

**Assessment Advisory Council**  
**Committee Document**  
**(Initial Approval: April 2003; Revised 2018-2020)**

Rationale

In 1999, the Provost at Illinois State University established the ad hoc University-Wide Assessment Committee to lead assessment planning and coordination for the University given the assessment-related mandates that were being considered by external agencies. This committee developed a definition, philosophy, and practices for assessment that served as the basis for recommending that specific policies on student learning outcomes assessment be developed and that a standing committee be charged with implementation of those policies. Furthermore, recommendations that included priorities and actions for both the new committee and the Provost were provided to build on assessment efforts, use assessment results, and provide assessment coordination. A follow-up report on each of these recommendations was submitted by the Assessment Coordinating Council (restructured from the University-Wide Assessment Committee) with six items identified to receive additional attention. One of these items was a continued examination and revision of this standing committee and from this, the Assessment Advisory Council (AAC) was established as a standing committee in 2003.

The council's membership included individuals from units across the University who had the knowledge and interest to contribute to the assessment-related discussions, and the committee's responsibilities were related to the alignments between assessment at the University and external accreditation or compliance standards and guidelines, as well as advising the University Assessment Office regarding its activities and initiatives. The purpose of this committee was to bring faculty, staff, and administrators together to address the assessment-related mandates in ways that both honor the culture of learning and assessment at the University and the disciplinary expertise and uniqueness of the faculty.

That same purpose of bringing individuals together remains as council meetings are devoted to discussions that are focused on sharing information among council members, addressing their questions and issues, and determining how to act upon gathered information regarding student learning, growth, and development. Additional meeting activities include professional development sessions and member and guest speakers/presenters to discuss their assessment-related work.

Membership

Because University Assessment Services is situated within the Division of Academic Affairs and this unit's focus is academic-based student learning outcomes assessment, the membership composition of the council should include a faculty majority [i.e., those who are evaluated through the University's Appoint, Salary, Promotion, and Tenure (ASPT) process and including those are who hold faculty rank but currently serve in a staff position, e.g., associate dean] and primarily represent units within the Division of Academic Affairs. Regardless of employee classification or division, members serve because of their responsibilities for and/or interest in the assessment of student learning, growth, and development broadly defined (i.e., assessment both within and beyond the classroom).

Membership should contribute to the overall context of assessment at Illinois State University due to the multiple disciplinary perspectives held by the council members and the communication of information regarding assessment that occurs among the council members and their respective units. Those units listed below are represented on the council because their functions or responsibilities directly or indirectly contribute to the assessment of student learning, growth, and development at the University. The members from those represented units have responsibilities for and/or interest in accreditation (program-

specific, college-/university-wide), curriculum (development, budget), compliance (university Program Review, State reporting), and assessment in general through service on committees, coordination and/or management of projects, and discussions and shared understandings through professional development with colleagues. In addition, council members are involved in the collection, reporting, and use of information within and among their units.

Members serving in representative roles are appointed through a request from the council chairperson to their respective unit supervisors (e.g., college deans) or committee chairperson (i.e., Chairpersons/Directors Council). College-based representatives should be faculty, whereas other representatives may be faculty or staff. Members serving in ex-officio roles are asked to serve through a request from the council chairperson due to their positions' responsibilities regarding the management of University-wide assessment of student learning, growth, and development. Members serving in ad hoc roles are asked to serve through a request from the council chairperson because of a recent assessment project on which they have worked or based on a recommendation to serve from another council member. Consideration of other campus committees' work regarding assessment of student learning, growth, and development should be given such that individuals representing the Academic Planning Committee, the Council for Teacher Education, and the Council on General Education may be asked to serve if such representation is not provided through an existing member's service on those committee. Terms of service are not specified as members may serve for as long as they are willing and able or for as long as their responsibilities relate to the council's charge.

Members will consist of the following individuals:

- **Chairperson.** Because much of the council's work is coordinated by University Assessment Services, the chairperson may be a member of this unit's staff if no other members prefer to serve as chairperson. Responsibilities of the chairperson include:
  - Requesting individuals to serve as council members based on the categories and criteria described here;
  - Setting the meeting agenda, documenting the meeting minutes, and providing both to council members;
  - Facilitating the committee work, such as the Process for the Review of Academic Assessment Plans (PRAAP), Assessment Update, and Assessment Initiative Awards (as funding allows);
  - Remaining knowledgeable of other committees' work as it relates to assessment of student learning growth, and development (e.g., Academic Planning Committee, Council for Teacher Education, Council on General Education) and communicating the council's work to others (e.g., relevant committees, Office of the Provost staff); and
  - Other duties as necessary based on the council's work.
- **Representative members:**
  - College of Applied Science and Technology
  - College of Arts and Sciences
  - College of Business
  - College of Education
  - Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts
  - Mennonite College of Nursing
  - Milner Library
  - Chairpersons/Directors Council
  - Center for Civic Engagement
  - University College
  - Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis

- Division of Student Affairs
- **Ex-officio members:**
  - Director of Assessment and Engagement Initiatives, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs
  - Director, University Assessment Services (if not already serving as the council chairperson)
- **Ad hoc members.**

### Responsibilities

The Assessment Advisory Council (AAC) meets periodically throughout the academic year to review processes related to the assessment of student learning, growth, and development and to discuss various reports and utilization of assessment findings to improve student learning, growth, and development. Based on this continuous review, the council recommends additions to, deletions from, and modifications of these processes to advance the quality of student learning, growth, and development at Illinois State University. The council works to ensure that appropriate resources are provided for assessment activities.

Specifically, the AAC will serve the University in four areas related to the assessment of student learning, growth, and development:

1. Support for University Assessment Services (UAS)
 

The council serves in an advisory role for the UAS staff regarding the projects, activities, and services that are offered by this unit and are related to the assessment of student learning, growth, and development. The council provides guidance to UAS staff in their gathering (e.g., streamlining the methods, targeting specific stakeholders), reporting (e.g., combining data from different sources, using a consistent structure), and using (e.g., responsible, purpose of making informed decisions) of information regarding student learning, growth, and development across the University. Because of this, the council's meeting agendas should include information and time devoted to reporting and discussing UAS work.
2. Support for Program-Level Assessment
 

The council's work directly relates to the assessment of student learning, growth, and development within academic degree programs through the Process for the Review of Academic Assessment Plans (PRAAP). This activity involves council members' review of and feedback on the program assessment plans for academic degree programs prior to beginning the Program Review self-study process (facilitated by the Office of the Provost). The council chairperson then meets with faculty and staff of those academic degree programs to share the council's feedback on the program assessment plans and discuss options for continued implementation of or revisions to the program assessment plans. Council members who represent and/or are situated within those units that administer the academic degree programs (e.g., associate dean) may attend those meetings as they are able. To encourage continuous improvement of student learning, growth, and development within academic degree programs, Assessment Updates are requested from faculty and staff of the academic degree programs. Council members review and provide feedback on these submissions, and their submissions and the council members' feedback on those submissions are shared with the council members who represent those units (i.e., associate dean). As funding is available, council members also review proposals for and select recipients of the Assessment Initiative Awards that are sponsored by University Assessment Services to provide financial and professional support for conducting assessment studies or program evaluations.

3. Support for University Strategic Planning

The council supports the University as it continues to work toward embedding principles for the assessment of student learning, growth, and development into the planning and budgeting process. With the adoption of *Educate Connect Elevate: Illinois State – The Strategic Plan for Illinois' First Public University 2018-2023*, several strategic directions, objectives, and actions related to student learning, growth, and development have been established. The council can contribute to the University's work in implementing the strategic plan through such areas as:

- I.B.2. Maximize employee growth through learning and professional development opportunities
- I.D.2. Increase collaboration across departments and divisions
- II.C.2. Further integrate curricular and co-curricular programs that prepare students for success
- IV.C.2. Support efforts to assess student career outcomes and placement in graduate and professional school

4. Support for Accreditation and Compliance

The council is informed and consulted as necessary regarding both accreditation and compliance processes as they relate to the assessment of student learning, growth, and development within academic degree programs or units. Such processes include:

- University accreditation [i.e., with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC)], and
- Specialized program accreditation of both academic units [e.g., Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP); Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International)] and academic programs.

As mandated changes regarding the assessment of student learning, growth, and development within academic degree programs or units occur at the national (i.e., Department of Education) and/or state [i.e., Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE)] levels, the council contributes by providing recommendations to the University administration regarding their implementation at Illinois State University.