THREE-YEAR UNIVERSITY-WIDE STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT PLAN

2021-2024

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to drive continuous improvement of student learning assessment practice at the program, school, and institutional levels, and thus, to enhance student learning at Loyola University Maryland.

Committee on the Assessment of Student Learning; Approved by the Academic Senate on October 26, 2021

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Three-year University-wide Student Learning Assessment Plan
2021-24

Loyola's Mission

Loyola University Maryland is a Jesuit, Catholic university committed to the educational and spiritual traditions of the Society of Jesus and to the ideals of liberal education and the development of the whole person. Accordingly, the University will inspire students to learn, lead, and serve in a diverse and changing world.

CASL's Charge and Purpose of the Plan

Committee Charge

The Committee on the Assessment of Student Learning (CASL) will review, provide feedback on, and facilitate the assessment of student learning at the program, school, and institutional levels.

Committee Responsibilities

As part of ongoing assessment initiatives at Loyola, CASL will review assessment practices and findings; recommend changes in student learning assessment processes; support initiatives related to the improvement of student learning assessment; and promote opportunities for the dissemination and discussion of assessment findings to inform decision-making at all levels. The committee also will facilitate faculty participation in assessment activities at the institutional level. The Co-Chairs will maintain close communications with the Academic Senate, the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Institutional Research, and other appropriate committees and administrative offices. The Committee reports annually, in writing, to the Senate.

Purpose of the Plan

To fulfill its charge and responsibilities and to foster the culture of assessment at Loyola, CASL recommended, and the Academic Senate approved, the *2021-24 Three-year University-wide Student Learning Assessment Plan* to drive continuous improvement of student learning assessment practice at the program, school, and institutional levels and to meet expectations of the higher education community.

Current Status of Student Learning Assessment at Loyola

Loyola has sustained progress in developing its culture of assessment for more than a decade. The University is now poised to systematically report on student achievement at the program, school, and institutional level. This substantial leap in reporting capability is largely due to the faculty's and deans' offices' adoption of an assessment software system and the University's investment in that system. This represents a shift away from *ad hoc* assessments at the institutional level, which were time-consuming and burdensome. The quality of the institution-level and school-level reports hinges upon the quality of the assessment practice within the academic programs. Evaluation of the quality of program-level assessment occurs annually in Loyola's Associate/Assistant Deans' Reports and captures the growth in quality over time. Specifically, strengths include that faculty:

- employ clear statements of program learning outcomes that align with Loyola's institution-level outcomes, known as the *Undergraduate Learning Aims* and the *Graduate Learning Goals*,
- create and use clear assessment rubrics with relevant criteria and targets for student learning achievement,
- use direct evidence of student work for assessment, and
- use the results of their assessment findings to inform actions for continuous improvement of the curriculum, teaching, academic supports, and student learning.

Through the process of Loyola's 2020-21 Middle States self-study, the University found that it had developed a culture of assessment over the past decade and that the implementation of the *2018-21 Three-year University-wide Assessment Plan* had driven progress in this area. The Middle States evaluation team agreed that Loyola had invested in developing a culture of assessment and that it had created a foundation for implementing and continuing organized and systematic assessment of student learning across the University. Nonetheless, the team provided Loyola with guidance for improving assessment of student learning in a number of ways outlined in the following section.

Outcomes of the 2020-21 Middle States Self-Study and Site Visit

Loyola's Self-Study report led the University to the identification of opportunities for innovation and continuous improvement related to student learning and educational effectiveness assessment:

- Continue implementation of the *2018-2021 Three-year University-wide Assessment Plan*. This recommendation specifically refers to university-wide adoption of the Watermark Planning & Self-Study platform for assessment reporting.
- Develop the next university-wide plan for assessment with attention to an Institution-level Learning Outcome assessment cycle, aligned with the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee's future goals for evaluating student learning in the new core curriculum.
- Continue the conversation of equitable and inclusive assessment practices in CASL by engaging with relevant resources in the field and designing its next assessment plan with these principles in mind.
- Support the office of institutional research as it works to provide the University with timely access to data and a new data visualization platform.
- Encourage the university community to use existing data sources as much as possible to reduce survey fatigue among students. Consider how the standing committee status of the Committee on Institutional Effectiveness might be leveraged for this purpose after completion of the Middle States self-study and site visit.

The Middle States evaluation team conducted a site visit of Loyola, through virtual platforms, in March 2021. At the conclusion of the team's visit, the team chair delivered an oral report on the team's findings. In the report, the team,

- Concurred with the University's opportunities for innovation and continuous improvement (listed above);
- Provided collegial advice and recommendations that indicate the need for improvement in the following areas:
  - Creating clearer documentation of the processes, procedures, timelines, and expectations for assessments of student learning and other program goals;

- o   Identifying and completing a clear timeline of the assessment of institutional learning outcomes, specifically the *Assessable Learning Outcomes* for undergraduate assessments and the Graduate Learning Goals for graduate assessments; and
- o   Creating and following clear protocols for the dissemination of student learning assessment results for the purposes of decision-making in the institutional processes for planning and budgeting.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education decided to reaffirm Loyola's accreditation, after completing a review of Loyola's self-study and the evaluation team's report. The Commission expects further documentation of evidence of Loyola's institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement. Institution-level reports on student learning achievement play an important role in examining a University's effectiveness, so CASL recommends that this plan support the examination of Loyola's educational effectiveness.

Principles and Practices of Student Learning Assessment for the 2021-24 Plan

During the planning exercises undertaken by CASL in spring 2021, the committee, particularly the faculty members of the committee, reviewed and updated the *Principles and Practices of Student Learning Assessment* that had been established originally by its predecessor, the Student Learning Assessment Committee, in 2011-12.

CASL examined current literature and 2020 IUPUI Assessment Institute conference materials to inform its updates to the Principles and Practices. A bibliography of materials is provided. The revised Principles and Practices document is included in Attachment A.

The principles drive the practice of student learning assessment at Loyola; both the principles and the practices are grounded in Loyola's mission, current literature and trends of the field of student learning assessment, and the accreditation standards set by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. In fulfilling the Middle States standards and expectations, Loyola also meets the assessment expectations of the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

2021-24 Plan

For Loyola to be able to answer the question of meeting our mission, "How do we know that we inspire students to learn, lead, and serve in a diverse and changing world?," we look to assessment of student learning for partial answers. Specifically for the purposes of this plan, we look to the assessment of learning that takes place in the academic classroom or as part of academic programs. This means that the strong alignment from institutional learning outcomes (ILOs) to program learning outcomes (PLOs) and down to course-level learning objectives offers the potential for synthesis in the student learning experience toward the University's mission. Thus, all levels of student learning (ILO, PLO, and course-based learning objectives) are to be assessed, as appropriate to the level.

For the purposes of broadening the University's analysis of student learning beyond the academic classroom and beyond the academic program, the University will view this student learning assessment plan as one part of a larger whole. To be effective in providing evidence of student learning for the purposes of institutional decision-making and resource allocations, CASL will include lists for the dissemination of student learning assessment results in this assessment plan.

Finally, a recurring need and emphasis of the University's is the enhancement of equity and inclusion, particularly for the purposes of creating the environment for inclusive academic excellence. The University's Core Values emphasize diversity and academic excellence. The *Ignatian Compass* strategic plan calls for the creation of Ignatian Citizens who will be thoughtful and active in promoting civic and global engagement. The Seven Areas of Focus by which the University has operationalized its implementation of the strategic plan include a focus on Fostering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Loyola's Mission Priority Examen, the self-study conducted to affirm the University's Jesuit, Catholic nature, identified equity and inclusion as one of its three priorities to advance in the near term. Loyola's Middle States self-study report emphasized the need for continued improvement and progress in enhancing equity and inclusion at Loyola. The theme shows a consistent value of and call for the University to improve so that it can fulfill the goal of fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion to promote inclusive academic excellence. At this time, the field of student learning assessment has also turned its attention to equitable and inclusive assessment practices. CASL affirms its commitment to fostering equity and inclusion and to playing a part in promoting inclusive academic excellence through student learning assessment practice. This commitment will be a building block of the *Principles and Practices of Student Learning Assessment* and will be centered in the plan.

2021-24 Plan for Institution-level Assessment
Leveraging PLO Assessment for ILO Findings of Student Achievement
The introduction of the Watermark Planning & Self-Study reporting platform, paired with the strong alignment between program learning outcomes (PLOs) and institution-level learning outcomes (ILOs), will allow for Loyola to produce reports on student achievement of ILOs in the aggregate. The findings should be shared within the Loyola community for discussions of how to improve student learning on a continuous basis. To fully leverage this opportunity to innovate Loyola's assessment practice, the following will be implemented over the course of the next three years:

1. Active academic degree programs will report annually on student learning assessment activities and student learning achievement in the Watermark Planning & Self-Study system, with instances of optional pause for assessment projects such as program reviews, self-studies, or Core course assessments.
2. CASL will collaborate with the UCC and the Academic Senate to pre-determine the targets for student achievement of the *Assessable Learning Outcomes*.
3. CASL will produce and share university-level reports on student learning achievement at the ILO level.
4. CASL will engage relevant bodies of the University with discussion of the reports so that findings can inform continuous improvement and institutional decision-making and so that assessment practice can be improved and refined to ensure reports are meaningful and accurate. The relevant bodies will include but not be limited to:
   a. Executive Committee on Governance and Academic Senate;
   b. Provost, Deans, and Provost's Council;
   c. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee;
   d. Graduate Curriculum Committee;
   e. Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Messina Offices;
   f. Student Government Association and Graduate Student Organization;
   g. Committee on the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning;

    h.   ALANA faculty;
    i.   Stakeholders related to co-curricular programming;
    j.   Committee on Institutional Effectiveness; and
    k.   President's Cabinet

Core Curriculum Assessment

The introduction of a new Core Curriculum offers an ideal time to launch a new systematic, organized, and regular assessment of the Core Curriculum, as expected by Middle States and MHEC. The Core offers a unique opportunity to understand student learning achievement of the Senate-approved *Assessable Learning Outcomes,* included in Attachment B. To engage this opportunity fully to innovate Loyola's assessment practice, the following will be implemented over the course of the next three years:

1. The establishment of a timeline in which all nine *Assessable Learning Outcomes* are assessed at least once by the end of 2024 and at least twice by the end of 2027, so that student achievement can be observed and so that improvements can be tracked for impact over time.

2. The establishment of a plan in which departments that teach in the Core Curriculum agree to engage in assessment activities, according to a timeline established for each *Assessable Learning Outcome*, and in which embedded course assessments result in data and evidence of student learning achievement to be shared with CASL for retained files and for summary reporting of university-wide results. The plan will likely include the following components:

    a.   standardized rubrics that can be adapted to fit the course assignment while remaining effective at conducting assessment for institutional purposes

    b.   student-level reporting to CASL, across sections of Core Curriculum courses, for reporting:

        i.   analyses that aggregate student achievement of the learning outcome across the University, while concealing student identities, and then

        ii.   disaggregated data for findings by student demographic groups. This will allow the University to monitor its academic offerings for equitable and inclusive student achievement, to identify any disparate patterns of student achievement, and to investigate ways in which teaching, learning, programs, or student supports can be improved.

3. CASL will engage relevant bodies of the University with discussion of the reports so that findings can inform continuous improvement and institutional decision-making and so that assessment practice can be improved and refined to ensure reports are meaningful and accurate. The relevant bodies will include but not be limited to:

    a.   Executive Committee on Governance and Academic Senate;
    b.   Provost, Deans, and Provost's Council;
    c.   Undergraduate Curriculum Committee;
    d.   Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Messina Offices;
    e.   Student Government Association;
    f.   Committee on the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning;
    g.   ALANA faculty;
    h.   Stakeholders related to co-curricular programming;
    i.   Committee on Institutional Effectiveness; and
    j.   President's Cabinet

Loyola begins this assessment plan with a strong foundation of regular program assessment reporting processes in place. Associate and Assistant Deans continue to hold responsibility for oversight of student learning assessment within their divisions. All active academic degree programs will continue to be required to report on assessment activities and findings on an annual basis. The new plan can build from past success to refine and enhance existing program assessment practices, particularly with the continued use of the Associate/Assistant Deans' and CASL's rubrics to evaluate program assessment practices, included in Attachment C. To fully and appropriately engage this opportunity to innovate Loyola's assessment practice, the following will be implemented over the course of the next three years:

1. Academic programs, in consultation with associate/assistant deans and their chairs, will identify a timeline of the assessment cycles for each program learning assessment outcome, such that:
    a. All program learning outcomes (PLOs) are assessed at least twice within a six-year period, with special attention to the timeline of disciplinary accreditation or academic program review;
    b. Multiple measures, including at least one form of direct evidence of student work, are identified to be used to assess each PLO;
    c. The standards of student achievement of the PLOs are pre-determined by the faculty teaching in the program, with an expectation that the standards be ambitious but attainable targets;
    d. All active programs with majors in courses that are key to assessment of PLOs collect evidence of student learning each year;
    e. All programs track the "close the loop" actions taken for continuous improvement to determine whether they are effective;
    f. All programs that use other program or student success goals (that are additional to the PLOs) identify those goals and describe the assessment processes for those goals; and
    g. All programs share these timelines with CASL to ensure the committee provides appropriate support through the Watermark Planning & Self-Study system setup and other support, as necessary.
2. All active academic degree programs will complete annual PLO assessment reports in the Watermark Planning & Self-Study platform, beginning in 2021.
3. PLO assessment reports will be shared with faculty teaching in the program, department chairs, the program's associate or assistant dean, the dean, CASL, and, as needed, with accrediting bodies or program reviewers. In addition, programs may want to provide a summary of student learning achievement to their students in the major. As long as student identities are protected in the summaries, CASL encourages inviting students to the conversation of the links among assessment, teaching, and learning. This can both improve the program and engender student ownership of the learning process.

2021-24 Plan for Course-level Assessment
Course-level assessment remains the purview of the academic programs. However, CASL can provide support to programs in aligning PLOs to course-level learning objectives and to key assignments for embedded assessments. To engage this opportunity to innovate Loyola's assessment practice, the following will be implemented over the course of the next three years:

1. CASL will continue to collaborate with the Committee on the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning to share resources and information about student learning assessment practice and learning outcome alignment.
2. CASL will continue to provide consultation/resources about student learning assessment practices, including for course-level assessment.

Conclusion

Loyola has built the foundations of a culture of assessment over the past ten years. There is much to be gained from improving the basics of our institution- and program-level student learning assessment practices because it will unlock the information that is hidden from us, namely how well we are meeting the University's mission. Loyola is held accountable to assess student learning and achievement, to demonstrate that students accomplish educational goals that are consistent with their programs of study, and to demonstrate that the University considers and uses assessment results to improve teaching and learning. It is with this next three-year plan that CASL intends to unlock that hidden information and continuously refine our practice for increasingly meaningful assessment analyses.

Attachment A - Principles and Practices of Student Learning Assessment at Loyola University Maryland

Established 2011; Revised 2021

The following is a set of principles and practices to guide the assessment of student learning at Loyola University Maryland. [1] These principles and practices are guided by best practices of student learning assessment and Loyola's Jesuit values, specifically core values of Academic Excellence and the Constant Challenge to Improve.

The principles articulated here will be long-standing but reviewed periodically as necessary. The principles will underpin assessment activities at Loyola within academic departments and for University-wide initiatives, such as assessing learning outcomes related to the Core Curriculum. The practices listed here are not exhaustive of possible best practices. Instead, these practices are meant to help faculty members apply the principles through assessment activities.

Loyola University Maryland is committed to maintaining an ongoing program of student learning assessment and will provide appropriate resources to facilitate and improve the quality of student learning assessment at the University. The following principles guide our work.

Principles

1. **Assessment is a reflective, systematic, and ongoing process.** The purpose of assessment is to improve student learning. This is accomplished by using student learning assessment results to improve academic support for students, program structure, course content, and pedagogy. Program learning outcomes are assessed on a regular basis, with a cycle that allows faculty members to observe and document the impact of continuous improvement on student learning over time.

2. **Faculty members drive assessment.** Faculty members have the primary responsibility to develop, implement, and revise student learning assessment plans and activities. In addition, successful student learning assessment requires faculty members, administrators, staff, and students to collaborate across functional areas of the University.

3. **Assessment is flexible and uses multiple measures with an emphasis on direct evidence.** To assess student learning, faculty members use a variety of methods appropriate to the unique goals, outcomes, and academic content of their disciplines. In

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[1] Established originally in 2011-12 by the Student Learning Assessment Committee, a standing committee of the Academic Senate. Revised in spring 2021 by the Committee on the Assessment of Student Learning, the reconstituted standing committee of the Academic Senate devoted to student learning assessment across the University. This draft includes expectations from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and best practices shared at the 2020 IUPUI Assessment Institute by Wanda Baker of Council Oak Assessment.

addition, faculty members must incorporate direct evidence of student learning into assessment practices for outcomes that are knowledge or skills based. Multiple measures (i.e., evidence and artifacts of student learning) provide a more holistic, comprehensive understanding of student learning achievement, and thus, provide faculty members more meaningful evidence for decision-making about the improvement of programs.

4. **Assessment plans should be inclusive, equitable, and sustainable.** Faculty members will integrate and implement equity-minded assessment plans considering the usual constraints of faculty time and departmental resources. Student artifacts should be collected with future data disaggregation in mind to ensure that examinations of inclusive academic excellence and conversations about equity

5. **Assessment will drive decision making in planning and improvement processes.** Faculty members, administrators, staff, and students will use assessment results to drive curricular and pedagogical change or to improve academic support. Decision makers will not use student learning assessment to evaluate individual faculty members or to make comparisons across programs, departments, divisions, or schools. Evaluators will follow equity-minded strategies and will not use the assessment results to compare individual students or groups.

Practices

1. Student learning outcomes should be explicit. They should clearly state what students are expected to know, be able to do, and/or value at the end of a program of study.
    a. Number of learning outcomes: Degree and academic programs should have no fewer than three and no more than seven learning outcomes, with exceptions made to meet requirements of disciplinary accreditation.
    b. Alignment of learning outcomes: Program learning outcomes (PLOs) should align with but not duplicate institution learning outcomes (ILOs). This alignment provides a coherence of the academic programs with Loyola's educational mission.
        i. PLOs of undergraduate programs should align with the institution-level *Undergraduate Learning Aims*, with connections made through the assessable learning outcomes.
        ii. Similarly, PLOs at the graduate level should align with the institution-level *Graduate Learning Goals*.
    c. Expectations of Student Achievement: Programs should specify the expected level of proficiency for each of the program learning outcomes so that assessment of student learning may demonstrate whether students accomplish educational goals consistent with their programs of study.
        i. The expected level of proficiency is typically indicated by the verb in the program learning outcome statement.
        ii. The use of the revised Bloom's Taxonomy is one way to develop clear expectations in learning outcomes statements.

      iii.   The University provides Guiding Questions for the development or refinement of program learning outcomes.

  d. <u>Mapping the Outcomes</u>: Degree programs should produce a curricular map to demonstrate educational experiences are relevant to and interrelated with the program learning outcomes and to indicate where and at what level these learning outcomes are embedded within individual courses in the program.

2. <u>A program assessment plan</u> should clearly identify the cycles of program learning outcomes assessments, including collection of evidence of student learning, analysis, and tracking actions for continuous improvement.

  a. <u>Assessment Cycle</u>: All program learning outcomes should be assessed at least twice within a six-year period.
      i.   This cycle should be consistent, sustainable, predictable, and dependable.
      ii. The goal of repeated assessments is to take and then monitor the results of a "close-the-loop" action for continuous improvement of student learning.

  b. <u>Assessment of Mastery</u>: Programs should focus, primarily, on assessing mastery level achievement of the learning outcome (i.e., evaluate student work completed toward the end of the program).
      i.   Faculty members can conduct summative assessments of what program completers know and can do.
      ii. The curricular map serves as a resource to identify the appropriate courses from which to obtain artifacts of student work at the mastery level.

  c. <u>Use of Multiple Measures</u>: Multiple measures of student learning achievement should be used for each program learning outcome.
      i.   If possible, aim to use two forms of direct evidence and one of indirect evidence.
      ii. Faculty members can make this practice sustainable by focusing on the specific part of an exam, assignment, project, etc. that is related to the program learning outcome, and can keep the scope of the assessment narrowly focused on the program learning outcome achievement.
      iii. If possible, faculty members can identify types of measures that will predictably be sources of direct evidence across years, course sections, instructors, etc.

  d. <u>Artifact Collection</u>: Programs should plan to collect artifacts of direct and indirect evidence each year.
      i.   Ensure all faculty (i.e., tenure, tenure-track, and clinical or teaching faculty) teaching the relevant courses are aware of the plan and committed to providing the artifacts.
      ii. If assessments are embedded within courses, collect and store all completed rubrics and/or data related to the assessment.

  e. <u>Establishing Timelines</u>: A timeline should be included in the program assessment plan that clearly identifies each year's artifact collection, learning outcome analysis, and tracking of actions for continuous improvement. The timeline should display a full six-year cycle and then should be refined or repeated for

the next six years.

    i. Departments that teach core curriculum courses should adhere to a cycle of Loyola's university-level assessable learning outcomes assessments, to be determined in collaboration among the UCC, the department, the associate dean for the humanities and the core curriculum, and CASL.

        1. This can either occur concurrently with program outcomes assessments or can be woven into the assessment plan as the singular assessment in a particular year.

        2. Consult with the department chair and the associate dean for the humanities and the core curriculum to determine whether stand-alone or concurrent assessments fit the program the best.

    ii. Programs that conduct academic program review or disciplinary accreditation can pause assessment reporting during the year of self-study/review. This should be documented within the assessment plan timeline. The program should still collect student artifacts during that year.

3. Each program should <u>set clear standards</u>. The success of the program in achieving its learning outcomes should be evaluated relative to clearly defined standards and by using appropriate and specific evidence of student learning.

    a. <u>Standards</u>: Programs should identify agreed upon standards of student achievement for each measure of direct and indirect evidence of student learning.

        i. The standard defines or categorizes what mastery looks like (e.g., "80% of students will be rated as meeting or exceeding mastery of the learning outcome on the established rubric for the program learning outcome.").

        ii. Set the standards in advance of conducting assessments.

        iii. Make the standards ambitious but attainable.

        iv. If the standards are not met once student artifacts are analyzed, take an action to improve student learning and re-measure the program learning outcome with the same standards during the next instance in the assessment cycle.

    b. <u>Direct Evidence of Student Learning</u>: Programs should use direct evidence to assess outcomes related to skills and knowledge.

    c. <u>Rubrics</u>: Programs should use rubrics with agreed-upon criteria to evaluate student work when direct evidence is subjective in nature (e.g., a piece of written work as opposed to a standardized test).

    d. <u>Comparison of Results to Standards</u>: Programs should tabulate, analyze, and aggregate data from direct and indirect assessment to compare results to previously determined standards.

    e. <u>Equity-minded Strategies</u>: When assessing diversity, equity, and inclusion, evaluators should frame results in the context of the standards and use equity-minded strategies, including disaggregation of data by race/ethnicity, gender, and other demographic attributes, if available, and avoid comparisons across individuals and groups. Instead, the disaggregated data should be compared

against the standard for achievement, and actions for continuous improvement should be taken to enhance learning for all students.

    f. <u>Retention of Evidence</u>: Programs should retain evidence (completed rubrics, test scores, student samples, etc.) used in assessing student learning for seven years and provide this evidence for review when requested.

4. Direct evidence for assessing student learning should come from <u>embedded coursework</u>. This approach minimizes the burden of assessment on students and faculty members.

    a. <u>Identification of Courses</u>: The curricular map is a good resource to identify courses from which programs will collect assessment evidence.

    b. <u>Sources of Student Mastery</u>: Evidence gathered near the end of the program of study is particularly helpful in assessing the ability of students to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired over time. Capstone courses and senior portfolios, where offered, are good sources of this type of evidence.

    c. <u>Sampling</u>: If a program gathers student work as evidence of learning that is from a subset and not from all students in that program, the work should consist of an appropriately representative sample of students or course sections. The sample should only include work of program majors. The sampling plan should be determined in advance.

        i. When measuring aggregated data from a sample of student work, programs should compile course-based sources to present evidence about aggregations of students and not particular course sections, students, or instructors.

        ii. When assessing diversity, equity, and inclusion, programs should use disaggregated data by race/ethnicity, gender, and other demographic attributes, if available, to measure outcomes of these efforts.

5. Programs should be <u>assessed regularly</u> and should document their assessment activities annually.

    a. <u>Guidance for a Diversity of Program Sizes</u>: The type of engagement in annual assessment may vary across programs.

        i. Regardless of size of program, each year,[2]

            1. At least one student learning outcome should be assessed;

            2. The extent of student achievement should be analyzed and documented for the learning outcome(s) assessed;

            3. The assessment report must clearly articulate whether the measures and the overall program learning outcome(s) were met, according to the program's established standards of mastery, to determine whether students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their programs of study;

            4. Documented assessments should include analysis of the past use of results to improve educational effectiveness and/or

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[2] There are exceptions to this rule: programs with no active majors in key assessment courses (e.g., no graduating seniors), programs undergoing program review or disciplinary accreditation self-studies, programs in the midst of a substantial MHEC-level curricular overhaul or substantial assessment overhaul may report these activities in lieu of the PLO report, if approved to do so by the program's dean's office.

planned future actions to improve educational effectiveness as a result of the current year's assessment findings; and

     5. Sufficient support should be provided to the faculty members charged with assessment so that assessment of student achievement can be sustained and the results can be communicated to stakeholders.

  ii. Programs with a large number of graduating majors in any given year will likely complete assessment for one or two learning outcomes each year. In such cases,

     1. Programs might use samples of student work to conduct assessment of student learning (see 4.C)

     2. Programs should ensure the cycle of assessment allows an outcome to be re-assessed at least once within a six-year period.

  iii. Programs that graduate few majors each year may collect and evaluate data for one or more outcomes each year, but not complete the tabulation and analysis phases of assessment until they have several years' worth of data from which to make valid summary conclusions about student learning. In such cases,

     1. Programs should collect data and/or artifacts of student learning every year for all program learning outcomes;

     2. Programs should define a cycle that includes analysis of at least one program learning outcome every year; and

     3. Programs should ensure the cycle of assessment allows an outcome to be re-assessed at least once within a six-year period.

b. <u>Reporting Platform</u>: The University has implemented Watermark, a University-wide assessment reporting platform, to facilitate the reporting of program level student learning assessment results. The program's assessment report should be completed in the system to maintain one centralized repository and to allow for precise institution-level insights about student learning.

6. <u>Support</u>: Programs will seek assistance if needed. Programs that need help with designing their assessment plans or analyzing their assessment data should consult CASL in addition to the resources found online at: https://www.loyola.edu/department/academic-affairs/resources/assessment-of-student-learning.

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Attachment B - Loyola University Maryland's Undergraduate Academic Assessable Learning Outcomes

Purpose: The Academic Senate accepted the Three-year University-wide Assessment Plan presented by CASL in spring 2018. As part of the plan, and out of the discussion in the Senate meeting, CASL undertook a process of developing a layer of assessable institution-level learning outcomes, specific to academic classroom learning, that will serve as a bridge from the aspirational, inspirational Undergraduate Educational Aims to our ability to measure student learning achievement demonstrated through direct evidence of student work. The draft outcomes were brought before the Senate in spring 2019 for review and feedback, and they were approved on April 16, 2019, as written below.

Assessable Learning Outcomes

> *The education of men and women of compassion and competence, imbued with the desire to seek in all things the greater glory of God, represents the enduring aspiration of Loyola University Maryland . . . In all of this, [Loyola] will remain ever mindful of the Jesuit precept that the aim of all education ultimately is the ennoblement of the human spirit. – Vision Statement*

The knowledge and skills developed through a Loyola education will inspire students to learn, lead, and serve in a diverse and changing world. As such, students who complete an undergraduate degree at Loyola will be able to:

1. Evaluate intersections of faith and reason in the contemporary world.

2. Demonstrate a synthesis of knowledge and reasoned judgment appropriate to one's chosen discipline(s).

3. Connect and integrate knowledge and methods across disciplines, aided by a breadth of experience in the liberal arts and sciences.

4. Apply ethical theories or perspectives and an analysis of one's core beliefs to ethical or social justice issues.

5. Demonstrate awareness of the global context of citizenship and an informed sensitivity to the multiplicity of perspectives that bear on the human experience, inside or outside the United States.

6. Solve open-ended problems or engage in inquiry, using appropriate methods and tools.

7. Evaluate a claim or hypothesis based on plausibility, logical coherence, and evidence.

8. Advance arguments supported by research and evidence.

9. Express oral and written ideas clearly, grammatically, and logically, with attention to audience and purpose.

Assessable Outcomes as a Bridge – Alignment with Undergraduate Educational Aims

Undergraduate Educational Aim(s)	Assessable Learning Outcome(s)
Faith and Mission	Evaluate intersections of faith and reason in the contemporary world.
Intellectual Excellence	Demonstrate a synthesis of knowledge and reasoned judgment appropriate to one's chosen discipline(s). Connect and integrate knowledge and methods across disciplines, aided by a breadth of experience in the liberal arts and sciences.
Leadership, Promotion of Justice	Apply ethical theories or perspectives and an analysis of one's core beliefs to ethical or social justice issues.
Diversity	Demonstrate awareness of the global context of citizenship and an informed sensitivity to the multiplicity of perspectives that bear on the human experience, inside or outside the United States.
Critical Understanding	Solve open-ended problems or engage in inquiry, using appropriate methods and tools. Evaluate a claim or hypothesis based on plausibility, logical coherence, and evidence. Advance arguments supported by research and evidence.
Eloquentia Perfecta	Express oral and written ideas clearly, grammatically, and logically, with attention to audience and purpose.

Assessable Outcomes as a Bridge – Alignment with Middle States Expectations

Assessable Learning Outcome(s)	Middle States Expectation(s)
Evaluate intersections of faith and reason in the contemporary world.	Study of values, consistent with university mission
Demonstrate a synthesis of knowledge and reasoned judgment appropriate to one's chosen discipline(s).	Synthesis of learning in the major
Connect and integrate knowledge and methods across disciplines, aided by a breadth of experience in the liberal arts and sciences.	Mastery of undergraduate-level learning, inclusive of core curriculum integration
Apply ethical theories or perspectives and an analysis of one's core beliefs to ethical or social justice issues.	Study of ethics, consistent with university mission
Demonstrate awareness of the global context of citizenship and an informed sensitivity to the multiplicity of perspectives that bear on the human experience, inside or outside the United States.	Study of diverse perspectives, expansion of cultural and global awareness, and cultural sensitivity, consistent with university mission
Solve open-ended problems or engage in inquiry, using appropriate methods and tools.	Contributes to demonstration of critical analysis and reasoning, scientific and quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and technological competency
Evaluate a claim or hypothesis based on plausibility, logical coherence, and evidence.	Contributes to demonstration of critical analysis and reasoning, scientific and quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and technological competency
Advance arguments supported by research and evidence.	Contributes to demonstration of critical analysis and reasoning, scientific and quantitative reasoning, and information literacy
Express oral and written ideas clearly, grammatically, and logically, with attention to audience and purpose.	Demonstration of oral and written communication skills

Attachment C - 2021 Rubrics for Assistant/Associate Dean Reports to CASL

The use of these rubrics is intended to complement the 2021 Divisional Report to CASL and CASL Feedback Report. Assoc/Asst Deans can use the rubric on assessment reports to evaluate the annual student learning assessment reports from the programs in concert with Question 1 of the Assoc/Asst Dean's Report to CASL.

The purposes of the reports to CASL are to:

1. further Loyola's assessment efforts in line with higher education standards;

2. leverage the established regular program level assessment practices for evaluation of student learning achievement at the institutional level in a way that attempts to avoid adding a new layer of assessment work in the academic departments/programs; and

3. allow our community to develop more shared language about assessment and assessment practices.

One key element that allows for program level assessments to be leveraged for institutional level assessments is the alignment of Program Learning Outcomes with institutional learning outcomes. In Loyola's case, the institutional learning outcomes are known as Undergraduate Educational Aims at the undergraduate level and as Graduate Learning Goals at the graduate level.

Associate/Assistant Dean Rubric on Program Assessment Reports

	Programs Achieving the Goal	Programs in Need of Improvement
Program learning outcome statements clearly identify what students will learn by completing the degree program.		
Each assessed program learning outcome uses evidence of student learning from student work (a.k.a., direct evidence).		
The program employs a shared understanding for the criteria by which to assess the student work (e.g., a rubric).		
The program identifies the target for student achievement of the program learning outcome and uses it as a benchmark for comparison to actual student achievement levels. (e.g., "75% of students will master the skill"; "85% of students will apply the concept correctly"; etc.)		
Assessment results are analyzed or discussed by the program/ department and used to inform evidence-based action to facilitate the continuous improvement of student learning.		

Attachment D - Definition of Key Terms

Assessment artifact: assignments, test questions, or other student work that can be assessed in aggregate to determine students' attainment of course, program, or institutional learning outcomes

Assessment map: an assessment map represents how in a curriculum learning outcomes are assessed. This includes identification of the assessment methodology (direct or indirect, summative or formative), and the artifact's form: for example, a capstone paper (artifact), used to assess writing as a learning outcome (direct assessment).

Course level assessment: the use of direct or indirect evidence to demonstrate that students are meeting the student learning outcomes for the course

Curriculum map: an identification and illustration of which courses in a program address which of its learning aims.

Direct assessment: collection and analysis of student work (i.e. assessment artifacts) to determine students' attainment of course, program, or institutional learning outcomes

Indirect assessment: the use of surveys or other self-report evidence to determine students' attainment of course, program, or institutional learning outcomes

Institutional learning aims/outcomes (ILOs): what we want graduates of Loyola University Maryland to know, do, or value at the completion of their academic program(s) and co-curricular experiences.

Program: a structured and coherent course of study with clearly defined objectives and intended student learning outcomes, requiring the completion of a specified number of course credits from among a prescribed group of courses, which leads to the award of a certificate or degree.

Program level assessment: the use of direct and indirect evidence to investigate students' attainment of program learning outcomes.

Program learning outcomes (PLOs): what a program expects students to know, do, or value at the completion of an academic or co-curricular program.

Student learning outcomes (SLOs): what we want students to know, do, or value at the completion of an individual course or co-curricular experience; also referred to as course objectives.