



United States University

Annual Institutional Assessment Report

Addressing the Results for the 2016-2017 Assessment Endeavors

January 2018

This report summarizes the assessment work done by the USU Assessment Task Force and USU faculty (both core and adjunct) during the 2016-17 academic year. Many thanks to our dedicated faculty for their time, energy, and commitment to academic success at USU.

One of the principal purposes of this annual report is to present an overview of all learning outcomes assessment results so that common areas of strength and concern can be identified, discussed, and acted upon. The specifics of the report itself are secondary to how it can help us make changes to better support our students.

Updates on Previous Assessment Years

Proposed Changes, 2014-16

The yearly Program Learning Outcome reports begin with a review and update on previous years' plans for improvement. The table below gives an overview of the improvement activity taking place in the programs aggregated from those reports and categorized by status.

Status	#	%
Completed	16	39%
In Progress - Current Curriculum Revision Due to Migration (Fall 1, 2018)	13	32%
In Progress - Other	5	12%
Delayed - Future Assessment Cycle Activity	7	17%

The highest percentage (39%) of plans have been completed. The next highest (32%) are curricular changes that have been subsumed into the major review, revise, and migrate efforts underway this academic year. These should all be complete by Fall 1, 2018, just in time for the commencement of our second five-year assessment cycle. A third category (17%) include items that address plans for re-assessment of particular outcomes. The smallest group (12%) are items that are categorized as still in progress, but which should most likely be revised to create more definite deliverables. To this end, one of the sessions of the Assessment Task Force for the coming year will workshop plan/goals writing.

2017 Critical Thinking Summit and PLO Revisions

In April, 2017, the long-planned Critical Thinking Summit was held. The Assessment Task Force faculty discussed curriculum developments in their programs since the initial Critical Thinking assessments were completed (2014). The institutional definition of this skill was revised as was the Institutional Learning

Outcome (ILO). This work was followed later in the year with revisions of the Critical Thinking PLOs for most programs.

Perhaps the most significant assessment activity for the year was the revision of the all PLOs for 4 of the programs and General Education: Bachelor of Arts in Management, Bachelor of Science in Health Science, Master of Arts in Education, and Master of Business Administration. The goal of this work was to refine the PLOs to 1) increase their authenticity and relevance to students and faculty, 2) increase their usefulness in driving programmatic curriculum revision, 3) improve their measurability for assessment purposes, and 4) enhance professional preparation. The remaining programs, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Master of Science in Nursing, and Teacher Credential Preparation Program, were involved in preparing for professional accreditation visits at that time (all successful), and are now involved in the strengthening of their PLOs. See Appendix A for the 2016-17 PLO revisions.

Learning Outcome Assessment, 2016-17

Note on Institutional vs. Program Assessment

For this cycle of the assessment process, student work was evaluated using the institutional-level rubrics (one for each competency); the results were then used for program-level planning within the programs by program faculty. Although the Task Force had planned to address the asymmetry of this process by creating program-level rubrics more directly reflecting the PLOs in 2016-17, the PLOs under review (related to Diversity and Collaboration skills) did not yet lend themselves to such specificity as written. The between-cycle focus instead shifted to revising the Program Learning Outcomes to support more discipline-focused assessment beginning in the next assessment year, 2017-18 (see update above). That year will include the last ILO (and related PLOs) that addresses Mastery of the Discipline. Rubrics will be created/revised for all PLOs as part of the ILO/PLO assessment. All PLOs have been revised (or are being revised) at the time of this report, January 2018 (see Appendix A).

Note on Very Small Sample Sizes

This assessment year occurred at a historic low for enrollment at the institution. Sample sizes were small across the board, and sample availability, based on courses offered during the year, was also restricted. As enrollment grows, and curricula are revised based on even these preliminary results, both sample size and availability (due to increased number of courses supporting the learning outcome) are expected improve. This should also result in a corresponding increase in the validity and reliability of the assessment results themselves.

Several of the sample sizes in this report are so small as to make the percentage calculations awkward. In some cases, decisions to round up or down (to “meet” or “not meet” the benchmark) were made in disciplinary curriculum committees. Note that the sample size is listed with each program, and the conclusions drawn from the results should be weighed accordingly.

Note on Course Level Terminology and Rubric Scores

Course levels are noted as I (Introduce), D (Develop), and M (Master), using the most common system at USU for indicating the position of a course on a program’s curriculum map. The placement on the map reveals its categorization as an early, middle, or late course, with the content scaffolded appropriately for the students’ experience and competency. USU’s assessment rubrics (see Appendices B and C) are designed with 4 possible scores, from 0 to 3, with “3” being used for the most skilled student

performances. With the change to programmatic rubrics, the difficulties in using the same rubric and its numbering to score both undergraduate and graduate student work will hopefully be avoided in the future.

2016-2017 Diversity and Collaboration

Diversity Results

ILO 6. Work effectively across race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

For the review of this competency, programs identified one or two courses with no restrictions on level to assess student performance in the program. Although the Task Force and Programs aim to assess at the Mastery level (“at or near graduation”), not all programs offered courses in 2016-17 at that level. This difficulty does indicate that the PLOs relating to diversity skills are most likely not supported as thoroughly in the program curricula as they need to be. This issue will be addressed in both programmatic and institutional recommendations.

The samples of student work from the courses chosen were evaluated using a common institutional rubric (see Appendix B and note above). Note: The MSN student samples were scored using an earlier draft of the rubric (see Appendix C).

Note that the RN-BSN program did not participate in assessment this year due to lack of enrollment.

Undergraduate Programs

Program	Course Level (Rubric Target)	Target % (of scores)	Rubric Criterion	Achieved %		Met?	Predominant Score
GE n=5	D (“1” and “2” or higher)	80% at “1” AND 40% at “2+”	Diversity	80%	40%	Yes	1
GE n=4	I (“1” or higher)	80% at “1+”	Diversity	100%		Yes	1
BSHS n=3	D (“1” and on “2” or higher)	80% at “1” AND 40% at “2+”	Diversity	100%	67%	Yes	2
BAM n=9	M (“2” or higher)	80%	Diversity	78%		Yes	2
RN-BSN	Not Assessed (Enrollment)	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA

Graduate Programs

Program	Course Level (Rubric Target)	Target % (of scores)	Rubric Criterion	Achieved %	Met?	Predominant Score
MAEd n=14	D (“2” or higher)	80%	Diversity	35%	No	1
MBA n=22	D (“2” or higher)	80%	Diversity	63%	No	2 & 3
MSN-FNP	M (“3”)	80%	Knowledge	100%	Yes	3

n=14						
	M ("3")	80%	Analysis	93%	Yes	3
	M ("3")	80%	Application	86%	Yes	3

Collaboration Results

ILO 7. Work collaboratively as members and leaders of diverse teams.

For the review of this competencies, programs identified one or two courses with no restrictions on level to assesses student performance in the program. Although the Task Force and Programs aim to assess at the Mastery level ("at or near graduation"), not all programs offered courses in 2016-17 at that level. Two programs were not able to assess their collaboration-aligned PLOs at all. The problems associated with assessing collaboration in predominantly or completely online programs will be addressed in both programmatic and institutional improvement proposals.

The samples of student work from the courses chosen were evaluated using a common institutional rubric (see Appendix B and note above). Note: The MSN student samples were scored using an earlier draft of the rubric (see Appendix C).

Note that the RN-BSN program did not participate in assessment this year due to lack of enrollment.

Undergraduate Programs

Program	Course Level (Rubric Target)	Target % (of scores)	Rubric Criterion	Achieved %		Met?	Predominant Score
GE Group: n=1	D ("1" and "2" or higher)	80% at "1+" AND 40% at "2+"	Group Dynamic	100%	100%	Yes	2
Individual: n=4	D ("1" and "2" or higher)	80% at "1+" AND 40% at "2+"	Individual Contribution	100%	50%	Yes	1
BAM Group: n=1	M ("2" or higher)	80% at "2+"	Group Dynamic	100%		Yes	3
Individual: n=2	M ("2" or higher)	80% at "2+"	Individual Contribution	100%		Yes	3
BSHS	Not Assessed (Scheduling)	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA
RN-BSN	Not Assessed (Enrollment)	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA

Graduate Programs

Program	Course Level (Rubric Target)	Target % (of scores)	Rubric Criterion	Achieved %	Met?	Predominant Score
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MBA Group: n=2	D ("2" or higher)	80%	Group Dynamic	100%	Yes	2 & 3
Individual: n=10	D ("2" or higher)	80%	Individual Contribution	80%	Yes	2
MSN n=14	M ("3" or higher)	80%	Contributes to Meetings	100%	Yes	3
	M ("3" or higher)	80%	Individual Contributions	88%	Yes	3
	M ("3" or higher)	80%	Fosters Constructive Climate	94%	Yes	3
MAED	Not Assessed (Pilot)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Aside from the MAED and MBA difficulties in the supplied Diversity samples, all learning outcomes assessment expectations were met this year. That said, BSHS and MAEd will need to assess Collaboration in the coming assessment year, if possible.

Number of Changes Planned or Proposed Based on Assessment Results

Diversity Changes

Changes to Curriculum - Increase Support for PLO in Courses, Increased Scaffolding of Skills	8
Changes to Pedagogy - Faculty Training	1
Changes to Assessment Process - Revision of PLOs, Rubrics, Mapping, Sample Selection, Faculty Involved	7

Collaboration Changes

Changes to Curriculum - Increase Support for PLO in Courses, Increased Scaffolding of Skills, LMS Tech Tools to Support Learning	5
Changes to Pedagogy - Faculty Training, Use of Tech Tools	1
Changes to Assessment Process - Revision of PLOs, Rubrics, Mapping, Sample Selection, Faculty Involved, Use of Tech Tools for Recording Samples	7

Addendum: Institutional Initiatives Recommended by 2017 Assessment Summit

Based on discussions of the results presented above, the participants of the 2017 Assessment Summit, recommended the following institutional initiatives:

Diversity

No institutional recommendations for Diversity.

Collaboration

With the assistance of IT, investigate and select technological support tools for collaborative activity in Brightspace (the LMS) for learning, practicing, and assessing collaborative skills.

Appendix A:

Learning Outcomes Revisions, 2017-18

Previous Learning Outcome	Revised Learning Outcome
ILO (Critical Thinking)	
4. Apply critical thinking in the research and problem-solving processes.	4. Analyze and evaluate information and arguments, interpretations, or hypotheses in order to solve problems and form well-reasoned positions.
General Education PLOs	
1. Write and speak fluently and expressively.	1. Write and speak fluently and effectively.
3. Analyze and interpret data in a scientific or social context.	2. Analyze and interpret data in a scientific or social context.
6. Access, assess, and use information responsibly.	3. Access, assess, and use information responsibly.
2. Identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in one's own and others' writing.	4. Identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments and positions.
5. Analyze situations based on moral and ethical principles.	5. Apply ethical frameworks in various social and civic contexts.
4. Demonstrate a comprehension of one's individual identity in relationship to other cultures and lifestyles.	6. Explain how social diversity and social identity impact life experiences and social relations.
7. Collaborate with others in diverse group settings.	7. Work effectively with others to achieve mutual goals.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of basic goals, facts, and approaches of a range of disciplines, including physical sciences, mathematics, social sciences, history, and the arts and humanities.	8. Demonstrate knowledge of basic goals, facts, and approaches of a range of disciplines, including sciences, mathematics, social sciences, and the arts and humanities.
BA Management PLOs	
1. Accurately and effectively communicate business concepts in written and oral presentations.	1. Construct and present effective oral and written forms of business communication.
2. Utilize quantitative and qualitative research findings to support management decisions.	2. Compute and analyze financial and other quantitative data to support business decisions.
3. Demonstrate ability to utilize multiple sources of information in addressing business challenges.	3. Select and use appropriate sources of business information.

4. Utilize critical and analytical skills to synthesize information and create innovative solutions.	4. Evaluate ideas and data to rationally produce and implement solutions for business issues.
5. Describe ethical obligations of profit and non-profit businesses.	5. Analyze the ethical and legal obligations and responsibilities of business.
6. Explain how diversity of opinion and perspective impact team processes and outcomes.	6. Promote diverse perspectives to optimize performance in a global business environment.
6. Explain how diversity of opinion and perspective impact team processes and outcomes.	7. Work effectively in teams on business projects.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of theory and practices of different organizational structures and how they support organizational goals and responsibilities.	8. Solve discipline-specific problems demonstrating mastery of foundational business knowledge.

BS Health Science PLOs

1. Employ effective written and oral communication appropriate for its intended audience.	1. Employ the language of healthcare effectively in written and oral forms.
2. Identify data sources and interpret information in relation to healthcare practices necessary for decision-making.	2. Interpret healthcare data delivered in verbal, numeric, or graphical form.
4. Identify information needs, locate and access relevant information and critically evaluate a diverse array of sources.	3. Identify and evaluate a diverse array of health-related information sources.
3. Develop and justify solutions through critical evaluation and analysis.	4. Evaluate ideas and evidence rationally to produce and implement solutions for health-related issues.
5. Evaluate ethical issues and propose effective approaches to their resolution.	5. Evaluate ethical issues in healthcare in order to propose effective resolutions.
6. Work effectively and appropriately interact in a variety of cultural contexts.	6. Demonstrate consideration and sensitivity to cultural contexts of patients, their families, and healthcare staff and providers.
7. Participate in multidisciplinary teams on reporting health data and executing analytical solutions driving organization's strategic vision.	7. Participate effectively in team problem-solving and decision-making in healthcare.
8. Exhibit appropriate level of subject matter knowledge for the academic discipline.	8. Effectively integrate concepts and practices in health sciences to achieve healthcare outcomes.

RN-BSN PLOs

Review in Progress	Review in Progress
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Teaching Credential Preparation Program

Review in Progress	Review in Progress
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Master of Business Administration PLOs	
1. Accurately and effectively communicate business concepts in written and oral presentations.	1. Communicate effectively as a business professional to meet organizational goals.
2. Demonstrate ability to understand and utilize financial and other quantitative data to support business decisions.	2. Analyze financial and other quantitative data in the decision-making process.
3. Demonstrate ability to access, interpret, and evaluate academic and professional sources of business-related data and information.	3. Evaluate academic and professional sources of business-related data and information.
4. Utilize critical and analytical skills to synthesize information and create innovative solutions to business challenges.	4. Evaluate business situations/issues, taking into consideration all strategic factors, to promote innovation, improve performance, and mitigate risk.
5. Describe the ethical obligations of profit and non-profit businesses and demonstrate understanding of how to resolve ethical dilemmas in specific business situations.	5. Recommend alternative solutions to resolve ethical dilemmas in business.
6. Exhibit awareness of how multiple perspectives and cultural differences influence team dynamics and an understanding of how to leverage these differences in pursuit of optimal team decision-making and performance.	6. Leverage diversity to optimize performance in the global marketplace.
6. Exhibit awareness of how multiple perspectives and cultural differences influence team dynamics and an understanding of how to leverage these differences in pursuit of optimal team decision-making and performance.	7. Influence group dynamics in pursuit of optimal team decision-making and performance.
7. Ability to utilize knowledge of business theory and practice to generate multiple strategies to achieve both short-term and long-term business objectives.	8. Lead organizations using creative and innovative strategies and solutions to achieve business objectives.

Master of Arts in Education PLOs	
1. Write and present scholarly essays on policy, programs and issues relating to education and education leadership.	1. Communicate effectively with education constituents.
2. Apply quantitative and qualitative research to practical problems in education.	2. Interpret quantitative data relating to challenges and barriers in education.
3. Effectively gather, analyze and integrate information to guide practice.	3. Integrate educational research to guide practice and inform policy.
4. Critically analyze the historical, social, economic, and political influences on education institutions and practices.	4. Deconstruct societal influences on education practice and policy.

5. Identify and analyze social, legal, and ethical issues that arise in education practices and institutions.	5. Analyze ethical issues that arise in education practices and institutions.
6. Analyze research and theories exposing inequities in educational access, opportunities and practices; propose solutions to enhance rather than restrict opportunities.	6. Frame professional practice through the lens of diversity and inequity.
7. Collaborate in a community of practice.	7. Collaborate in a community of educational practice.
8. Develop a range of skills and knowledge that facilitates mastery in the area of education and include 21st century knowledge and skills.	8. Connect theory and practice to engage 21st-century learners and professionals.
Master of Science in Nursing PLOs	
Review in Progress	Review in Progress

Appendix B1:

Diversity Rubric

A person who is competent in diversity works effectively across race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

Criteria	0 Not Attempted	1 Attempted but in a simplistic or incomplete way	2 Achieved	3 Achieved in a comprehensive way
Diversity	Demonstrates no understanding of elements important to members of cultures or social groups.	Demonstrates knowledge of cultural and social (race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation) worldview frameworks, including their own (Awareness)	Interprets cultural and social experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview. (Analysis)	Initiates and develops interactions with socially and culturally different others. Suspends judgment in valuing her/ his interactions with socially or culturally different (Application)

Appendix B2:

Collaboration Rubric

A person who is competent in collaboration works collaboratively as members and leaders of diverse teams.

Criteria	0 Not Attempted	1 Attempted but in a simplistic or incomplete way	2 Achieved	3 Achieved in a comprehensive way
Group Dynamic	One person does all the work for the group.	Some members perform all the work for the group.	Group tasks are divided up and worked on by individuals on their own.	Group tasks are collaboratively worked on by all group members.
Individual Contributions to Group Effort	Does not support a constructive team climate; is absent, disruptive, or distracting; AND/OR does not complete assigned tasks.	Supports a constructive team climate through active participation, but primarily does own work independent of group.	Completes all assigned tasks and work is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project.	Supports a constructive team climate by proactively taking any necessary roles and helping other team members to achieve project goals.

Appendix C1:

Diversity Rubric (MSN Only)

A person who is competent in diversity works effectively across race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.

Criteria	0 Not Attempted	1 Attempted but in a simplistic or incomplete way	2 Achieved	3 Achieved in a comprehensive way
<p>Knowledge: Diversity Knowledge of cultural and social (race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation) worldview frameworks, including their own</p>	<p>Demonstrates no understanding of elements important to members of cultures or social groups.</p>	<p>Demonstrates surface understanding of the major elements important to members of cultures or social groups.</p>	<p>Demonstrates adequate understanding of the major elements important to members of cultures or social groups.</p>	<p>Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of cultures or social groups.</p>
<p>Analysis: Diversity The student's evaluation of cultural and social worldviews</p>	<p>Views the experience of others through own cultural worldview.</p>	<p>Identifies components of other cultural perspectives but responds in all situations with own worldview.</p>	<p>Recognizes intellectual and emotional dimensions of more than one worldview and sometimes uses more than one worldview in interactions.</p>	<p>Interprets cultural and social experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview and demonstrates ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural or social group.</p>
<p>Application: Diversity The student's interaction with people of various cultural and social worldviews</p>	<p>Does not interact with culturally or socially different others and is unaware of own judgment.</p>	<p>Receptive to interacting with culturally or socially different others. Has difficulty suspending any judgment in her/ his interactions with culturally or socially different others, but is aware of own judgment.</p>	<p>Begins to initiate and develop interactions with culturally or socially different others. Begins to suspend judgment in valuing her/ his interactions with culturally or socially different others.</p>	<p>Initiates and develops interactions with socially and culturally different others. Suspends judgment in valuing her/ his interactions with socially or culturally different others.</p>

Appendix C2:

Collaboration Rubric (MSN)

A person who is competent in collaboration works collaboratively as members and leaders of diverse teams.

Criteria	0 Not Attempted	1 Attempted but in a simplistic or incomplete way	2 Achieved	3 Achieved in a comprehensive way
Contributes to Team Meetings	Does not share ideas that advance work of the group.	Offers new suggestions to advance the work of the group.	Offers alternative solutions or courses of action that build on the ideas of others.	Helps the team move forward by articulating the merits of alternative ideas or proposals.
Individual Contributions to Group Work Outside of Team Meetings	Does not complete assigned tasks or does so after the deadline.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project. Proactively helps other team members complete their assigned tasks to a similar level of excellence.
Fosters Constructive Team Climate	Does not support a constructive team climate: is absent, disruptive, or distracting.	Supports a constructive team climate through participation and positive attitude, but primarily works independently of the group.	Supports a constructive team climate by either taking a role as leader or follower in the completion of tasks.	Supports a constructive team climate by proactively taking any and all necessary roles as required for completion of tasks.