

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT PLANS/REPORTS
Educational Programs

Degree Program: Name of the degree program being reported. Only submit plans/reports for degree programs, not concentrations, minors, or certificates.

Assessment Period: The academic year being reported.

Program Mission Statement: A mission for the program should explain the basic purposes of the degree program. It should make clear what it aims to accomplish and how it contributes to the well-being of its students and its significance for the entire university. It may include a vision statement that suggests where the program is headed.

Core Student Learning Outcomes: Academic programs should have 3-6 ongoing SLOs that regularly use exit measures and course embedded measures. Ideally each program should develop trend-line data to show its areas of strengths and weaknesses in student learning. That would allow the program to generate “special” objectives to build on strengths and address weaknesses. That would also give reviewers the opportunity to view the program over time.

The list of Core Objectives should not be understood as an exhaustive list of all the program’s objectives. These are the most basic things that the program expects all of its students to achieve if they are to graduate. Examples would be: “Students will write professionally in Business Administration.” “Students will know the basics in all three subfields of Criminal Justice.” “Biology students will practice lab safety.” “Social Workers will be sensitive to diversity.”

Link to Institutional Mission: Indicate which portion of the University mission statement justifies the student learning outcomes selected for this program. Do not paraphrase. Quote directly from the current mission statement at <https://www.mvsu.edu/university/mission>

Faculty Involvement: In the Assessment Plan, leave this item blank. In the Assessment Report, include a list of all assessment meetings for the major.

Student Learning Outcome: Indicate what students are expected to know, think or do (knowledge, skills, & dispositions) as a result of your program. Do not include means of assessment in the student learning outcomes.

Student Learning Goal Supported: Indicate which of the following Student Learning Goals each SOL is most likely to support. If the SLO could fall under more than one category. Choose the best. Do not choose more than one. The choices are:

I. Students will be critical thinkers.

1A: General Critical Thinking.

1B. Critical Reading.

1C: Mathematics or Statistics.

II. Students will be exceptional communicators.

2A. Writing Proficiency.

2B. Oral Proficiency.

2C. Computer Literacy.

III. Students will be service-oriented, engaged, and productive citizens.

IV. Students will Participate in Research.

V. Students will Master the Discipline.

Means of Assessment: Means of assessment are the instruments that are used to determine if the Student Learning Outcome (SLO) has been achieved.

Examples: A) A locally developed rubric will be used to measure performance proficiency in Theater 406, the capstone course for the degree in Theater. B) An exit exam for Criminal Justice Students will be administered to all graduating seniors measuring the three main areas of competence. C) All graduating students will pass a licensing exam in Landscape Architecture. D) Students will complete the Major Field Test in Biology.

In the Assessment Plan, **the 1st means of assessment is required. The 2nd means of assessment is strongly recommended.**

Data Collection Plan: This should explain all of the steps necessary to administer the instrument properly. The plan should include the following elements: A) Who is responsible for administering the instrument? B) When will it be administered?

Benchmarks: This section should describe the levels of proficiency students should attain once the instrument is applied. Make sure that the benchmarks are expressed numerically, e.g., students are expected to score an average of 3.5 on the six items in the reading rubric.

Students will not always meet these benchmarks, but that does not indicate failure. It simply tells the program what it needs to work on. The most useful instruments allow for multiple benchmarks. Multiple benchmarks allow the program to identify areas of

strengths and weakness. For example, a standard such as “students will score at the 40th percentile in all areas of the Major Field Test.” could yield the following results: Students are up to standard on 3 of 4 areas. That means that the program can focus on improving the fourth area. Similarly, a standard may say that students will score at least a 4 on every item in an Oral Presentation Rubric. If they score at standard in 4 of 6 levels, the program would know to focus on the other two.

In the drop-down portion of the menu, the program should select the exact number of benchmarks that the program expects to achieve. Please use the space provided to report benchmarks. Extended explanations, charts and graphs should be included as appendices.

Data Collected: If the data was collected as planned, that can be noted without further comment. If there were issues, missing data or modifications, these should be noted and explained.

Benchmarks Achieved: The program simply needs note how many of the benchmarks were met. For instance, “students met the standard on 4 of 6 items on the writing rubric. Items met were Thesis, Introduction, Organization and Content. Items not met were Mechanics and Grammar.” Or, “Students passed two of the five sections of the test.” It should be clear to the reader how many benchmarks were met and how many were not met.

In the drop-down portion of the report, the exact number of benchmarks achieved should be selected. In the section calling for a description, the report should express the ratio of benchmarks achieved to benchmarks expected. For instance, “the program met 4 of 6 objectives. The rubric items below standard were ‘Thesis’ and ‘Organization.’ These will be our focus for next year.”

IMPROVEMENTS OBSERVED DURING ACADEMIC YEAR

Describe how assessment results were used to improve the program. These improvements could have derived from data analysis from the current year or from previous years. First, include the student learning outcome and the academic year it was initiated. It is highly unlikely that any improvements will occur during the current planning year. Most reports will track SLO’s initiated in the previous years. If more than four improvements are observed, include those in the appendix section.

Report improvements in one or more of the following categories:

TYPE 1: Improvements in means of assessment (e.g., validated a rubric or adopted a nationally normed test).

TYPE 2: Interventions suggested by the data (e.g., created a new course, adopted a new pedagogy or changed the emphasis in an existing course).

TYPE 3: Documented gains in student learning attributable to an intervention. Specify the intervention. All gains in category 3 must be expressed numerically unless the analysis is qualitative (e.g., students' scores increased 2 percentiles on the Major Field Test). Attach the report for the qualitative analysis in the appendix section.

APPENDIX: Programs should strive to use the space provided for all reporting items. Often extended explanation, methodological preface, charts, graphs and other items requiring extended space are necessary to adequately convey a program's achievements. These are properly confined to the Appendix section.