## Student Access and Success
Texas A&M University-Commerce

### DIVISION MEETING
10/11/11 3:00 P.M. SAM RAYBURN STUDENT CENTER
CONFERENCE ROOM A

| MEETING CALLED BY | Mary Hendrix, PhD  
| Vice President for Student Access and Success |
| WELCOME | Dr. Hendrix welcomed those in attendance. |

### AGENDA ITEMS

#### SACS COMPLIANCE/WEAVEONLINE
- Dr. Hendrix thanked the leadership team for having their information entered into WEAVE on the Wednesday prior to the due date of September 30. She indicated she reviewed each of the plans and provided feedback to the deans and, in some cases, directly to the directors.
- Dr. Hendrix explained that the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools (SACS), Commission on Colleges, is charged with the process of assuring the integrity and quality of degree-granting institutions. In the past, SACS reaffirmation was seen as merely a compliance process. However, now in addition to compliance, institutions are required to include a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) to demonstrate that a course of action has been identified to improve student learning.
- Institutional Effectiveness (IE) is a key component of the SACS review process and details continuous improvement focused on the institution’s mission and strategic plan.
- Dr. Hendrix provided a condensed SACS document, “Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement” that includes topics pertinent to the Division of Student Access & Success, along with examples of relevant questions for consideration and sample documentation (see attached) that will be included in the compliance document.
- WeaveOnline is the tool A&M-Commerce will use to track institutional effectiveness for each unit.
- Dr. Hendrix provided the document, "Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment Plan Manual" to assist SAS Division units to understand the three components of institutional effectiveness: Planning, Outcomes, and Assessment. Evidence of continuous improvement based on the analysis of results is required.
- The Division of Student Access & Success will form a SACS Review/QEP committee headed by Dr. Sharon Johnson with members from each unit to receive training, audit unit plans for the division, and serve as the leaders for the division in fostering a culture of evidence. Nominations for the committee are due to Ricia Montgomery by 5:00 p.m. on October 17, 2011.
- Dr. Hendrix would like our Division to lead the university throughout the SACS review process.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS
- The Student Health Center produced their first digital x-ray and they are in the process of hiring new staff and opening the new wing in their building.
- Homecoming begins the week of October 17. The full schedule of events was announced and can be found online.
- Disability Awareness Week began October 10 and continues thru the 14th. Events included a movie, "The Sound and the Fury", a vendor fair and a goal ball competition.
- The Morris Recreation Center is adding new soccer fields (including a walking trail) at the Cain Sports Complex.
- The annual Haunted House will be held at the Morris Recreation Center on October 31.
- Resident Assistant applications, interviews, and selection will take place beginning in November. Please refer qualified applicants to Residential Living & Learning.
- A&M-Commerce has entered a partnership with Woodrow Wilson High School to provide service opportunities and priority admission. The partnership will promote the Hispanic-Serving Institution initiative.
- Undergraduate Admissions sponsored “Top Ten” student day on October 10 that attracted area high school students in the top 10% of their class to attend a preview of opportunities at A&M-Commerce.
- Mane Event is October 15. Approximately 1000 students and guests will be on campus. All volunteers are welcome and appreciated.

#### CONCLUSION
Dr. Hendrix concluded the meeting by thanking those in attendance for all they do as leaders to make a difference in the lives of students and their families.
ATTENDANCE

K. Jamie Babineaux, Community College Outreach Coordinator, CHEC
Molly Bauer, Registrar
Russell Blanchett, Mesquite Metroplex Center
Tina Boitnott, Career Development
Paige Bussell, Registrar’s Office
Linda Clinton, PhD, Counseling Center
Danielle Davis, Sam Rayburn Student Center
Ricky Dobbs, PhD, University College
Robert Dotson, Student Judicial Services, Disability & Cultural Affairs
Demetra Durham, Undergraduate Admissions
Erin Fortenberry, University College
Luis Franco, Hispanic Outreach & Student Programs
Denise Golden, Residential Living & Learning
Ray Green, PhD, Honors College
Todd Grier, Morris Recreation Center
Susan Grove, Financial Aid & Scholarships
Eric Gruver, Honors College
Wendy Gruver, Student Assessment
Robert Hodges, Undergraduate Admissions
Stephanie Holley, Enrollment Management & Retention
Jennifer Hudson, University College
Sharon Johnson, PhD, Student Access & Success
Jorge Juarez, Morris Recreation Center
Connie Kercher, Sam Rayburn Student Center
Dennis Koch, Residential Living & Learning
Lindquist, Chase, Residential Living & Learning
Maxine Mendoza-Welch, Student Health Services
Kathy McGrath, Residential Living & Learning
Rick Miller, Applied Leadership
Wendy Morgan, Sam Rayburn Student Center
Brian Nichols, Campus Life & Student Development
Jodi Oelrich, Academic Success Center
Stephanie Pinckard, University College
Cat Polovida, Residential Living & Learning
Maria Ramos, Financial Aid & Scholarships
Darnisha Reed, Student Support Services
Veronica Reed, Student Support Services, TRIO
Elva Resendez, University College
Lisa Rhoades, Children’s Learning Center
Greg Shirley, Career Development
Jody Todhunter, Undergraduate Admissions
Rebecca Tuerk, Student Disability Services & Resources
Deepti Vanguri, Sam Rayburn Student Center
Sarah White, Summer Camps/Conferences, UIL
Tim Willett, Campus Life & Student Development
Gwen Young, Residential Living & Learning

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE

For information regarding these minutes or to report inaccuracies, please contact:
Ricia Montgomery @ 903-468-8705 / Ricia_Montgomery@tamu-commerce.edu

CREATED

10/17/11
Southern Association of Colleges & Schools
Commission on Colleges
Principles of Accreditation:
Foundations for Quality Enhancement

1.1 Institutional Integrity
Institutional integrity serves as the foundation of the relationship between the Commission on Colleges and its member and candidate institutions.

1.2 Quality Enhancement
The concept of quality enhancement presumes each member institution to be engaged in an ongoing program of improvement and able to demonstrate how well it fulfills its stated mission.

1.3 Institutional Compliance with Commission Policy

1.3.1 Substantive Change

1.3.2 Commission Policies and Procedures
The Principles of Accreditation states:
The Commission's philosophy of accreditation precludes denial of membership to a degree-granting institution of higher education on any ground other than an institution's failure to meet the standards of the Commission in the professional judgment of peer reviewers, or failure to comply with the policies and procedures of the Commission. (See the Commission's Web site for policies: www.sacscoc.org)

1.3.3 Representation of Institutional Status
The Principles of Accreditation contains two references to an institution's representation of status. In Section 1.3.3, the Principles require an institution to report accurately to the public its status with the Commission and provide statements for use by a member institution and a candidate institution. The appropriate statement is to be reported in "all official publications" of the institution.

2.10 The institution provides student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission that promote student learning and enhance the development of its students.

Rationale and Notes:
Appropriate student support programs and services enhance the educational development of students at all levels. The expectation of this requirement is that institutions recognize this important component of student learning and student development and that, in the context of their mission, provide a comprehensive and appropriate range of support services and programs at all locations.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:
- What are the student support programs and services provided by the institution that serve all levels of students?
- How do the student support programs and services effectively promote the mission of the institution for all types of students?
- How do students support programs and services promote student learning and enhance their development?
- How are student support programs and services assessed for their effectiveness and adequacy? What is evidence that the programs are effective?

Sample Documentation:
- Descriptions of the various student support programs and services
- Narrative relating the student support services and programs to the mission of the institution
- Assessment procedures for student support services and programs
- Assessment evidence that the student support services and programs effectively meet the needs of students of all types and promote student learning and development

3.4.2 The institution’s continuing education, outreach, and service programs are consistent with the institution’s mission.

Rationale and Notes:
This standard recognizes a clear distinction between credit and noncredit activities and reinforces that, when such outreach activities are in place, they should be consistent with the institution's mission.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:
- What evidence exists that demonstrates that continuing education, outreach, and public service programs are consistent with the institution’s mission?
- What evidence exists that demonstrates that continuing education, outreach, and public service programs are regularly evaluated in relation to the institution’s mission?

Sample Documentation:
- Policies regarding the role and scope of continuing education, outreach, and public service as they relate to the institution’s mission
- Examples of program offerings in continuing education, outreach, and public service including information about the audiences served
- Documentation that continuing education, outreach, and public service activities are regularly evaluated with respect to the institution's mission and program goals

3.4.3 The institution publishes admissions policies consistent with its mission.
Rationale and Notes:
Sound admission policies are defined in relation to the institution's higher education mission and are designed to ensure that students who are admitted to the institution or to a specific program can benefit from the institution's programs. Implicit in the policy is that the institution consistently applies the policy to all applicants and transfers; exceptions are limited and based on specific criteria for waiving admission requirements.

Sound admissions policies for the institution or a specific program conform to widely accepted higher education standards for admissions and define all admissions categories used by the institution, such as transfer, transient, non-degree, audit, honors, and probation or conditional.

Admissions policies are published in official documents and communicated accurately and effectively to prospective students and other constituents.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:
- What are the admissions policies for the institution and for specific programs and how are they based on widely accepted standards for undergraduate and graduate applicants?
- What evidence exists that admissions policies for the institution and for specific programs are consistent with the stated mission of the institution?
- What evidence exists that the standards for admissions to the institution and specific programs are clear, reasonable, and consistently implemented?
- How does the institution show that admissions requirements are appropriate to identify qualified students who have the ability to complete a program successfully?
- How does the institution disseminate admissions policies and are they uniform in all publications?

Sample Documentation:
- Undergraduate and graduate catalogs that include admissions policies, standards, and procedures
- Institutional and specific program brochures and other recruitment materials stating admissions policies and procedures
- Documents describing how the institution evaluates applications and makes admissions decisions
- Minutes or other documents showing evidence that the institution regularly evaluates its admissions policies in accordance with good practices in higher education
- System policy or legislation regarding admissions policies and procedures

3.4.4 The institution has a defined and published policy for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, advanced placement, and professional certificates that is consistent with its mission and ensures that coursework and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution's own degree programs. The institution assumes responsibility for the academic quality of any coursework or credit recorded on the institution's transcript.

Note: See also the following Commission policies: "International Institutions: Affiliate or Technical Assistance Relationships," and "The Transfer or Transcripting of Academic Credit" posted at www.sacscoc.org.

Rationale and Notes:
The key to this standard lies in the concept of "comparability" and assessing responsibility for academic quality since, by awarding credit for learning outside its own educational programs, an institution affirms that students have achieved the knowledge, skills, and experiences comparable to those attained by students who have completed the institution's own educational programs. Policies for approval of transfer credit, advanced placement, experiential learning, and professional certificates are developed, implemented, and published in catalogs and other documents that are made available to prospective students.

Good practices supporting academic quality in these areas include: (1) linking transfer credit, including credits earned at a foreign/international institution, to clearly defined outcomes for courses and programs; (2) delineating the basis for advanced placement credit awarded for achievements outside commonly accepted programs; and (3) awarding credit for experiential learning and professional certifications based on well-documented activities and experiences at the appropriate educational level and evaluated based on clearly developed outcomes for the courses or program for which credit is awarded.

Note: CS 3.4.4 refers to credit awarded for experiential learning and other life experiences and accomplishments; CS 3.4.8 refers to the conversion of noncredit to credit for coursework taken.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:
- What are the policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, advanced placement, and professional certificates and are they consistent with the mission?
- How are the policies developed and evaluated to ensure comparability to the institution's own degree programs?
- How does the institution publish the policies and make them available to students?
- How does the institution ensure that coursework and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level?
- How does the institution demonstrate responsibility for the academic quality of the following work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript: (1) articulation or other agreements with institutions from which students frequently transfer credits; (2) other transfer credit for courses or programs; (3) advanced placement; (4) experiential learning; and (5) certificates or other professional education outside a collegiate degree program? In all cases, how does the institution ensure that students receiving credit for such programs have achieved the same knowledge, skills, and experiences as those who have completed its own educational programs?
- What evidence shows that the institution periodically reviews and revises policies for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit?

Sample Documentation:
- Catalogs and other documents describing policies for awarding credit
- A description of how transfer of credit policies are developed and implemented
3.4.5 The institution publishes academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice. These are disseminated to students, faculty, and other interested parties through publications that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution.

Rationale and Notes:
Good educational practice presumes that an institution’s academic policies are developed in concert with the appropriate input and participation of the affected constituencies and conform with generally accepted practices and policies of higher education.

Each institution develops academic policies—such as grading policies, withdrawals, degree completion requirements—that are appropriate to its programs and students and that accurately portray its programs and services. Good educational practice presumes that these academic policies lead to a teaching and learning environment that enhances student learning and further implies that each institution engages in a process of program review. Faculty members assume responsibility for determining good educational practice and therefore should have a substantive role in the development and review of academic policies.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:
- How does the institution determine good academic practices within the context of its mission?
- What is the role of faculty in the development and approval process?
- To what extent are the institution’s academic policies made available to those constituencies affected by the policies?
- What is the approval process for print and other media material that the institution uses to portray itself to the general public and potential students?

Sample Documentation:
- List of academic policies
- Documents (including websites) which contain academic policies such as catalogs, student handbook, policy handbook, faculty handbook
- Faculty Handbook or other documents/Web pages that include a description of the process by which academic policies are developed, approved, and reviewed
- Publications and other material that portray the institution to potential students and the general public
- Minutes of meetings in which academic policies are modified or approved

3.4.6 The institution employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery.

Rationale and Notes:
Good educational practices in higher education assume that institutions adopt sound and generally acceptable procedures for determining what a credit unit means for graduate and undergraduate coursework taking into account the amount and level of credit for courses. Nontraditional coursework may vary in format but is equivalent in expected learning outcomes. When undergraduate and graduate courses are offered through nontraditional delivery, the institution awards credit compatible with sound academic practice in the field. The institution gives attention to principles developed by nationally recognized organizations, such as the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, when developing the type of credit and the amount of credit awarded.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:
- If the institution awards credit for courses delivered in an alternative format, how does the institution ensure that the process for determining the amount of credit is equivalent to the credit earned in the same or similar courses delivered in other formats?
- What are the policies that determine the level and amount of credit awarded for undergraduate and graduate coursework?
- In developing policies related to the amount and level of credit awarded, how does the institution use the standards of professional organizations or the practices of peer institutions?

Sample Documentation:
- Policies, guidelines, and written procedures for establishing and evaluating the amount and level of credit to be awarded for a course
- Catalog identifying credits assigned to courses and types of instructional modes if nontraditional

3.4.7 The institution ensures the quality of educational programs/courses offered through consortial relationships or contractual agreements, ensures ongoing compliance with the comprehensive requirements, and evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the purpose of the institution.

Rationale and Notes:
A consortial relationship typically is one in which two or more institutions share in the responsibility to develop courses and programs that meet mutually agreed-upon standards of academic quality. A contractual agreement typically is one in which an institution enters an agreement for receipt of courses/programs or portions of courses or programs (i.e., clinical training, internships, etc.) delivered by another institution or
service provider. The institution is responsible for ensuring the quality of all such coursework included on its students’ transcripts as credit earned from the institution and for ensuring that the quality of such programs meets the standards required of similar programs.

An evaluation process that delineates the responsibility and role of all parties to the agreement is basic to the institution’s ability to ensure the quality of the educational programs and courses covered by the agreements. Regular evaluation and comparison of program and course offerings against the institutional mission are also important in establishing educational quality.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:

- How does the institution define “consortium” and “contract” with respect to programs/courses?
- How does an institution's contract or consortial agreement provide for the following: (1) a clear indication of the responsibilities of all parties to the agreement; (2) provision for ensuring the quality of the programs and courses offered through the agreement; and (3) provision for evaluating the agreement in relation to the purposes of the institution?
- What is the institution's process for ensuring the quality of programs and courses offered through contract or consortial agreements?
- How does the process involve all parties to the agreement?

Sample Documentation:

- Contracts and consortial agreements that clearly stipulate the responsibility of each party to ensure program and course quality
- Evidence that the institution evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the purpose of the institution

3.4.8 The institution awards academic credit for coursework taken on a noncredit basis only when there is documentation that the noncredit coursework is equivalent to a designated credit experience.

Rationale and Notes:

All coursework taken for academic credit should have rigor, substance, and standards connected to established learning outcomes. When academic credit is granted for noncredit courses, the institution demonstrates and documents that the noncredit course work is equivalent to the designated credit experience. A sound academic practice typically involves faculty participation in the evaluation of such credit.

An institution awarding academic credit for coursework taken on a noncredit basis has a process for evaluating and determining that noncredit coursework is equivalent to a designated credit experience. The processes are reviewed on a systematic and periodic basis in light of established guidelines for accepting academic credit for work taken on a noncredit basis such as the American Council on Education, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, as well as other specific organizations.

Note: CS 3.4.8 refers to the conversion of noncredit to credit for coursework taken; CS 3.4.4 refers to credit awarded for experiential learning and other life experiences and accomplishments.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:

- What are the policies used to describe the circumstances in which academic credit is awarded for coursework taken on a noncredit basis?
- How does the institution determine whether the student has achieved through the noncredit course the same level of proficiency as required in a credit course?

Sample Documentation:

- Appropriate policy statements describing the process for determining that noncredit coursework is equivalent to credit coursework
- Evidence that policies are published, implemented, and enforced

3.4.9 The institution provides appropriate academic support services.

Rationale and Notes:

Academic support services pertain to students at all levels and to faculty and are consistent with the institution’s mission, enhance the educational experience, and contribute to the achievement of teaching and learning outcomes. Student and faculty success is affected by the learning environment. An institution providing appropriate academic support services to strengthen academic programs and ensure the success of students and faculty in meeting the goals of the educational programs. Academic support services may include, but are not limited to, academic teaching and resource centers, tutoring, academic advising, counseling, disability services, resource centers, adequate library, laboratories, information technology, and mentoring.

Relevant Questions for Consideration:

- What academic support programs exist for faculty and students?
- How does the institution ensure that its academic support programs and services are adequate and appropriate to the needs of its faculty and students?
- How does the institution ensure that students and faculty have knowledge of and access to academic support programs?

Sample Documentation:

- Documents (e.g., catalog, student handbook, advising handbook) and Web sites
- (e.g., academic support services) explaining how support services are provided and how services can be accessed
- Data on the frequency of usage of academic support services by students and faculty
- Information about how academic support services are evaluated and how the results are used to improve services

3.9.1 The institution publishes a clear and appropriate statement of student rights and responsibilities and disseminates the statement to the campus community.

Rationale and Notes:

Because students and student learning are central to the mission of the institution, institutions are obligated to develop comprehensive and appropriate policies delineating student rights and responsibilities. To be effective, such policies are clear and widely available to the entire student body.

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community of the institution and include procedures for their implementation. The institution provides opportunities for students to learn about their rights and responsibilities.

**Relevant Questions for Consideration:**
- What are the policies governing rights and responsibilities of students (both academic and nonacademic)?
- How do these rights conform to sound educational principles and practice and meet the needs of all the types of students served by the institution?
- What are ways in which the institution ensures that students as well as other constituencies of the institution are aware of student rights and responsibilities?
- What are the procedures for implementation of the policies on student rights and responsibilities?
- How are alleged violations and grievances regarding student rights and responsibilities handled?

**Sample Documentation:**
- Description of student rights and responsibilities at the institution and the procedures used to implement the policies.
- Documents describing the methods of dissemination of statements on student rights and responsibilities.

### 3.9.2 The institution protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of its student records.

**Rationale and Notes:**
The maintenance of the confidentiality of student records in secure locations is critical to the integrity of the institution. In order to meet this obligation, institutions develop and implement policies pertaining to student records. Campus constituencies need to understand the nature of student records and the policies that pertain to these records such as confidentiality, access, release, and security.

**Relevant Questions for Consideration:**
- What are the definitions, policies, and procedures governing student records, their confidentiality and their release? How does the institution ensure that it adheres to these policies and procedures?
- How are the policies regarding student records in accordance with federal regulations and how do they follow educational best practices?
- How are students and others in the community informed of policies and procedures governing student record?
- What is the policy and process for the storage, release, dissemination, and disposition of student record (including both electronic and printed records)?

**Sample Documentation:**
- The policies and procedures governing student records, their security and confidentiality, their use, and their release.

### 4.3 The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies.

**Rationale and Notes:**
Good educational practice suggests that the institution’s constituents be informed about matters such as academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies. Such policies and calendars are widely distributed.

**Relevant Questions for Consideration:**
- How does the institution make current academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies available to students and other constituents?

**Sample Documentation:**
- Publications and Web pages including information about academic calendars, grading policies, and refund policies
Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment Plan Manual
2010-2011

Introduction

What is Institutional Effectiveness? The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools defines Institutional Effectiveness as:

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of results in each of the following areas: (Institutional Effectiveness)

1. Educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
2. Administrative support services
3. Educational support services
4. Research within its educational mission, if appropriate
5. Community/public service within its mission, if appropriate

(Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1, Principles of Accreditation, SACS Commission on Colleges)

Institutional Effectiveness is a process in which college and university officials demonstrate how well they succeed in accomplishing the institution’s mission and meet goals. These measures are overtly expressed in the SACs criteria of 2.5 and 3.4. The institutional effectiveness, planning, and assessment process allows college officials to choose expected outcomes based on a self-identified mission. Faculty and administrators develop mission statements for each academic program and administrative unit, which are derived from the College’s mission statement. Then program and expected outcomes are defined and reported in an annual Institutional Effectiveness assessment cycle. Outcomes are assessed to determine the extent to which they were achieved in the planning year. Finally, the assessment results are used as the basis for making changes for continuous improvements in the academic and administrative programs and services. The process of Institutional Effectiveness involves planning, assessment, and using the assessment results for continuous improvement.

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance for faculty, academic administrators, and the College’s educational support and services administrators to develop and evaluate Institutional Operational Plans, Student Learning Outcomes, and Program Outcomes, and to use the assessment results.
General Procedures for Institutional Effectiveness Planning

- Representatives from all academic departments, educational support programs, and administrative units will identify a faculty or staff member as the assessment contact person. This person will serve as the liaison for assessment and will be the department's contact with the Institutional Assessment Director.

- Representatives from each academic department, educational support program, and administrative unit will prepare an effectiveness plan using the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Planning Manual. The institutional effectiveness plan consists of three parts:
  - Part I: Yearly Strategic Plan Assessment (Institutional Effectiveness Report)
  - Part II: Educational/Learning/Program Outcomes Assessment Plan
  - Part III: Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

- The strategic plan of the College should outline goals and objectives to help further the institutional mission, directives, and goals.

- The results of the Program Review conducted by representatives from a department or program should also help frame the annual assessment goals. The long-range goals (where do we want to be in five years?) identified, the recommendations of peer reviewers, and the action plan developed in response to the recommendations should be addressed in the years following the program review process.

- Representatives from all units should consider how operations, services, and programs support the student learning environment and experiences.

- In developing a yearly assessment plan, representatives from each department and unit should identify three to five goals and describe the goals, objectives, evaluation methods, evaluation results, and uses of results. The yearly goals might reach beyond those of the institutional strategic plan or in the program review action plan due to changing needs and circumstances.

- In developing an educational/learning/program* outcomes assessment plan, representatives from each department/program and educational support program will identify the learning outcomes students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of the discipline, program, and/or learning activity, where applicable. If an academic department has more than one program, each program, major, and concentration will identify the learning outcomes that students are expected to possess upon completion of the course**, program, major and/or concentration. *All current learning outcomes should be listed in the catalogue.
Where outcomes are not directly linked to student learning, representatives must demonstrate connection of those outcomes to student success in achieving learning goals and outcomes.

*Note: Not all learning outcomes need to be assessed annually. For instance, alumni feedback about successes and employer assessment of skills acquired may be obtained every three to five years, while Subject Area Examination scores may be tracked on an annual basis. However, all learning outcomes should be assessed at least once in a five-year cycle.

**Course syllabi should state explicitly the learning outcomes students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of the course and the assessment methods used to determine the extent to which the learning outcomes are achieved. Department heads and Deans are responsible for ensuring that course objectives are clearly stated in each syllabus. Periodically, the Deans will be asked to submit a sample of course syllabi to the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and/or the Vice President of Academic Affairs for review.

Developing an Institutional Effectiveness Plan

An institutional plan consists of two parts: strategic planning and student learning outcomes assessment. Figure 1 is a visual representation of the relationship among institutional effectiveness, strategic planning, and educational/learning outcomes assessment.

Figure 1 Institutional Effectiveness Model
Assessment accomplishments are reported annually as three reports: The Institutional Effectiveness Report; Annual Assessment Report for Divisions, Educational Programs, and Services; and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Institutional Mission Statement and Goals

The Institution’s Mission Statement describes what the College is trying to do as an educational institution. To accomplish its mission, the College has goals listed in its 2008-2012 Strategic Plan that are derived from the mission statement. The mission statements of all academic departments and administrative units should be tied to the College mission statement and one or more of the College goals. The Institutional Effectiveness Assessment Plan links the mission statement and goals of each department or unit to the College’s mission statement and goals, which can be found on the Institutional Effectiveness and Research website

Strategic Plan

Developing your Mission Statement:

The mission statement details what a department or unit seeks to accomplish and should reflect the mission and goals of the College.

Developing your Goals:

The goals statement describes the direction a department or a unit plans to take to advance and enhance its purpose. It is broad and emanates from the department’s or unit’s mission statement. Three to five goals are recommended.

Developing your Objectives:

For each goal, state the desired results to be achieved. Objectives should be measurable, flexible, feasible, understandable, and aligned with departmental purpose.

Outcomes

There is a broad range of important outcomes that assessment efforts can address. They may be divided into two general categories: Institution-Centered Outcomes, and Student-Centered Outcomes. Institution-centered outcomes include those outcomes that have more direct benefit to the College than to students, such as program-generated revenue, program efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and program impact on promoting professional/public partnerships and campus community among faculty, staff, and administrators. Student-centered outcomes encompass those outcomes that pertain more directly to
student learning and development; can be assessed collectively or individually; and examined at the institutional, program, and course levels.

**Student-Centered Outcomes**

Student-centered or learning outcomes may be:

(a) *academic*: academic skill development, academic performance, student persistence to academic program or degree completion, time taken by students to complete program or degree requirements, and student advancement; or

(b) *personal (holistic)*: individual developmental areas that are *non-academic* domains (e.g., social, emotional, ethical, physical, vocational).

Student-centered outcomes may be assessed in terms of three key types or dimensions of developmental change, the "ABCs" of outcome-assessment measures:

A. *attitudinal* (e.g., change in student opinions or values with respect to diversity),

B. *behavioral* (e.g., incidence or frequency with which students use support services), and

C. *cognitive* (e.g., gains in knowledge or critical thinking skills).

**Types of Expected Outcomes**

There are two types of expected outcomes: Student Learning Outcomes and Program Outcomes (academic and non-academic).

1. **Student Learning Outcomes (Student-centered)** are the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes or values that students are expected to have or exhibit when they complete an academic program.

2. **Program Outcomes (Institution-centered)** are specific, programmatic, operational, and administrative objectives that academic departments and administrative units intend to accomplish. They are not directly related to student learning.

In order to determine whether objectives/learning outcomes are achieved, some kind of evaluation is in order. This mechanism for assessment should be built into the plan to specify the objective/learning outcomes.
Assessment

Assessment represents the systematic and on-going process of collecting, and reviewing evidence about the College's academic and administrative programs and services and using it to evaluate these programs and services to improve their quality. It is focused on improving student learning and the services delivered to the College community.

Assessment performs two functions for the College.

☑ The first function is to provide information for improving programs of the College. It accomplishes this function by providing feedback to

1) the faculty by identifying areas where students are performing well and where they are not so that changes can be made that will improve teaching and the curricula. The expected outcome is improved student learning.

2) the staff by identifying areas where services are good, contributing to the improvement of student learning, and where changes need to be made that will result in better services to improve the educational environment.

☑ The second function of assessment is evaluation of College programs for accountability purposes. Accountability in this sense means both internal and external accountability. External accountability involves providing evidence to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools that the College is meeting accreditation requirements. In addition it meets state and federal demands for proof that the College is performing at acceptable levels. Internal accountability also involves evaluating the quality of programs and services to determine continuity or modification.

Examples with academic and non-academic objectives and their corresponding assessments are provided below.

Example 1

Objective: Increase the cumulative GPA of the entering class.

Outcomes: For unconditionally admitted first-time freshmen, show an increase in the median cumulative GPA of at least 0.1 grade points.
Example 2.

Objective: Monitor student attitudes on a range of issues related to the college environment using the Student Satisfaction Inventory (Survey), and create plans to address apparent deficiencies.

Outcomes: At least one important area of student dissatisfaction will be identified and addressed.

Assessment Guide Table*

The following table can be useful when trying to determine the scope of your assessment. Circle each of the resources, processes, results, and feedback mechanisms that will be part of your assessment process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOURCE</th>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>OUTCOMES/RESULTS</th>
<th>FEEDBACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Student Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty, Staff</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Growth and Development</td>
<td>Employers</td>
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<td>Facilities</td>
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<td>Space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Opportunities</td>
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<td>Resources</td>
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<td>Financial</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Curricular Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Community Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Institutional Assessment Advisory Committee

This committee helps ensure that all College-wide assessment functions are implemented according to well defined and communicated processes. The committee systematically reviews the college-wide assessment plan to determine the extent to which the College’s mission and goals are achieved, and monitors the overall performance of the institution and its various units, as represented by its membership. The committee monitors the effectiveness of measurement instruments in providing essential data needed to gain insight on progress