GBC Services and Operations

Procedures for Updating Annual

Assessment Plans and Reports

**Assessment of operations and services is important**. It documents what we do (our missions and major outcomes), how well we do it, and how we know how well we do it. It illustrates to our constituents that we care about the quality of our services and it helps us to document what changes we make to improve those services. Not only is this a best practice, but it provides evidence of systematic and on-going evaluation and improvement as required by the [Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities](http://www.nwccu.org/) for accreditation purposes.

**Assessment definition**: The systematic collection, review and use of information about services and operations for the purpose of making improvements. It requires: 1) establishing clear, measureable outcomes; 2) identifying appropriate measurement techniques; and 3) acting on the results. Assessment measures can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, but require an analysis of the results and a reflection on what improvements, if any, can be implemented.

**Assessment is a process: Define – Plan – Analyze – Report – Act**

**Assessment resources:** As outlined in [GBC’s Institutional Assessment Plan 2015-2020](http://gbcnv.edu/IR/docs/GBC_Institutional_Assessment_Plan_2015_2020.pdf), each operation must assess at least one outcome each year and all outcomes of the operation must be assessed at least once every five years. There are two templates for your use: a Five-year Assessment Plan template and an annual Assessment Report template are both available on the [Assessment Resources](http://gbcnv.edu/IR/assessresources.html) site.

**Current assessment plans and reports** can be found on the [Services and Operations Assessments](http://gbcnv.edu/IR/assessment_services_ops.html) website.

**Five-year Assessment Plans**

**Overview:** At the end of each academic year and before July 1, each operation submits to Institutional Research and Effectiveness an updated assessment plan for the next five years outlining when and how each major outcome will be assessed. The assessment plan for the next academic year is especially important, since you will need to make sure you have everything in place in order to assess your outcome.

1. **Define the major outcomes or activities of your service or operation.** These should arise from your mission and encompass the most important things you do. Identify your stakeholders and state how you will determine the quality of your work or what you want to achieve. Three or more outcomes should be sufficient.

A SMART outcome is:

* + - * 1. Specific – what do you do, who is involved, when or where?
        2. Measurable – how will you know when you’ve done this well?
        3. Achievable – how will you do it?
        4. Relevant – does it relate to your mission, GBC’s mission?
        5. Time-bound – when will you accomplish and/or assess it?

1. **When do you plan to assess this outcome?** Identify the academic years and the assessment start date. Assessing an outcome every couple of years allows you to implement improvements so you can later assess how well the improvements are doing.
2. **Identify how you will measure how well you do those activities.** You will use these measurements to assess the quality of your work. Direct assessment measures include: 1) pre- and post-activity questionnaires to measure gains in skills or knowledge; 2) internal tracking worksheets to measure processing time, number of errors or exceptions, volume, cost, or location; or 3) external data sources such enrollments, course completions, service area populations, audit findings. Indirect assessment measures are satisfaction surveys where your constituents (students, faculty and staff, community members) reflect on how they feel about your services and can include nationally normed surveys such as the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory or a locally-created point-of-contact questionnaire. Qualitative assessment measures focus on the *how* and the *why* of activities and include an analysis through observation and reflection.

**Identify a criterion for success** – how do you know you’ve successfully achieved your outcome? What percentage of students will be satisfied? How long (or short) should it take to process something?

1. **Note what needs to be in place, if anything, in order for this assessment to happen.** This could be developing a point-of-contact survey for students to complete on leaving your office, or an internal tracking worksheet to monitor the time it takes to provide services, for example. Do you need to put a process in place before you can assess it? Do you need to train your staff first?

**Procedures:** There are a couple of ways to update your assessment plan. After reading your most recent assessment plan on the [Services and Operations Assessments site](http://gbcnv.edu/IR/assessment_services_ops.html), determine whether the changes you’d like are minor or major.

1. If you have **minor changes** such as identifying which outcome will be assessed in the fifth year out (from the coming academic year), note those changes on a printed plan.
2. If you have **major changes**, access the Operational Outcomes Five-year Assessment Plan template from the [Assessment Resources](http://gbcnv.edu/IR/assessresources.html) website and use it to reword your outcomes, re-order when they will be assessed and/or change how you will assess them. You can refer to your current plan if some of those outcomes are to be continued on your new plan. Just be clear about what you want to do and when.
3. Send all changes to Brandis Senecal in Institutional Research and Effectiveness. She will enter them into TracDat and will send you a proof. Once you’ve signed off on the plan, Brandis will post it to the website. Keep a copy of it handy – this plan now serves as your assessment guide post.

**Annual Assessment Reports**

**Overview:** At the end of each academic year and before July 1, each operation submits to Institutional Research and Effectiveness a completed assessment report on the outcome(s) that was assessed during the current academic year, the results of those assessments, an analysis of the results, whether or not the criterion for success was met and any recommended changes to be put into place so that those changes can be assessed in the future.

1. **Document the assessment measure(s) you used** -- Was the assessment measure adequate to the task? Was it readily available or difficult to use? Will you be able to replicate it in the future so you’ll have comparable results after implementing any changes?
2. **Document your results and provide an analysis and an interpretation of them** – Were the results expected? Why or why not? Did you meet your criterion for success? Are you using these results to compare to an earlier assessment and any changes you have implemented in the past?
3. **Identify any action taken and/or planned in order to make improvements** – When will you implement them? When will you assess those changes?

**Procedures:** There are a couple of ways to submit your assessment report. Read your most recent assessment plan on the [Services and Operations Assessments site](http://gbcnv.edu/IR/assessment_services_ops.html) and determine whether there are any changes to the outcome(s) and assessment measure(s) you had planned to assess this academic year.

1. If you have no changes, then contact Brandis so she can put you into TracDat and you will receive an email with a link to that outcome in order to report the results, your analysis, and any changes you want to make directly into TracDat.
2. If you do have changes, or if you feel more comfortable reporting in a word document, then download the Operational Outcomes Assessment Report template on the [Assessment Resources](http://gbcnv.edu/IR/assessresources.html) site, complete it for the outcome(s) you’re assessing for the current academic year, and send it to Brandis.
3. Once entered into TracDat, Brandis will send you the assessment report for you to proof. Once it’s finalized, she will put it on the website where all current plans and reports are maintained. You may want to keep a record of this report so you can refer to it in the future, after you’ve made any changes, and when you assess the same outcome again.