

# Academic Assessment: Assessment of Student Learning Policy

The Faculty Senate is committed to student learning outcomes assessment as a means of understanding, documenting, and improving the quality of student learning at NAU. This policy reaffirms the central role of faculty in the assessment process. Assessment of student learning is expected to stimulate discussions among faculty about degree program student learning goals, learning opportunities, program curriculum, and teaching techniques as means to improve student learning. Academic units and programs will use assessment information, derived from multiple direct and indirect measures, to identify both strengths and areas for improvement within their programs.

## 1.0 Purpose

Establishes university policies for the assessment of student learning at Northern Arizona University

## 2.0 Definitions

Assessment of student learning – Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about student achievement and performance in relation to academic goals and academic strategic plans undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.

University Assessment Committee (UAC) – a committee of faculty, staff and students chartered by the Faculty Senate.

Office of Curriculum, Learning Design, and Academic Assessment (OCLDAA) - administrative unit charged with the centralized support for and reporting of assessment of student learning and its utilization in the continual improvement of curriculum and learning design.

Academic unit - a department or unit with one or more courses of study with a prescribed set of requirements that a student must complete (major and emphases, stand-alone certificate)

Academic program – a prescribed set of University-level requirements that a student must complete (e.g., Liberal Studies, Diversity)

Curricular initiative – curricular content prescribed at the University-level (e.g., Global Learning Initiative)

## 3.0 Policies

**3.1** *NAU Policy for Assessment Governance.* The University Assessment Committee, a Faculty Senate committee, is the official institutional body responsible for creating and recommending policies that govern academic assessment practices across the university. The Faculty Senate, Academic Chairs Council, Academic Associate Deans Academy, Provost's Academic Leadership Council, and the President's Cabinet will be consulted about any policy changes. The approval process will include the Faculty Senate and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**3.1.1** The University Assessment Committee (UAC), with support from the Office of Curriculum, Learning Design, and Academic Assessment (OCLDAA), is responsible for developing and revising the Annual Assessment Reporting process and feedback rubrics for alignment with NAU organization development initiatives and best practices in assessment and reporting. The UAC is responsible for reviewing submitted Annual Assessment Reports by utilizing the publicized reporting and feedback rubric criteria for the purpose of providing clear, consistent peer feedback to the academic unit, academic program, and/or curricular initiative in a

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timely manner. Meaningful feedback on assessment efforts should focus on documenting and celebrating student success, improving student learning, and refining academic assessment activities at NAU.

3.2 *NAU Assessment of Student Learning.* Each academic unit, academic program, or curricular initiative involved in the content and delivery of curriculum is required to engage in meaningful assessment of student learning for each of their undergraduate and graduate programs (major and emphases, stand-alone certificate, or academic program), regardless of delivery mode or location of study, and to submit an Annual Assessment Report documenting their assessment and decision making activities each academic year. See Annual Assessment Reporting process, procedures, and reporting templates on the UAC website.

3.2.1 Efforts toward coordination and assessment of student learning outcomes at the course level, the degree program level, and the university should be apparent.

3.2.2 Each academic unit includes documentation (Annual Assessment Reports) of the use of the assessment of student learning outcomes and achievement of academic goals and long-term academic strategic plans in the Arizona Board of Regents Academic Program Reviews and accreditation, when applicable.