

Assessment at Goshen College

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Introduction

GC assessment efforts are overseen by the Director of Assessment, Institutional Research & Effectiveness. The director works closely with members of the President's Council and the Assessment Committee to develop assessment policy and implement campus assessment efforts.

This document outlines the broader framework for assessment at Goshen College, and identifies key participants in campus assessment efforts, articulates roles, and describes relationships between the participants.

Staff

Director of Assessment, Institutional Research & Effectiveness

The director oversees and coordinates all campus assessment efforts, including:

- Chairing the Assessment Committee
- Supervising the Institutional Research office staff
- Guiding the work of the Decision Support Team
- Serving on the Administrative Cabinet, with particular responsibility for guiding all areas in use of data for decision-making and in assessment
- Chairing the HLC Self-Study Process, which will develop the self-study for GC's 2015 accreditation review

Institutional Research Office

The Institutional Research (IR) Office serves the entire campus with regard to data management, reporting, and analysis. The office further coordinates institutional reporting for compliance purposes as well as participation in external surveys. The IR Office includes:

- Assistant Director of Institutional Research and Academic Database Manager

The Assessment Committee

The Assessment Committee is a 6 – 8 member faculty committee charged with oversight of assessment of academic and co-curricular programs. Traditionally, the committee includes a representative from each school as well as a person or persons with responsibility for the GC Core (e.g., the GC Core Director). Specifically, the committee prepares assessment policy recommendations for approval by the Academic Affairs Committee and other campus groups as appropriate. The Assessment Committee may, in many cases, play a direct role in the assessment/evaluation work for academic and co-curricular programs, but it is not solely responsible for conducting assessments/evaluations. The committee may delegate responsibility for assessment/evaluation to academic or student life departments, task forces, or standing committees.

Assessment in Academic & Co-Curricular Programs

Academic Programs

Framework for Assessment

Assessment for all academic programs, including majors & minors in the traditional undergraduate program, adult accelerated and degree-completion programs, online programs, and graduate programs takes place within the context of four building blocks:

1. Statement of mission or purpose – The statement of mission or purpose (found in the GC catalog) articulates the overall intent of the program and provides focus for assessment work.
2. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) – The student learning outcomes identify the particular goals of the program with regard to student learning.
3. Curriculum map – The curriculum map links courses in the program to the student learning outcomes, noting where key outcomes are introduced, reinforced, and evaluated.
4. Assessment plan – The assessment plan documents the assessment method(s) for each learning outcome and the frequency of review. The plan further identifies data sources and performance benchmarks for each student learning outcome. The plan also identifies additional metrics of success and program quality used to monitor effectiveness of the program. Updated annually and submitted to the Dean’s Office as the cornerstone of the annual report, the assessment plan stands as the primary documentation of assessment findings and subsequent actions taken in response to those findings.

Annual Cycle for Assessment

At the conclusion of each academic year, faculty members are expected to review and synthesize data collected as part of the assessment plan in order to complete the reporting components of the assessment plan. In addition, the assessment plan is updated for the coming academic year.

Program Review

In addition to annual data analysis, reporting and updating of the assessment plans, all academic programs are reviewed on a five-year cycle (adapted as-needed to specific program considerations). This comprehensive review is conducted by the assessment committee and incorporates resources provided by the institutional research office.

Review Considerations	Steps of Program Review
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Success in achieving student learning outcomes 2. Program efficiency, as measured by performance indicators such as student-faculty ratio and program cost per student credit hour 3. Enrollment 4. Future potential, as determined by external forces such as market demand 5. Faculty professional activity 6. Alignment with GC mission, vision and core values 7. Other key factors identified by the President’s Council, the Assessment Committee, or the review task force 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-study 2. Internal peer review 3. External peer review (as appropriate) 4. Action plans and follow-up via annual reports
	Possible Outcomes
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Program continues as-is 2. Establish goals for improving quality or efficiency with no new resources 3. Invest to improve the program’s capacity, quality, or efficiencies 4. Restructure the program; merge its activities with another program; or discontinue

In developing the specific program review timeline, the assessment committee considers potential for synergies in schedule particular departments or programs at the same time. These synergies might be due to

similar or overlapping involvement in offering academic programs; or, alternatively, synergies might be due to interdisciplinary activities that create logical connections and support concurrent program review.

See the accompanying document “*Academic Program Review Schedule*” for the timeline of program reviews.

Course-Level Assessment

All GC courses administer the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction as the instrument for course evaluation. This system is built around evaluation of student progress on course outcomes the instructor identifies as essential or important. In addition, the IDEA system provides aggregate student-reported measures of overall course and instructor quality.

In addition to functioning as a regularly administered source of information on student success in achieving course-level learning outcomes, the IDEA system provides a structured environment for reflection on course content and pedagogy. Each year instructors—in collaboration with their department chair—select two courses (usually one in the fall and one in the spring semester or May term) for particular attention. Instructors administer IDEA’s longer, more detailed instrument (the “long form”) in the selected courses and use the results to review the course and identify potential ways to strengthen student achievement of learning objectives.

General Education Assessment

Assessment in the college’s general education program, the GC Core, is outlined in a separate document, “*Assessment in the Gosben Core*.” The general education assessment program centers around student electronic portfolios, regular faculty review of student work using adapted versions of the AAC&U’s VALUE rubrics, and a regular review cycle for core courses.

Co-Curricular Program Assessment

Framework for Assessment

Co-curriculars housed in specific academic departments are incorporated into academic program review. Assessment for all other co-curricular programs takes place within the context of three building blocks:

1. Statement of mission or purpose – The program or department’s statement of mission or purpose articulates the overall intent of the program/department and provides focus for assessment work.
2. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) – The student learning outcomes identify the particular goals of the program with regard to student learning &/or development.
3. Annual Reports – Each program submits to the supervising dean or vice president an annual report which includes a review of available data and evaluates the extent to which each of the program SLOs are being achieved.

Annual Cycle for Assessment

Departments or programs that engage in significant student development or learning incorporate assessment findings into their annual report, noting any plans for programming changes and with updates to the assessment plan for the coming academic year.

Program Review

Co-curricular programs are reviewed on a five-year cycle. Program review consists of a self-study, an internal review by a task force overseen by the assessment committee, and, if requested by the supervising dean or

vice president, an external review comprised of leaders from peer institutions. Findings from internal and external reviews are received by the supervising dean or vice president for use in evaluation and planning.

Survey Research

We regularly invite various segments of the campus community to participate in surveys addressing a wide range of issues. Together with a variety of direct measures, survey data play an important role in assessment efforts as a first-indicator of areas for further research, and as a source for triangulation of findings in review of direct-measure data.

Regularly Administered Surveys

National Surveys

- HERI CIRP Freshmen Survey (TFS)
- HERI College Senior Survey (CSS)
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)
- HERI Faculty Survey
- HEDS Alumni Survey
- HEDS Research Practices Survey (RPS)
- HEDS First Destination Survey
- HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey
- HEDS Diversity & Equity Campus Climate Survey

Locally-developed Surveys

- General education survey
- Graduate alumni survey
- Undergraduate alumni survey

Survey Administration & Reporting

Key surveys providing data for institutional assessment efforts are administered on regular cycles. The goal of these cycles is to balance cost, burden to students, administrative overhead, external benchmarking, and alignment for pre-post comparisons.

Survey reporting is handled primarily through the Institutional Research office, which prepares and disseminates survey findings to campus programs, offices and departments. In particular, the IR office strives to link appropriate survey results to program/department learning & performance objectives in order to facilitate assessment.

See the following appendices for further detail on survey administration:

- Appendix 1: On-Campus Student Survey Cycle
- Appendix 2: Alumni Survey Cycle
- Appendix 3: Record of Miscellaneous Surveys, 2012-2015

Administrative & External Data

Data Resources

The institutional research office maintains a variety of data resources for academic and co-curricular program assessment efforts. These resources are outlined in the table below, and are updated on a regular basis.

Data/Information Provided by Institutional Research Office
Academic Department Profiles
Departmental faculty FTE for past 5-7 years (direct instruction & non-teaching tasks)
Departmental expenses for past 5-7 years
Departmental performance ratios for past 5-7 years (cost/student credit hour, student/faculty ratio)
Enrolled major/minor history for past 5-7 years
Graduating major/minor history for past 5-7 years
Low enrollment courses for past 5-7 years
Rank, tenure & degree summary for dept. faculty
Percentages of courses & student credit hours by rank/tenure & terminal degree status
Delaware benchmark data for program
Additional Academic Data
Course evaluation results
Percentage of credit hours generated by the department in service to other majors
Survey Data
2013 Alumni Survey (HEDS) by major
2010 Alumni survey results -- alumni feedback items
HERI/CIRP Senior Survey – 2004-12 trend and 2012 with HEDS peer comparisons
Nat'l Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) for fields/area of study
Departmental Information
Prior departmental/major reports (from CCRP, 2005 re-accreditation self-study)
Library resources (journal subscriptions and acquisitions)
Syllabus archive
Academic software resources
External Data & Information
Doctoral production for department/major
National and regional demand for program (e.g., interest among high school seniors)
Program competition within 100 miles of Goshen & at Mennonite institutions
National demand by occupation/career
Career data from Nat'l Assoc. of Colleges & Employers (NACE)

Appendix 1: On-Campus Student Surveys, 2014-2023

Term	AY	CIRP TFS	CIRP CSS	NSSE	SSI	GC Gen Ed	HEDS Research	HEDS Sexual Assault	HEDS Diversity & Equity
Spring 2023	22/23			Frosh: F22 Seniors: F19		G23 (F19)			
Fall 2022	22/23	F22							
Spring 2022	21/22		G22 (F18)				Frosh: F21 Seniors: F18	All classes	
Fall 2021	21/22				All classes	F21	F21		
Spring 2021	20/21					G21 (F17)			All classes
Fall 2020	20/21	F20							
Spring 2020	19/20		G20 (F16)	Frosh: F19 Seniors: F16			Seniors: F16	All classes	
Fall 2019	19/20				All classes	F19			
Spring 2019	18/19					G19 (F15)	Frosh: F18		All classes
Fall 2018	18/19	F18					F18		
Spring 2018	17/18		G18 (F14)					All classes	
Fall 2017	17/18				All classes	F17			
Spring 2017	16/17			Frosh: F16 Seniors: F13		G17 (F13)	F16		
Fall 2016	16/17	F16					F16		
Spring 2016	15/16		G16 (F12)						
Fall 2015	15/16				All classes	F15			
Spring 2015	14/15			Frosh: F14 Seniors: F11		G15 (F11)			
Fall 2014	14/15	F14							
Prior Administrations		(Fall) 2012 2010 2008 2006 2004 2002 2000 1998 1996 1992 1986 1985 1973	(Spring) 2014 2012 2010 2008 2006 2004 2002 2000 2000 1999 1998	(Spring) 2013 2012 2009	(Fall) 2009 2007 2005 2004 2003 2002	(Fa+Sp) 2013 2011 2009 2007 2005 2003 2001 1999	(Fa+Sp) 2013		

Incoming cohorts are denoted by “F” and the year of entry (e.g., F10 is the incoming first-year cohort of the Fall of 2010-11). Graduating cohorts are denoted by “G” and the year of May graduation (e.g., G10 is the cohort of May 2010 graduates).

Appendix 2: Alumni Survey Cycle

For assessment, reporting & compliance purposes, it is becoming increasingly important to have high-quality data on where our alumni are and what they are doing (particularly with regard to career information). Thus, we have adopted a structured approach to surveying, which:

1. Gathers data regularly and specific “post-GC” milestones (e.g. 1 & 2 years out, 5 years out, 10 years out).
2. Surveys a subset of alumni (defined by post-GC milestones) each year, on a rolling basis.
3. For undergraduate students, alternates use of a GC-specific forms and the HEDS Alumni Survey (to provide benchmarking data). Also uses the HEDS First Destination Survey to gather key placement data

Survey Pattern

Milestone	Survey administration year (calendar year)					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
HEDS First Destination (administered in December)						
1 year out	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
General Alumni Survey (administered in summer)						
2 years out	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
5 years out	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
10 years out	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
15 year out		2001		2003		2005
20 years out		1996		1998		2000
25 years out		1991		1993		1995
30 years out		1986		1988		1990
35 years out		1981		1983		1985
40 years out		1976		1978		1980
UG Instrument	HEDS	GC	HEDS	GC	HEDS	GC
Data Update (Winter)	All alumni	All alumni	All alumni	All alumni	All alumni	All alumni

Appendix 3: Record of Miscellaneous Surveys, 2012-2015

The Institutional Research Office administers a wide variety of ad hoc surveys for assessment and evaluation purposes. Most of these surveys are one-time administrations designed for a particular audience or purpose.

Timeframe	Audience	Notes
*Annual, September	Employees New students & parents	All-employee retreat evaluation; informs planning for future years New student days evaluation; informs planning for future years
*Annual, January	Faculty, staff & students	MLK Study Day evaluation; informs planning for future years
*Annual, April	Faculty, staff & students	Information Technology Services satisfaction survey; identifies strengths & weaknesses of IT systems & services, and informs planning for future years
*3-year Cycle	Teaching Faculty	HERI Faculty Survey; national instrument that provides benchmark data on a variety of faculty-related topics
2013-14 Fall	Faculty, staff & students	Convocation & chapel program review survey
2013-14 Fall	Faculty & staff	Employee engagement; national survey from HR association providing data on a variety of employee-related topics as well as benchmarking
2012-13 Spring	Students	Retention check-in, polling students for their plans for 2013-14
2012-13 Spring	Students	Taylor University spirituality survey, for use in campus ministries assessment
2012-13 Spring	First-year students	2 nd iCore program evaluation survey
2012-13 Fall	First-year students	iCore program evaluation survey
2012-13 Summer	DAES alumni	Alumni survey for degree completion programs
2011-12 Spring	Faculty & staff	Employee engagement; national survey from HR association providing data on a variety of employee-related topics as well as benchmarking
2011-12 Spring	GC constituents (targeted)	Feasibility study for Master's in Business Administration
2011-12 Fall	Students	Campus health services evaluation of new agreement with Goshen Family Physicians
2011-12 Fall	GC constituents (targeted)	Feasibility study for Master's in Social Work