

Assessment at Goshen College

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Introduction

GC assessment efforts are overseen by the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment. The director works closely with members of the President's Cabinet 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 Institutional Research and Assessment

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

- Chairing the Assessment Committee
- Supervising the Institutional Research office staff
- Coordinating academic and co-curricular program review
- Serving as the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) to the Higher Learning Commission

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 scheduling 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
- SAILS Research Practices Survey (RPS)
- HEDS Sexual Assault Campus Climate Survey
- HEDS Diversity & Equity Campus Climate Survey
- HERI Faculty survey
- Great Colleges to Work For employee survey

Locally-developed Surveys

- First destination survey
- General education 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

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 Surveys, 2020-2028

Term	AY	CIRP TFS/ CSS	GC Gen Ed	NSSE	SSI	SAILS Res Prac	HEDS Sexual Assault	HEDS Diversity & Equity	HERI Faculty	Great Coll to Work For
Spring 2028	27/28	G28 (F24)					All campus			All employees
Fall 2027	27/28		F27		Trad. UG					
Spring 2027	26/27		G27 (F21)					All campus		
Fall 2026	26/27	F26								
Spring 2026	25/26	G26 (F22)		F25 G22		G26 (F22)	All campus			
Fall 2025	25/26		F25		Trad. UG	F25			Teaching fac	
Spring 2025	24/25		G25 (F21)					All campus		All employees
Fall 2024	24/25	F24								
Spring 2024	23/24	G24 (F20)					All campus			
Fall 2023	23/24		F23		Trad. UG					
Spring 2023	22/23		G23 (F19)	F22 G19				All campus		
Fall 2022	22/23	F22				F22			Teaching fac	
Spring 2022	21/22	G22 (F18)				G22 (F18)	All campus			All employees
Fall 2021	21/22		F21		Trad. UG					
Spring 2021	20/21		G21 (F17)					All campus		
Fall 2020	20/21	F20								
Prior Admini- strations		(Fa) 2020 2018 2016 2014 2012 2010 2008 2006 2004 2002 2000 1998 1996 1992 1986 1985 1973	(Fa+Sp) 2019 2017 2015 2013 2011 2009 2007 2005 2003 2001 1999	(Sp) 2020 2017 2015 2013 2012 2009 2007 2005 2004 2003 2002	(Fa) 2019 2017 2015 2013 2011 2009 2007 2005 2004 2003 2002	(Fa+Sp) 2020 2018 2016 2013	(Sp) 2020 2018	(Sp) 2019	(Fa) 2019 2013 2010 2007 2004 2001 1998 1995	(Sp)

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).

Survey Pattern

Milestone	Survey administration year (calendar year)					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
GC First Destination (administered in December)						
1 year out	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
General Alumni Survey (administered in summer)						
2 years out	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
5 years out	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
10 years out	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
15 year out	2005		2007		2009	
20 years out	2000		2002		2004	
25 years out	1995		1997		1999	
30 years out	1990		1992		1994	
35 years out	1985		1987		1989	
40 years out	1980		1982		1984	
UG Instrument	GC	HEDS	GC	HEDS	GC	HEDS