to student learning outcomes as well as other themes that may emerge from the assessment results.

Describe the assessment type (formative or summative), whether the measure is direct or indirect, and frequency of the assessment such as every other year, include the assignment rubrics and describe how the faculty is calibrated to the assessment rubric. This discussion might include a description of how the assignments and rubrics were developed and whether the assignments are embedded in course assignments

used for grading purposes.

4. Criteria for Success

Criteria for Success are performance targets the academic unit believes mark the desired success rate for a specific assessment activity. Every assessment assignment or activity is to include a related, Criteria for Success. Faculty begins with a measure where students are currently performing and set a desired level of performance they want to see, as measured by indicators, that represents success at achieving the outcome.

Examples

- **All students** are expected to achieve a **Proficient level** on at least **four of the five categories** of the Evaluation Rubric.
- **80%** of graduating students will **score a 20** (out of 25) **or higher** on the specialized knowledge **rubric**.
- **90%** of students will achieve a score of **at least 3.5** (out of 5) **in all seven** of the subscale criterion areas on the **Lab Report Rubric**.
- Students entering their senior year will achieve a mean score **at or above** that of **peer institutions** for **80%** of the discipline's content test subscales.

5. EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING (see Template # 3)

Each Learning Outcome requires multiple lines of assessment data including; formative and summative, indirect and direct, with a minimum of one direct measure. There are a wide range of activities the faculty can use to assess student learning. Faculty in the program being assessed should collaborate in creating the signature assignments used to assess a PLO, and collectively review the evidence of student achievement in order to form agreement on the program improvements needed.

Program assessment is about the entire program not an individual student's performance. In the evidence section of the Wheel include the aggregate of the student results not individual student performance. Be careful to ensure student identification information is **NOT** in the Wheel in order to protect student identity (FERPA). Below is a partial list of potential assessment methods and tools:

Direct measures of assessment

- Is an assignment that assesses what the learning outcome states a student will know, understand and can do
- Require students to produce work so that reviewers can assess how well students meet expectations
- Directly observed demonstration of student's work

Examples:

- High impact practices as defined by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) include: First-Year Seminars and Experiences, Common Intellectual Experiences, Learning Communities, Writing-Intensive Courses, Collaborative Assignments and Projects, Undergraduate Research, Diversity/Global Learning, Service Learning, Community-Based Learning, Internships and Capstone Courses and Projects.

- Value-added assessment with pre and post-tests
- Course-embedded assessment (homework assignments [problem sets], essays, locally developed tests, term papers, oral presentations, multiple-choice test questions)
- External examiners or experts/peer review
- Comprehensive exams; exit exams
- National Major Field Achievement Tests
- GRE subject exams
- Senior thesis or major project
- Exams
- Portfolio evaluation (includes direct and indirect)
- Case studies and simulations
- Writing Assignments; technical reports and proposals
- Capstone projects
- Internal/external juried review of performances and exhibitions (poster presentations)
- Performance piece (e.g., musical recital)
- Class project (individual or group)
- Internship and clinical evaluation
- Laboratory Assignments
- Grading with criteria or rubrics
- Classroom Assessment techniques (minute papers)

Indirect Measures of Assessment

Self-reported, self-measured, opinion-based

Opportunities for students to reflect on their learning experiences and inform the reviewers their perceptions of their learning experience (Banta, 2004; Palomba & Banta, 1999)

Suggest WHY performance was above or below expectations and what might be done to improve the processes of education

Indirect measures are not as useful in identifying specific knowledge and skills deficiencies

Examples:

- Classroom Assessment Techniques, such as “muddiest point”
- Department survey, survey of current students
- Survey of faculty members
- Survey of internship supervisors
- Exit interviews
- Survey of alumni
- Survey of employers
- Survey of transfer institutions
- Focus groups
- Job placement statistics
- Graduation and retention rates

- Percentage of students who study abroad

6. USE OF THE EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING (see Template # 3)

The final stage of “closing the loop” is the analysis of the Evidence faculty have gathered around student learning and what this means for program improvement. The reason we assess student learning is to continuously improve the academic program to better achieve the program’s intended learning outcomes. The Use of the Evidence of Student Learning should include: 1) the faculty’s interpretation of the evidence they have gathered and their identification of areas where they excel and the areas of learning they want to focus their attention for continuous improvement, 2) proposals for program changes in curriculum or supporting activities, and 3) future plan of action for the development of the program (this is part of the program review self-study). For example, the School of Education strengthened its growing Special Education concentration by creating a new Master of Arts in Special Education embedding the Clear Credential and Added State Authorization in Special Education. There are numerous examples both major and minor that have led to the improvement of the curriculum.

7. MEANING, QUALITY, AND THE INTEGRITY OF THE DEGREE

This is the most recent addition in the *2013 WSCUC Handbook of Accreditation* revision. PLNU will use the [Degree Qualification Profile](#) (DQP) and map current PLNU assessment activities to the DQP. At this time the undergraduate (traditional, degree completion, and online) faculty will include the assessment results from the five core competencies (please see Guidelines section A. 1. f.). The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will assist the faculty in mapping their assessment to the five DQP learning categories: (1) Specialized Knowledge, (2) Broad and Integrative Knowledge, (3) Intellectual Skills, (4) Applied and Collaborative Learning, and (5) Civic and Global Learning. Graduate programs are requested to explore ways to map assessment data to the DQP. For example, the School of Education has developed an approach to integrate the five learning areas in the curriculum and assessment.

APPENDIX A: PLNU Academic Assessment Context and Philosophy

PLNU Assessment Philosophy

In 1996, an ad hoc Institutional Effectiveness Committee defined assessment at PLNU to be “the gathering, synthesis and evaluation of multiple sources of information in order to enhance decision-making and institutional effectiveness.” The Nichols Model of Assessment was adopted by PLNU in 2001 as the framework that would guide the assessment activity of the university. This model includes an expanded institutional purpose, including the vision, mission, core values and institutional learning outcomes as adopted by PLNU. In addition, a key component of the Nichols Model of Assessment is the use of evidence of student learning to make program improvements. Then in 2011, the University adopted the NILOA Transparency Framework and adapted it as the PLNU Assessment Wheel to maintain and display assessment plans and activities. The assessment of the learning outcomes takes place in each co-curricular and academic unit. At PLNU, the assessment results inform institutional improvements to programs, services and curriculum.

Curricular programmatic adjustments based on the evidence of student learning are proposed and forwarded to the appropriate faculty oversight committee (i.e. Graduate Studies Committee for graduate programs, Academic Policies Committee for undergraduate programs, and General Education Committee). For co-curricular programs, changes are reviewed through the co-curricular planning and budgetary processes under the administration of the Vice Presidents for Spiritual and Student Development. The financial implications of all curricular and co-curricular changes are reviewed and prioritized; where needed these implications are reviewed and approved by the President’s Administrative Cabinet. The Educational Effectiveness Committee has a central role in supporting, advising, and building the assessment capacity in both the curricular programs. The Offices of Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research provide support, resources, assessment workshops and other service activities needed to enhance the University’s assessment capability.

PLNU is committed to the continuous improvement and transparency of all curricular and co-curricular programs and services. Programmatic improvements are based on the evidence developed through the annual assessment processes, three-year assessment cycle, the six-year program review, periodic academic prioritization, and other institutional approaches to achieve program efficiencies and effectiveness. The PLNU assessment system is based on the identification, planning, assessment and analysis of appropriate student learning outcomes aligned to the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and benchmarked to external best practices and national standards. Assessment occurs at every level of the university: institutional, co-curricular and curricular. PLNU maintains all of its assessment plans and activities on the web for transparency (<http://assessment.pointloma.edu/institutional-assessment/>).

PLNU Institutional Assessment Context

The WASC Interim Report Advisory Council was established in 2010 by the President to oversee the Interim Report filing in fall 2012. The Advisory Council believed there was a lack of transparency with assessment planning and activities that prevented faculty learning from each other, hampered

student engagement, and resulted in less accountability. Members of the Committee, including the Chair of the Department of Mathematical, Information, and Computer Sciences brought to the attention of the Advisory Council the NILOA Transparency Framework. After careful investigation and analysis of the NILOA standards, the WASC Interim Report Advisory Council agreed to adopt the Transparency Framework. In the summer of 2011 the appropriate standing committees were consulted and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness sought permission from [NILOA to adopt the transparency framework](#).

PLNU Assessment Wheel

In fall 2011, the WSCUC Interim Report Advisory Council then began identifying ways to adapt the framework. The three department chairs serving on the WASC Advisory Council were the first volunteers to use the framework as a repository for their academic unit's assessment plans and activities (see at assessment.pointloma.edu: [Assessment Wheels](#)) as these three departments had recently completed a program review. In addition, the Vice Provost for Program Development created an instructional wheel with examples and instructions in filling out the wheel. The new wheel represents the same information previously submitted in an Annual Assessment Report; the Wheel replaced the annual report and is updated by each academic unit as changes occur. The Wheel more effectively communicates the continuous improvement culture important to program improvement. Since only the portion of the wheel that has changed needs to be updated, it systematizes information and creates a more sustainable process by reducing work for department faculty

The high visibility of the Assessment Wheel reinforces to the PLNU community the value the University places on the assessment of student learning that leads to student success. Links to the Assessment Wheel are clearly visible by way of the [Assessment Wheel logo](#) displayed on the front page of each academic unit's home page throughout the University web pages. Students and parents, as well as others visiting the web site, can easily navigate to the Assessment Wheels. This complete transparency also creates accountability within the University, and it visually depicts the connections between mission, learning outcomes, planning, assessment activities, and program improvement.

Program Review (6-year cycle) and Assessment Cycle (3-year cycle)

Academic programs are scheduled for a full program review every 6 years and an in-depth review of program assessment every three-years. PLNU's recommended three-year assessment cycle allows academic units to complete two full assessment cycles between program reviews. This three-year cycle provides faculty and staff time for reflection, program improvements, revised assessment plan, and analysis of revised assessment process. It also allows the academic unit to collect six years of student learning data in their Assessment Wheel, which forms the body of evidence for the program review, and is the basis for curricular proposals submitted to the Academic Policies Committee and/or the Graduate Studies Committee.

The Educational Effectiveness Committee and Program Review Committee faculty work closely to ensure important assessment findings and the quality of the academic unit's assessment program is embedded in the formal program review process. To avoid gaps and redundancy the Educational Effectiveness Committee and Program Review Committee have harmonized the rubrics each committee uses to conduct their evaluations. The committees have delineated responsibilities and in AY 2013-2014 revised their respective rubrics to avoid redundancy, mixed messages, and gaps in accountability. In addition, the committees sequence and coordinate their reviews so that academic units moving through program review will first receive an in-depth Educational Effectiveness Committee review and report. The Educational Effectiveness Committee report includes commendations, recommendations for improvement, and a summary of the overall quality of the assessment work being done in the program. The report is used by the program faculty to assist them in revising their assessment planning and activities as part of the program review process. The assessment report must be received by the Program Review Committee before the Program Self-study will be accepted by the Program Review Committee.

The academic unit is asked to contact the Educational Effectiveness Committee when they begin their program review self-study so the Committee can schedule an in-depth review. An in-depth review is required prior to the academic unit submitting its self-study to the Program Review Committee. The revised review process that links the assessment review to program review includes the following steps:

STEP 1 – ASSESSMENT WHEEL: Academic unit maintains all assessment planning and activities documentation in their Assessment Wheel (NILOA Transparency Framework) on the PLNU website (assessment.pointloma.edu).



STEP 2 – ASSESSMENT REVIEW AND SEQUENCING: PLNU has a three-year assessment cycle and a six-year Program Review Cycle. Each program goes through two complete assessment cycles between each program review. All major curriculum changes must be accompanied by a current Educational Effectiveness Committee report and Program Review Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Assessment and Program Review Cycle							
Year -1	Year - 2	Year - 3	Year - 4	Year - 5	Year - 6	PR -Yr. 1	PR - Yr. 2
ASSESSMENT CYCLE							
1st 3-year Assessment Cycle			2nd 3-year Assessment Cycle			Review & Renewal of Assessment	
1st year assessment with PR revised assessment processes and practices	Audit by Director IE and Assessment Analyst	Audit by Director IE and Assessment Analyst	Deep Analysis Cycle 1 w/ Academic Assessment Committee	Audit by Director IE and Assessment Analyst	Audit by Director IE and Assessment Analyst	Deep Analysis by Academic Assessment Committee with report to Committees & academic leadership	Revisions resulting from Program Review
PROGRAM REVIEW CYCLE							
MOU Annual update to College Dean, Provost, & PR Committee	MOU annual update, monitored for sustainability & quality	MOU annual update, monitored for sustainability & quality	MOU annual update, monitored for sustainability & quality	MOU annual update, monitored for sustainability & quality	Alumni survey, student satisfaction, IR data packet, Advisory Council review	PROGRAM REVIEW: 1st year self-study and in-depth analysis	PROGRAM REVIEW: 2nd year self-study submitted followed by external team visit

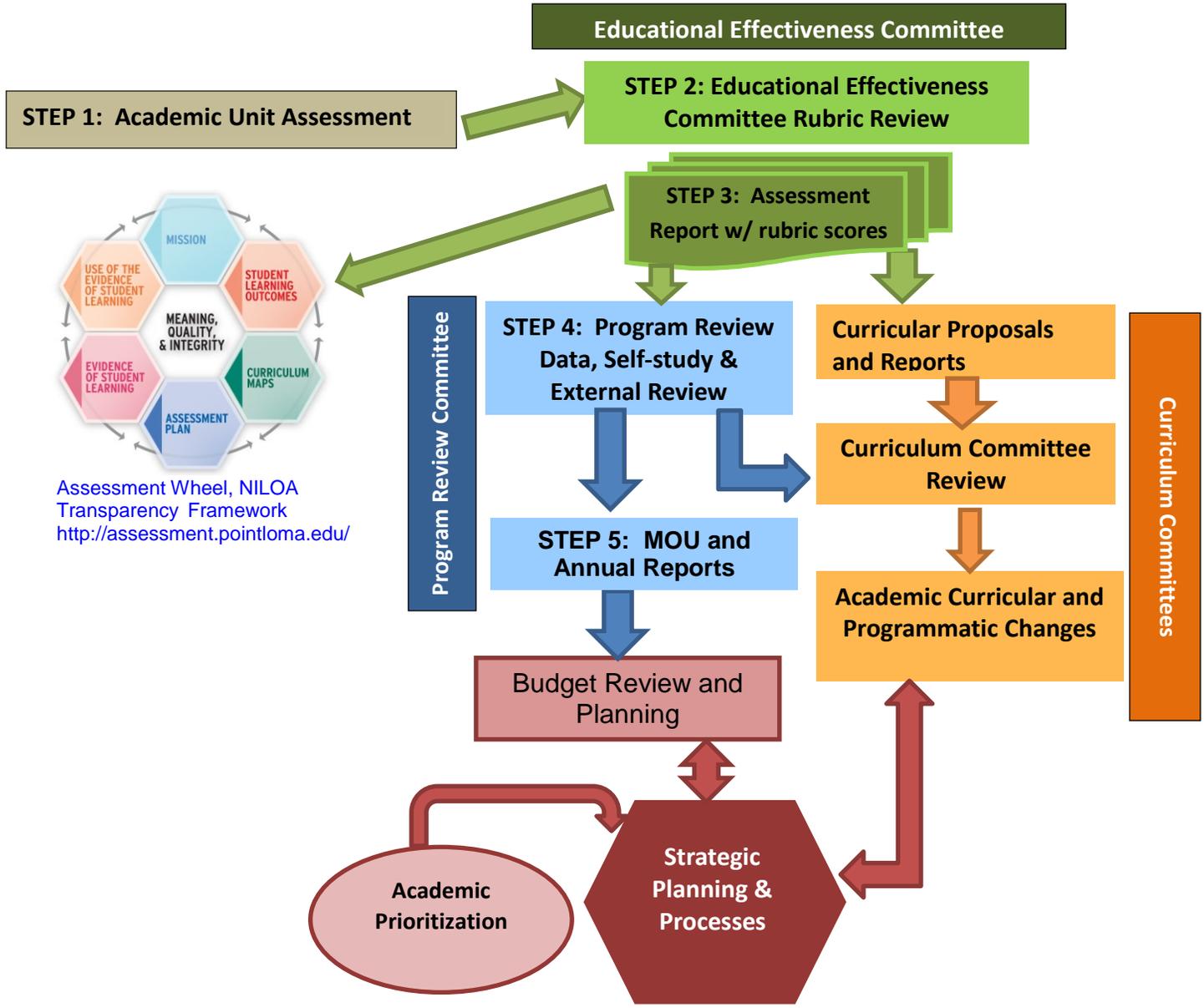
STEP 3 – ASSESSMENT REPORT: At the end of the second 3-year assessment cycle the Educational Effectiveness Committee conducts an in-depth review followed by a Committee report (4-6 pages) on their findings, commendations, and recommendations. The Committee report is sent to the academic unit leadership, Program Review Committee, curriculum committees, College Dean(s), and Provost.

STEP 4 – PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE: The Program Review Committee receives the Educational Effectiveness Committee report, and Educational Effectiveness Committee rubric criteria scores on the “Quality of Assessment” are then embedded in the Program Review Self-Study Rubric.

Educational Effectiveness Committee Criteria Embedded in the Program Review Rubric				
Criteria	Highly Developed	Developed	Emerging	Initial
Assessment Wheel (Educational Effectiveness Committee Report & Score)	Excellent assessment program in all aspects with few areas needing improvement.	Strong assessment program with some areas needing further development.	Building of assessment program begun, but needs significant improvement.	Have made very little progress on building out the assessment structure for the program.
Score ___	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0
Program Assessment (1...2...3...) A different criteria row for each of the academic programs	Excellent assessment documentation and evidence for Program (1) with few areas needing improvement.	Strong assessment documentation and evidence for Program (1) with few areas needing improvement.	Building of the assessment for Program (1) documentation and evidence has begun, but needs significant improvement.	Have made very little progress on building out the assessment structure and evidence for Program (1).
Score ___	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0

The assessment of student learning is the foundation for program review with the focus of improving educational quality based on the culture of evidence. This assessment process is a continual, formative process of data collection, analysis, reflection and improvement. The following graphic is a depiction of the revised process linking assessment to strategic planning.

Linking ASSESSMENT Processes to Curricular Committees, Program Review, and Budgeting



STEP 5 – MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: The Program Review process culminates with a MOU and is linked to future budgeting, planning and resource allocation as well as a program improvement timeline. The MOU contains three parts: (1) a summary of the needed improvements in the academic unit, (2) the action plan for the academic unit to improve the program with specific targets, and (3) a

commitment from the University to provide resources, support, and faculty to achieve the agreed upon student learning outcomes.

Institutional and Co-curricular Assessment

PLNU uses a number of national tests and survey tools to assess students on the institutional level learning outcomes while at PLNU and for their first 15 years after graduation. In fall 2011, PLNU piloted the national general knowledge tests, the ETS Proficiency Profile and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). After a year-long pilot, testing both freshmen and seniors, we concluded that the ETS Proficiency Profile gave faculty more actionable data aligned with our General Education program. The ETS PP assesses students on critical thinking, reading, writing and mathematics. PLNU has continued to give the ETS PP, and the academic year 2014-2015 is the first year that PLNU will administer the ETS to outgoing seniors who also took the test as incoming freshmen.

PLNU also conducts an annual survey panel which is a well-known method for tracking outcomes and changes longitudinally. The best known of these is the *Panel Study of Income Dynamics* (<http://psidonline.isr.umich.edu/>). The National Science Foundation (NSF) recognized the Panel Study (PSID) as one of the 60 most significant advances funded by the NSF in its 60 year history. Other well-known panel surveys include the *National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS)* (<http://www.bls.gov/nls/>) and the *Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)* (<http://www.census.gov/sipp/overview.html>). A survey panel has been used in a number of settings throughout the country (PSID, NLS, and SIPP above). The first PLNU Survey group was impaneled in the fall of 2010.

PLNU also uses both nationally normed tools (NSSE and HERI surveys) as well as some PLNU homegrown instruments to measure the “To shape” learning outcome for students and alumni. Because the identity of each participant is known, we are able to connect survey data with everything from chapel attendance and residence hall to GPA and major. The Department of Mathematical, Information and Computer Sciences supports the university by conducting periodic alumni surveys. The most recent was conducted in the spring of 2012.

Student Development’s Office of Diversity administered two surveys to ascertain information about the climate of the campus. For students, PLNU participated in the 2012 and 2015 administration of the online “Diverse Learning Environments Survey (DLE)” administered through the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA. For faculty and staff, PLNU administered an in-house Faculty Staff Campus Climate (FSCC) survey through Qualtrics. These surveys are administered periodically and form the body of evidence needed to inform decision-making and continuous improvement at the institutional, curricular and co-curricular levels.

Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) VALUE Rubrics

In 2007, as part of the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative, the Association of American Colleges and Universities undertook the challenge of designing an alternative to national testing that could represent student learning to better capture the wide range of intellectual skills and

contexts of American universities. The project was the Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE), the result of which was, after eighteen months, three rounds of drafting, and over 100 campuses piloting, the fifteen (now 16, Global Learning was added in 2013) VALUE Rubrics covering the Essential Areas of Learning:

- Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
- Intellectual and Practical Skills (this includes the core competencies)
- Personal and Social Responsibility, and
- Integrative and Applied Learning

According to Antonia Levi and Dannelle Stevens in *Assessing Outcomes and Improving Achievement: Tips and Tools for Using Rubrics*, AAC&U (2010), the VALUE Rubrics were designed to answer the question, "...what does it mean to be an educated person?"

AAC&U Vice President, Dr. Terrel Rhodes, who led the project and visited PLNU in 2013, "The VALUE rubrics are conceived as broad, generic, institutional-level rubrics. Our vision is that colleges and universities will select the rubrics that reflect their own learning outcomes and use them to write local versions that are reflective of their own missions, cultures, and practices. The VALUE rubrics can be translated and elaborated for assessment and improvement at programmatic and course levels" (*Assessing Outcomes and Improving Achievement: Tips and Tools for Using Rubrics*, AAC&U, 2010). Faculty are encouraged to translate the VALUE rubrics into their own discipline language and then map back to the VALUE rubric for scoring in LiveText for institutional reporting purposes. The VALUE rubrics are standard rubrics in LiveText and can be easily attached to PLO signature assignments.

The VALUE rubrics are designed to map the progression of the student through their academic experience beginning at the entry level of college labeled as "benchmarking" and progressing to the senior year labeled as "capstone" indicating the end of their undergraduate experience. Dr. Rhodes writes, "The performance level reflected in the VALUE rubrics—capstone, milestones, and benchmark—do not represent year in school (freshman, sophomore...), nor do they correspond to grades (A, B., C...). Rather, the capstone level reflects the demonstration of achievement for the specific criterion for a student who graduates with a baccalaureate degree. Milestones suggest key characteristics of progressive learning as students move from early in their college experience to the completion of the baccalaureate degree." (*Assessing Outcomes*, AAC&U, 2010)

The VALUE rubrics have been adopted by PLNU undergraduate programs for benchmark assessment in General Education curriculum and for capstone assessment of the core competencies which align to the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes and Degree Qualification Profile for Intellectual Skills. Many academic units are also tracking the progression of students in the academic program. The AAC&U VALUE rubrics also align well with the Lumina Degree Qualification Profile (DQP) which was written by some of the same authors involved in the VALUE project. For more information and resources on the VALUE rubrics, please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Graduate programs may choose to adapt the VALUE rubrics for their purposes or identify other similar assessment tools benchmarked to national standards for their discipline (see also the NILOA <http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/publications.html> and DQP <http://degreeprofile.org/> websites for additional resources appropriate for graduate level education).

Assessment Technology: LiveText and Taskstream

PLNU supports several technologies used to enhance teaching and learning. The two assessment technologies used at PLNU are Taskstream, used by the School of Education, and LiveText used by the rest of the university. Taskstream is supported by the School of Education and questions regarding Taskstream should be addressed to the School. Taskstream provides cloud-based software and supporting services to efficiently plan and manage assessment processes and demonstrate both student learning achievement and institutional effectiveness for continuous improvement and professional accreditation. Taskstream is a tool for assessment planning, outcomes management, surveys, and more. PLNU's School of Education adopted Taskstream in 2010 as they were preparing for their successful application for NCATE national accreditation.

LiveText is similar to Taskstream and serves as an online assessment and ePortfolio tool. The web-based program assists faculty and administrators in collecting, aggregating, and reporting longitudinal data on student learning for the evaluation of program offerings as well as external accreditation standards. LiveText can handle large amounts of data for reporting purposes and greatly reduces the burden on faculty to score, maintain, and analyze data by hand. PLNU's student information system interfaces with LiveText allowing faculty to run reports and report results by a wide range of variables (e.g. major, academic year, student demographics, etc.). This data helps the institution make decisions that will improve the academic programming offered.

Incoming graduate and undergraduate students each receive a LiveText account and online training. LiveText greatly enhances the university's ability to assess program learning outcomes, General Education learning outcomes and core competencies across multiple class sections, cohorts, and years. Reports on assessment data can be disaggregated by program major, academic year, student cohort, and demographics thus enabling the faculty to identify both areas for improvement and instructional strategies. Students in graduate programs are also charged an electronic technology fee for LiveText. In the case of the School of Education students are charged a TaskStream Teacher Performance Assessment fee.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness works with the Office of Instructional Technology to support LiveText and its interface with Canvas (PLNU's Learning Management System). Faculty can integrate their courses in Canvas by embedding LiveText links to assignments for assessment or ePortfolios requiring only a single sign-on through Canvas. While the majority of students' work will be submitted or graded within Canvas, ePortfolio assignments and assessment data will be collected within LiveText for institutional assessment for reporting purposes. LiveText data warehousing allows the

University to collect longitudinal data and to show and measure points of academic development, such as the five Core Competencies: Written Communication, Oral Communication, Information Literacy, Critical Thinking, and Quantitative Reasoning.

Students and faculty can also use LiveText and TaskStream to develop an ePortfolio and customize multiple academic, professional or personal ePortfolios to showcase the student's academic achievements, professional skills and experience. In addition to unlimited storage and 24/7 access to materials, LiveText accommodates a variety of link and file types – including audio, video and images. The online platform makes sharing academic work and ePortfolios with instructors, classmates, and potential employers very convenient. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness maintains online resources on the assessment section of the web (<http://assessment.pointloma.edu/institutional-assessment/livetext-resources/>). For additional support and training please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

APPENDIX B: Roles and Responsibilities

The assessment of student learning is foundational to the continuous improvement of PLNU's academic programs with the focus of improving educational quality based on the culture of evidence. This assessment process is a continual, formative process of data collection, analysis, reflection and improvement.

1. Office of the Provost

The Provost leads and provides guidance to the integrity, efficiency and effectiveness of the assessment process. The Provost will receive recommendations from the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, the Educational Effectiveness Committee and academic units regarding the state of assessment processes and practices. Provost's role in an effective assessment program: The role of Provost (or designee) in an effective assessment program:

- serves as an ex-officio member on the Educational Effectiveness Committee and monitors and provides guidance to the Committee in their oversight role
- receives the reports from the Educational Effectiveness Committee on the quality and progress of the assessment program and where needed meets with the members of the Committee to discuss their findings
- reviews and approves or denies all exception requests to the assessment guidelines (all exception requests are submitted to the Educational Effectiveness Committee and are forwarded to the Provost and College Dean with the Committee's recommendation)

2. Educational Effectiveness Committee

The Educational Effectiveness Committee has responsibility for creating and overseeing the University's academic assessment policies and procedures. The Committee works with academic unit faculty in supporting, guiding and assessing the quality and progress of academic assessment. The Committee members are elected by the faculty and work with the academic program faculty and administrative leadership to ensure alignment with institutional learning outcomes, mission, assessment plans and activities. This includes monitoring the progress of academic units, conducting cyclical reviews of program assessment, providing reports and feedback to the faculty and appropriate committees, and providing guidance to the university regarding academic assessment changes and exemplar practices in Higher Education. The Committee will monitor the needs of faculty in their assessment role and where needed advocate for resources, professional development and administrative support.

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS COMMITTEE

Committee reports to: Provost (or designee)

Frequency of reports: Annually and as needed

Make-up of committee: Size: 9

Members:

Elected by the Faculty (5):

The Committee membership is to maintain a balance among the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Social Sciences and Professional Studies, undergraduate, graduate, and extended learning programs

Ex officio (4):

Provost

Vice Provost / Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO)

General Education Committee faculty member (designated by GE Committee Chair)

Director of Institutional Effectiveness

Length of tenure for elected members: Three years staggered terms

Chair: Provost (or designee)

Suggested frequency of meetings: Monthly or as needed

Educational Effectiveness Committee (EEC)

Roles and Responsibilities

The Educational Effectiveness Committee provides leadership and assistance in developing and overseeing a program of evaluation and feedback to enhance the educational effectiveness of the academic programs at Point Loma Nazarene University. The Committee's roles and responsibilities include:

Major responsibilities

- Design, review, update and improve the academic assessment processes, policies, and guidelines
- Provide advice to the Director of Institutional Effectiveness on issues related to academic assessment.
- Facilitate the academic assessment program for the university in order to support institutional effectiveness.
- Provide support for academic leaders in their work to review program objectives, means of assessment, criteria for assessment, results of assessment, and use of results.
- Receive and review annual updates of the assessment from all academic programs including General Education.
- Ensure that the academic assessment program is linked to the university's strategic plan and the academic planning process.
- Meeting to be chaired by the Provost (or designee) with the Co-curricular assessment staff, and as needed with the Program Review Committee, once each semester to address common concerns, harmonize processes, assessment workshop development, and institutional level policies and procedures.
- Send a report for the academic unit following a review detailing steps to continuously improve and update assessment planning and activities.

3. Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness

The Vice Provost provides leadership to the university in the areas of accreditation, program review and assessment and provides leadership in developing and sustaining a culture of evidence-based decision making and continuous improvement. The Vice Provost is also responsible for devising innovative solutions to meet institutional assessment, accreditation and information needs and provides support for planning by preparing reports on assessment, accreditation, and national surveys. The Vice Provost works with the Educational Effectiveness Committee in overseeing and maintaining assessment transparency, designing and implementing processes and structures to strengthen learning outcomes assessment and administer the program. The Vice Provost keeps the Committee informed of the progress in assessment made by academic program faculty and work with faculty in supporting their assessment needs. In addition, the Vice Provost keeps current on external environmental issues affecting higher education, particularly changes in assessment, accountability, and effectiveness, and utilizes that knowledge in planning and decision making and to inform the campus community.

4. Academic Unit Faculty and Leadership

The responsibility for developing the assessment plan and conducting the assessment for the program, general education, and core competencies, belongs to the academic unit faculty in which the program(s) and general education courses are housed. Assessment of academic program(s) is to be led by the department chair or school dean, and all faculty and staff are required to participate. All academic units are scheduled for an in-depth assessment review at the end of every three-year cycle and are required to maintain all current assessment plans and activities in their respective Assessment Wheel.

The academic unit is to develop and maintain all documentation related to assessment planning and activities. Historic data and student assessment results should be maintained in the department's Shared Folder or similar password protected digital file. The academic unit's historic records should include a representative sample of student work products, rubrics, evaluative instruments, and annual assessment reports. In addition, the academic unit is to retain materials related to ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes in the Assessment Wheel, including the mission statement, learning outcomes, curriculum map, assessment assignments, rubrics, and analysis of assessment results. Current syllabi should be readily accessible and are required to include course learning outcomes and the identification of any program learning outcomes to be assessed in the course along with assessment assignment. The Educational Effectiveness Committee will review all syllabi during each 3-year assessment cycle.

All academic units shall designate for each program a faculty member to function as the Assessment Coordinator. The Assessment Coordinator will serve as a point of contact and fill an important role in building the assessment capacity within the academic unit. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will provide resources and professional development for the Assessment Coordinators. This includes resourcing with new publications, hosting periodic luncheons to discuss assessment issues, and assessment training.

5. College Dean

The Academic Unit leadership and faculty should keep the respective College Dean informed of the state of the assessment processes and activities for academic programs. The College Dean will offer timely feedback and guidance on assessment planning, activities, data analysis and findings.

The College Dean's oversight includes the following:

- works directly with academic unit, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Educational Effectiveness Committee in the program assessment process and monitors the academic unit's progress
- may be asked to provide a recommendation to the Provost for any exceptions in the assessment process requested by the academic unit
- where needed, makes recommendations to the Educational Effectiveness Committee regarding the assessment planning and activities, Credit Hour Compliance, WSCUC Core Competencies assessment, General Education assessment, schedule, budget, and quality of the program assessment process and documents

6. Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research Office

The Offices of Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research support and serve the faculty in their important role of continuous improvement of the academic quality of each program. The office staff provides a wide range of support including LiveText training and reporting services, professional development, testing services, budget support, and consultation. The newly formed Offices of Institutional Effectiveness (2008) and Institutional Research (2013) were created to support both the curricular and co-curricular needs of the university for evidence based decision-making and compliance with accreditation, state, regional and federal reporting. The Institutional Effectiveness Office supports all needs related to assessment, program review, state authorization, accreditation compliance, and related committee work.

The offices are focused on building institutional capacity in assessment, evidence based decision-making, data analysis, quality control and continuous improvement. The small staff views its role as one of support and service to the university administration, faculty, and staff in their assessment roles as well as programmatic decision-making based on assessment, data analysis, program evaluation, external bench-marking, and improvement. In addition, the office supports students in developing their ePortfolios to achieve their professional and academic objectives.

APPENDIX C: Successful Assessment Strategies and Practices

PROGRAM FACULTY ROLE: Program faculty should meet frequently as a group to plan their program assessment activities and review their assessment findings and make revisions for program improvement. Fulltime program faculty are responsible for including program adjunct and part-time faculty in program assessment and to develop adjunct and part-time faculty in their important role in the assessment of student learning. During their time together, faculty should review assessment findings, assignments, rubrics, faculty calibration activities, national testing options, revisions to learning outcomes, assessment plans and activities. This is also a time to identify professional development needs in the area of assessment, teaching and program review and contact the Center for Teaching and Learning or the Office of Institutional Effectiveness for professional development support.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND COURSE GRADING: There is often confusion between grading an assignment and using an assignment for program assessment. Grading and program assessment serve different purposes and this difference should be clarified early in designing the assessment process. Grades on an assignment reflect an individual student's performance while assessment focuses on the program and whether or not students are achieving the desired learning outcomes. Program assessment focuses on a cohort of students in the aggregate, and their collective performance on meeting program-based learning outcomes. This type of evaluation uses the evidence learned as a result of the assessment and identifies specific strengths or weaknesses of the program that contribute to the overall performance of the cohort.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND FACULTY EVALUATIONS: Another important aspect of program assessment that should be clarified is the relationship of program assessment to student evaluations of faculty. Just as grading is associated with an individual student achievement on an assignment, faculty evaluations are specific to the individual faculty and appropriate for faculty professional development and are not included in program assessment or program review. Student evaluations of faculty teaching are designed to help faculty develop their individual course teaching style, content and activities. The continuous cycle of program assessment feedback provides faculty the evidence to make ongoing program improvements.

Table 2. Successful Assessment Strategies and Practices

1. Involve all of the academic unit faculty and staff including part-time and adjunct faculty. Inform students of the assessment process, purpose, strategy and benefits. Each program within the academic unit is to be assessed separately. Program assessment is designed and implemented by all of the faculty teaching in the program and the academic unit leadership.
2. Develop a plan and determine the evidence for the **Meaning, Quality and Integrity of the Degree** that is more than the compilation of courses. Faculty should consider the adaptation of the Degree Qualification Profile and supporting programs and activities.
3. Assessment of the **Program Learning Outcomes** and **GE Learning Outcomes** are assessed in the three-year assessment cycle. Divide the assessment into manageable tasks among all program faculty including part-time and adjuncts.
4. Identify an **Assessment Coordinator** for each program or the academic unit who is a program faculty member, understands the program, and is committed to the assessment of student learning and will keep the program faculty moving forward and informed.
5. Benchmark where possible, the PLOs to national discipline-specific standards (e.g. ETS Major Field Test, Board exams, etc.). Collect longitudinal data for each PLO.
6. Seniors in the undergraduate major (traditional, degree completion and online) must be assessed every year on the **five core competencies** (quantitative reasoning, information literacy, oral communication, written communication, and critical thinking). Review the core competencies assessment plans, activities, results, and identify areas for improvement. Faculty may want to collaborate with GE faculty to strengthen their program.
7. Review the **assessment wheel** throughout the year to ensure it is updated and the assessment data are accessible, informative and relevant.
8. Create an academic unit process for collecting and storing password protected student assessment data for future analysis. Data might include capstone projects, assessment tests, embedded questions, term papers, internship evaluations, etc. Contact the Assessment Analyst in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness for support.
9. Create an academic unit strategy for multiple faculty assessment of the PLOs, GELOs, and core competencies including approved assignments. Schedule assessor calibration on rubrics & assignments.
10. Create a plan for faculty and staff development and training for assessment. Seek budgetary and workshop support from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

APPENDIX D: Educational Effectiveness Committee Schedule for Academic Unit Reviews

The academic unit department chair or school dean will lead the assessment process and may designate other members of the faculty, as assessment coordinators to manage the process. The academic program faculty are responsible for the administration of the program assessment as well as collecting and analyzing the evidence of student learning and reporting these results each semester in the Assessment Wheel. The program faculty are responsible for updating the Assessment Wheel throughout the academic year for each program in their area. The updates will include, but are not limited to: changes to the mission and/or student learning outcomes; update of the assessment plan and all associated assignments and rubrics; summary of assessment data and evidence of student learning collected; reflection on what the faculty learned from assessment; and how the program or services will be improved to better achieve the academic priorities for student learning. On behalf of the Educational Effectiveness Committee, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness will audit the assessment wheels each year for currency and thoroughness. The full review by the Committee will be conducted every three-years according to the following schedule:

<i>Cohort Assessment and Program Review Schedule</i>	<i>Assessment Cycle 1 – Review (spring semester)</i>	<i>Assessment Cycle 2 Review (fall semester)</i>	<i>Program Review Year 1</i>	<i>Program Review Year 2</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theology and Christian Ministry • Literature, Journalism and Modern Language • History and Political Science • Art and Design 	2016-2017	2013-2014 2019-2020	2012-2013 2020-2012	2014-2015* 2021-2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sociology and Social Work • Communication and Theater • Music • School of Nursing 	2017-2018	2014-2015 2020-2021	2014-2015 2020-2021	2015-2016 2022-2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biology • Chemistry • Physics and Engineering • General Education 	2018-2019	2015-2016 2021-2022	2014-2015 2021-2022	2015-2016 2023-2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematical, Information, and Computer Sciences 	2015-2016	2017-2018	2016-2017	2017-2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychology • Kinesiology 	2015-2016	2010-2011 2018-2019	2010-2011 2018-2019	2011-2012 2019-2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Fermanian School of Business 	2016-2017	2012-2013 2019-2020	2012-2013 2019-2020	2013-2014 2020-2021
*AY 2013-2014 all administrative and academic units were involved in academic prioritization and program review was place on hold.				

APPENDIX E: General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs), Approved 11-19-14

Context: Learning, Informed by our Faith in Christ

ILO #1: Students will acquire knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world while developing skills and habits that foster life-long learning

GELO 1a. Written: Students will be able to effectively express ideas and information to others through written communication.

GELO 1b. Oral: Students will be able to effectively express ideas and information to others through oral communication.

GELO 1c. Information Literacy: Students will be able to access and cite information as well as evaluate the logic, validity, and relevance of information from a variety of sources.

GELO 1d. Critical Thinking: Students will be able to examine critique and synthesize information in order to arrive at reasoned conclusions.

GELO 1e. Quantitative Reasoning: Students will be able to solve problems that are quantitative in nature.

Context: Growing, In a Christ-Centered Faith Community

ILO #2: Students will develop a deeper and more informed understanding of self and others as they negotiate complex environments

GELO 2a. Students will develop an understanding of self that fosters personal wellbeing.

GELO 2b. Students will understand and appreciate diverse forms of artistic expression.

GELO 2c. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the complex issues faced by diverse groups in global and/or cross-cultural contexts.

Context: Serving, In a Context of Christian Faith

ILO#3: Students will serve locally and/or globally in vocational and social settings

GELO 3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of Christian Scripture, Tradition, and Ethics, including engagement in acts of devotion and works of mercy.

APPENDIX F: PLNU Institutional Research Policy on Sampling

In deciding the sample size of artifacts to assess, a balance needs to be considered between the following factors:

- Acquiring enough observations to be able to perform robust and meaningful analysis
- Availability of resources both within and outside the department
- Complexity and size of artifacts to be assessed

To achieve the best chance of actionable data analysis, PLNU requires each department to provide assessments of 20 observations or 20% of the population, whichever is HIGHER.

Program Student Population Size	Required Sample Size
20 or fewer students	Census (entire population)
21-100 students	20 assessments (minimum)
101 students or higher	20% of population (minimum)

We also encourage departments to provide larger sample sizes where resources allow. The more data that are collected the more robust analysis possible.

A random sample should suffice for most situations. There are various tools available (including Excel) to accomplish this. Institutional Research should be consulted for verification of sampling procedures. Institutional Research is also available to assist with the sampling process, including randomization. More complex sampling procedures can be performed if desired and appropriate. For sampling assistance please consult with the Director of Institutional Research.

APPENDIX G: Assessment Support and Resources

The Offices of Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Research support the university in its responsibility of ensuring the quality, effectiveness, and sustainability of all curricular and co-curricular programs. This support includes budgeting for regional and professional accreditation, as well as state and federal compliance, and all assessment related activities. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provides assessment resources including publications, workshops, conferences, assessment technology, and consultative support, and training for faculty and students in the use of ePortfolios and LiveText, etc. The Office staff also provides administrative support to the Educational Effectiveness Committee, Program Review Committee, and other standing committees or task forces as requested.

The Vice Provost of Institutional Effectiveness maintains the Cost Centers related to accreditation (10-5212), assessment and program review (10-5310), and institutional research (10-5305), State authorization (12-1999) and LiveText Training (12-1281). These budgets are developed in consultation with the Academic Council and the appropriate oversight committees, Educational Effectiveness and Program Review. All academic units are encouraged to submit budget requests to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness for review and inclusion in the next fiscal year budget. These requests will be reviewed through the normal budgetary approval process. Budget requests might include but is not limited to the list below:

Cost Center 5212 - Accreditation

- Professional accreditation fee
- National association fees
- State Authorization fees

Cost Center 5305 - Institutional Research

- National surveys
- Alumni surveys

Cost Center 5310 - Institutional Effectiveness (assessment and program review)

- a. Program review related costs including external visit teams
- b. Student satisfaction surveys (e.g. EBI)
- c. Assessment tests (e.g. ETS Major Field Tests)
- d. Assessment Technology
- e. Faculty Workshops
- f. Publications

Contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness with all budget requests.

TEMPLATE No. 1: Curriculum Map

Sample 1:

	Program Learning Outcomes				Five Core Competencies (CC) ^{1,2,3,4,5} and courses where assessed	
	PLO 1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4		
SCI 101	I		I, D ^{*1}	I		CC ^{1&3}
SCI 203	D ^{*1}	I,D ^{*1}		I,D ^{*1}		
SCI 342			M ^{*1}			CC ^{2,4,&5}
SCI 487	M ^{*1}	M ^{*2}		M ^{*2}		
SCI 490	M ^{*1}		M ^{*1}			
(*) Identifies where PLO assessments occur and the number ^{1,2,3,...} of assessments					Senior Year	

Sample 2:

Course	Content Knowledge		Critical Thinking		Communication		Application		Values		Core Competencies	
	PLO 1:	PLO 2:	PLO 3	PLO 4	PLO 5	PLO 6	PLO 7	PLO 8	PLO 9	PLO 10		
HUM 110	I	I		I	I				I			
HUM 201			I			I						
HUM 235	D				D	I	I	I	D			
HUM 310		D		D			I			D		
HUM 365			D						D			
HUM 387	D		D		D		D					
HUM 410		D		D		D	D	D				
HUM 467	M				M			D	M	M		CC 1, 2
HUM 489		M	M	M				M	M			CC 4
HUM 490			M	M	M	M	M	M		M	CC 3, 5	
Legend: Introduced (I), Developed (D), Mastered (M)					CC: Oral, Written, Quantitative Reasoning, Information Literacy, Critical Thinking							

TEMPLATE No. 2: Program Assessment Plan, Three-Year Assessment Cycle

Name of Academic Unit _____

Name of Program _____

Academic Year Assessment Plan updated _____

Name of Program Faculty	Assignment/ Responsibility
(1)	
(2)	
(3)	
(4)	

Three-Year Assessment Plan

Program Learning Outcome	Academic Year/ Semester	Course(s)	Faculty
PLO 1			
PLO 2			
PLO 3			
PLO 4			
PLO 5			

Annual Core Competency Assessment Plan

Core Competency	Fall/ Spring Semester	Course(s)	Faculty
Oral Communication			
Written Communication			
Critical Thinking			
Information Literacy			
Quantitative Reasoning			

Template No. 2: Individual PLO Assessment Plan Three-year assessment cycle (year one)	
Academic Year	Description
Targeted Program Learning Outcome (PLO__):	Course/ Activity where assessment will occur
	Lead faculty point of contact
	Rubric/ Assessment Instrument
	Multiple assessors assigned
Description Assignment/ Assessment Activity (formative or summative; direct or indirect)	
Criteria for Success:	
What information needs to be communicated to students concerning the assessment process (syllabus, Canvas, web)	
When will the assessment take place (semester, quad, etc.)?	
What student artifacts will be collected? Will LiveText be used?	
When will data analysis occur and who will lead the process?	
Who is responsible for updating the Assessment Wheel?	

NOTE: Add Individual PLO Assessment plans as needed. All PLOs will have multiple assessments (e.g. direct & indirect and formative & summative) over the three year assessment cycle.

Template No. 2: Individual PLO Assessment Plan
Three-year assessment cycle (year two)

Academic Year	Description
Targeted Program Learning Outcome (PLO):	Course/ Activity where assessment will occur
	Lead faculty point of contact
	Rubric/ Assessment Instrument
	Multiple assessors assigned
Description Assignment/ Assessment Activity (formative or summative; direct or indirect)	
Criteria for Success:	
What information needs to be communicated to students concerning the assessment process (syllabus, Canvas, web)	
When will the assessment take place (semester, quad, etc.)?	
What student artifacts will be collected? Will LiveText be used?	
When will data analysis occur and who will lead the process?	
Who is responsible for updating the Assessment Wheel?	

Template No. 2: Individual PLO Assessment Plan
Three-year assessment cycle (year three)

Academic Year	Description
Targeted Program Learning Outcome (PLO): 	Course/ Activity where assessment will occur
	Lead faculty point of contact
	Rubric/ Assessment Instrument
	Multiple assessors assigned
Description Assignment/ Assessment Activity (formative or summative; direct or indirect)	
Criteria for Success?	
What information needs to be communicated to students concerning the assessment process (syllabus, Canvas, web)	
When will the assessment take place (semester, quad, etc.)?	
What student artifacts will be collected? Will LiveText be used?	
When will data analysis occur and who will lead the process?	
Who is responsible for updating the Assessment Wheel?	

Template No, 2: Individual PLO Assessment Plan Three-year assessment cycle (year three)	
Academic Year	Description
Targeted Program Learning Outcome (PLO_):	Course/ Activity where assessment will occur
	Lead faculty point of contact
	Rubric/ Assessment Instrument
	Multiple assessors assigned
Description Assignment/ Assessment Activity (formative or summative; direct or indirect)	
Criteria for Success:	
What information needs to be communicated to students concerning the assessment process (syllabus, Canvas, web)	
When will the assessment take place (semester, quad, etc.)?	
What student artifacts will be collected? Will LiveText be used?	
When will data analysis occur and who will lead the process?	
Who is responsible for updating the Assessment Wheel?	

TEMPLATE No. 3: Assessment Data for the Evidence of Student Learning and the Use of Evidence

EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING

Learning Outcome to be assessed:

Outcome Measure (assignment and schedule):

Criteria for Success (if applicable):

Longitudinal Data Table:

USE OF EVIDENCE OF STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions Drawn from Data:

Changes to be Made Based on Data:

Rubric Used

EXAMPLE: Assessment Data Mathematics Outcome #2

Learning Outcome:

Mathematics Outcome #2: Students will be able to write proofs

Outcome Measure:

MTH242 Signature Assignment (each year)

Criteria for Success (if applicable):

80% of the students to score a 2.5 or higher (on a scale of 1-4 with 1 being low) in each of the four areas:

- Statement of the problem
- Logic
- Symbolism
- Justification

Longitudinal Data:

	Percentage of Class at 2.5 or Higher			
	2011	2012	2013	2014
Statement of Problem	100%	100%	100%	100%
Logic	100%	88%	100%	100%
Symbolism	100%	100%	100%	100%
Justification	86%	75%	100%	83%

Conclusions Drawn from Data:

The one point of weakness seems to be in the area of the justification of the steps of the proof.

Changes to be Made Based on Data:

Continue to emphasize the fundamental importance of the need to justify each step of the proof in MTH242 and use this rubric to assess some of the early proof assignments in the class so that students have a clear indication that their lack of justification is weak point.

Rubric Used

Proof Writing Rubric (MTH242, MTH424, MTH444)

	Unsatisfactory	Low Satisfactory	High Satisfactory	Outstanding
Statement of the Problem	Cannot determine what is given and what needs to be proved	Misses one part of the hypothesis or the conclusion	Makes one minor error in identifying hypothesis or conclusion	Understands what is given and what is to be proved
Logic	Proof has major flaws that make it invalid.	Proof misses more than one major element.	Proof has the main flow of the logic correct but misses one major element	Statements flow logically from one another
Symbolism	There are many errors in the use of symbolic notation	There are more than two errors in symbolic notation	There are two or fewer minor errors in symbolic notation (e.g. missing parentheses)	All symbols are used correctly
Justification	There are several errors in the justification	There is one major mistake in justification or more than two minor errors.	There are two or fewer minor errors in justification for the steps.	Every logical step has the appropriate reason (theorem, definition, lemma, etc.)

GLOSSARY

Academic Unit

An academic unit is defined as a department or school whose mission is teaching and research and houses the academic degree programs. Point Loma Nazarene University has seventeen academic units. These include all academic departments (e.g. Psychology, Biology, Chemistry, etc.) and schools (e.g. Education, Business, Nursing, etc.).

Accreditation

Accreditation is a voluntary process involving an association of schools and/or colleges to encourage high standards of education. Accreditation indicates that the accrediting commission judges that the institution, in a manner consistent with Commission standards, offers its students on a satisfactory level the educational opportunities implied in its objectives and is likely to continue to do so, *WSCUC 2013 Handbook of Accreditation*. The U.S. Department of Education requires the affirmation of accreditation from an approved regional accreditation association for the university to be eligible for Federal financial aid under USDE Title IV.

Accrediting Association (regional)

Regional accreditation is a voluntary, non-governmental association established to administer accrediting procedures and standards for universities but not specific academic programs. A listed accrediting body is one that is officially listed by the Secretary of Education because it is used as part of the Department of Education's processes for determining institutional eligibility for certain federal funds. There are six senior college and university regional accreditation associations: Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WSCUC). Our (PLNU) subdivision in WSCUC is the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities.

Accrediting Association (specialized, professional)

Several PLNU academic programs also adhere to specialized accreditation that certifies the professional standards and quality of the program. For example, the School of Education is required by the State of California to be accredited by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) and to meet these standards for credentialing programs. The Fermanian School of Business is accredited by a school of business professional

association, Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (**ACBSP**). The Program Review and Educational Effectiveness Committees work with the academic units in coordinating the timing of the internal program review cycle and specialized accreditation reviews.

Alignment (curriculum)

Alignment means that curriculum is coherent; it has a common framework that provides linkages among curriculum, instruction/learning experiences and assessment. An example is a tool that facilitates an alignment to a curriculum map.

Assessment

Assessment is the process by which faculty set learning outcomes; develop a plan, assignments and tools for evaluating whether or not students are meeting these outcomes; assign students activities to demonstrate their accomplishment of the learning outcomes; and use the evidence from the students' performance to evaluate and make improvements to the program. "Assessment is not an end in itself but always a means to one of two desirable ends: (a) improvement of individual or program performance or (b) confirmation of existing practice." (Mary Allen, *Assessing General Education Programs*, 2006, p. 122)

Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment occurs when students participate in exercises that simulate or are embedded in real-world activities. For example, we might assess critical thinking skills by asking students to analyze news articles or letters to the editor, and we may test their ability to integrate what they're learning by giving them a real-world problem and asking them to propose solutions that take into account cultural, social, physical, and economic conditions. . (Mary Allen, *Assessing General Education Programs*, 2006, p. 14)

Embedded Assessment

Embedded assessment is frequently used to analyze the impact of general education programs. Students routinely take exams and do projects, and their products can be used as assessment data. Usually, students' work is graded by course instructors, and the assessment of learning outcomes can be integrated into the grading process or can occur later. The alternative is to have add-on assessment. . (Mary Allen, *Assessing General Education Programs*, 2006, p. 15)

Formative Assessment

Evaluation of what students know or are able to do on a given task and which identifies the part of the task that the students does not know or is unable to do. Formative assessments are on-going assessments, reviews, and observations in a classroom. These assessments are used to improve instruction and give students feedback throughout the learning process. For example, to achieve an ILO to communicate effectively,

PLNU requires a General Education course in writing. As the students learn in these courses they are given feedback on their writing in order for them to improve. Results from the formative assessment are used to modify or validate the instructional process.

Direct vs. Indirect Measures of Assessment:

Direct Assessment reveals what students know and can do, and it requires students to produce work so that reviewers can assess how well students meet expectations. It is a directly observed demonstration of students' work. "Direct assessment provides the primary evidence concerning how well students have learned what we want them to learn. Indirect assessment provides supplementary information." (Mary Allen, *Assessing General Education Programs*, 2006, p. 15)

Indirect Assessment – It can be considered as self-reported, self-measured, and opinion-based; provides opportunities for students to reflect on their learning experiences and inform the reviewers their perceptions of their learning experience (Banta, 2004; Palomba & Banta, 1999). Indirect assessments supplement and enrich what faculty learn from direct assessment studies. Indirect assessment may include alumni surveys, employer surveys, satisfaction surveys and interviews. Indirect assessment is not as useful in identifying specific knowledge and skills deficiencies.

Summative Assessment

The evaluation at the conclusion of an academic program, to determine whether or not students achieve the learning outcomes, skills and knowledge, as defined by the program faculty. Summative assessments are used to determine the effectiveness of the instructional program or learning process. The goal is to make a judgment of the student's competency after instruction has taken place. For example, at the end of the students' time at the university they may be given a writing exam to determine to what degree they have achieved the PLO of communicating effectively. Results from the summative assessment are used to determine if the students have mastered specific learning outcomes and to identify areas in the curriculum that need additional attention.

Performance-based Assessment

Performance-based assessment uses a student's actual performance activity and faculty criteria to determine the degree to which a student has met an achievement target. (Richard J. Stiggins, *"The Key to Unlocking High-Quality Performance Assessment."*

Value added assessment

The increase in learning that occurs during a course, program, or degree level education. Can either focus on the individual student (how much better a student can write, for example, at the end than at the beginning) or on a cohort of students (whether senior papers demonstrate more sophisticated writing skills—in the aggregate—than freshmen papers). A baseline measurement is required for comparison. An example

would be, the ETS Proficiency Profile that is given to entering freshman and also given to the same cohort of students when they graduate. The difference in performance from the freshman to the senior year is the value added.

Assessment Plan

Each academic unit is required to have assessment plans for the academic programs it offers. A plan outlines the student learning outcomes and program outcomes, the direct and indirect assessment methods used to demonstrate attainment of each outcome, a brief explanation of the assessment methods that includes an indication of which outcomes are addressed by each method, the intervals and semesters at which evidence is collected and reviewed, and the individual(s) responsible for the collection and review of the evidence.

Capstone or Culminating Experience

A capstone, or culminating experience, is generally located in a capstone course in the senior year of college. It consists of a learning experience, performance task, paper or project on a topic chosen by the student or by the instructor. In some majors the culminating experience consists of writing an academic paper with a literature review or completing an Honors Thesis. In other majors, the culminating experience may be a singing recital or an art exhibit. In the sciences, students may take a standardized test, e.g., the Biology field test, at the end of their last course in the program as their culminating experience.

Goals

Program or Academic Unit goals are broad statements of what an academic unit or program aims to achieve and they serve as guiding aims to achieve through Learning Outcomes.

Course goals are broad, general statements of what a course aims to achieve. *Example:* “This course will introduce students to design methods and quality art” or “This course will expose students to federal and state government requirements for personal privacy, search and seizure.”

Program Review

The Program Review process is required by the US Department of Education and WSCUC. During the Program Review the academic unit examines the effectiveness of an academic program. The academic program review process is applied to degree programs, General Education, and academic centers and institutes. Program Review Guidelines are available in the assessment section of the PLNU webpage (assessment.pointloma.edu).

Standards (accreditation)

Accreditation standards are a level of accomplishment all students are expected to meet or exceed. Standards do not necessarily imply high quality learning; sometimes the level is a lowest common denominator. Nor do they imply complete standardization in a program; a common minimum level

could be achieved by multiple pathways and demonstrated in various ways. *Examples:* carrying on a conversation about daily activities in a foreign language using correct grammar and comprehensible pronunciation; achieving a certain score on a standardized test (Leskes, 2004).

1_Rubric for Assessment Planning 2014 (rev 1/2014)

by Institutional Effectiveness Committee

Assessment

Description: This rubric is maintained by the Point Loma Nazarene University Institutional Effectiveness Committee for the purpose of assessing the academic unit’s assessment wheel(s).

Glossary of Terms:

Program: a program is defined as an undergraduate major or major/concentration or graduate degree. General Education (GE) is also considered a program for assessment purposes.

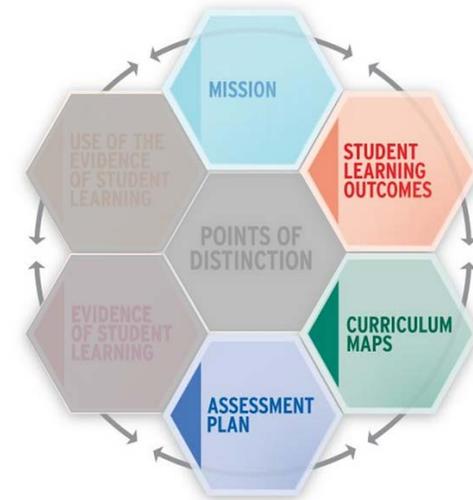
Academic unit: an academic unit is a department or school. There are 17 academic units at PLNU, 13 departments and 4 schools. The academic units fall under two colleges: Arts & Sciences and Social Sciences and Professional Studies.

Learning outcome: Student learning outcomes are statements that reflect what students will know, understand or be able to do as result of their learning experiences. Student learning outcomes are developed at the institutional level (ILO), sometimes at the department/school level (PLO), program level (PLO), and course level (CLO). Learning outcomes are defined for both academic and non-academic units. On the academic side, the learning is expected to occur through their coursework.

Criteria for Success: The score/response from each assessment method that is considered successful student learning.

Cohesive curriculum: Progression of through curriculum would allow students to be introduced, then develop, and lastly reach mastery of learning outcomes.

Multi-year sustainable assessment schedule: Timeline for implementation that divides assessment of learning outcomes across three years (with the exception of School of Education which has accreditation requirements for annual assessment of every outcome).



Assessment Planning Rubric

Criteria	Highly Developed (4 pts)	Developed (3 pts)	Emerging (2 pts)	Initial (1 pt.)
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES: (15, 14%)	All PLOs are well developed, clearly align with the academic mission, and cover multiple levels of mastery including the highest cognitive levels. All PLOs reflect what students will know, understand or be able to do to demonstrate learning at the completion of the program.	Most PLOs are developed, align with the unit mission, and covers most of the cognitive levels. Most PLOs reflect what students will know, understand or be able to do to demonstrate learning at the completion of the program.	Some of the PLOs are clear, align with the mission, but cover primarily the lower cognitive levels. Some identify what students will know, understand or be able to do to demonstrate learning at the completion of the program.	PLOs do not identify what students will know, understand or do to demonstrate learning.
COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (Syllabus):	All CLOs are well developed and clearly identified in the program syllabi. All PLOs identified in the curriculum map, including core competencies, are in the specified appropriate course syllabus either separately or embedded in the CLOs. Assignments are appropriate for the CLOs and embedded PLOs and level of mastery.	Most CLOs are developed, and clearly identified in the program syllabi. Most of the PLOs identified in the curriculum map are in the specified course syllabus and appropriate assignments are aligned with the CLOs and level of mastery.	Some CLOs are in the syllabi and partially aligned with the PLOs. Some of the CLOs identified in the curriculum map are in the specified course syllabi. The assignments are not clearly aligned with the CLOs or the level of mastery.	The CLOs are missing from the syllabi.
CURRICULUM MAP: Alignment of courses to PLOs on a curriculum map (20, 19%)	PLOs are aligned to designated courses. Mastery levels (I, D, M) of each outcome are presented in a curriculum map showing sequential progression throughout the curriculum leading to a cohesive curriculum.	PLOs aligned to courses, but levels of mastery (I, D, M) of each outcome are not sequential. The curriculum map does not lead to a cohesive curriculum.	Not all of the PLOs are aligned to courses in a curriculum map. The levels of mastery (I, D, M) are missing for some of the PLOs. The curriculum map does not present a cohesive curriculum.	No curriculum map presented.

Criteria	Highly Developed (4 pts)	Developed (3 pts)	Emerging (2 pts)	Initial (1 pt.)
PLAN: Multi-Year assessment plan (20, 19%)	A well-developed multi-year assessment plan that identifies where, when, and how all of the PLOs will be assessed and at which level of mastery for each semester over a three year cycle. The plan requires an appropriate level of assessment activities and is clear and well developed. The assessment plan requires formative and summative assessment data for each PLO.	A multi-year assessment plan that identifies where & when most of the PLOs will be assessed and at which level of mastery for each semester over a three year cycle. The plan in most cases identifies an appropriate level of assessment activities and is clear and well developed. The assessment plan requires formative and summative assessment data for each PLO.	An assessment plan is presented that is not sustainable or is incomplete. Assessment activities are unclear with regard to PLO alignment, assessment data and timelines.	The report does not include a multi-year, sustainable assessment schedule. Or An assessment plan is not presented.
PLAN: Assignments, Rubrics and faculty calibration	The Plan includes all of the assignments, rubrics, and other assessment activities that will be included for assessment purposes. The Plan describes how assignments will be assessed including multiple faculty assessors and calibration.	The Plan includes most of the assignments, rubrics, and other assessment activities that will be included for assessment purposes. The Plan describes how assignments will be assessed including multiple faculty assessors and calibration.	The plan includes only partial or incomplete set of assignments, rubrics and other activities. The Plan does not include a description of how assignments will be assessed or calibrated.	The plan does not include the assessment assignments, rubrics, etc.
Plan: Quality of assessment plan	Plan is fully developed in all areas including learning outcomes, measures, curriculum map, assessment schedule, and criteria for success.	Plan is complete, but one of the areas needs some improvement	Plan is complete, but several of the areas needs some improvement	Assessment plan is present but incomplete.

Assessment

Description: This rubric is maintained by the Point Loma Nazarene University Institutional Effectiveness Committee for the purpose of assessing the annual assessment reports submitted by academic departments.

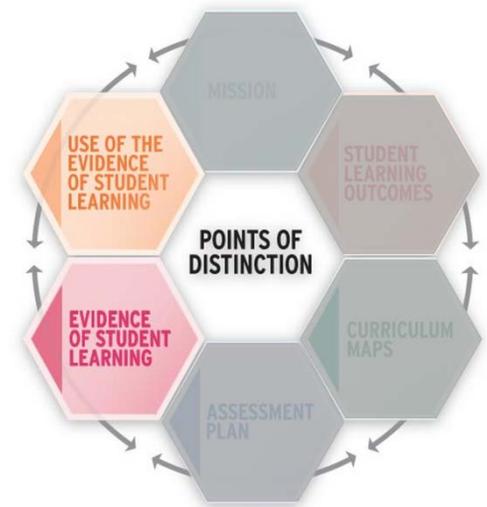
Glossary of Terms

Methods of Assessment: The activities used to measure student learning. Reports should contain an explanation of how assessment activities are being used.

Direct or Indirect Measures: Direct measures are where students demonstrate their learning by performing an activity that can be assessed. Indirect measures are self-reported opinions on learning.

Reliability: Reliable measures are consistent in 1) students would perform equally well if assessment process was repeated or presented in a unique way. 2) Assessment methods allow assessors to score at an acceptable rate of consistency.

Validity: Valid measures are meaningful. The results of the assessment process inform the assessor by providing data that is useful, and informs the success of student learning. Direct assessments are more valid than indirect.



Assessment Activity Rubric 2014

Criteria	Highly Developed (4 pts)	Developed (3 pts)	Emerging (2 pts)	Initial (1 pt.)
EVIDENCE OF LEARNING: Methods of Assessment (10, 13%)	Instruments or measurement tools (rubrics, etc.) identified and description of use is clearly articulated and developed enough to be meaningfully and consistently applied. Instruments (i.e. rubrics) included in report.	Instruments or measurement tools identified and description of use is articulated, but may need further development to be more meaningfully and consistently applied.	Instrument or measurement tools are identified, but incomplete, vague, or in early stages of development.	Instruments or measurement tools to assess student learning outcomes not identified.
EVIDENCE OF LEARNING: Direct or Indirect Measures (10, 13%)	All PLOs are assessed by three or more assessment activities. Both direct and indirect measures are used to assess each PLO. There is at least one direct measure for each learning outcome.	Most PLOs are assessed by three or more assessment activities and there is at least one direct assessment activity to assess each of the PLOs.	Program collects indirect measures of student learning (i.e. surveys, focus groups) and some direct evidence.	Program does not collect either direct or indirect measures of student learning.
EVIDENCE OF LEARNING: Quality of Evidence (15, 20%)	All PLOs are supported by the evidence of student learning that is well developed and includes data that can be benchmarked to national standards, longitudinal, reliable and valid.	Most PLOs are supported by the evidence of student learning that is well developed and includes some data that can be benchmarked to national standards, longitudinal, reliable and valid.	Faculty collect evidence, but the reliability or the validity of the evidence collected is questionable and does not include data that can be benchmarked.	The collection of evidence does not appear to be aligned with the PLOs, is not well developed, and does not include data that can be benchmarked.
EVIDENCE OF LEARNING: Criteria for Success (10, 13%)	Assessment Plan includes targets for student performance for each method of assessment and rationale of how targets are appropriate.	Assessment Plan lists several performance targets but does not include a rationale for targets and why they are appropriate.	Descriptions of performance targets unclear or inappropriate and without rationale.	Performance targets or other expectations missing.

Criteria	Highly Developed (4 pts)	Developed (3 pts)	Emerging (2 pts)	Initial (1 pt.)
USE OF EVIDENCE: Analysis of Findings (15, 20%)	Report articulates a well-reasoned critique of assessment data, which is presented in summary formats, that leads to conclusions for improved student learning that are clearly drawn from the analysis of data.	Report provides analysis of assessment data, which is presented in summary formats, that leads to conclusions for improved student learning.	Report includes qualitative or quantitative data but analysis is vague or questionably related to results.	Report does not include sufficient qualitative or quantitative data, and does not include analysis of data.
USE OF EVIDENCE: Recommendations and Planning Change (15, 20%)	Academic unit provides a coherent and viable plan to improve student learning by redesigning learning outcomes, instruction (curriculum or pedagogy), or assessment where necessary and includes rationale for how these modifications would improve student learning.	Academic unit provides ideas to improve student learning where necessary, but plan is lacking in coherence or viability. Rationale for connecting recommendations to student learning weak or missing.	Academic unit provides ideas for improvement of student learning, but no plan is presented. Lacks rationale for connecting recommendations to student learning.	Recommendations are missing or not based on assessment results.