

The cover features a dark blue background on the left side, which is bisected by two diagonal lines: a white line running from the top-left to the bottom-right, and a red line running from the bottom-left to the top-right. The right side of the cover is white. The title is centered on the white background.

UNIVERSITY
OF SOUTH ALABAMA
ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

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University of South Alabama Assessment Handbook

The assessment handbook is a comprehensive guide to the assessment process at the University of South Alabama. It provides detailed information and guidance on best practices for measuring and improving student learning outcomes, as well as tools and templates for the components of an assessment report, data collection, and analysis. The handbook is designed to support faculty, staff, and administrators in their efforts to ensure the quality and effectiveness of our academic programs, administrative units, and student support services.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) ensures the University of South Alabama has robust, institution-wide planning, assessment, and budgeting processes that work to support the University's mission. OIE also supports this work in divisions and departments across campus to help them demonstrate how they are advancing their unit's mission and the strategic priorities of South Alabama. Our planning and assessment work includes strategic planning, identifying and reporting on performance indicators, and requiring the use of data to support institutional improvement and decision-making.

Other responsibilities housed in the office include:

- Compliance with state authorizations for distance education including NC-SARA intended learning outcomes Assessment
- General Education Assessment
- Development of the Academic Calendar
- Revision and publication of the Faculty Handbook
- Implementation of periodic administrator evaluation for Deans
- Administration of Student Evaluations of Teaching

Other reporting units include:

- Office of Academic Enhancement

Introduction

The University of South Alabama is committed to demonstrating the effectiveness and value of the programs and services that contribute to the university's ability to achieve its goals and fulfill its mission. Assessment works best as an ongoing process. We aim to cultivate a strong and comprehensive institutional culture of continuous improvement.

Guiding Principles

Assessment is non-punitive.

- Assessment is a process to identify solid practices and practices that should be changed or improved.
- Effective assessment depends on reliable results and honest reflection, which should be used punitively.

Assessment is comprehensive.

- Meaningful results are derived using multiple valid methods: direct and indirect, qualitative and quantitative, and formative and summative.

Assessment is well documented.

- All departments, programs, and services must systematically collect and document evidence showing how well they achieve their mission and goals.

Purpose of Assessment

The University of South Alabama (USA) conducts assessments to improve student learning, program quality, and effectiveness of services, and to create a culture of data-informed inquiry through an iterative process of planning, evidence collection, reporting, analysis, and action. Assessment serves several important functions, including:

- **Improving student learning:** Assessment provides feedback to students on their progress, identifies areas where they need improvement, and helps them to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

- **Measuring student learning:** Assessment helps to determine what students know and can do, and identifies areas where they may need additional support or resources.
- **Informing program improvement:** Assessment data can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs and to make informed decisions about curriculum development, resource allocation, and program improvement.
- **Providing evidence of program outcomes:** Assessment provides evidence of student learning and achievement, which can be used for accreditation, funding, and other purposes.

Who Benefits from Assessment

Faculty: An outcomes-oriented approach to instruction provides faculty with valid and meaningful evidence of student learning, which can inform and facilitate conversations at the institution level, department level, or course level about curricular planning, staffing, and space.

Students: An outcomes-oriented approach to instruction encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning by focusing on course and program goals. Students who understand what is expected of them are better equipped to assess their own mastery, seek assistance as needed, and make progress toward successful and timely degree completion.

Administrators: Assessment helps administrators to evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs and make data-driven decisions about resource allocation and program improvement. It also provides evidence of program outcomes for accreditation and funding purposes.

At USA, the institutional assessment process is overseen by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). In addition, representatives from each college and school serve on the University Assessment Advisory Committee (UAAC) and act as assessment liaisons for communicating assessment expectations, deadlines, and updates.

University Assessment Advisory Committee

The University of South Alabama is committed to demonstrating the effectiveness and value of the programs and services that contribute to the university's ability to achieve its goals and fulfill its mission.

Representatives from each college, school, and various academic and support service units serve on the University Assessment Advisory Committee (UAAC) and act as assessment liaisons for communicating assessment expectations, deadlines, and updates.

Charge of the Committee

1. To be a knowledgeable point of contact for their division/unit regarding information about institutional effectiveness.
2. To review assessment data and provide guidance regarding the extent to which the University is progressing towards its goals and the continued appropriateness of the University's Strategic Plan goals and objectives.
3. To review data and provide guidance regarding the extent to which the University's assessment practice is effective and meaningful.
4. To assist in identifying and recognizing exemplary assessment practices across the University.

Planning and Self-Study

OIE now utilizes Watermark's Planning and Self-Study (P&SS) to document assessment reports, program reviews, and plans. This platform has replaced the previous software, Nuventive Improve. Watermark's Planning and Self-Study (P&SS) is a tool designed to assist institutions in the process of self-assessment and planning.

Note: Nuventive will remain operational should the University's assessment leads and contributors need to retrieve historical assessment reports. However, direct assistance from Nuventive Improvement's team support will not be available.

The P&SS platform offers a range of features and capabilities, including:

- Customizable templates for self-study reports: The platform provides customizable templates and forms for institutions to use in creating their self-study reports, ensuring that they meet the requirements of accrediting bodies and other stakeholders.
- Integrated data collection and analysis: The P&SS platform enables institutions to collect and analyze data from a range of sources, including student surveys, course evaluations, and institutional assessments. P&SS allows integration from other platforms, such as LMS and other Watermark products.
- Collaboration and communication tools: The platform contains tools for collaboration and communication among stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and external reviewers.
- Reporting and analytics: The P&SS platform includes reporting and analytics tools that enable institutions to generate reports and visualizations of their data, and to use that data to inform decision-making and assessment.

Units

Administrative Units

The administrative unit assessment process focuses on the University of South Alabama's activities related to regular planning, goal setting, and evaluation of the extent to which it is accomplishing its mission.

As its mission, USA strives to make a difference in the lives of those it serves through promoting discovery, health, and learning. To achieve that mission, administrative units are responsible for identifying desired outcomes related to the University's Strategic Plan and analyzing the efficacy of steps taken to achieve those goals.

The assessment schedule will differ depending on the reporting period for the administrative unit. The administrative units will report either on a Fiscal Year (FY) or the Academic Year (AY), according to classification (see calendar). The Fiscal Year at the University of South Alabama operates from October 1st to September 30th. The Academic Year at the University of South Alabama comprises three teaching periods: Fall Term, Spring Term, and Summer Term.

Administrative Units reporting on an Academic Year	Administrative Units reporting on a Fiscal Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business Office/Accounting/Budget ● Diversity and Community Engagement ● Facilities ● Governmental Relations ● Graduate School ● Institutional Effectiveness ● Institutional Research ● Legal Affairs ● Research and Economic Development ● Research Innovation ● Whiddon College of Medicine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alumni and Development ● Audit ● Continuing Education & Conference Services ● Human Resources ● Safety & Environmental Compliance

Student Support Services

A student support service unit is a department within an educational institution that provides a range of services and resources to support students in their academic, personal, and professional development. Student support services are designed to help students succeed and thrive in college. Student support services are typically staffed by professionals with expertise in their respective areas, such as academic advisors, career counselors, and mental health professionals. The Student Support Service units will report on an Academic Year (AY) (see calendar).

Academic Units

An academic program refers to a formal course of study offered by an educational institution, such as a college or university, that leads to a degree, diploma, or certificate. Academic programs are offered through 10 divisions: Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions; College of Arts and Sciences; Mitchell College of Business; School of Computing; College of Education and Professional Studies; College of Engineering; College of Medicine; College of Nursing; the Graduate School; and the Auburn University School of Pharmacy at USA. The academic units will report on an Academic Year (AY).

Academic Program Review

Academic program review (APR) is an opportunity for faculty and staff of programs, without discipline-specific accreditation or approval, to have a clear picture of how their students are doing and what might improve their success. APR is conducted every 7 years by non-accredited programs and is a 12-month process. APR is a reflective study that outlines steps that can be taken to bolster a positive impact on students' learning. It is an essential component of maintaining the standards and ensuring that the program is meeting its intended goals and objectives. Academic program review typically involves a comprehensive evaluation of the program, including its curriculum, faculty, intended learning outcomes, and resources. At the end of the study, program leadership will incorporate their knowledge of existing strengths to support those steps.

Additionally, APR:

- Assesses student satisfaction
- Provides a broad view of your program through the eyes of:
 - Students
 - Faculty
 - Staff
 - Administrators
 - Alumni
- Allows for the establishment of long-term and short-term program goals
- Contributes to planning at department and university levels
- Supports completion of annual assessment reports

A complete APR is derived from two components, the self-study, and the external review.

- **Self-study:** The program conducts a comprehensive self-study to evaluate its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
- **External review:** An expert is typically brought in to provide an objective evaluation of the program. This can include individuals from other institutions, professional organizations, or industry experts. The external review can be conducted either in person or remotely.

In each of its academic programs, the University of South Alabama (USA) identifies expected intended learning outcomes, assesses the extent to which those outcomes are achieved, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on the analysis of assessment results.

Components of an Assessment Report

Assessment Cycle

The assessment cycle is a continuous process that involves planning, implementing, and evaluating the effectiveness of an educational program or activity. It is a cyclical process that begins with setting goals and objectives and ends with using the results of the assessment to make informed decisions about program improvement. Assessment reports will be published at the end of each cycle.

The sequence in which assessment is performed (in an ongoing loop):

1. Identify outcomes:

Intended learning outcomes are specific objectives that measure individual student knowledge and skills. For example: "Students will demonstrate effective written communication skills."

Success outcomes assess overall student achievement and development.

Outcomes that articulate other indicators of student success that are not directly tied to mastery of learning outcomes. For instance: "90% of graduating students secure employment in relevant fields within six months of graduation."

2. Determine a benchmark for success
3. Identify methods and measures
4. Collect data
5. Identify & implement improvements
6. Assess the impact of change
7. Document and Discuss the Assessment Activity
8. Repeat

Assessment Planning

It is expected that each academic program and non-academic unit develops and maintains an assessment plan that clearly outlines the following components. The process of assessment planning typically involves multiple steps, including:

- **Defining outcomes:** The first step in assessment planning is to identify the learning outcomes that will be assessed. Learning outcomes should be specific, measurable, and aligned with program goals and objectives. Academic units are required to report 3-5 intended learning outcomes. Non-academic units are required to report 2-3 outcomes/goals.
- **Selecting assessment methods:** Once learning outcomes have been defined, the next step is to select appropriate assessment methods. Assessment methods can include exams, quizzes, essays, projects, presentations, or other forms of assessment.
- **Developing assessment tools:** After selecting assessment methods, the next step is to develop assessment tools that will be used to evaluate student learning. Assessment tools may include rubrics, scoring guides, or other evaluation criteria.
- **Collecting data:** Once assessment tools have been developed, the next step is to collect data on student learning. This may involve administering exams, reviewing student work, or collecting other forms of data.
- **Creating a schedule** for assessment is an important step in ensuring that assessments are conducted regularly and consistently. A well-planned assessment schedule helps to ensure that assessments are aligned with program goals and objectives, that data is collected at regular intervals, and that feedback is provided in a timely manner from the Assessment Team.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes refer to the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and values that students are expected to acquire or develop through a particular course, program, or educational experience. It has become standard practice to use Bloom's Taxonomy to write intended learning outcomes. Bloom's Taxonomy is a framework for classifying different types of learning objectives and cognitive skills that are typically required for successful learning outcomes. The framework is an effective instrument for creating intended learning outcomes because it clarifies the various stages of the learning process (Shabatura, 2022).

Bloom's Taxonomy

Use the following questions to guide the development of the program's intended learning outcomes:

- What particular student behaviors, knowledge, skills, or abilities would indicate the achievement of each of your program's goals?
- What specific behaviors or evidence are necessary to observe in order to determine if your students are successfully reaching the significant goals you have set for them?
- Based on your experience, what indicators or evidence have you used to assess that your students have met these goals? How do you recognize that they are "understanding" the subject matter?

Use Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Skills with Action Verb List to create intended learning outcomes for each goal.

The taxonomy is divided into six categories, arranged in order of increasing complexity:

- **Remembering:** This involves the ability to recall information that has been previously learned. Assessment strategies for this category may include multiple-choice questions, matching exercises, and fill-in-the-blank tasks.
- **Understanding:** This involves the ability to comprehend and interpret information. Assessment strategies for this category may include short-answer questions, summarizing tasks, and identifying key concepts.
- **Applying:** This involves the ability to use knowledge and skills in a new or unfamiliar context. Assessment strategies for this category may include case studies, problem-solving exercises, and simulations.
- **Analyzing:** This involves the ability to break down complex information into smaller components and identify relationships between them. Assessment strategies for this category may include data analysis tasks, compare and contrast exercises, and categorization tasks.
- **Evaluating:** This involves the ability to make judgments and assess the value of information. Assessment strategies for this category may include peer review exercises, critical reflection tasks, and argument analysis.

- **Creating:** This involves the ability to generate new ideas and create original work. Assessment strategies for this category may include creative writing tasks, project-based assessments, and multimedia presentations.

Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Recognizing	Interpreting	Executing	Differentiation	Checking	Generating
Recalling	Exemplifying	Implementing	Organizing	Critiquing	Planning
Memorize	Classifying	Solving	Attributing	Judging	Constructing
Reproducing	Summarizing	Using	Comparing	Weighing	Formulating
Repeating	Inferring	Demonstrating	Contrasting	Defending	Investigating
Stating	Translating	Operating	Operating	Arguing	Designing

Data Source/Method of Measurement

Direct measures involve collecting data from the demonstration of knowledge, capabilities, skills, and ways of thinking related to the learning objectives by students. Indirect measures approach assessment differently, this technique involves collecting data without the demonstration component. Below is a list of possible examples of direct measures and indirect measures.

Direct Measures

- Essays/Papers
- Analyses of senior theses
- Projects
- Standardized Exams
- Presentations
- Lab Assignments
- Performance Evaluations
- Case Study Analysis

Indirect Measures

- Exit Interviews
- Survey of recent graduates
- Focus Groups
- Course Evaluations
- Presentations
- Student participation in faculty research, publications, and conference presentations
- Case Study Analysis

Data Collection

- Reflect on how the program can gather assessment data regularly and consistently.
- Determine the most appropriate time to measure and collect data.

It is advisable to be strategic and realistic in selecting the timing for data collection. Establish an assessment cycle that aligns with both external (accreditation) and internal (academic program review) commitments to improve and support program quality.

Use of Results for Improvement

The assessment planning stage commonly known as “closing the loop” involves the crucial task of using data to evaluate and improve current practices within a program. This can be challenging, but utilizing assessment results is essential for supporting the continuous improvement of program quality.

Curriculum Mapping

Link goals/objectives to the curriculum: Curriculum mapping is the process of documenting and analyzing the structure and content of a curriculum to ensure that it is aligned with program goals and objectives and meets the needs of students. Curriculum mapping typically involves creating visual representations of the curriculum that show the relationships between various components, such as courses and learning outcomes.

Expectations for Assessment

- **Alignment:** Program-level assessments should align with the program's stated learning outcomes and objectives, ensuring that students are acquiring the knowledge, skills, and competencies expected of them. Non-academic units and department assessments should align with its goals, ensuring that the unit and department are meeting its mission and contributing to the overall success of USA.
- **Validity and reliability:** All assessments should be valid, measuring what they are intended to measure, and reliable, providing consistent results over time.
- **Data-driven decision-making:** Assessment data should be used to make informed decisions about improvements, including curriculum development, instructional strategies, and student support services.
- **Collaboration:** Faculty, staff, and other stakeholders should aim to collaborate, ensuring that all perspectives are considered and that the assessment process is transparent and inclusive.
- **Continuous improvement:** Programs/units should regularly review and improve their assessment practices.

Assessment Schedule

The assessment schedule serves as a guide for program coordinators and administrators to ensure that they are meeting the milestones. Check the OIE Schedule page for significant dates. Assessment reports will be publicly published to ensure transparency and accountability.

Assessment Language Glossary

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW	Academic Program Review (APR) is a self-study conducted by non-accredited programs every seven years as a means to improve student learning and student success outcomes. APR is a transparent, collaborative, and comprehensive process providing faculty and administration with the information needed to support and guide a university process of continual program planning, quality improvement, and resource allocation. Conducted on an established cycle, this review includes a comprehensive analysis of the structure, processes, and outcomes of the program with results typically reported to senior university leadership
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	Academic programs refer to a structured series of courses and educational activities that are designed to impart knowledge, skills, and competencies in a particular field or discipline.
ACADEMIC STUDENT SERVICES	Academic support services are resources and programs that are designed to assist students in achieving their academic goals and succeeding in their educational pursuits. Examples of academic support services may include tutoring programs, study skills workshops, academic advising and counseling, career services, writing centers, library resources, technology support, and disability services.
ASSESSMENT	<p>Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development. (Palomba & Banta, 1999).</p> <p>A systematic, ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning.</p>

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
ASSESSMENT PLAN	<p>An assessment plan outlines the student learning outcomes and program objectives, the direct and indirect assessment methods used to demonstrate the attainment of each outcome/objective, a brief explanation of the assessment methods, an indication of which outcomes are addressed by each method, the intervals at which evidence is collected and reviewed, and the individual(s) responsible for the collection/review of evidence.</p> <p>An assessment plan outlines the specific courses and educational practices in your program that address your learning outcomes. It can help you determine how and where the student learning outcome is being addressed in the curriculum.</p>
ACTION PLANNING	<p>Action planning in assessment refers to the process of developing a plan of action or improvement based on the results of an assessment. If an academic program or administrative unit/student unit does not meet their established criterion, then an action plan is needed to address the weaknesses and to make improvements.</p>
CRITERION	<p>Criteria are established targets of success for each assessment method. These are standards that provide evidence of achievement of the intended outcome. The criterion must be appropriate for the intended outcome, assessment method, and department that it pertains to.</p>
CLOSING THE LOOP	<p>Closing the Loop is the creation and follow-through of the Continuous Improvement (CI) Plan for the particular cycle. It is a term used to describe the process of completing a cycle of action and feedback in order to improve continuous learning. In an educational context, closing the loop typically involves using assessment data to make improvements to a program or course, and then reassessing to determine whether those improvements have been effective.</p>
CO-CURRICULAR	<p>Co-curricular refers to activities and programs that are offered by an educational institution in addition to the regular academic curriculum. These activities are designed to complement and enhance the academic experience of students by providing opportunities for personal growth, skill development, and social interaction. Examples of co-curricular activities may include clubs and organizations, athletic teams, cultural events, volunteer service programs, and student government.</p>

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
COURSE-LEVEL ASSESSMENT	Course-level Assessment refers to methods of assessing student learning within the classroom environment, using course goals, outcomes, and content to gauge the extent of learning that is taking place.
CURRICULUM MAP	<p>A curriculum map is a visual representation of what you do in your program to foster desired knowledge, skills, and values. It shows the alignment between a program's curriculum and the learning outcomes of the program.</p> <p>Curriculum Mapping is an analytical approach that allows faculty to identify important components of program curricula, place them in relation to each other in a visual format, and then capture an overarching curricular structure to support cognitive scaffolding for further analysis. A curriculum map is a visual tool that can be used to introduce new students and faculty to the program, curriculum discussion, and accreditation requirements, and provides an approach to systematically study the curriculum. Curriculum mapping is especially helpful in implementing an assessment plan. (Cuevas, Matweb & Feit, 2009)</p>
DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING	Direct Assessment of Learning occurs when measures of learning are based on student performance or demonstrate the learning itself. Scoring performance on tests, term papers, or the execution of lab skills are examples of direct assessment of learning. Direct assessment of learning can occur within a course (e.g., performance on a series of tests) or could occur across courses or years (comparing writing scores from sophomore to senior year).
DIRECT MEASURES	Direct measures evaluate student work products in light of learning outcomes for the program. Examples of direct measures include exams and rubrics for capstone projects, portfolios, papers, and performances.

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	<p>Formative Assessment aims to understand and improve learning along the progression of students' studies. It involves gathering and interpreting evidence of student learning from at least one point prior to the end of the program.</p> <p>Formative Assessment refers to the gathering of information or data about student learning during a course or program that is used to guide improvements in teaching and learning. Formative assessment activities are usually low-stakes or no-stakes; they do not contribute substantially to the final evaluation or grade of the student or may not even be assessed at the individual student level. For example, posing a question in class and asking for a show of hands to support different response options would be a formative assessment at the class level. Observing how many students responded incorrectly would be used to guide further teaching.</p>
INDIRECT ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING	<p>Indirect Assessment of Learning uses perceptions, reflections, or secondary evidence to make inferences about student learning. For example, surveys of employers, students' self-assessments, and grades are indirect evidence of learning.</p>
INDIRECT MEASURES	<p>Indirect measures evaluate students' perceptions of their learning and the educational environment that supports learning. Examples of indirect measures include surveys, focus groups, and interviews.</p>
INSTITUTION-LEVEL ASSESSMENT	<p>Institution-level assessment is aimed at understanding and improving student learning across the institution.</p>

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOME	<p>Learning outcomes are operational statements describing specific student behaviors that evidence the acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes, or dispositions. Learning outcomes can be usefully thought of as behavioral criteria for determining whether students are achieving the educational objectives of a program, and, ultimately, whether overall program goals are being successfully met. Outcomes are sometimes treated as synonymous with objectives, though objectives are usually more general statements of what students are expected to achieve in an academic program. (Allen, Noel, Rienzi & McMillin, 2002)</p> <p>After articulating a mission statement, a department creates goals and outcomes or locates already existing ones, and connects them to the mission statement, as well as the broader mission and goals of the school and college.</p> <p>Learning outcomes are clear, concise statements that describe how students can demonstrate their mastery of program goals.</p>
MILESTONE	<p>An assessment milestone refers to a specific point or event in an assessment process where a particular goal or objective is achieved. Assessment milestones are important because they provide a clear way to track progress and measure success.</p>
MISSION STATEMENT	<p>A mission statement explains why your organization exists and what it hopes to achieve in the future. It articulates the organization's essential nature, its values, and its work. (Radtke, 1998) It also typically defines the primary objectives and its overall approach to achieving those objectives.</p>
NON-ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS	<p>Non-academic administrative units refer to departments or offices within an educational institution that is responsible for managing and supporting the administrative functions of the institution. These units are often responsible for ensuring the smooth operation of the institution and providing services to students, faculty, and staff. Examples of non-academic administrative units may include human resources, facilities management, finance administration, and budgeting.</p>

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
NON-ACADEMIC STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	Non-academic student support services are resources and programs that are designed to assist students in meeting their non-academic needs and achieving success in their personal and social lives. Examples of non-academic student support services may include counseling services, health and wellness services, career services, financial aid and scholarships, housing services, transportation services, disability services, and student activities and organizations.
PROGRAM-LEVEL ASSESSMENT	A program-level assessment aims to understand and improve student learning within a program. It involves gathering and analyzing data about intended learning outcomes and program goals and using that data to make informed decisions about program improvement.
RELIABILITY	Reliability describes how well a particular assessment method provides consistent results, regardless of who uses the method or when it is used.
RESULTS	Your results should describe how your findings compare to the established criterion for each assessment method. If applicable, your results should also describe any trends over time that you have noticed with the data as well as any relevant subscale data. The date of your results should be in accordance with the date during which you analyzed and drew conclusions about your data.
RUBRIC	<p>A rubric is a guide for evaluating student work along certain dimensions. Within the context of program assessment, the dimensions can be specific skills or aspects of a learning outcome. For each dimension, there are concrete descriptors for different levels of performance.</p> <p>Rubrics are scoring tools that explicitly represent the performance expectations for an assignment or piece of work. A rubric divides the assigned work into component parts and provides clear descriptions of the characteristics of the work associated with each component, at varying levels of mastery. Rubrics can be used for a wide array of assignments: papers, oral presentations, artistic performances, group projects, etc. Rubrics can be used as scoring or grading guides, to provide formative feedback to support and guide ongoing learning efforts, or both.</p>

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	Summative Assessment is the gathering of information at the conclusion of a course, program, or undergraduate career to improve learning or to meet accountability demands. When used for improvement, it impacts the next cohort of students taking the course or program. Examples: examining student final exams in a course to see if certain specific areas of the curriculum were understood less well than others; analyzing senior projects for the ability to integrate across disciplines.
SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTATION	Supplemental documentation refers to additional documentation included in the assessment methods or results sections of your report and provides a clearer picture of your methods and/or findings. Most commonly, documentation will include rubrics, deidentified data, a copy of a survey, visualizations of data, and more.
SUCCESS OUTCOME	Outcomes that articulate other indicators of student success that are not directly tied to mastery of learning outcomes. Examples include increased graduation rates, and successful job placements after graduation.
VALIDITY	Validity describes how well a particular assessment method actually measures the learning outcome it is intended to measure.