

Integrating State Assessment Mandates with SACS Reaffirmation

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November 16-18, 2005



Learning Outcomes

Attendees should be able to do the following:

- Identify and describe the Academic Learning Compacts developed by UWF to meet mandate from the Board of Governors of the State of Florida
- Describe the importance of documented use of assessments and implementation of Quality Enhancement Plans for the SACS reaffirmation process
- Explain why the University of West Florida identified Project Management as the focus of the initial phase of its QEP
- Describe the relationship of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs in the QEP
- Suggest ways in which these strategies might be implemented in their own institution's upcoming SACS review

Why “Academic Learning Compacts” ?

- Education is a collaborative effort between students and faculty
- Compact as a promise made to students connects with the integrity mission of UWF

Academic Learning Compacts

- Three basic Academic Learning Compacts are mandated by the Board of Governors for every program offered by State Universities in Florida
 - Content
 - Critical Thinking
 - Communication

“Value-Added” Academic Learning Compacts

- Two additional Academic Learning Compacts were adopted by the University of West Florida – these represent characteristics that distinguish UWF
 - Project Management
 - Integrity / Values
- Optional 6th ALC for some departments that highlights a specific strength of a department

Examples of Optional ALCs

- Chemistry
 - Risk and Hazard Management
- Music
 - Keyboard Proficiency
- Computer Science
 - Microsoft Certification
- Health, Leisure, & Exercise Science
 - First Aid

Relation between SLOs and ALCs

Program Academic Learning Compacts

- Content
- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Integrity / Values
- Project Management

Student Learning Outcomes for a Course in the Program

- Identify and describe major theories in the discipline
- Evaluate competing hypotheses and select the one that is best supported by existing data
- Write clearly using the editorial style endorsed by the discipline
- Comply with professional standards of ethics associated with the discipline
- Manage time and resources to carry a long-term project in the discipline to completion

Institutional Needs for Student Learning Outcomes

- SLOs will provide the foundation for reliable and valid assessment data that can be used to improve the curriculum and instruction
- SLO-based assessments will allow us to clearly report our student achievements to our stakeholders (students, employers, the Board of Trustees, Board of Governors, regional accreditation agencies (SACS), discipline-specific accreditation agencies)

Assessment and Accreditation

- SACS Criteria 3.3.1 – “The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.”
 - Academic Programs
 - Student Affairs Programs
 - Support Services

Assessment and Accreditation

- Identify outcomes
 - Program (or Operational) Outcomes
 - Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)
- Assess the outcomes
 - Each outcome must be measurable
 - Direct measures are better measures
- Document that we use the results of assessment
 - To improve practice
 - To influence planning

Assessment and Accreditation

Core Requirement #12: Quality Enhancement Plan

The (QEP) describes a course of action for institutional improvement that:

- Is critical to enhancement of educational quality
- Has directly related to student learning (as defined by SACS, “changes in students' knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or values that may be attributable to the collegiate experience”)
- Identifies goals and evaluation strategies are "clearly linked to improving the quality of student learning."

Reasons for Refined Focus of QEP

- The Academic Learning Compacts (ALCs) and the related student learning outcomes provide structural opportunities to frame learning enhancement in terms of Project Management.
- The “value added” domain of Project Management suggests opportunities for documenting distinction in UWF programs.
- Focus on Project Management in the QEP highlights the interaction between students and faculty (small classes and accessible faculty) that comprises an important part of the image of UWF
- New focus of the QEP is consistent with the Making Way for Excellence program, which focuses on enhancement of staff development
- Document and improve awareness of the student-centered learning culture at UWF

UWF's QEP Theme

**Creating Communities of
Learners through Active
Learning and Student
Engagement**

Focus on Project Management

QEP Goals

- Improve student learning of knowledge, skills, and values relevant to Project Management.
- Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies for development of Project Management skills, knowledge, and values.
- Provide opportunities for faculty and staff development related to improving student learning of Project Management

Implementation of Current QEP

Goals: Action Items and Outcomes

- Each academic degree program (foundational, bachelor's, master's, post-master's) and student affairs program will review its definition of Project Management for the extent to which it
 - Corresponds to broad learning outcomes identified at the institutional level
 - Reflects student learning outcomes appropriate to the discipline, student needs, and faculty expertise
 - Requires revision to describe these outcomes

What's Next: Implementation of Future QEP Goals

- Initiate project management program-level outcomes and assessments for graduate programs
- Place project management program-level outcomes, curriculum maps, and assessment plans for foundational studies and graduate programs on the CUTLA website

What's Next: Implementation of Future QEP Goals

- Highlight active learning and student engagement instructional strategies at the fall New Faculty Series, fall Adjunct Training, and fall GTA Training
- Manage RFP process to provide assistance and support to faculty and staff creating QEP proposals
- Add Instructional Strategies Fellow to the existing Assessment and Mentoring Fellow positions in CUTLA
- Present workshops on outcomes and assessments, instructional strategies, and project management

Academic and Student Affairs: Partners in Planning and Assessment

- Student Affairs SLO Commitment
 - Developing Student Learning Outcomes and Related Assessments
 - Plotting a “co-curriculum” map
- Parallel Planning and Assessment Frameworks
 - Annual Cycle
 - Congruent Major Elements

Discussion

- Problems encountered when coping with accreditation demands from multiple agencies
- Gaining institutional efficiency by combining assessment and accreditation needs into one program