

PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

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Focused Interim Report:
Accomplishing the Recommendations
From the April 2008
Comprehensive Visit

Prepared for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

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INTRODUCTION

This Focused Interim Report is written to address the four recommendations crafted by the evaluation committee from their April 16-18, 2008, visit for Pacific Lutheran University's decennial accreditation process. On July 24, 2008 PLU's accreditation was reaffirmed.

In addition to the four recommendations, addressed thoroughly in this report, the evaluation team commended PLU for accomplishments around mission, facilities, sustainability, information & technology services, and faculty involvement in curricular design.

This report demonstrates that the university is now in compliance with accreditation standards as raised in Recommendations One and Three (Standards 2.B.2 and 4.A.5, and Policy 4.1). Further, the report shows improvement in areas addressed by Recommendations Two and Four (Standards 2.B.1 and 2.B.2, Policy 2.2, and Standard 1.B.6-8).

RECOMMENDATION ONE – PUBLISH LEARNING OUTCOMES

While noting that the institution has clearly identified target Integrative Learning Objectives that are widely understood across the campus as shared student learning outcomes, the Evaluation Committee did not find published learning objectives for every individual program or degree. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the University develop and publish learning outcomes for all degree and certificate programs (Standard 2.B.2).

Response to Recommendation

On May 7, 2009 student learning outcomes for 100% of all major and certificate programs were published to a newly established Assessment Web site. This goal was achieved over the course of the full academic year through careful preparation, communication, and oversight by the Office of the Provost.

Preparing for the Task

In late Spring 2008, a qualified internal member of the faculty was appointed by the provost to the position of director of assessment and was given primary responsibility for guiding the development and publication of student learning outcomes for all major and certificate programs. Dr. Karen McConnell, co-Interim Dean of the School of Education and Movement Studies, continues to hold this position. To best achieve the goal several preliminary actions were taken. First, during Summer 2008, the director of assessment audited existing assessment practices based on information provided in the Assessment Activities sections of the 2007-2008 Annual Unit Reports. The audit helped to clarify 1) those programs with existing published learning outcomes, 2) those programs without existing published learning outcomes, and 3) commonly reported program level assessment practices. The audit also helped to determine potential needs associated with meeting the recommendation ([Appendix 1-A: Assessment Audit](#)). This comprehensive review confirmed the NWCCU assertion that learning outcomes were not established or published for all programs. While approximately 40% of departments and programs reported the existence of program level student learning outcomes, most did not have these published or otherwise clearly available, and others misunderstood program goals for student learning outcomes.

As a result of the information gathered from the audit activities, it was clear that actions needed to be taken to help all program leaders and department chairs understand the nature of academic assessment and what constitutes program level learning outcomes. It was also noted that misunderstandings and some general resistance around assessment needed to be addressed in order to provide academic leaders with the knowledge and motivation necessary to successfully guide the learning outcomes development within their respective units.

Second, to aid the academic leaders in understanding the NWCCU recommendation, and to begin to foster an appreciation for the role of outcomes in assessment, as well as the role of assessment in the quality assurance of the university, the director of assessment developed a comprehensive Assessment Guidebook ([Appendix 1-B: Assessment Guidebook](#)) for use by the

academic leadership and faculty in writing outcomes and establishing program level assessment plans. In addition, a workshop series was planned to help those in the academic division better understand student learning outcomes and assessment practices. The workshop series was specifically designed to help those with little to no assessment understanding or experience ([Appendix 1-C: Assessment Workshop Series](#); Appendix 1-D: [Workshop Resources](#)).

Finally, during Summer 2008 the director of assessment created a five year planning document to help guide the successful implementation of the NWCCU recommendations and to do so in a way that would help create a sustainable culture around the regular assessment of student learning in the academic division ([Appendix 1-E: Academic Assessment Guiding Document](#)).

Communicating Expectations

Prior to the start of the academic year the provost and the director of assessment established a set of internal deadlines to guide departments and programs in developing student learning outcomes. These deadlines were communicated at the academic program leaders meeting during Faculty Fall Conference and were further delineated for the academic deans ([Appendix 1-F: ADC Checklist](#)). The Assessment Guidebook was also distributed to all academic leaders at this time and was posted to the Office of the Provost Web site for reference. Additionally, expectations and clarifications of the task were communicated through two assessment workshops offered during Fall Conference. The first session, Assessment 101: Learning by Design, was attended by over 90 faculty and academic administrators and the second workshop, Assessment 201: Writing Learning Outcomes and Understanding Program Level Assessment, was attended by approximately 35 key academic leaders (principally program directors and department chairs). The progressive deadlines and their early and clear communication, along with early and well attended educational efforts and the availability of the Assessment Guidebook, were critical steps in setting the tone and expectations associated with the task.

Executing the Work

Throughout the academic year, the director of assessment provided consultation to departments and programs on the process of developing outcomes, and provided feedback regarding the quality of the outcomes as they were developed. This consultation work was done on a requested basis. Programs and departments taking advantage of consultation included: First Year Experience Program, International Honors Program, General Education Program, Global Studies Program, Environmental Studies Program, Women and Gender Studies Program, The Humanities Chair's Council, Religion, Sociology, Social Work, Economics, the Division of Natural Sciences (as a group), Geosciences, Mathematics, Physics, and Biology.

All programs were required to submit drafts of learning outcomes on two occasions prior to the final submission deadline of April 15 (the deadlines for drafts being November 1 and February 15). Compliance with these deadlines was high, with all programs providing some sort of draft or status report on both occasions. These deadlines served as a mechanism for keeping the work at the forefront of the academic division and allowed opportunities for feedback to be given and emerging needs to be addressed through consultations or alterations in workshop

and educational materials. In addition, updates on the overall progress of the task were provided to the Academic Deans Council in November, February, and April, to the Faculty Assembly in February and May, and to the Board of Regents in January and May.

Final Accomplishment

The director of assessment created the new Assessment Web page and published all major program outcomes to the site on May 7, 2009. Most programs have also published learning outcomes to departmental Web sites. The quality of the work varies from program to program, but the overall result is excellent (Appendix 1-G: [Published Program Outcomes](#)). While we are pleased that completion of the specific task of publishing student learning outcomes was achieved by all programs, the greater achievement was in moving the whole of the academic division forward in the collective understanding of outcomes based assessment and in growing the relative comfort with, and appreciation for, the process. The investment, collaboration, and cooperation given by all programs and units to this task during the 2008-2009 academic year is noteworthy. Additional achievements regarding program assessment efforts and an analysis of future activities are provided in response to Recommendation 2.

RECOMMENDATION TWO – SYSTEMATIC ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Evaluation Committee did not find evidence of systematic and longitudinal assessment of learning outcomes for all programs, and it is not clear that assessment activities consistently lead to the improvement of teaching and learning. The Evaluation Committee recommends the University take immediate steps to assess the achievement of learning outcomes in all of its educational programs and document the use of the results to improve teaching and learning (Standard 2.B.1, 2.B.2, and Policy 2.2)

Response to Recommendation

This recommendation stems from Standards 2.B.1, 2.B.2, and 2.2 which, taken together, specify the need to establish an institution assessment plan that identifies and publishes learning outcomes for all programs, and supports the regular and systematic assessment of those outcomes for the purpose of ensuring the consistent quality of the academic program and, most specifically, for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. We understand the wording of the recommendation “to take immediate steps” and also recognize the ongoing and formative nature of the work necessary to meet these accreditation standards on a regular basis. It would be short sighted and insufficient to simply respond to the immediate element of this recommendation. Rather, we must grapple with creating the resources, systems, mechanisms, policies, and procedures necessary to truly demonstrate adherence to these standards over time and to do so with quality and consistency. Attending to this recommendation, in particular, has helped to illuminate the need for PLU to systematize assessment standards and reporting and to better attend to incorporating assessment findings in processes of both planning and review (in a variety of areas).

In struggling with these issues and placing them up against existing constraints in human and fiscal resources, institutional research capacity, and leadership capacity it became clear that making progress would require identifying and moving forward on a select number of concrete and attainable tasks while simultaneously crafting a vision and plan that would allow for significant gains in all aspects of assessment to be realized over time. To this end, the explanations of the “immediate steps” that have been taken are presented below and are followed by consideration of their long-term context and planned future activities.

Concrete Actions Taken and Progress Made

Published Student Learning Outcomes

Outcomes assessment hinges on the existence of stated and published learning outcomes for the whole of the university and for each academic program. Thus, PLU’s successful response to the NWCCU’s first recommendation on publishing student learning outcomes also serves as a primary accomplishment in addressing this recommendation. The significance of this achievement over a nine-month period cannot be downplayed nor considered entirely separately from this recommendation. This would include the appointment of the assessment

director, the array of faculty development opportunities provided throughout the year, the development of the Assessment Guidebook, the shepherding provided through consultation with programs and units, and the publication of the actual program outcomes on the assessment Web page. Ongoing review of outcomes, in relation to student learning, is discussed later as part of a developing program review process.

Specific student learning outcomes have also been identified and published with regard to each element of the newly revised General Education Program, which begins in Fall 2009 (Appendix 2-A: [General Education Element Outcomes](#)). This task ran parallel to the task of publishing major program outcomes during the 2008-2009 year, and was regarded as a first step in developing and implementing an assessment plan for the new general education program. Future actions on this front are briefly described later in this document.

Creation and Utilization of New Program Assessment Planning and Reporting Template

The NWCCU response noted that it was not clear what systematic assessment efforts were in place in the academic division. This was likely due, in part, to inconsistent assessment reporting practices at the program level, as well as to the lack of a common language or shared understanding about program assessment. When conducting assessment audits using the 2007-2008 Annual Unit Reports, it was evident that a standardized format for reporting program assessment plans needed to be established. Without such common ground and systemic consistency, it is challenging for sustained conversation, cohesion, and growth of assessment practices to emerge. Crafting a template for this purpose also served to further the dialogue and understanding of program assessment within the ranks of the academic leadership (as they responded to drafts and considered components of such a template in relation to the practices of their own programs and units). This template was reviewed on two separate occasions by the Academic Dean's Council, was communicated to program directors by deans, and was published to the Assessment Web site eight weeks prior to the unit report deadlines. The process of establishing a more specific assessment planning and reporting template was also supported by the creation of the Assessment Guidebook which provides academic leadership with a common philosophy, language, and framework on program assessment processes. The efficacy of this action was determined during Summer 2009 when program assessment plans using the new planning template were evaluated against a basic rubric ([Appendix 2-B: Assessment Plan Template](#); [Appendix 2-C: Assessment Plan Rubric](#)). Summary responses to the reports were provided to program and department leaders early in the Fall term. Common assessment practices identified in the audit were communicated at a 2009 Faculty Fall Conference session ([Appendix 2-D: Summary Statement](#)). This session served as a mechanism to help identify informal cohorts and support structures for units at similar phases of assessment implementation and sophistication. Thus, creating a common template for assessment planning and reporting represents a critical step forward in developing a shared sense of language, expectations, and utilization of program assessments across all sectors of the academic division.

Improved Practices and Expanded Use of National Survey and Assessment Instruments

A variety of university-wide and longitudinal assessment activities are being reviewed as part of the process of developing a sustainable institutional assessment plan. Greater consistency and care must be applied to making use of commonly employed survey instruments, specifically for the improvement of teaching and learning. The administration of the NSSE as a longitudinal assessment instrument was continued in 2009. The FSSE was also administered for the first time in 2009. It is recognized that mechanisms for sharing results with various constituents on campus remain weak. Results from these two instruments will be shared with relevant faculty and university committees this academic year, with the intent of using them to help inform curricular and co-curricular programming and assessment activities, most specifically in the General Education Program and the First Year Experience Program. Thus, continuation of this survey, with the addition of the FSSE, constitutes a concrete action taken with the intent to better distribute and utilize findings to inform educational practice.

In conjunction with the NSSE, the use of the Collegiate Learning Assessment is being piloted in the 2009-2010 academic year. To this end the director of assessment has participated in Web seminars sponsored by the Council on Aid to Education (Introduction to the CLA; CLA Administration Timeline), has participated in the CLA in the Classroom Academy (February 21-22, 2009, Palo Alto, CA), and has gathered and read multiple documents and studies on the CLA in order to carefully create a plan for the administration and intentional use of the assessment measure as an institution-wide pilot assessment ([Assessment 2-E: CLA Planning Document](#)).

While additional surveys and assessment instruments are employed by the Division of Student Life and other constituents at the university, the academic division is focused on improving the intentional use of the NSSE and FSSE, in conjunction with the CLA, as the principal mechanisms for attaining longitudinal, nationally benchmarked institutional level assessment data. The academic division remains committed to its philosophy of assessment as principally housed and rooted in the disciplines, being both authentic and didactic in design, and seeks to balance its approaches such that carefully selected assessment measures are used and understood in relation to one another, allowing their intended purpose of improving teaching and learning to be fully realized.

Planning for Periodic Program Review Process

A critical element of the assessment plan for the university hinges on the creation of a meaningful periodic program review cycle. Such a review process would help to ensure that appropriate learning outcomes are being realized by students in every program at the university, and would provide both internal and external evaluation of programs in response to detailed self-study. Several draft documents have helped to guide early conversation with the Academic Dean's Council about the philosophy, purpose, and structure of a review cycle and have helped to identify the next steps necessary to move the process forward. Each of these factors is present in the most recent draft discussion documents ([Appendix 2-F: Program Review Cycle Diagram](#); [Appendix 2-G: Program Review Overview Slides](#)). The academic division will be continuing discussions of this initiative, recognizing that there are considerable time demands and resources required to develop a sustainable system that can respond to the

needs and expectations of programs, the administration, and external constituents. The most immediate next action steps will include the continued refinement of assessment efforts at the program level, along with maximizing the use of institutional research in supporting programs with their assessment efforts and in providing rigorous and useful annual reports.

Conceptualization of Overall University Assessment Plan

Consideration of the whole assessment picture of the academic division, as conceptualized and presented in graphic illustration ([Appendix 2-H: Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Schematic](#)) has underscored all of the actions taken during the past year. As illustrated, the conceptualization of such a plan hinges on several identified components: periodic program review, improved evaluation of teaching and learning as incorporated into newly adopted faculty review policy; consistent administration and appropriate use of national survey and assessment instruments, and a carefully designed array of survey activities targeted to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other constituents. Identifying the key assessment activities, their inter-relationships and their appropriate uses remains an ongoing process that is playing out as dialogue around program review, survey use, faculty review, and additional issues evolves.

Intentional Leadership Development and Expanded Understanding of Best Practices

Key leaders in the academic division participated in several assessment workshops and conferences over the course of the year with the intent of exploring best practices and bringing those understandings back to the university. To this end, the director of assessment attended the Performance Assessment Seminar at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (November 16-18, 2008) and returned with suggestions pertaining to overall assessment planning, specifically regarding the use of indirect survey instruments ([Appendix 2-I: Questionnaire Planning and Recommendations](#)). This has spurred increased dialogue with other divisions of the university around institutional assessment activities and has resulted in the beginnings of an intentionally designed university survey cycle ([Appendix 2-J: Working Cycle Document](#)). In the spring, the director of assessment, the associate provost for curriculum, and one selected faculty member attended the CLA in the Classroom Regional Academy (February 21-22, 2009) and returned to provide an on-campus workshop on the assessment technique to five additional faculty. The interest spurred from this development opportunity has been very strong and has led to PLU's hosting of a CLA in the Classroom Regional Academy to be conducted by the Council on Aid to Education on October 15-16, 2009. Several selected PLU faculty will be sponsored by the provost to attend this workshop. Exposing key faculty to the CLA process will help to create a better overall understanding of the CLA when it is administered in 2009-2010, and will help to develop faculty leaders who have a stronger sense of performance based outcomes assessment at the classroom and program level. Finally, the associate provost and director of assessment attended the AAC&U National Meeting in Seattle in January, 2009 along with the faculty chair, faculty vice chair, and registrar. Several assessment focused sessions were attended, specifically those most related to general education assessment (including attendance at the LEAP initiative breakfast). Taken together, the commitment made to development opportunities for key faculty and assessment leaders

this year was a critical step in helping to move the whole of the academic division forward in ways that are current and that take advantage of best practice knowledge.

Improved Reporting and Documentation of Assessment Activities and Progress

Regular reports were generated throughout the year to document assessment progress and to aid the provost in communicating assessment activities to the President's Council and Board of Regents ([Appendix 2-K: Assessment Activities Updates](#)). Additionally, an annual assessment report was written by the assessment director and submitted to the provost ([Appendix 2-L: 2008-2009 Assessment Report](#)). While these practices don't directly demonstrate measures of student learning outcomes, they help to create a culture of documentation that is necessary in order to provide internal and external constituents with a clearer sense of progress being realized within the academic division.

Next Steps and Anticipated Progress

As described in the previous narrative, several next steps have been identified on a number of key assessment initiatives. These include:

- 1) Continuing consultation with departments to further refine assessment practices and incorporate and communicate outcomes-based assessment findings.
- 2) Continued development of a Periodic Program Review procedure. Actions for this year include a) refinements to the Annual Unit Reports as they begin to reflect improvements to institutional research capacity and refinements to assessment work at the program level, b) advancing the dialogue about the framework and expectations of a review process, and c) identifying and beginning to secure the resources necessary for implementing (at least the initial phases of) a periodic program review process.
- 3) General Education Assessment Plan. A completed plan for the assessment of General Education will be achieved in the 2009-2010 academic year. The General Education Program Committee, convened by the associate provost and supported by the assessment director, will oversee this process. It is anticipated that the plan will initially include program level assessments for each general education element (in relation to stated student learning outcomes for each element along with the Integrative Learning Objectives) as well as intentional use of the CLA and NSSE data in relation to the ILOs.
- 4) Implementing the CLA and CLA in the Classroom Activities. The CLA will be administered as a pilot assessment for the academic division during the 2009-2010 academic year. The CLA in the Classroom Regional Academy to be held on campus in October, and ongoing workshops sponsored by the Office of the Provost and the Center for Teaching and Learning will help to provide an understanding of this assessment tool among a wider range of faculty.
- 5) Effective utilization and sharing of NSSE and FSSE results. An executive summary of findings from NSSE and FSSE will need to be made available to appropriate constituents for comment and to guide relevant decisions for which they may provide insight. Exact mechanisms for doing so have yet to be established. However, at the minimum a brief report or reports highlighting specific and relevant findings will be distributed to the General Education Committee, the First Year Experience Committee, and the program, department, and committee chairs. Ideally such briefs will be accompanied by a few

carefully selected questions for discussion and response. Student focus groups may also be used to gain additional insights into particular findings if recommended by relevant committees. Any recommendations that would emerge from these activities would then be addressed as needed.

- 6) Improving resources and support relative to assessment. Addressing the need for expanded administrative capacity to support assessment and related activities (assessment director, IR) remains a priority. This may need to include providing additional release time associated with the position of assessment director, creating new appointments within institutional research, and providing funding to programs and departments to support both essential and innovative assessment work.

Conclusion

In the single academic year since the NWCCU's accreditation visit occurred and recommendations were given, clear steps have been initiated and taken that move the academic division forward in the meaningful assessment of student learning. Progress has begun in establishing the resources, systems, mechanisms, policies, and procedures necessary for assessment activities to fully manifest themselves into sustainable cycles of improvement. The campus climate has evolved considerably in its willingness to engage assessment efforts. While much remains to be accomplished, we are confident in our ability to further refine our capacity to utilize longitudinal and systematic assessment as a mechanism that can guide us and inform us as we move through complex, challenging, and changing times at the university.

RECOMMENDATION THREE – REVISE POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR FACULTY EVALUATION

The Evaluation Committee found that with regard to faculty evaluation, the institution's practice was not consistent with its policy. In addition, the University's policy was not consistent with the Commission's policy. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the University revise its policy and procedures on faculty evaluation to ensure that all faculty members are reviewed within each five-year period of service and that multiple indices are used for evaluation (Standard 4.A.5 and Policy 4.1).

Response to the Recommendation

During the 2008-2009 academic year, Provost Patricia O'Connell Killen, the Committee on Rank and Tenure, and the Academic Deans Council addressed the NWCCU's multi-part recommendation on Faculty Evaluation. Significant progress was made in four areas with work remaining in two others.

Policy on Faculty Review

Most significantly, the university's Policy on Faculty Review was revised. The Committee on Rank and Tenure, working collaboratively with the provost and in consultation with the Academic Deans and the faculty assembly, revised the extant policy and procedures on faculty review to bring them into alignment with NWCCU Policy 4.1. PLU's policy now requires review of all faculty within every five-year period. Further, the revised policy requires that multiple indices be incorporated into the review process. The faculty formally adopted the new policy at its April 2009 meeting for implementation during the 2009-2010 academic year. The new policy has been incorporated into the faculty handbook ([Appendix 3-A: Faculty Review Policy](#)).

Implementation Schedule

The Office of the Provost constructed a revised review cycle implementation schedule. Faculty members who previously were reviewed on a "post-sabbatical" (7-year) cycle are now on a fourth-year post-tenure review cycle or a fifth-year review cycle. Faculty members enter the latter after occupying a faculty rank for more than eight years. The master schedule was reviewed by the Academic Deans Council and disseminated to department chairs at their opening meeting of the year on September 1.

Master Schedule

The Office of the Provost completed its construction of a master review cycle for all tenure-stream faculty. The Office now provides to all deans annually a list of faculty due for review. Deans also receive annually the master schedule of reviews for faculty in their units. Further, the Provost disseminated the guidelines for the maintenance of the master faculty review schedule and the procedures for requesting alteration in a particular faculty member's review schedule ([Appendix 3-B: Review Schedule Guidelines](#)).

The new post-tenure fourth and fifth year review cycle process begins this academic year. Steps have been taken to ensure smooth implementation, including a decision by the provost to move the reviews to a spring deadline rather than fall as called for by the original guidelines. This will provide ample time for the review process. In order to move the review to spring on a permanent basis, the Committee on Rank and Tenure is this fall bringing a motion to the faculty assembly to revise the newly adopted policy. This alteration will spread the work of all faculty reviews across the academic year.

Internal Compliance

The NWCCU recommendation noted that institutional practice on faculty review did not comply with PLU's own policy on review. This recommendation has been addressed in four ways. First, the Office of the Provost has reconstructed and has a procedure for maintaining the master schedule list for review of all faculty and has developed procedures for notifying deans of those faculty in need of review. Second, the Provost has discussed with each academic dean their responsibility to ensure that reviews are carried out. Third, the Office of the Provost now does an annual audit of faculty reviews submitted and disseminates that information to deans and chairs. Fourth, a workshop on conducting faculty reviews has been made a regular part of the Chairs Development series.

Multiple Indices

The NWCCU recommendation also called for the use of multiple indices in faculty reviews. During Fall 2009, academic deans are working with their chairs and faculty to refine their procedures for conducting pre-tenure third-year and post-tenure fourth-year and fifth-year reviews so that they include multiple indices of faculty performance. The Office of the Provost, through Director of Assessment Dr. Karen McConnell, has provided materials on multiple indices for faculty review to the academic deans ([Appendix 3-C: Multiple Indices](#)).

Contingent Faculty

One other major piece of work remains. While the new PLU policy on faculty review adopted in spring 2009 complies with the NWCCU requirement that all faculty, including contingent faculty, be reviewed, the part related to contingent faculty is not yet in place. During the 2009-2010 academic year the procedures for regular review of contingent faculty at Pacific Lutheran University, specifically, visiting faculty, clinical faculty, lecturers, and part-time, section-by-section adjunct faculty will be developed. The acting provost is working with the Academic Deans Council and consulting with the Committee on Rank and Tenure on developing these procedures. The Office of the Provost is constructing a master review schedule for contingent faculty of all categories. This involves revising the current system of oversight on the recruitment and retention of all classes of contingent faculty. The current distributed system is inadequate for tracking contingent faculty over time. This structural issue is being addressed by the acting provost and academic deans. The review of contingent faculty will be implemented during the 2010-2011 academic year.

Conclusion

Pacific Lutheran University is now in compliance with the NWCCU policy on faculty review in that faculty are reviewed at least every five years. Measures are in place to ensure ongoing attention to this important responsibility.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR – DEVELOP AN ACTIVE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM

Institutional research is necessary and must be integrated and supportive of institutional evaluation and planning. The valuation Committee recommends that the University take immediate action to develop and active institutional research program to support assessment and planning (Standard 1.B.6-8).

Response to the Recommendation

Pacific Lutheran University has taken major steps in responding to the NWCCU recommendation on institutional research. These involve a) a review of technological and personnel capacity in the Office of Institutional Research, b) consideration of how IR can support on-going work in the assessment of student learning, and c) beginning discussions about university and division research needs.

Review

Working from the report of Dr. Michael Dooris, who had been retained in February 2008 to do an assessment of institutional research at PLU ([Appendix 4-A: Dooris Site Visit Report](#)), and upon the retirement of the person who had been the long-term institutional research analyst, the provost retained a consultant, Deirdre McGoldrick, for the 2008-2009 academic year to assess technological capacity in the IR Office while providing needed regulatory reporting and responding to low-level data requests. Both Dooris' report and the work of McGoldrick showed that the university had significant work to do in training personnel who use Banner systems and that the university had not been using these systems to their full capacity for institutional research. Further, it became quite clear that the university lacked some of the technological resources, e.g., a data warehouse, normally associated with an ongoing institutional research program. During 2008-2009, consultant McGoldrick, in collaboration with others in the Office of the Provost, began an educational process aimed particularly at offices in the academic division. McGoldrick also provided an assessment of basic technological system improvements needed for the Institutional Research Office to be able to undertake the kinds of work needed for a comprehensive institutional research program.

Consultant McGoldrick was hired as the systems and data analyst for the Office of Institutional Research in June 2009. During 2009-2010, she continues to provide regulatory reporting, responds to requests for basic data, works collaboratively on educating personnel about the kinds of data available through PLU's Banner system and how to access it, and works with offices to improve their coding and refine their use of Banner.

Consultants Gene Spencer and Brian Hoyt were hired to evaluate administrative information and technology services at PLU, and to assist the university in developing a multi-year strategic plan for PLU's administrative information environment (AIE). The process was led by Associate Provost for Information & Technology Services Chris Ferguson. The consultants' report

([Appendix 4-B: Strategic Plan for the AIE](#)) now guides PLU executive leadership in setting priorities, sequencing steps, and assuring full realization of PLU's vision for the AIE. The portion of this vision most germane to institutional research includes cultivation of an independent, well-trained user community resident in all sectors of the university; such important shared resources as a data dictionary and training and professional development plans for each administrative area; and a data warehouse that enables easy retrieval of reliable data in support of assessment activities and data-driven decision making ([Appendix 4-C: Components of the Strategic Plan](#)). The report has also led to a Strategic Technologies Initiative for 2009-10, of which institutional research is one dimension ([Appendix 4-D: 2009-2010 University Initiatives](#)).

Supporting Student Learning

The academic division made progress on how institutional research might support assessment of student learning. Director of Assessment Dr. Karen McConnell attended the Performance Assessment in Higher Education Seminar at Harvard University in November of 2008. She subsequently shared material from the workshop with the provost, Academic Deans Council and others. She developed a draft plan for institutional research in the academic division as it relates to assessment of student learning. As well, she drafted a model for assessment in the academic division that incorporates periodic external review of academic programs (see [Appendix 2-H: Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Schematic](#)). This document has been shared with the Academic Deans Council and discussions are ongoing. Further, Dr. McConnell developed a proposed schedule of surveys across all sectors of the university (see [Appendix 2-J: Working Cycle Document](#)). This document also has been reviewed by the Academic Deans Council and, in a preliminary manner, by the President's Council.

Dr. McConnell and Associate Provost for Curriculum Dr. Jan Lewis will be working this year with the General Education Steering Committee on refining an assessment plan for general education. As a pilot project on one possible approach, PLU is participating in CLA (Collegiate Learning Assessment) during the 2009-2010 academic year. This project is illustrative of the range of activities IR needs to support as we grow and enhance assessment work.

Institutional Research Across the University

During 2008-2009 the provost convened preliminary conversations with the vice presidents for admission and enrollment services, student life, development, and finance and operations about their specific needs for data that could be provided by institutional research. The Academic Deans Council also identified types of institutional research data that would assist in their planning.

Conclusion

The Dooris and Spencer/Hoyt reports, the information provided by McGoldrick, the various projects undertaken by McConnell, the provost's conversations with other vice presidents, the consideration of best practices at other institutions, and the NWCCU recommendation itself all point to the need for a more robust institutional research capacity so that the university can

adequately serve the expectations associated with both external and internal reporting requirements.

For 2009-2010, the Provost's Office will continue to facilitate conversations with the vice presidents for admission and enrollment services, student life, development, and finance and operations as part of the next step in developing a university-wide institutional research plan. Further, institutional research has been identified as a topic within the 2020 long-range planning process.

This conversation will focus on the issues of technological capacity and quality; confidence and competence surrounding the entry and maintenance of data in the Banner systems (especially those used in admission, student life, and the academic divisions); institutional research support for student learning and assessment, institutional research support for program assessment and planning; and the personnel levels necessary to address our institutional research needs.

While the provost will facilitate the conversations with the other vice presidents in moving forward on the construction of an institutional research plan, the shape and implementation of the final plan will be guided by the provost, in consultation with the other vice presidents, and the president.

APPENDIXES

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- 1-B: Assessment Guidebook
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- PLU Organizational Chart

Academic Assessment Audit by Unit - Reported Practices in Self-Statements for Accreditation (1998-2008)

Department/Program	Major surveys	Gen Ed course surveys	Alumni Surveys/Tracking	Exit Interviews/surveys	Exit/competency exams	Standardized Exams	Designated CBAs	Capstone papers/presentations	Portfolios	Internship/clinical site evals	graduate school placements	external accreditation	Public dissemination of student work	external review	student focus groups	Program/Learning Objectives
English								X								X
Languages and Literature						X		X								X
Philosophy	X		X					X					X			X
Religion							X	X		X						X
Biology	X					X		X								?
Chemistry						X	X	X								X
Computer Science							X	X			X					X
Geosciences							X	X								?
Mathematics	X				X	X		X								?
Physics			X							X						?
Anthropology	X															X
Economics	X		X													?
History							X	X								X
Political Science								X								X
Psychology								X					X	X		X
Sociology	X							X					X			X
Social Work	X		X	X						X		X	X			X
Art								X						X		X
Communication and Theatre								X			X	X				?
Music			X				X	X			X	X				X
Instructional Development								X	X	X	X					X
Movement Studies		X		X				X	X	X	X					X
Nursing	X		X	X		X	X			X	X					X
Business	X		X	X		X	X		X							X

Notes:

1. This is draft/preliminary reporting only based on a first read of accreditation self statements - I would need to see Appendix A and meet with chairs/ reps to confirm and clarify (reports vary considerably in level of sophistication and clarity). However, it does already suggest: a) there are a wide variety of assessment efforts used in the academic sector b) capstones assessments of varying types are the most common assessment efforts at the department/program level and c) most departments/programs claim to employ multiple assessment measures, many including both direct and indirect assessment.

2. Reporting of an assessment process in this chart does NOT mean the process was done well or that any meaning was made of findings. Many units seem to do little interpretation of results/findings and fewer track the impact their efforts have had on curriculum changes, pedagogy or learning. None seem able to show continuity over time (except as specifically required for external accreditation I imagine) and so don't fully close the loop or document improvement in student learning resulting from assessment efforts.

3. A mark of "x" under "Program/Learning Objectives" only indicates that such objectives are stated to exist - very few actually identified them in the document. Combined with the above the accreditation report seems reasonable in its interpretation.

Chinese Studies						X	X	X			X					X
Environmental Studies								X								X
First Year Experience Program		X														X
Global Studies	X		X					X							X	X
International Honors						X									X	
Legal Studies																?
Publishing and Printing Arts	X									X		X				?
Scandinavian Area Studies								X								?X
Women's and Gender Studies			X												X	?
Totals	11	2	10	4	1	8	9	22	3	4	6	7	6	3	3	22
Percentage	33%	6%	30%	12%	3%	24%	27%	67%	9%	12%	18%	21%	18%	9%	9%	67%
	Major surveys	Gen Ed course surveys	Alumni Surveys	Exit Interviews/surveys	Exit/competency exams	Standardized Exams	Designated CBAs	Capstone papers/presentations	Portfolios	Internship/clinical site evals	graduate school placements	external accreditation	Public dissemination of student work	external review	student focus groups	Program/Learning Objectives

4. Major needs seem to include:

- a) assistance in clearly articulating department/program goals and student learning goals. (workshops/individualized consulting with units)
- b) Closing the loop and documenting assessment work and findings (workshops/individualized consulting with units/ consistent, uniform reporting on assessment practices, findings and impact).
- c) Considering additional targeted workshops/training/resources around common practices: capstone papers/presentations as program assessment; survey development; using/interpreting standardized test results, portfolio management, etc.
- d) Improved alumni tracking help/resources for departments - or stronger centralized alumni office survey work to support department efforts.

PLU ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT GUIDEBOOK AND RESOURCES

2008-2009

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**PLU Academic Assessment Guidebook
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What is Academic Assessment?

Assessment is the systematic collection of information about student learning, using the time, knowledge, expertise, and resources available, in order to inform decisions about how to improve learning. (Walvoord, p. 2)

At its most basic assessment is comprised of:

1. Articulating goals for student learning
2. Gathering evidence about how well students are meeting the goals
3. Interpreting evidence against predetermined standards/expectations
4. Using the evidence for the improvement of student learning

In other words: assessment is saying what you do, doing what you say, seeing how well you did it, and then doing it better.

Types of Assessment

Assessment is often referred to as either *direct or indirect* and as *formative or summative*.

Indirect Assessment

Indirect assessment include asking current and past students how well they thought they learned, or inquiring about variables related to student learning such as satisfaction and engagement. It may also involve tracking related indicators of learning such as graduate school placements and job placements.

Commonly employed indirect assessments:

Surveys and questionnaires
Interviews
Focus groups
Reflective essays

Direct Assessment

Direct assessment includes the demonstration of learning itself. Direct assessments require students to use their knowledge, skills and abilities in order to complete the selected task.

Commonly employed direct assessments:

Standardized/published exams and inventories
Embedded class assignments and course activities
Papers, projects, experiments, presentations, demonstrations,
reports, case studies, service projects etc.

Oral exams/competence interviews
Portfolios
Observation

In essence, indirect assessment asks *about* student learning while direct assessment requires a direct demonstration of learning. Strong programmatic assessment will use both types in ways that inform one another and inform the teaching and learning process.

Formative Versus Summative Assessment:

Formative assessment is assessment designed to give feedback on, and to improve, the process of learning. It captures student's progress toward the desired outcome.

Formative assessment is typically embedded classroom assessment that may take the form of drafts of papers, practice performances, response papers and other learning activities that contribute to the final desired outcome. Formative assessment in a program may involve evaluating papers in a 200 or 300 level course on a specific learning objective that is then re-evaluated as part of a capstone assessment.

Summative assessment is assessment done for the purpose of providing an evaluative summary and capturing student achievement. Summative assessment typically occurs at the completion of a major classroom assessment, course, or program of study. The evaluation of comprehensive portfolios or capstone papers are common examples of summative assessments used at the program level at PLU.

What is Program Assessment?

Program assessment is an on-going process that is designed for the purpose of monitoring and improving student learning within a given academic program.

Quality program assessment is comprised of:

- ✓ Clearly established program mission and goals
- ✓ Explicit statements of what students are expected to learn (learning objectives)
- ✓ The intentional alignment of the curriculum to the stated learning objectives
- ✓ The collection of empirical data/evidence that indicate student attainment of the objectives (qualitative or quantitative)
- ✓ The interpretation and application of collected data/evidence for the purpose of improving student learning
- ✓ Accurate and regular documentation of the above
- ✓ Regular review of the assessment process and findings in relation to program growth and development.

Thus, it follows that the commonly identified and understood steps of program assessment include:

1. **Develop learning objectives that reflect the program's mission and goals**
2. **Check for alignment between the curriculum and the learning objectives**
3. **Develop an assessment plan**
4. **Collect and interpret assessment data**
5. **Use results to improve the program**
6. **Routinely examining the assessment process and correct it as needed**
7. **Document all assessment work and report as necessary**

Each of these steps is elaborated on briefly below.

Steps of Program Assessment

Step 1: Develop Learning Objectives

Learning objectives are clear, concise statements that describe how students can demonstrate their mastery of a program goal. Learning objectives are student-focused (not faculty focused) and are anchored in verbs that identify the actions, behaviors, dispositions and ways of thinking or knowing that students should be able to demonstrate.

There are a number of things to keep in mind when designing learning objectives. These are:

1. Effective program learning objectives should:
 - a. Focus on the learner, not the teacher (what the learner will learn, NOT what the instructor will teach).
 - b. Explain how students can demonstrate mastery of the desired objective (identify the desired outcome)
 - c. Use action verbs that specify definite, observable behaviors
 - d. Use action verbs that properly identify the depth of processing required
 - e. Differentiate between value added or absolute expectations (are student required to 'improve' [value added] or are they required to perform at a specific, absolute level). Both are acceptable, but each demands its own type of attention in the assessment plan.
 - f. Incorporate or adapt professional organization outcome statements when they exist
 - g. Reflect the mission and goals of the University and the program
 - h. Be collaboratively authored and collectively accepted

(modified from Allen, p. 38 & Maki, p. 60)

2. The most effective learning objectives may often be phrased in ways that include both the desired outcome as well as the appropriate/relevant process (or

processes). This is because strong assessment practices reflect not just the desired outcomes, but also acknowledge the thoughtfulness and alignment of the learning processes used to achieve the outcome. However, when first writing program based learning objectives, the focus should be on clearly identifying the desired outcome.

Effective student learning objectives utilize phrases such as:

Upon completion of this degree, the learner will.....(*place desired outcome here*) through or as a result of or by (*place appropriate process here*)

Or

When they complete our program, students will be able to....(*place desired outcome here*) through or as a result of or by...(*place appropriate process here*).

3. Strong learning objectives lend themselves to appropriate evaluation (either qualitative or quantitative). The selection of the action verb in the objective is critical to this end. What you indicate the student should achieve is what you should then evaluate in your assessment plan. For example, if you say students will 'demonstrate' a particular skill or competency, then the actual demonstration of that skill or competency is what should ultimately be evaluated against established criteria. If students are simply asked to 'describe' the same competency rather than 'demonstrate' it on the assessment selected, it will not be possible to fully evaluate the program's success at achieving the outcome as stated.

A common tool that is helpful for selecting appropriate action verbs when writing objectives is known as Bloom's Taxonomy. A summary of action verbs based on Bloom's Taxonomy is located in the resource section of this manual. Other taxonomies and tools exist and can be used when writing learning objectives.

4. Program objectives may look and be less specific than individual course objectives. Oftentimes course objectives will specify a) the behavior/skill or ability b) a condition or process and c) the specific criterion. For example, a course learning objective might read: "Students will be able to perform one classical composition on a given instrument in front of the class with no more than three identifiable errors." In contrast, a program learning objective might state: "Students will master classical music performance on a selected instrument." Aligning the curriculum to this objective will identify where the mastery is developed within the program. Evaluating a final jury performance against an established set of criteria (e.g., a rubric established by the faculty)

may serve as the final outcome by which the success of the program in meeting this objective is ultimately evaluated.

Approaches to developing learning objectives

There are a number of processes that can be used in developing or refining learning objectives. There is no one right procedure. Basic approaches tend to fall under one of the following types (and you may have your own based on the faculty culture, disciplinary practices and history within your own unit or program).

Top down approach – in this approach an existing document (or documents) is modified at the program or departmental level to reflect specific disciplinary and departmental goals. At PLU this document would be the ILOs. Or, there may be learning objectives from governing bodies, accrediting agencies or other sources that can serve as the starting point to be modified by the faculty as appropriate.

Bottom up approach – in this approach all faculty in a department or program identify the learning objectives that are already being met in individual classes (and are hopefully already stated on course syllabi). The faculty create a master list of all of these objectives and work together to identify common objectives as well as to identify unique or missing objectives. A final list of objectives is then developed and is refined into a cohesive and inclusive document. In this approach you are building objectives off of current practices within the department or program. Various ethnographic processes fall under this general category as well.

Regardless of the process used, it is critical to foster full involvement and work to develop consensus among all faculty in the department or program. Assessment works best when there is investment and ownership in the desired outcomes and the overall assessment plan.

Finally, learning objectives often go through refinement or modification as the assessment process unfolds over time. Difficulty in gathering or interpreting assessment data may reveal a weakness in some element of the assessment process, or it may reveal a weakness in the way an objective is stated (e.g., the objective does not accurately convey what it is the department actually values and is actually evaluating). It is okay to modify and refine objectives at any point in the assessment process. When this occurs be sure to document the change and the reason for it.

Step 2: Aligning the Curriculum

Curriculum alignment is a critical element of assessment that often drives curricular revisions within classes and within programs even prior to the collection of assessment data or its evaluation. The process involves identifying where in the curriculum each of

the objectives is being met and reflecting on the overall picture. This is essentially conducting what is known as an ‘assessment audit’.

Alignment efforts can be simple simplistic, but should become more nuanced over time. An initial alignment effort may simply ask faculty to ‘check off’ which department objectives are being addressed in each of their classes. A master chart for each degree is then developed that indicates which objectives are being met and how often (some will have one check, some will have many, and occasionally, some will have no checks and will quickly demonstrate holes in the curriculum). A more refined approach will have faculty identify how objectives are being satisfied in their classes, not simply identifying if they are being addressed. Most typically this practice will identify whether an objective is “introduced”, “practiced” or “mastered” within a given course (and may also record the classroom based assessment used to demonstrate the claim). Such alignment analysis allows the faculty to better see if the overall curriculum is cohesive and if it provides for the systematic development of learning.

An example of a general alignment chart is provided below and a good resource on this step can be found in *Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education* by Mary Allen (chapter 3), or *Assessment Clear and Simple* by Walvoord (Chapter 3 and Appendix K).

Sample Curriculum Alignment Chart					
Course	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5
101	I				I
152		I			I
201	P		I		P
220	P		P		P
310		P			
238	D				D
410			D		
480	D			D	D

I – introduced, P = practiced, D = demonstrated

Adapted from: Allen, p. 43; for additional example charts see Walvoord, Appendix K, or Maki, P. 49-57

Step 3: Developing an Assessment Plan

An assessment plan essentially describes what will be done when, who will do it and what will happen as a result. Developing and implementing an assessment plan is challenging. It is important to remember that part of the on-going assessment process itself involves modification of to the assessment plan. Doing assessment well not only informs student learning, it also informs the assessment process. Therefore, it is acceptable, and expected, that a program’s assessment strategies will change and evolve over time. It is acceptable and encouraged to start simplistically and add more nuance to the efforts over time, when appropriate.

Assessment plans can be conceived of and presented any number of ways. However they are presented, the following components should be clearly articulated within the plan:

1. Identification of the learning objective or objectives being assessed in the plan
Note: Not all learning objectives need to be assessed every year. The goal is to assess all elements of the program over time. It is typical for a department to evaluate all learning objectives within a 3-7 year cycle.
2. How the objective(s) is/are aligned to the program (in which courses they are addressed)
Note: It is a common, effective and efficient practice to utilize embedded classroom based assessments for program assessment purposes. This is why it is important to know the alignment of the curriculum with the department objectives.
3. A clear description of the assessment strategy or strategies being employed (e.g., indirect measures such as a survey, focus group or interview; direct measures such as standardized exams, portfolio evaluation, capstone presentation evaluation etc).
Note: It is far better to utilize fewer strategies and to make use of the information that emerges than to conduct assessments 'for assessment sake' and never make sense of the collected information. In the case of academic assessment, less is very often much more.
4. The criterion by which the outcome will be evaluated for the purpose of program assessment.
Note: This often employs the use of a basic rubric or other evaluative tool designed to look specifically at the variable or objective of interest. If existing classroom assessments are used for program assessment, it is most common for those assessments to be given a 'second read' by faculty other than the course instructor. The grading rubric or evaluation criteria an individual faculty uses to grade the assessment for the student will likely be different from the rubric used to evaluate the program objective(s) of interest. It is also important to remember that program assessment should deal with students in aggregate and with respect for student confidentiality, privacy and anonymity.
5. A systematic method for collecting and interpreting evidence.
Note: Again remember, not all objectives need to be evaluated every year. Similarly, not every student needs to be evaluated on every objective. It is common and acceptable to use sampling procedures for the purposes of programmatic assessment. These should be determined in advance and should be clearly articulated in the assessment plan.

A well written assessment plan brings clarity to the process and allows for potential challenges or problems to be identified and fixed before the assessment is executed. In addition, a well written plan can easily become a report of the year's activities by adding a section that addresses the findings and recommended changes that resulted. Creating a clear plan each year and using it as the basis for reporting results is an excellent way to 'close the loop' and create a train of documentation that readily supports a commitment to on-going assessment. Plans need not be long or complicated.

Step 4: Collecting and Interpreting Assessment Data

This is the execution of the established plan as described followed by the application of professional judgment in identifying and reflecting on the indicators that emerge. Rich and thoughtful discussion among faculty is one of the true benefits of engaging in academic assessment efforts. It is not necessary to hire experts or others to interpret most programmatic assessment data (especially when embedded assessments are harnessed for programmatic review). Assessment need not yield perfect results in order to generate meaningful program improvements. Remember, assessment is inherently a reflective process, not a scientific one.

Step 5: Using Results to Improve the Program (closing the loop)

Making sense of assessment efforts and using them to improve student learning is at the heart of the assessment process. Well written objectives, a well aligned curriculum and a clear assessment plan will all contribute greatly to the ability to effectively 'close the loop'.

It is important to remember that academic assessment efforts do not prove or disprove anything. The process is a sort of 'action research', not a controlled experiment. It is up to the professional expertise and judgment of faculty to make sense of the data and information collected, and to do so for the purpose of informing pedagogy, curricular, resource, or other changes with the hope of improving the teaching and learning process. In this way, academic assessment should be viewed as the gathering of indicators for the purpose of informing local action. When done well it both answers and raises questions and feeds itself in a sort of cyclical way. The difficulty for many is in understanding that there is no end point to the well done assessment process, and in accepting that not all efforts will yield big ideas or major changes. It is important to acknowledge, track and report small findings and changes as well.

Most faculty are inherently inquisitive and are naturally inclined toward analysis and evaluation. It is likely that departments will gravitate toward assessment techniques that utilize disciplinary strengths and common practices in this regard. 'Closing the loop' occurs by incorporating changes into our classes after engaging in departmental discussion on pedagogy and/or curriculum and after reviewing assessment data and

information collected. Typically, however, we fail to track and report our judgments and their associated actions and so it appears that the loop hangs open.

To close the loop:

1. Conduct your assessment as planned.
2. Clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses uncovered during the assessment process. RECORD AND REPORT THESE.
3. Identify concrete actions that can be taken to try to improve on weaknesses and to harness strengths. RECORD, REPORT AND MAKE THESE CHANGES.
4. Keep minutes and notes from department/curriculum/assessment meetings, particularly noting any related actions taken throughout the year.
5. Incorporate the above actions into the assessment plan for the next year. Be sure that the revised assessment plan and information/data collected will provide indicators as to the effectiveness of changes made to curriculum, pedagogy etc. WRITE THE REVISED PLAN OUT.

Follow your plan. Report your findings and proposed actions. (go back to #1 & repeat)

Closing the loop simply involves taking action based on findings and keeping track of the variety of changes and improvements that result. Closing the loop might also involve the affirmation of an existing practice based on evidence collected.

Step 6: Examining the Assessment Process

As previously stated, not only does the assessment process inform pedagogy, curriculum and learning, it also informs the process itself. If assessment efforts did not yield the richness of information hoped for, or did not answer the questions needing answered, then it is important to critically evaluate the plan being followed. It may help to recruit an external reviewer or reviewers to evaluate the plan, review the evidence collected and the conclusions reached, in order to make recommendations for improving the process. Even if assessment practices are working and faculty are satisfied with the improvements the process yields, it is a best practice to periodically undergo such an external review (every 4-7 years). Disciplinary accrediting bodies serve this purpose for some programs.

Step 7: Document and Report Work

It is a necessary and best practice to document and report all assessment work. This is typically done as part of a department's annual report, or as a separate annual assessment report. It is essential that assessment efforts be collected in order to satisfy accountability concerns, and also to provide academic administrators with an opportunity to monitor, celebrate and convey achievements and improvements as well as to identify and attend to collective areas of need in the academic sector.

Commonly asked questions

What are the distinguishing features of, and differences between, a program mission statement, a set of program goals, and stated learning objectives at the program level?

The mission statement communicates the broad vision of the fundamental purposes and values of a program. It should be consistent with the University's mission statement, and should be written in language that is widely understood by multiple constituents. It may provide the historical and philosophical grounding of the program, the types of services and training provided, important characteristics of program participants and graduates, or other information deemed essential to the program.

Program goals are broad statements concerning the knowledge, skills, abilities and values faculty expect graduating students to achieve. Program goals might also exist around matters of faculty-student engagement, civic engagement, community leadership or other defining features of a program. Program goals are generally too vague to guide the assessment of student learning, or to be the sole source for guiding curricular development.

Learning objectives operationalize program goals into concrete terms that are measurable, quantitatively and/or qualitatively. Learning objectives are student-focused (not faculty focused) and are anchored in verbs that identify the actions, behaviors, dispositions and ways of thinking or knowing that students should be able to demonstrate. The *Integrative Learning Objectives* are institutional level outcome statements that should become more specific at the program level, reflecting the ways of thinking and knowing that are expected within a discipline, profession or field of study.

Why should faculty do assessment?

All faculty members already engage in the assessment of student learning. It is a natural and necessary element of good teaching. Faculty regularly engage informal and formal assessment practices as a way to gather feedback and information that can inform their pedagogy and curriculum. At the program level assessment ensures that the cumulative learning over time and across courses reaches the level and expectations the faculty as a whole hold for their program. Assessment done well can inform local action and promote improvements to curriculum, pedagogy, resource utilization and allocation and planning decisions within a program. These are goals and desires most faculty already value and are willing to support.

How can we do assessment well without a greater commitment of human and financial resources?

Assessment of student learning is already occurring in every course. Taking advantage of this reality is not only the most efficient and practical approach to program assessment, it is also the most authentic. Faculty already engage in the scholarship of teaching and most faculty are genuinely committed to improving their teaching and their student's learning. Additionally, most departments encourage discussions of pedagogy and curriculum, and all departments should. Making these existing practices explicit and organizing them around clear student learning objectives is the practice of academic assessment. It is true that large scale, complex and nuanced assessment would require the commitment of additional resources. It is also true that meaningful improvements to pedagogy, curriculum and learning can occur through simple assessment strategies that take advantage of a program's existing practices. Assessment does demand time and energy to be done well and so does require an investment and a commitment to self-reflection and self-improvement. However it need not be burdensome, complex or overly taxing.

How can we be assured that assessment data won't be used against a department if it shows a weakness in a program?

Assessment needs to be an honest and safe practice if it is to be truly effective. The purpose of academic assessment is to foster improvement. This is not possible if weaknesses are immediately exploited or used as points of attack. It is critical that departments, programs and institutions allow for 'safe zones' to exist into which honest reflection can occur. If improvement is valued, weaknesses that are found in the assessment process will be attended to with extra effort and/or additional resources in order to foster positive change. This is a critical point that must be understood and honored at all levels of academic leadership. However, assessment may also yield patterns of deficiencies that are not able to be corrected over time. Such realities must also be dealt with honestly and appropriately.

Isn't grading a form of assessment and can't course grades or GPA constitute sufficient assessment data?

Course grades and grade point averages do offer some information about student learning, but are too vague to be used for the purpose of programmatic assessment. Course grades cannot be deciphered in a way that allows faculty to determine which learning objectives were met adequately within the course or program.

Patterns in course grades, however, may be used in conjunction with curricular alignment charts to identify potential areas that may need to be the subject of a department's assessment efforts.

Selected Resources

Action Verbs Based on Bloom's Taxonomy

Selected Action Verbs Commonly Used in Writing Learning Objectives					
Cognitive Domain:					
Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
cite define describe identify indicate know label match name recall record repeat select state	arrange classify describe defend diagram discuss estimate generalize infer paraphrase predict report review translate	apply change compute discover illustrate interpret manipulate modify organize perform prepare produce solve translate use	analyze appraise calculate compare contrast criticize debate determine distinguish examine identify select solve test	arrange assemble categorize collect combine compose construct create design formulate generate modify produce revise	assess conclude discriminate estimate evaluate grade interpret judge justify measure rate score support value
Affective Domain:					
Receive	Respond	Value	Organize	Internalize	
acknowledge ask attend concentrate discuss focus follow listen retain take part	cite clarify react contribute examples interpret perform present provide question respond seek clarification	argue challenge confront criticize debate justify persuade refute	arrange build compare contrast defend develop formulate modify prioritize relate reconcile	act display influence practice solve	
Psychomotor Domain:					
Imitation	Manipulation	Precision	Articulation	Naturalization	
adhere copy follow replicate repeat	build execute implement perform re-create	calibrate control complete demonstrate perfect show	adapt construct combine coordinate integrate formulate modify master	design invent manage specify	

A modification of Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson et al., 2001: A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives. Addison-Wesley).

9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

1. **The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.** Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only **what** we choose to assess but also **how** we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.
2. **Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.** Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore firmer bases for improving our students' educational experience.
3. **Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.** Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations--these derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.
4. **Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.** Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way--about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.
5. **Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.** Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative. Though isolated, "one-shot" assessment can be better than none, improvement over time is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same examples of student performance or using the same instrument semester after semester. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.
6. **Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.** Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts

- may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculty play an especially important role, but assessment's questions can't be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni/ae, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. Thus understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.
7. **Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.** Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results"; it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continuous improvement.
 8. **Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.** Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such campuses, information about learning outcomes is seen as an integral part of decision making, and avidly sought.
 9. **Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.** There is a compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the publics that support or depend on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation--to ourselves, our students, and society--is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

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INTEGRATIVE LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

Pacific Lutheran University's Integrative Learning Objectives are designed to provide a common understanding of how learning at PLU is targeted. These objectives offer a unifying framework for understanding how our community defines the general skills or abilities that should be exhibited by an individual who is granted a PLU bachelor's degree. Therefore, they are integrative in nature.

University policy, adopted by the Deans' and President's Councils in the summer of 1998, lodges responsibility for the singularly academic components of assessment directly with academic departments, schools, and cross-disciplinary programs and their administrators. The Integrative Learning Objectives (ILOs) are intended to provide these units with a conceptual reference in their efforts to build on and reinforce the goals of the General University Requirements in their own particular curricula, as well as to assist the university in such assessment related activities as general student and alumni surveys. Academic units may refer to the ILOs in their annual assessment reports. Not all ILOs are expected to be dealt with equally by every program, much less by every course. (Any change in the current university policy that lodges primary responsibility for academic assessment with academic units and programs will include consultation with the faculty through its standing governing structure.)

The ILOs do not represent, by themselves, all of our understanding of education. Rather, they are a part of a more complex web of education. One can conceptualize the outcomes of a PLU education in three general categories: knowledge, skills or abilities, and values and attitudes. These outcomes occur simultaneously at the individual course, program or major, and institutional levels. Work to develop and measure or evaluate the learning outcomes of students is connected to and informed by the learning outcomes set by groups of faculty in departments, schools, and programs. Likewise, these activities are guided by the outcomes established by the whole faculty for all PLU graduates. Students' perceptions of the educational process should provide useful feedback at all three levels.

The ILOs, which relate primarily to the skills/abilities domain at the whole institutional level, range from the ability to critically analyze and resolve complex issues and problems to being able to work in and understand constantly changing environments, cultures, and times. They transcend disciplines and specialized knowledge, but are not meant to replace or change the contextualized knowledge base of disciplines and fields. They are meant to serve as a useful framework that unifies education throughout Pacific Lutheran University while disciplinary study provides students with the knowledge and understanding of a field that will allow them to function effectively in their chosen area. With respect to this base of knowledge, these global statements can be made:

The PLU graduate is expected to have a broad knowledge of the basic liberal arts and sciences.

The PLU graduate should have an understanding of the interconnections among these basic liberal arts and sciences that provide the broad framework for living with the complexities of life.

The PLU graduate is expected to develop an in-depth knowledge of a specified area of knowledge designated as a major within the university.

The PLU graduate should have an understanding of the interconnections among the basic liberal arts and sciences and the in-depth knowledge of her/his specified major area.

The Integrative Learning Objectives

In addition to the knowledge base described above, and an awareness of how different disciplinary methodologies are used, every student at Pacific Lutheran University is expected to develop the following abilities:

A. Critical Reflection

1. Select sources of information using appropriate research methods, including those employing technology, and make use of that information carefully and critically.
2. Consider issues from multiple perspectives.
3. Evaluate assumptions and consequences of different perspectives in assessing possible solutions to problems.
4. Understand and explain divergent viewpoints on complex issues, critically assess the support available for each, and defend one's own judgments.

B. Expression

1. Communicate clearly and effectively in both written and oral forms.
2. Adapt message to various audiences using appropriate media, convention, or styles.
3. Create symbols or meanings in a variety of expressive media, both verbal and nonverbal.

C. Interaction with Others

1. Work creatively to identify and clarify the issues of concern.
2. Acknowledge and respond to conflicting ideas, principles, and traditions, identifying common interests where possible.
3. Develop and promote effective strategies and interpersonal relationships for implementing cooperative actions.

D. Valuing

1. Articulate and critically assess one's own values, with an awareness of the communities and traditions that have helped to shape them.
2. Recognize how others have arrived at values different from one's own, and consider their view charitably and with an appreciation for the context in which they emerged.
3. Develop a habit of caring for oneself, for others, and for the environment.
4. Approach moral, spiritual, and intellectual development as a life-long process of making informed choices in one's commitments.
5. Approach one's commitments with a high level of personal responsibility and professional accountability.

E. Multiple Frameworks

1. Recognize and understand how cultures profoundly shape different assumptions and behaviors.
2. Identify issues and problems facing people in every culture (including one's own), seeking constructive strategies for addressing them.
3. Cultivate respect for diverse cultures, practices, and traditions.

ASSESSMENT RESOURCES IN THE PLU LIBRARY

Primary references used in this manual:

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ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP SERIES

Workshop Series Goals:

- 1) Provide training and guidance for faculty on how to plan for effective teaching and learning through the regular use of stated learning objectives that are aligned to authentic classroom based assessments and effective instruction.
- 2) Provide training, guidance and resources to programs in order to aid in developing or refining program objectives and planning for effective assessment.
- 3) Provide training, guidance and resources to individual faculty and programs in order to aid in the effective development and use of rubrics and other evaluation tools.
- 4) Provide guidance and resources to programs that will aid in helping to close the assessment loop by incorporating assessment findings into planning and curriculum development, and by documenting resulting changes and improvements through effective assessment reporting.
- 5) To provide faculty with guided opportunities to engage in reflective assessment practices in order to evaluate and improve teaching (instruction), course design (curriculum development) and classroom assessment use.

Fall Conference 2008:

- ✓ SEPTEMBER 3, 1:00-1:45, Regency Room, Assessment 101: Learning by Design (introduction/brief form)
- ✓ SEPTEMBER 3, 1:55-2:40, Regency Room, Assessment 201: Developing Program Objectives and Planning for Assessment (introduction/brief form)

Fall 2008:

- ✓ SEPTEMBER 22, 3:40-5:00, UC 201: Assessment 101: Learning by Design (repeated, full form)
- ✓ OCTOBER 22, 3:40-5:00, UC 201: Assessment 301: Developing Rubrics and Other Assessment Tools

Coming in Spring 2009:

- ✓ Assessment 102: Reflecting on the Fall Semester (offered 3 times)
- ✓ Assessment 301: Developing Rubrics and Other Assessment Tools (repeated)
- ✓ Assessment 490: Closing the Assessment Loop

Coming in Fall 2009:

- ✓ Assessment 401: Making the Most of Institutional Resources for Program Assessment

Other assessment training will be developed in response to provided feedback and developing needs. Any of the above sessions can be offered at department or program faculty meetings or can be adapted to better fit your needs. All workshop materials will also be made available on the PLU Academic Assessment homepage.

For assistance contact: Karen McConnell, x7169, mconnke@plu.edu

Assessment 101: Learning by Design

This interactive session will focus on the importance of intentional course design and will explain the role that assessment plays in this process. Emphasis will be placed on the process of developing clear course objectives, aligning them with authentic classroom based assessments, and ultimately selecting appropriate instructional strategies that enhance learning. Participants are encouraged to bring one or more course syllabi and associated assessment and evaluation tools. All faculty are welcome. New faculty are strongly encouraged to attend.

Assessment 102: Reflecting on the Fall Semester

This workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to engage in guided reflection of a fall course of their choosing in order to consider the effectiveness of the curriculum (course design), instruction and classroom based assessments used, and to develop concrete improvements to the course for future semesters. Due to the intensive and individual nature of this workshop, participation is limited to 12 participants per session.

Assessment 201: Developing Department Learning Objectives and Planning for Assessment

An overview of the basic steps of program assessment will be provided and opportunities for reflection and interaction will be given. Special attention will be given to the importance of writing strong learning objectives as the basis for effective program assessment. All faculty are welcome. Department chairs and program directors and/or assessment coordinators are strongly encouraged to attend.

Assessment 301: Developing Rubrics and Other Assessment Tools

Effectively evaluating evidence of student learning in relation to stated objectives is at the heart of strong educational assessment. This session provides a tutorial on creating simple and effective rubrics for use in classroom based and program based assessment. Sample rubrics and opportunities for collaborative work will be provided.

Assessment 401: Making the Most of Institutional Resources for Program Assessment

This session will provide an overview of existing data bases and institutional assessment surveys that can be used to enhance program assessment. Emphasis will be placed on how to effectively query these resources and how to interpret the information they provide. All program directors are encouraged to attend.

Assessment 490: Closing the Assessment Loop

Strong assessment provides meaningful feedback that should be used to improve curricular offerings, enhance course design and pedagogy, clarify and improve program objectives, and ultimately improve student learning. This session provides an opportunity to make meaning from assessment efforts and to develop manageable systems for tracking and monitoring assessment activities.

Appendix 1-D: Workshop Resources (Web page)

Assessment Resources - Mozilla Firefox
http://www.plu.edu/assessment/Assessment Resources/home.php

PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
HOME NEWS CALENDAR LIBRARY DIRECTORY WEBMAIL

Office of Assessment
Assessment Resources

Home
Assessment Resources
Major Program Learning Outcomes
Staff

[General Resources](#)
[Workshop Resources](#)
[Other Resources](#)

GENERAL RESOURCES

- [Program Assessment Guidebook](#)
- [PLU Library Holdings on Assessment](#)

WORKSHOP RESOURCES

- [Fall 08 Workshop Schedule/Descriptions](#)
- [Spring 09 Workshop Schedule/Descriptions](#)
- [Assessment 101 slides](#)
- Assessment 101 handouts:
 - [Bloom's Taxonomy](#)
 - [Worksheet](#)
 - Writing Learning Objectives
- Additional 101 worksheets from 9/22/08:
 - [Expanded Reflection sheet](#)
 - [Setting Priorities Worksheet](#)
 - [Classroom Assessment Terminology Sheet](#)
- Assessment 102 slides
- Classroom Assessment Strategies Summary Sheets:
 - [Part 1](#)
- Creating Rubrics Resources:
 - [Rubric Guide](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

- [NWCCU Standards](#)

INFORMATION ON THE COLLEGIATE LEARNING ASSESSMENT

The CLA will be piloted this year as one element of a comprehensive assessment plan for student learning. Information on the CLA is available on the CLA website (below) and the most relevant background documents are

Assessment Resources - Mozilla Firefox
http://www.plu.edu/assessment/Assessment Resources/home.php

- Classroom Assessment Strategies Summary Sheets:
 - [Part 1](#)
- Creating Rubrics Resources:
 - [Rubric Guide](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

- [NWCCU Standards](#)

INFORMATION ON THE COLLEGIATE LEARNING ASSESSMENT

The CLA will be piloted this year as one element of a comprehensive assessment plan for student learning. Information on the CLA is available on the CLA website (below) and the most relevant background documents are directly linked below.

<http://collegiatelearningassessment.org/>

- Background information and rationale: "[Returning to Learning in an Age of Assessment!](#)"
- Construction of the assessment and explanation of scoring: "[Architecture of the CLA](#)"
- Answers to technical questions: "[CLA Technical Questions](#)"

APPENDIX A OF THE UNIT REPORT FOR 2008-2009

Please complete Appendix A and submit it with your 2008-2009 unit report. You do not need to submit major program learning outcomes again since they have already been submitted. Appendix A of the reports will be used in responding to the NWCCU recommendations and will be audited to determine common assessment practices and needs.

[Unit Report Appendix A - Assessment Planning and Reporting document \(pdf\)](#)

[Unit Report Appendix A - Assessment Planning and Reporting document \(word\)](#)

Office of Assessment, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma WA 98447
Phone: 253-535-7169 Email: mccollett@plu.edu

PLU Academic Assessment Guiding Document 2008-2011

Academic Assessment Strategic Planning Document

Phase Summary

Phase I (Summer 2008-Spring 2009)

- Goal 1. 1: Guide the development of learning objectives for each major and minor program _ COMPLETED
- Goal 1. 2: Guide the development of a Departmental Assessment Plan (DAP) for each major and minor program _ COMPLETED
- Goal 1. 4: Provide cohesive reporting of DAP progress across units _ COMPLETED
- Goal 2. 1: Support (and enforce) departments in implementing and executing established Department Assessment Plans _ IN PROGRESS
- Goal 3. 1: Provide faculty development and campus wide educational opportunities on assessment _ ON GOING
- Goal 3. 2: Build assessment resources and make them accessible to all _ ON GOING
- Goal 4. 1: Guide the Development of GEP Element Learning Objectives and Assessment Plans for each element of the General Education Program (housed in departments/divisions) _ COMPLETED
- Goal 4. 2: Establish longitudinal programmatic assessment strategies for the GEP (housed 'outside' of departments) _ IN PROGRESS
- Goal 4. 3: Establish a mechanism for gathering, compiling and reporting on GEP assessment activities and programmatic effectiveness _ DELAYED, FALL 09
- Goal 5. 4: Study and make recommendations on data management, analysis and reporting specific to academic assessment activities and on ties to Institutional Assessment and Analysis efforts. ON GOING

Phase II (Summer 2009-Spring 2011)

- Goal 1. 2: Guide the development of a Departmental Assessment Plan for each major and minor program
- Goal 1. 3: Review (approve) all departmental assessment plans (DAP) for each major and minor program
- Goal 1. 4: Provide cohesive reporting of DAP progress across units _ COMPLETED
- Goal 2. 2: Study and make recommendations on policies and procedures governing the regular on-going review of, or approval to changes in, departmental assessment plans _ IN PROGRESS
- Goal 2. 3: Study and make recommendations on policies and procedures for regular internal and/or external program review tied to assessment and planning _ IN PROGRESS
- Goal 3. 1: Provide faculty development and campus wide educational opportunities on assessment _ ON GOING
- Goal 4. 1: Guide the Development of GEP Element Learning Objectives and Assessment Plans for each element of the General Education Program (housed in departments/divisions) _ COMPLETED
- Goal 4. 2: Establish and implement longitudinal programmatic assessment strategies (housed 'outside' of departments) _ IN PROGRESS
- Goal 4. 3: Establish a mechanism for gathering, compiling and reporting on GEP assessment activities and programmatic effectiveness
- Goal 5. 1: Integrate the use of established and approved major/minor and general education learning objectives into the regular curricular approval
- Goal 5. 2: Study and make recommendations on more fully integrating assessment practices/reporting into annual Faculty Activity Reports and the Rank and Tenure review procedures
- Goal 5. 3: Study and make recommendations on the viability of creating a permanent University or Faculty Assessment Committee (elected) or Assessment Council (appointed), or other oversight mechanism
- Goal 5. 4: Study and make recommendations on data management, analysis and reporting specific to academic assessment activities and on ties to Institutional Assessment and Analysis efforts.

Phase III (Summer 2010-Spring 2011+)

- Goal 1. 4: Provide cohesive reporting of DAP progress across units
- Goal 2. 4: Implement Assessment Plan and Program Review Procedures and Reporting
- Goal 3. 3: Provide funding to support assessment activities at the departmental and unit/school/division level
- Goal 3. 4: Provide incentives for exemplary assessment practices on campus
- Goal 4. 4: Implement GEP Departmental and Programmatic Assessment Strategies
- Goal 5. 4: Study and make recommendations on data management, analysis and reporting specific to academic assessment activities and on ties to Institutional Assessment and Analysis efforts.

Academic Assessment Strategic Planning Document

Goal Summary

Goal 1: Develop Departmental Assessment Plans (DAPs) for all Major and Minor Programs

- Goal 1. 1: Guide the development of learning objectives for each major and minor program
- Goal 1. 2: Guide the development of a Departmental Assessment Plan (DAP) for each major and minor program
- Goal 1. 3: Review (approve) all departmental assessment plans (DAP) for each major and minor program
- Goal 1. 4: Provide cohesive reporting of DAP progress across units

Goal 2: Implement Department Assessment Plans and Establish Assessment Plan/Program Review Procedures

- Goal 2. 1: Support (and enforce) departments in implementing and executing established Department Assessment Plans
- Goal 2. 2: Study and make recommendations on policies and procedures governing the regular on-going review of, or approval to changes in, departmental assessment plans
- Goal 2. 3: Study and make recommendations on policies and procedures for regular internal and/or external program review tied to assessment and planning
- Goal 2. 4: Implement Assessment Plan and Program Review Procedures and Reporting

Goal 3: Create a Culture That Supports and Values Assessment of Student Learning

- Goal 3. 1: Provide faculty development and campus wide educational opportunities on assessment
- Goal 3. 2: Build assessment resources and make them accessible to all
- Goal 3. 3: Provide funding to support assessment activities at the departmental and unit/school/division level
- Goal 3. 4: Provide incentives for exemplary assessment practices on campus

Goal 4: Develop and Implement an Assessment Plan for the General Education Program (GEP)

- Goal 4. 1: Guide the Development of GEP Element Learning Objectives and Assessment Plans for each element of the General Education Program (housed in departments/divisions)
- Goal 4. 2: Establish longitudinal programmatic assessment strategies for the GEP (housed 'outside' of departments)
- Goal 4. 3: Establish a mechanism for gathering, compiling and reporting on GEP assessment activities and programmatic effectiveness
- Goal 4. 4: Implement GEP Departmental and Programmatic Assessment Strategies

Goal 5: Create Sustainable Systems for the Continued Development, Oversight and Management of Academic Assessment

- Goal 5. 1: Integrate the use of established and approved major/minor and general education learning objectives into the regular curricular approval
- Goal 5. 2: Study and make recommendations on more fully integrating assessment practices/reporting into annual Faculty Activity Reports and the Rank and Tenure review procedures
- Goal 5. 3: Study and make recommendations on the viability of creating a permanent University or Faculty Assessment Committee (elected) or Assessment Council (appointed), or other oversight mechanism
- Goal 5. 4: Study and make recommendations on data management, analysis and reporting specific to academic assessment activities and on ties to Institutional Assessment and Analysis efforts.

Goal 1: Develop Departmental Assessment Plans (DAPs) for all Major and Minor Programs

Objective 1: Guide the development of learning objectives for each major and minor program (Phase I)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Provide education and resources for use by units - faculty development series - chair development activities - resource development and distribution (including web site development)	A) Summer 08-Spring 09	A) Director of Assessment, Assoc. Provost for Curr, Assoc. Prov. for ITS	Four workshops completed. Spring series in development.	
B) Set benchmarks and deadlines for compliance, make deadlines known, monitor and report on progress	B) Summer – early Fall 08	B) Director of Assessment, Provost	Memo established with May 1 deadline for final products.	Need to send memo.
C) Provide individual department consulting and guidance	C) Fall 08-Spring 09	C) Director of Assessment	Consulting is on-going. See October Assessment Report.	Need to send out memo. By Dec. 1 need to 'knock on doors'.

Objective 2: Guide the development of a Departmental Assessment Plan for each major and minor program (Phase I & II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Develop standard template or guidelines (Department Assessment Plan - DAP)	A) Summer 08	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Provost	Not attended to yet. Best practices and common elements being collected.	High priority – need to establish format and set deadline for compliance.
B) Distribute DAP template/guidelines and provide training on use - faculty development series - chair development activities, ADC education - posting template on-line	B) Summer 08-Fall 08	B) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for Curr, Assoc. Prov. for ITS	Develop template for ADC consideration in Fall. Consider for Spring chair's workshop for training /clarification.	
C) Provide individual department consulting and guidance - audit current practices and create shared opportunities for naturally occurring cohorts on campus. - work with department chairs or assigned faculty assessment directors individually and attend department meetings, workshops and retreats as requested.	C) Fall 08-Spring 10	C) Dir. Of Assessment	Audit 1 complete. Audit 2 in progress – Dec. 23 self-imposed deadline for completion.	Considering "Occasional Discussion Series" for cohort based discussions.

Objective 3: Review (approve) all departmental assessment plans for each major and minor program (Phase II)				
Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Develop criteria and rubric for evaluating and approving assessment plans - study and utilize external resources/established rubrics from other institutions (commonly employed)	A) Fall 08	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for Curr, Provost	Currently finding examples and best practices.	
B) Collect DAPs as completed, review and return/approve. Post approved plans on-line.	B) Fall 08 – Spring 10	B) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for Curr, Provost		Need to decide deadlines on this.
Objective 4: Provide cohesive reporting of DAP progress across units (Phases I-III)				
Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Develop a master assessment progress report that documents all department objectives and assessment plans and provides a cohesive framing of activities across the academic sector. Distribute/share/report findings.	A) Summer 2009	A) Dir. Of Assessment	This will be the basis for the updated accreditation report – will include audits, program outcomes and plans, processes and reporting line information etc.	Repeat report in Summer 10 or when all units have complied with Phases I – III.

Goal 2: Implement Department Assessment Plans and Establish Assessment Plan/Program Review Procedures

Objective 1: Support (and enforce) departments in implementing and executing established Department Assessment Plans (Phase I)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Seek funding sources for supporting departmental assessment activities such as resource allocation, development opportunities, consultants, paid assessment days/retreats, release time options etc.	A) Spring 2009 - ongoing	A) Provost, Assoc. Prov. for Curr, Dir. Of Assessment		
B) Continue to utilize annual unit reports as a mechanism for monitoring assessment practices. Refine "Appendix A" to better reflect DAP elements.	B) Spring 2009 - ongoing	B) Provost, Dir. Of Assessment	In discussion	Needs refinement and continuity with other reporting practices
C) Provide incentives for strong compliance and progress by units.	C) Fall 2010 - ongoing	C) Provost		

Objective 2: Study and make recommendations on policies and procedures governing the regular on-going review of, or approval to changes in, departmental assessment plans (Phase II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Review practices of other institutions and review potential for occasional assessment review efforts in existing faculty governance system or by other mechanisms (special committee, Assessment Committee or Council, Provost Advisory Board etc).	A) Fall 08 – Spring 09	A) Dir. of Assessment	Early stages are in progress. Draft discussion documents developed.	
B) Make recommendation and establish action plan for implementation	B) Fall 09- Spring 10	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Provost		Could be done by Assessment Committee

Objective 3: Study and make recommendations on policies and procedures for regular internal and/or external program review tied to assessment and planning (Phase II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Review common practices of other institutions and expectations of governing boards/accreditation commissions and study the merits of establishing an internal and/or external periodic program review process.	A) Spring 09 – Spring 10	A) Dir. Of Assessment	Initial consideration being done by EPC. Best and common practices being compiled by DofA	
B) Make recommendation and establish action plan for implementation	A) Spring 10	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Provost		Could be done by Assessment Committee

Objective 4: Implement Assessment Plan and Program Review Procedures and Reporting (Phase III)				
Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Implement established policy and procedures from Phase I and II according to action plans.	A) Fall 10 – Spring 11	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Provost		Could be done by Assessment Committee or Council/Board

Goal 3: Create a Culture That Supports and Values Assessment of Student Learning				
Objective 1: Provide faculty development and campus wide educational opportunities on assessment (Phase I & II)				
Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Provide on-going faculty development workshops on pedagogy and assessment.	A) University Fall Conference 08, Faculty Fall Conference 08, 09. On-going 2008-2010. Targeted through 2011.	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for Curr	On-going in multiple formats.	
B) Provide targeted faculty development workshops on pedagogy and assessment for new faculty hires.	B) New Faculty Orientation, Fall workshop, Spring workshop – annually 08-11.	B) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for Curr		
C) Provide targeted training to Department Chairs and Program Directors as desired.	C) Department Chair Development Series	C) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for Curr		
D) Provide annual progress report to ADC, open to all.	D) Late spring – annually beginning 09	D) Dir. Of Assessment		
Objective 2: Build assessment resources and make them accessible to all (Phase I)				
Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Create a guiding document that unifies PLUs vision of, and purpose for, assessment of student learning. Include educational elements such as a statement of philosophy/purposes for assessment, uses of assessment information, commonly employed practices, types of assessment, effective objectives, types of evidence etc. Use external examples for guidance (this is a relatively common practice)	Summer 08-Fall 08	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for Curr, Provost	Draft 1 of a portion of this has been developed in the “Program Assessment Guidebook”	
B) Create an “Assessment at PLU” web-page to provide resources, links, forms, workshop materials, P&Ps etc, and to publish institutional assessment documents and reports. Link page to Provost’s page, consider creation of larger CTL site for other CTL resources.	Summer 08-Fall 08 w/regular revisions	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for ITS, Assoc. Prov. for Curr, Provost	Temporary site in place for general postings.	

Objective 3: Provide funding to support assessment activities at the departmental and unit/school/division level (Phase III)				
Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
See Objective 2.1.A	A) Spring 2009 - ongoing	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for Curr, Provost		
Objective 4: Provide incentives for exemplary assessment practices on campus (Phase III)				
Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Study the potential for offering Assessment Advancement Grants, Department/Program honors and recognitions and other sources of incentives and rewards for pursuing and using innovative and effective assessment practices.	A) Spring 10 – Fall 11	A) Dir. Of Assessment		

Goal 4: Develop and Implement an Assessment Plan for the General Education Program (GEP)

Objective 1: Guide the Development of GEP Element Learning Objectives and Assessment Plans for each element of the General Education Program (housed in departments/divisions) (Phase I & II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Guide departments/units in drafting one or two clearly stated learning objectives for their element of the GEP. Encourage regular use of stated objectives on course syllabi and in classroom based assessment efforts.	A) Fall 08-Spring 10	A) Associate Provost for Curriculum	On-going. AP has met with all GE program chairs	
B) Guide departments on developing simplistic, manageable Assessment Plans for their respective element of the GEP.	B) Spring 09 – Spring 10	A) Dir. Of Assessment, AP for Curriculum		Refer to Gen Ed Imp. committee for discussion

Objective 2: Establish and implement longitudinal programmatic GEP assessment strategies (housed 'outside' of departments) (Phase I & II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Create GLOs or affirm ILOs for the collective assessment of the General Education Program.	A) Fall 08 or Spring 09	A) AP for Curriculum	Seems imbedded in current practice from 4:1:A	
B) Study and develop Programmatic Assessment Strategies and Action Plan(s) for the GEP (such as targeted assessments, cohort assessment studies etc)	A) Summer 08-Spring 10	B) Dir. Of Assessment, AP for Curr., Gen Ed Implementation Committee	Examples and documents being collected for future use.	Could be reviewed by Assessment Committee

Objective 3: Establish a mechanism for gathering, compiling and reporting on GEP assessment activities and programmatic effectiveness. (Phase I & II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Determine mechanism for gathering GEP assessment activities; write and publicly provide report on GEP Assessment Activities.	A) Summer 09 / Fall 10 – Repeated Annually	A) Dir. Of Assessment, AP for Curriculum		

Objective 4: Implement GEP Departmental and Programmatic Assessment Strategies. (Phase III)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Implement established plans	A) Fall 10	A) Dir. Of Assessment, All		

Goal 5: Create Sustainable Systems for the Continued Development, Oversight and Management of Academic Assessment

Objective 1: Integrate the use of established and approved major/minor and general education learning objectives into the regular curricular approval process (Phase II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Adjust approval form and procedures to require that new courses identify what learning objectives they meet and how they meet them.	A) Fall 09	A) Dir. Of Assessment, EPC, Provost		

Objective 2: Study and make recommendations on more fully integrating assessment practices/reporting into annual Faculty Activity Reports and the Rank and Tenure review procedures (Phase II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Explore meaningful ways to incorporate individual assessment practices, relevant department assessment data and other assessment information into regular faculty review and rank and tenure review practices and make appropriate recommendations.	A) Fall 09-Spring 10	A) Dir. Of Assessment, R&T Committee, Provost		

Objective 3: Study and make recommendations on the viability of creating a permanent University or Faculty Assessment Committee (elected) or Assessment Council (appointed), or other oversight mechanism. (Phase II)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Create and Ad Hoc Assessment Committee for the study of Assessment Practices and Procedures, or create an Assessment Advisory Board for this purpose. Identify potential committee charge and responsibilities and make recommendation to the faculty if warranted.	A) Spring 10 or Fall 10	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Provost		

Objective 4: Study and make recommendations on data management, analysis and reporting specific to academic assessment activities and on ties to Institutional Assessment and Analysis efforts. (Phases I-III)

Potential Strategies	Proposed Implementation Timeline	Responsible Parties	Progress/Status	Comments
A) Consider ways to support and complement assessment efforts with data management, data analysis and reporting relative to assessment practices, curricular management and changes, resource utilization, planning efforts etc.	A) on-going	A) Dir. Of Assessment, Assoc. Prov. for C&A, Provost, Institutional Research	On-going through IR consultation, dialogue, conference participation	

Essential Assessment Tasks – Discussion Document – Academic Deans Council – April 27, 2009 - UPDATED

<p>Task 1: Publish Learning Objectives Deadline: May, 2008</p>	<p>Task 2: Develop Program Assessment Plans Deadline: Annual Report Appendix A distributed in May, collected June 15</p>	<p>Task 3: Establish viable, sustainable on-going reporting and review mechanism Deadline: On-going throughout year, implementation date unknown</p>	<p>Task 4: Prepare documentation for accreditation re-visit Deadline: August 2009</p>
<p>Deans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Convey importance of task to chairs/program leaders and provide support as necessary/able. <input type="checkbox"/> Help to ensure successful completion of task by deadline <p>Departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop learning objectives for each major program. <input type="checkbox"/> Update progress or submit draft to Dean, Provost, Assessment Director: December 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Submit draft: Feb. 1, 2009 <input type="checkbox"/> Submit final: April 15, 2009 <p>Assessment Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Advise/consult with units and provide feedback on draft documents <input type="checkbox"/> Provide workshops and training opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Set process and deadlines for collection <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate process for collection <input type="checkbox"/> Organize and publish: May 1, 2009 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Store in net-store <input type="checkbox"/> Publish on an assessment web page <input type="checkbox"/> Publish on department homepages - ? (or via link to assessment page) <input type="checkbox"/> On admission information sheets - ? <input type="checkbox"/> In banner/On-line catalog - ? <p>TASK ON TARGET TO BE COMPLETED – NEW ASSESSMENT WEBSITE WITH OUTCOMES IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO BE PUBLISHED MAY 1, 2009</p>	<p>Deans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Convey importance of task to chairs/program leaders and provide support as necessary/able. <input type="checkbox"/> Help to ensure successful completion of task by deadline and ensure on-time submission of annual unit report <p>Departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop an assessment plan for each major program. <input type="checkbox"/> Submit plan(s) with the annual unit report by the deadline. <input type="checkbox"/> Follow through with new or continued implementation of plans <p>Assessment Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide guidebook for use by units <input type="checkbox"/> Advise/consult with units on creating assessment plans and elements of assessments plans <input type="checkbox"/> Determine template/elements desired as part of plans <input type="checkbox"/> Create plan template and instructions <input type="checkbox"/> Determine process and deadlines for collection of plans <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate process for collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Share documents and process with working group and ADC for feedback – Dec. 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Share documents and expectations with Chairs as part of Chairs leadership series – mid Spring – May 6, 2009 <input type="checkbox"/> Collect assessment plans (June 15, 2009) and provide feedback 	<p>Deans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate actively in discussions on potential models and processes as appropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide feedback from units on potential models and processes to Provost and Assessment Director as may be requested. <p>Departments/Committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate actively in discussions on potential models and processes as appropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide feedback on potential models and processes to Provost and Assessment Director as may be requested. <p>Assessment Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Research best practices and evaluate their usefulness, application and appropriateness for consideration by PLU. <input type="checkbox"/> Create draft discussion documents <input type="checkbox"/> Share discussion documents with Provost Advisory Group, ADC and other groups as appropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> Revise documents <input type="checkbox"/> Share revised documents with all appropriate parties – ADC, April 27, 2009 <input type="checkbox"/> Create working documents from feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Share working documents for feedback and necessary actions (ADC/Chairs/Directors/EPC/faculty etc., as appropriate) <input type="checkbox"/> Create reporting mechanisms (guiding documents/templates etc) and necessary supporting structures as appropriate 	<p>Deans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate the provision of any supporting documentation or evidence that may be requested for divisions/schools (more will be known in the Spring when NWC UU contacts us) <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for interviews with accreditation team as may be requested <p>Departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate the provision of any supporting documentation or evidence that may be requested for departments/programs (more will be known in the Spring when NWC UU contacts us) <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for interviews with accreditation team as may be requested <p>Assessment Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Collect and publish all program outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Collect and organize assessment plans <input type="checkbox"/> Create supporting materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> University assessment reporting processes, schematics, narrative <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment audits/interpretations <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting data collections (ie. study of gen ed assessment options, transcript analysis reviews, other evidence of progress) <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate supporting assessments (NSSE, CLA past participation etc) as is useful for making the case <input type="checkbox"/> Write draft report(s) and submit to the Provost for editing and final document production

	<input type="checkbox"/> Organize plans for accreditation follow up visit TASK RUNNING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement TASK IS ON-GOING	TASK IS ON-GOING – WAITING FOR DIRECTIVES FROM NWCCU
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**Italicized items are those in progress by the Assessment Director at this time*

Appendix 1-G: Publish Program Outcomes

Major Program Learning Outcomes - Mozilla Firefox
http://www.plu.edu/assessment/Major Program Learning Outcomes/home.php

PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
HOME NEWS CALENDAR LIBRARY DIRECTORY WEBMAIL

Office of Assessment
Major Program Learning Outcomes

Home
Assessment Resources
▶ Major Program Learning Outcomes
Staff

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Division of Humanities

- [English](#)
- Languages and Literatures
 - [Classics](#)
 - [German](#)
 - [Hispanic Studies](#)
 - [French](#)
 - [Norwegian](#)
- [Philosophy](#)
- [Religion](#)
- [MFA in Creative Writing](#)

Division of Natural Sciences

- [Biology](#)
- [Chemistry](#)
- Computer Science and Computer Engineering
 - [BA in Computer Science](#)
 - [BS in Computer Engineering](#)
 - [BS in Computer Science](#)
- [Geosciences](#)
- [Mathematics](#)
- [Physics](#)

Division of Social Sciences

- [Anthropology](#)
- [Economics](#)
- [History](#)
- [Marriage and Family Therapy](#)
- [Political Science](#)
- [Psychology](#)
- [Sociology and Social Work](#)

Done

Major Program Learning Outcomes - Mozilla Firefox
http://www.plu.edu/assessment/Major Program Learning Outcomes/home.php

- [International Studies Program](#)
- [Political Science](#)
- [Psychology](#)
- [Sociology and Social Work](#)

PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

School of the Arts and Communication

- [Art](#)
- [Communication and Theatre](#)
- [Music](#)

School of Business

- [BBA](#)
- [MBA](#)

School of Education and Movement Studies

- [Instructional Development and Leadership \(BAE, MAE, Principal Certification\)](#)
- [Movement Studies & Wellness Education \(BAPE, BSPE\)](#)

School of Nursing

- [BSN](#)
- [MSN](#)

INTERDISCIPLINARY MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES PROGRAMS

- [Chinese Studies Program](#)
- [Environmental Studies Program](#)
- [Global Studies Program](#)
- [International Honors Program](#)
- [Scandinavian Area Studies Program](#)
- [Women's and Gender Studies Program](#)

Office of Assessment, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma WA 98447
Phone: 253-535-1169 Email: mccollins@plu.edu

Done

Appendix 2-A: General Education Element Outcomes

The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying the Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) General Education Program Outcomes page. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <http://www.plu.edu/general-education/General Education Program Outcomes/home.php>. The page header includes the PLU logo and navigation links: HOME, NEWS, CALENDAR, LIBRARY, DIRECTORY, and WEBMAIL. The main content area is titled "General Education Program Outcomes" and lists several categories of outcomes with associated course numbers and disciplines. A sidebar on the left provides a menu of navigation options.

Category	Outcomes
General Education	Embracing the Life of the Mind FYEP Gen Ed
Faculty Resources	FYEP 101 FYEP 190 IHON
General Education Program Outcomes	
Staff	Engaging Arts and Performance Arts Physical Activity
Academic Advising	
First-Year Experience Program	Interpreting Living Traditions Literature Languages/Literature
International Honors Program	Philosophy Religion
	Exploring Nature and Number Mathematical Reasoning NSCSM SSM
	Investigating Human Behavior, Culture, and Institutions Anthropology Economics History Political Science Psychology Social Work Sociology
	Encountering Perspectives on Diversity Alternative Perspectives Cross Cultural Perspectives
	Producing and Presenting Culminating Scholarship: Senior Seminar/Project See specifics under Major Program Learning Outcomes

Determining the Status of Unit/Program Assessment Plans

Status	Learning Outcomes	Plan	Implementation	Analysis	Actions
Undeveloped	No program level student learning outcomes	No methods of assessment and plan for implementation	No implementation of assessment activities	No analysis of student outcomes	No action or response identified or implemented
Developing	Partially developed student learning outcomes	Methods of assessment and plan for implementation partially developed	Some implementation of minimal assessment activities	Some analysis of student outcomes for some learning goals	Response or action identified but not implemented
Established	Clearly established student learning outcomes	Methods of assessment and plan for implementation fully developed (for all learning outcomes and students)	Implementation of several assessment activities to assess several learning goals	Some analysis of student outcomes for most learning goals	Response or action identified for most learning outcomes
Exemplary	Appropriately detailed and well articulated student learning outcomes	A variety of reasonable assessment measures and manageable timeline are developed	Implementation of a variety of assessment activities to assess the most important learning goals	Comprehensive analysis of the most important learning goals	Response or action demonstrates use of data for improvement of program

Adapted from Southeast Missouri State University and Concordia College

2008-2009 Annual Unit Report, Appendix A – Summary Observations

Prepared by: Karen McConnell, Director of Assessment

August 22, 2009 – DRAFT 1

Total number of Appendix A reports considered in this observation set: 31

Compliance rate (reports submitted at time of consideration/reports expected): 31/35 = 88.5%

Program listings are based on clearly articulated elements of the unit report and are intended as a resource for cross-departmental conversation. Misrepresentations are yet to be corrected at the time of this draft. Unclear practices and/or areas of assessment that may be part of the overall program plan but are not understood as a clear focus during the 9-10 AY are not identified.

Most Frequently Reported Program Level Assessment Practices:

1. Capstone Projects/Papers: Reported by 25/31 programs

Programs reporting work on capstone as assessment during 09-10 include: English, Languages & Literatures (all), Philosophy, Religion, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science & Computer Engineering, Geosciences, Mathematics, Anthropology, Economics, History, Political Science, Sociology, Social Work, Art, Communication and Theatre, Music, MSWE, Scandinavian Area Studies.

Category: Direct assessment of student learning

Description of common practice(s): Most units report utilizing senior capstone projects, presentation and/or papers as a source for collecting departmental assessment data. Typically this involves comparing student work to a rubric designed from program/department outcomes. Smaller departments report that copies of student papers and scoring rubrics will be kept on file and will be periodically reviewed once a reasonable number are attained. Most departments report reviewing the rubrics each year at a department meeting, assessment meeting or short working retreat.

General strengths: This is an authentic approach that is manageable for most units/programs and does not require significant investment of additional work for students. Findings will likely be general but should represent the cumulative competencies of majors in the given program.

General recommendations/considerations/challenges: This approach hinges on carefully constructed rubric(s) that may need to undergo several early revisions. Holistic rubrics especially may require several early revisions to be effective and not too general. It is acceptable to focus the efforts on a subset of the program outcomes each year and to rotate the focus over a 2-3 year cycle – this may allow for more detailed review to occur. It is imperative that the findings from reviewing student performance be conveyed somehow in the unit's annual reports and that any recommendations that stem from the reviews be documented and followed up on. Grades

on capstones are not sufficient for program assessment – the intent is to look at how students in aggregate perform on each program outcome – a single grade on the paper/project does not provide this level of nuance.

Consider getting together with others using this approach to compare ideas for rubric development and documentation of faculty observations.

Please note: If you have a departmental rubric related to capstone assessment and are willing to have it posted on the assessment resource page for other units to benefit from please submit it to the assessment director.

2. Imbedded Classroom Assessments: Reported by 17/31 programs

Category: Direct assessment of student learning

Programs reporting work on imbedded classroom assessments as program assessment focus in 09-10 include: Hispanic Area Studies, Religion, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science and Computer Engineering, Physics, History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work, Art, Communication and Theatre, Music, First Year Experience Program (common writing assignment), International Honors Program, MSWE, IDL

Description of common practice(s): This practice refers to identifying specific assignments that are used in individual courses as mechanisms for program assessment. These may be in the form of a common assignment across sections of a course, assignments that focus on competencies of particular interest and that align to department outcomes (such as writing), exams that serve as critical pre and post assessments aligned to a particular sequence in the curriculum etc.

General strengths: This is a very authentic way to conduct assessment within a program and requires no additional work for the student. Assignments should be given a 'second read' for programmatic purposes (generally blinded with grades removed). The student product is reviewed against a rubric designed to evaluate learning as it relates to a department outcome and may therefore be targeted and focused. Reviewing assignments can help faculty not only understand student learning but also better appreciate faculty expectations within the program/unit.

General recommendations/considerations/challenges: Using imbedded assignments requires great faculty cooperation and openness. It may also demands additional work by faculty (generally at least one faculty member aside from the one responsible for the design and grading of the assignment has reviewed the student work). A random sample of a designated assignment can be used for programmatic assessment purposes (i.e. - every paper from a class need not be given a second read). This approach also requires a curriculum that is clearly aligned to program outcomes so that different assignments from different courses can be reviewed on rotation to ensure that all program outcomes have been evaluated periodically.

3. Exit Surveys/Interviews: Reported by 11/31 programs

Category: Indirect assessment (perception, experience and satisfaction)

Programs reporting work on or use of exit interviews/surveys as a primary program assessment in 09-10 include: Biology, Mathematics, Anthropology, Sociology, Social Work, MSWE, Business, Global Studies, International Honors, Women's and Gender Studies.

Description of common practice(s): An internally designed survey is used during capstone, toward the end of the course. Results are compiled and discussed in aggregate. Some units strictly use interviews and others follow up on written surveys with targeted focus groups or interviews.

Programs reporting exit surveys and/or interviews as program assessment focus for 09-10 include: biology, mathematics, anthropology, sociology, social work, MSWE, Business, Global Studies, International Honors, Women's and Gender Studies.

General strengths: Exit surveys are a very useful and often rich source of information. Programs have little difficulty generating questions/ideas and cross-pollination is possible given that some units have these well established. They are relatively easy to develop, process and use and students generally respond well and appreciate being asked about their experience. Additional questions are easy to add if a specific issue needs to be explored.

General recommendations: They are best used when they are anonymous and given at the end of the student's total experience. Discrete response scales are useful but a few well articulated open ended questions may provide the richest feedback. A combination of question types is most typically used. It is important to ask questions that relate to specific learning outcomes to support direct assessment work with indirect work (so that the two can be taken together). It is considered less effective to focus exit interviews on particular faculty or courses – the focus of the questions should be programmatic as much as possible (even though student responses may drift toward the particular).

4. Standardized Exams: Reported by 7/31 programs

Category: Direct assessment of student learning

Programs reporting use of standardized exams as a primary element of program assessment in 09-10 include: Mathematics, Hispanic Studies, Chemistry, Computer Science and Computer Engineering, Business and programs with required licensure/certification exams.

Programs reporting standardized exams as a focus of program assessment in 09-10 include: Mathematics, Hispanic Studies, Chemistry, Computer Science and Computer Engineering, Business (and programs with certification and/or licensure exams whose scores are tracked for external accreditation).

Description of common practice(s): Exam rights are purchased by an organization or company, students take the exam (typically on-line) and results are returned to the department. Most units using exams do so annually as part of a course/capstone requirement or do so on a rotational basis as an 'added' program assessment.

General strengths: Provide externally evaluated feedback that has a known validity and reliability. Allows for longitudinal tracking of student performance over time.

General recommendations: Do not use these as the sole means of assessing a program. Typically one cannot get access to the test itself to know what was asked or how it was asked. This makes scores difficult to relate to specific elements of the program's curriculum.

5. Other reported assessments include: Major surveys (prior to exit), Alumni Surveys, Exit or Stepped Competency Exams, Portfolios, Internship/Clinical/Student Teaching Site Supervisor Evaluations, External Accreditation/Review, Student Focus Groups.

6. Others thoughts:

Consider asking 'friends' of the department (former adjuncts, alumni, community partners, colleagues from other local institutions) to serve on an advisory board (used effectively by Business and CSCE). The board may sit in on capstones and provide feedback, review department assessment findings or curriculum, etc. to provide outside perspectives. Advisory boards can rotate so that members aren't burdened, or may only function periodically. A small board is sufficient and often individuals will volunteer for a periodic task without the need for incentive (or for a simple lunch or dinner).

Other Observations and Comments:

Needs:

- IR Support**critical to advancing assessment work
- Alumni contact and survey support**critical to advancing assessment work
- Opportunities for shared practice/development around rubric creation and curriculum mapping and exit survey creation. These constitute the primary tasks being taken on by departments this year as they execute elements of their plans.

Expectations of programs for 09-10:

- Focus on executing assessment plan, documenting work and making associated recommendations/changes (take action on your plan).
- More detailed year end reporting – including statements of relevant findings and recommendations from assessment activities. Programs providing examples of findings in their 09-10 include English, Mathematics, MSWE, FYEP, CSCE.

Common Practices Summary

Which programs might want to compare notes on their capstone assessments?

Which programs might be developing or refining rubrics for use with the capstone or with imbedded classroom assessments this year?

Which programs have completed a curriculum map that aligns courses and/or course assessments with department outcomes? Who else might be working on doing so this year?

Which programs regularly use a standardized exam as part of their program assessment?

Which programs were able to effectively document assessment activities and/or findings in their 08-09 report or might have examples of other forms of assessment documentation they use?

Which programs have developed or are developing an exit survey for use with graduating seniors?

TO: Patricia O'Connell Killen, Provost, Dean of Graduate Studies
CC: Jan Lewis, Associate Provost for Curriculum
FROM: Karen McConnell, Director of Assessment
RE: Collegiate Learning Assessment Information
DATE: July 13, 2009

The following relates to the administration of the Collegiate Learning Assessment at PLU. All costs, dates and procedures are proposed for a cross sectional administration in AY 2009-2010, but can be assumed as similar if the 2010-2011 academic year was used instead.

Signing up requires completing a very simplistic form and sending in payment prior to August 15, 2009.

Purpose:

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is administered through the Council on Aid to Education (CAE). It provides nationally benchmarked data. The assessment seeks to evaluate critical thinking, analytical reasoning, writing and problem solving skills and gives information on the 'value added' education provided by an institution (by comparing expected student responses against actual student responses accounting for baseline abilities as determined from ACT or SAT scores). The assessment is administered to first year students and seniors at a given institution. At PLU, the CLA would provide:

- 1) Nationally benchmarked data on a direct measure of student learning in areas that align with the Integrative Learning Objectives of the university.
- 2) Sound baseline information on elements of student achievement that align with the ILOs and the key markers of the FYEP curriculum, thus providing a uniform and over-arching assessment for the FYEP and other areas of the General Education Program.
- 3) Data that can be interpreted in conjunction with the NSSE in ways that can help to inform curricula, teaching and learning, and academic support services.
- 4) A repeatable direct assessment measure that can be applied to the whole of the academic program, even as the program itself changes (since the assessment is not discipline specific). A true longitudinal assessment can also be administered if desired (slightly different administration schedule, cohort pooling, costs etc, in order to assess the same exact group of students at multiple points over time).

**see also information on the CLA as provide by CAE*

Cohorts:

The CLA requires a minimum of 100 students per cohort in order for reliability and validity to be established, and nationally norming to be provided. A standard administration uses two cohorts: first year students and graduating seniors. Specialized cohorts or additional analysis can be run (ie. males versus females within each class, results from differing divisions of the academic sector etc) but these

require 100 students per sub-group and no such delineations are recommended at this time. This leaves us with two cohorts:

- 100 first year students, randomly selected
- 100 graduating seniors, randomly selected

Recruiting Strategy:

Based on recommended practices for the CLA the following recruitment practices are suggested:

- 1) An invitation to participate is provided to all, or a random subset of, first year students via e-mail and announcement given during fall new student orientation.
- 2) Information on the assessment is provided to faculty prior to the invitation being given.
- 3) The first 100 first year students to sign up and complete the assessment are given an incentive of \$25 Lute Bucks added to their account.
- 4) An invitation to participate is provided to all graduating seniors via e-mail during the first week of the Spring term.
- 5) The first 100 graduating seniors to sign up and complete the assessment receive a \$25 refund of their \$50 graduation fee.

Costs:

The direct costs are determined at cohorts of 100 students.

Element	Fall (first year)	Spring (seniors)	TOTAL:
Direct Cost of the CLA (paid to CAE)	--	--	\$6,500
Incentives	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$5,000
Additional non-direct	Exam proctors Exam space Data entry/provisions	Exam proctors Exam space Data entry/provisions	
TOTAL COST			\$11,500

**if more than 100 students take the exam in a given cohort, the additional cost is \$25 for the exam (to CAE) and \$25 in incentive equaling \$50 per student.*

**100 students per cohort MUST be tested in order for institutional reporting to be generated. No refunds are given if the cohort does not fill. It might be worth upping the senior incentive to the entire graduation fee of \$50 (raising the total cost of the CLA to \$13,500).*

Timeline and General Administration Strategy:

The national administration dates for the CLA are: August 15-October 31 for Fall (first year students) and February 1-April 15 for Spring (graduating seniors). An institution must administer the CLA within these windows.

The CLA is administered on-line via a standard internet connection. The exam itself is timed at a maximum of 90 minutes. The proper window for administration (including reading of instructions and collecting demographic information etc) is 2 hours. As such, a minimum of 8 sessions, of two hours each, would need to be scheduled in computer labs each term (assuming 15 computers per lab and allowing for scheduling variations). Additional sessions (1-2) should be reserved toward the end of the cycle in order to reach cohorts of 100 students (assuming the need to reschedule some no-shows, or recruit additional students, during the testing window).

The suggested dates for the administration of the CLA at PLU are the 3rd through 5th weeks into the term (prior to heavy mid-terms/mid semester break). These are:

Sept. 19-Oct. 10, 2009 (First Year)

Feb. 20-March 6, 2010 (Seniors)

Additional Resources:

Within two weeks of completing on campus testing a spreadsheet would be provided to the registrar/IR and would need to be returned to CAE promptly. The spreadsheet would contain the student ID numbers of all students who completed the assessment (with no other identifying information given). The registrar /IR would need to populate the spreadsheet with the following data:

- 1) Official class standing for each student
- 2) The mean SAT or ACT score for each cohort (mean for ALL first year, mean for ALL seniors)
- 3) The individual SAT or ACT for each student on the roster by ID number.

Proctors would need to be present during the exam administration.

An individual would need to handle student registration for the exam (by sending the invitation, ranking order of response and sorting them by testing times/dates etc., and sending reminders etc).

Reports Provided:

- 1) Fall interim report (on first year student achievement) delivered in mid spring.
- 2) Full institutional report delivered in mid-summer.
- 3) Student data file (individual student data that can then be cross referenced to NSSE etc) delivered in mid-summer.
- 4) Powerpoint presentation of institutional results delivered in mid-summer.

Additional points of consideration:

- 1) How much faculty involvement and buy in is necessary? (this may raise several issues)
- 2) An institution may submit up to 9 multiple choice questions that the students respond to during the registration process. This could be beneficial and the questions would need to be developed.

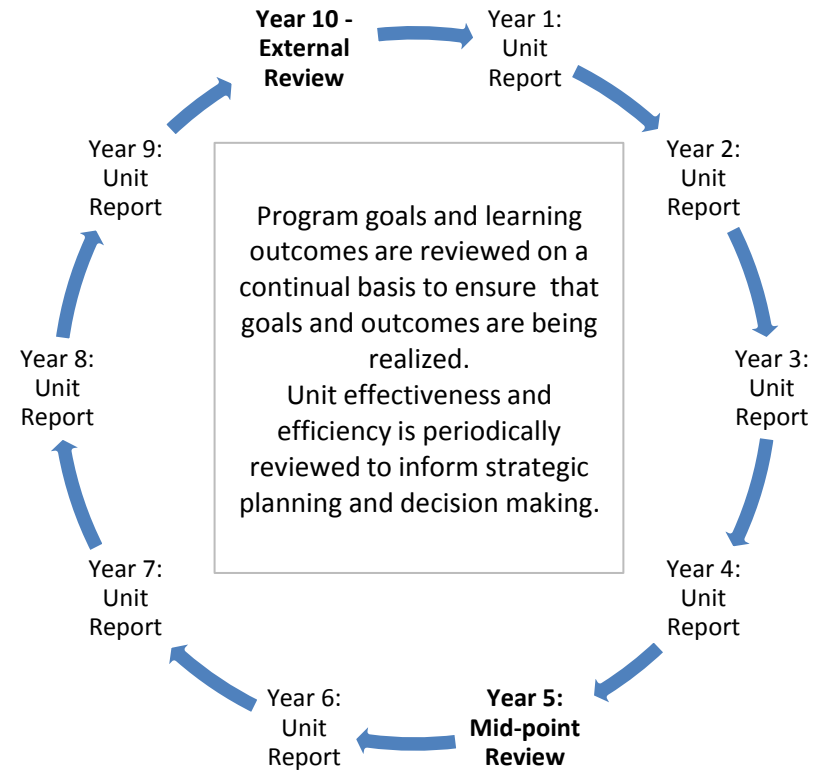
Pacific Lutheran University
Periodic Program Review - Ten Year Review Cycle - Draft Discussion Document

Purpose:

To create a sustainable system for supporting program assessment and review efforts, for the purpose of supporting and growing program quality and to periodically review program effectiveness and efficiency as it related to institutional mission, resource allocation and use, and future development.

Guiding Principles:

- *Review procedures and expectations are to be reasonable given existing resources, and should not require the commitment of unprovided funds.
- *Review procedures and expectations should seek simplistic and meaningful markers, data and information.
- *Reviews are to be flexible in design in order to respect departmental autonomy and uniqueness.
- *Reviews should be collaborative and utilize cross and off campus involvement where possible.



Annual Reviews

Evidence of on-going attention to program effectiveness related to:

- *Goals, actions and results of previous year's activities, including the assessment of student learning
- *Faculty, student and staff demographics
- *Curricular innovations and changes
- *Unit goals for the coming year, including the assessment of student learning outcome(s).

Mid-point Program Review (Internal)

Evidence of program quality and distinctiveness related to:

- *program mission and purpose
 - *learning outcomes and assessment
 - *faculty scholarship and service
 - *faculty, student and staff demographics (numbers, changes, trends)
 - *administrative structure, and function
 - *overall program efficiency
 - *alumni and student relations
 - *development of a 5 year strategic plan
- 10 Year Review (external)** - attends to all of the above in addition to:
- *external program evaluation (external to unit and university)
 - *evaluation of strategic plan including revisions for the next cycle

Assessment Initiative

Periodic Program Review
10 Year Review Cycle Discussion

Program Review

- ▶ A continuous, collaborative process of gathering, interpreting and reflecting upon data and information for the purpose of improving program quality.
 - The formal evaluative element is "a sign post in the process, showing the results of prior assessment activities and pointing the way toward a continuation of those activities".
- ▶ It is a focused, in-depth self-study conducted by a program/unit.
- ▶ An opportunity to hold both a mirror and a window up against a program for the purpose of honest reflection and reporting.

*AAC (1992). Program Review and Educational Quality in the Major. Liberal Learning and the Arts and Sciences Major, Volume 3, p16

Why pursue program review?

To create a sustainable system for supporting program assessment and review efforts, for the purpose of supporting and growing program quality, and to periodically review program effectiveness and efficiency as it relates to institutional mission, resource allocation and use, and future development.

Major Phases of a Program Review

- ▶ Self-study
 - Guided by questions, required sections or other pre-established template/framework/model
- ▶ Analysis of the self-study by individuals and groups external to the program
 - May write separate response based on evidence, may respond to program's written report, or both.
- ▶ Institutional and program response
 - Providing opportunity for constructive dialogue about matters related to educational quality

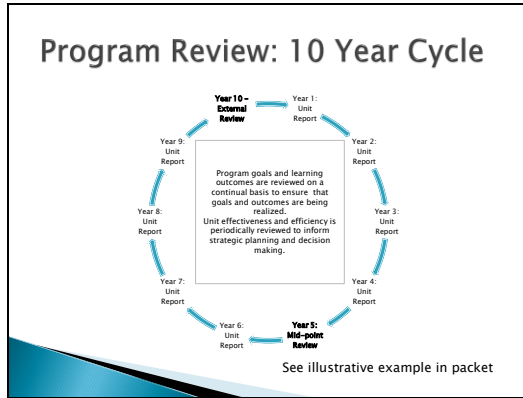
Typically a 9 month - 2 year process

Review procedures and expectations should:

- ✓ Be reasonable and supported with appropriate resources.
- ✓ Engage simplistic and meaningful markers, data and information.
- ✓ Allow for flexibility in design in order to respect departmental autonomy and uniqueness.
- ✓ Be collaborative and utilize cross and off campus involvement where possible.
- ✓ Be widely understood and accepted (appreciated?)

Role of Institutional Research

- ▶ IR capacity must be enhanced to fully support meaningful and sustainable program review.
 - Provide units with data that is reliable, consistently presented, meaningful and interpretable.
 - Enough data/information should be provided by IR to allow units to interpret and reflect rather than struggling themselves over how to determine and generate it.



Annual Unit Reports

Annual Unit Reports	Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goals, actions and results of previous year's activities, including the assessment of student learning Curricular innovations Faculty, student and staff demographics Goals for coming year, including goals for the assessment of student learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively short Report activities and plans Respond to data generated by Institutional Research <p><i>The design and function of the annual report needs to exist in relation to the presence or absence of a mid-point review.</i></p>

Periodic Program Review

Periodic Review (5 year)	External Review (10 Year)
<p>Summative self study providing evidence of program quality and distinctiveness related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *program mission and purpose *learning outcomes and assessment *faculty scholarship and service *faculty, student and staff demographics (numbers, changes, trends) *administrative structure, and function *overall program efficiency *alumni and student relations *evaluation of development of a 5 year strategic plan 	<p>Periodic review process with external review component</p>

Additional (Resource) Issues

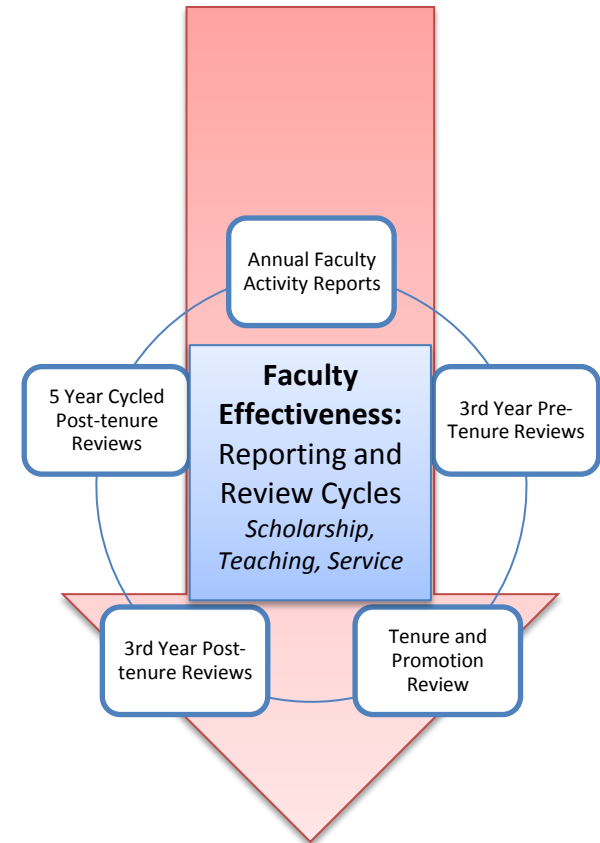
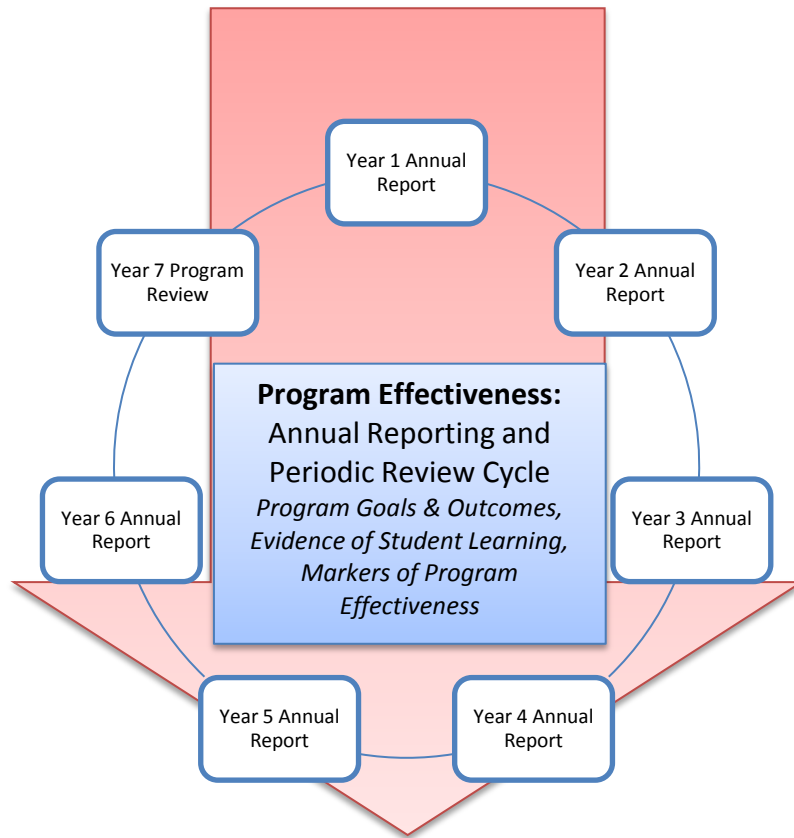
- Time
 - Unit, committees, IR, support staff, administration
- Money
 - Release Time? External reviewer stipends, assessment support
- Expertise
 - Unit, faculty, administration
- Support
 - Reward systems, administrative and other support
- Trust, Understanding and Confidence
 - Process, outcomes, use and function

Discussion Points

- Purposes of program review
- Principles and understandings
- Institutional Research Issues
- Annual Unit Reports versus Program Review
- Additional Resource Issues
- Next Steps

Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Schematic

Teaching & Learning



•*Strategic Planning*
Resource Utilization and Allocation
Internal and External Accountability and Accreditation

Faculty Development
Curriculum Planning & Revision
Curriculum Management

PLU University Wide Assessment Measures – Considerations of the Big Picture (*based on both current and recommended practice)

	Year 1 08-09	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
University Wide Indirect Measures (do not measure student learning, but rather the conditions that support learning and relate to support services)														
NSSE	x			x			x			x			x	
BSSE	x			x			x			x			x	
Program and Service Specific Surveys	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Student Satisfaction Inventory			x			x			x			x		
<i>Alumni Surveys</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Admissions Surveys</i>		x			x			x						
<i>Course Evaluations</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
University Wide Direct Measures (measure student learning outside of specific degree programs)														
CLA		x			x			x			x			x
<i>CLA in the Classroom</i>			(x)	x		(x)	x		(x)	x		(x)	x	
Department/Program Measures and Reports (principally direct measures of student learning as determined by a unit and supported by indirect measures)														
Initial Assessment Plan	x													
Annual Assessment Updates (Report)		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Periodic Program Review							x							x

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

SINGLE BIGGEST OVERALL RECOMMENDATION: Recognize that students are over-surveyed and identify, select and plan institutionally for the responsible use of surveys in relation to priorities, planning and mission. Do not administer multiple national surveys in a single year or subject a class of students to a barrage of different surveys throughout their career. The following recommended practices assume that an institution is making choices and does not suggest that all must always be done. It is also noted that the direct assessment of student learning is at the core of an institution's ability to demonstrate overall institutional effectiveness.

Categories of Survey Instruments and Recommendations:

Student Engagement Surveys:

Recommended Instruments:

NSSE – National Survey of Student Engagement; BSSE – Beginning College Student Survey of Student Engagement; CSXQ – College Student Expectations Questionnaire (cumbersome with low response rate but rich); CSEQ – College Student Experiences Questionnaire.

Recommended practice:

Administer every 4 years to first year students and/or seniors. Upper administration review report in detail. Summary of entire report is shared with academic leadership (Deans, Chairs, Directors) and is posted on secure server that is accessible by all faculty. Short form reports (1-2 pages) of selected, relevant items are created and shared with relevant faculty committees and/or university offices for observations, concerns and potential actions. The assessment director and/or associate provost would be responsible for organizing reports and presentations, collecting feedback and consolidating feedback.

Additional practices:

To gather information related to retention it is recommended that a robust sample of first year students is used and permission is sought to link the survey to student ID number (so, not anonymous, but confidential and all reporting is done only in aggregate). The following Fall the data is dis-aggregated into 'returning' and 'non-returning' piles in order to determine significant differences that might inform student attrition rates and enhance retention. Information can be reported to a committee (ARTS) and actions are then recommended as warranted.

Student Satisfaction Surveys:

Recommended instruments:

ACT Survey of Student Opinions and the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory.

January 27, 2009: Notes from the Harvard Institute on Performance Assessment

Appendix 2-I: Questionnaire Planning and Recommendations

Recommended practice:

Administer a national student satisfaction survey to continuing/returning students once every 4 years, and triangulate with smaller home grown survey(s). Upper administration should review the report in detail. Summary of entire report is shared with academic leadership (Deans, Chairs, Directors) and is posted on secure server that is accessible by all faculty. Observations, concerns and potential actions can be collected from various constituents as part of the University's assessment efforts. The assessment director, Associate Provost (or equivalent post given institutional configuration) would be responsible for organizing reports and presentations and collecting feedback. To gather information related to retention it is recommended that a robust sample of first year students is used and permission is sought to link the survey to student ID number (so, not anonymous, but confidential – and all reporting is done only in aggregate). The following Fall the data is dis-aggregated into 'returning' and 'non-returning' piles in order to determine significant differences that might inform student attrition rates and enhance retention.

Local/Campus Developed Survey Instruments

Admissions and Entering Student Surveys

Recommended Practices:

Monitor admissions data but also consider administering an occasional survey designed to extend beyond monitoring of admissions cycles and drill down into understanding student admission behavior. Home grown versions are most recommended (for specificity and cost containment). I acquired a copy from Delaware of theirs for reference (College Student Selection Survey). National surveys (ASQ – College Board Admitted Student Questionnaire and/or Questionnaire-Plus) are available and allow for benchmarking. If a school recognizes recruitment as an issue then it is recommended to utilize a combination of national and homegrown surveys, with consideration of the overall university survey plan (so as not to over-survey a particular class of students). Depending on the survey design they may be administered to all accepted and/or all admitted students. Typically such surveys inform advertisement, campus visits and tours and other marketing efforts. It was suggested that often schools assume what they should 'play up' but may find out that they were underselling other features that parents and students value. "Student perceptions don't have to be accurate to be real".

Recommended practice: Entering Students

Use one of the major national assessment surveys every 2-3 years during new student orientation. Offer a drawing for a one semester tuition

Appendix 2-I: Questionnaire Planning and Recommendations

remission to 'motivate' participation. ACT College Student Needs Assessment Survey (identifies areas of expected/perceived need in academics and social) and the College Student Expectations Questionnaire (assesses levels of expectation around intellectual, social and cultural engagement) are recommended surveys.

Course Evaluations:

Comment:

Oversold and overused as an assessment measure. Faculty reflections about results and changes to teaching and learning as a result should be at the heart of using course evaluations. This gets to the tenure and promotion process and what constitutes evidence of effective teaching and learning. From an assessment perspective good teaching should not be evaluated from course evaluations alone, but they can inform actions and judgments. It was universally agreed that these are generally weak and that more collaborative work across campuses should be done to strengthen the quality of course evaluations. These are typically given more weight when resources around attending to direct measures of student learning in the academic sector are not sufficient. They are easy and convenient, but like any survey the information itself is only valuable if used.

Matriculating Student Exit Interviews and Surveys:

Recommended Practice:

Exit interviews and surveys can be conducted by respective units or can be centralized through the alumni office or the development office. It is considered most efficient to have a standardized university exit survey onto which a unit may ask to graft additional questions relative to their department. This allows for better understandings of the institution's overall effectiveness and allows for internal benchmarking to occur. If the system is centralized those managing the surveys should also manage the information and provide cohesive and timely reports and full access to the data for use by departments with external accreditation demands.

Curricular and Co-curricular Program Developed Surveys ("Campus Pulse Surveys"):

Recommended practice:

Administer no more than 3-6 per year to subsets of the student population. These are home grown surveys that seek to drill down deeper into findings or concerns that emerged from the NSSE, BSSE, Student Satisfaction Inventory or other instruments. They are often on Survey Monkey or a similar system, or may involve focus groups. The purpose is to be intentional and seek information on items the institution is ready and willing to address, or that directly relate to mission or planning (do not survey for survey sake). The other option recommended is to administer a different satisfaction survey on off years

(non-NSSE years). The recommended survey is the ACT Survey of Student Opinions. Only one major survey is recommended to be administered each year. Thus, smaller “campus pulse” surveys may be a more useful option if areas of concern arise. It is critical to have oversight and monitoring of program and service specific surveys in order to prioritize needs and prevent over-surveying the student population.

Standardized Exams and Pan-University Direct Assessments of Student Learning

Recommended Instruments:

CLA – Collegiate Learning Assessment (and CLA in the Classroom):

Recommended Practice:

Administer every 4 years to a sample of first year students and seniors. Upper administration should review the report in detail. Summary of entire report is shared with academic leadership (Deans, Chairs, Directors) and is posted on secure server that is accessible by all faculty. Observations, concerns and potential actions can be collected from various constituents as part of the University’s assessment efforts. The assessment director and/or Associate Provost (or equivalent post) would be responsible for organizing reports and presentations and collecting feedback. The CLA in the Classroom was also highly recommended as an approach to gathering additional data on a campus. The instrument is either developed by faculty or adopted (if developed at another school or by another department) and is evaluated by faculty. This allows for a rich interaction with the evidence of learning itself and is considered effective as a means to engage meaningful conversation on pedagogy and curriculum. For example, an institutional designed CLA may be used within the FYEP to provide specific feedback on critical inquiry skills. The same CLA instrument may be administered four years later to the same subset of students in the senior seminar for comparison. Another may be adopted by a unit as a means of gathering assessment data within their program review cycle, or it may be used by the university to compare a cohort of high risk or other identified students at entry and again at matriculation. It is not viewed as necessary to administer the regular CLA more often than once every four years. Smaller CLA in the Classroom based assessments may be done on off years or at mid-point years (two years following the CLA) or within individual courses throughout the year.

Academic Deans Council

April 13, 2009

Coordination of University Level Assessment Efforts: Discussion Document

The following chart provides a snapshot of survey use across campus for AY 2008-2009 and projects future survey use based on current practice. We are moving to align our university assessment practices with known best practices and are working to better coordinate the distribution of surveys over time in order to maximize their efficiency, effectiveness and purposeful use.

Points for discussion:

1. Are there any other major surveys used this year (from your area, division, school etc) that should also be included on this planning chart?
2. What reactions/concerns/recommendations would you like to share about this information?
3. Are you aware of any related issues (or related efforts) regarding the use of surveys across campus that you would like to share?

**PLU University Wide Assessment Measures – Example of “Best Practice” layout
(*based on both current and recommended practice)**

	Year 1 08-09	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
University Wide Indirect Measures										
NSSE	x			x			x			x
BSSE	x			x			x			x
Program and Service Specific Surveys	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Student Satisfaction Inventory			x			x			x	
<i>Alumni Surveys</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Admissions Surveys</i>		x			x			x		
<i>Course Evaluations</i>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
University Wide Direct Measures of Student Learning										
CLA		x			x			x		
CLA in the Classroom/Others			(x)	x		(x)	x		(x)	x
Program Level Assessments/Reports (of direct and indirect assessment efforts at the program level)										
<i>Initial Assessment Plan</i>	x									
<i>Annual Assessment Updates (Report)</i>		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
<i>Periodic Program Review</i>							x			

**Assessment Activities Update
September 16, 2008**

1. Assessment Audit
 - a. An initial assessment audit was conducted over the summer using the accreditation self-study reports submitted by all departments and programs. The audit identified current and past assessment practices across the academic sector and was used to help guide the formation of the Guidebook and the Workshop Series. A summary chart of the report was provided to the Provost.
 - b. A second assessment audit is underway using the annual reviews submitted by all academic departments and programs for 07-08. This audit is being used to guide departmental consultations and to inform the provost of the assessment practices utilized during the past year. The audit, upon completion, will also identify collective areas of need with regard to sustaining and improving academic assessment efforts.

2. Enhanced Library Holdings
 - a. Over 20 new books and resources focused on academic assessment practices and issues were added to the PLU library during the summer.

3. Assessment Guidebook
 - a. A simple 12 page guidebook was developed by the Assessment Director that defines academic assessment in the context of program assessment and provides a step by step look at the critical elements of well created program assessment plans. The guidebook includes useful resources and was distributed at the Academic Program Leaders meeting in September.

4. Workshop Series
 - a. Two workshops were held during Faculty Fall Conference.
 - i. Assessment 101: Learning by Design focused on drawing attention to the connections between assessment practices and individual course design and instruction. Approximately 90 faculty members were in attendance.
 - ii. Assessment 102: Developing Learning Objectives and Understanding Program Assessment focused on the distinguishing features of learning objectives (versus program goals) and the process of developing a programmatic assessment plan. Most participants were academic program leaders, with attendance around 35-40.
 - b. Two additional workshops are scheduled for October and November.

5. Web-site Development
 - a. An Assessment Resources web page, linked to the Provost home page, was created Sept. 13th. Resources, including the Assessment Guidebook and Workshop materials were posted. The site will be enhanced over coming months to include sample

assessment plans and PLU program learning objectives as they are developed and submitted.

6. Learning Objectives Development

- a. Individual and group consulting is on-going. Nine different programs or departments have sought out advice and consulting services during the first two weeks of the term. History, Environmental Studies, Nursing (BSN and MSN) and Computer Science and Computer Engineering have formally submitted their learning objectives. CSCE has also formally submitted a comprehensive assessment plan.
- b. A timeline for the submission of status reports, drafts and final learning objectives to the Office of the has been developed and will be distributed by the Provost to all Deans, Department Chairs and Program Directors. The dates are as follows:

12/1/08

Either a draft of student learning outcomes for majors, or a status report on their development, due to Provost, Dean and Director of Assessment

2/1/09

All drafts of student learning outcomes for majors, in whatever form they exist, due to Provost, Dean and Director of Assessment

4/15/09

Final drafts of student learning outcomes for major programs due to Provost, Dean and Director of Assessment

5/1/09

Student learning outcomes for all major programs will be “published” on the Assessment Webpage.

Assessment Activities Update
October 20, 2008

1. Workshop Series
 - a. A workshop was offered on Sept. 22, 2008.
 - i. Assessment 101: Learning by Design focused on drawing attention to the connections between assessment practices and individual course design and instruction. Seven faculty members attended: Matt Levy, Kate Luther, Duncan Foley, Cliff Rowe, Claudia Bergeson, Gerry Myers, Jill Whitman.
 - b. The next workshop is scheduled for October 22, 2008.
2. Learning Objectives Development (continued)
 - a. Individual and group consulting is on-going. Departments, divisions and programs that have had individual or group meetings/consultations include: Biology, Mathematics, Natural Sciences (division meeting), Humanities (Chair's Council), First Year Experience Program, International Honors, Environmental Studies. Future meetings are scheduled for: Religion, Women and Gender Studies, Global Studies, Environmental Studies.
 - b. To date, learning outcomes have been received by:
 - Professional Programs:
 - Nursing (BS, MS)
 - College of Arts & Sciences:
 - Anthropology (hard copy only, electronic copy requested)
 - Biology
 - Computer Science & Computer Engineering
 - History
 - Political Science
 - Interdisciplinary/Multidisciplinary Programs:
 - Environmental Studies
 - Global Studies (draft document)
3. Systems development for reporting and long term documentation of assessment work is on-going. Draft documents are in development and are being minimally distributed among the Provost's Office staff for discussion and further refinement. The goal is to bring possible models for the sustainable and purposeful gathering of assessment plans and reports, and for providing feedback and support to programs, to the Deans Council this Fall. This includes discussions of possible internal program review mechanisms, staffing and support services needs within the Office of the Provost, and the intersection of assessment in the academic sector with both short and long term planning.
- 4.

Assessment Activities Update

November 19, 2008

1. Workshop Series
 - a. A workshop on Developing Rubrics was offered on October 22nd. Seven faculty members along with the Associate Provost and Director of Assessment attended. Attendance predominantly consisted of senior faculty from across a variety of academic sectors (humanities, social sciences and natural sciences were represented). Supporting materials were posted on the Assessment Resources webpage.
 - b. The Spring workshop series has been tentatively planned. A total of 4 general workshops are scheduled. An additional workshop will be offered as part of the Department Chair Development Series.
2. Learning Outcomes Development
 - a. Since the last report, consultation meetings have occurred with representatives from Environmental Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, Religion, Social Work, Sociology, and Global Studies. A progress update was also provided by Art, and outcomes were submitted by Mathematics and Marriage and Family Therapy.
 - b. The current status of all program outcomes as known to date is provided on the attached page.**
 - c. The programs that have not yet contacted the Assessment Director will be directly contacted in December to solicit updates.
3. Work continues on solidifying systems for sustaining on-going work on assessment. The Provost Advisory Group reviewed the working template for the submission of assessment plans to be included in the unit annual reports this year. The template will be shared with the Academic Deans Council on December 8 for feedback and further refinement.
4. The Director of Assessment attended the Performance Assessment in Higher Education institute at Harvard University November 16-18th. A brief report was issued to the Provost Advisory Group and full reports are planned to the Academic Deans Council and other individuals in January and February. Reports will focus on best practices and recommended practices pertaining to the academic assessment of student learning, including program review and annual reporting mechanisms and the need for university wide planning and deliberate coordination of all supporting institutional assessment efforts.
5. Five members of the faculty/Provost's office have formed a team to attend the AACU national meeting in Seattle in January. Multiple pre-conference workshops focused on assessment will be attended by the team and collectively debriefed.

Assessment Activities Update

February 19, 2009

1. **Learning Outcomes Development** – At this point 58% of programs have submitted final drafts of learning outcomes and 38% have submitted working drafts. Only two programs remain in the un-submitted category: Chemistry (BA and BS degrees) and the MFA in Creative Writing program. Most programs are near final form on drafts and all (aside from those above) have indicated that they intend to meet the April 15 deadline. Many programs have also submitted draft forms of assessment plans as they have been including these discussions when developing/refining outcomes. PROGRESS IS GOOD. Individual consultation with departments/programs continues (most recently including International Honors and Women's and Gender Studies).
2. **Assessment Series Workshops** – three workshops are planned for March, April and early May. Two will provide opportunities for reflective assessment on Fall/J-term courses and one will address documenting assessment work/closing the loop.
3. **Assessment Plan Template** (Appendix A: Annual Unit Report) – the template for departments to use when submitting assessment plans for the coming academic year, along with relevant findings from the current academic year, was shared with Academic Deans Council on December 8th. Feedback was positive and Deans were encouraged to share it with Department and Program Chairs. A reminder was issued at the February 9 meeting. No feedback was received but at least one unit (Languages and Literatures) has already made use of the format in submitting draft assessment plans. The template for the Appendix will be incorporated into the overall Unit Plan template.
4. **Plans for Coordinating Overall Campus Assessment Efforts** - The Director of Assessment submitted to the Provost one view of an overall plan for organizing and implementing university assessment efforts, including recommended practices and timeframes for creating sustainable, realistic assessment practices. The Provost may elect to share it as a discussion document with others who have a vested interest in conducting surveys and collecting assessment data from students.
5. **Conference Attendance** - Members of the Provost's Office, Registrar's Office and the Chair of the Faculty attended the AACU National Meeting in Seattle in January. Several assessment sessions were attended with little benefit. Both the Director of Assessment and the Associate Provost represented PLU at the LEAP breakfast and meeting.
6. **CLA in the Classroom Training** - The Director of Assessment, along with the Associate Provost for Curriculum and one faculty member (Jan Weiss) will be attending the CLA in the Classroom Academy at Stanford February 20-21. Upon completion of the Academy all three individuals will be "trainers" and will be able to 1) access retired CLA questions for use in assessment on campus and 2) train other faculty on how to develop and use the CLA model in their own programs and classes.
7. **Focus areas moving forward: continual conversation around implementing a regular, cyclical program review process and continual web site development to prepare for the timely publication of outcomes (goal set for May 1, 2009).**

2008-2009 Academic Assessment Annual Report
Submitted by: Karen E. McConnell, Director of Assessment

2008-2009 Goals:

- Publish student learning outcomes for all major and certificate programs.
- Publish general education element level outcomes for all general education elements.
- Provide education, training and consulting on program assessment to academic leadership and programs via consultation (as requested), workshops and other mechanisms.
- Work on establishing long term assessment plan and take immediate steps toward implementing regular assessment of student learning that is used for the improvement of teaching and learning.

Accomplishments/Findings:

- Published Student Learning Outcomes and General Education Element Outcomes for all major program and in house certificate programs.
- Began dialogue and organization to improve practices and expand use of national survey and assessment instruments
 - Provided a recommendation document for survey use based on information attained at the Performance Assessment Seminar conducted by the Harvard Graduate School of Education during the Fall semester.
 - Crafted the start of a survey cycle to help organize and conceptualize all major survey instruments used by all campus constituents.
 - Attended CLA in the Classroom Academy and two CLA webinars after considering recommendations regarding the use of the CLA and the NSSE as complimentary institutional assessments given at the Performance Assessment Seminar.
 - Continued use of the NSSE, added the FSSE.
 - Registered for the CLA as a pilot project in 2009-2010.
- Improved the reporting and documentation of assessment activities and progress
 - Via regular submission of Assessment Activities Updates to the Provost
 - Via submission of the Assessment Annual Report (and, this year, the responses to NWCCU recommendations related to assessment)
 - Via the creation of a reporting template for use by units and programs (Appendix A of the Annual Unit Report)
- Conceptualization of Overall University Assessment Plan
 - Conducted a number of audits to gage the status of academic assessment and to prepare for the development of an assessment plan (including audits of all program accreditation self-statements, all 2007-2008 Appendix A assessment reports and all 2008-2009 Appendix A assessment reports. Two informal (rudimentary using only hand drawn data due to lack of Banner support mechanisms) transcript analysis to determine

- GUR trends (which classes are most often used to fulfill each element etc) to help determine areas of focus for initial assessment of the general education program.
 - Provided visual schematic to help present and organize a general approach and big picture understanding of assessment and its role in quality assurance and program effectiveness.
- Planning for Periodic Program Review Process
 - Created and presented to the ADC a basic rationale for periodic program review along with a recommended 10 year cycle process for future discussion/consideration.

Recommendations:

[There are no true recommendations stemming from this year. Recommendations should arise from findings – either findings from the NSSE, FSSE, CLA or other assessments employed or from trends emerging from program level findings. Significant findings will not be available for review until the 09-10 year. General recommended activities are as follows:]

- Continue existing initiatives with a main focus on continued refinement of program level assessment across the academic sector – move toward looking for evidence of assessment activities, along with the interpretation and use of results/findings.
- Draft a general education assessment plan.
- Attend to NSSE and FSSE findings.
- Pilot the CLA to determine viability as a longitudinal and a primary institution level assessment as well as its potential inclusion in a General Education assessment plan.
- Continue to foster communication regarding survey instrument use(s) and planning and pursue enhanced capabilities for supporting alumni surveys for all programs.

Actions for 2009-2010:

- 1) Continuing consultation with departments to further refine assessment practices and incorporate and communicate outcomes based assessments findings.
- 2) Continued development of a Periodic Program Review procedure. Actions for this year include a) refinements to the Annual Unit Reports as they begin to reflect improvements to Institutional Research capacity and refinements to assessment work at the program level b) advancing the dialogue about the framework and expectations of a review process and c) identifying and beginning to secure the resources necessary for implementing (at least the initial phases of) a periodic program review process.
- 3) General Education Assessment Plan. A completed plan for the assessment of General Education will be achieved in the 2009-2010 academic year. The General Education Program Committee, convened by the Associate Provost and supported by the Assessment Director will oversee this process. It is anticipated that the plan will initially include program level assessments for each general education element (in relation to stated student learning outcomes for each element along with the Integrated Learning Objectives) as well as intentional use of the CLA and NSSE data in relation to the ILOs.
- 4) Implementing the CLA and CLA in the Classroom Activities. The CLA will be administered as a pilot assessment for the academic sector during the 2009-2010 academic year. The CLA in the Classroom Regional Academy to be held on campus in October, and on-going workshops

sponsored by the Office of the Provost and the Center for Teaching and Learning, will help to provide an understanding of this assessment tool among a wider range of faculty.

- 5) Effective utilization and sharing of NSSE and FSSE results. An executive summary of findings from NSSE and FSSE will need to be made available to appropriate constituents for comment and to guide relevant decisions for which they may provide insight. Exact mechanisms for doing so have yet to be established. However, it is recommended that a brief report or reports highlighting specific and relevant findings be distributed to the General Education Committee, the First Year Experience Committee and the program, department and committee chairs. Ideally such briefs will be accompanied by a few carefully selected questions for discussion and response. Student focus groups may also be used to gain additional insights into particular findings if recommended by relevant committees. Any recommendations that would emerge from these activities would then be addressed as needed.
- 6) Improving resources and support relative to assessment. Addressing the need for expanded administrative capacity to support assessment and its' related activities (assessment director, IR) remains a priority. This may need to include providing additional release time associated with the position of Assessment Director, creating new appointments within Institutional Research, and providing funding to programs and departments to support both essential and innovative assessment work.

Faculty Handbook, February 2003 Edition, pages 96A-99

FACULTY PERSONNEL POLICY

- A. Faculty Review Process for Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty: Organized periodic review procedures cover the time both before and following the granting of tenure. The objective is to promote faculty development, ensure teaching effectiveness and the fulfillment of instructional and other faculty responsibilities, and promote fair treatment within the university. Comprehensive peer review is the hallmark of an autonomous, self-governing faculty body and is essential to our practice as responsible members of the academy.

These regular reviews are designed to serve a number of university constituencies and important functions of the university. First, these reviews serve individual faculty members in the pursuit of tenure and promotion. The review process is designed to assess the progress of faculty members with regards to teaching, scholarship and service. Second, the review process is critical to the work of the Rank and Tenure Committee in that it affords a relatively uniform system of equitable evaluation for faculty members between and across units. Third, and more generally, the review process provides an essential component of ongoing assessment across the university, in particular allowing the university to remain in compliance with accreditation bodies on issues of faculty review. The review process described in the *Faculty Handbook* brings the timeline and practices of departments, divisions, schools and programs in line with the criteria for the review process determined by faculty legislation.

In order for chairs and deans to complete accurate and timely reviews, and ensure that each faculty member is being treated fairly in the process, it is the primary responsibility of the faculty member to know all review deadlines, complete all reports and, where necessary, respond to reviews in accordance with the timeline as indicated in the *PLU Faculty Handbook*. It is the primary responsibility of the chair of each department or dean of each school to make sure reviews are conducted in accordance with *PLU Faculty Handbook* policy. Toward this end, the Office of the Provost will work with faculty, chairs and deans by keeping a master schedule for reviews, providing timely reminders, and assuring the quality of the peer review process.

1. Before the granting of tenure, review procedures shall be as follows:
 - a. By June 1, the faculty member will submit to the department chair or dean, as appropriate, a report of activities for the closing academic year. A template for the annual activity report will be provided by the Office of the Provost.
 - i. The report will include a self-evaluation, reflections on available student evaluations, and a discussion of priorities for the coming academic year in regards to teaching, scholarly/professional activity and service. The criteria used in the reports will be those for appointment, promotion and rank described in the Bylaws to Article V of the Faculty Constitution, or commensurate criteria adopted for this purpose by departments, divisions, or schools.
 - ii. Academic units are encouraged to conduct peer evaluations also.
 - b. The chair or dean will by July 15 write an annual performance review for each faculty member, which shall be based on the report described in 1.a. above and other sources of information such as classroom visits, reviews by peers, and scholarly products. The chair or dean will use the criteria for appointment, promotion and rank described in the Bylaws to Article V of the Faculty Constitution, or commensurate criteria adopted for this purpose by departments, divisions, or schools. The chair or dean will meet with the faculty member and discuss the report and performance review. Written and signed records of each meeting shall be made, copies of which are retained by faculty members, department chair, and dean, and submitted to the provost's office, along with a copy of the faculty member's report and of the review by the chair or dean, by September 15. The faculty member may supplement the review by appending his or her own statement to the review as it is forwarded by the chair/dean to the Office of the Provost.

- c. The discussion (1.b above) will be specific with regard to each faculty member's strengths and weaknesses, including recommendations for improvement and an appraisal of any significant reservations about performance including teaching, scholarly/professional activity and service.
- d. The first evaluation at the university shall note in writing that a faculty members ~~have~~ has been informed of the conditions of employment, expectations for teaching, scholarship, and service, and the rank and tenure rules of the university.
- e. During the third year of probationary credit leading toward tenure a comprehensive written review by the chair or dean is due February 26 in the provost's office (for those hired with credit towards tenure, see note below about the timing of the review). This will constitute the annual review for the third probationary year. The review will be generated according to the procedures described above (at 1.a-d, deadlines adjusted). The review will in addition explicitly address the advisability of retaining a faculty member based on the following:
 - i. Evidence of the faculty member's past and current performance. Procedures for the handling of the third-year or other subsequent comprehensive reviews shall be conducted in such a way that this review is congruent in evidence and practice with the procedures for tenure and promotion review. While each department, division, school, or unit is granted the authority and responsibility to set their own specific review guidelines (see note below), all reviews shall include consideration of the following:
 - Materials assembled by the candidate that provide evidence of his or her performance in teaching, scholarly/professional activity and service. Evidence will include a resume, self-assessment statement, raw course evaluation forms and statistical summaries and any other documents that may be useful. These might include copies of publications and other scholarly work, copies of syllabi and other course materials, evidence of service activities. These materials shall be distributed to department/school colleagues. These materials may also be made available to the other colleagues who have been invited to provide input about the faculty member.
 - Letters from colleagues solicited specifically for the review process. This should include letters from all department/school colleagues, all team-teaching colleagues, the chairs or directors of any cross-disciplinary programs in which the faculty member teaches, and any other colleagues designated by the faculty member to provide input for the review on any aspect of the faculty member's performance that he or she wishes. It is especially important to have letters from those who can provide input based on direct observation of teaching.
 - ii. Expectation of continued competence and/or reasonable progress toward tenure and promotion criteria (described in the Bylaws to Article V of the Faculty Constitution) and any applicable department, division, or school criteria.
 - iii. Departmental and university projected needs, staffing, and planning.

Notes:

Procedures for the handling of third year and subsequent reviews shall be more explicitly developed in schools and divisions. In all cases, however, for the third year review, the review committee will include a faculty member from outside the person's unit, appointed by the provost after consultation with the dean of the unit. The role of the outside committee member shall be to provide a pan-university perspective to the review process. This person shall participate fully according to the third year review procedures of the unit. A candidate's file is due to the department/school by January 15, letters from colleagues are due to the chair/dean by February 8, and a draft comprehensive third-year review is due to the faculty member by February 18.

For faculty members who were hired with years of credit toward tenure, the timing of the third-year review shall be as follows: (1) with one year of credit toward tenure, the review shall occur in

- the third year of tenure eligibility (i.e. the second tenure-stream year at PLU), (2) with two years of credit towards tenure, the review shall occur in the fourth year of tenure eligibility (i.e. the second tenure-stream year at PLU), and (3) with three years of credit towards tenure, the review shall occur in the fourth year of tenure eligibility (i.e. the first tenure-stream year at PLU).
- f. During the year in which an individual is a candidate for tenure a comprehensive review about that person (following the Procedures of the Rank and Tenure Committee in the Faculty Handbook, item A —Consideration for Tenure) will be completed according to the timetable set by the Rank and Tenure guidelines (see p. 105-106). This will constitute the annual review for the sixth probationary year.
 - i. Copies of these statements shall be retained by the provost.
 - ii. It shall be the responsibility of the provost to provide this information to the Rank and Tenure Committee when faculty members are under consideration for promotion or tenure.
 - g. Nothing in this section precludes recourse to the university grievance procedure, described in the Bylaws to Article VI —Grievance, Disciplinary, and Dismissal Procedures of the Faculty Constitution.
2. After the granting of tenure, continued review procedures shall be as follows:
- a. By June 1, the faculty member will submit to the department chair or dean, as appropriate, a report of activities for the closing academic year.
 - i. The report will include a self-evaluation, reflections on available student evaluations, and a discussion of priorities for the coming academic year in regards to teaching, scholarly/professional activity and service. The criteria used in the reports will be those for appointment, promotion and rank described in the Bylaws to Article V of the Faculty Constitution, or commensurate criteria adopted for this purpose by departments, divisions, or schools.
 - ii. Where applicable, the report will describe an individual's plan for sabbatical leave or other self-improvement. (See —Sabbatical, Regular, and Special Leaves of Absence in the Faculty Handbook.)
 - b. Each fourth year after achievement of tenure, the chair or dean will complete a comprehensive review according to the procedures described in (1.e) above, focusing on the faculty member's performance in the years since the last such review and progress toward promotion. This review should take into consideration the previous self-evaluations and reviews. The chair or dean will meet with the faculty member and discuss the written review. The report along with the review by the chair or dean shall be due September 15 in the provost's office.
3. For those faculty members who achieve the rank of professor, or have been tenured for eight years, continued review procedures shall be as.
- a. By June 1, the faculty member will submit to the department chair or dean, as appropriate, a report of activities for the closing academic year.
 - i. The report will include a self-evaluation, reflections on available student evaluations, and a discussion of priorities for the coming academic year in regards to teaching, scholarly/professional activity and service. The criteria used in the reports will be those for appointment, promotion and rank described in the Bylaws to Article V of the Faculty Constitution, or commensurate criteria adopted for this purpose by departments, divisions, or schools.
 - ii. Where applicable, the report will describe an individual's plan for sabbatical leave or other self-improvement. (See —Sabbatical, Regular, and Special Leaves of Absence in the Faculty Handbook.)

- b. Each fifth year the chair or dean will complete a comprehensive review according to the procedures described in (1.e) above, focusing on the years since the last review. The chair or dean will meet with the faculty member and discuss the written review. The report along with the review by the chair or dean shall be due September 15 in the provost's office.

These procedures for faculty review are not the procedures for censure or dismissal, which are dealt with separately in the Faculty Handbook (Bylaws to Article VI of the Faculty Constitution and C. below).

The faculty has recommended that the provost provide to the Rank and Tenure Committee such information on any tenured faculty member being considered for dismissal, and that the provost obtain the early and continuing advice of the Rank and Tenure Committee in such cases. Any such role of the Rank and Tenure Committee precedes use of the more formal mechanisms for conciliation or dismissal that are provided in the Faculty Constitution and Bylaws.

The procedures above are summarized in the following calendar:

	Due Feb 18/Feb 26*	Due Jun 1	Due Jul 15/ Sept 15*	Due on 3 rd Monday of September
Before Tenure	Third-Year Review (faculty member's files due Jan 15)	Annual activity report and self evaluation	Annual Review	Sixth-Year Tenure Review
After Tenure		+Annual activity report and self evaluation	Four Year Reviews	
After Promotion to Professor or after 8 years as a tenured faculty member		+Annual activity report and self evaluation	Five-Year Reviews	

*The first date is when the draft review is due to the faculty member. The second date is when the final review is due in the Provost's Office.

+Chairs and/or deans receive this, but do not write a review.

[For guidelines on conducting these reviews consult the Provost's Office homepage under —Academic Policies and Guidelines.]

- B. Faculty Review Process for Benefits-Eligible Continuing Affiliate Faculty:** The purpose of these reviews is to ensure quality teaching and learning is consistent across the university. In addition, these reviews of affiliate faculty are an essential component of on-going university assessment. These reviews also support the professional development of our valuable continuing affiliate faculty members. (This review process applies only to benefits-eligible Lecturers, Faculty Fellows, and Clinical Faculty.)
1. By June 1, the affiliate faculty member will submit to the department chair or dean, as appropriate, a report of his or her activities for the previous academic year. The report will include a self-evaluation, reflections on available student evaluations, as well as a discussion of priorities for the coming academic year in regards to teaching and, where relevant, scholarly/professional activity and service. A template for the annual activity report will be provided by the Office of the Provost.
 2. During the fifth year of teaching at the university, the chair or dean will write a comprehensive review of the affiliate faculty member consistent with the procedures described in (A.1.e) above. The chair or dean will meet with the faculty member and discuss the written review. Written and signed records of each meeting shall be made, copies of which are retained by faculty members, department chair, and dean, and submitted to the provost's office, along with a copy of the faculty member's report and of the review by the chair or dean, by September 15.

3. During each subsequent fifth year of benefits-eligible teaching, the chair or dean will complete a comprehensive review according to the procedures described above, focusing on the years since the last review. The chair or dean will meet with the faculty member and discuss the written review. Written and signed records of each meeting shall be made, copies of which are retained by faculty members, department chair, and dean, and submitted to the provost's office, along with a copy of the faculty member's report and of the review by the chair or dean, by September 15.
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NOTE: The addition of section B. above results in the following additional changes:

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- C. The university strives to provide every member of the faculty with a harmonious environment conducive to good performance.

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- D. The university community strives to secure the rights of its individual members, including those of due process, especially when conflict arises between members or between the university and its members.
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From *Faculty Handbook, February 2003 Edition*, pages 115-117

SABBATICAL, REGULAR, AND SPECIAL LEAVES OF ABSENCE

E. Reporting.

Faculty members on leaves of any kind shall submit an activity report to their chair and dean as well as the president and provost on completion of the leave. The activities report is due within one month of return from leave. A template for the post-leave activity report will be provided by the Office of the Provost.

Faculty returning from a sabbatical shall submit an abstract of no more than 250 words that summarizes his or her activities report to the provost within one month of return from leave. These abstracts will be presented to the Board of Regents.

**FACULTY REVIEW SCHEDULE
GUIDELINES
August 11, 2009**

I. GENERAL

The master schedule for all faculty reviews is maintained in the Office of the Provost.

The Office of the Provost will provide annually to deans and chairs lists of faculty who are due for 4th and 5th year post-tenure reviews.

To make possible an orderly implementation of the new faculty review policy, reviews under the new policy which are due September 15, 2009, will not be due until April 2010. This is necessary to allow adequate time for departments, divisions, and schools to refine and affirm their procedures for carrying out the reviews and for those faculty members up for review to prepare their materials.

I. OVERALL

The review schedule includes 132 faculty, tenured as of September 1, 2009. Tenured full time administrators and tenured faculty who have applied for phased retirement or retirement are excluded.

- All faculty in the rank of professor OR tenured more than 8 years begin their review schedule with a 5th Year I review. Review years were NOT assigned for faculty in *italics* since it has been more than 5 years since their last recorded review (and no sabbatical in 08-09 or 09-10 to trigger a sabbatical review).
- All faculty tenured between 5-8 years (in rank as assistant or associate) begin their review schedule with a 4th Year II review. Faculty out of sequence, due to a separate promotion review (for associate or professor), are highlighted in **BOLD**.
- All faculty tenured between 1-4 years (in rank as assistant or associate) begin their review schedule with a 4th Year I review.

The review schedule is determined according to the guidelines presented in Section IV.

The years reported on the schedule indicates the year the review is due. For example, "2009", refers to "September 15, 2009" (for 4th or 5th year reviews).

**II. "SABBATICAL" REVIEWS DUE SEPTEMBER 2009
"SABBATICAL" REVIEWS DUE SEPTEMBER 2010**

Reviews are required from faculty who have not been reviewed in the past five years. For example, professors on their second/third sabbatical were last reviewed after their previous sabbatical year (2002 or 2003).

Reviews are NOT required from faculty who have been reviewed in the past five years (e.g. tenure or promotion review).

Based on the number of years tenured, the next review is determined according to guidelines presented in Section IV.

III. DETERMINING LAST REVIEW

A faculty member's last review is based upon hard copy reviews received and recorded by the Office of the Provost OR consideration for tenure and/or promotion by the Rank and Tenure committee.

The year reported under the last review date received is the year the review was conducted or received. For example, 07TENRVW indicates that the faculty member was reviewed in (Fall) 2007. For 08SABB, the faculty member's review was completed and recorded in 2008 (either spring or fall).

The following are considered as reviews: tenure or promotion review, post-sabbatical review, 7th year review, or post tenure 3rd year review. Sabbatical reports do not count as reviews.

IV. REVIEW SEQUENCE

Based on Rank and Tenure's Review Sequence (2009):

Years Tenured	Scheduled Reviews	Notes
0	Tenure Review	Review by Rank and Tenure Committee
1	First year tenured	Tenure effective September 1; usually sabbatical year
2		
3		
4	4th Year Review I	
5		
6		
7		
8	4th Year Review II (or Promotion Review)	May be sabbatical year
9		
10		
11		
12		
13	5th Year Review I	
14		

15		May be sabbatical year
16		
17		
18	5th Year Review II	
19		
20		
21		
22		May be sabbatical year
23	5th Year Review III	

V. ALTERATIONS TO REVIEW SCHEDULE

Any alteration to a faculty member's review schedule, other than correction for error, will be made upon the submission of signed documentation from the faculty member and her or his chair/dean and the approval of the provost. Documentation for every alteration, excluding correction for error, will be kept in the faculty member's file.

If a faculty member's 4th or 5th year review, post-tenure, is scheduled for the calendar or academic year during which he or she is on sabbatical leave, the due date for that review can be shifted to the subsequent academic year, upon request of the faculty member and her/his chair and dean, and with the approval of the provost.

In the case of special leaves of absence, the due date for a faculty member's 4th or 5th year review, post-tenure, may be shifted to the subsequent academic year, upon the request of the faculty member and her/his chair and dean, and with the approval of the provost.

In cases where a faculty member's review is altered, the master schedule tracking anticipated review dates for that faculty member will be adjusted to maintain the appropriate 4th year and 5th year post-tenure review cycle.

Examples of Multiple Indices of Teaching Effectiveness

Disclaimer: The following is designed to serve as a reference only. The amount, array and quality of evidence of teaching and learning effectiveness expected of PLU faculty is not intended or implied here. Remember: The purpose is to seek out multiple indices since no single method is considered sufficient in and of itself.

Primary Source	Curriculum (design, structure, organization, planning and development)	Instruction (delivery)	Assessment (student learning) and other assessment related activities
Faculty Member	<p>Faculty self-reflection on course structure or design elements in relation to best practice and/or student perception and learning. Free form or using a design model, guiding questions or evaluation rubric.</p> <p><i>[Self-assessment packet – course review based on the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education - McConnell]</i></p> <p><i>[Self-assessment packet – teaching style based on Learner-Centered Psychological Principles of the APA – McConnell]</i></p> <p><i>[Explanation of Design Choices template – Richlin]</i></p> <p><i>[Self assessment open ended question format 1 - Lyons]</i></p> <p><i>[Self assessment open ended questions format 2 – Chism]</i></p> <p><i>[Self assessment open ended questions format 3 – Berke and Kastberg]</i></p> <p><i>[Course Portfolio Guidelines]</i></p> <p><i>[Reflective Questions for a Course Portfolio – Richlin]</i></p> <p><i>[Teaching Portfolio Guidelines]</i></p>	<p>Video-taped self-observation and written reflection of one’s own class session (tape, reflection provided; second taping for documenting improvement recommended)</p> <p><i>[videotaped self review questions]</i></p>	<p>Evidence and reflections from a wide variety of available Classroom Assessment Techniques.</p> <p><i>[CATs handouts – assessment website]</i></p>

	Evidence of participation in faculty development opportunities related to teaching and learning (notes and ideas, certificates etc)	Evidence of participation in faculty development opportunities related to teaching and learning (notes and ideas, certificates etc)	Evidence of participation in faculty development opportunities related to teaching and learning (notes and ideas, certificates etc)
	Statement of teaching and learning philosophy and reflection of how it impacts course design, delivery and evaluation. <i>[Example of a Teaching and Learning Philosophy]</i>	Self reflections of teaching delivery/self-evaluations of instruction and associated recommendations for improvement. <i>[Instructor Self-Evaluation Form – ISEF – University of Illinois]</i>	Results and comments from pre and post tests, assignments or surveys as they relate to a specific course and student learning.
	Reflective review of a course’s evolution over 2 or more years, in relation to student feedback and student performance, with documentation of each syllabus, relevant assessment descriptions and/or rubrics etc.		Aggregate performance indicators from a particular course assessment (ie. itemized exam analysis, rubric analysis) with associated observations and recommendations (and, ideally, a follow up evaluation).
	Course mappings that demonstrate connections between course design and desired course and/or departmental outcomes (how the organization intentionally helps to emphasize desired learning). <i>[Course Blueprint template – Richlin]</i>		Publications or scholarly work on teaching and/or learning
	Publications or scholarly work on teaching and/or learning		
Student	Relevant responses from student evaluations <i>[Limitations of student evaluations – background information]</i> <i>[Critical variables and their known impact on student evaluations – background information]</i>	Relevant responses from student evaluations <i>[Limitations of student evaluations – background information]</i> <i>[Critical variables and their known impact on student evaluations – background information]</i>	Relevant responses from student evaluations <i>[Limitations of student evaluations – background information]</i> <i>[Critical variables and their known impact on student evaluations – background information]</i>

		Qualitative feedback from students (such as written comments on standard evaluations – compiled and considered for consistencies, additional comments or letters solicited from students – current and/or past etc).	Evidence of student learning – particularly observable and documentable growth or development in specific skills/knowledge/abilities (ie. drafts of a paper from a student noting your comments to the student, observable changes to the student’s work and connections to learning opportunities provided that might have enhanced the student’s development)
	Student focus group or student interview that looks at a faculty member’s course design and organization from a single course or across a variety of courses in a given term (findings and reflective response) <i>[sample student interview questions]</i>	Student focus group that looks at a faculty member’s instructional effectiveness in a single course or across a variety of courses in a given term (findings and reflective response)	Student focus group that looks at a faculty member’s assignments and assessments from a single course or across a variety of courses in a given term (findings and reflective response)
	Informal formative student evaluations (see also CATs) <i>[CATS handouts – assessment website]</i>	Informal formative student evaluations (see also CATs) <i>[CATS handouts – assessment website]</i>	Informal formative student evaluations (see also CATs) <i>[CATS handouts – assessment website]</i>
Peer or other external source	Findings and/or reflections from SGID sessions, especially as they related to course design improvements and the implementation of recommendations given.	Findings and/or reflections from SGID session(s)	Findings and/or reflections from SGID sessions
	Review of syllabi and course materials by departmental peer, direct administrator or outside faculty member against a set of guiding questions or an established evaluation rubric. <i>[Elements of an Effective Syllabus – Lyons]</i>	Direct observations of multiple days of a given class in the same term by a peer, administrator or other with documentation of observations for the purpose of conversation and improvement (not as a strict or high stakes evaluative measure)	Peer (faculty) review of student work with consideration given to the quality of feedback and opportunities for learning provided by the instructor (assignment description and expectations, evaluative rubrics or

	<p><i>[Rubrics - 10 total - for evaluating course elements – course description, teaching goals and learning outcomes, course design, learning experiences, assignments, rubrics, grading plan, tests/evaluations, CATS, philosophy – one rubric for each category]</i></p> <p><i>[Evaluation of Course Materials Template – Braaskamp]</i></p>	<p>unless the evaluator is well trained)</p> <p><i>[Guidelines for preparing for a peer review]</i></p> <p><i>[Limitations to peer review]</i></p> <p><i>[Teaching Observation Worksheet 1]</i></p>	<p>descriptions, specific and meaningful feedback etc) – potentially using guiding questions, a review form or rubric.</p>
	<p>Syllabi review and/or program review materials from external accreditation processes as they may relate to a given instructor.</p>	<p>Video -taped review of a class session by a peer (using free form qualitative feedback, guiding questions or an evaluative rubric)</p> <p><i>[Guidelines for preparing a video of class]</i></p>	<p>Findings from departmental assessment efforts when they pertain to a particular course (ie. changes to program outcomes that result in changes to a course – ie. capstone), especially as they relate to improvements or refinements made to the course by the instructor as a result.</p>
	<p>Direct observation of a class session with attention given to structural elements (such as the development and organization of key concepts within the lesson, alignment of instructional strategies with desired outcomes for the lesson etc)</p> <p><i>[Looking for a template...could adapt video self evaluation form]</i></p>	<p>On-going ‘buddy’ evaluation system with periodic observations in multiple courses over a semester or academic year with on-going conversation. Documentation kept of observations made, actions taken and improvements offered.</p>	<p>Results from student learning and/or teaching style inventories and reflections.</p> <p><i>[Teaching Style Self-Assessment]</i></p> <p><i>[Self-Reflection Exercise – Declarative versus Procedural Approaches]</i></p> <p><i>[Grasha Teaching Styles Inventory]</i></p>
	<p>Review of a lesson plan or set of lesson plans by a qualified individual who can provide specific, concrete and actionable recommendations for refining or improving learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Written observations on teaching effectiveness or instructional abilities following the delivery of a guest lecture as observed by the course’s instructor of record.</p>	<p>Classroom management self-evaluation and reflective statement.</p> <p><i>[classroom management self-assessment form]</i></p>
	<p>Evaluation of structural elements of a course (course design) by a peer who co-teaches in the same course.</p>		

Another way of thinking about it:

The Course Portfolio

A course portfolio collects and analyzes many of the same types of materials identified for the teaching portfolio – only it does so around a single course. These are not as commonly used as a general teaching portfolio. A critical element to a course portfolio is the reflective narrative/analysis. Consider addressing:

- 1) Design elements – Why is the course organized this way? How does it reflect your teaching philosophy and meet student learning outcomes? How does it help you meet the course’s major challenges?
- 2) Enactment – What do the students experience during the course? What are the reasons behind key student activities, assignments and assessments? How do you select your instructional strategies and how do they support students in reaching key outcomes?
- 3) Results – What do students learn? How are they changed? What have they not achieved and why?
- 4) Analysis – What is your overall assessment of the course and what will change as a result?

Another way of thinking about it:

The Teaching Portfolio

The teaching portfolio serves as a source of information about a faculty member’s overall teaching effectiveness. It will include relevant materials and examples from a variety of courses as testament to overall effectiveness. Teaching portfolios are best ‘collected’ continuously over time, with major reflective elements conducted at set points in time (ie. as part of a faculty annual report and a tenure/promotion report).

Steps to developing a teaching portfolio (Seldin, 1997):

- 1) Summarize your key teaching responsibilities in a short paragraph
- 2) Identify key learning outcomes you hold for your students, your approach to course design, your expectations for student progress and your major student assessments.

- 3) Describe your criteria for teaching effectiveness (from your own experience) and your reasons for choosing the criteria (what does it mean to be effective and how do you know if you have been?). These should reflect your teaching style and coincide with teaching responsibilities.
- 4) Prioritize your criteria from the previous step.
- 5) Assemble materials from your teaching that align with and support your criteria (ie. student assignments, journals, test results, student ratings, evidence from faculty development workshops etc).

Additional materials you might include (Teaching at Its Best, p. 227):

- 1) Statement of teaching philosophy
- 2) Statement of teaching goals for next 5 years.
- 3) Syllabi
- 4) Self-evaluation statement (which includes teaching improvement strategies and efforts)
- 5) Descriptions of improvements and updates in your course assignments, materials and activities.
- 6) Professional activities related to teaching (relevant research, writing, presentations, journal editing etc)
- 7) Names of students you advise or supervise in faculty-student research (and supporting information in the latter)

Additional support materials you may include (Teaching at Its Best, p. 227)

- 1) Statements from peer observations of teaching
- 2) Statements from peers who have reviewed your course syllabi
- 3) Additional student evaluations (beyond standard university evaluations)
- 4) Teaching awards, honors and/or recognitions
- 5) Student scores on standardized exams or department exams
- 6) Records of student success in higher level courses following a pre-requisite you teach
- 7) Invitations to conduct teaching workshops/programs
- 8) Samples of student work along with your evaluations and comments (from a range of student performance levels)

Another way to think about it:

Apply common standards of judgment typically applied to other forms of scholarship to teaching. The following represent common standards and their applications to documenting teaching effectiveness (Teaching at Its Best...):

- 1) Clear and realistic goals, objectives and purpose – examined by peer review of student learning outcomes, teaching philosophy, reflective course narratives.
- 2) Adequate preparation in skills, resources and background knowledge – examined by peer review of the currency and appropriateness of course content and readings
- 3) Appropriate use of methods, properly and flexibly implemented, to meet goals – examined by peer’s consideration of the appropriateness of teaching strategies and assessments employed.
- 4) Significant results, impact and achievement of goals – examined by peer review of student performance on assessment instruments, assignments and other available indicators of learning and through student ratings on items relevant to learning such as perceived challenge, motivation and interest.
- 5) Effective presentation, clear and honest communication to the intended audience – examined by peer observation and student evaluations on communication related items.
- 6) Reflective critique, evaluation of results with plans for improvement – examined by peer review of reflective narratives contained in teaching portfolio/class portfolio materials.

More comprehensive faculty evaluation systems have been developed (resulting in numeric ratings on key identified elements). Two resources on taking this more quantitative approach within a department or division are:

Arreola, R.A. 2000. *Developing a Comprehensive Faculty Evaluation System*. 2nd Ed. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Chism, N.V.N 1999. *Peer Review of Teaching: A Sourcebook*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

**Pacific Lutheran University
Institutional Research Site Visit Report
February 24-26, 2008**

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Introduction

This report follows a site visit to Pacific Lutheran University in February 2008, for the purpose of reviewing the organization of and processes for institutional research.

The report is based in part on a reading of relevant documents such as *PLU 2010* (the long-range plan), the university's draft self-study report being developed in preparation for PLU's April 2008 Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities accreditation review, and other information on the university's website. In addition, during the visit I was able to interview many individuals in leadership positions at PLU, including the president, the provost, the assistant provost, members of the president's council, members of the deans' council, representatives of various faculty committees, and staff members with specific data handling and reporting responsibilities.

This analysis approaches institutional research at PLU broadly, as the capacity to collect and report data, and to support institutional planning, policy formation, management, and decision making – in other words, as the capability for institutional self-knowledge. This capacity is what Patrick T. Terenzini (in *New Directions for Institutional Research* no. 104, 1999) has labeled “organizational intelligence.” Terenzini used the term to describe gathering data, analyzing data to create practical information, and using it to contribute to an informed sense of a college or university. The capability is found in offices under assorted labels, including institutional research; institutional effectiveness; IR and planning; IR, assessment and planning; planning research; research and improvement; and so on. While office titles, staffing levels, and organizational structures do vary, it is unusual for an institution of PLU's size, complexity, aspirations, and quality to be without a well-organized, formally designated unit that has responsibility for and expertise in this type of organizational intelligence.

Observations

PLU is a flourishing comprehensive university. While there are clearly financial constraints, in general PLU is a vibrant and healthy – if lean – institution. Strong and effective leadership is evident in PLU's central administration and in its respective administrative and academic units. A considerable information resource infrastructure already exists in various corners of university such as the registrar's area, admission and enrollment services, information and technology services, and so on. However, for whatever reasons – perhaps because considerable institutional knowledge and memory resides in individual administrators – the structure and processes for effective IR at Pacific Lutheran University are in some respects not quite on par with other strengths and ambitions of the institution.

It may be useful for PLU to consider its IR capability conceptually in two tiers. The first tier involves collecting and reporting basic data consistently, accurately, and efficiently. The second tier involves utilizing those data analytically to inform decision-making on such matters as academic programs, the effectiveness of teaching and learning, student retention, curricular offerings, faculty workload, costs, and revenues. In my estimation, PLU is meeting most first-tier goals, but not always as proficiently as possible. That first-tier capability could and should be sharpened; this would enable institutional research to better make second-tier contributions.

Recommendations

I make the following recommendations knowing that PLU is a tuition-dependent and administratively lean university, and recognizing that any organizational changes should be consistent with the realities of PLU's mission, goals, objectives, resources, and culture. With those considerations in mind, I suggest that a relatively modest enhancement in IR at Pacific Lutheran University could over the long-term pay substantial dividends to the university.

1. Revisit the structure and operations of the Office of Institutional Research. According to PLU's Office of Institutional Research website:

This office serves in Pacific Lutheran University's structure as a place to evaluate a myriad of important issues to the university. The university as an educational institution has fiscal, economic, and marketplace considerations. Within the university's goals, this office helps to evaluate progress regarding governing and regulatory concerns, measurements of quality, allocation of resources, productivity, cognitive outcomes, accomplishment of "educating students for lives of service," and satisfaction with the university. These things hinge on all manner of data

about the university. It is the task of the Office of Institutional Research to provide this data to internal and external university constituents.

And OIR carries out four basic functions:

- * *Collecting data about the environment of the institution*
- * *Collecting data about the performance of the institution*
- * *Analyzing and interpreting the collected data*
- * *Transforming the data analyses and data interpretations into information that can be used to support institutional planning, policy and decision making.*

In my view, these are reasonable statements and in many respects the office is carrying out the functions described above. As currently staffed and managed, however, there is probably some opportunity for improvement. For example, my sense is that oversight of the office at present is fairly loose. The assistant provost now guiding the office is a tenured professor and strong social scientist, who clearly has the judgment, skill, and personal attributes to direct the IR function well. However, this appears to be a temporary assignment, and at present PLU's organizational arrangements for IR seem a bit *ad hoc* and impermanent. With some modest additional attention – by more carefully structuring and managing its IR work processes and capabilities, and taking a more deliberate, long-term approach to IR – PLU could, I believe, collect, tabulate, and report data more efficiently, effectively, and accurately, and also better support institutional planning, policy formation, management, evaluation, and decision making.

2. Institutional research work plan. The potential demands for data and analysis at an institution such as PLU can be almost limitless, but IR capabilities (like any human resource capacities in a university) are always limited. The Office of Institutional Research should therefore establish a deliberate work plan for what it can realistically hope to accomplish, how that work will be carried out efficiently and accurately, and how IR can best contribute to PLU. I suggest that this planning include a review of the prior year's workload and accomplishments. Once priorities are set and an annual work plan is established, the status of completed and upcoming projects, as well as *ad hoc* commitments, can be readily reviewed in real time, perhaps on a quarterly basis. This work plan should include brief, concise documentation (for example, identifying individual responsibilities, timing, interactions with other offices, recipients of reports, and files and queries needed). The work plan should be updated annually.

3. Factbook / dashboard indicators. The compilation of routine data, made generally accessible, on basic information such as enrollments by program, degrees awarded by program, faculty and

staff numbers, ethnicity, budget, and the like, is already under way at PLU. This is an excellent initiative that should continue.

4. Data dictionary. My understanding is that a university-wide data dictionary does not exist for PLU. Such a dictionary, if created, could help to eliminate multiple definitions and competing, contradictory reports. Developing a data dictionary would require conversations among many stakeholders at the university and cannot be viewed strictly as an IR responsibility, but OIR should be one of the voices in and contributors to this important practical project.

5. Communication and collaboration. Open communication and positive relationships between the institutional research office and other academic and administrative units at any university is critical to the efficacy of such an office. PLU's OIR should continue to build and strengthen day-to-day linkages with operating units such as the registrar, enrollment management, information and technology services, and finance and operations. In addition, effective communication with the academic and administrative leadership of PLU is important. There are many mechanisms that could be employed toward this end; perhaps a discussion of institutional research could be placed on the agenda of the president's council and the deans' council once each semester.

6. Data warehouse. I also understand that PLU has not yet developed a fully functional warehouse for administrative data. This lack makes it difficult, for example, to efficiently store and retrieve data or to complete longitudinal studies. I recommend that PLU seriously consider creating a data warehouse.

Development of a good data warehouse would be a worthwhile but ambitious multi-year undertaking. It would require a well organized and collaborative effort among staff from across the university. There is not a single prescription for how to do this, nor a definition of what a warehouse should include. In general, however, if this recommendation is followed, it would probably lead to a team charged with making *ad hoc* access to institutional data easier, more flexible, and more widely available to the PLU community for analytical and reporting purposes. The aim of the effort would be both to store and to unlock data. This is sometimes done through a system of data marts, which are simply subsets of data oriented to various functional business areas. These subsets might include, for example, undergraduate applications and admissions, graduate applications and admissions, enrollments, human resources, budget, course sections, and so on. Typically, transactional data are posted on a regular schedule to the data warehouse, where

they are non-modifiable, and represent a snapshot fixed in time. A warehouse is generally available close to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to individuals who have been granted access and who have the appropriate software. I do not envision the development or maintenance of the data warehouse as being primarily an OIR responsibility – this is probably best led by administrative computing staff – but OIR should be one of the partners in such a project.

7. Reporting line. Across the country, institutional research offices may be found in any of several organizational homes. There can be advantages to having the office report, for example, to the president; to the provost; to the vice president for finance and operations; or to the associate provost for information and technology services. Pacific Lutheran University has a strong senior leadership team in place, and a productive, collaborative culture. These are important advantages for OIR office, wherever it is housed, and I believe that any of the arrangements described above could work.

However, because the core functions of any university are academic, and because the areas of overlap between institutional research and other needs (such as outcomes assessment and program planning) most often identified during my PLU site visit focus upon academic matters, it appears most reasonable to continue to house the Office of Institutional Research within the provost's office.

8. Staffing. It is reasonable to envision OIR more or less as currently configured, although I strongly recommend that the leadership be identified as a permanent member of the provost's staff with clear IR responsibilities. So, for example, a reasonable approach at this time might be a permanent staff of an assistant provost / executive director, one full-time programmer/research analyst, and clerical support (probably shared with the provost's office), with the possibility of adding modest resources once priorities are clarified and an explicit work plan is developed.

While the assistant provost / director would not be a part of the president's cabinet, he or she certainly should be part of the provost's leadership team and would surely be considered among one of the key leaders of the university.

As noted, over time, the addition of some additional resources could justifiably be considered. These investments might take the form of one additional staff member, or funds to support a faculty member or graduate student part-time on a project basis. For example, if assessment

becomes a greater focus for this office, perhaps an assessment coordinator could be reasonably housed in the office.

9. Skills and qualifications. It is especially important that the assistant provost / director provide strong leadership to the office on a long-term basis. Such positions usually benefit from someone with organizational savvy and the ability to build and sustain good interpersonal working relationships in the academic culture. Effective IR directors usually have a high level of contextual intelligence about the substantive issues on which institutional research can be brought to bear, and about how formal and informal decision-making works. Good judgment and a sophisticated understanding of the culture and context of higher education in general, and of their own institutions in particular, help earn respect, credibility, and trust. Strong skills in oral and written communication, research, and analysis are crucial. Familiarity with the literature and practices on institutional research, strategic management, assessment, and institutional improvement are assumed. A graduate degree in the social sciences is typically a minimal expectation for such a position.

A seasoned institutional research practitioner usually has some survey and/or focus group or interviewing capabilities, along with some systems/programming/database background. Those are very useful skills for an assistant provost / director to have, but to some extent, these technical matters will be delegated to staff as functional responsibilities.

10. Sample position announcements. Excerpts from several position announcements found through “AIR Job Listings” (<http://www.airweb.org>) on February 28, 2008 are appended as samples that might be useful for PLU.

Appendix 1. Sample Job Descriptions

DIRECTOR OF ASSESSMENT, PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH (#650), Scripps College, Claremont, CA

Institution: Founded by newspaper publisher and philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps in 1926, [Scripps](#) is the women's college of The Claremont Colleges. Scripps women lay claim to the best of both worlds: a superb liberal arts education on one of America's most beautiful college campuses as well as the opportunity to take advantage of educational and co-curricular offerings at four coed colleges literally next door to one another. Scripps graduates go on to some of the most prestigious graduate schools in the nation and leadership positions in a wide range of academic fields and endeavors.

Job Duties: Scripps College invites applications for the position of Director of Assessment, Planning and Institutional Research. This is a full-time, twelve-month, exempt benefits based position. Reporting to the Dean of Faculty, the Director of Assessment, Planning and Institutional Research has direct responsibility for institutional research, strategic planning, academic assessment planning, and disaster preparedness. In addition, the director is responsible for work related to the coordination and facilitation of the College's upcoming WASC accreditation, including the Institutional Proposal, the Capacity and Preparatory Review, and the Educational Effectiveness Review. The Director has responsibility for designing and managing mechanisms and methodologies for the collection and analysis of institutional data so that it may be used effectively to enhance institutional decision-making and planning. The Director will work closely with the President and senior staff in identifying and developing new strategic opportunities for the College.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Serve as a consultant to campus groups on the collection and use of data for decision-making and planning.
- Design and conduct annual longitudinal studies to address issues related to retention and student satisfaction.
- Design and conduct studies as needed to address critical issues in other areas of the campus.
- Coordinate all external institutional data reporting and participate in institutional data exchange.
- Design and produce Strategic Indicators and other collections of College data as needed.
- Identify and document information resources and provide readily available and usable institutional data to senior administrators, the Board of Trustees, the Faculty Executive Committee, faculty task forces, committees, etc.
- Explore the availability and keep abreast of national and state institutional research issues.
- In coordination with the Dean of Faculty,, develop and implement assessment programs in response to college and departmental needs for data and analysis.
- In coordination with the Dean of Faculty, assist in implementing the college's WASC reaccreditation processes, including development of the institutional Proposal, Capacity and Preparatory Review, and Educational Effectiveness Review.
- Integrate accountability measures, learning outcomes data, and other survey and study data to provide comprehensive reporting and analyses on institutional effectiveness.
- Create a systematic review of persistence rates and, working with departments, determine parameters for measurements.
- Serve as the key staff person for the College's strategic planning process, and provide administrative support to other campus committees as assigned.
- Serve on various Board committees and serve on various campus committees, including Senior Staff, Budget and Planning Committee, Diversity Coordinating Committee, etc.
- Coordinate the College's emergency preparedness planning and preparations.
- Supervise the staff of the Planning and Research Office.
- Meet regularly with staff to set goals and monitor progress toward goals.
- Give on-going feedback and conduct formal performance evaluations in a timely manner.
- Lead the process of identifying and developing new strategic opportunities for the College, working closely with the President of the College and other members of the campus leadership.

Qualifications:

- Excellent written and oral communication skills, exceptional organizational and administrative skills, and must be able to manage multiple tasks simultaneously in a complex institutional environment.
- Strong work ethic, professional initiative, high energy, and a sincere sense of dedication to the mission of Scripps College.
- MA/MS in education, statistical analysis, research methodology or related field, or any combination of education, training and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities of the position, is required (Ph.D. preferred).
- Four years related work experience in research design and implementation, preferably in a private higher education institution.
- Demonstrated knowledge in the areas of assessment, program evaluation, quantitative and qualitative research methods, research design and statistical analysis.

DIRECTOR FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT (08-534), Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA

Institution: The mission of [Berklee College of Music](#) is to educate, train, and develop students to excel in music as a career.

Developing the musicianship of all our students is the foundation of our curriculum. We believe that the lessons and qualities derived from that work—the self-discipline needed for excellence, the empathy required of music making and the openness and inquisitiveness essential to creativity—are critical to achievement in any pursuit, musical or otherwise; and that music is a powerful catalyst for personal growth, which is central to any collegiate experience.

Founded on jazz and popular music rooted in the African cultural diaspora, our comprehensive curriculum is distinctly contemporary in its content and approach, and embraces the principal musical movements of our time. Through a course of scholarly and practical learning experiences integrating performance and writing, our curriculum covers the variety of influential styles, relevant technologies, and career opportunities open to today's music professional.

Job Duties: Berklee College of Music seeks a professional to provide leadership in planning, directing, and implementing the college's program of institutional research and assessment. You will be engaged in the college's accreditation activities, manage the budget, and supervise a small staff.

Qualifications: Master's degree in education, research/statistics, or related field from an accredited institution required. Five to seven years of experience in higher education program review, assessment, research design, statistical analysis, reporting, and higher education accreditation. A deep support for diversity in ideas, perspectives, individual, cultures, learning styles, and music.

ASSISTANT VICE CHANCELLOR FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, MA

Institution: US News and World Report ranks UMass Dartmouth among the top public universities in the northeast. The [University](#) has an enrollment of more than 8000 students in a growing and dynamic environment. The main campus, located in North Dartmouth, was designed by renowned architect Paul Rudolph and provides easy access to Boston, Providence, and Cape Cod.

Job Duties: The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth seeks an Assistant Vice Chancellor of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment to provide leadership in development of an information culture for the campus with emphasis on assessment methods and strategies. The Assistant Vice Chancellor will assist campus leaders to formulate issues, analyze trends, and assess outcomes, contributing to strategic planning, assessment, and development of institutional policy. The Assistant Vice Chancellor will provide information and analysis involving students, budgets, research activity, human resources and collective bargaining, instruction, financial analysis, strategic planning, policy formulation, and enrollment management.

Qualifications: Minimum qualifications include: Doctoral degree preferred (a master's degree can be considered with substantial experience); ability to work collaboratively across a broad range of constituencies; proven ability to balance multiple priorities and address multiple challenges creatively with limited resources; significant success in higher education assessment, planning, and institutional research and program administration; significant record of achievement in campus leadership and demonstrated outstanding organizational, analytical, and communication skills. Also required are demonstrated success in research design and statistical analysis and modeling and survey development and other functions of assessment; knowledge of standards and trends in national education data reporting, enrollment management, and planning and assessment; demonstrated understanding of and success in institutional strategic planning and policy formulation; knowledge of principles of collective bargaining process, knowledge of principles of organizational development and/or managing institutional change; experience in designing and using data warehouse or data mart preferred; experience in using the PeopleSoft enterprise information system and a reporting environment such as Crystal Reports, Query, FOCUS, and Cognos preferred.

DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESEARCH, Pennsylvania College of Technology, Williamsport, PA

Institution: Pennsylvania College of Technology is located in Williamsport, a family-oriented community, ideally situated along the Susquehanna River at the foot of Bald Eagle Mountain in North Central Pennsylvania, just a four-hour drive from New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington D.C. [Penn College](#) is Pennsylvania's premier technical college and an affiliate of The Pennsylvania State University. More than 6,500 students are enrolled in Penn College's bachelor and associate degree and certificate majors, which combine hands-on experience with theory and management education.

Job Duties: The Director will plan and execute all internal and external institutional research undertaken by the College and will have coordinating responsibilities for the College's annual planning process.

Qualifications: Minimum qualifications include a Master's Degree in Educational Research or related discipline, OR an equivalent combination of education and work experience; three years of demonstrated successful experience in institutional planning and research, preferably in an educational setting; the ability to design research studies and perform complex statistical analyses; and a strong background and experience in computer applications, including statistical applications, mainframe systems, and database systems. Background check will be required on selected candidate.

DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, Onondaga Community College, Syracuse, NY

Institution: Onondaga Community College is a college of the State University of New York (SUNY) system and one of 30 locally sponsored community colleges throughout New York State. Onondaga County is our sponsor.

We offer two-year degree programs that serve as transfer opportunities to baccalaureate degree programs at four-year campuses or for direct entry to the workforce.

[Onondaga](#) is a diverse educational learning community. We are committed to creating and maintaining an atmosphere where individuality is not only recognized - but encouraged - to contribute to the fabric of the campus environment. We continue to serve the educational and economic development needs of the region and have over 30,000 alumni.

Our focus is on a:

Student-Centered Environment
Learning-Focused Institution
Community-Oriented Approach

Our Syracuse location, at the geographic center of New York, is within 350 miles of every major metropolitan center of the northeast. Our central location and accessibility in the heart of New York and the northeast make it easy to get here. We are near the Finger Lakes, Lake Ontario, and the St. Lawrence Seaway as well as the Adirondack mountains.

Job Duties:

- Provide institutional leadership in the development and analysis of assessment systems for academic and administrative units, including the overall planning, budgeting, organizing and coordinating of campus-wide assessment efforts;
- Participate in the formulation of policies related to assessment, recommend policies for approval, and implement those policies which are approved;
- Plan and conduct workshops and other developmental activities for faculty, chairpersons, and department managers on good practices in assessment;
- Provide technical input into the selection, design and/or development of assessments that measure student learning;
- Develop, implement, and maintain systems for the collection, analysis and interpretation of assessment data, including data collection and reporting of Key Performance Indicators and Critical Success Factors relative to the College's strategic plan;
- Be responsible for overseeing the design, validation, implementation, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of activities that focus on outcomes assessment, program review, and institutional effectiveness.
- Coordinate processes for the annual review of the strategic plan in support of the College's mission; recommend and prepare appropriate updates to the plan for President's and Board of Trustee approval in accordance with the institutional planning calendar;
- In collaboration with faculty, administrators, staff, students, and other stakeholders, collect and analyze relevant data from both internal and external resources in support of the institutional planning and decision-making process;
- Generate periodic and special reports, surveys, forecasts, and trend analyses on the effectiveness and improvement of educational programs and administrative/support services; prepare and submit assessment reports as required by SUNY and other external agencies;
- In collaboration with the information technology department, develop and maintain a college website for assessment;
- Remain current with recent changes and trends/developments in the field of assessment and student learning;
- Comply with college policies and procedures and actively support the college's affirmative action

program and the goals of open access and diversity; and

- Complete special assignments as requested.

Qualifications:

- Master's degree from an accredited college or university, with course work in research and statistics, educational research, psychology or related field. A doctorate degree is a plus;
- Minimum of two years of demonstrated experience in research methods and data analysis in higher education, preferably in assessment;
- Thorough knowledge of empirical research principles and techniques and skill in their application;
- Good working knowledge of statistical methods;
- Ability to plan, organize and conduct major administrative and analytical studies;
- Ability to draw conclusions, develop recommendations and clearly communicate research findings orally and in written reports;
- Excellent computer skills required including standard office software and SPSS or similar statistical package; and
- Excellent interpersonal, analytical, organizational, presentation, oral and written communication skills.

Pacific Lutheran University
Strategic Plan for the Administrative Information Environment
June 2009

Executive Summary:

The first decade of the 21st century has been marked by dramatic increases in both the power and the proliferation of information technologies. This growth has impacted virtually all sectors of our society, including the ways we buy and sell merchandise, communicate and interact with one another, access information and entertainment, educate ourselves and each other, and work together for important causes. The Obama presidential campaign, for example, was an opportunity for many to experience first-hand how a strategically implemented information technology infrastructure could enable a new way of doing business, by supporting effective decision-making, rapid program implementation, and increasingly effective communications campaigns.

It is against this backdrop of the transformational power of information technologies that Pacific Lutheran University envisions its administrative information, World Wide Web, and other communications systems as a unified information environment. As PLU pursues its aspirations for the future, its students, faculty, staff, and external constituents require an increasingly robust information environment that is appropriately resourced, cost effective, increasingly powerful, ultimately flexible, and widely accessible. The university's administrative information environment will ultimately become a powerful agent for change that can be leveraged for institutional success.

The initiatives described in this strategic plan will provide a solid foundation upon which the institution can transform “the Pacific Lutheran University experience.” By developing and sustaining a seamless and powerful information environment, the university will:

- **Transform the way people work:** those engaged in the work of the university will have simplified access to PLU's institutional information resources, as well as the tools and training with which to utilize them effectively. Vast stores of materials formerly available only on paper will be available in easily accessible digital formats. Data access and manipulation tools will simplify the use of information for creative and powerful new purposes. Processes will also be redesigned to leverage new technology resources for basic interactions, creating opportunities for new kinds of higher-level work.
- **Transform the way PLU communicates:** All forms of communication with the university's constituent groups will become increasingly personalized to reflect their unique relationship with the institution, their preferences, their affinity groups, and their needs of the moment. The richness of multiple communications channels (including both print and digital media) will be utilized in a way that conforms to varying and unique personal needs.
- **Transform the way information guides decisions:** Decision-makers will not only have access to high-quality information that is well-defined, accurate and trusted, but they will be able to manipulate that information in ways that can more effectively inform decisions and future directions.

- **Transform the way the university meets the needs of students, parents, alumni, faculty and staff:** With a rich set of institutional information and powerful tools to manage and manipulate information, not only can the university better communicate with key constituents, but it can build new digital transactions and interactions that can streamline, target, and personalize the business they need to conduct with the university. In addition, PLU can use those same resources to offer greater levels of service in cost effective ways for all members of the PLU community.
- **Transform the ways in which Pacific Lutheran University engages the broader world:** The university already engages the world in many ways, but a dynamic, flexible, and media-rich digital presence can reach farther and more effectively communicate PLU's messages to the outside world. This foundation can also use technology to bring the world more fully into the curriculum, as well as recruit students, friends and donors from beyond traditional boundaries.

The development of this strategic plan for the administrative information environment has been guided by two consultants with over 50 years combined experience in higher education information technology and library organizations. We have utilized a process that allowed PLU to define its own direction with respect to the administrative information environment. Many members of the campus community have been consulted during this four-phase process, and decisions about this strategic plan have been driven by the Administrative Information Environment Group (AIE Group).

The observations, findings and recommendations of this planning effort are summarized here, and described in greater detail in the full section of the report:

- **Vision:** PLU's Administrative Information Environment Group has defined a vision for the information environment that it believes is both necessary and desirable. The vision describes an ideal toward which the university will work over the next several years.
- **Strengths:** The current administrative information environment has many significant strengths such as the attention and oversight of the AIE Group, the quality of the existing Banner system, the recent implementation of Microsoft Reporting Services, the ongoing development of the new web content management system, and significant improvements to the university's overall technology infrastructure.
- **Areas Requiring Attention:** The analysis of the current administrative information environment revealed several areas that require attention, including the current assumptions and approach to stewardship and ownership of that environment, the ways in which technical support is utilized, the need to reexamine current approaches to developing web functionality, the need to improve reporting and data access, the need to improve technical skills across the institution, and the need to complete the migration of the www.plu.edu website into the web content management system.
- **Strengthening the Existing Environment:** Over the course of the next year, the university can address these areas of concern and significantly strengthen the existing environment by making some strategic changes. In particular, a framework for professional development should be created for all employees, a cohesive institution-wide reporting strategy should be developed, the responsibilities of the Data Administration Task Force should be expanded, the work of the Administrative Computing unit within Information and Technology Services should be redefined, a

new web leadership and development framework should be instituted, and a long-range approach for the stability of the technical infrastructure should be developed.

- **The Strategic Plan:** The strategic plan for the administrative information environment consists of four key components: establishing annual planning cycles, implementing existing and emerging projects that are deemed to be a high priority, developing an ongoing process of “best practice” reviews for functional departments, and employing several new technologies for the university, including a data warehouse, customer relationship management software (including enrollment management), portal/personalization engine, workflow system and document imaging system. Choices for the implementation timeline and budget models are provided for two possible scenarios over a five-year period.
- **Supporting Activities:** The overall success of the strategic plan for the administrative information environment will ultimately depend on several supporting structures and activities to ensure a high-quality result that is well aligned with the needs of the institution. These structures and activities include appropriate oversight leadership (for priorities, decisions and allocation of resources), definition of a new web development framework, initiation of ongoing strategic planning activities, development of a project management methodology, consideration of resource allocations, and efforts to effectively manage organizational change.
- **Summary of Costs:** Realizing the ambitious goals PLU has set out for its administrative information environment will require the allocation of both one-time and ongoing resources. While it is likely that some, if not most, of the ongoing resource requirements and some portion of the one-time costs can be addressed through prudent reallocation of existing resources (such as current I&TS budgets and reorganization efforts), a project of this magnitude and strategic significance cannot be achieved without the dedication of additional university resources. Over the five-year life of the strategic plan, the estimated one-time costs for the core technology initiatives outlined in the plan are \$1,627,000 – \$100,000 in FY 09-10; \$428,000 in FY10-11; \$529,000 in FY11-12, \$410,000 in FY12-13; and \$160,000 in FY 13-14. The plan also calls for ongoing allocations totaling \$2,068,000 – \$211,000 in FY 09-10; \$314,000 in FY10-11; \$449,000 in FY11-12; \$552,000 in FY12-13; and \$542,000 in FY13-14 to support the staffing and ongoing operating costs of the plan’s core initiatives.

The directions outlined within this strategic plan provide a trajectory rather than an endpoint for the overall improvement of the administrative information environment and the advanced communications environment which will rely upon it. Progress within this initiative will be the ongoing responsibility of the Administrative Information Environment Group, as well as the leadership and staff of Information and Technology Services, University Communications, the Data Administration Task Force, and a variety of other campus units that interact closely with the administrative information environment.

This strategic plan has been developed with focused attention from the consultants, close guidance of the AIE Group and broad input from the Pacific Lutheran University community. We expect that many of the campus initiatives that result from the plan will themselves be transformational, both in creating powerful new tools upon which the university can build its new ways of working, communicating, making decisions, serving its many constituents and engaging the world.

Pacific Lutheran University
Strategic Plan for the Administrative Information Environment
June 2009

Components of the Strategic Plan:

This plan represents the convergence of four broad initiatives.

1. **Planning:** Ongoing planning activities, including strategic planning, budget and resource planning and project planning are laid out in a multi-year format. Our recommendations for ongoing Strategic Planning and Project Management are described fully in sections below.
2. **Existing and Emerging Projects:** Several significant projects have already been defined or are underway, and new needs and opportunities will likely arise during the plan's timeframe. Careful decisions need to be made about which must proceed (see the section on Oversight Leadership below). Those that must move forward will need to be carefully integrated into the overall timeline and resource commitments.
3. **New Technologies:** The implementation of major new technologies has been the primary goal of this strategic planning process. Technologies such as data warehousing, customer relationship management (CRM) tools, portal/web personalization framework, document imaging, and workflow are seen as key additions to the university's administrative information environment. These technologies are more fully described within this section.
4. **Best Practice Reviews:** An ongoing series of departmental reviews (administrative departments and I&TS departments) should be defined to ensure continuous improvement through the use of industry best practices and process improvement. These activities utilize outside help from the system vendor and/or from other subject matter experts to ask probing questions about current operations and make recommendations about transforming standard practices and processes.

Data Warehouse:

Providing greater access to the data within the university's information environment will be central to transforming how people work at PLU and how information will guide decisions. A significant portion of the transformation will be accomplished through the addition of a data warehouse to PLU's administrative information environment.

Once implemented, the data warehouse will address three significant data access issues which are inherent in virtually every Banner implementation. First, the data warehouse transforms the Banner data set from a complex maze of interconnected data elements into a simpler format resembling columns and rows with which most users are more comfortable. As part of the data transformation process, data elements can be renamed with "human readable" terms, removing much of the need for mastering "Banner speak" from the data access process.

Secondly, a data warehouse can transform PLU's ability to aggregate and report on datasets across systems. While Banner seemingly has a place to store every data element one might imagine, there are important data elements within the PLU environment that are not stored within Banner (but that often need to be combined with Banner data for reporting purposes). With the implementation of a data warehouse, it becomes possible to store Banner data adjacent to data from a card access system or parking system (for example), as if it was one data set.

Finally, the data warehouse provides the ability to store periodic snapshots of the data based on some defined timetable (e.g. beginning of each month or quarter). Because Banner is a transactional system, it is very efficient at collecting and storing data. With the right tools, it is simple to provide a picture of the data at a particular instant. However, if you wait five minutes, new transactions will have occurred and the original picture will have been lost. The existence of periodic data snapshots in the data warehouse will transform PLU's ability to perform period-to-period comparisons and same-time-over-multiple-years analyses.

While PLU has taken steps over the years toward implementing a data warehousing strategy, we recommend the Banner ODS-EDW solution at this time. We further recommend that the data warehouse be the first of the new technologies implemented as part of this plan. Not only is the data warehouse essential to the customer relationship management system described below, but much of the prerequisite work outlined above leads directly to the data warehouse implementation, as the next logical step.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Tools:

The first of two technologies aimed at transforming PLU communications is a customer relationship management (CRM) application. Initially, this toolset will be targeted at transforming communication with prospective student and alumni communities. As the name implies, the CRM toolset is intended to assist with managing the relationship with external customers. At the most elementary level it will provide a structured framework for creating communications campaigns and capturing the results of those campaigns. As the implementation grows in sophistication, the tools will also support university efforts to develop highly segmented communications campaigns based on data the university already has about individual constituents. At a third level of sophistication, campaigns can be highly segmented and will allow opportunities for the recipient to act on those communications (providing data for future communications). Finally at a fourth level of sophistication, increasing recipient profile and behavioral data will allow the tools to facilitate predictive communication models, that can anticipate which messages a given recipient will respond to and act upon.

While SunGard Higher Education has branded its CRM offering as the Enrollment Management Suite, the toolset is equally applicable to cultivating prospective donors. In our estimation the CRM system would ideally be implemented following the data warehouse project (see Plan A in Appendix C). However, if PLU deems it necessary or appropriate to advance the implementation timeline for the CRM tools, it is possible to initially implement only the portions of the data warehouse necessary to realize the CRM system and then return to the data warehouse implementation once the CRM project has been completed (see Plan B in Appendix C).

Portal/Web Personalization Platform:

Implementation of a portal/personalization framework is far enough out in the strategic plan's timeline that new technologies for achieving personalization may become viable and/or mainstream. Therefore, the university will need to develop a process by which it can fully articulate its goals with respect to personalization, consider viable options available at that time, and select the appropriate technologies to deploy in this quickly changing marketplace.

While also applicable to external audiences, the initial audience for this toolset is likely to be PLU's internal constituencies—students, faculty, and staff. In the case of a portal or web personalization platform, instead of “pushing” content to a recipient, a portal creates a web environment in which content is presented to a user based on who they are and the choices they have made about viewing content. Once a user authenticates to the portal, the displays will reflect his/her user profile as a personal dashboard of information and links to information, as well as aggregated messages and information the user has selected to receive. For example, one could choose to only view notices about Chemistry lectures and musical performances, instead of getting notifications about every campus event; instead of having to log into the library system to see which books one has checked out, the portal would simply provide that information automatically. Similarly, instead of having to go into Banner Self-Service to find a budget balance, the portal, or similar application, would simply include that information on every budget manager's status page.

Workflow and Document Imaging:

While workflow and document imaging are really separate technologies, their combined power to transform processes suggests that they be implemented simultaneously. Analyzing, rethinking, and improving outdated processes to leverage automation technologies requires not only a significant willingness to change, but also a significant commitment of both time and energy. Thus, coupling the workflow and document imaging implementations can facilitate doing this work once, as opposed to twice. Furthermore, since the usability of these tools is greatly enhanced when they are integrated with a portal or other personalization applications (because of the extent to which these tools utilize messaging to notify individuals of process and task status), it is generally recommended that these tools be implemented in parallel with, or subsequent to, a portal or other personalization framework.

Workflow facilitates the transfer of multi-step processes between individuals in a structured and trackable fashion. Rather than having to route a paper form (say a grant application) to several offices in a serial fashion, workflow allows a document to be routed electronically to several people, possibly even in parallel (if appropriate). Digital signatures can be applied to the document to indicate approval, and the initiator can determine the status of the process while providing reminders at appropriate intervals to individuals who have not yet completed a required task.

Out of necessity, universities have historically maintained vast quantities of paper records, and considerable time and effort is spent gathering, processing, storing and retrieving those records.

In many cases, some portion of the information is also stored in a digital system (like Banner). Document imaging is intended to address the inherent inefficiencies in storing paper documents. Once implemented, this technology will facilitate the digital storage of most paper records and associate any related electronic records directly to the digital image.

In the case of workflow, the value of the direct integration into the Banner environment makes the selection of the Banner workflow product nearly an automatic choice. The same cannot be said for document imaging. There are certainly advantages to Banner's Extender solution, especially when it comes to the system cost. However, document imaging has become so commonplace in the commercial marketplace that there are several third-party vendors who offer a significantly more sophisticated product for a relatively small additional investment.

The Power of these Technologies:

The application of the new technologies outlined within this strategic plan, built upon the prescribed efforts to strengthen the existing administrative information environment, will help the institution transform the Pacific Lutheran University experience for all sectors of the community, by:

- transforming the way people work;
- transforming the way PLU communicates;
- transforming the way information guides decisions;
- transforming the way the university meets the needs of students, parents, alumni, faculty and staff; and
- transforming the ways in which Pacific Lutheran University engages the broader world.

There are, however, additional supporting structures and activities that must be developed in order for these new technologies to have the maximum transformational effect. Those structures and activities are described in the sections that follow.

*Pacific Lutheran University
University Conference
September 2, 2009*

2009-2010 PLANNING REPORT

PLU 2010: Vision to Action Year VII

UNIVERSITY INITIATIVES

1. Address the continuing challenges of a changing economic landscape with a special focus on:
(a) market research and strategic positioning, (b) revenue enhancement, and (c) strategic financial planning, both short- and long-term.
2. Complete the first year, the study year, of the PLU 2020 long-range planning process.
3. Continue the leadership phase of the "Engage the World: The Campaign for PLU" with a goal of reaching \$80 million in total gifts received.
4. Implement year one of the Strategic Technologies Initiative, a university-wide project to design and use information technologies to better support workflow, decision-making and communication.
5. Make the next level of response to NWCCU recommendations on assessment and institutional research.

DIVISIONAL INITIATIVES

Academic Affairs

1. Complete response to the NWCCU recommendation on faculty review by beginning implementation of the new faculty review policy and procedures and improving compliance across all divisions and schools.
2. Achieve the next level of progress on the NWCCU recommendations on assessment of student learning by implementing department, program, and school assessment plans and by developing an academic division assessment plan.
3. Strengthen general education by completing implementation of the revised general education program, developing the assessment plan for general education, and supporting the effective functioning of the General Education Program Committee.
4. Continue to strengthen faculty culture and leadership by providing resources and development opportunities around teaching, scholarship and service, by cooperating in activities related to the current capital campaign, and by working on issues of governance, norms, expectations, and compensation.
5. Continue to respond to the NWCCU recommendation on institutional research by advancing assessment of our Banner capacity and completing a draft of an institutional research plan for the academic sector.

Admission and Enrollment Services

1. Increase yield rates from freshmen and transfer admit pools by better qualifying inquiries, improving campus visits, and enhancing academic messaging.
2. Analyze pricing and discount trends in order to more accurately inform net tuition revenue discussions going forward.
3. Thoroughly evaluate all service procedures in the Student Services Center (SSVC) seeking opportunities to leverage automation opportunities and online tools such as the SSVC Web site as well as Banner.
4. Complete all new admission, financial aid, and student service requirements called for by the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

Development and University Relations

1. Continue the leadership phase of the "Engage the World: The Campaign for PLU" with a goal of reaching \$80 million in total gifts received.
2. Work in support of the Master Plan for the Information Environment of 2020: (a) complete implementation of content management system, (b) complete review of Advancement best practices, (c) enhance database and integrity of records, and (d) establish an integrated marketing and communications advisory group for key university messages.
3. Produce major events and connect them with key university themes: (a) produce Christmas signature events in new venues and with a new schedule, (b) connect major events of Christmas concerts and Wang Symposium with corresponding themes of Lutheran heritage and global engagement, and (c) explore connecting spring donor banquet and 2011 homecoming with messages of academic excellence and vocation, respectively.
4. Complete the KPLU broadcast installation move to the Martin J. Neeb Center and dedicate the facility in October in conjunction with Homecoming and the meeting of the Board of Regents.

Finance and Operations

1. Improve operational effectiveness and reduce paper flow in Finance and Operations and across the university by upgrading Web presence, the campus calendar and electronic tools for ecommerce, payroll, accounts payable and human resources.
2. Continue campus planning and construction by developing phasing plans and finalizing conceptual designs and construction documents for Eastvold Hall, Rieke Science Center and athletic facilities.
3. Continue to develop multi-year financial plan through modeling of financial aid, net revenue and staffing; improve net revenue stream from Auxiliary Services, including Garfield Book Company and Conferences and Events.
4. Develop campus action climate plan to meet goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2020.
5. Provide team building, leadership development and training opportunities for Finance and Operations directors, managers and staff.

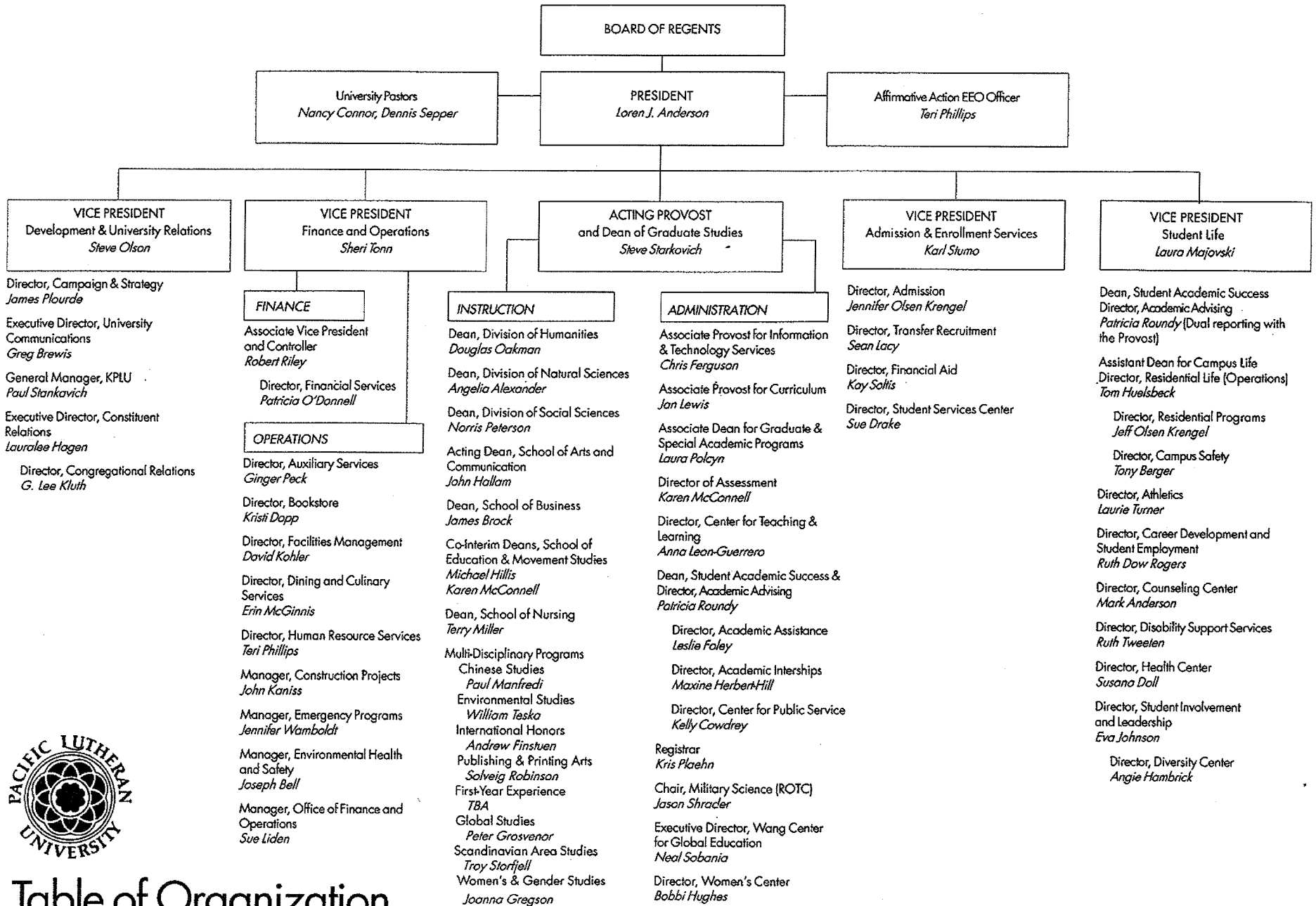
Student Life

1. Strengthen student engagement in the PLU community through expanded use of Web-based and other technologies.
2. Enhance effectiveness of delivery of services to students and administrative workflow by more effective utilization of the Banner system.
3. Broaden and sustain delivery of Health and Wellness campus programming and refocus LuteFit on student issues.
4. Improve first year student success and retention through enhanced assessment methods and more effective and timely follow-up.



Table of Organization

REVISED AUGUST 2009



APPENDIX A: PROGRAM ASSESSMENT PLAN

Major or Program: _____

Submitted by/Contact person: _____

Program Mission Statement and/or Program Goals:

[Program Goals may include things like expected employment or graduate school placements for graduating seniors, expected rates of certification/licensure etc. or other expectations held for graduates around global citizenship, professional engagement and lifelong learning etc]

Student Learning Outcomes:

[Please list the specific student learning outcomes for the specific major/program (NO NEED TO RESUBMIT). This section may also include a curriculum map that identifies how the curriculum is aligned to the learning outcomes]

Description of Assessment Measures and Time Frame(s):

[Assessment measures should include direct and indirect measures. All measures need not be done every year but assessment of all learning outcomes should be attended to as best as possible during the specified assessment cycle. A brief but clear explanation of each measure and when/how each will be collected should be provided]

Benchmarks/Performance Criteria:

[Using professional judgment, and external standards where applicable, identify the criteria or threshold(s) the program will use for evaluating student achievement on each assessment measure, where applicable. Attach and properly label any rubrics or evaluation tools to be used, if available.]

System for Analysis and Feedback:

[Describe how, and by whom, the assessment measures will be evaluated and reported. Clearly identify the mechanisms by which findings will be shared and improvements will be identified. This may be by subcommittee reporting to the larger unit, by department retreat or regular department meetings etc]

Findings: (provide only if available from work completed this year)

Improvements: (provide only if available)

Explain mechanism(s) for communicating learning objectives and assessment efforts to students and others: