

How Assessment Technologies Assist Colleges with Implementing an Institution- Wide Quality Assurance Process

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In this session you will learn...

- What processes are used to collect evidence of student learning across the University of South Carolina (USC)
- How USC standardizes reporting of assessment activities across the University using a home-grown assessment system
- Plans to enhance USC's existing system to provide a more value-added experience for end users



Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Standards

Core Requirement 7: Institutional Effectiveness (IE)

The institution engages in **ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated, research-based** planning and evaluation processes that (a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and (b) incorporate a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission.

Ongoing

- Consecutive
- Cyclical
- Clearly identifiable
- Recent

Comprehensive

- Pervasive/broad-based involvement
- Each unit/program has outcomes/goals that relate to the institution's mission

Integrated

- Not done in isolation
- Interactive among/between units
- Clearly connected to institutional goals
- Budget for institution and units reflects priorities

Research – based

- Data-driven
- Includes real results

Source: Hoefler, Michael Institutional Effectiveness :An Overview” SACSCOC Annual Meeting 2016



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Breaking Down Standard 7 Institutional Effectiveness (IE)

At the institutional level, IE relates to: – Institutional Mission, – Strategic /Long Range Plan

At the Unit level- IE relates to: – Program/Department

- Has outcomes designed to fulfill the mission/purpose of the program/department
- Ensures alignment between unit/program goals/outcomes and the mission/strategic goals of the institution
- Is informed by research
- Is reviewed and modified as appropriate on a systematic basis
- Includes student learning outcomes

Source: Hoefler, Michael. "Institutional Effectiveness: An Overview" SACSCOC Annual Meeting 2017



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SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas:

- **3.3.1.1 educational programs to include student learning outcomes.**
- 3.3.1.2 administrative support services
- 3.3.1.3 academic and student support services
- 3.3.1.4 research within its mission, if appropriate
- 3.3.1.5 community/public service within its mission, if appropriate



Satisfying SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1

- identify expected outcomes (to include student learning outcomes at the program level)
- assess the extent to which students achieve these outcomes
- provide evidence of the use of results to improve based on analysis of results

Source: Hoefler, Michael. "Institutional Effectiveness: An Overview" SACSCOC Annual Meeting 2017



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How USC addresses SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1

The University of South Carolina requires that all degree programs ...

- Draft student learning outcomes for each of its degree programs and establish ways to evaluate students' performance on those outcomes.
- Outline how each program plans to measure students' performance, establish acceptable criteria for each measure and describe the program oversight mechanisms each program has in place. These items constitute an assessment plan.
- Report actual student performance (results) on outcomes and how the program responds and reacts to the assessment results. These activities complete the assessment report.



OIRAAs Role and C.S. 3.3.1.1

The University's Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Analytics (OIRAA) serves in a quality assurance role by executing the following activities:

- Reviews all of the degree program assessment plans and reports in accordance with SACSCOC standards.
- Drafts feedback on assessment plans/reports
- Uses its assessment software application (Assessment Plan Composer) to communicate the following to plan authors:
 - 1) Official comments on plan/report from OIRAA
 - 2) Status of the assessment plan/report e.g. Accepted, Revisions Requested, etc..
- Forwards Learning Outcomes from Accepted plans/reports to the Registrar's office for bulletin update

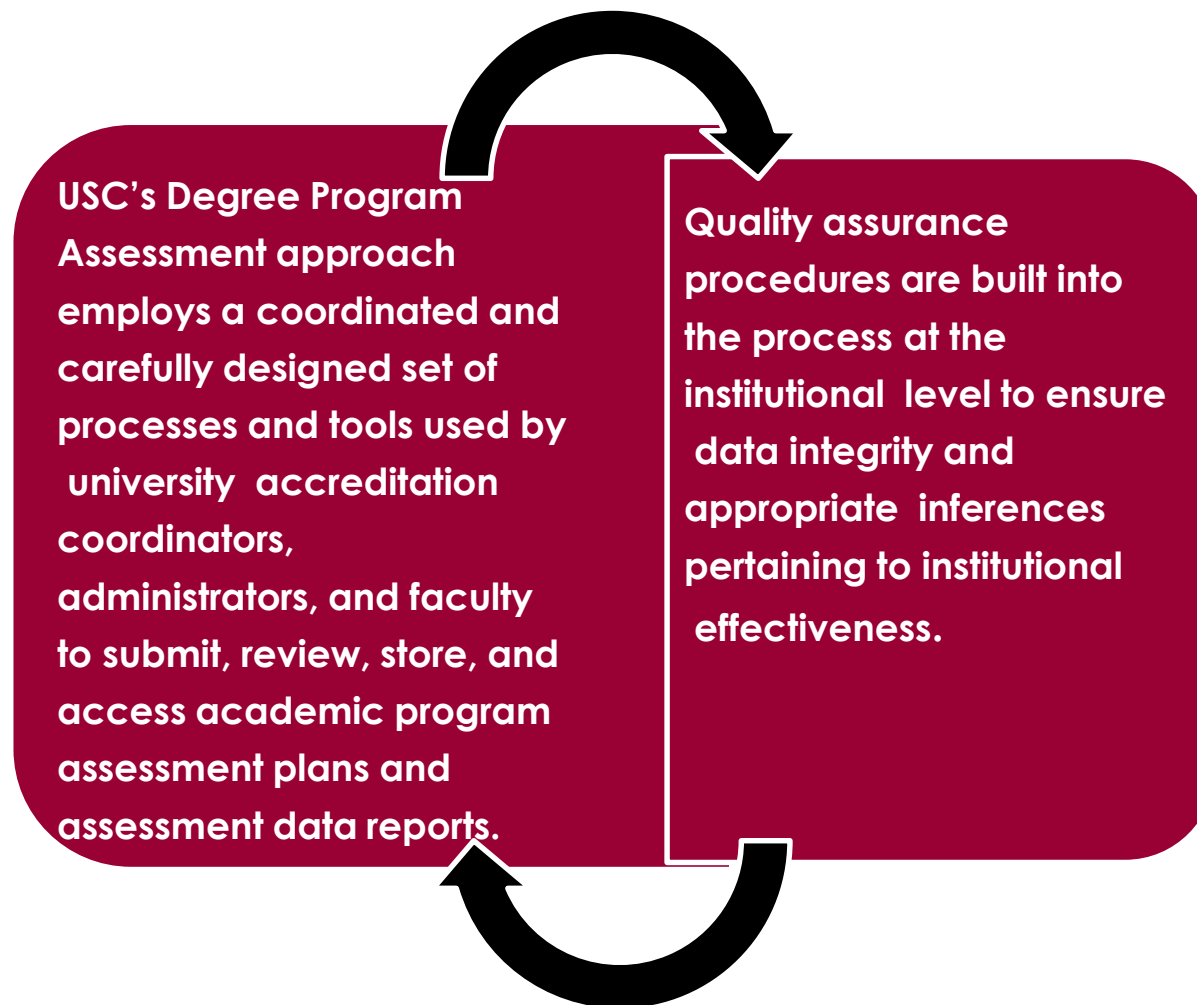


Scope

- Approximately 35,000 students
- 8 campuses
- 300 degree programs
- Documentation includes reporting the assessment activities for 5 campuses and the School of Medicine in Greenville, SC



University of South Carolina's Degree Program Assessment Approach



Source: Brophy and Fields, "Sustaining Excellence in Academic Assessment: Designing and implementing an Institutional Academic Assessment System". SACSCOC Annual Conference, 2016



Assessment Plan Composer (APC)

- Developed in 2007
- Home-grown application
- Site that can be accessed by all colleges to document their assessment processes.

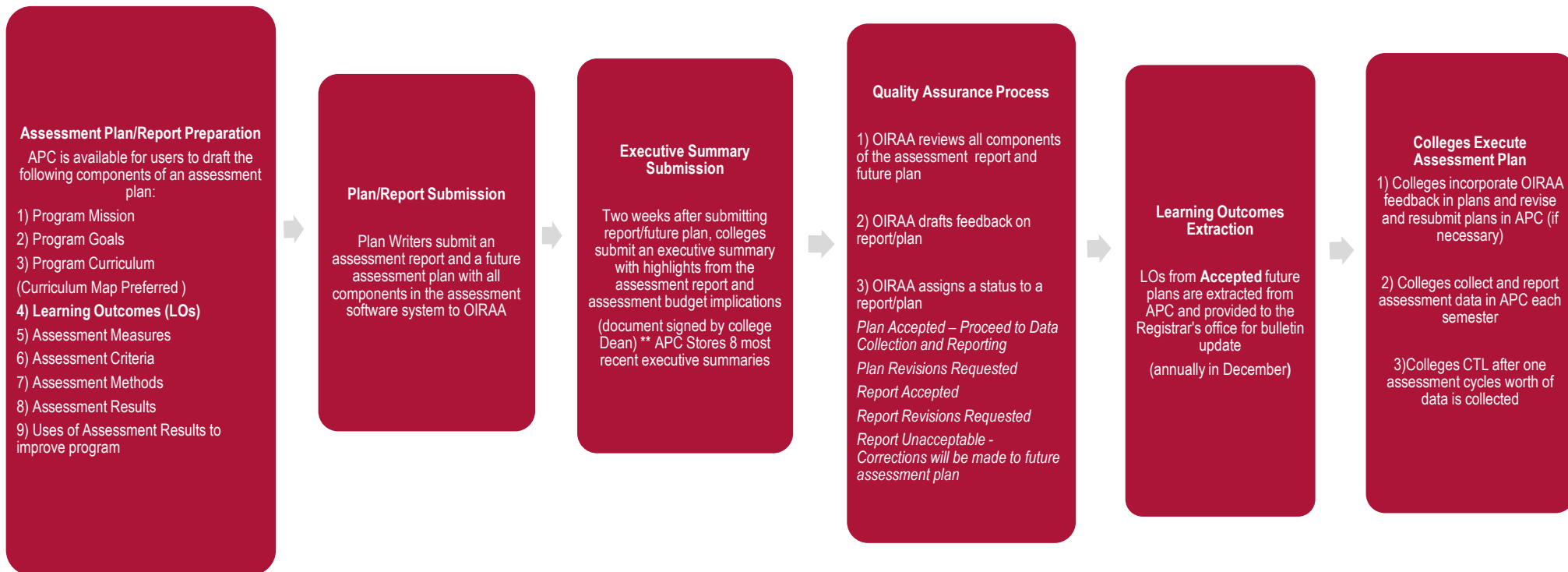


Key Benefits of Assessment Plan Composer

- Uses a static template to report on assessment processes, all reports are similar regardless of degree program.
- Stores all components of plans and serves as a repository for assessment data collected while executing plan
- Tracks revisions made by plan writers for reports/plans requiring revisions, Helps OIRAA administrators manage and track the progress colleges are making with their assessment plans.
- Facilitates security roles for three major parties: External SACS reviewers, Plan Authors, System Administrators



USC Degree Program Assessment Process



Assessment Reporting Timelines

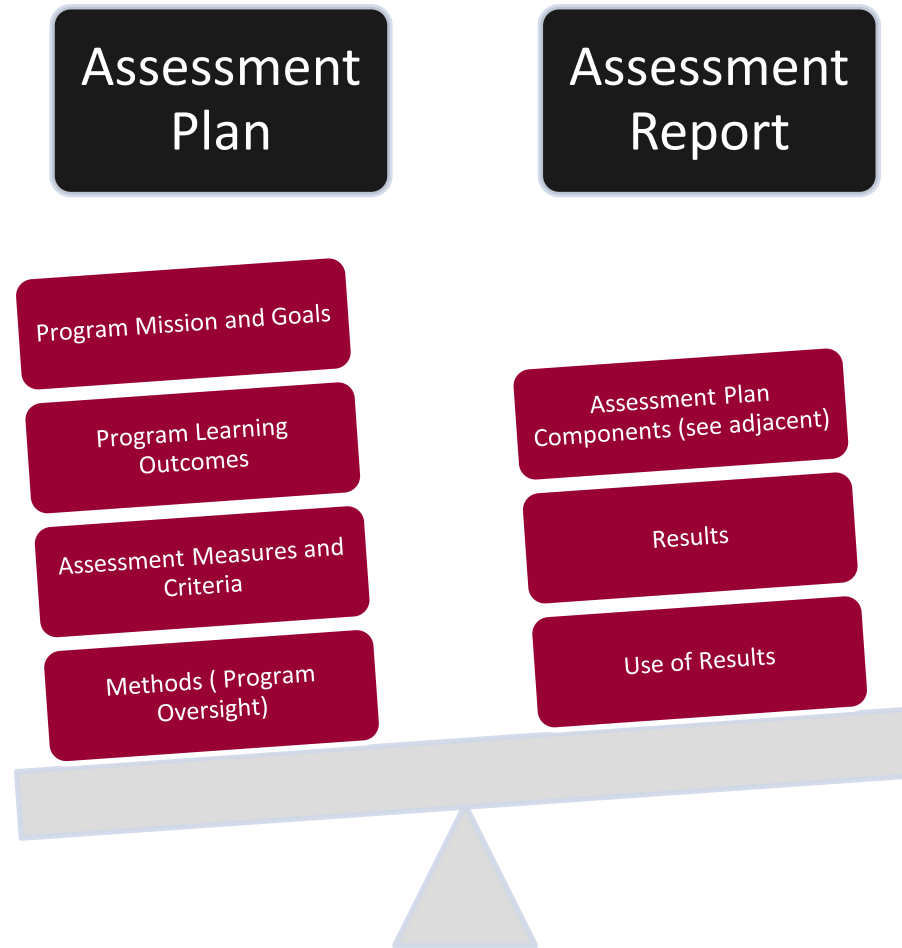
Group	Plans Due	Reports Due
Group 1	Spring 2018	Fall 2019
Group 2	Fall 2018	Spring 2020
Group 3	Spring 2019	Fall 2020 ⁽¹⁾
Group 4	Fall 2019	Spring 2021 ⁽²⁾

(1) Programs in Group 3 will submit an assessment report in the **Fall of 2018** based on assessment plans submitted in June 2017.

(2) Programs in Group 4 will submit an assessment report in the **Spring of 2019** based on assessment plans submitted in June 2017.



Assessment Plan & Report Components



APC Plan Manager- (Plan Author View)



ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPOSER

South Carolina's Flagship University INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPOSER MAIN LOGOUT

- Plan Manager
- Mission Statement
- Update Annual Report
- Copy Annual To Future
- Goals
- Learning Outcomes and Assessments
- View Full Assessment Plan
- Toolbox
- Instructions
- Logout

Plan Manager

Directions: To develop your Assessment Plan, begin with Step 1 and continue through each step following instructions and filling out forms (the check list below may be used to help yourself remember where you left off). When you are completely finished, be sure to submit your plan using the button at the bottom of this page. The submitted plan will be reviewed by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and either accepted or sent back with comments requesting additional information.

Higher Education Business Administration - M.Ed 2016 - 2017

STEP 1 - Mission Statement
> [Mission Statement](#)

STEP 2 - Annual Report
> [Update Annual Report](#) 
> [Copy Annual To Future](#)

STEP 3 - Future Assessment Plan
> [Goals](#) 
> [Learning Outcomes and Assessments](#)

STEP 4 - View Assessment Plan
> [View Full Assessment Plan](#)

STEP 5 - Submit Entire Plan for Approval

All warnings  must be corrected before this plan can be submitted

SUBMIT ASSESSMENT PLAN

USC LINKS: DIRECTORY MAP EVENTS VIP SITE INFORMATION

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Entering Assessment Plan in APC (Plan Author View)

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ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPOSER

South Carolina's Flagship University INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPOSER MAIN LOGOUT

Plan Manager
Mission Statement
Update Annual Report
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Toolbox
Instructions
Logout

Goals [Return to Plan Manager](#)

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> Instructions

There are no Goals entered

[Add Goal](#)

[Return to Plan Manager](#)

Attach
Edit
Delete
Comments

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Academic Assessment Plan Goals - Google Chrome

Secure | https://assessmentplan.usc.edu/GoalEdit.aspx?GID=0

GOAL UPDATES

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Directions: Goal statements are broad, but provide a more detailed discussion of the general aims of the program that support the mission. Goal statements describe intended outcomes for students/graduates of the program in very general terms.

Goal: (1000 char max.)

Paragraph Font Family Font Size

Path: p

Directions: Identify where in the curriculum the students will be exposed to the necessary materials to obtain the knowledge and skills associated with the goal or learning outcome. This should include specific classes as well as any extra-curricular opportunities that would provide students with the opportunity to gain knowledge or skill in the goal area. Consider using a curriculum map to demonstrate where in the program's curriculum learning outcomes are being addressed.

Curriculum:

Paragraph Font Family Font Size

Path: p

Save Close Window



Submitting Assessment Report in APC (Plan Author View)



University of South Carolina

South Carolina's Flagship University

ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPOSER

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND COMPLIANCE | ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPOSER MAIN | LOGOUT


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A Complete Assessment Report and Future Assessment Plan in APC

Mechanical Engineering - Ph.D 2017 - 2018 Assessment Plan

Currently status is: Accepted
Change Plan Status

I. ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEARS 2016 - 2017

Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Mechanical Engineering (DME) is to provide students with a sound mechanical engineering education, advance the understanding and application of mechanical engineering principles, enhance the economic development of the State of South Carolina, and improve the quality of life of our citizens through teaching, research, service, and outreach programs.

Goal 1.

The graduates shall have expertise in a core subject area of mechanical engineering.

Curriculum

A PhD student must complete 18 hours of graded course work beyond the Master's degree. These 18 hours must be at the graduate level, with at least one half of the course work at the 700 level or above. In general, these 18 hours of coursework will be chosen in conjunction with the student's dissertation advisor and will be directed toward gaining a deeper understanding of the area of mechanical engineering connected to the student's research.

In addition, graduate students are required to participate in the departmental seminar series which may be given by internal or external speakers.

Learning Outcome 1.

The graduates shall demonstrate expertise in a core subject area of mechanical engineering.

Measures and Criteria

- All students will obtain a passing grade on their written Admission to Candidacy Examination.
- All passing students will achieve a grade of "good" or better based on the rubric based evaluation of their dissertation proposal.
- All passing students will achieve a grade of "good" or better based on the rubric based evaluation of their dissertation and their oral dissertation defense.

By passing the admission to candidacy exam and dissertation proposal, this will serve as a measure as to if the graduates have demonstrated an expertise in a core subject area in mechanical engineering.

Methods

- The admission to candidacy exam is administered and graded by the PhD candidate's dissertation committee. Results are reported to the graduate director and the Student Services Office which will add the results to the student's file. Students are allowed two opportunities to take the admission to candidacy exam. If they do not pass on the second try, they will be required to either leave the program, or obtain a master's degree before retaking. Admission to candidacy indicates that the students received a good or better on the rubric. The Graduate Director has reviewed the rubric outcomes for the past year and notes that no student received an adequate = satisfactory overall outcome, all exceeded this mark, therefore, the students are meeting the outcome. Passing the Admission to Candidacy exam successfully shows the learning outcome is met. If Passing the Admission to Candidacy exam becomes a problem (say 25% or more fail) then the graduate director and graduate studies committee will assess why this is happening.

By passing the admission to candidacy exam and dissertation proposal, this will serve as a measure as to if the graduates have demonstrated an expertise in a core subject area in mechanical engineering.

Methods

- The admission to candidacy exam is administered and graded by the PhD candidate's dissertation committee. Results are reported to the graduate director and the Student Services Office which will add the results to the student's file. Students are allowed two opportunities to take the admission to candidacy exam. If they do not pass on the second try, they will be required to either leave the program, or obtain a master's degree before retaking. Admission to candidacy indicates that the students received a good or better on the rubric. The Graduate Director has reviewed the rubric outcomes for the past year and notes that no student received an adequate = satisfactory overall outcome, all exceeded this mark, therefore, the students are meeting the outcome. Passing the Admission to Candidacy exam successfully shows the learning outcome is met. If Passing the Admission to Candidacy exam becomes a problem (say 25% or more fail) then the graduate director and graduate studies committee will assess why this is happening.
- The graduate committee has developed a rubric for evaluation of dissertation proposals and dissertations. The rubric will be used by the student's dissertation committee in evaluation of student performance. All students will achieve a minimum grade of adequate based on the evaluations by their thesis committee. The rubric based evaluations will become part of the student's file, held in the Student Services Office. The graduate committee will meet to discuss and use the aggregated results of the rubric based evaluations to assess the need for policy and/or curricular changes. The graduate committee will suggest needed changes to the full faculty based on their analysis of the rubric based assessments. An adequate grade is equivalent to a satisfactory mark on the rubric. During the last year, all students achieved an outcome higher than satisfactory = adequate on the rubric. The lowest score on the rubric is unsatisfactory, and the second lowest is satisfactory which is equivalent to adequate. To pass, students must receive an overall score of satisfactory = adequate.

Results

A total of 98 evaluations occurred for comprehensive exams during the past year. On the Rubric, Ph.D. students taking the comprehensive exam had their overall evaluation ratings as: 52% Excellent, 45% Good and 3% Satisfactory, and 0% Unsatisfactory.

A total of 100 evaluations occurred for dissertation defenses during the past year. On the Rubric, Ph.D. students defending their dissertations taking the comprehensive exam had their overall evaluation ratings as: 54% Excellent, 43% Good and 3% Satisfactory, and 0% Unsatisfactory.

Use of Results

Upon reviewing the outcome of Ph.D. students during the comprehensive exams and dissertation defenses, the department continues to produce high quality students doing high quality research.

II. FUTURE ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR YEARS 2017 - 2018

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APC Main Screen – (System Administrator View)

University of South Carolina

ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPOSER

South Carolina's Flagship University INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT AND COMPLIANCE ASSESSMENT PLAN COMPOSER MAIN LOGOUT

2017-2018 All Plans Go View Logs Edit Help

- User List + - Not Activated - Plan in Progress - Plan Submitted X - Plan Revisions Required - Readonly - Rubric

ADD COLLEGE	MANAGE USERS	COPY PROGRAM STRUCTURE	CS MANAGE	PLAN MANAGE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arnold School Of Public Health			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Of Arts and Sciences			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Of Education			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Of Engineering & Computing			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aerospace Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biomedical Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chemical Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Civil and Environmental Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer Information Systems			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer Science			+	🗑️
BSCS			🗑️	🗑️ ✉️ 🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer Science & Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electrical Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering Management			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Engineering			+	🗑️
BSE			🗑️	🗑️ ✉️ ✖️ 🗑️
ME/MS			🗑️	🗑️ ✉️ ✖️ 🗑️
Ph.D			🗑️	🗑️ ✉️ 🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nuclear Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Software Engineering			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System Design			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Of Hospitality, Retail & Sport Management			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Of Information and Communications			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Of Nursing			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Of Pharmacy			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> College Of Social Work			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Example College			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moore School Of Business			+	🗑️
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Palmetto College			+	🗑️



Sending Feedback in APC – System Administrator View

status.asp?FIAMID=5009&CID=15&DID=525&FID&FIAMID=100&YI=2017

STATUS UPDATE

Please choose one of the status options below:

Accepted

Revisions Requested

Awaiting Review

Under Review

Upload Rubric (pdf, doc or docx)

Choose File PhD Mech. E...edback.pdf

Current File: [Download File](#) [[delete](#)]

Optional text to send to user.

This is an acceptable report.
For the future, 1) clarify
whether Admission to Candidacy
exam is the same as Comp exam.

Save Status

Cancel



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Assessment Plan/Feedback Form

- PDF or Word Document
- Currently 17-24 pages
- Includes criteria for each component of the plan/report
- Allows space for detailed feedback on every aspect of the assessment report
- Sent as an attachment with each status update

Sample Page

Assessment Feedback Form

Program: Mechanical Engineering Degree: PhD

Report Year: 16-17 Future Plan Cycle: 2

ASSESSMENT REPORT FEEDBACK

Rubric Section	Exceeds (E)	Meets (M)	Approaching (A)	Unacceptable (U)	Rating	Comments
Curriculum	- Curriculum map containing course names and course numbers is attached to, or provided in, plan	- Both course names <i>and</i> course numbers provided in plan	- Specific Course numbers <i>or</i> course names provided in plan OR - General course numbers OR course levels are provided in plan	- No curriculum information provided		Curriculum sections references only general course numbers OR course levels are provided in plan
	1. Have expertise in a core subject area of mechanical				A	18 hours of graded course work beyond the Master's degree.
	2.					
	3.					
	4.					

Search the web and Windows



Next Steps for IE at USC

“A commitment to continuous improvement is at the heart of an ongoing planning and evaluation process. It is a continuous, cyclical process that is participative, flexible, relevant, and responsive.”

Source: SACSCOC Resource Manual, 2012



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Continuous Improvement Items

- Upgrade Assessment Plan Composer while exploring alternative Assessment Systems
- Minor modifications made to APC
 - Managing the new assessment reporting timelines
 - Allowing for upload and storage of 8 executive summaries
- Integrated Technology Solution (ITS) Committee formed in the Summer of 2017
 - Collaboration across USC technology, assessment, degree catalog, and bulletin offices
 - Drafting specifications for each functional area to send to prospective vendors



Most Desired Features of New Assessment Software

- Ability to integrate with other University-approved systems
- In-system scoring mechanism that supports feedback from OIRAA without need for PDFs or Word Documents
- Auto update feature that automatically transfers LOs from accepted assessment plans from APC to the Registrar's office for bulletin update
- Workflow capabilities that allow for interactive communication between OIRAA and plan authors (discussion boards)
- Ability to track changes and archive to assessment plans
- Ability to upload supporting documentation
- Report generation capabilities



Questions?



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