

University of Hawai'i System Assessment Coordinators' Group

Principles Statement

Approved on March 17, 2021

The heart of assessment is supporting people involved in student learning and institutional effectiveness at all levels: course, program and institution.

Assessment is a goal-oriented process that allows institutions to measure how effectively they are fulfilling their mission. Assessment of student learning is a campus-wide responsibility with instructors and students being integral to the process. At the University of Hawai'i campuses, administrators, faculty, and staff work together to support the continuous improvement of student learning in all courses, programs, and services. As assessment practitioners and advocates, the members of the UH System Assessment Coordinators' Group are dedicated to supporting student learning success through assessment practices that strengthen teaching and academic services in order to positively impact student learning and the learning environment.

Assessment in this context refers to the holistic process to engage faculty, staff, and administrators in collaborative efforts to investigate student learning achievement and to use assessment to effect course, program and/or institutional improvement and, ultimately, student learning improvement. The assessment process starts before the evaluation and continues after obtaining evaluation results. Learning is a complex process that entails not only what a person or organization knows, but what they can do with what they know. Student learning involves knowledge and skills as well as values and attitudes that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom.

Therefore, assessment practitioners form partnerships with campus communities, including faculty and staff, professional development and instructional design experts, academic advisors, student affairs and student support professionals, institutional researchers, and administrators. Through our work with these colleagues, we support assessment through activities such as the following:

- Providing faculty and staff development through one-on-one consultations, customized training for departments/units, campus workshops, events, and UH-system collaborations;
- Offering technical expertise on assessment methods and processes, such as campus curriculum mapping and system articulation, including a roadmap to graduation and course alignment;
- Developing resources on outcomes, assessment methods, evidence analysis, and usage of findings towards improvement of student learning and unit performance;
- Facilitating intra- and inter-departmental/unit conversations about the improvement of learning outcomes and non-instructional services;

- Coordinating institutional learning assessment projects, which includes analyzing, reporting, and making the assessment process and results transparent, with a focus on quality and equity;
- Setting up, maintaining, and updating an assessment management system(s) to collect course, program, and institution-level assessment data.
- Representing the UH System in national and international conversations in the field of higher education, including through publications, conference presentations, and participation on advisory boards; and,
- Supporting campus-wide planning and reporting, including accreditation reports, program and unit reviews, campus planning, budget decision-making and human-resources evaluations.

Educational values inform what is assessed and how it is assessed. Faculty, staff, administrators and others use the resulting assessment data to guide changes aimed at improvements in teaching and services in support of student learning and student success. Rigorous, student-focused evaluations provide evidence for curricular and programmatic planning as well as budget decision-making, with the ultimate goal of improved student learning, greater student success, and improved institutional effectiveness.

This shared, focused approach makes assessment not an end in and of itself, but a vehicle for educational improvement across each of our institutions and supports the following activities:

1. Providing information and technical expertise to assist academic and other units at all levels in measuring and improving student learning;
2. Facilitating continuous improvement of academic and administrative processes;
3. Developing and disseminating effective practices for enabling continuous improvement in student learning and institutional organizational development;
4. Providing a focal point for the institution's accountability to stakeholders;
5. Accumulating, generating, maintaining, communicating, and disseminating institutional information to support the general awareness of and improvements in student learning; and
6. Ensuring quality and equity practices across the whole campus, with a kuleana (responsibility and privilege) to Native Hawaiians, historically marginalized communities, and Asia-Pacific neighbors.

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