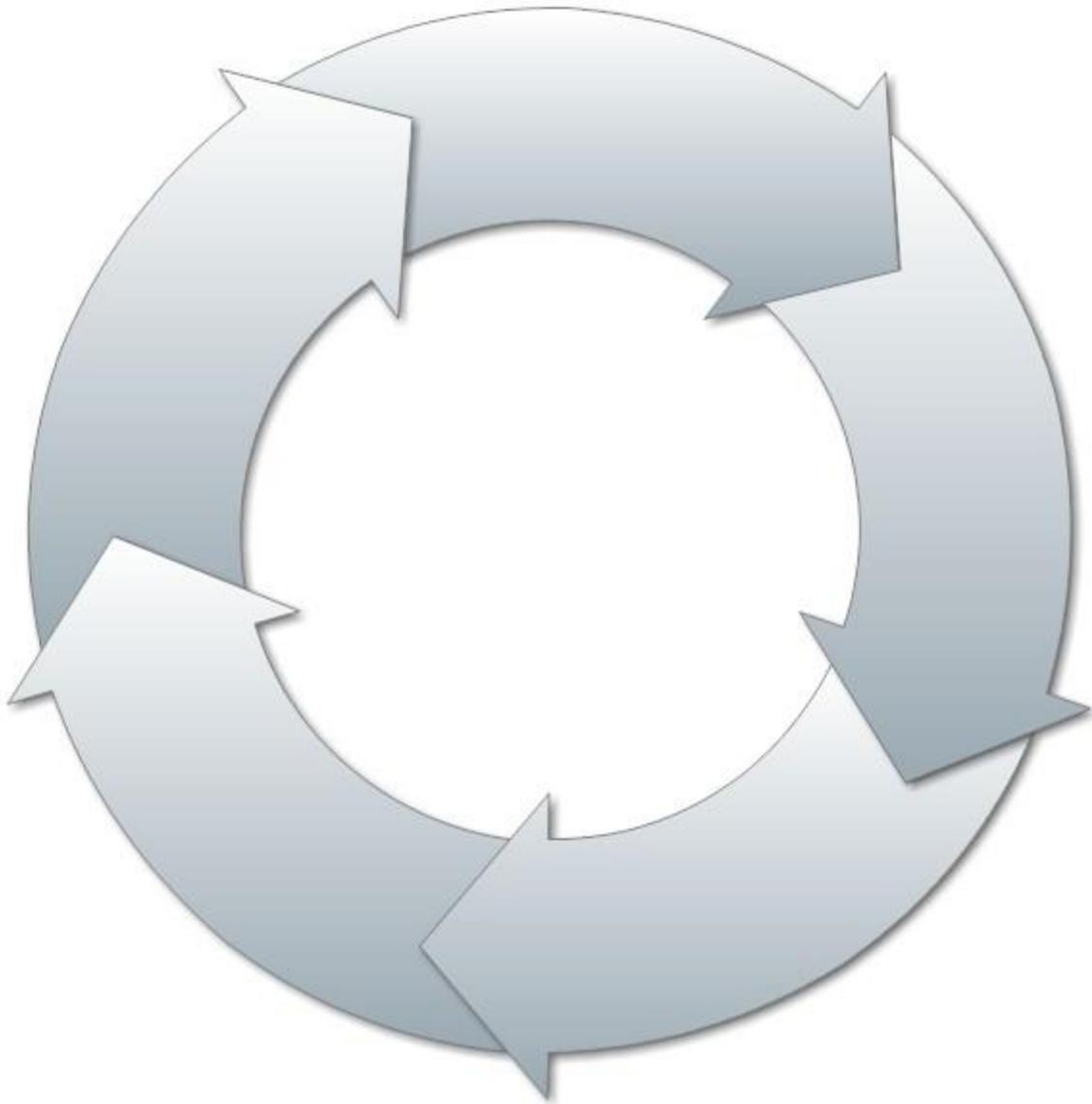




Assessment Manual



Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research

March 2013



ASSESSMENT MANUAL

**For Academic Programs and
Administrative and Support Services**

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INTRODUCTION TO ASSESSMENT

What is assessment?

Assessment is a *systematic process* of *gathering* and *interpreting* information to learn how well your unit is performing, and using that information to modify your operations in order to *improve that performance*. It involves:

- Making our expectations explicit
- Setting appropriate criteria and high standards for quality
- Using the resulting information to document, explain and improve performance

Why do we assess?

The four main purposes of assessment should be:

1. **To improve performance** – The assessment process should provide feedback to determine how the academic or administrative unit can be improved.
2. **To make informed decisions** – The assessment process should inform department/program heads and other decision-makers of the contributions and impact of the administrative unit to the development and growth of students.
3. **To improve the quality of experiences for all** – The assessment process should encapsulate and demonstrate what the academic or administrative unit is accomplishing for students, faculty, staff and outsiders.
4. **To promote continuous improvement** – The assessment process should provide support for campus decision-making activities such as unit review and strategic planning, as well as external accountability activities such as accreditation.

How does assessment fit into the accreditation process?

We assess for institutional improvement and accountability. Particularly, we are accountable to our accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Assessment permeates throughout the accreditation requirements and standards, but they can be summarized in the following two criteria:

Core Requirement 2.5: The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. (Institutional Effectiveness)

And:

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1: Institutional Effectiveness: 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: (Institutional Effectiveness)

- 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

How does assessment fit into the Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Process?

The process of Strategic Planning, Institutional Effectiveness, & Assessment is **cyclical** and **ongoing**. At Galveston College the cycle begins with the Strategic Planning process. We have a 5-year strategic plan with an annual review. In this process, **goals** are identified with the leadership of the President and Board of Regents. These **goals** are aligned with the mission and purposes of the institution, and are *general, or global, in nature and cannot be measured*.

So, each program or department interprets what these goals mean for them in their area. The next step is to identify **objectives** or **outcomes** that *further define the goal...and these objectives are measureable*. **Action plans** are then identified that provide a “game plan” for achieving the objectives or outcomes: *What will the department do to achieve the objective/outcome?* For example, if the institutional *goal* is to increase the number of graduates, each department will determine what it needs to do to accomplish this goal. The department identifies its *action plans* and the *outcomes* by which it will know if it has done its part in meeting the goal.

Here is where the “formal” assessment process steps in. The department or program identifies *student-oriented outcomes* that align with the *mission, purposes, and strategic goals* of the institution. It selects the *method of assessment or measurement* it will use to measure results—to determine the extent to which *each outcome* has been met. Also, it establishes a “*Criteria for Success*” or *benchmark* that the department believes represents a successful outcome. This might be expressed as a percentage of students meeting the standard of a learning outcome...or, for a service unit like Human Resources or the Business Office, “zero deficiencies” resulting from an audit it is required to conduct.

Next, the fun part: the actual outcomes are measured. What did you find when you applied the assessment methodology to the outcome you were measuring? The results are recorded in the “Assessment Results” column of the Institutional Effectiveness

Report. These results are *analyzed*. When you compare the data to your benchmark, what does this data tell you? Did you meet your standard or benchmark?

Now, the **most important** step occurs: the department determines how it will *use the results of the assessment for improvement!* This is the focus of SACSCOC Core Requirement 2.5 & Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1 through 3.1.1.5: They want to see a process of identifying and assessing outcomes, but it is all for naught unless the institution demonstrates **how it uses the results of assessment (or the IE process) to make improvements.**

This assessment process, and particularly the “Use of Results for Improvement,” will guide next year’s strategic planning and budget processes and identify new goals, objectives, and actions to be taken to improve performance. This is known as **completing the cycle** or **closing the loop**, and the cycle starts all over again. Institutional Effectiveness and the assessment process NEVER ENDS!!!

Diagramed, the process looks like this:



Welcome to Strategic Planning Online

Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) is a web-based software solution specifically designed to help institutions automate the planning, budgeting, assessment, and accreditation processes. SPOL manages strategic objectives, institutional outcomes and accreditation requirements while ensuring that budgets are supporting the strategic planning effort. By involving unit managers and budget managers directly in the planning process, SPOL enables your institution to tie planning goals and budget requests directly to high-level goals issued at the institutional level. Unit Managers can create realistic goals with a straight-forward strategic plan, define budgets to meet their needs, and keep everyone updated by sharing the information online. Financial officers can get detailed information about budget requests and see how they relate to the big picture. Presidents and Chief Executive Officers can see how strategic initiatives are progressing and ensure that institutional goals are met by monitoring the process online. SPOL creates a culture of planning with a unified understanding of the strategic goals by increasing the transparency and accountability of planning efforts while involving the entire institution in the planning process.

SPOL: Main Sections

SPOL can be broken down into four major parts: Planning, Budgeting, Assessment, and Accreditation. These sections work together to bring planners, budget managers, academic administrators, and accountability managers together in an online environment. By sharing information between modules (and managers), SPOL helps to constrain the planning requirements of any one manager and reduce or eliminate the need for duplicated efforts and redundant paperwork.

Planning Section

The Planning Section guides unit managers to develop strategic plans that clearly define their goals and how they relate to the needs of the institution. In this module planners can create strategic objectives, a list of tasks and budget requests required to complete the objective, and a myriad of methods for measuring and managing goals to ensure they are met. The Planning Section allows Unit Managers to plan, budget, execute, and verify their performance with minimal effort.

Budgeting Section

The Budgeting Section enables Budget Managers to review their historical budgets and expenditures and use that information to develop their cost to continue (operational) budgets. Budget Managers can use the budget requests defined in their planning efforts to derive their enhanced budgets. This section provides information in a summarized manner, but detailed information about how any request relates to College Goals, Planning Priorities, and Accreditation Requirements is just a click away. The financial team can reduce the amount of

time spent explaining budget policies by using SPOL to model the fiscal policies electronically. This guides Budget Managers to create their budgets *in-line* with the strategic plan and fiscal policy. Additionally, SPOL serves as a place where budget managers can review budget approvals at a detailed level to see exactly what was approved and why. The Budgeting Section brings the fiscal team members together to develop a more accurate, accountable, zero-based budget while eliminating redundancy and duplicated efforts.

Assessment Section

The Assessment Section of SPOL allows faculty members and other administrators to track the Outcomes of their planning process. Faculty members can use the Outcomes Section to track performance for Student Learning Outcomes, Program Outcomes, Operational Outcomes, or any other academic or non-academic Outcomes. This Section offers users high-level views of Outcome data with the ability to drill down into underlying supportive data quickly. Outcomes can be managed at a Program level or a Course level, providing both flexibility and the academic freedom for faculty users to develop their own Outcomes. Non-academic users can use the Outcomes module to develop performance metrics on non-academic functions making the Outcomes module a powerful tool for both academic and non-academic administrators to manage and measure departmental performance.

Accreditation Section

The Accreditation Section helps Compliance Officers manage accreditation regularly as part of an automated, systematic process. The Accreditation Section handles both regional accreditation standards and other special program standards for vocational or health science programs. Because accreditation compliance is managed as part of the planning and budgeting process, accreditation compliance information is always being updated automatically. With SPOL users can invite peers into the compliance planning process and help them understand their role in a successful review. SPOL creates a collaborative environment where documentation can be organized and shared in real time. Users can make information available to peer review committees anytime by simply sending them a web link and a password to SPOL. Increase institutional accountability by enlisting your team to help build compliance documentation as they build their plan. Distribute the documentation workload, then organize and measure results electronically with SPOL

(Taken from User Manual Version 3.3, Strategic Planning Online)

PART I: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Overview

Galveston College's Commitment to Assessment of Student Learning

Galveston College is committed to assessment of student learning and to using assessment results to improve the educational experiences offered to students. Assessment is critical in the overall quality of teaching and learning in higher education. This manual is designed as a reference for administrators, faculty, and staff at Galveston College as they conduct and coordinate assessment of student learning at the institutional level and at the instructional program level.

Mission Statement

“GALVESTON COLLEGE, a comprehensive community college committed to teaching and learning, creates accessible learning opportunities to fulfill individual and community needs by providing high-quality educational programs and services.”

Purposes

In accordance with Texas Education Code, Section 130.003, the College District shall provide:

- Technical programs up to two years in length leading to associate degrees or certificates;
- Vocational programs leading directly to employment in semiskilled and skilled occupations;
- Freshman and sophomore courses in arts and sciences;
- Continuing adult education programs for occupational or cultural upgrading;
- Compensatory education programs designed to fulfill the commitment of an admissions policy allowing the enrollment of disadvantaged students;
- A continuing program of counseling and guidance designed to assist students in achieving their individual educational goals;
- Workforce development programs designed to meet local and statewide needs;
- Adult literacy and other basic skills programs for adults; and
- Such other purposes as may be prescribed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board or local governing boards in the best interest of post-secondary education in Texas.

What is the Difference between *Grading & Assessment*?

One of the first questions that faculty typically ask when presented the mandate or opportunity to assess learning outcomes is, “Don’t we already do that? After all, we

grade everything the student does in class!” Yes, but grades do not always reflect the acquisition of specific learning outcomes. As a result, accreditors tend to start with a “fox guarding the henhouse” bias toward traditional course grading: You as the instructor do all the teaching and all the grading so, of course, you are going to find what you expect to find.” That may or may not be a fair assessment, but SACSCOC, our accreditor, wants to see evidence of the “extent to which” students have achieved identified program learning outcomes. Here are a few of the differences between grading and assessment:

Grading:

- *may or may not* reflect achievement of specific program, course, or general education outcomes.
- is *course-specific*. That is, grades are assigned for courses, not programs, so they have little usefulness in assessing programs.
- is often *instructor-specific*, with different instructors assigning different grades for comparable work.
- *usually includes other factors*—like attendance, participation, and effort—that are not measures of learning outcomes.
- typically involves a *comparative standard of measurement*—how is the student doing in relation to other students (i.e., *normative-referenced*, not *criterion-referenced*)—and often establish a competitive relationship among those receiving grades.

Assessment:

- The goal is to *improve student learning* (“value added”). It tells us how WE are doing with respect to our students.
- It is *outcome-specific*, with the assessment methodology or measurement chosen to *directly measure* the extent to which a particular outcome or competency is achieved.
- Systematically examines patterns of student learning across *courses and programs*. So, it can be used to validate *program-level* and/or *institutional-level* outcomes.
- Measures student growth and progress on an individual basis (*criterion-referenced*). You may use sampling to assess students, rather than evaluating each student, but your goal is to *conclude* or *infer* the *extent to which* your students *as a whole* have mastered the outcomes [e.g, a cross-section or stratified sample of students may be tested to draw inferences on a larger *cohort* of students].

Summarizing, **grades** tell us how a student is doing in relation to other students; **Assessment** tells us how WE are doing with respect to what we are trying to teach our students. You might say it this way: We grade all students to see how each individual student is doing with respect to other students; we assess each student (or a sample of students) to determine how ALL students are doing so we can make improvements in

the process along the way. By the way, while grading is not assessment, when done properly, assessment can make grading more objective and criterion-related—at the same time we are assessing to gather our institutional effectiveness information.

NOTE: Another difference is that every course grading assignment does **not** have to also be an assignment used for assessment! Select two or three projects, papers, examinations, or other assignments that respond to specific course- or program-level Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's).

Definition of Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment of Student Learning is the on-going process of systematically collecting, reviewing, and using information from instructional programs for the purpose of improving student learning and teaching.

The essential steps in the process of Assessment of Student Learning are:

1. Identify the most important/critical student learning outcomes for students to achieve at the end of an instructional program (or course).
2. Evaluate how well the students achieved the identified student learning outcomes.
3. Implement changes as appropriate based on the findings of the assessment to improve the academic experiences of students.

Connection of Assessment of Student Learning to College's Strategic Plan

Assessment relates to many of the goals identified in the 2012-2017 Galveston College Strategic Plan, entitled “*New Horizons: Strategic Goals and Institutional Goals for Continuous Development.*” The first three strategic goals address preparing students for a global economy, providing student support services that enhance student success, and providing effective retention processes. Goals #9 and #10 address conducting institutional research and planning leading to continuous improvement and meeting all federal, state, local, and accreditation agency accountability standards for operations and quality. Assessment is not an *event* but a *process* that is an integral part of Galveston College by providing evidence that the assessment of student learning and use of the results is an on-going institutional activity. The reader might refer to **Appendix E** for excerpts from this document.

How does Student Learning Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness Respond to Accreditation and The Higher Education Coordinating Board Requirements?

Strategic Plan: The Galveston College Strategic Plan and Institutional Effectiveness processes are a direct response to SACSCOC Core Requirement 2.5: “The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research- based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. (Institutional Effectiveness)

Student Learning Assessment: Program learning outcomes and their assessment is a direct response to SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1: “The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent on 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**”

General Education Learning Outcomes: In addition to program learning outcomes, the institution must demonstrate that it has responded to SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1: “The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them.” The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (*Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part I, Rule §4.28*) also mandates that institutions of higher learning assess core general education competencies. The THECB has established core curriculum objectives which Galveston College will be adopting as its general education competencies in Fall 2013 (TAC, Title 19, Part I, Chapter 4B, Rule § 4.28-4.31).

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The faculty members of each instructional program guide the process of assessment of student learning under the leadership of their respective Program Coordinator or Program Director. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee serves the function of Core Curriculum/General Education Committee, helping to coordinate the assessment of general education learning outcomes. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research provides technical support and coordination of the overall assessment process.

The process of assessment of student learning is tailored to the needs and requirements of each instructional program and involves the following:

- A manageable number of student learning outcomes are identified.
- Student learning outcomes are aligned with the Galveston College mission and the programs’ missions.

- Student learning outcomes are aligned with the appropriate general education competencies and the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.
- Student learning outcomes, measures, benchmarks, assessment results, and action plans are documented in the Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) software.
- Assessment of student learning outcomes is conducted and the findings are analyzed.
- Action plans are developed and implemented based on the analysis of the findings.
- Assessment results are used to improve teaching and learning.

Levels of Assessment

Galveston College conducts assessment of student learning at the institutional level and at the instructional program level. The foundation for the two levels of assessment is the Galveston College Strategic Plan which is assessed annually and updated every five years.

Institutional Level

Strategic Plan

The Galveston College Strategic Plan has ten broad goals, as well as more specific operational goals and objectives for Education and Curriculum Development, Facilities Development, Financial Development, Institutional and Management Development, Personnel Development, and Student Services Development. (See **Appendix E**)

General Education Assessment

The Institutional Effectiveness Committee is responsible for oversight and review of assessment of general education competencies across all instructional programs. The Committee has established and implemented an assessment plan that identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them.

Currently, Galveston College assesses student achievement in the following general education competencies:

- Communication Skills
- Critical Thinking
- Numerical Comprehension and Analysis
- Historical Consciousness
- Multicultural Awareness
- Concern about Ethics, Aesthetics, and Values

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has mandated that each institution identify a Core Curriculum of 42 semester hours and six uniform general education competencies by 2014-2015: Galveston College will implement the following six competencies in Fall 2013.

- Communication Skills
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Empirical and Quantitative Skills
- Teamwork
- Personal Responsibility
- Social Responsibility

Instructional Program Level

Program Review Assessment

The Galveston College Program Review is a comprehensive, systematic method of program evaluation and review of the academic programs' goals and objectives. The program review process complements the on-going institutional effectiveness and is a vital part of Galveston College strategic planning effort.

Annual Program Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Faculty members of each instructional program have the primary responsibility of conducting annual assessment of student learning. Under the direction of the respective Program Coordinator/Director, the faculty of a given instructional program develops an assessment plan, implements the assessment plan, analyzes the results of their assessments, and implements action plans to improve student learning. Faculty must follow the Timeline for Assessment of Student Learning (See **Appendix B**) to insure quality in teaching and learning and to comply with accrediting agency guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) should address three basic questions at the end/completion of a program:
 - a. What should the student know? (knowledge/cognition)
 - b. What should the student do? (skills/abilities)
 - c. How has the student's life changed as a result of completing a given program? (values/attitudes)
2. Student learning outcomes need to be written in an observable and measureable manner:

*Example: The student will (active verb) (something specific).
The student will demonstrate knowledge of Piaget's theory of cognitive development.*
3. Avoid the verbs *understand, know, or learn* because these verbs are not easily measureable and observable.
4. Identify at least four or five student learning outcomes of a given program for each academic year and assess all of them each academic year.
5. The SLOs may remain the same from year to year or they may be modified as needed based on identified needs of the program.
6. For each student learning outcome, a measure and benchmark/standard needs to be identified and entered in the year the student learning outcome was identified and entered into Strategic Planning Online (SPOL).
7. Associate each student learning outcome to the related general education competency(-ies) and to the appropriate Strategic Plan objectives.

Program Objectives

1. Program objectives differ from student learning outcomes. Program objectives are desired achievements or needs of a given program.

Example: Graduates of the Welding Applied Technology Program will be gainfully employed in their field six months after graduation.
2. Program objectives change based on the needs of the program or a new direction a program may take.

Measures

1. Measures are direct and indirect methods of assessment used to determine the successful attainment of the student learning outcomes.
2. Direct measures are direct assessment methods of a student's work such as exams, written essays, portfolios, projects, presentations.
3. Direct measures need to clearly identify the content that addresses the student learning outcome and include how the measure will be assessed.

Example: The students will submit a written essay which will be assessed by the instructor on logic, structure, content knowledge, and persuasiveness using a rubric.

4. Each SLO must be assessed with at least one direct measure every year.
5. Indirect measures are methods used to gain additional supportive information regarding a student learning outcome or program objective such as surveys, questionnaires, self-evaluations and interviews.

Example: Students will complete a survey indicating their level of satisfaction in using critical thinking for problem solving.

6. One measure may be used to assess more than one student learning outcome.
7. Measures should be entered at the beginning of the academic year cycle.
8. Throughout the academic year, use the measures for data collection to enter as "Findings" or "Assessment Results" at the end of the cycle.

Criteria for Success/Standard/Benchmark

1. The criteria for success (also known as the "standard" or "benchmark") is the desired or expected results from the measurement of a student learning outcome or program objective.

Example: 85% of the students will score 80 or better on the comprehensive skills test.

2. The criteria for success or benchmark should neither be set unrealistically high nor so modestly low that anyone can meet them.
3. Without specifying the criteria for success, it would be difficult to make use of the data to improve the program.

Findings/Assessment Results

1. Findings are the results (data) from the measures used to assess student learning outcomes or program objectives or outcomes.

Example: 80% of the students (20/25) scored 90% or greater on the rubric used to assess the students' evaluation of the health and safety of a children's playground.

2. The findings indicate the level of student success in achieving the student learning outcomes or level of the program success in achieving the program objectives.
3. The findings are entered at the end of the academic year cycle or at the end of the semester when the student learning outcome was assessed.

Use of Results for Improvement

1. "Use of Results for Improvement" is the description of actions that will be taken to address the findings (results) identified through the assessment of student learning outcomes or program objectives.
2. These action plans are based on the results of the assessment of student learning outcomes and need to be developed for each measure when an benchmark or achievement target is not met.
3. "Use of Results for Improvement" is developed at the end of the academic year cycle and implemented the following academic year cycle.
4. Action plans help faculty to reflect on teaching practices, to identify needed resources, and to show commitment of faculty to teaching and learning. They also provide supporting documentation for compliance with SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1, which addresses how the institution provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of assessment results.
5. An enhanced action plan is designed to address program improvement based on the College's Strategic Plan or for quality enhancement purposes. Each program should develop and implement at least one enhanced action plan each.

Analysis

1. The analysis component of the assessment process occurs when the data or assessment results have been recorded. It is designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program or department and what steps need to be taken to enhance performance on the outcomes.

2. The analysis provides information regarding any student learning outcomes or program objectives that will require continued attention which becomes the starting point for “Use of Results for Improvement.”
3. The analysis can also be used to justify professional development, travel, equipment, personnel, facilities, etc.
4. The analysis also provides supporting documentation for compliance with SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.

Annual Report

1. The annual report of each instructional program or administrative unit communicates the strengths and achievements of each program/unit, as well as areas needing to be addressed for improvement or enhancement.
2. The information provided in the annual reports of programs can be used by Academic and Administrative Officers to assess academic years and to write their annual reports.
3. Annual reports help to create a history of Galveston College’s academic accomplishments.
4. Annual reports provide important and useful information for program reviews.

Successful Student Learning Assessment

- Involves everyone
- Is goal/outcome oriented
- Addresses student learning outcomes
- Data collection is careful and deliberate
- Analyzes and reflects on data
- Disseminates results
- Monitors use of results from improvement

9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.
2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.
3. Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.
4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
5. Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.
6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.
7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.
8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.
9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.

(Adopted from the American Association for Higher Education.)

**PART II: ASSESSMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND
SUPPORT SERVICES**

ASSESSMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Overview

Why do administrative units need to conduct assessment?

As with academic units, assessment of administrative activities needs to be ongoing, continuous, and systematic in order to improve student support services and student learning.

The mission of each administrative unit should relate directly to the college's mission; outcomes should be explicitly stated, measurable, and relate to the administrative unit's mission; achievement of these outcomes should be assessed against targets or benchmarks; the results of the assessment should be communicated; and the results used to make changes to improve performance and effectiveness to meet the needs and expectations of students, parents, employers, faculty, and other stakeholders, allocate resources, and inform other decisions related to the unit's area of responsibility.

Assessment, as it is addressed in this manual, relates to measuring critical administrative processes in order to gather data that provides information about how the institution is meeting stakeholders' needs and expectations. Assessment is *not* a performance evaluation of individual staff members. A benefit of measuring performance among administrative support services is that it provides the basis by which the institution's employees can gain a sense of what is going wrong and what is going right within the organization. This process ultimately establishes direction for improving quality and constituent satisfaction.

How does assessment of administrative and student support units fit into the accreditation process?

As with student learning outcomes, we assess other parts of the campus for institutional improvement and accountability. This not only addresses Core Requirement 2.5, but also Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.2 (administrative support services) and 3.3.1.3 (academic and student support services). See below:

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1: Institutional Effectiveness: 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: (Institutional Effectiveness)

- 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

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Below is an overview of the five-step assessment process for Administrative and Academic Student Support Services Units:

Write Expected Outcomes/Objectives

Step 1a: Articulate your unit's mission of purpose.

Defining the Administrative and Support Services Unit Mission

Stating the mission of the administrative and support services unit is a required element of assessment plans at Galveston College.

The mission statement is a broad statement of purpose and values of the administrative and support services unit. For each administrative and support services unit the mission statement should reflect how the unit contributes to the education, development, and experiences of students at the institution. The mission statement also should describe the services provided by the unit.

It is important that the unit's mission supports and endorses Galveston College's institutional mission statement, which can be located online at: http://www.gc.edu/gc/Mission_and_Vision_of_the_College.asp.

The elements of a well-defined mission statement:

- **Briefly state the purpose of the unit.** State the primary purpose of your administrative or support services unit—the reason(s) why you perform your major activities or operations. Explain why you do what you do. For example, the main focus may be helping students to receive funding for college through financial aid or scholarships.
- **Indicate who the stakeholders are.** Include the primary groups of individuals to whom you are providing your services and/or those who will benefit from the services (e.g., students, faculty, staff, parents, employers, etc.).
- **Indicate the primary functions or activities of the unit.** Highlight the most important functions, operations, services, and/or offerings of your administrative or support services unit.
- **Ensure that the mission statement clearly supports the institution's mission.** Make sure that your mission is aligned with the mission of the college.

- **The mission should be distinctive.** Does your statement distinguish you from other administrative or support services units? If the name was removed, it should not be applicable to another unit.

(Adapted from “How to Write a Mission”, University of Connecticut)

A well-written mission/purpose statement should lead to identification of the goals and outcomes/objectives that will guide the future work of unit or program.

Goals

Galveston College policy does *not* require that you define the goals of your administrative or academic support services as part of the Institutional Effectiveness and assessment process. However, unit goals do align with Strategic Planning goals and may lend themselves to defining program or departmental outcomes.

Goals are broad statements that describe the overarching long-range intended outcomes of an administrative or support services unit. These goals are usually not measurable and need to be further developed as separate distinguishable outcomes, that when measured appropriately, provide evidence of how well you are accomplishing your goals. They are primarily used for general planning and are used as the starting point to the development and refinement of outcomes.

Step 1b: Define your unit’s outcomes/objectives.

When the mission and goals have been stated, outcomes and objectives can then be defined. The outcome statements should be derived from the goal statements (if used), which in turn should be aligned to the college’s mission. A unit should identify at least one outcome for each of its main functional responsibilities.

Outcomes and objectives are specific statements that describe desired **performance of a service or function** of an administrative or support services unit and are tied to the College’s Strategic Plan. Outcomes and objectives imply an observable, measureable action and begin with an **action verb**.

- Outcomes can relate to the operations and processes of the unit, and may include a consideration of demand, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Outcomes may also relate to intended behaviors that a student, having used services provided by the administrative or academic support services unit, should demonstrate.

- Outcome statements can also be student learning outcomes (SLOs); they can focus on the intended abilities, knowledge, values, and attitudes a student should demonstrate after having used certain services or having participated in an activity.

The terms *outcomes* and *objectives* are often used interchangeably in Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment. ***The difference between an outcome and an objective is its life span.*** That is, outcomes are ongoing, while objectives are time-bound.

*Example of an **Outcome**: All academic support and administrative units at Galveston College conduct ongoing and effective assessment of their activities and services and use the results of assessment to inform planning, decision-making and resource allocation.*

*Example of an **Objective**: All academic support and administrative units prepare outcomes assessment plans which are in place by the end of 2012-2013.*

At Galveston College we use the term *outcome* to define any objective we are measuring, be it a student learning outcome or support unit outcome. One of the reasons we choose to use *outcomes* rather than *objectives* is because our accreditor, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) uses that term.

SMART is an acronym that is often used to determine how well an outcome is formulated. A good outcome is a SMART objective when it is:

- **Specific** – Be clear about what your unit plans to accomplish, as well as when, where, or how. For example, “we will expand our services” does not specify how or by how much or for how many customers the services will be expanded. Words such as *develop*, *encourage* and *enhance* lack specificity. Action words such as *locate* or *reduce* make objectives more specific.
- **Measurable** – Quantify your outcome as to targets and benefits, for which it is feasible to collect accurate and reliable data, so that your unit can determine if it has reached the outcome. Consider your available resources (e.g., staff, technology, institutional level surveys, etc., in determining whether the collection of data is a reasonable expectation).
- **Achievable** – Know the outcome is something that your unit can accomplish. It is fine to accomplish your objective in incremental steps over several years.
- **Realistic** – Make sure the objective is something that can be done practically in a specific timeframe or with existing or limited resources.

- **Time-bound** – When will the objective be done? Tie the objective to a specific time frame.

(Source: “Management Review”, November 1981, George T. Doran)

Establish Assessment Measures or Methodologies

Step 2a: Determine appropriate assessment measures.

Once you establish your unit’s outcomes and objectives (if applicable), define and identify the sources of evidence you will use to determine whether you are achieving expected impacts. You must detail what will be measured and how it will be measured. For each outcome/objective, create measures that help your unit in making critical decisions about its processes and services. Build an inventory of existing evaluation and assessment activities. When designing your assessment, you should use multiple measures. A composite of results can yield a more realistic picture of your unit’s performance. Develop targets or benchmarks for each measure.

A **measure** is a *method* used to collect *evidence* of success for the outcome and provide useful data for continuing improvement. A measure could be *direct* or *indirect*, a *single method* or a *multi-step process*. A measure is expressed as a **noun**.

Assessment methods of administrative functions and critical processes

- **Direct assessors of unit processes:** This category includes methods that assess demand, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness. For example, efficiency may address completion of service, productivity of service, and efficiency of individual points of service (e.g., academic and career advising, computer assistance, tutoring).
- **Student or client perception of functions and critical processes:** This category includes methods that assess perception of support activities and services (e.g., orientation, financial aid, admissions, and international student services).

Common types of assessment:

- Attitudinal – measures of satisfaction from those you serve
- Direct – counts of unit services, timeliness
- External – validation (neutral party, auditor, professional standards)

Selecting Assessment Measures

The acronym **MATURE** is used when selecting or developing measures for your outcomes:

- **M**atch
- **A**ppropriate
- **T**arget
- **U**seful
- **R**eliable
- **E**ffective and **E**fficient

Match

- Match the Outcome with the appropriate assessment method. Successful and useful assessment cannot be achieved if you do not align the assessment method with the outcome that you are trying to assess.
- Match the assessment method to the outcome and not the reverse. Develop and write your unit outcomes and objectives before selecting assessment methods. Do not develop an assessment instrument and then fit an outcome to it.

Appropriate

- Choose methods that are appropriate. They can be direct or indirect. Direct measures include assessments that evaluate a quality indicator, or student ability or achievement in one of the areas noted. Indirect measures can be survey responses to targeted questions or ancillary parts of a direct measure. There are times when one measurement instrument could measure more than one outcome. (For example, a survey may target several outcomes.)
- Select assessment methods that are good assessors of effectiveness of the service or unit. A primary goal of assessment is to uncover issues that, when addressed, will lead to improvements in your operation. Consider measures that provide you with information that is easily interpreted and unambiguous and that can be used to improve where necessary.
- Determine beforehand if there are available resources to assist in the collection of data on the chosen measure. Do the data exist or is the collection of data going to be required. If so, determine whether the data are difficult or easy to obtain. Consider assessment methods for which data might already exist.

Target (Criteria for Success, Standard, or Benchmark)

- Each measure should have a criterion for success or benchmark that specifies the desired level of performance (level of satisfaction, productivity, efficiency,

performance, etc). The quantitative or qualitative benchmark is not included in the description of the measure or assessment methodology, but entered separately as a *Criterion for Success, Standard, or Benchmark*. This benchmark will be the level of performance that represents for you if you have met the outcome.

Useful

- Choose assessment methods that will provide you with useful and useable information. The measure that you are trying to assess should not only be interesting but one that would allow you to make inferences about the progress toward the outcome.

Outcome: *Process student requests in a timely manner.*

Example of assessment that will not provide useful, useable information: *Number of students served by Administrative Unit will be tracked for three semesters.*

Example of assessment that will provide useful, useable information: *A computerized log will track the date and time of each student request and the date and time that it is resolved. The time between request and resolution will be compared for two semesters.*

Note: The first example assessment shows that data are being collected, but not useful data. The second example assessment provides information that can be used to determine if the administrative unit is increasing its timeliness.

Reliable

- The measure is based on tested, known methods.
- The method selected should be one that provides dependable, consistent results time after time. The instrument and should be clearly worded and consistent in length.

Effective and Efficient

- Each approach accurately and concisely measures the outcome.

(Above was adopted from "Administrative Assessment Handbook", University of Central Florida)

Two assessment methods are preferred for each outcome. The benefits of using more than one method include: different components of one outcome can be assessed, and a high level of accuracy and authority can be achieved.

Attempt to identify subcomponents of a measurement approach so that you will be able to conduct a deeper analysis. This will provide an opportunity to identify an increased

number of areas to improve. For example, multiple questions on a survey may be relevant to one outcome (e.g., quality of advising). However, one question on an evaluation tool or questionnaire may provide data about a subcomponent.

When possible, utilize a combination of qualitative and quantitative assessment methods to effectively assess outcomes. The selection of assessment methods should reflect the culture of the unit and should be methods that provide those making changes to the operation or programs of the unit with useful information. Examples of qualitative assessment methods include open-ended questions on surveys, focus groups, and structured interviews.

Utilize a combination of direct and indirect assessment methods. Some assessment methods require direct interaction with the students in an evaluative or instructional setting, while others do not (such as information from the student database or employer surveys).

When assessing students using your services or completing your program, it is possible to use a locally developed test as the assessment method. However, if there is a nationally normed instrument, you will be able to compare your services to those at other institutions.

Examples of assessment measures for supporting units include:

- Student satisfaction surveys
- Count of program/event participants
- Number of complaints
- Comparisons to professional organizations' best practices
- Number of applications
- Processing time for requests
- External review
- Opinion surveys
- Growth in participation
- Average wait or service time
- Statistical reports
- Staff training hours & staff trained
- Number of users
- Focus groups
- Dollars raised

Avoid some common mistakes when describing measures:

- Simply restating the outcome as a measure. For example, "provide student services".
- Inserting actions in place of measures. For example, "participate in activity".
- Not aligning the outcome and the measure. For example, the outcome is "conduct independent research" and the measure is "Information technology." Not only is there a mismatch, but the measure name could mean any number of things.

- Mixing an achievement target in with a measurement description. For example, “10% participation in the program” where the measurement should be simply the “Rate of participation in the program” and the achievement target is “10% participation”.

Step 2b: Set Criteria for Success, Standards, or Benchmarks

Once an appropriate measure is associated with an outcome it is necessary to establish an achievement target. If a measure is associated with more than one outcome, it is necessary to create an achievement target for each outcome. Each of these associations also requires entering a separate finding. This kind of multiplicative effect should reinforce the notion that it is wise to have thought things out in detail before entering anything in a database like SPOL.

The **achievement target** is a *criteria for success, standard, or benchmark* (quantitative or qualitative), and it can be single or multi-part. The standard is specific and aimed to stretch the unit’s performance. The terms *criteria for success, standard, or benchmark* are used interchangeably in this manual and in assessment generally, and should be expressed in **numeric** form if possible.

Examples of achievement targets:

- 95 percent of our users will be “very satisfied or satisfied” with our services.
- At least 80 percent of eligible employees will participate in training.
- 90 percent of the transcripts will be sent within three days.
- 90 percent of the forms will be processed without errors.

Assessment statement

To check how well your outcome/objective, measure, and standard are aligned, consider writing an “**assessment statement**”. An assessment statement is a sentence that includes ALL three elements of the outcomes assessment process: the Outcome/Objective, the Measure, and the Benchmark. It is **not** recorded as a whole anywhere in the Institutional Effectiveness process, nor in SPOL®, but this is simply a tool for helping you be consistent across assessment categories.

The template for an administrative assessment statement is:

A desired outcome of the [policies, processes, procedures, actions, services] of the [insert entity name here] is to [insert non-learning outcome condensed description beginning with a verb] as measured by [insert measure condensed description here] with an achievement target of [insert benchmark condensed description here].

(Adapted from University of Alabama at Birmingham)

The actions of the administrative entity are included in the statement as two distinct things. The first is what the entity has (e.g., policies) or does (e.g., processes, procedures, etc). The second is the outcome itself, stated in way that captures the reason for what the entity has or does.

Writing administrative assessment statements for administrative entities requires distinguishing what the entity does from why it does it.

Example of an administrative assessment statement:

A desired outcome of the assessment support services provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research is to assist in the development of a culture of assessment at Galveston College as measured by the departmental (or SPOL) audit reports with an benchmark of a) 100% of all entities have an assessment plan in place, and b) there are no outcomes without measures, no measures without benchmarks and results/findings, and no findings without associated "Use of Results for Improvement."

The Office of Institutional Research provides assessment support services to all the entities on campus, this document being just one example of the services being provided. The office cannot create or impose a culture of assessment; it can only assist others in the development of that culture. Thus, the objective part of the statement contains the reason for providing the services.

Assess Performance of Unit

Step 3: Conduct assessment activities.

Put your assessment plan into action. You must set a schedule for conducting assessment activities. Some assessments may take place monthly, others annually and others even on a biennial or triennial basis. Conduct a focus group of those you serve, survey people who have participated in your unit's activities, have an expert come through and review your processes. This time is to find out what others say about your operation.

View Assessment Results

Step 4: Analyze the findings from your assessments.

Once the results from your assessments have been collected, see what they can tell you about your program. Consider asking questions such as:

- What can you infer from the data?
- What future actions will you take?
- What changes have you made (or will you make) based on assessment results?
- What are the budgetary implications?

As your unit discusses the assessment results and their implications, celebrate when your unit has accomplished what it planned to accomplish. Come to a clear understanding and agreement on areas that still present opportunities for growth and improvement.

Document the findings of assessment. Summarize your results for reporting purposes; be sure to retain details of documentation on file for reference purposes if needed. As you discuss results, revisit and improve your assessment measures.

Assuming that achievement benchmarks are set at reasonable levels it is important to know that your assessment processes will not be judged negatively if the standards are not met. The critical thing is whether the relationship between the findings and the achievement standards identifies where improvement is possible and leads to an action plan that is designed to improve performance.

Effect Improvements to Increase Performance

Step 5a: Use your results.

Assessment is done to continuously improve student learning and the quality of services provided. You have not completed the quality enhancement process until you “close the loop” and use results to make improvements to services. The end result of the assessment process is an action plan designed to improve student learning and quality of services. This plan is recorded in the Institutional Effectiveness Report column entitled “Use of Results for Improvement.” This is actually the only place on the report written from the perspective of what you will do, or resources you will assign for the improvement, rather than from the perspective of the outcome.

NOTE: If you are entering your assessment plan into the Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) software, there is no accommodation for an Action Plan. The program follows up the assessment results with a category referred to as “Notes.” It is at this point that you enter what you will do to address any weaknesses, especially if your standard was not met. The “official” assessment plan will be the Institutional Effectiveness Report submitted as part of the Budget process. This report has been recently revised to be consistent with the contents and directions of this manual. The following is presented only for the purpose of helping the reader record the steps he/she will use to address areas requiring improvement.

Creating an Action Plan

Action Plans show **continuous improvement initiative**. The focus of the Action Plan is actually on the desired unit outcome or objective defined at the beginning of the process and is tied to the budget. An Action Plan is required for “Partially Met” and “Not Met” achievement benchmarks and is recommended for “Met” standards.

The plan sets the stage for the next round in the assessment cycle and should focus on changes designed to improve unit performance. Typical changes in services include:

- revising organizational structure
- reallocating resources
- revamping administrative procedures
- modifying or expanding relations with public or external agencies

The decisions you make regarding the course of action for the following year also may lead to a restructuring or revision of your unit’s objectives for the following year.

Any actions proposed or taken should be predicated on having designed good direct measures and having at least one round of findings. The existence of action plans designed to improve unit performance should be the product of in-depth discussions of the entire assessment process by the staff. The table below describes the stages of evolution that an administrative support services unit may go through in using findings and devising quality improvement action plans. It is obvious that the desired end is that findings be used in the manner described in the “Use of Results for Improvement” column. This level would be indicative of the development of a culture of assessment for the unit.

Stages in the evolution of the use of findings

Developing	Emerging	Developed	Full circle assessment, highly developed
Findings discussed among staff	Findings discussed among staff, identification of issues discovered	Findings discussed among staff, identification of issues, policies/procedures reviewed, recommendations made for area improvement	Findings discussed among staff, policy/procedures reviewed and revised based on assessment data, changes made if warranted for area improvement

(Source: UAB “WEAVEonline User Manual”. Original borrowed from WASC, adapted by B.A. Holzman, Office of Academic Planning and Educational Effectiveness, SFSU)

An action plan has “verb-ness.” An outcome/unit objective is best stated when it begins with a verb that **describes what a unit wants to achieve**. In the same manner, an action plan describes what staff should do over some period of time to improve unit performance. Therefore, the Condensed Description, which is the title of the action plan, should also begin with a **verb**.

Guidelines for writing a good Action Plan:

- Make sure the Action Plan follows from the Assessment Results and the Benchmark and addresses the original outcome/objective.
- Begin the Condensed Description with a verb and make it explicit.
- Do not repeat a measure as a Condensed Description.
- Do not repeat an Outcome/Objective as a Condensed Description.
- Make sure that the properly phrased Condensed Description is what is expanded on in the long description.
- Avoid repetitious use of “Continue to monitor” or “Review by a committee.” What is it that is being monitored or reviewed and why? This approach may be fine if a measure and its associated benchmark have reached a ceiling, but is otherwise uninformative.
- Ask yourself whether someone reading the Action Plan out of context would be able to tell what was being done to improve your unit performance.

Note that even when an action begins with a verb it is not always informative. Consider the following example and see if you can guess what the intent is:

Condensed Description: *“Increase baseline over time.”*

Description: *“It is the hope that we can increase the baseline over time but will continue to track until 2012 whereas we will have more information in which to reassess our direction with this goal.”*

Example of a good Action Plan: *Develop and distribute assessment materials in hard-copy and online forms. These will include an assessment guide, plan, and report templates, examples, evaluative rubrics to provide feedback on plans and reports, online links to additional resources, etc.*

Action statement

An action statement brings the thought processes to the end. An action statement is a declarative sentence that includes condensed descriptions of the Assessment Results, Benchmarks, and the Action Plan. It, of course, assumes that you have findings on whatever measure you are using.

A generic template for an action statement might look like this:

Based on our finding that [insert concise findings statement] using [insert measure condensed description] with an achievement target of [insert target condensed description], we propose to [insert action plan condensed description here].

(Above adapted from "WEAVEonline User Manual" University of Alabama at Birmingham)

Just as with assessment statements, these action statements are **not** designed to be recorded as a whole anywhere in the Institutional Effectiveness/Assessment process nor in SPOL. They are designed to aid the thinking process by making sure that all the elements are expressed correctly and consistently. This means that, 1) the findings are consistent with the measure, 2) the findings are expressed in the same units as the benchmark and are consistent with it, and, 3) the action plan description starts with a verb that describes something that will be done that is directly related to the evidence provided by the finding.

A possible action statement for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research is as follows:

Based on our finding [insert findings of the audit report] we propose to:

- 1) create more documentation regarding how to think about outcomes assessment,*
- 2) conduct additional training sessions on the mechanics of using SPOL, and*
- 3) meet with responsible persons to discuss how to make judgments regarding the quality of the entries for which they are responsible.*

All these actions would be listed under a single Action Plan entitled, "Provide SPOL users with a deeper understanding of assessment."

Step 5b: Review assessment process.

Assessment Cycle

Galveston College operates on a twelve-month cycle corresponding with the academic year. Each new cycle for support units starts on September 1st and ends on June 30th. Until the cycle is closed for editing, changes can be made any time.

Assessment is particularly daunting when it is first started because it requires lots of thinking—unless an entity has been doing assessment for some time, everything has to be thought through. Once the initial elements are in place, the demands of system upkeep will decrease and the focus can shift to gathering findings, developing action plans, and carrying through on those plans.

Thus, the Mission/Purpose, the Goals, the Outcomes/Objectives, and the Measures should remain reasonably constant over time unless there are dramatic shifts in the nature of the program or the mission of an administrative office. What should change with each cycle are the Assessment Results, the Benchmarks (as needed), and the Use of Results for Improvement. While these may lead to refinements in the first four elements, these changes should be minor. Benchmarks should not be changed on a frequent basis, but only after analysis of what change might be appropriate. As a rule, the more general or abstract the element, the less likely it will change.

Assessing assessment

A self-sustaining culture of assessment means that those engaged in the process are motivated primarily by having seen improvements in learning in the students they teach or in the delivery of services they provide to stakeholders. While accreditation and internal demands for measures of institutional effectiveness still play a role, the results of the assessment process are their own reward in this ideal environment. To reach that ideal, it is necessary to understand how to think about assessment and use those thought processes as the basis for evaluating the assessment process itself.

Achievement Summary/Analysis Questions

In the Institutional Effectiveness Report, the assessment results are compared to the benchmark or “criteria for success” to determine if the outcome was successfully met. If the standard was NOT met, some action must be taken to address existing weaknesses. This plan for action is recorded in the “Use of Results for Improvement” column of the IE Report, and followed up in the subsequent cycle to verify that the action was taken. Note: Not meeting a standard should not be understood as a “failure.” The intent and purpose of assessment is to identify needed improvements. In

fact, the only thing worse than NEVER meeting your standard or criteria for success is ALWAYS meeting or exceeding it!

Likewise, SPOL provides the user the ability to display a Program Detail Report that summarizes the results of the annual assessment process for each program. This report will display the Program Description and Mission Statement, as well as Outcomes, Measures, Rubrics, and Measurements. Measurements are the Assessment results: what you found when you measured your outcome and compared it to your benchmark. The measurements list results from each course section taught, that addresses a particular outcome. The “Actual Score” divided by the “Projected Score” produces a “Weighted Score” for each course section and instructor, as well as an aggregate score for the program outcome. A weighted score of 100% indicates that the standard was fully met.

In analyzing the assessment results, you may benefit from asking yourselves several “Analysis Questions.” The Analysis Questions may vary from cycle to cycle, but the intent is the same. These analysis questions may resemble the following:

- 1) What specifically did your assessments show regarding proven strengths or progress you made on outcomes/objectives?
- 2) What specifically did your assessments show regarding any outcomes/objectives that will require continued attention?
- 3) How will your assessment be used by the unit to justify professional development, travel, equipment, personnel, facilities, etc.? (Budget)

Although actions to address assessment results will rarely have many dollar signs attached, the use of assessment results to make these kinds of changes to improve effectiveness and inform decision making and planning is the reason why we assess. Assessment provides important evidence on which to base requests for additional funding, curriculum changes, new faculty and staff, and more. Even negative assessment results can have powerful, positive impact when they are used to improve performance, effectiveness, and ultimately, the college’s ability to achieve its mission.

Annual Assessment Calendar

The College adopted an Assessment Calendar in Spring 2013 that basically synchronized the Assessment and Academic Year, which runs from September 1 through August 31. However, since most faculty do not spend much time on campus during the summer, and because the two Summer Sessions are by nature in an accelerated delivery format not conducive to assessment, the academic assessment cycle is September 1 through May 31 and covers the Fall and Spring semesters. To make the transition from the old to the new IE Report format and calendar, 2013-2014 budget requests, preliminary 2013-2014 Institutional Effectiveness Reports, and a

“completed” 2012-2013 IE Report were due in March. However, instructors were allowed to complete their 2012-2013 Institutional Effectiveness reports at the conclusion of the spring semester. The deadline for submitting a revised/completed 2012-2013 Institutional Effectiveness Report—including action plans to address the “Use of Results for Improvement”—as well as a revised preliminary 2013-2014 IE Report—that addressed the action plans from 2012-2013—was May 31, 2013. See *Appendix B* for the Academic Assessment Calendar and *Appendix C* for the Administrative Support Unit Assessment Calendar.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

Effective administrative unit assessment should answer these questions:

1. What is the primary purpose of our unit?
2. What are we trying to do?
3. How well are we doing it?
4. Using the answers to the first three questions, how can we improve what we are doing?
5. What and how does a unit contribute to the overall mission of the College?
6. How can the unit support the overall student learning experience?

That is, assessment is not just about measuring results, but about continuous improvement over the long term. Additionally, assessment is most effective when:

1. Assessment is viewed as a comprehensive, systematic, and continuous activity.
2. Assessment is viewed as a means for self-improvement.
3. Assessment utilizes multiple measures that are meaningful, and multiple sources.
4. Assessment results are used as a management tool to improve administrative units' structure, services, and processes.
5. Assessment should involve the participation and input of all faculty and staff.
6. Assessment includes student involvement.

(Adapted from “Assessment Manual” Del Mar College)

PART III: APPENDICES

Appendix A Common Language of Assessment

Action Plans: description of what will be done to address the findings identified through the assessment of outcomes and objectives. These are typically identified in the column of the Institutional Effectiveness Report labeled “Use of Results for Improvement.”

Analysis: the interpretation of assessment results (findings) to draw conclusions regarding outcomes and objectives.

Assessment: *A systematic process of gathering and interpreting information to learn how well your unit is performing, and using that information to modify your operations in order to improve that performance;* The systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development. (Palomba & Banta, 1999)

Assessment Plan: a plan to assess student learning that should include which Student Learning Outcome(s) will be assessed during a specific cycle, which measure(s)/instruments will be utilized for the assessment, which semester(s) and the point in the semester when assessment will occur. The plan should also include implementation of action plans developed based on assessment from previous cycle(s) and how the results of such Action Plans will be assessed.

Assessment Results: results (data) from the measure used to assess student learning outcomes or program objectives. *[Ex. 100% of students (20 out of 20) demonstrated competency in the performance of Gait Training.]*

Authentic Assessment: a form of assessment in which students perform real-world tasks/situations that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. *(Ex. Music recital, art exhibition, letters to the editor, classroom lesson plan, clinical experiences)*

Benchmarking: An actual measurement of group performance against an established standard at defined points along the path toward the standard. Subsequent measurements of group performance use the benchmarks to measure progress toward achievement. Other terms for the *benchmark* might be *Standard* or *Criteria for Success*. (New Horizons for Learning)

Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives: Six levels arranged in order of increasing complexity (1=low, 6=high):

1. Knowledge: Recalling or remembering information without necessarily understanding it. Includes behaviors such as describing, listing, identifying, and labeling.

2. **Comprehension:** Understanding learned material and includes behaviors such as explaining, discussing, and interpreting.
3. **Application:** The ability to put ideas and concepts to work in solving problems. It includes behaviors such as demonstrating, showing, and making use of information.
4. **Analysis:** Breaking down information into its component parts to see interrelationships and ideas. Related behaviors include differentiating, comparing, and categorizing.
5. **Synthesis:** The ability to put parts together to form something original. It involves using creativity to compose or design something new.
6. **Evaluation:** Judging the value of evidence based on definite criteria. Behaviors related to evaluation include: concluding, criticizing, prioritizing, and recommending. (Bloom, 1956)

Criterion-Referenced Assessment: an assessment where an individual's performance is compared to a specific learning objective or performance standard and not to the performance of other students.

Culture of Assessment: an environment in which continuous improvement through assessment is expected and valued.

Curriculum Mapping: a matrix showing where student learning outcomes are covered in each program course.

Direct Assessment: direct evaluation of student work in direct response to a set of guidelines or assignments. *[Ex. Musical performance, art exhibitions, paper, projects, exams, etc.]*

Embedded Assessment: a means of gathering information about student learning that is built into and a natural part of the teaching/learning process. *[Ex. Pre-test and post-test, written reflection, clicker response system (CRS)]*

Evaluation: The use of assessment findings (evidence/data) to judge program effectiveness; used as a basis for making decisions about program changes or improvement. (Allen, Noel, Rienzi & McMillin, 2002)

Findings: See *Assessment Results*

Formative Assessment: the gathering of information and providing feedback about student learning, during the progression of a course or program and usually repeatedly, to improve the learning of those students. *[Ex. Reading the first lab reports of a class to assess whether some or all students in the group need a lesson on how to make them succinct and informative.]*

General Education (Gen Ed): the body of fundamental knowledge and skills which forms the foundation of the broad educational experience all graduates with associate degrees should possess.

Goals: broad general statements about desired achievements. [*Ex. 1. Students can use technology; 2. Students have effective communication skills*]

Grades vs. Assessment: **Grades** tell us how a student is doing in relation to other students; **Assessment** tells us how WE are doing with respect to what we are trying to teach our students

Indirect Assessment: an assessment that supplements and enriches what faculty learn from direct assessment studies, such as alumni surveys, employer surveys, satisfaction surveys, and interviews.

Learning Outcomes: operational statements describing specific student behaviors that evidence the acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes or dispositions. Learning outcomes can be usefully thought of as behavioral criteria for determining whether students are achieving the educational objectives of a program, and, ultimately, whether overall program goals are being successfully met. Outcomes are sometimes treated as synonymous with objectives, though objectives are usually more general statements of what students are expected to achieve in an academic program. (Allen, Noel, Rienzi & McMillin, 2002)

Mean (Average): one of several ways of representing a group with a single, typical score. It is figured by adding up all the individual scores in a group and dividing them by the number of people in the group.

Measure: an instrument or method used to collect data to produce quantifiable information regarding outcomes or objectives. [*Ex. Test, survey, oral presentation, essay, laboratory skills exam.*]

Norm-Referenced Assessment: an assessment that judges a performance in relation to the performance of other members of a well-defined group. The purpose of a norm-referenced assessment is usually to rank students and not to measure achievement towards some criterion of performance.

Objective Test: a test for which the scoring procedure is completely specified, enabling agreement among different scores. A correct-answer test. [*Ex. Multiple-Choice Tests, True/False Tests*]

Outcome: With respect to a **learning outcome**, what do you want a student to **know** or **do** at the completion of an activity or course of study (knowledge, skills, or values)? With respect to an **administrative or other support unit outcome**, how will the **student's life or campus experience be improved** as a result of the services provided?

Outcomes are sometimes treated as synonymous with objectives, though objectives are usually more general statements of what students are expected to achieve in an academic program.

Performance Criteria: The standards by which student performance is evaluated. Performance criteria help assessors maintain objectivity and provide students with important information about expectations, giving them a target or goal to strive for. (*New Horizons for Learning*)

Portfolio: a systematized and organized collection of a student's work collected over time that exhibits to others the direct evidence of a student's efforts, achievements, and progress. The collection should involve the student in selection of its contents, and should include information about the performance criteria, the rubric or criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection or evaluation. It should include representative work, providing a documentation of the learner's performance and a basis for evaluation of the student's progress. Portfolios may include a variety of demonstrations of learning and have been gathered in the form of a collection of materials, videos, CDROMs, reflective journals, artwork, etc.

Program Coordinator: the person responsible for coordinating a specific program or discipline, including curriculum development and review (SACS Principles of Accreditation 3.4.13). This person is also responsible for coordinating assessment efforts within the program. At Galveston College the coordinators of academic programs carry the title of "Program Coordinator," while coordinators of workforce program are referred to as "Program Directors."

Program Objectives: specific statements about a program's desired achievement or need. [Ex.: 1. *Graduates of the program will be employed in the field within 6 months of graduation.* 2. *Majors will successfully transfer to a 4-year university to complete a baccalaureate degree.* 3. *Physical facilities will be added or renovated to enhance student learning.*]

Program Outcome: a student learning outcome (SLO) developed at the program level, and to which course-level outcomes flow.

Qualitative Assessment: Collects data that does not lend itself to quantitative methods but rather to interpretive criteria. (Leskes, 2002)

Quantitative Assessment: Collects data that can be analyzed using quantitative methods

Reliability: the extent to which an assessment produces consistent results over time and with different samples of students.

Rubric: Specific sets of criteria that clearly define for both student and teacher what a range of acceptable and unacceptable performance looks like. Criteria define descriptors of ability at each level of performance and assign values to each level. Levels referred to are proficiency levels which describe a continuum from excellent to unacceptable product. (*System for Adult Basic Education Support*)

Self-Assessment: a process in which a person engages in a systematic review and reflection on his/her performance, usually for the purpose of improving future performance.

Standardized Testing: an objective test that is given and scored in a uniform manner. Scores are often norm-referenced and may be stated as a percentile rating.

Standards: agreed-upon values used to measure the quality of student performance, instructional methods, curriculum, etc. Synonyms often used are *Criteria for Success* and *Benchmark*

Strategic Planning Online (SPOL): a web-based software solution specifically designed to help institutions automate the planning, budgeting, assessment, and accreditation processes. Program and/or course assessment plans, measurements, and assessment results are entered into the College's online assessment management system. From these, detailed assessment reports can be printed for each instructional (and non-instructional, if desired) entity.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): clear, concise, and measurable statements that specify what a student is expected to know or be able to do at the end of a course or program. [Ex. 1. *Students will be able to demonstrate competency with cloze skills in American Sign Language (course-level SLO).* 2. *Students will be able to interpret from American Sign Language to English and English to American Sign Language (program-level SLO).* 3. *Students will be able to articulate an informed personal reaction to works of literature (program-level SLO).*]

Subjective Test: a test in which the impression or opinion of the scorer determines the score or evaluation of performance; a test in which the answers cannot be known or prescribed in advance. [Ex. *Essay, case study, classroom observation, oral presentation.*]

Summative Assessment: the assessment of student achievement at the end point of their education or at the end of a course. The focus of summative assessment is on the documentation of student achievement by the end of a course or program. It does not reveal the pathway of development to achieve that endpoint.

Target Performance: the desired or expected result from the measurement of a student learning outcome or program objective; also referred to as a *benchmark, criteria for success, or standard.* [Ex. 1. *100% of students will pass the Police Academy Exam with a score of 90 or above;* 2. *80% of students will score 80 or better on a skills test.*]

Triangulation: the collection of data via multiple methods in order to determine if the results show a consistent outcome.

Use of Results for Improvement: what you will do in the next assessment cycle to address weaknesses identified by your assessment results. This is referred to as “closing the loop” and represents the most critical step in the assessment process.

Validity: the extent to which an assessment measures what it is intended to measure.

Value-Added: describes the increase in learning that occurs during a course, program, or undergraduate education. Can either focus on the individual student (for example, how much better a student can write at the end, rather than at the beginning) or on a cohort of students (whether senior papers demonstrate more sophisticated writing skills—in the aggregate—than freshmen papers). This requires a baseline measurement for comparison. (Leskes, 2002)

Appendix B

Timeline for Assessment of Student Learning

Student learning assessment is an on-going process. A timeline provides markers regarding collection, review and use of assessment information to improve teaching and learning.

1. **May:** Program Coordinators and Directors review assessment plans completed in their programs during the previous academic year. Program coordinators and directors are expected to disseminate this information to their faculty. Completed Institutional Effectiveness Reports for the current year and preliminary reports for the upcoming year are due by May 31.
2. **June:** The Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research reviews the Institutional Effectiveness Reports for each program. This review includes examining the assessment results and anticipated improvements from the previous year as recorded in the Institutional Effectiveness Report just completed, as well as potential revisions of the Institutional Report for the upcoming year to reflect suggested improvements. If needed, suggested revisions are disseminated to respective program coordinators or directors.
3. **August:** Programs review their Student Learning Outcomes and finalize measures for the upcoming academic year. Programs determine the timeline for their assessment of SLOs for the upcoming academic year. Typically, this review process has begun at the conclusion of the spring semester or during summer months, as program coordinators and directors and faculty are available.
4. **September:** The Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research reviews the assessment process for each program in conjunction with the respective program coordinator or director.
5. **October through end of academic year:** Academic and Workforce Programs use the identified measures to assess student learning throughout the academic year (ending in May for instructional programs, and not including summer terms), following the timeline established by the program. At the conclusion of each semester, instructors input assessment results and anticipated course-level improvements into SPOL.
6. **January:** Programs review effectiveness of the assessment plan implemented during the Fall Semester, tabulating and analyzing findings based on measures used to assess student learning. Modifications are made as needed for subsequent Spring Semester. Action plans for improvement are developed based on analysis of findings.
7. **March:** Program Coordinators and Directors, as Budget directors, submit their budget requests to their respective supervisors. If preliminary data suggests a

need for budget changes, it is recommended that budget directors submit a preliminary Institutional Effectiveness Report for the current year.

8. **May:** Completed Institutional Effectiveness Reports for the current year with finalized assessment results and anticipated changes for the upcoming year (i.e., Use of Results for Improvement), as well as preliminary reports for the upcoming year are due by May 31.

9. **Cycle begins again**

NOTES:

- Any information (measures and findings) from summer classes that lead to suggested improvements should be included in the next academic year.
- An annual report regarding the state of assessment at GC will be prepared by the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research.

Source: Committee minutes of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee

Appendix C

Timeline for Assessment of Administrative and Support Services Units

1. **June:** Directors of administrative and academic support units review assessment plans completed in their programs or units during the previous academic year. Their respective Vice President and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research meet with directors to share results of their findings. Completed Institutional Effectiveness Reports for the current year and preliminary reports for the upcoming year are due by June 30.
2. **July:** The Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research reviews the assessment process for each department in conjunction with the departmental director. This review includes examining the assessment results and anticipated improvements from the previous year as recorded in the Institutional Effectiveness Report just completed, as well as potential revisions to the Institutional Effectiveness Report for the upcoming year to reflect suggested improvements. If needed, a revised “Preliminary” report is submitted and these are used to revise the Institutional Reports for both the current and upcoming academic years.
3. **August:** Departments review their departmental outcomes and finalize measures for the upcoming academic year. Directors determine the timeline for their assessment of outcomes for the upcoming academic year. Typically, this review process has begun at the conclusion of the spring semester or during summer months.
4. **No later than the end of September:** The Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research reviews the assessment process for each department in conjunction with the departmental director to determine if the assessment plan is still appropriate and accurate.
5. **October through end of academic year:** Administrative and academic support units assess their outcomes throughout the academic year (from September through August), recording assessment results as they occur.
6. **January:** Departments review the continued effectiveness of their assessment plan implemented at the beginning of the academic year. Modifications to the assessment plan are made as needed for the remainder of the cycle. Action plans for improvement are developed based on analysis of assessment results.
7. **March:** Departmental Directors, as Budget directors, submit their budget requests and preliminary Institutional Effectiveness Reports for the upcoming year, as well as their “completed” IE Report for the current year. With the approval of the Vice President to which the Director reports, as well as the

Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, Departmental Directors may revise their IE Reports at the end of the spring semester or summer sessions to include final assessment results and anticipated changes for the upcoming year (i.e., Use of Results for Improvement).

8. **May/June:** Completed Institutional Effectiveness Reports for the current year with finalized assessment results and anticipated changes for the upcoming year (i.e., Use of Results for Improvement), as well as any revisions to preliminary reports for the upcoming year are due no later than June 30.
9. **Cycle begins again**

Source: Committee minutes of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee

Appendix D

Role of Stakeholders in the Assessment Process

Students:

- Participate actively in the program
- Evaluate effectiveness of the program (course evaluations)
- Complete satisfaction and post-education surveys

Faculty:

- Participate fully in the development and implementation of the program assessment plan
- Integrate SLOs into curriculum
- Identify and implement effective action plans based on results of assessment
- Participate in professional development

Program Coordinators/Program Directors:

- Serve as lead faculty for input of information into assessment software
- Ensure validity of assessment tools
- Coordinate with faculty in developing and implementing program assessment plan
- Ensure SLO/assessment plan is in compliance with appropriate external standards
- Ensure program assessment plan follows college-wide assessment timeline
- Consult with chair in development and implementation of program assessment plan
- Ensure assessment of Student Learning Outcomes for off-campus dual-credit students
- Identify budgetary needs based on action plans

Division Directors:

- Ensure faculty develop an assessment plan for programs and classes
- Ensure faculty implement an assessment plan for programs and classes
- Consult with Institution's Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research regarding program outcomes
- Ensure program assessment plans fall within college-wide assessment timeline
- Monitor the progress of program assessment plans
- Support faculty with necessary resources
- Review SLO/assessment plans for compliance with appropriate external standards

- Ensure assessment of Student Learning Outcomes for off-campus dual-credit students
- Request budgetary needs based on assessment results and action plans
- Ensure allocation and distribution of assessment funds based on action plans

Dean of Technical and Professional Education:

- Develop department timelines for submission of assessment reports within the institutional assessment timeline
- Ensure departments complete assessment reports on a timely basis
- Report to the Vice President of Instruction on issues related to assessment
- Prioritize and make budgetary recommendations based on requests made by departments within the division
- Ensure assessment of Student Learning Outcomes for e-learning (online) students

Directors of Academic and Student Support Services Units:

- Responsible for assessment plans and measuring outcomes for continuing education, distance education, library and learning resources, and the student success center.
- Ensure assessment of Student Learning Outcomes for off-campus dual-credit students
- Request budgetary needs based on assessment results and action plans

Directors of Administrative Support Services Units:

- Responsible for assessment plans and measuring outcomes in their respective departments
- Request budgetary needs based on assessment results and action plans

Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research:

- Meets with program coordinators/directors and support unit directors to provide support
- Reviews assessment process for each program and provide feedback
- Implements the assessment timeline
- Serves as a liaison between Administration and Faculty
- Facilitates training and professional development in assessment
- Supports and encourages a culture of assessment
- Keeps abreast of current best practices
- Keeps abreast of SACS and other external accrediting agencies

Vice President of Administration:

- Approves allocation of funds/resources based on assessment results and implications of actions to be implemented for continuous improvement
- Oversees assessment plans for administrative support units

Vice President of Instruction:

- Prioritizes allocation of funds for assessment
- Oversees student learning/curriculum development
- Oversees assessment plans for academic and student support services
- Leads assessment of student learning throughout the institution
- Serves as Accreditation Liaison

President:

- Motivates/implements regulations throughout institution
- Links the community, Board of Regents, and Faculty to implement policy
- Advocates for assessment of student learning outcomes as an institutional priority
- Prioritizes the resources necessary to develop and maintain a culture of assessment

Appendix E
GALVESTON COLLEGE
AN INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN
2012-2017

[Note: The following is excerpted from “New Horizons: Strategic Goals and Institutional Goals for Continuous Development.”]

Mission

Galveston College, a comprehensive community college committed to teaching and learning, creates accessible learning opportunities to fulfill individual and community needs by providing high-quality educational programs and services.

Purposes

The purposes of Galveston College are defined in the Texas Education Code, Section 130.003, and shall be to provide:

- (1) technical programs up to two years in length leading to associate degrees or certificates;
- (2) occupational programs leading directly to employment in semi-skilled and skilled occupations;
- (3) freshman and sophomore courses in arts and sciences;
- (4) continuing adult education programs for occupational or cultural upgrading;
- (5) compensatory education programs designed to fulfill the commitment of an admissions policy allowing the enrollment of disadvantaged students;
- (6) a continuing program of counseling and guidance designed to assist students in achieving their individual educational goals;
- (7) workforce development programs designed to meet local and statewide needs;
- (8) adult literacy programs and other basic skills programs for adults; and,
- (9) such other purposes as may be prescribed by the Texas Higher Education
- (10) Coordinating Board or the Galveston College Board of Regents, in the best interest of post-secondary education in Texas.

Galveston College exists to serve these purposes as they relate first to the local service areas, then to the State of Texas, and finally, to the nation. Further, Galveston College accepts the challenge of providing the resources, curricula, instructional support, and personnel required to best serve the many educational needs of its students.

PHILOSOPHY OF GALVESTON COLLEGE

The faculty, staff, Board of Regents, and administrators at Galveston College are committed to the concept that our College be an open door to learning. With this goal in mind, we extend an educational opportunity to students of all ages who can profit from instruction. Every effort is made to provide equal access to the educational opportunities offered at Galveston College without regard to age, gender, color, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, creed, and/or disability.

In keeping with this philosophy, Galveston College recognizes and accepts the responsibility for providing curricula for university-bound students, for students seeking career opportunities in a variety of occupations, and for persons of the community seeking cultural enrichment, short-term skill training, or personal improvement opportunities. The College will seek to achieve these goals within the limits of its legal responsibilities and available fiscal resources.

Vision

Galveston College: A beacon of light guiding lifelong learning.

Values

The Board of Regents developed a list of seven values as an integral part of the College Mission and Vision. The values reinforce the Board's desire to provide ethical leadership and are used in making decisions undertaken by the college community as the Mission is operationalized. From the development of unit goals to the simplest actions and decisions taken by college staff, these values will manifest themselves.

Integrity	Stewardship	Diversity	Respect
Excellence	Access	Achievement	

INTRODUCTION

The 2007-2012 Institutional Master Plan was a statement of common hopes and dreams for Galveston College. This document and evaluation documents that support it represent the completion of a five year master planning and evaluation cycle at Galveston College. *New Horizons* sets forth a new set of hopes and new dreams for the Galveston College community. *New Horizons* is based on a three-phase process that includes setting goals, developing plans to achieve them, and monitoring the success of goal achievement, which includes feeding information back into the planning process. The process was undertaken by the College faculty, the Regents, the administration,

the staff, and the community in an effort to help people within the College and in the surrounding community achieve five important results:

- To help us better understand the College's needs, opportunities, and resources, and how they are related;
- To help us resolve our individual opinions into a consensus of what we should be doing and where we should be headed;
- To help all of us become more involved in the College decision-making system in a productive manner;
- To help us develop a greater sense of confidence about the College, a clearer idea of our collective aspirations, and a positive feeling of momentum for achieving our goals; and
- To develop within the institution a greater sense of community, of belonging, of being part of what happens at Galveston College.

There are other functions intended for this plan. It will be reviewed on an annual basis by the College community to determine progress toward achieving our goals. Another purpose is to serve as a source of information and as a guide to anyone interested in the betterment of Galveston College. In this role, it is hoped this plan will encourage comment, creative ideas, and dialogue not only within the College, but also within the supporting community. For this reason, it will be disseminated to all interested persons and organizations within the service area. It is hoped that each reader will want to become involved with us in bringing the goals to reality.

GALVESTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Provide dynamic programs of study and conduct appropriate cultural activities to meet the needs of a diverse student body that is reflective of the community and service area constituents so that constituents will be prepared to compete in a global economy.
2. Provide comprehensive student support services that enhance student success.
3. Provide effective recruitment and retention processes.
4. Provide a qualified and diverse faculty and staff through fair hiring processes and continuous professional development.
5. Provide facilities and grounds that create a physical environment conducive to teaching and learning in the 21st Century.
6. Provide and continuously improve technology to collect and store data, provide required information, support learning needs, and facilitate effective communications.
7. Provide effective and accountable management of resources.
8. Seek additional resources to support the mission of the College.
9. Conduct and document comprehensive institutional research, planning, and information services that support continuous improvement of every facet of college operations.
10. Meet all federal, state, local, and accreditation agency accountability standards for operations and quality.

Appendix F

Galveston College General Education/Core Curriculum Competencies 2013-2014

Critical Thinking Skills:

- **Creative Thinking** - Be able to generate/demonstrate original ideas
- **Innovation** - Be able to apply information in a novel way
- **Inquiry** - Be able to ask relevant questions
- **Analysis** - Be able to list/describe the components of information
- **Evaluation** - Be able to judge the relevance of the components of information
- **Synthesis** - Be able to integrate/organize information in its functional context

Communication Skills:

- **Written** - Be able to develop, interpret, and express ideas effectively through written communication
- **Oral** - Be able to develop, interpret, and express ideas effectively through oral communication
- **Visual** - Be able to develop, interpret, and express ideas effectively through visual communication

Empirical & Quantitative Skills:

- **Data Collection** - Be able to collect data
- **Data Manipulation** - Be able to manipulate data
- **Analysis** - Be able to analyze data to draw informed conclusions

Teamwork:

- **Points of View** - Be able to consider different points of view to support a shared purpose or goal
- **Work with others** - Be able to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal

Personal Responsibility:

- Be able to connect **choices**, **actions** and **consequences** to ethical decision-making

Social Responsibility:

- **Intercultural Competence** - Be able to demonstrate intercultural competence
- **Civic Responsibility** - Be able to demonstrate knowledge of civic responsibility
- **Engagement** - Be able to engage effectively in regional, national, and/or global communities

