



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Student Learning Assessment Plan

Introduction

This document describes the Student Learning Assessment Plan of The Catholic University of America. This plan does not encompass assessment of all University goals, rather those involving the assessment of student learning outcomes from academic experiences and campus life as it complements student learning. This document traces unique ingredients of today's plan to Catholic University's institutional history, mission, goals and strategic plan; describes the conceptual and regional accreditation frameworks that are also critical to the shape it takes and sets out the plan's framework along with a timetable for ongoing enhancements.

Assessment in Context

At its most basic, assessment in higher education is a process that helps universities and colleges ascertain whether they are fulfilling their missions and achieving their goals – whether they are making a difference in students' lives. University wide, the values and practices that characterize Catholic University's assessment of student learning has been woven into the fabric of our institutional culture over time. There is a growing appreciation of the roles that clarifying goals, analyzing data and improving assessment practices can play in enhancing student learning.

First and foremost, Catholic University's student learning outcomes are grounded in the University's mission and shaped by our history.

Mission of the University

As the national university of the Catholic Church in the United States, founded and sponsored by the bishops of the country with the approval of the Holy See, The Catholic University of America is committed to being a comprehensive Catholic and American institution of higher learning, faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ as handed on by the Church. Dedicated to advancing the dialogue between faith and reason, The Catholic University of America seeks to discover and impart the truth through excellence in teaching and research, all in service to the Church, the nation and the world.¹

Early History of the University

In 1887, the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States founded The Catholic University of America (Catholic University) with the approval of Pope Leo XIII. As the national university of the Catholic

¹ Approved by the Catholic University Board of Trustees, 12 December 2006.

Church in the United States, it is unique among Catholic institutions of higher learning in the US because it is the only one to possess a papal or Vatican charter, sponsorship of the US Catholic hierarchy and the authority to grant ecclesiastical degrees. (In addition to granting civil degrees, the Schools of Philosophy and Theology and Religious Studies award several different ecclesiastical degrees by virtue of the University's designation as a Pontifical University. Catholic University's School of Canon Law, the only one of its kind in the United States, offers only ecclesiastical degrees.) Catholic University also has a civil charter granted by the Congress of the United States. Catholic University was initially established solely as a graduate-level research university. It was the first US Catholic university to offer the doctorate.

As a graduate institution, from the outset Catholic University's model for the assessment of student outcomes followed the traditional format for graduate education, which emphasizes a capstone experience integrating important educational goals of an individual department or School and a field as a whole. At the master's degree level, general practice was for students to receive intensive training in the research methods of their specialty field, complete comprehensive examinations and write theses. (Today, some master's level students elect a non-thesis option, which involves qualification in particular field-specific, technical research skills and the submission and refining of two research papers. In applied fields, such as architecture or drama the master's capstone involves extensive design projects or major roles in or responsibilities for major productions and related, analytical written products.) At the doctoral level, students completed multi-day comprehensive examinations, conducted original research and wrote up the results in dissertations, which they defended in oral examinations.

One consequence of Catholic University's having begun as a graduate institution has been that, since undergraduates were first admitted in 1904, their assessment was modeled on this capstone- experience approach traditional to graduate assessment. Faculty support remains strong for this assessment model in which passing a comprehensive examination and completing an extensive research project have been essential to receiving an undergraduate degree. The resultant series of rigorous undergraduate capstone experiences typically includes: (1) junior-year seminars on research methods; (2) senior capstone courses; (3) comprehensive exams and/or senior projects, recitals and performances.

Institutional Goals

Integral to the conceptual framework on which we build our student learning goals and their outcomes measurement is the principle that at Catholic University individual programs are built on a foundation of the Institution's mission (see above), goals and strategic plan. The most recent iteration of the university's goals, which the Board of Trustees approved in 1980, still resonates today. Summarizing, these goals assert the university's commitment to:

- Sustaining academic excellence within Catholic and American contexts in undergraduate, graduate and professional education and cultivation of the arts, and assuming leadership in the advancement of learning and development of knowledge within the context of the Christian revelation at each of these levels. Faith is consistent with reason, and theology and religious studies benefit from critical inquiry.
- Preserving a special excellence in theology, philosophy and canon law.

- Offering graduate programs that promote scholarship, scientific research and the training of future scholars to advance knowledge and sustain a highly qualified faculty to enrich undergraduate and professional programs.

Emphasizing liberal studies with a focus on the whole person and the Western tradition. At the undergraduate level, this means religious studies and philosophy are as integral to the curriculum as requirements in the arts and humanities, languages and literatures, and natural and social sciences. At the professional level, it means Catholic University imbues its programs with the learning and values inherent in both academic and Catholic traditions.

- Supporting scholarship and research in religious and philosophical studies as the top priority at the advanced level. Other priorities are advancing humanistic learning, serving the contemporary and future needs of society and the Church and sustaining academic strengths not represented elsewhere.

Recognizing that its distinctive character derives from the intellectual and moral standards of its community members. Thus, Catholic University continues the tradition of collegial governance to foster a climate within which all members of the university community have influence.

- Fulfilling its obligation to the larger community of which it is a part. Its presence in the nation's capital offers unique opportunities to influence public policy and the crucial issues of our time. Its unique relationship with the Catholic Church guides it to prepare clergy and other Church leaders and undertake factual investigations and discussions of principles to influence policy.

Comprehensive Student Learning Assessment Process

Under the direction of the Provost, the Vice Provost and Dean of Assessment oversees Catholic University's Student Learning Assessment Plan and process, which supports the improvement of teaching and learning across the university, and assures its connection with the self-study process of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), the regional body that accredits the institution, the institution's current strategic plan, and its mission and goals. The university's assessment plan incorporates (1) the contents of a conceptual framework that describes the process, its constituent parts and its benefits; (2) the MSCHE standards framework and (3) the university's own framework and timetable for implementation of practices that execute the concepts and standards.

Conceptual Framework

Guiding Principles

Faculty and Campus Life professionals drive the design of Catholic University's student learning assessment plan; the Administration guides and supports it. Direct assessment measures, embedded in each course and in capstone experiences, have their basis in program and, for undergraduates, School distribution requirements. Among other assessment sources are the results of standardized national surveys; pass rates on licensure, certification or subject area examinations; institutional data on course grades, student characteristics, enrollment, retention and time to milestones and program completion; results from the university's student course evaluation process; information from the division of student life and the office of campus ministry and alumni data. A set of principles, outlined below, shapes the plan and its conceptual framework as a continuous, collaborative process for improvement:

- The University is committed to student learning assessment, broadly defined to include students' personal and social development, and sustaining and enhancing a coherent process for assessing its academic and co-curricular activities.
- Faculty members are best suited to establish student learning goals for their academic programs and courses and decide how to assess their students' learning outcomes. A student learning assessment process that is faculty-driven ensures that all faculty members are directly involved, honors academic freedom, faculty responsibility for the curriculum and principles of collegial governance.
- Administrators provide leadership and accountability to the process. They also ensure the availability of related professional development opportunities and the dissemination of information on assessment tools, activities and results, including data on student attitudes about the college experience from national surveys and the non-academic divisions of the university and the results of nationally standardized licensure and subject-area tests, when pertinent.
- Assessment plans, policies and guidelines are written, shared and periodically evaluated.
- Every academic unit and the components of Campus Life engage in ongoing assessment of student outcomes. (Assessment is not conducted only in selected programs or episodically.) In every academic unit, learning activities support learning goals, and multiple assessment tools and techniques are used systematically over time to ensure that every student, regardless of background or learning style, can demonstrate what s/he has learned. Student Life ensures the availability of quality supports for student learning and preparation for life after the university, while Campus Ministry provides opportunities for faith development and facilitates student involvement in social justice, community service and outreach activities.
- The assessment of student learning outcomes depends on systematic collection of reliable data. Data collection is as simple, unobtrusive and as manageable as possible. The data collected identify strengths and shortcomings in academic programs that make it possible to improve student, departmental/School and institutional performance. The data collected for Campus Life assesses the fuller context of students' learning experiences important to student engagement and retention and each student's development as a whole person.

- Faculty members working collaboratively on both a department/School level and across disciplines, departments and Schools to determine how to use the results of student learning outcomes assessment in their planning to improve individual courses and programs and attain institutional goals. Faculty members and staff understand that this information is intended to “close the loop” in a continuous improvement process.
- Departments, Schools and the institution use the results of student assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of academic programs and activities, the full variety of student services and campus ministry rather than the performance of individual faculty or staff.
- The university’s culture of assessment results from implementing a comprehensive institutional assessment process in which the assessment of student learning is central, as an ongoing and institutionalized process and data source.

Addendum 1 displays the conceptual framework that is both foundation and oversight structure for the assessment of student learning outcomes at Catholic University. Its feedback loops and inter-communication paths demonstrate the multi-dimensional and continuous nature of the assessment process and the connections among the different segments of the university’s community who are involved. This framework clarifies the connections among the overarching Student Learning Assessment Plan, Catholic University’s mission and goals and the roles of its faculty and administration in the process. This framework supports continuous quality enhancement in teaching and learning.

Benefits of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

Also part of our conceptual framework for student assessment, and a primary reason that institution-wide assessment processes have been ingrained in Catholic University’s practices for so long, is an appreciation of its benefits to every segment of the university community. We describe these benefits as follows:

- For students,
 - It is informative. It communicates clear expectations about what is important in a course, program or field. It makes their evaluation transparent and suggests that it will be consistent.
 - It is formative. It provides students with ongoing feedback they can use to improve their performance. It supports students’ personal and spiritual development outside the classroom.
 - It is summative. It sums up what they have accomplished in a course or program. It gives them a better sense of the progress they are making in acquiring the knowledge and developing the skills they expect to achieve to graduate.
- For faculty and Campus Life professionals,
 - It is informative. It gives them a better picture of what is and what is not working in their respective courses/programs/services. It helps programs, departments/Schools and Campus Life determine what’s working on a larger scale. It can stimulate

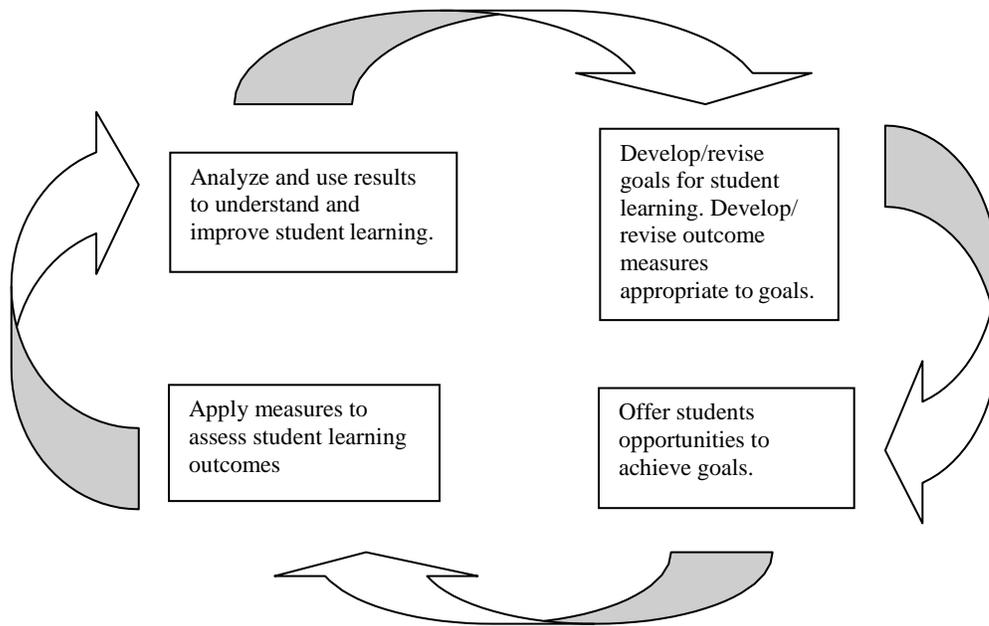
- interdisciplinary and institution-wide discussions about the entire student experience.
 - It is formative. It provides the data to nourish course, program, department/School and Campus Life feedback loops and enables efforts to shape better courses and programs and student supports, services and ministry-related experiences.
 - It is summative. It provides faculty, departments/Schools and Campus Life with data central to short-term improvements and long-range planning. It offers evidence they can use to justify requests for additional resources to maintain or improve programs and services. It helps them tell their story to people outside their department, e.g. prospective students, foundations or government grantmaking agencies, administrators, trustees, etc.
- For administrators,
 - It is informative. It gives them a clearer picture of what is really happening in the institution's academic and Campus Life programs.
 - It is formative. Multiple feedback loops that nourish each other demonstrate an institutional commitment to ongoing improvement in academic programs and the full depth and breadth of the student experience, while they also supply data to ongoing institutional assessment, strategic planning and regional accreditation self study processes.
 - It is summative. It tells the administration what the university's core activities are accomplishing. It provides valuable evidence to support requests to donors. It demonstrates accountability to funding sources and accrediting bodies. It can be persuasive to future students, faculty, staff and the larger community.

MSCHE Standards Framework

In 2002, the MSCHE, the regional body that accredits Catholic University, introduced a new emphasis on student learning assessment. From then through 2006, it gradually released guidance that clarified the expectations of Standard 14, which states: "Assessment of learning demonstrates that, at graduation, or other appropriate points, the institution's students have knowledge, skills, and competencies consistent with institutional and appropriate higher education goals."² For MSCHE, assessing student achievement of learning outcomes is the third in a four-step teaching-learning-evaluation cycle that is integral to the life of the institution.

As suggested by MSCHE, at Catholic University the four-step student learning outcomes cycle (Fig. 2 below) begins with the faculty's development of clearly articulated student learning goals that delineate the knowledge, skills and competencies that students should demonstrate to complete a course, general education requirement or degree program along with the companion measures they will use to ascertain whether students achieve these goals. It continues with the faculty, department/School and also Campus Life offering experiences, courses and programs that provide students with opportunities to achieve the goals. The third step is evaluating student

² MSCHE. 2006. *Characteristics of EXCELLENCE in Higher Education: Eligibility requirements and standards for accreditation*, p. 63. Available online: <http://www.msche.org/publication.asp>



achievement of the learning goals using the measures identified in step one, and the cycle ends and begins again with their use of the results that student assessment generates to enhance student learning, teaching, course and curriculum development and inform planning and decisions about the allocation of departmental and university resources.

MSCHE does not prescribe specific methods for setting goals, the use of particular assessment measures, or the timing of assessments. MSCHE has indicated, however, requirements for the overall assessment process. Under Standard 14, the Fundamental Elements of the assessment process requires:

- clearly articulated statements of expected student learning outcomes ... at all levels and for all programs ... that are:
 - appropriately integrated with one another;
 - consonant with the institution's mission; and
 - consonant with the standards of higher education and ... the relevant disciplines;
- a documented, organized, and sustained assessment process to evaluate and improve student learning that meets the following criteria:
 - systematic, sustained and thorough use of multiple qualitative and/or quantitative measures that:
 - maximize the use of existing data and information;
 - ... relate to the goals they are assessing;
 - are of sufficient quality that results can be used with confidence to inform decisions; and

- include direct evidence of student learning;
 - support and collaboration of faculty and administration;
 - clear, realistic guidelines and timetable, supported by appropriate investment of institutional resources;
 - sufficient simplicity, practicality, detail, and ownership to be sustainable; and
 - periodic [re-]evaluation of the ... institution's student learning assessment processes;
- assessment results that provide sufficient, convincing evidence that students are achieving key institutional and program learning outcomes; [elsewhere in Standard 14, MSCHE specifically states that the use of indirect measures alone does not meet this standard]
- evidence that [the results of student learning assessments are] shared and discussed with appropriate constituents and ... used to improve teaching and learning; and
- documented use of student learning assessment information as part of institutional assessment.³

MSCHE supplements these fundamentals with suggestions for additional, optional analyses and evidence. Among these are evidence of governance structures, policies, financial support, and professional development opportunities supportive of student learning assessment; protocols and workable processes to foster the dissemination and analysis of outcomes results; evidence and analyses of evidence that any changes made as a result of outcomes assessment have had the intended results; analysis of student evaluations of their courses and faculty, and analysis of reports on classroom assessment practices, including grading approaches.⁴

Current Implementation Framework

The Provost, the university's chief academic officer, is responsible for overseeing the assessment process and for integrating the student learning assessment plan with the overarching institutional outcomes assessment plan. As noted previously, the Provost has delegated day-to-day management oversight of the student learning assessment plan to the Vice Provost and Dean of Assessment. Various standing academic bodies inform assessment (see Attachment A). The Provost convenes the Academic Leadership Group which addresses student learning assessment as well as other academic priorities. Other bodies that inform student learning assessment are the Associate and Assistant Deans' Committee and the student learning assessment committees within each School or department. The faculty is at the heart of the assessment effort and is in communication with or represented on these academic groups.

An essential contributor to the evaluation and development of student learning assessment is the University Student Learning Assessment Council and its subcommittees. The Dean of

³ MSCHE, 2006, pp. 66-67.

⁴ MSCHE, 2006, pp. 67-68.

Undergraduate Studies (in collaboration with the Vice Provost and Dean of Assessment) chairs the Council, which facilitates implementation of the student learning assessment plan by providing guidance, structure and support for the assessment of student learning throughout the university. The committee structure of the Council changes from year to year depending upon the current assessment needs of the university, but the council typically has one subcommittee each for graduate education and undergraduate education. Council members include faculty from the appropriate programs, university librarians, Campus Life professionals and students.

The Council, which meets quarterly, serves as both consultant and advisor on assessment to the Provost and the Dean of Assessment. It makes recommendations regarding implementation of and policies to support the student learning assessment plan. It creates guidelines for reporting assessment activities, reviews assessment evaluations conducted by its subcommittees and assists the Dean of Assessment with the updates to the student learning assessment plan.

Subcommittees meet monthly or bi-monthly in the intervening months between Council meetings. Each member of the Council and its subcommittees serves as a liaison, who consults with or advises colleagues on the assessment of student outcomes, as s/he reports to and seeks input from his/her constituent groups on assessment policies and practices for the Council. The Council's subcommittees review both program evaluation and student assessment plans in their respective areas of responsibility. Subcommittees also review annual and five-year assessment findings reports, and they help facilitate university-wide discussions of assessment findings and the student learning assessment plan. They share and celebrate best practices in student learning assessment within the university community. Each subcommittee reports regularly to the full Council on its activities.

The faculty in each department/School defines or refines its program (degree or certificate), department and/or School's student assessment plan in its Statement of Goals and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes report (see initiatives below). Faculty members analyze and discuss assessment findings and plan subsequent improvements in courses and programs. These discussions are the basis for the annual assessment findings reports. Taken together, these documents constitute the centerpiece of Catholic University's student learning assessment plan. The Council/Subcommittee framework enables faculty, departments and Schools to exchange information about assessment plans and best assessment practices, identify shared concerns and collaborate across disciplines to address their concerns and improve student learning campus wide. This framework engages in the process for enhancing student learning the other key support functions, including libraries and Student Life, Campus Ministry, Financial Planning, Institutional Research and Assessment, Summer Sessions and Global Education and it disseminates results from nationally-standardized assessments and the university's proprietary measures, including student course evaluations, alumni surveys, etc.

The cornerstone of the university's assessment process lies in the annual and summative reporting process for assessment findings and curricular improvements. This process, conducted under the guidance of the Vice Provost and Dean of Assessment, closes the feedback loop envisioned in the above statements and the overarching assessment plan.

- The annual process (Addendum 7 and Addendum 8) focuses on faculty review and analysis of direct evidence of student learning for a one-year time period only. It is

standard procedure in each department/School for either a committee or the faculty as a whole to meet at least annually, but usually more often, to review student progress and apply the results of student learning assessments in their short- and long-term planning to improve instruction and student outcomes. This process interjects a guided reflection and a formal report that is posted to the <http://pir.cua.edu/learning-outcomes/index.cfm> website. The reporting format involves the review and analysis of selected pieces of the data excerpted from the more complex five-year reporting tool (e.g. key indicators with a metric).

- The summative five-year reporting process (Addendum 5 and Addendum 6) ensures that faculty engage with the full range of direct and indirect student assessment data and elicits a report that is a product of their thoughtful analysis of, reflection on, and response to these data in context. This process implements a critical mechanism for disseminating to departments/Schools the results of institutional data to complement information from unit's assessment processes. For undergraduate programs, Catholic University distributes five years of data for key courses on enrollment, grades, and course evaluations as well as results from the National Survey of Student Engagement. For graduate programs, the data/report places a new, critical emphasis on student progression rates, providing five-years of course data and five-years of data on enrollment, retention and attainment of milestones such as the passage of comprehensive exams and completing degrees. Documentation includes (1) discussion of direct assessment measures (e.g., at a minimum performance in capstone projects and pass rates on comprehensive examinations) and other indirect measures (e.g., student course evaluations, program review data, alumni surveys, etc.); (2) reflections on analyses of enrollment, student performance, and students' instructor and course ratings and the department's/School's use of NSSE results to benchmark its seniors' general education outcomes, and (3) a narrative describing curricular improvements the department/School had introduced as a result of earlier assessment findings. The next five-year report will be due in September of 2013.

The student learning assessment plan operates at three levels, as follows:

Catholic University Student Learning Assessment Plan

Level	Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
Course:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Grades based on explicit criteria directly related to clear student learning goals (2) Rubric scores for writing, presentations, performances, projects (3) Course and homework assignments (4) Participation in class discussions (5) Quizzes and examinations (6) Research or other applied projects, such as artistic products and performances (7) Analyses of case studies (8) Observations of performance in field work, internships, service learning or clinical experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Reviews of course syllabi (2) Student course evaluations (3) Grades not based on explicit criteria directly related to clear student learning goals (4) Number of student hours spent in field work, internships, service learning or clinical experiences (5) Comparative registration or course enrollment information
Program:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Rubric scores for capstone experiences, e.g., projects; performances; research papers, theses, dissertations (2) Performance on capstone examinations (3) Portfolios or other explicit student reflections on what they have learned in a given program (4) Pass rates or scores on national licensure, certification or subject area tests (5) Student publications or conference presentations (6) Supervisor or employer ratings on field work, internships, service learning or clinical experiences (7) Annual faculty reviews of student progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements report (every 5 years) (2) Annual Key Assessment Findings report (3) Student exit surveys (4) Annual and/or exit student focus groups (5) Alumni surveys (6) Interviews or focus groups with faculty or supervisors/employers (7) Program or department/School review data (8) Career surveys/job placement data (9) Graduate school placement rates (10) Employer surveys (11) Student perception surveys (12) Program progression rates

Level	Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
<i>Institution:</i>	(1) Performance on tests/examinations related to general education requirements based on explicit criteria (2) Rubric scores for papers/products/presentations in classes related to general education/other distribution requirements (3) Student reflections on what they have learned in institutional programs, such as Campus Ministry	(1) Bi-annual reviews of student learning assessment plan (2) Composites/analyses of Annual and Five-year Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements reports (3) Standardized national surveys of student perceptions or other student self-reporting (4) Retention rates

Annual Timeline: Student Assessment Plan for Academic Programs

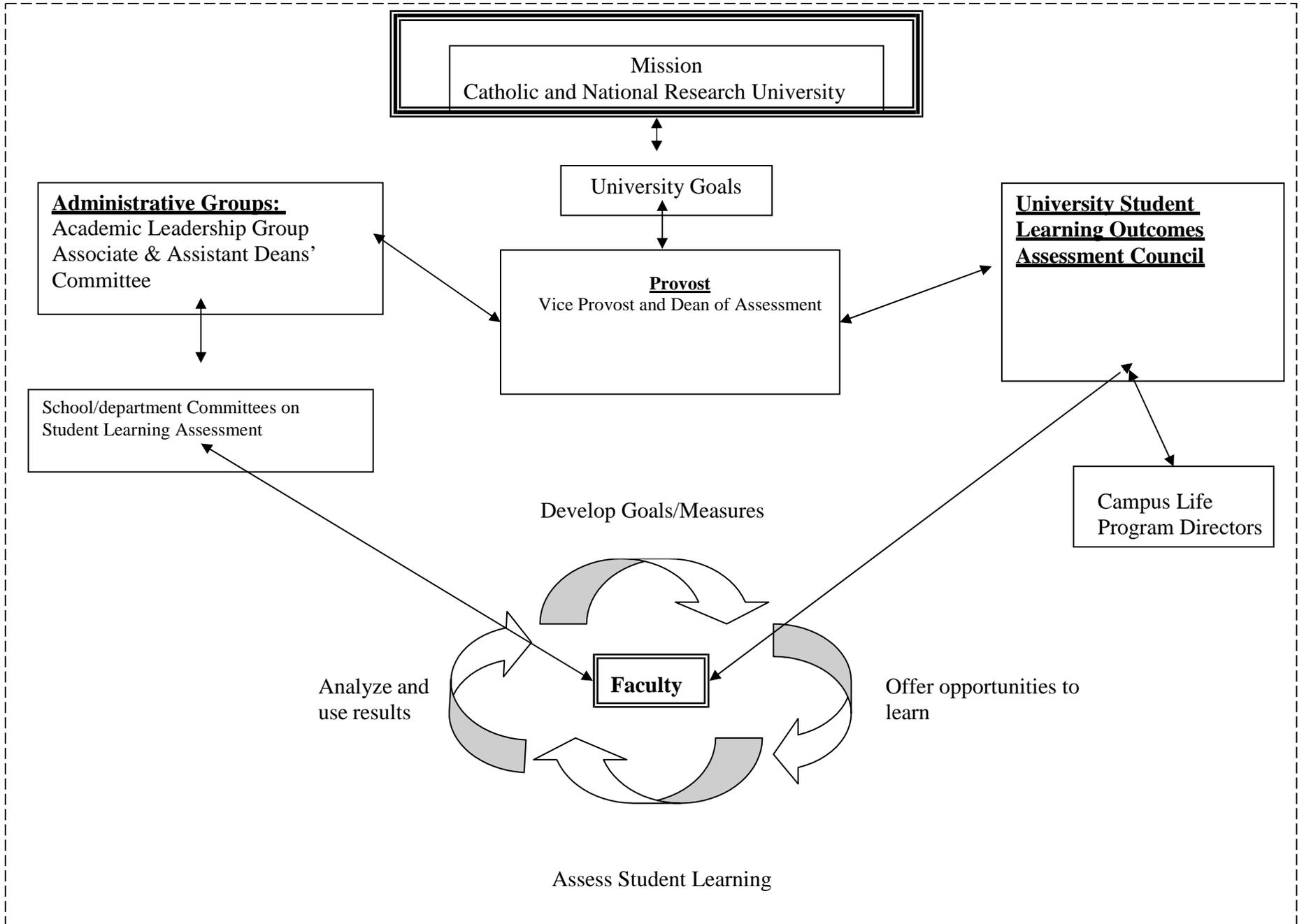
Date (AY cycle)	Assessment Activity
August	Annual Reports: Deans submit to Provost
Quarterly (beginning in Fall)	University Assessment Council meets
Monthly (intervening months)	Subcommittees of the University Assessment Council meet (in the months when the full Council does not meet)
Fall	Annual NSSE Survey: Preparation and submission of survey materials
Ongoing throughout Fall Semester	Faculty administers varied student outcome measures embedded in course work
September 15	Syllabi: Faculty submits conforming fall semester syllabi to department chairs/School Deans.
September 30	Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements (report): Departments/Schools post previous AY annual findings and improvements report and, as necessary, updates to Goals Statements.
Late October	Graduate student comprehensive exam period (capstone)
December	Student course evaluations: Students complete course/faculty evaluations for their Fall semester courses.

Date (AY cycle)	Assessment Activity
December	Annual NSSE Survey: Results available from previous Academic Year administration
Early January	Annual CIRP Freshman Survey: Results available from previous Academic Year administration
Early January	Departments/Schools hold Fall Semester review of individual student progress, as needed.
Late January	Student course evaluations: Results of Fall semester evaluations posted. Deans receive rank-ordered analysis of key results.
<i>Ongoing</i> throughout Spring Semester	Faculty administers varied student outcome measures embedded in course work
January/February	Annual NSSE Survey: Administrations begins
February 15	Syllabi: Faculty submit conforming spring semester syllabi to department chairs/School Deans
March through Summer	Annual CIRP Freshman Survey: Administration
Late March	Graduate student comprehensive exam period (capstone)
Late Mar/early Apr	Undergraduate senior comprehensive exam period (capstone)
Late Apr/early May	Student course evaluations: Students complete course/faculty evaluations for Spring semester courses
Late Apr/early May	Catholic University Undergraduate Senior Survey: All graduating seniors
May	Catholic University Graduate Alumni Survey: Results available from previous year's survey
May	Catholic University Undergraduate Alumni Survey results available for previous year's graduates
May	Departments/Schools hold annual reviews of student progress and in-depth review and discussion of annual assessment results. They outline course and curricular adjustments to make in the coming year, as necessary.
June 1	NSSE Annual Survey: Administration closes
June 1	Syllabi: Faculty submits conforming Summer Session I syllabi to department chairs/School Deans and the Director of Summer Sessions
Early July	Student course evaluations: Results of Spring semester evaluations posted. Deans receive rank-ordered analysis of key results.
July 15	Syllabi: Faculty submits conforming Summer Session II syllabi to department chairs/School Deans and the Director of Summer Sessions
Summer: 1 week following start of special session classes	Syllabi: Faculty submits conforming Special Summer Session syllabi to department chairs/School Deans and the Director of Summer Sessions
Summer into Fall	Catholic University Graduate Alumni Survey: Administration
Summer into Fall	Catholic University Undergraduate Alumni Survey: Administration

Addenda

- 1: Conceptual framework for Student Learning Assessment
- 2: Course syllabus template
- 3: Undergraduate Study: Statement of Goals and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes-Template
- 4: Graduate Study: Statement of Goals and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes-Template
- 5: Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements: Undergraduate Programs template
- 6: Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements: Certificate, Master's and Doctoral Programs template
- 7. Undergraduate Study: Annual Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements - Template
- 8. Graduate Study: Annual Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements –Template
- 9. Sample capstone rubric

Addendum 1: Conceptual Framework for Student Learning Assessment at The Catholic University of America



Addendum 2

Catholic University Syllabus Template
Revised June 2017



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
<SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT NAME>

<Course number, section number (if applicable), and title>

<Semester and year>

*Specify Graduate or Undergraduate Syllabus if offered to both groups**

Credit Hours

Prerequisites/ Department consent (if any)

Classroom

Days and hours of class meetings and labs or discussion sections

Instructor contact information: (same information for co-teachers or TAs)

Full name and title

Office location

Phone

E-mail

Office Hours

Course Description (from Cardinal Station <http://cardinalstation.cua.edu>)

Instructional Methods

Required Text

Recommended Text

Reading materials, web materials with full citations. (Note if on reserve)

Other materials (e.g. lab supplies, calculators) with specifics of what is needed and how to obtain

Libraries

The CUA Libraries' wide range of resources and services, including databases, online journals, and FAQs are on the [main web site](#). For assistance on papers and assignments, consult the [research guides](#) or schedule an appointment with a [subject librarian](#).

Course Goals

(e.g. The purposes or goals of the course are to...)

Goals for Student Learning

(e.g. At the conclusion of the course, the student will be able to...)

OR The student will demonstrate...)

Professional Standards Addressed

(if applicable for programs accredited by specialty organizations)

Course Requirements

Assignments/Projects (specify requirements and format)

Examinations

Expectations and policies

Academic Integrity [INSTRUCTOR NOTE: PLEASE MODIFY THE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION AS BEST FITS YOUR COURSE, EXCEPTING THE UNIVERSITY POLICY QUOTE.] Academic integrity is not merely avoiding plagiarism or cheating, but it certainly includes those things. More than anything, having academic integrity means taking responsibility for your work, your ideas, and your effort, and giving credit to others for their work, ideas and effort. If you submit work that is not your own – whether test answers, whole papers or something in-between – I have a responsibility to hold you accountable for that action. I also have a responsibility to treat you with respect and dignity while doing so.

The following sanctions are presented in the University procedures related to Student Academic Dishonesty:

“The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. There may be circumstances, however, where, perhaps because of an undergraduate student’s past record, a more serious sanction, such as suspension or expulsion, would be appropriate. ...In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction.”

or

“The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. In the context of graduate studies, the expectations for academic honesty are greater, and therefore the presumed sanction for dishonesty is likely to be more severe, e.g., expulsion. ...In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction.”

[INSTRUCTORS SHOULD INCLUDE INFORMATION ON GROUP WORK, IF APPLICABLE, E.G.]

At times, I may ask you to do group work for an in-class presentation or group project. For that *specific* assignment, you are allowed to share material, ideas and information; however, for any related work that is to be submitted on an individual basis, I expect your submission to be your own in its entirety.

or

There is no group work in the class; therefore, you should not collaborate with classmates on work that is to be submitted for an individual grade.

For more information about what academic integrity means at CUA, including your responsibilities and rights, visit <http://integrity.cua.edu>.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Support Services. Please contact Disability Support Services by email at dss.cua.edu, or call 202-319-5211 to make an appointment to discuss reasonable accommodations. DSS is located in PRYZ 127.

Other Policies or Expectations: Note your policies or expectations (e.g. Attendance and punctuality policy, Participation expectation, note re: cell phones, timeliness on papers, form of submission of papers electronic vs. hard copy, policy on making up (or not) quizzes, tests etc.)

Academic Support Services

The university’s primary academic support resources are located on the 2nd floor of Mullen Library, McMahon Hall, and at the Pryzbyla Center. These affiliated offices and services include:

The Undergraduate Advising Center (UAC) offers guidance to all undergraduates, especially first-year students, as they move toward their academic goals. The UAC is located in B 10 McMahon Hall. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Phone: (202) 319-5545 **Email:** cua-advising@cua.edu **Web:** advising.cua.edu

The Center for Academic Success (CAS) provides academic support services for all students through a broad base of programs and services, including Tutoring Services, Workshops, Individual Skills Meetings, Peer Mentoring, and more. CAS is located at Mullen Library Second Floor.

Phone: (202) 319-5655 **Email:** cua-academicsuccess@cua.edu **Web:** success.cua.edu

The Writing Center is an excellent resource for any student. The Writing Center is committed to supporting the writing needs of students at all stages of the writing process. If, at any point in the semester, you feel that you are struggling to draft, revise, or properly reference sources in a writing assignment, make an appointment at <http://english.cua.edu/wc>; we also welcome walk-in appointments at the Writing Center, which is located in 219 Mullen Library.

Phone: (202) 319-4286 **Email:** cua-writingcenter@cua.edu **Web:** english.cua.edu/wc/

The Math Center is staffed with Math Faculty and Tutors who are trained to assist students struggling in areas ranging from the basics to complex problems in calculus and statistics. Any student who feels he or she may need assistance in this or any other math class is welcome to visit the Math Center on Monday through Thursday between the hours of 4:00 and 10:00pm. No appointment is necessary and services are absolutely free. The Math Center is located at Mullen Library Second Floor.

Phone: (202) 319-5655 **Email:** cua-academicsuccess@cua.edu

The Office of Disability Support Services provides reasonable accommodations for the classroom and testing environment for students with documented disabilities. DSS is located in Pryz 127. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 8:00am-5:00pm, and Tuesday and Thursday 8:00am -6:30pm. **Phone:** (202) 319-5211 **Email:** cua-dss@cua.edu **Web:** dss.cua.edu

The Counseling Center provides free individual and group counseling services, psychiatric consultation, alternative testing, and emergency services to CUA students. In addition, we provide consultation services and outreach programs to the CUA community. Appointments can be scheduled in person in 127 O'Boyle Hall, or by phone.

Phone: (202) 319-5765. **Web:** counseling.cua.edu

Assessment

Link or attach scoring guidelines if appropriate

Weighting of various components of course grade

Equivalencies of course total points to University grades

University grades:

The University grading system is available at

<http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad//gradesfull.cfm#ii> for undergraduates and

<http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii> for graduate students.

Reports of grades in courses are available at the end of each term on <http://cardinalstation.cua.edu>.

Course Schedule

Each class meeting date, topic, due dates for assignments and projects/test dates

Note midterm date (and be prepared to have enough grades in to submit interim grades for freshmen if you teach

them)

Final Exam

Note date for final exam (as found on the Registrar's website).

The final exam must be given on the day and time assigned by the Registrar. Final examinations, if required, must be administered in the final examination period. Please plan accordingly for travel, work or appointments.

A student having an exam scheduling conflict such as:

1. two or more exams scheduled for the same time period or
2. three or more exams scheduled for one day

must report to her/his school's Academic Dean's Office no later than fourteen calendar days before the end of classes. The dean will assist the student in rescheduling the exam(s) for the courses having the lowest enrollment(s). All make-up exams must be completed at the earliest possible time during the final examination period.

Bibliography

References, supplementary readings, websites of interest

* For courses in which both graduate and undergraduate students are permitted to enroll, two separate syllabi are required that should reflect the additional requirements for students taking a course for graduate credit.

Undergraduate Study: Goals and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

TEMPLATE

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education has offered the following suggestions for providing information and generating data that will assist the university to complete Standard 14, Assessment of Student Learning, for future accreditation self-studies. Our goal is to post this assessment information on the Catholic University website as well.

Middle States views student assessment as the third step in a four-step teaching-learning-assessment cycle. It includes the following,

- “1. Developing clearly articulated *learning outcomes* [all highlighting appears as in the original]: the knowledge, skills and competencies that students are expected to exhibit upon successful completion of a course, academic program, co-curricular program, general education requirement, or other specific set of experiences;
2. Offering courses, programs, and experiences that provide purposeful *opportunities for students to achieve those learning outcomes*;
3. *Assessing student achievement* of those learning outcomes, and
4. *Using the results* of those assessments to improve teaching and learning and inform planning and resource allocation decisions.

Because student learning is a fundamental component of the mission of most institutions of higher education, the assessment of student learning is an essential component of the assessment of institutional effectiveness (Standard 7), and [it] is the focus of Standard 14 (Assessment of Student Learning).”

(Source: Middle States Commission on Higher Education. *Assessing Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness: Understanding Middle States Expectations*. 2005. Available online.)

These guidelines have led us to suggest the following formats for reporting this information:

I. For undergraduate majors:

SCHOOL or DEPARTMENT NAME
Baccalaureate Study in [program name]
Goals and Assessment of Student Outcomes

Begin the document with a brief overview of undergraduate study in the department or School, if not departmentalized.

Then, following the heading and introductory material above, develop a section for each major that includes the following four parts. If the unit has more than one major, it is not a problem for course

sequences and/or goals to overlap. The intent is for the descriptions of each major to be able to stand alone.

Bachelor of [Arts, Science, Business Administration or Music] in [name of major] Program Description

Provide a brief overview of the major with some specifics on course work, e.g. course sequence. Some departments have followed this with a description of internship and/or study abroad opportunities offered majors and most have ended with a description of what students are prepared to do upon graduation, i.e. some specifics re employment and/or graduate studies in which recent graduates have engaged. This section addresses the opportunities item in the Middle States excerpt above.

Goals for Student Learning

Students who graduate with a Bachelor of [Arts, Science, Business Administration or Music] in [name of major] will:

List goals. Number each one. Recommend limiting to 3 to 5 overall goals, although a number of programs have had more. This section addresses the learning outcomes item.

Student Assessment Outcome Measures

Note: Middles States says the following about ongoing outcome measures: “Assessment methods match the learning outcome being assessed, consist of multiple measures, are varied to accommodate student backgrounds and learning styles, are used systematically over time, and yield truthful, fair information that can be used with confidence.”

List measures, numbering each one. Highlight the senior capstone seminar/paper and/or comprehensive exams. The emphasis is not on the grades students earn but on measuring the proficiencies with which departments/Schools expect them to graduate. Following are a few examples (not an exhaustive list) of student assessment outcome measures:

Direct Measures

- Review of senior projects, exams or theses by several faculty members and/or external evaluators applying the same specified criteria. Comparison/discussion of these reviews to arrive at a shared assessment;
- National or state exams or the application of national standards;
- Portfolios of student work (evaluated with rubrics) for use like case studies, and
- Pre- and post-exams.

Indirect Measures

- Student evaluations;
- Focus groups;
- Alumni surveys, and
- Program reviews.

Although some measures may assess outcomes for more than one goal, when delineating measures be sure not to overlook any goals. (It is not necessary to state the connection between measure and goal directly.) The assessment plan ought also to provide a sense of how multiple measures interrelate to give a picture of how the school/department assesses student progress over time, including tracking and periodic review of ongoing progress, achievement of specific milestones, examination of qualitative factors, advising systems, etc. Focus groups may be included in the assessment plan. If a program also offers a degree with honors, please note briefly how measures and assessments differ for students striving to graduate with honors. This section addresses the assessing student achievement item, i.e. “What are our students actually learning?”

Use of Results to Improve Student Learning

Describe how the department or School uses the data that assessing student outcomes generates as feedback to improve individual courses, expand or change course offerings, plan for the future, etc. This might include the use of indirect measures, such as senior-year exit interviews or alumni surveys, if they address student learning outcomes. What Middle States is looking for at this point is a description of formal, structured, ongoing processes for reviewing and using data to “close the feedback loop”. If you think of what’s being asked for here as a parallel to the methods section of a research article for a peer-reviewed journal, perhaps that makes it clearer. This section addresses the using the results item.

Repeat the four sections above for each additional major the unit offers.

II. For undergraduate certificate programs:

Use the same format. Be sure to note how the program accomplishes a final assessment for students not majoring in a related area.

- Entitle these sections as follows:

**Certificate in [program]
Program Description**

- Lead into the list of goals with the following statement:

Students who complete the undergraduate certificate in [program] will:

Graduate Study: Goals and Assessment of Student Outcomes

TEMPLATE

Some of you may have already produced statements of goals and assessments for your undergraduate programs. This is a parallel effort for the graduate side. If you have produced the undergraduate statements, they may be helpful as you prepare the materials for the graduate programs. You may also want to review the Program Review Inventory (PRI) submitted for each doctoral program in February of 2002. These documents described the vision that each program sought to turn into reality within five years. You may want to see how your program has fared in the intervening years. The Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies can provide a copy of the PRI for your program on request.

The continuing task of self-study is linked directly to the 10-year cycle of institutional accreditation. This particular task reflects the growing demand of Middle States and other accrediting bodies to see clear and transparent statements of goals and assessments of outcomes. Please review the Provost's Update on Middle States Accreditation, sent to the faculty January 28. The time table he proposed explains the urgency of the submission of your Goals and Outcomes review for graduate programs. Please submit copies of your goals and assessments statements to Dean Wall, with a copy to the office of the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, by February 29. Dean Wall has an outside consultant reviewing submissions and she is pulling together the materials for Middle States, as well as ensuring that the process of outcomes assessments is incorporated into the structure and culture of the University.

Following are a few suggestions by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

SAMPLE FORMAT

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education has offered the following suggestions for providing information and generating data that will assist the university to complete Standard 14, Assessment of Student Learning, for future accreditation self-studies. Our goal is to post this assessment information on the Catholic University website as well.

Middle States views student assessment as the third step in a four-step teaching-learning-assessment cycle. It includes the following,

- “1. Developing clearly articulated *learning outcomes* [all highlighting appears as in the original]: the knowledge, skills and competencies that students are expected to exhibit upon successful completion of a course, academic program, co-curricular program, general education requirement, or other specific set of experiences;
2. Offering courses, programs, and experiences that provide purposeful *opportunities for students to achieve those learning outcomes*;
3. Assessing *student achievement* of those learning outcomes, and

4. *Using the results* of those assessments to improve teaching and learning and inform planning and resource allocation decisions.

Because student learning is a fundamental component of the mission of most institutions of higher education, the assessment of student learning is an essential component of the assessment of institutional effectiveness (Standard 7), and [it] is the focus of Standard 14 (Assessment of Student Learning)."

(Source: Middle States Commission on Higher Education. *Assessing Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness: Understanding Middle States Expectations*. 2005. Available online.)

These guidelines suggest the following format for reporting this information:

SCHOOL or DEPARTMENT NAME
Certificate Program in [program name], or
Master's Program in [program name], or
Doctoral Program in [program name]

Goals and Assessment of Student Outcomes

Begin the document with a brief overview of graduate study in the department or School, if not departmentalized.

Following the heading and introductory material above, develop a section for each graduate program that includes the following four parts. The description for each degree program should be formulated so that it can stand alone. It is no problem, if there is an overlap of requirements for different degrees in the same department.

MASTERS' DEGREE PROGRAMS

Master of [Arts, Science, Fine Arts, Music, Architecture, Nursing, etc.] in [name of major]

I. Program Description

Provide a brief overview of the degree program with some specifics on course work, and, if applicable, course sequence. Identify the standards and processes for admission to the Program (credentials, committees). End with a description of what students should be prepared to do upon graduation, i.e. some specifics re employment and/or further graduate studies in which recent graduates have engaged. This section addresses the opportunities item in the Middle States excerpt above.

II. Goals for Student Learning

Students who graduate with a Master of [Arts, Science, Music, etc] in [name of major] will:

List goals. Number each one. Recommend limiting list to 3 to 5 overall goals, although a number of programs may have more. This section addresses the learning outcomes item.

III. Student Assessment Outcome Measures

Note: Middle States says the following about ongoing outcome measures: “Assessment methods match the learning outcome being assessed, consist of multiple measures, are varied to accommodate student backgrounds and learning styles, are used systematically over time, and yield truthful, fair information that can be used with confidence.”

List measures, numbering each one. Highlight such items as the research seminar/seminar paper(s), capstone courses and comprehensive exams. The emphasis is not on the grades students earn but on measuring the proficiencies with which departments/Schools expect them to graduate. Following are a few examples of student assessment outcome measures. Add or delete items relevant to your discipline:

Direct Measures

- Review of final projects, exams or theses by several faculty members and/or external evaluators applying the same specified criteria. Comparison/discussion of these reviews to arrive at a shared assessment;
- National or state exams or the application of national standards;
- Portfolios of student work (evaluated with rubrics) for use like case studies, and
- Pre- and post-exams.

Indirect Measures

- Student evaluations;
- Focus groups;
- Alumni surveys, and
- Program reviews.

Although some measures may assess outcomes for more than one goal, when delineating measures be sure not to overlook any goals. (It is not necessary to state the connection between measure and goal directly.) The assessment plan ought also to provide a sense of how multiple measures interrelate to give a picture of how the school/department assesses student progress over time, including tracking and periodic review of ongoing progress, achievement of specific milestones, examination of qualitative factors, advising systems, etc. Focus groups may be included in the assessment plan. If a program also offers a degree with distinction, please note briefly how this level of performance is assessed. This section addresses the assessing student achievement item, i.e. “What are our students actually learning?”

IV, Use of Results to Improve Student Learning

Describe how the department or School uses the data that assessing student outcomes provides as feedback to improve individual courses, expand or change course offerings, plan for the future, etc. Middle States is looking for formal, structured processes for reviewing and using data. This might include the use of indirect measures, such as exit interviews or alumni surveys. This section addresses the using the results item.

Repeat the four sections above for each additional major offered by the unit.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Use the same format as that for Masters' Programs. Be sure to note how the certificate program accomplishes a final assessment for students not majoring in a related area.

- Entitle these sections as follows:

Certificate in [program]
Program Description

- Lead into the list of goals with the following statement:

Students who complete the certificate in [program] will:

The Definition of terms provided by the following website may be helpful:

<http://www.wccnet.edu/departments/curriculum/assessment.php>

DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMS

The Doctoral Programs should follow the same format with adjustment made as appropriate, e.g., the dissertation is the most critical measure of student performance for the doctorate. For professional doctorates with project requirements, i.e., D.Minn. and DNP, the statement should identify the selection and evaluation processes.

Milestones (modify as appropriate to specific doctoral program):

- Course work and language requirements
- Completion of Comprehensive Exams (How are they prepared and evaluated?)
- Admission to Candidacy (How are students selected for candidacy? Quality of Master's comps, demonstrated research and writing ability, etc.)
- Selecting a committee
- Identifying an area for original research
- Presenting a proposal
 - Defending it in the department
 - Pass evaluation by Departmental faculty
 - Approvals of committee and topic by Chair, and/or Dean, outside reviewer, and Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. [Note: The University's standards and forms will be provided elsewhere. The focus of the School/Department should be on requirements that are required at the School/Department level.
- Completing an acceptable dissertation within 5 years of candidacy, including revisions suggested by committee (What are processes and standards for determining that a dissertation is ready for defense?)
- Gaining approval signatures from Committee (required for oral defense).
- Oral Defense
- Deposit of Dissertation

“Rubrics” for Oral Defense of Dissertations: (What are the criteria for evaluating an oral defense? Which of the following criteria are applied by members of the Defense Committee? Are there other criteria?)

- No Pass Pass Pass with Distinction
- Presentation of topic, methodology, results
- Clear, focused, convincing delivery in appropriate scholarly discourse
- Content knowledge, demonstration of analytical ability, awareness of intellectual/scientific context of study and application of its results
- Ability to handle difficult questions and criticism

**FOR ALL GRADUATE PROGRAMS – DOCTORATE, MASTERS OR CERTIFICATE --
CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FOR INCLUSION, identifying the knowledge, skills and/or
attitudes fostered by the listed activities:**

Opportunities for Professional Development and Personal Growth:

- Teaching and Research Assistantships
- Departmental committees
- Participation in scholarly programs (department, School, University)
- Participation and Papers at Professional conferences
- Publications
- Representation at governing bodies such as Graduate Student Association, Academic Senate
- Involvement in Campus Activities such as Campus Ministry
- Work/Study experience

Addendum 5

TEMPLATE
Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department or School Name
Undergraduate Program(s)

Assessment Measures

The School of _____ or Department of _____ uses the following measures to assess departmental learning outcomes:

Please list measures used by your faculty to review student learning in your program(s). The table below is for your consideration of possible measures that you may use in this review process. Please delete the table itself. Your list suffices.

Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Capstone projects, senior papers, senior theses, exhibits, or performances _____ •Pass rates on comprehensive examinations _____ •Pass rates or scores on licensure, certification, or subject area tests _____ •Student publications or conference presentations _____ •Employer and internship supervisor ratings of students performance _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for capstone seminars _____ •Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for gateway and/or intermediary courses _____ •Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for gateway and/or introductory courses _____ •Department or program review data _____ •Job placement _____ •Employer or alumni surveys _____ •Student perception surveys _____ •Proportion of upper-level courses compared to the same program at other institutions _____ •Graduate school placement rates _____ •Focus group interviews with students, faculty members, or employers _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Other (please describe): _____ 	

Note: Adapted from Student Learning Assessment, MSCHE, 2007, P.29.

Assessment Findings

Please report findings from data that you display in attachments in this section. Programs with specialized accreditation data should attach tables or figures with such data (e.g. pass rates on professional licensure exams) and provide create sections under Assessment Findings to discuss

this data. For all undergraduate programs, Institutional Research will provide course data for a five year period (on enrollment, grades, course evaluation) for senior seminars and other key courses that programs requested. Institutional Research will also provide comps data if available for your program(s). Finally Institutional Research will provide data related to general education goals from the National Survey on Student Engagement (a student perception survey) for your majors from the responses of seniors in the most recently available year.

In your remarks under Assessment Findings, please identify the data source, refer to the appropriate attachment by number in the text and mark the number on the attachment itself. Describe the findings, i.e. what is the pattern of the results? What are significant findings from the NSSE data?

Senior Seminar Discussion (Attachment 1):

The School of _____ or Department of _____ analyzed course grade, evaluation, and enrollment data in HIST 401 Senior Thesis Seminar for a five-year period (Fall 2003 through Fall 2007). *[The phrasing is just for illustration. You determine the best way to express your data.]*

During this period, enrollment _____ (describe the findings).

Characterize the performance of students in the senior seminar. Comment as needed.

Course evaluation results for the past five years indicate (report findings re: instructor rating)..... Comment as needed.

Student judgment of the senior thesis seminar as a course was (report findings re: course rating)..... Comment as needed.

Intermediary Course or Introductory Course Discussion

Provide similar information for other key courses after the senior seminar. Use a parallel format, referring to the attachments, describing enrollment, student performance, course evaluations.

Perceptions of General Education Outcomes by History Majors (Attachment 4):

Each spring, the School of _____ / or Department of _____ uses the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to benchmark the general education outcomes of its senior students against senior students enrolled in: Catholic University, Carnegie Peers, and the entire NSSE participant group.

Seniors in the School of _____ or Department of _____ view their proficiency in all general education areas *Characterize the overall pattern of findings from NSSE data for seniors. Then in subsequent statements comment on particular areas that are significantly different from peer groups (noted by the asterisk on the attached NSSE results). Comment as needed.*

Curricular Improvements

In this section, provide narrative describing the curricular improvements introduced, and if possible provide comments on the effects of these improvements if known. For example, the improvements may include changing the structure of particular courses, requiring prerequisite courses or skills, providing special advisement, introducing earlier experiences with parts of what become key projects or papers. In some instances, there will be extensive changes of requirements or course offerings (i.e. in Nursing or TRS). A brief overview of these major changes should be noted here.

TEMPLATE
Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department or School Name
Certificate Program in _____
Master's Program in _____
Doctoral Program in _____

Assessment Measures

The School of _____ or Department of _____ uses the following measures to assess student learning outcomes:

Please list measures used by your faculty to review student learning in your program(s). The table below is for your consideration of possible measures that you may use in this review process. Please delete the table itself. Your list suffices.

Direct Measures	Indirect Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected projects, papers, theses, exhibits, or performances _____ • Pass rates on comprehensive examinations _____ • Pass rates or scores on licensure or certification exams _____ • Student publications or conference presentations _____ • Teaching and research assistantships _____ • Employer and internship supervisor ratings of students performance _____ • Portfolios of student work _____ • Progression toward milestones, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continuous enrollment _____ -Completion of courses _____ -Completion of language/research requirements _____ -Approved dissertation proposal _____ -Award of degree or certificate _____ • Other (please describe): _____ _____ _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades, course evaluations, and enrollment totals for selected courses, e.g. gateway, intermediary, and/or culminating/core courses _____ • Job placement _____ • Employer or alumni surveys _____ • Student perception surveys _____ • Further Graduate school placement rates _____ • Focus group interviews with students, faculty members, or employers _____

Note: Adapted from Student Learning Assessment, MSCHE, 2007, P.29.

Assessment Findings

Please report findings from data that you display in attachments in this section. Programs with specialized accreditation data should attach tables or figures with such data (e.g. pass rates on

professional licensure exams) and create sections under Assessment Findings to discuss this data. For all graduate programs, Institutional Research will provide course data for a five year period (on enrollment, grades, course evaluations if available) for key courses that programs request. Institutional Research will also provide comps data and progression data (continuous enrollment/retention and when students complete programs or earn degrees).

In your remarks under Assessment Findings, please identify the data source, refer to the appropriate attachment by letter in the text and mark the letter on the attachment itself. Describe the findings, i.e. what is the pattern of the results?

Course Discussion (Attachment A)

The School of _____ or Department of _____ analyzed course grade, evaluation, and enrollment data in (name of course) for a five-year period (Fall 2003 through Fall 2007). *[The phrasing is just for illustration. You determine the best way to describe your findings.]*

During this period, enrollment _____ (describe the findings).

Characterize the performance of students in the course. Comment as needed.

Course evaluation results for the past five years indicate (report findings re: instructor rating)..... Comment as needed.

Student judgment of the (course number) as a course was (report findings re: course rating)..... Comment as needed.

Provide similar information for other key courses. Use a parallel format, referring to the attachments, describing enrollment, student performance, course evaluations.

Progression Data (Attachment B, etc.)

Comment on Enrollment

Comment on Passage of Comprehensive Exams

Comment on Time to Degrees/ Graduation Rates

Curricular Improvements

In this section, provide narrative describing the curricular improvements introduced, and if possible provide comments on the effects of these improvements if known. For example, the improvements may include changing the structure of particular courses, requiring prerequisite courses or skills, providing special advisement, introducing earlier experiences with parts of what become key projects or papers. In some instances, there will be extensive changes of requirements or course offerings). A brief overview of these changes should be noted here.

TEMPLATE
Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department or School Name
Undergraduate (identify degree type (e.g. B.A., B.S. etc. or certificate) Program in

Key Assessment Findings

Please report findings from data that you display in this section.

- *Programs with specialized accreditation data should insert tables or figures with such data (e.g. pass rates on professional licensure exams) and discuss this data.*
- *Schools/Departments should present data regarding passage or failure on comprehensive exams.*
- *Schools/Departments should present data in tables based upon rubrics for key assessments. Describe the findings in the text as well, i.e. what is the pattern of the results?*
- *Briefly present data from other sources if needed.*

Curricular Improvements

Briefly describe improvements to the curriculum or student supports that will be introduced subsequent to the findings, if any. Comment on the effects of recent curricular improvements in light of data if known. For example, the improvements may include changing the structure of particular courses, requiring prerequisite courses or skills, providing special advisement, introducing earlier experiences with parts of what become key projects or papers.

TEMPLATE
Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department or School Name
Certificate Program in _____
Master’s Program in _____
Doctoral Program in _____

Key Assessment Findings

Please report findings from data that you display in this section.

- *Programs with specialized accreditation data should insert tables or figures with such data (e.g. pass rates on professional licensure exams) and discuss this data.*
- *Schools/Departments should present data regarding passage or failure on comprehensive exams.*
- *Schools/Departments should present data in tables based upon rubrics for key assessments. Describe the findings in the text as well, i.e. what is the pattern of the results?*
- *Briefly present data from other sources if needed.*

Curricular Improvements

Briefly describe improvements to the curriculum or student supports that will be introduced subsequent to the findings, if any. Comment on the effects of recent curricular improvements in light of data if known. For example, the improvements may include changing the structure of particular courses, requiring prerequisite courses or skills, providing special advisement, introducing earlier experiences with parts of what become key projects or papers.

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY TEACHER EDUCATION ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT RUBRIC

	Exceeding Expectations (3 pts)	Meeting Expectations (2 pts)	Below Expectations (1 pt)
Educational Philosophy	Candidate uses CF to develop rich understanding of personal philosophy in terms of philosophy of site. Clear use of written and anecdotal evidence to support discussion of school philosophy.	Candidate uses CF to explore personal philosophy and site philosophy. Evidence provided to support discussion of school philosophy.	Candidate does not use CF to explore either personal philosophy or site philosophy. Little or no evidence used to support description of school philosophy.
Systematic Observations	Candidate uses CF extensively to examine various components of school setting. Identifies and reflects on at least 4 educational dilemmas that might shape experience. Identifies and reflects on at least 3 issues that might lead to project problem statement. Provides specific examples of student behaviors.	Candidate uses CF to examine various components of school setting. Identifies and reflects on 2 or 3 educational dilemmas that might shape experience. Identifies and reflects on at least 2 issues that might lead to project problem statements. Provides specific examples of student behaviors.	Candidate uses CF in limited manner to examine various components of school setting. Identifies and reflects on fewer than 3 educational dilemmas that might shape experience. Identifies and reflects on fewer than 2 issues that might lead to project problem statement. Behaviors/observations are presented as generalities.
Exploring Causes	Candidate identifies well defined ARP problem statement in terms of measurable behaviors. Candidate uses rich and varied data to support broad range of possible causes. Data are organized and clearly aid reader understanding. Candidate shows how some observations support more than one possible interpretation. Candidate includes possible special needs causes but does not categorize students without supporting formal assessment.	Candidate identifies ARP problem statement. Candidate uses observational data to support broad range of possible causes. Data are organized and clearly aid reader understanding. Candidate includes possible special needs causes but does not categorize students without supporting formal assessment.	Candidate does not identify an ARP problem statement. Candidate uses insufficient data to support limited range of possible causes. Data are not organized in a meaningful manner that aids reader understanding. Candidate presumes special needs categorization without supporting formal assessment.
Plan for Pre/Post Measures	Candidate clearly identifies pre/post measure appropriate for stated problem statement. Additional data sources identified showing clear plan for triangulation.	Candidate clearly identifies pre/post measure appropriate for stated problem statement. Additional data sources are discussed.	Candidate does not identify pre/post measure appropriate for stated problem statement. No additional data sources are considered.
Exploring Interventions	Candidate describes broad range of possible interventions. Uses rich and varied data to justify selection of specific strategies. CF (including multiple relevant dilemmas) is used to aid selection of strategies. Interpretative and philosophical perspectives are clearly included in decision-making process. Causes and	Candidate describes broad range of possible interventions. Uses varied data to justify selection of specific strategies. Elements of the learning environment are considered when selecting interventions. At least 2 dilemmas are described. Causes and strategies are clearly linked in an organized manner that aids reader	Candidate describes limited range of possible interventions. Uses insufficient data to justify selection of specific strategies. Limited use of the CF. Causes and strategies are not clearly linked.

Exploring Interventions	Candidate describes broad range of possible interventions. Uses rich and varied data to justify selection of specific strategies. CF (including multiple relevant dilemmas) is used to aid selection of strategies. Interpretative and philosophical perspectives are clearly included in decision-making process. Causes and strategies are clearly linked in an organized manner that aids reader understanding.	Candidate describes broad range of possible interventions. Uses varied data to justify selection of specific strategies. Elements of the learning environment are considered when selecting interventions. At least 2 dilemmas are described. Causes and strategies are clearly linked in an organized manner that aids reader understanding.	Candidate describes limited range of possible interventions. Uses insufficient data to justify selection of specific strategies. Limited use of the CF. Causes and strategies are not clearly linked.
Describing Individual Interventions	Systematic and thorough description of all strategies implemented. Student and teacher artifacts as well as observational data give well developed picture of how all strategies were implemented. Meaningful discussion of the impact of individual strategies on multiple stakeholders.	Systematic and thorough description of all strategies implemented. Supporting artifacts and observational data are provided. Meaningful discussion of the impact of individual strategies.	Limited description of strategies implemented. Little or no supporting evidence is provided. Little or no discussion of the impact of individual strategies.
Reflecting on Impact on P-12 Students	Conclusions are supported with multiple sources of data. Original problem statement is thoroughly discussed. Multiple alternative explanations are included and multiple recommendations for classroom teacher are made. Clear discussion of the impact of the overall project on P-12 student development including student artifacts as appropriate. Direct comparison of pre and post measures as defined in ARP 3.	Conclusions are supported with multiple sources of data. Original problem statement is thoroughly discussed. At least one alternative explanation and at least one recommendation for classroom teacher are given. Clear discussion of impact of overall project on P-12 student development including student artifacts as appropriate. Direct comparison of pre and post measures as defined in ARP 3.	Conclusions are supported with few sources of data. Original problem statement is not discussed. Missing either alternative explanations or recommendations for classroom teacher. No direct comparison of pre and post measures as defined in ARP 3.
Reflecting on Professional Development	Discussion of the student teaching experience includes all three modes of reflection. Specific description of how philosophy and expected classroom practice were changed by lessons learned from both the ARP process as well as general classroom experiences. Reflection on ARP 1 and 2 show how experiences matched or conflicted with expectations.	Discussion of the student teaching experience includes all three modes of reflection. Reflection on ARP 1 and 2 show how experiences matched or conflicted with expectations.	Discussion of the student teaching experience includes limited use of the CF. Limited reflection on ARP 1 and 2 show how experiences matched or conflicted with expectations.

Use of Literature	Rich and thoughtful use of variety of professional resources. Clear integration of literature into discussion of causes and strategy demonstrate that literature helped shape understanding of topic.	Rich and thoughtful use of variety of professional resources.	Missing literature or literature that appears to be added in a haphazard manner without enriching candidate understanding.
Professional Presentation	Careful proofreading resulting in essentially error-free writing. Clear and concise language conveys ideas smoothly. Error-free use of APA style. Intro abstract/essay provide clear summary of project.	Careful proofreading resulting in essentially error-free writing. Appropriate use of APA style. Intro abstract/essay provide clear summary of project.	Obvious errors in writing or use of APA style. Confusing or misleading intro abstract/essay.