

# *Assessing Learning Outcomes in Degree and Certificate Programs*

## Proposed Revised Policy Highlights

Faculty Senate  
October 1, 2019

# Schedule for Vetting and Approval of Revised Policy

Associates Forum – August 9

Assessment Council – September 6

**Faculty Senate – October 1**

Submit draft to the Integrity and Compliance Office (ICO) – October

Submit draft to the Office of University Council – October

Conduct 10-day Public Comment Period – October

UCAAUP & UC – November

President's Cabinet – December

Implementation – Spring 2020

# Purpose of the Revised Policy

- Outline VCU's expectations and standards for learning outcomes assessment in degree and certificate programs.
- Ensure that VCU meets the requirements set forth by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), core requirement *8.2a, Student Achievement: (a) student learning outcomes in education programs*.

# *Question*

What support and resources for faculty and chairs/designees do you suggest I provide for the implementation of the following . . . ?

# Why do we assess student learning outcomes?

1. To better understand our students' learning.
2. To deepen and improve our students' learning.
3. To document and give an account of our students' learning and our assessment work.

# Responsible Agents

- Faculty members—including adjunct—in the context of their academic departments
- Department chairs or designees
- VCU Assessment Council
- Office of the Provost

# Faculty & Chair

- Assessment is a distributed responsibility which is an aspect of a department's commitment to student learning.
- Chairs delegate responsibilities among faculty and coordinate with assessment council representative.
- The role of faculty is embedded in their responsibility for the curriculum, i.e. faculty design and deliver the curriculum; assessment is a practice of querying the curriculum in terms of students' learning.

# Faculty & Chair: Maintain a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan

- Degree programs with concentrations (tracks) will develop and assess learning outcomes specific to the concentration.
- Programs may set a two- or three-year cycle for assessing student learning outcomes. The plan must be documented in the assessment management system.



# Faculty & Chair: Maintain a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan

- A curriculum map indicating which courses give students opportunities to learn, practice, and demonstrate the expected learning outcomes.
- An operational plan that includes roles, responsibilities and a schedule of activities and deliverables for each year's assessment plan.

# Faculty & Chair: Administering Plans

- “Programs” administer a schedule of meetings, tasks and responsibilities for assessing all programs.
- “Programs” develop a process for using outcomes assessment data to promote and inform improving and deepening student learning. The process is documented in Taskstream AMS.

# Faculty & Chair: Use Assessment Findings to Inform Course and Curriculum Proposals

- New courses, course modifications, and changes to curriculum include a curriculum map and a rationale for change that is informed by assessment information.

# Assessment Council

- Council members ensure annual compliance and integrity of learning outcomes assessment reporting.
- Council members collaborate with the Office of the Provost to plan and administer assessment quality reviews and assessment improvement plans.

# Office of the Provost

- Office of the Provost ensures that annually the Assessment Council members receive the status of assessment plan compliance and integrity for their respective unit.
- The Office of the Provost coordinates with the Assessment Council to provide support and guidance for programs to develop useful assessment plans and practices.

# Comments and Suggestions

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