

The Office of Curriculum, Accreditation and Assessment

Institutional Effectiveness

An Assessment Update

Programs Scheduled for Review in Fall '06

- Radio/Television/ Film
- Theatre BA, BFA
- Pre-Business - AAS Business Administration BS/ Business - MBA
- Accounting - BS, M.Acc
- Management/ Sports Business
- Marketing
- Economics
- Information Systems – BS, MS
- Finance
- Nursing - ADN, BSN, MSN
- Psychology BA/BS
- Business Education/ Industrial Education

Program Review Update

Twenty-one degree programs will go through the program review process this fall. See adjacent list. The Program Review process focuses directly on the mission and goals of the programs being evaluated and their assessment measures. The program's self-study report should include goals related to instruction, scholarship, and civic engagement. The report should delineate ways in which the program's mission and goals are consistent with the mission and goals of the university. Finally, the bulk of the report should focus on providing evidence that the program is effectively carrying out its mission and meeting its goals.

Issues such as curriculum, enrollment, and faculty must be addressed, as well as measures (student learning outcomes).

The review must be evaluative as well as descriptive and directed toward program improvement. Program improvement is especially important as NKU prepares for SACS reaffirmation in 2008. SACS Principles of Accreditation include references to the requirements for a process of assessment, planning, and use of evidence in improving all programs and services.

For more information on the Program Review process and schedule, visit: <http://programreview.nku.edu>.

Student Engagement at NKU

Guest Contributor: Maggie Stevens, Director of Service Learning

Student engagement is measured and defined in many different ways, even the NSSE looks at multiple variables to measure "how engaged" our students are. At first glance, these numbers can be daunting, overwhelming and make you want to turn the other way and pretend that they don't exist. But we can't do that. The university and CPE want us to use NSSE scores, and since our students took the time to answer these questions, don't we owe it to them to look at them?

So with the help of the staff in CAA, I started the process. It may not sound

like fun, but it has actually been very interesting and the CAA staff has been very helpful. They easily can help make sense of the NSSE data as it applies to the students in your department.

For my work, I was particularly interested in learning about the differences between students who "*participated in a community based project as part of a regular course*" in the past year. The population for this survey was a cohort of students completing their first year at NKU and a cohort of students completing their final year at NKU. While, I have looked at the results of both of these groups individually and combined, here is one example of what I have learned about our 2005 seniors. (*continued on page 2*)

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Using NSSE as a Tool for Documenting Student Learning Outcomes

NKU will administer the NSSE survey in Spring of 2007!

Look for the 2005 Analysis online at: <http://access.nku.edu/oaca/NSSE/2005/2005AnalysisPage.htm>

“NSSE data inform planning and decision making, provide a comprehensive snapshot of the quality of the undergraduate experience, and encourage institutions to adopt best models and practice.”

— James A. Anderson, Vice President of Student Success, University of New York at Albany

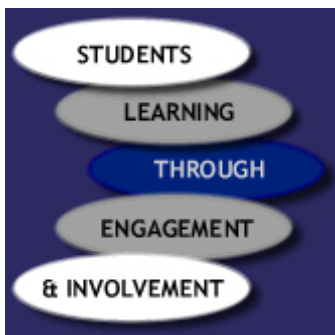
Here are several examples of how student engagement information can help NKU document SACS reaffirmation requirements related to student learning outcomes:

1. NSSE is a national survey that can help institutions measure their effectiveness in key areas of interest
2. Used systematically over time, NSSE provides data that illustrate: (a) NKU is using assessment to determine the extent to which it is meeting its educational objectives, (b) whether current institutional goals remain appropriate, and (c) various areas of teaching and learning that need improvement.
3. Participation in part of a NSSE consortium allows NKU to benchmark its performance against peer comparison groups
4. Information about student engagement and institutional effectiveness is evidence of efforts to meet accrediting standards and continuously improve
5. NSSE results can yield insights into widely held assumptions about the nature of students and how they use the institution’s resources for learning

6. Student engagement results are intuitively accessible and understandable by different groups of stakeholders, on and off the campus.

Specific items on the NSSE are identified as evidence corresponding to both SACS Core Requirements and Comprehensive Standards. NSSE results will be most meaningful when coupled with other measures of SLO from our campus. In developing assessment plans, it is important to incorporate NSSE data as it relates to your department and SLO.

Adapted from: NSSE, *Accreditation Toolkit: Southern Association, 2005.*



Student Engagement at NKU *(continued from page 1)*

Of the 375 seniors who competed the survey (from a randomly selected sample of 700 seniors), 152 reported they participated in at least one class that involved a community based project.

These students were more likely to report that during the past year they had “tried to better understand someone else’s views” [t(373)=2.76, p<0.01] and that they had “learned something that changed the way that they understood an issue or concept” [t(373)=3.13, p<0.01].

Both of these represent the development of new critical thinking skills in our students and are skills that students need as informed and engaged citizens.

These are just two of the many variables that I have looked at, but as we work to grow our programs, and meet with faculty, staff and community members to talk about creating more community-based learning opportunities for our students, we will be sharing more of this information.

In addition, as we see areas that we would expect students with community-based learning experiences to perform better in, the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement will use that information to improve our practices and programs.

I encourage you to take advantage of this valuable resource and information to learn more about the students you are interacting with on a daily basis by contacting Jen Stansbury in the CAA office at ext. 7574.

“NSSE is giving us increasingly credible evidence of student engagement in effective educational practices and allows us to compare campus findings with those of local, regional, and national peers.”

- Trudy Banta, Vice Chancellor for Planning and Institutional Improvement, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

Assessment Plan Q&A

As you might have heard, all academic programs and most administrative and educational support/service units will be required to submit assessment plans this (and every) fall, conduct assessments throughout the academic year, subsequently utilize the results of the assessments to make improvements, and document changes implemented.

Q: Why is it necessary to document our assessment and program improvement efforts?

A: *SACS Core Requirement 2.5* requires that: "The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that incorporate a systematic review of programs and services that (a) results in continuing improvement and (b) demonstrates that the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission.

SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1 requires that: "The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results."

SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.4.1 indicates that: "The institution demonstrates that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded: (a) is approved by the faculty and the administration, and (b) establishes and evaluates program and learning outcomes."

Q: Who must submit assessment plans?

A: Department Chairs and College/School Deans of all academic programs at the associate, baccalaureate and graduate levels, and the unit heads for administrative and educational support units.

Q: What should the assessment plan include?

A: Assessment plans for academic programs must focus on student learning outcomes (SLO): what students are expected to know, think, or be able to do upon completion of the program. SLO will need to be linked to the departmental mission, which in turn will need to evidence ties to the College/School mission, which in turn will link to the University mission.

Outlines for your assessment plans can be found on our website: <http://access.nku.edu/oca/assessmentplandevelopmentresources.htm>

Q: What is the required format for the assessment plans?

A: Links on CAA website are intended to provide you with templates and outlines for developing your assessment plan. If after consulting these resources, you still have questions, Associate Director Jen Stansbury will be happy to make an appointment with your office to assist with developing a plan!

Q: When are the assessment plans due?

A: Assessment plans are due to be submitted to the CAA office by November 1 of each year.

Q: Who will review the assessment plans?

A: A committee appointed by the SACS Compliance Committee.

Q: What will be the next step in the assessment process?

A: The assessment plans that are developed should be implemented in the Spring semester of 2007. Careful records should be kept on the information gathered and the changes or improvements that are made to the program based on the information gained by implementing the assessment plan.

For more information on how to develop your Assessment plan, by contacting Jen Stansbury in the CAA office at extension 7574.

For more information about SACS, visit their website:

www.sacscoc.org

and read the Principles of Accreditation



Compliance with the SACS Core Requirements is essential for gaining and maintaining accreditation with the Commission on Colleges.

The Comprehensive Standards set forth requirements in the following three areas: institutional mission, governance, and effectiveness; academic and service programs; and resources. The Comprehensive Standards represent good practices in higher education and establish a level of accomplishment expected of all member institutions.

The Office of Curriculum, Accreditation and Assessment (CAA) provides assistance to colleges, departments, faculty, and other units of the University in the identification of appropriate information pertinent to measuring programmatic outcomes.

CAA is responsible for the University's curricular and assessment activities. CAA also serves as NKU's Liaison to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and will take a leadership role in the University's 2009 reaffirmation.

During the last two decades, the effectiveness of the world of higher education institutions has been challenged by agents such as federal and state governments, educational foundations, the general public, students and their families, and faculty and administrators within the institution. CAA serves faculty and staff to help defend against those challenges by consulting in the areas of curriculum, assessment analysis and program review and development.



SACS REAFFIRMATION SCHEDULED FOR 2009!

Each issue of the newsletter will feature in-process and requirements. This month we

formation about the SACS reaffirmation highlight Faculty Credential Requirements:

Core Requirement 2.8 The number of full-time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution. The institution has adequate faculty resources to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. In addition, upon application for candidacy, an applicant institution demonstrates that it meets Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 for faculty qualifications.

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time faculty members is adequate to support the mission of the institution. The institution has adequate faculty resources to ensure the quality and integrity of its academic programs. In addition, upon application for candidacy, an applicant institution demonstrates that it meets Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 for faculty qualifications.

Note: This requirement addresses the adequacy of faculty personnel, not the adequacy of academic support services and resources.

Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline in accordance with the guidelines listed below. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.

Note: The Commission suggests that institutions use the Commission's "Faculty Roster Form for Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty" or a similar format providing the same information to report the qualifications of faculty. The following faculty should be reported: all full-time and part-time faculty teaching credit courses that can be part of a degree, certificate, diploma, or other credential; faculty teaching developmental remedial courses; and teaching assistants who are the instructors of record.

**For more information about SACS and the SACS Reaffirmation Process go to: <http://access.nku.edu/sacs/>
To download the Faculty Roster Form, visit: <http://access.nku.edu/oca/facultyrosterform.htm>**

**WE HOPE THAT THIS NEWSLETTER WILL HELP TO KEEP YOU AWARE OF
UPCOMING GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH
SACS REAFFIRMATION.**

**PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE WITH COMMENTS OR CONTENT SUGGESTIONS
TO INCLUDE IN THIS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER!**

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