

Guide for Program-Level Assessment Liaisons

Revised September 15, 2022

Learning Outcomes Assessment at Illinois:

- **Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans** were submitted for each undergraduate degree program in 2017 and for all graduate degree programs in 2018.
- Learning Outcomes Assessment work is expected to take place each year.
- Programs are expected to submit **annual Assessment Updates** to communicate ongoing assessment work .
- Requests for Assessment Updates are **sent in the Spring** and are **due the following Fall by October 1**.
- Although the deadline to submit Assessment Updates is October 1, the Assessment Updates capture assessment activities the program engaged in during the **previous academic year**.
- Units are encouraged to submit Assessment Updates sooner than later to ensure faculty and staff involved in assessment activities have an opportunity to provide feedback before the new academic year.

Goal of program-level learning outcomes assessment:

- The goal is improved student learning and better programs.
- Program-level learning outcomes assessment is defined as “The systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.” (Palomba & Banta, 1999).
- The unit of interest is the program and the focus is on student learning. **The focus is not individual students, faculty, or course evaluation.**

Assessing program-level learning outcomes:

- Learning outcomes assessment is an expectation for institutional accreditation (Higher Learning Commission), the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), and most importantly, for improving the student learning experience at Illinois.
- Our campus is committed to the educational achievement of our students, and we strive to offer educational programs of the highest quality.
- A regular and thoughtful practice of articulating and assessing student learning outcomes allows for our campus to ensure that our graduates are receiving the world-class education that we promise.

Assessment should be meaningful and useful:

- You are not expected to assess all program-level learning outcomes each year.
- In some cases, programs might not be in the position to assess student learning, but instead focus their efforts on developing rubrics, surveys, exams, and other artifacts that can be used to assess student learning. These are called “**preparatory assessment activities**”.
- When appropriate, the unit should pull assessment information from other work that it is doing, such as from specialized accreditation reports, committee reports, IBHE reports, and program review reports.
- The program faculty should ask what they want to know about student learning in the degree program. For instance, faculty interested in students’ ability to effectively communicate knowledge of the field might identify evidence to answer the question, then analyze that

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evidence to reach a conclusion. Finally, it should use that information to confirm the program is impacting student learning or improve the curriculum.

Council for Learning Outcomes Assessment (C-LOA):

- The Provost's Council for Learning Outcomes Assessment (C-LOA) was created in spring 2016 to promote and guide assessment activities on our campus.
- The Council consists of faculty from each school/college, an undergraduate student, a graduate student, and representatives from Student Affairs, the Faculty Senate, the General Education Board (GEB), the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL), and the Provost's Office.
- The role of the Council is to foster a practice of assessment that is ongoing and meaningful to campus units.

Program-Level Assessment Liaisons (PLAL) Roles and Responsibilities

- Collaborate with program faculty, staff, and students to identify assessment questions to explore
- Facilitate the collection and evaluation of evidence related to student learning
- Attend learning outcomes assessment events to stay informed of best practices (as needed)
- Periodically review program-level learning outcomes and curriculum map to ensure alignment
- Serve as a liaison between units and the Office of the Provost;
- Communicate the importance of this work with other program faculty and staff
- Inform incoming program-level assessment liaisons of ongoing learning outcomes assessment work

If you are an incoming program-level assessment liaison, you are encouraged you to:

- Request access to your program's Learning Outcomes Assessment Reports folder by sending an email to learningoutcomes@illinois.edu. The folder contains the program's assessment plan, assessment updates, and feedback from C-LOA.
- Review the [questions](#) on the Assessment Update Form
- Meet with the previous/outgoing program-level assessment liaison to discuss the learning outcomes assessment process for the program.
- Review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about assessment at Illinois.
- Meet with your [College-Level Assessment Liaison](#).
- Review the learning outcomes assessment [website](#).
- Review [materials](#) from past learning outcomes assessment workshops.
- Get to know your C-LOA representative.
- Schedule an [Assessment Insight Chat](#). These 30-minute sessions are designed to address any questions or concerns you might have about the learning outcomes assessment process for your program.
- Review [Learning Outcomes Assessment Examples](#) from select units.

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