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University of Maine Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan

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UMaine student learning outcomes assessment plan: Approved by Provost Hecker 06/30/2014

Last updated: 8/15/2014

The purpose of assessment is to improve student learning.

UMaine's planned design for a comprehensive and meaningful system of learning assessment reflects the complexity of learning outcomes to be measured. Reporting to the Associate Provost, and with the guidance of Assessment Advisory Board, the Director of Assessment will coordinate program-level and General Education outcomes-assessment for the purpose of improving student learning. UMaine's approach to assessment supports faculty who serve at the center of the process to determine the most appropriate data-based methods for their academic programs. UMaine will use multiple sources of faculty-determined evidence including program level measures, course-embedded assessments, and other faculty-selected approaches to document the progress and achievements of our students.

Core values for assessment at UMaine:

- Assessment is important at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Learning outcomes are created and endorsed by faculty and are reflections of what students know and can do.
- Student learning outcomes are measurable and reflect specific demonstrated skills that help us improve *what and how we teach* and *how programs can best serve the needs of students*.
- Data are collected through course-embedded and other routinely used measures given at key points during students' academic careers to serve the purpose of improving future student and program outcomes.
- Student engagement in campus and community experiences is a critical aspect of the UMaine experience and the impact of these experiences can be measured.
- The experiences of students after they graduate is a valuable source of information that can be used to inform curriculum and instruction.

Mission and responsibilities of the Director of Assessment (DA):

- There is a regular, reasonable, equitable, and transparent process for reporting student assessment data.
- Faculty, staff, and students will have access to a variety of high-quality online assessment resources to help them complete their work.
- Faculty, staff, and students will have access to high-quality professional development provided by their peers and assessment experts on assessment design, implementation, review, and usage.
- Faculty will have direct assistance from the DA to provide feedback, guide development, and offer suggestions about program assessment.

Proposed Assessment Policies for UMaine:

1. *Academic Program Review and Reporting*: All undergraduate, professional, and graduate academic programs at UMaine will be actively engaged in student learning outcomes assessment as evidenced by, but not limited to:

- a) Published student-learning-outcomes that are clear statements of what students are expected to know and be able to demonstrate at the completion of the academic program. These student learning outcomes and community engaged objectives will be published on the program's website via a link to the website for the UMaine DA. Student-learning-outcomes and community engaged efforts will be periodically reviewed by the faculty in the respective academic programs for ongoing relevance.
- b) A plan of student learning outcomes assessment that is endorsed by the program's faculty. Plans should include a regular cycle for collecting and analyzing assessment data, for discussing curricular and programmatic changes, for implementing interventions, and for re-assessing the impact of implemented changes. Assessment plans will be published on program's website via a link to the DA website.
- c) Reports of student learning outcomes assessment that are provided to DA using staggered cycles of no more than 3 years. Cycles for accredited programs will be adjusted to decrease redundancy of effort (See proposed reporting cycle in Appendix A).
 - a. Units report on a three year cycle at the program/department level using a set of self-study rubrics (any updates will still be reported as part of the college annual reporting process). Full reports will include:
 - i. the specific learning outcomes examined during the current review cycle
 - ii. the specific data/evidence used (beyond course grades) to determine that students have achieved outcomes
 - iii. the evaluation process used to examine evidence of student learning. Specifically, the procedures and tools used, stated levels of performance, how the tools were scored, and how the data was compiled.
 - iv. the results of the analysis of the evaluation data including a summary of quantitative results of student learning, analysis of programmatic strengths and weaknesses, identification of assessment strengths and weaknesses, reflections and conclusions.
 - v. specific recommendations and planning for change based on assessment results including the specific changes intended, as well as a timeline for completion.

2. *DA Support and Guidance for Academic Programs*: Guidelines for preparation of outcomes assessment plans and reports will be provided by DA with the assistance and approval of the

Assessment Advisory Board (AAB). DA will be available to offer advice on the logistics of collecting assessment data, consultation on techniques to analyze results, and to provide feedback/guidance on designing curricular and programmatic changes. Rubrics for evaluating the plans and reports will be generated by DA and posted on its website.

3. *Review and Approval of Plans and Reports:* Evaluation of student learning outcomes assessment plans and reports will be made by DA and presented to AAB for required approval. Programs will be notified directly of the results of the evaluation and whether modification is needed. Reports will be published on the DA website. In an annual report to the Faculty Senate, AAB will provide commendations for outstanding examples of student learning outcomes assessment as well as a general summary on outcomes assessment.

4. *University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes Assessment:* The DA will work with other university offices to collect, maintain, analyze, and distribute student learning outcomes assessment findings, derived from a variety of local and national sources. DA will identify patterns of student performance to inform ongoing program and institutional improvement. Assessment of General Education outcomes will follow a similar approach to implementation and reporting, and will be addressed in a future implementation plan.

5. *Service Learning and Community Engagement:* The DA will work with key campus and community partners to identify and implement appropriate outcome measures for internships, service learning courses, volunteer opportunities, and other experiential learning activities.

Appendix A: Proposed Assessment Reporting Calendar*

Assessment Reporting Calendar 2015-2027		
Department/Program/School	Reporting Cycle	Full Reports Due
4 PILOT DEPARTMENTS		
PILOT		
2015		
DIVISION OF LIFELONG LEARNING		
Bachelor of University Studies	A	2016, 2019, 2022, 2025
Maine Studies		
Peace and Reconciliation Studies		
MAINE BUSINESS SCHOOL		
Associate Dean	A	2016, 2019, 2022, 2025
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT		
Educational Leadership, Higher Education, and Human Development Exercise Science and STEM Education Teacher and Counselor Education	A	2016, 2019, 2022, 2025
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING		
Associate Dean Chemical and Biological Engineering Civil and Environmental Engineering Electrical and Computer Engineering School of Engineering Technology Mechanical Engineering ROTC - Army ROTC - Navy	A	2016, 2019, 2022, 2025
COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES, FORESTRY, AND AGRICULTURE		
School of Biology and Ecology Cooperative Forestry Research Unit Communication Sciences and Disorders School of Earth and Climate Sciences Ecology and Environmental Science School of Economics School of Food and Agriculture School of Forest Resources School of Marine Sciences Molecular and Biomedical Sciences School of Nursing School of Social Work Wildlife Ecology	B	2017, 2020, 2023, 2026
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES		
Anthropology Art Canadian-American Center Chemistry Communication and Journalism School of Computing Information Science	C	2018, 2021, 2024, 2027
English		
Franco-American Centre		
History		
Intensive English Institute		
International Affairs Program		
Maine Folklife Center		
Mathematics and Statistics		
Modern Languages and Classics		
National Poetry Foundation		
Native American Programs		
New Media		
Philosophy		
Physics and Astronomy		
Political Science		
Psychology		
School of Performing Arts		
Music		
Theatre		
School of Policy and International Affairs		
Sociology		
Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies		
HONORS COLLEGE		
Honors Program	C	

* Individual Department schedules may change based on Accreditation review cycle