

Stark State College of Technology
Financial Aid and Academic Records
Assessment Biennial Report

Department Name: Financial Aid and Academic Records
Individual Completing Report: Amy Welty/ Pamela Arrington
Date: 9/11/13

Program/ Departmental Self-Assessment Procedure and Action Plan

Purpose:

To self-identify the status of Program/Department in the outcomes assessment process as well as the action-steps and timetable for the development of assessment processes.

Procedure:

All programs and departments must complete the self-assessment process. Programs which do not demonstrate how the program/department meets each of the self-assessment criteria must submit an assessment plan documenting the proposed action steps and timelines along with the self-assessment form. A follow-up self-assessment report on the implementation of the assessment plan will be due the following academic year. Programs meeting effective assessment standards will be required to submit an assessment report on a biennial basis.

Directions:

Mark the appropriate response to the Yes/No items with an X. Provide a brief summary of action steps to meet the Criteria (for example, the department will meet twice a month over the next term to develop goals). Please note that it is critical that due diligence is given to the development of goals and associated outcome measures. Do not attempt to create goals, identify measures, and implement the assessment plan in the same term!

Assessment Criteria

1. Goals

Does the Department have specific student learning or academic/ student service goals which reflect the discipline or service area professional standards?

Yes No

2. Outcome Measures

Are direct and indirect outcome measures identified for each goal?

Yes No

3. Research

Is research systematically conducted to evaluate success or failure in achieving outcomes?

Yes No

If no, what are the proposed action steps to meet the Criteria?

What is the proposed timetable for the action steps?

4. Findings

Are research results analyzed and interpreted and findings determined?

Yes _____ No X

If no, what are the proposed action steps to meet the Criteria?

What is the proposed timetable for the action steps?

5. Review Process

Are findings are discussed and reviewed by appropriate groups and individuals and recommendations made for action?

Yes _____ No X

If no, what are the proposed action steps to meet the Criteria?

What is the proposed timetable for the action steps?

6. Proposed Actions

Are recommendations acted upon?

Yes _____ No X

If no, what are the proposed action steps to meet the Criteria?

What is the proposed timetable for the action steps?

7. Improvements

Have actions result in documented improvements in student learning or academic/ student services?

Yes _____ No X

If no, what are the proposed action steps to meet the Criteria?

What is the proposed timetable for the action steps?

Assessment Measures Inventory

Purpose:

To identify benchmarked outcome measures and the benchmarking level (internal, state, national, etc.).

Instructions:

Enter the appropriate response for each question. Place an X in the box that corresponds to the level/type of benchmarking data that is available for each measure. The table can be appended as needed by adding or deleting rows.

Assessment Measures for Goals (Outcome measures from assessment report)	Is trend data available for the measure? (Yes or No)	Has a performance benchmark(s) been identified for the measure? (Yes or No)	Type of performance benchmark (check all that apply)		
			SSCT (Internal)	State-level (OACC, OBR, etc)	National (Professional Org., accrediting group, etc.)
Goal 1, Reports checklist	N	NA			
Goal 1, Employee satisfaction survey (items TBD)	N	N	X		
Goal 2, student focus groups	N	N	X		
Goal 2, faculty focus groups	N	N	X		
Goal 2, Employee satisfaction survey (items TBD)	N	N	X		
Goal 2 User data (reports TBD)	N	N	N		
Goal 3, Web registrations report	Y	Y	X		
Goal 3 ACT SOS items	Y	Y	X		X
Goal 4, Reports checklist	N	NA	X	X	X
Goal 5, Reports checklist Written summary of activities (Emails, documentation, seminars, meetings, webinars, conferences, etc.)	N	NA	X	X	X

Goal 6, Deadline met or not	N	NA	X	X	X
Goal 7, Alumni survey	N	Y			X
Goal 7, ACT SOS	Y	Y	X		X
Goal 7, Orientation Survey	Y	Y	X		
Goal 7, Employee satisfaction survey (items TBD)	N	N	X		
Goal 7, CAS review FA	N	N	X		N
Goal 7, CAS review (Registrar)	N	N	X		N
Goal 7, OBR Academic records Audits (currently Suspended)	NA	NA			
Goal 7, FA audits	Y	Y	Y		

Technical Competencies/Student Service Goals

- Goal 1: To provide information to the College community regarding “at-risk” students.
- Goal 2: To enhance the accessibility and utilization of the student and financial aid components of the Banner system.
- Goal 3: To assist students with self-sufficiency by promoting the use of mystarkstate and college email for general information and self service.
- Goal 4: To meet Ohio Board of Regents HEI system reporting deadlines.
- Goal 5: To keep abreast of changes in federal, state, and institutional policies and procedures.
- Goal 6: To develop and implement a records retention plan by June 30, 2012.
- Goal 7: To provide high quality, efficient, and courteous services to the College community.

Summary Narrative

Over the past few years, enrollment has increased, yet, staffing has only increased slightly to accommodate the growth. Consequently we have not made other changes that would assist us in serving students better. Therefore, we have seen a decline in the level of service we provide to our students via communication, clarity of forms, and effective use of mystarkstate. The federal processes continue to be complicated requiring us to find better ways to adequately assist students through the process. This will involve more intensive training of the staff. In addition, we need to continue to evaluate, assess and streamline our processes internally allowing staff the opportunity to educate the students on the process rather than processing paperwork. We need to invest our time in helping students understand the process, beginning with the benefits of mystarkstate for registration and financial aid purposes. We need to look at ways to reduce our wait times on the phone/in person while still maintaining quality student centered service to our students. In addition, we need to find more effective ways to communicate with students providing them with information that will educate them on their role and responsibility in the process.

Our office is working to form stronger relationships and partnerships with the academic side of the college. We want to provide better training to faculty who assist students with advising questions and issues. The advisors need to have some general knowledge of financial aid regulations as it relates to the scheduling of classes and course completion. The whole process can be complicated when dealing with multiple regulations, but we can still provide the general knowledge and the tools necessary to effectively advise students. We will continue to seek effective ways to partner with the Deans and Department Chairs for assignment of advisors, scheduling of classes, and a comprehensive communication plan relating to curriculum changes. We will provide guidance and direction to the curriculum committee that enhances and supports student success and access.

We need to be at the forefront of providing data to the administration regarding at risk students that can be utilized to promote success inside and outside the classroom. We need to review our systems to insure the accuracy of data and make this our number one priority. This has to be made a priority of every staff member to insure we report accurately to the state and federal agencies.

Assessment Results Report

Purpose:

The report is a summary compilation of key assessment methods, findings, review processes, actions, and improvements related to the academic/ student service or learning goals of the department/ unit on an annual basis. As a historical record of assessment activities, the report provides for and supports the systematic assessment of academic support outcomes.

Instructions:

Enter the outcome measure in the space provided. Please note that for each goal it is expected that a mix of quantitative and qualitative as well as direct and indirect measures are employed. Mark the term of assessment with an X (for example, if a survey is conducted in the fall term, mark fall for that measure). Provide a brief summary of key findings, either as bulleted points or in short paragraph form. Provide a brief summary on the review committee/ process (for example, Findings are reviewed by the Director and staff on a per term basis and recommendations are forward to the VP for further review). Provide a brief summary of any proposed actions for the next term/ academic year. Please note that not all findings result in actions. Provide a brief summary of any improvements from the previous year (this does not apply to new measures the first year). Finally, Goals and/ or Outcome Measures can be added (or deleted) as needed by copying and pasting.

Goal 1: To provide information to the College community regarding “at-risk” students.

Outcome Measure 1: Reports checklist (were the reports run)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring X Annual _____

Findings: We need to communicate the “at-risk” students to campus partners in a timely manner.

Review Committee/ Process: The Financial Aid and Academic Records Department Assessment Committee reviews the assessment results as collected.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Review all “at-risk” programs and coordinate a communication plan both internally and externally. This will allow the college to increase student retention and success.

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: Employee satisfaction survey (items TBD)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring x Annual _____

Findings: We need to be more customer focused and provide more timely responses

Review Committee/ Process: Through the new enrollment management plan we will evaluate our processes and job responsibilities.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Review processes, communications, and equity in job responsibilities to assist with a quicker response to the college as a whole.

Improvements:

Goal 2: To enhance the accessibility and utilization of the student and financial aid components of the Banner system.

Outcome Measure 1: student focus groups- did not do, will perform Fall 2013

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings:

Review Committee/ Process:

Proposed actions for next term/academic year:

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: faculty focus groups

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall x_____ Spring x_____ Annual _____

Findings: Worked with the Department Chairs on an effective scheduling process, use and functionality of mystarkstate, reports and curriculum changes.

Review Committee/ Process: Worked with the staff and curriculum to come up with improvements

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: with the new Registrar on board, we will continue to work through effective processes and communication of the academic side.

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: Employee satisfaction survey (items TBD)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring x_____ Annual _____

Findings: We need to be more customer focused and provide more timely responses

Review Committee/ Process: Through the new enrollment management plan we will evaluate our processes and job responsibilities.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Review processes, communications, and equity in job responsibilities to assist with a quicker response to the college as a whole.

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: User data (reports TBD) Not applicable

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings:

Review Committee/ Process:

Proposed actions for next term/academic year:

Improvements:

Goal 3: To assist students with self sufficiency by promoting the use of mystarkstate and college email for general information and self service.

Outcome Measure 1: Web registrations report-**Not available**

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings:

Review Committee/ Process:

Proposed actions for next term/academic year:

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: ACT SOS items

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall x _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings: the findings were not very favorable. We saw a decline in our ratings and the services we offer.

Review Committee/ Process: Review with Staff

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: we need to look at and review our processes and provide better information to our students.

Improvements:

Goal 4: To meet Ohio Board of Regents HEI system and other reporting deadlines.

Outcome Measure 1: Reports checklist

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings: During this assessment period, the reports to HEI have been completed within the timeframe posted by OBR.

Review Committee/ Process: Registrar completed a list of necessary reports to be submitted to HEI in the proper time frame.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: This process has changed at the end of the assessment cycle. The HEI reporting is now being handled via Institutional Research.

Improvements:

Goal 5: To keep abreast of changes in federal, state, and institutional policies and procedures.

Outcome Measure 1: Written summary of activities (Emails, documentation, seminars, meetings, webinars, conferences, etc.)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall x Spring x Annual _____

Findings: the office staff attended many conferences, trainings, and webinars in order to stay abreast of changes

Review Committee/ Process: this is reviewed every year by the senior staff to determine what the priorities of the year are and who should attend necessary trainings.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Continue to investigate necessary trainings that will benefit the staff in order to service students effectively.

Improvements:

Goal 6: To develop and implement a records retention plan by June 30, 2012.

Outcome Measure 1: We have not met the deadline for this and will be working on it for the 2013-2014 year

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings:

Review Committee/ Process:

Proposed actions for next term/academic year:

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2:

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings:

Review Committee/ Process:

Proposed actions for next term/academic year:

Improvements:

Goal 7: To provide high quality, efficient, and courteous services to the College community

Outcome Measure 1: Alumni survey

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings: Overall alumni are satisfied with the staff

Review Committee/ Process: Senior staff reviewed the report

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: We need to continue to provide more outreach to alumni and find ways to utilize them to assist current students get through hurdles toward graduation.

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: ACT SOS

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall x Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings: the findings were not very favorable. We saw a decline in our ratings and the services we offer.

Review Committee/ Process: Review with Staff

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: we need to look at and review our processes and provide better information to our students.

Improvements:

Repeat Goals and Outcome Measures format as needed

Outcome Measure 2: Orientation Survey

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall x Spring x Annual _____

Findings: Over the past couple of years, the survey has shown satisfaction levels under 80%.

Review Committee/ Process: Senior staff reviewed the surveys

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: We need to review the communications to students, be clearer with our forms and review the portal to provide a more meaningful step by step process for our students.

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: Employee satisfaction survey- See previous statement

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings: We need to be more customer focused and provide more timely responses

Review Committee/ Process: Through the new enrollment management plan we will evaluate our processes and job responsibilities.

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Review processes, communications, and equity in job responsibilities to assist with a quicker response to the college as a whole.

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: CAS review FA

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual x

Findings: There are some areas that we need to focus on in terms of not meeting the specified standards.

Review Committee/ Process: Reviewed by Registrar and Dean of the Department

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: We will look at each item and determine a course of action that will allow us to fall in line with the CAS standards.

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: CAS review Registrar

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual x

Findings: There are some areas that we need to focus on in terms of not meeting the specified standards.

Review Committee/ Process: Reviewed by Registrar and Dean of the Department

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: We will look at each item and determine a course of action that will allow us to fall in line with the CAS standards.

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: OBR Audits (Currently suspended)

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring _____ Annual _____

Findings:

Review Committee/ Process:

Proposed actions for next term/academic year:

Improvements:

Outcome Measure 2: FA audits

Terms of Assessment: Summer _____ Fall _____ Spring x Annual _____

Findings: There were zero findings with OBR audit

Review Committee/ Process: Amy Welty

Proposed actions for next term/academic year: Continue to insure that we have data accuracy and data integrity.

Improvements:

Assessment Report Review Rubric

Purpose:

A rubric is a guide that differentiates between levels of development in outcomes assessment. The rubric is designed to clearly show departments/ units how the assessment report will be evaluated and where further action may be needed.

Directions:

Mark the response to each item. If any item is not completed in its entirety the appropriate response is No. An Assessment Report review committee will use the same rubric to evaluate your assessment report.

Are the goals for the department/ service area measureable?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments:

Is a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures used to assess outcomes for each goal?

Yes ______ No _____

Comments:

Was research conducted and findings determined for each goal?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments: Some of the goals were not relevant to our area anymore and they will be excluded as future goals. Also, one of our goals was not accomplished and we will be moving it to the next assessment cycle.

Is there a review process in place for the department/ service area?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments:

Are action steps outlined where applicable?

Yes ______ No _____

Comments:

Was the self-assessment and action plan completed?

Yes ______ No _____

Comments:

Was the assessment measures inventory completed?

Yes ______ No _____

Comments:

Key Assessment Terms

Competencies/Goals are clear, meaningful statements of purpose or aspirations for the academic program or support service. Programs and services typically have several goals.

Outcome Measures are direct or indirect measures of student learning or of support services. Direct measures provide evidence of actual learning, e.g. paper, exam, artistic performance. Indirect measures provide evidence about characteristics associated with learning, e.g., student perception surveys, focus group interviews, alumni surveys. See below for detailed examples.

Research is the systematic collection and evaluation of outcomes data.

Findings are the results of research.

Review Process is the method(s) by which findings are discussed and reviewed by faculty, staff, and administrators.

Proposed Actions are the result of the review process and are based on findings.

Improvements are positive changes in student learning or support services as noted through the assessment process. It takes at least two iterations of the research and review process to document systematic improvement.

Examples of Direct Measures of Student Learning/Services

- **Scores and pass rates on standardized tests** (licensure/certification as well as other published tests determining key student learning outcomes)
- **Writing samples**
- **Score gains** indicating the “value added” to the students’ learning experiences by comparing entry and exit tests (either published or locally developed) as well as writing samples
- **Locally designed quizzes, tests, and inventories**
- **Portfolio artifacts** (these artifacts could be designed for introductory, working, or professional portfolios)
- **Capstone projects** (these could include research papers, presentations, theses, dissertations, oral defenses, exhibitions, or performances)
- **Case studies**
- **Team/group projects and presentations**
- **Oral examination**
- **Internships, clinical experiences, practica, student teaching, or other professional/content-related experiences** engaging students in hands-on experiences in their respective fields of study (accompanied by ratings or evaluation forms from field/clinical supervisors)
- **Service-learning projects or experiences**
- **Authentic and performance-based projects or experiences** engaging students in opportunities to apply their knowledge to the larger community (accompanied by ratings, scoring rubrics or performance checklists from project/experience coordinator or supervisor)
- **Graduates’ skills in the workplace rated by employers**
- **Online course asynchronous discussions** analyzed by class instructors

Whenever appropriate, scoring keys help identify the knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions assessed by means of the particular assessment instrument, thus documenting student learning directly.

Examples of Indirect Measures of Student Learning/Services

- **Course grades** provide information about student learning *indirectly* because of a series of reasons, such as: a) due to the focus on student performance or achievement at the level of an individual class, such grades do not represent an indication of learning over a longer course of time than the duration of that particular class or across different courses within a program; b) grading systems vary from class to class; and c) grading systems in one class may be used inconsistently from student to student
- **Grades assigned to student work in one particular course** also provide information about student learning *indirectly* because of the reasons mentioned above. Moreover, graded student work in isolation, without an accompanying scoring rubric, does not lead to relevant meaning related to overall student performance or achievement in one class or a program
- **Comparison between admission and graduation rates**
- **Number or rate of graduating students pursuing their education at the next level**
- **Reputation of graduate or post-graduate programs accepting graduating students**
- **Employment or placement rates of graduating students into appropriate career positions**
- **Course evaluation items related to the overall course or curriculum quality**, rather than instructor effectiveness
- **Number or rate of students involved in faculty research, collaborative publications and/or presentations, service learning, or extension of learning in the larger community**
- **Surveys, questionnaires, open-ended self-reports, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with *current students'* perception of their own learning
- **Surveys, questionnaires, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with *alumni's* perception of their own learning or of their current career satisfaction (which relies on their effectiveness in the workplace, influenced by the knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions developed in school)
- **Surveys, questionnaires, focus-group or individual interviews** dealing with the *faculty and staff members'* perception of student learning as supported by the programs and services provided to students
- **Quantitative data**, such as enrollment numbers
- **Honors, awards, scholarships, and other forms of public recognition earned by students and alumni**

[Adapted from Maki, P.L. (2004). *Assessing for learning: building a sustainable commitment across the institution*. Sterling, VA: AAHE; and Suskie, L. (2004). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. San Francisco, CA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc.]