

Academic Program Assessment: The ongoing evaluation of student learning within a specific academic degree program.

Administrative Assessment: The ongoing evaluation of operational efficiencies, cost-effectiveness, and service deliveries across administrative units.

Assessment Coordinator: A designated staff or faculty member who manages assessment activities within a unit, serves as a champion of assessment efforts with interface with unit members, and serves as the unit interface with the university Director of Assessment.

Assessment Cycle: A continuous, multi-step process involving the design of outcomes, gathering of data, analyses of metrics, and execution of revisions to optimize learning and services.

Assessment Project: A targeted, time-bound initiative focused on evaluating specific learning variables, new technologies, or experimental course sequences.

Assessment Report: A formal, documented synthesis of an evaluation cycle's outcomes, metrics, findings, and subsequent action items.

Assessment of Student Learning: the ongoing evaluation of student learning (through data collection, analyses of results, and use of results for improvement) which leads to improvement of the quality of educational programs. Per the Higher Learning Commission, assessment at the program level proceeds from clear goals, involves faculty during the process, requires analysis of the assessment results, and necessitates implementation of improvements based on those results.

Core Curriculum Assessment: The ongoing evaluation of student learning within the university's general education program.

Course-specific Student Learning Objective (CSLO): A formal statement specifying the knowledge, skills, and behaviors a student is expected to acquire as a result of successfully completing a specific course,

Curriculum Map: An alignment tool used by faculty to cross-reference Program Learning Goals with specific courses within the degree curriculum to ensure educational gaps are avoided.

Director of Assessment: The person who provides strategic leadership for the development and sustainability of assessment practices across the University. The Director serves as Shepherd University's institutional leader for academic and administrative assessment.

Implementation Fidelity: The degree to which an educational intervention, course design, or curriculum plan is delivered exactly as intended by its designers.

Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO): A general education competency that an entire university expects graduates to master, regardless of their major. At Shepherd, these are known as the Core Curriculum Competencies

Instrument Design and Selection: The process of creating or choosing valid, reliable evaluative tools (such as rubrics, exams, or portfolios) tailored to measure specified outcomes.

Intended Administrative Outcome (IAO): A formal statement specifying the expected quality, efficiency, or operational milestone an administrative or support unit intends to achieve.

Intended Student Outcome (ISO): A formal statement specifying what knowledge, skills, or behaviors a student is expected to acquire as a result of an educational experience.

Leadership Involvement: The purposeful engagement of high-level administrators (deans and vice-presidents) to allocate resources and facilitate continuous improvement efforts.

Program Learning Goal (PLG): A high-level statement specifying the knowledge, skills, and behaviors a student is expected to acquire as a result of successfully completing a degree program.

Unit Head: The person ultimately responsible for approving assessment plans and ensuring their team actively reviews annual outcomes. For Academic Program Assessment at Shepherd, this is the College Dean. For Administrative Assessment at Shepherd, this is the unit Vice-President or equivalent.

Use of Results for Improvement: The final and most critical phase of the Assessment Cycle, where data findings are directly translated into operational adjustments, pedagogical shifts, or curriculum changes. This is referred to as “Closing the Loop”

WEAVE Assessment Management System: A specialized cloud ecosystem used by universities to map objectives, manage accreditation tracking, and store continuous improvement evidence.