

AURORA UNIVERSITY

Program Assessment Policy

Effective: Immediately

Last Updated: 3/17/22

Responsible University Office: Office of Academic Affairs

Responsible Executive: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Approval: Faculty Senate 4/1/22

Scope: All full-time and part-time faculty; departmental chairs; academic deans; administrative deans; university senate and relevant committees; Director(s) of Assessment and General Education.

A. REASON FOR POLICY

This policy supports compliance with the following Higher Learning Commission Criterion stipulations:

3.A. The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.

4.A. The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.

4.B. The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and co-curricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

B. POLICY

Every program leading to a credential, as well as the general education program, will communicate and assess associated learning goals for students. A draft assessment plan is a required component to programs submitted for approval to the University Senate, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, and/or Graduate Affairs Committee.

Assessment of program quality and relevance is supplemented by a periodic and systematic program review for non-accredited programs. The quality and relevance of programs subject to specialized accreditation is supported by reporting and review required by that oversight.

Assessment of student learning to inform continuous improvement is supported by the annual university-wide assessment of general education learning outcomes, and the academic program assessment planning and reporting processes. The general education program includes university learning outcomes distinctive to undergraduate versus graduate students, as well as additional learning outcomes applicable to undergraduate students only. The expected performance and evaluation of the university learning outcomes is differentiated by degree level per targeted common rubrics employed.

University programs deemed to meet co-curricular learning goals are evaluated systematically through the co-curricular program assessment planning and reporting process.

C. DEFINITIONS

Periodic and systematic program review

- Once every six years, all non-accredited programs engage in an evaluation of academic program relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and competitive position.

Academic program assessment planning and reporting

- This annual process assesses student learning in academic programs via collection and analysis of data.

Annual assessment plan

- This plan hosts the program specific annual data collection plan for academic programs engaging in the *annual academic program assessment planning and reporting* process, and is refined in anticipation of each new academic year based on data collected and analyzed the prior academic year.

Annual assessment report

- This report hosts the program specific annual summary and analysis of data collected in the *annual academic program assessment planning and reporting* process.

Annual university-wide assessment of general education

- This annual process assesses student attainment of the general education learning outcomes in collaboration with all academic programs.

Co-curricular program assessment planning and reporting

- This is a systematic process whereby non-academic programs tasked by the university to contribute to co-curricular learning, engage in the assessment of student learning with respect to determined student learning outcomes.

D. PROCEDURES

This Assessment of Program Learning policy is applied to all academic and designated co-curricular programs under the supervision of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. The Office of Academic Affairs works with the department chairs, academic deans, Director(s) of General Education, General Education Committee, Director(s) of Assessment, Assessment Committee, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Graduate Affairs Committee, University Senate, and Office of the Registrar to ensure the maintenance of program relevance and appropriate assessment of approved learning outcomes.

The chairs and academic deans are responsible for ensuring that periodic program reviews are completed according to the review rotation schedule. Any deviations from the program review schedule are subject to the approval of the Office of Academic Affairs. The Office of Academic Affairs monitors the progress toward the data driven goals determined by the review process and approved by that office, and will collect a formal update (Goal Progress Reflection) following the third year after the academic year of the latest program review.

Ongoing Program Review Rotation Schedule (every 6 years)*	
Odd Numbered Fall of AY	Program Discipline beginning with A- F
Even Numbered Fall of AY	Program Discipline beginning with G - Z

* New programs will complete their first program review following the third full year of their active recruiting, and subject to the rotation schedule.

The faculty and governance committees are responsible for the initial and ongoing determination of program and general education learning outcomes. Revisions are approved subject to shared governance via the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Graduate Affairs Committee, and University Senate. The Office of the Registrar will ensure that the most current and approved learning objectives are captured in the university catalog.

The chairs and academic deans are responsible for ensuring that program assessment plans and reports are guided by approved learning outcomes, as verified by the Office of the Registrar. The Director(s) of Assessment and Assessment Committee support the assessment process and coach continuous improvement based on the analysis of data collected. The Director(s) of General Education and General Education Committee are responsible for ensuring that the assessment of the university-wide and undergraduate general education learning outcomes is coordinated with the program departments and schools to ensure data collection representative of all course modalities and locations. The Director(s) of General Education is responsible for the drafting of the annual General Education Assessment report, which is reviewed by the VPAA and academic dean.

Relevant departmental staff are responsible for maintaining and assessing co-curricular learning outcomes, in consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs and Director(s) of Assessment. The Office of Academic Affairs, Director(s) of Assessment, and Assessment Committee support the assessment process and coach continuous improvement based on the analysis of data collected.

Should discrepancies in the application of the Program Assessment policy be identified, the Office of Academic Affairs will communicate needed adjustments to the appropriate responsible party.