

Assessment of Student Learning Plan and Implementation Guide



Ecclesia College

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Introduction

The Ecclesia College *Academic Assessment Plan and Implementation Guide* has been developed jointly with college administration representatives, division/department heads, and faculty representatives. The plan and guide will serve as the foundational document for improving learning and teaching at the individual, course, program, and institutional levels. Further, the plan and its related processes will assist the college in accreditation and in providing accurate information to be disseminated to students, parents, and other stakeholders on student learning outcomes. Thanks are extended to those who have worked diligently to complete this document.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After reading and completing this handbook, individuals will be able to:

1. Describe the purposes of assessment as they relates to student learning.
2. Discuss research-based principles that define good assessment practice.
3. Outline the process of assessing student learning.
4. Construct/develop expected Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).
5. Develop a course-level Assessment Plan.
6. Review and revise a course syllabus to incorporate a course purpose, expected SLOs, methods to assess the outcomes, the criteria for grade determination, and a course outline.
7. Use a variety of formative assessment approaches to improve student learning.
8. Participate actively in implementing Ecclesia College's plan for improved student learning outcomes.
9. Help Ecclesia College foster a culture of assessment, continuous innovation, and quality improvement for the benefit of the students and to honor the Lord in all that we do.

Part 1: The Purposes of Assessing Student Learning

The Purposes of Assessment

What is assessment? The word “assessment” is defined as “the act of judging the amount, value, quality, or importance of something, or the judgment or decision that is made” (“Assessment,” n.d.) Judging something implies an evaluation against a given standard. In education, the standard is generally found within the student learning outcome or learning objective.

Angelo (2006a) defined assessment as an “ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning.” He outlined the following important components:

- Making expectations explicit and public
- Setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality
- Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards
- Using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance

Assessment has multiple levels of application. Students, courses, programs, institutions, and even educational systems can be assessed.

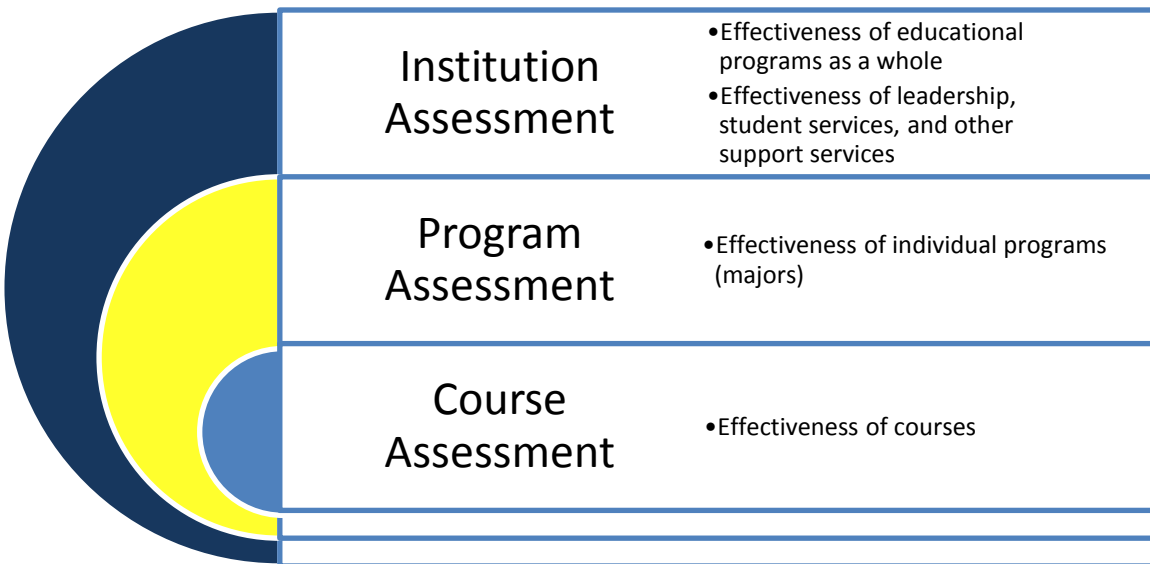


Figure 1: Assessment Application Levels

For student learning, the purposes of assessment can be understood by examining its different dimensions:

- Assessment **for** learning
- Assessment **as** learning
- Assessment **of** learning

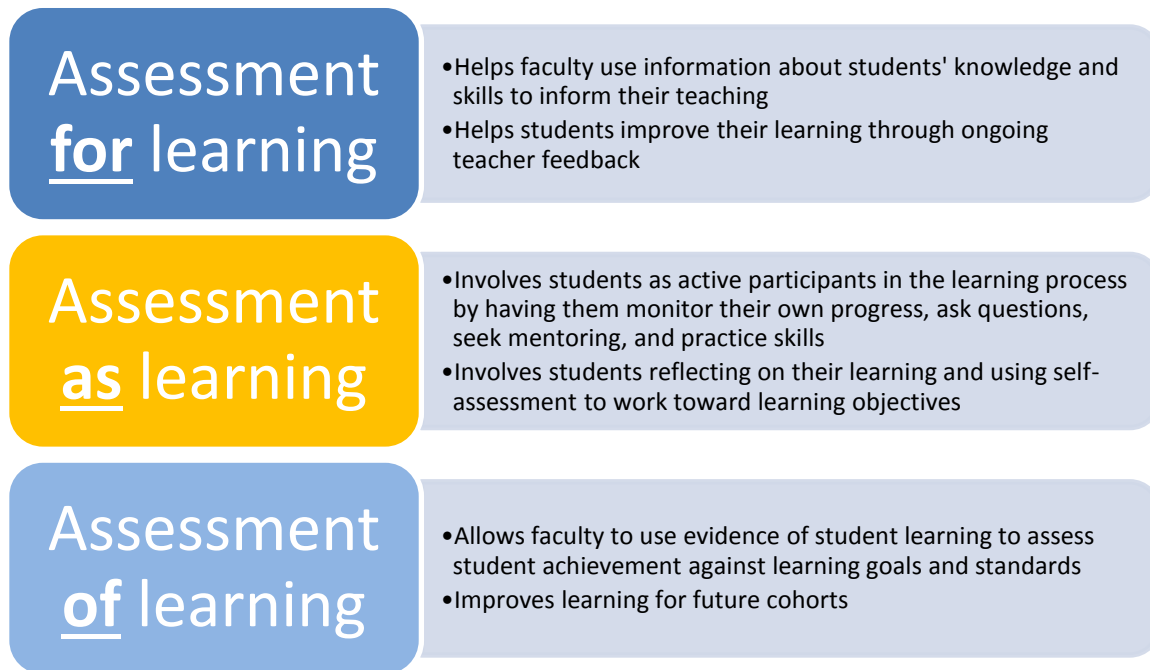


Figure 2: Dimensions of Assessment

Assessment that takes place during the learning process is called **formative assessment** and refers to the gathering of information or data about student learning during a course or program for the purpose of guiding improvements in teaching and learning.

Assessment that occurs at the end of instruction is called **summative assessment**. It means gathering data and information about student learning for three purposes: 1) to assure the student reached the learning objectives by the end of instruction, 2) to improve instruction for the next cohort of students, and 3) for accountability.

Simply put, assessment is the process by which we:

- Plan and implement the college curriculum
- Assess the results of student learning
- Analyze the results
- Develop improvements, when necessary
- Evaluate the effects of the changes

Academic assessment is an ongoing process at Ecclesia College (EC). In keeping with our Mission and Foundational Values, we focus our attention on the quality and effectiveness of our programs and courses. Assessment helps us affirm the things within the curriculum that are working well. It also helps us identify ways to improve student learning.

Ecclesia College is committed to the development and ongoing improvement of an aligned and integrated system of instruction based upon well-defined and interrelated student learning outcomes.

ABHE Accreditation Standards

A secondary, but critical, purpose for assessing student learning is to meet accreditation standards. EC is accredited by The Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), an accrediting body for institutions and programs in the United States, Canada, and related territories that offer certificates, diplomas, associate, baccalaureate or graduate degrees aimed at preparing students for Christian ministries through biblical, church-vocational and general studies. Our faculty and staff strive to meet all accreditation standards.

ABHE Standard 2a specifically addresses the assessment of student learning and planning and requires the “systematic and specific assessment of student learning and development through a strategy that measures the student’s knowledge, skills and competencies against institutional and programmatic goals.” Standard 2a has seven specific criteria:

- 2a.-1 The identification of appropriate interrelated student outcomes in the context of institutional goals, program objectives and course objectives.
- 2a-2. A shared commitment on the part of students, faculty, staff, and administration to achieve these stated outcomes.
- 2a-3. A written outcomes assessment plan that articulates multiple means to validate expected learning outcomes.
- 2a-4. Criteria appropriate to the higher education credential to be awarded for evaluating success with respect to student achievement.
- 2a-5. Validation, as a result of using the outcomes assessment plan, that students are achieving the stated outcomes relative to institutional goals, program objectives, and course objectives.
- 2a-6. A process whereby these outcome measurements lead to the improvement of teaching and learning.
- 2a-7. The ongoing provision of reliable information to the public regarding student achievement, including graduation and employment rates.

The Ecclesia College Definition of a Well-Educated Graduate

The ultimate purpose for assessing student learning is to ensure that EC prepares the well-educated graduate who:

1. Makes mature, independent choices based on principles of the Christian faith and a biblical worldview. (Institutional Outcome #1)
2. Applies critical thinking skills based on a biblical worldview and principles to making personal and professional decisions. (Institutional Outcome #2)

3. Communicates effectively, using verbal, non-verbal, written, listening and electronic technologies, as appropriate to the occasion, task, and context. (Institutional Outcome #3)
4. Lives his/her life, personally and professionally, based on integrity and the highest ethical standards. (Institutional Outcome #4)
5. Demonstrates leadership skills within vocational, church, community, and service contexts. (Institutional Outcome #5)
6. Pursues ongoing development of intellectual, creative, and theological knowledge and skills necessary to learn and grow throughout life. (Institutional Outcome #6)
7. Practices the biblical imperatives to serve people and be faithful stewards of the Church and God's created resources. (Institutional Outcome #7)

Part 2: The Principles of Assessing Student Learning

Research Relating to Assessment of Student Learning

During the past 20-25 years, higher education professionals have conducted many studies about the impact of assessment upon student learning. True change in higher education, however, has been slow to occur. According to Angelo (1996), “We continue to assess student learning – and to graduate and certify students – much as we did in 1986, 1966, or 1946, without meaningful reference to what students should demonstrably know and be able to do (pp. 3-4).”

Improved and expanded systems of assessment are a predictable outcome of the national call for higher standards and increased rigor in the curriculum. Assessment is an inherent part of a continuous improvement system. If one desires a specific outcome, and receives instruction, intervention, or behavioral change to obtain that outcome, then assessment logically follows. Was the desired outcome achieved, or was it not?

The ideal educational system begins by developing student learning outcomes that are in line with the institutional mission and core values. This is followed by specific instructional approaches designed to help students achieve the student learning outcomes. Assessment is used both formatively, as a tool of instruction, to help students assess how well they are moving toward the learning objectives, and summatively, to assess whether the learning objectives have been achieved.

Researcher and educational reformer, Ruth Mitchell (1992) wrote,

How students are assessed inevitably affects how they are taught. Assessment cannot be considered separately from teaching and learning, because assessments are the motivation for both teacher and student. Changing assessment therefore impacts on the classroom, the textbooks, the professional lives of teachers, the decisions of administrators. The topic here is a new system, not just modified tests (p. viii).

Regarding the standards movement, Mitchell (1995) argues standards, clear statements about what students **should know and be able to do** at certain stages in their education, represent a radical and pervasive shift that cannot be dismissed as transitory (p. 7).

Though referencing K-12 standards, she says that all levels of education, higher education included, will eventually have to rethink their roles (p. 10). One of the consequences for colleges and universities that have started self-assessment is “that they can’t judge the success of a course or program without explicitly defining what students should learn in it” (Mitchell, 1995, p.11).

“Know and be able to do”

These are key words. And, unless they are well-defined and measurable, it is difficult to assess the degree to which each college is effective in its mission.

The following statement, developed in 1992 by the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), provides nine well-researched principles of good practice for assessing student learning. It is reprinted with permission as follows:

Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

Developed under the auspices of the American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) Assessment Forum

American colleges have a long history of grading and certifying student work. The more recent practice of assessment builds on that history by looking at student achievement not only within courses but across them, asking about cumulative learning outcomes. As a systematic process of gathering, interpreting and using information about student learning, assessment is a powerful tool for educational improvement.

Today, hundreds of colleges and universities are doing assessment, at the classroom, program, and institutional levels. The practice has become a universal expectation for accreditation and a frequent object of state mandate; nine out of ten institutions now report that they have some type of assessment activity under way. Along the way, a "wisdom of practice" has emerged; the nine principles that follow constitute an attempt to capture some of that practical wisdom.

A Vision of Education

What, more specifically, is the intent of this document? We hope, first, that campuses will find these principles helpful for examining current practice and for developing and discussing their own principles. Further, we hope that the principles here will support campus assessment leaders in their work with the administrators, policy makers, and legislators who often set the conditions that determine whether assessment will lead to real improvement. This second purpose seems especially important given the current national debate about educational standards, testing, and accountability; the links between assessment and improved student learning must not be lost in this debate.

The core value behind this document is the importance of improving student learning. Implicit in the principles that follow is a vision of education that entails high expectations for all students, active forms of learning, coherent curricula, and effective out-of-class opportunities; to these ends, we need assessment--systematic, usable information about student learning--that helps us fulfill our responsibilities to the students who come to us for an education and to the publics whose trust supports our work.

The authors of this statement are twelve practitioner-students of assessment as it has developed on campuses and to some extent at the K-12 level. We know that no one best (sic) exists for the doing of assessment, but effective practices have things in common. We hope you'll find this statement helpful.

December 1992

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 leads to particular outcomes. Assessment can help 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 is best fostered when assessment

entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the progress of individual students, or 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 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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Part 3: The Process of Assessing Student Learning

Process for Continuous Improvement of Student Learning

EC's "Process for Continuous Improvement of Student Learning" is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3: Ecclesia College's Process for Continuous Improvement of Student Learning

The figure depicts a cycle where student learning objectives are formulated in alignment with program objectives and institutional outcomes. Instructional approaches are determined and delivered, followed by assessment of student learning (formatively and summatively). The assessment data is collected and analyzed. Based on the findings, improvements or changes may be made.

This cycle can be implemented on a day-to-day basis within the classroom and, more broadly, when analyzing student learning success for a whole course, program, or institution. It is flexible enough for faculty to develop and enact changes immediately, and yet, rigorous enough for teams to develop and implement major changes that will enhance student learning success.

The next items in this section will provide guidance to EC faculty on the steps included in Figure 3.

Formulating Student Learning Outcomes

An expected student learning outcome (SLO) is a statement of what students are expected to learn in a course. More specifically, it is a statement of what the student will know and/or be able to do at the end of the course. The SLO may pertain to specific knowledge, attitudes, practical skills, higher-order thinking skills, etc. that the instructor expects the students to develop, and preferably master, during the course.

You can use the SMART goals chart to help develop a great student learning outcome.

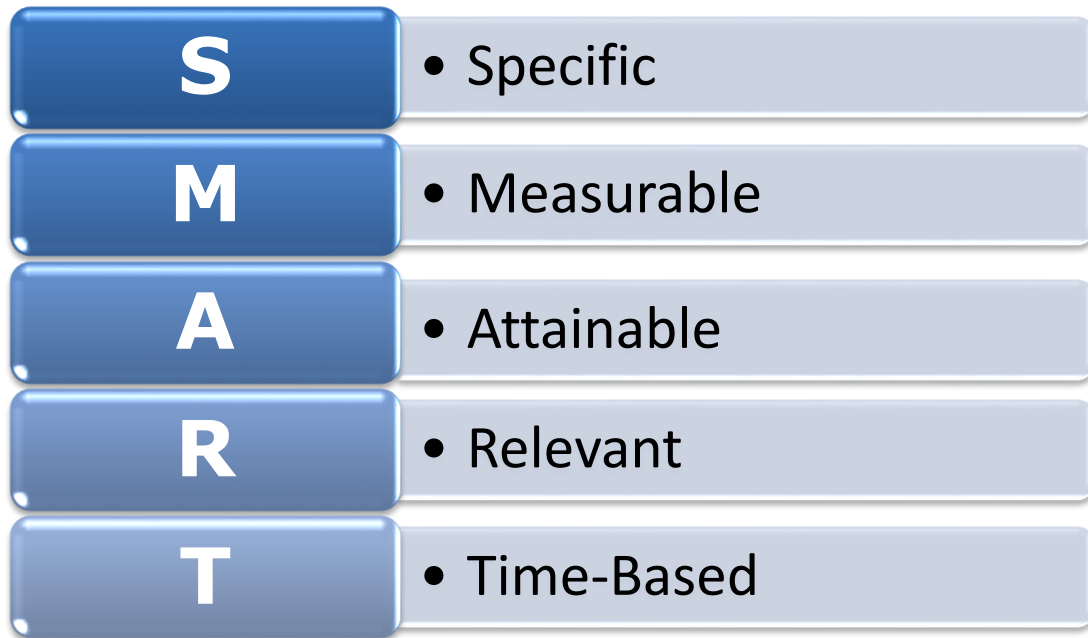


Figure 4: SMART Goal Elements

1. The SLO must be **SPECIFIC**. It should state precisely what the student must know or be able to do. What is the action-oriented verb? The action verbs found in Bloom's Taxonomy (Appendix D) are helpful. And, Bloom's Taxonomy can help you search for ways to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.
2. The SLO must be **MEASURABLE**. Think about how you will be able to assess whether or not the student has accomplished this outcome. Again, the action verb is very important. It is almost impossible to assess "know" or "understand." Action verbs like describe, compare, contrast, identify, differentiate, design, etc. are clearer and much easier to assess.
3. The SLO must be **ATTAINABLE** within the conditions and time frame of the course. What can be reasonably expected of students within the semester?
4. The SLO must be **RELEVANT** to the overall course description and purpose for providing/requiring the course.

5. And, the SLO must be **TIME-BASED**. The time is relative to what you are considering. For a program/major, the time frame is generally 2 to 4 years. For a course, it is the time within a given semester. There may be SLOs within the course that supply prerequisite knowledge for tasks later in the course. In that case, supply the time-frame. Example: The student will be able to name the 66 books of the Bible by the 3rd week of class.

Helpful Hints for Developing SLOs

- ◆ Focus on the major, overarching knowledge and skills the student must learn.
- ◆ Try to limit the overall number of course-level SLOs to between five and ten (5-10). You can develop more detailed SLOs at the unit, chapter, assignment, or lesson level.
- ◆ Focus on knowledge and skills that are central to the course topic or discipline. (RELEVANT)
- ◆ Write the SLOs from the student's perspective, not the teacher's. (Example: The student will be able to list the 206 bones of the human body. . . versus . . . The course will teach the student the 206 bones of the human body.) It helps if you will always begin your SLO list with the following phrase:

“Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to . . .”

- ◆ Incorporate, when possible, the institutional outcomes of Ecclesia College.

Assessment Development and Review Process

As mentioned in the previous section, assessment has multiple levels: institutional, program, course, and student. This section of this document has been developed specifically to address program, course, and student levels of assessment.

The procedural steps for developing a program-level assessment plan include:

1. Reviewing, revising, and/or writing the program's mission or purpose statement.
2. Developing or reviewing/revising goals and objectives for the program.
3. Identifying the educational experiences or activities for attaining the goals and objectives.
4. Identifying measures to assess progress toward meeting the goals.
5. Developing a plan for gathering the data.
6. Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data.
7. Using the data to continuously revise and improve students' educational experiences and activities.
8. Communicating the results.

The procedural steps for developing a course-level assessment plan include:

1. Formulating the Course Purpose.
2. Establishing expected SLOs for the course.
3. Developing a plan to assess the expected SLOs.
4. Compiling the course-level assessment plan.
5. Developing the criteria for grade determination.
6. Identifying learning experiences/activities that will lead to the attainment of the SLOs.
7. Communicating the Course-Level Assessment Plan, most often through the course syllabus.

The procedural steps for reviewing a course-level assessment plan include:

1. Reviewing the Course Purpose.
2. Reviewing the expected SLOs for the course.
3. Reviewing data and information related to student accomplishment of the expected SLOs.
4. Identifying whether the learning experiences/activities led to the attainment of the SLOs.
5. Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data.
6. Using the data to continuously revise and improve students' educational experiences and activities.
7. Communicating the results.

More Detail on the Procedural Steps for Developing a Course-level Assessment Plan

This section provides more specific information on developing a course-level assessment plan. It is written in a personalized style to help each faculty member succeed in this endeavor.

Formulating the Course Purpose

The Course Purpose Statement is not the same as the Course Description, which is contained in the college catalog. The **course description** outlines the actual content of the course (i.e., topics, facts, skills, etc. that will be addressed). The **course purpose** explains the intent of the course and how it contributes to the major. The process of determining the Course Purpose will help the faculty determine the intent of the course within the context of the college, the program, and the Institutional Outcomes. This will help the faculty identify essential knowledge and skills that should be incorporated into the course.

The course purpose section should clarify the course's standing within the major. For example:

- Is the course required or an elective?
- Does the course have a pre-requisite?
- Is it a general education course or a program-specific course?

The Course Purpose Statement should also describe the course's role in the programmatic curriculum by addressing the intent, i.e., importance, main contribution, intrinsic value, etc., of the class.

a. Determine if the course is part of the general education curriculum.

EC has established a list of general education courses that prepare all students with a general knowledge base. This consists of classes in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts, English, and oral communication.

If a course is listed as a general education course, the college has established some outcomes/objectives for all general education courses within the relevant discipline. For more information on general education courses, see the EC Catalog, which can be accessed at:

<http://ecollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/EC-Catalog-2014-2018-Revised-Catalog.pdf>

b. Determine if the course is approved by the Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS).

If a course has been approved by ACTS, then there are course objectives tied to this approval. If you plan to change the course objectives (SLOs), it may affect the transferability of the course. Contact the Registrar for the list of ACTS-approved courses. And, by all means, ensure that any changes you make have Academic Dean-approval before implementation.

The ACTS website is: <http://acts.adhe.edu/>

c. Determine how the course fits into the program curriculum.

Here are some key questions for determining how the course fits in the program curriculum:

- What role does the course play in the departmental/programmatic curriculum?
- Is this course required?
- Is this course an elective?
- Is this course required for some students and an elective for others?
- Does this class have a pre-requisite?

- Is this class a pre-requisite for another class in the department?
- Is this course part of the general education curriculum?
- How advanced is this course? In other words, where does this course fall in students' degree plans - as an introductory course or an advanced course?
- Can one expect the students taking this course to know anything about the course topic?
- Are other faculty members counting on students who have taken this course to have mastered certain knowledge or skills?
- Are other faculty members teaching the same course? (i.e., Do I need to coordinate with others teaching the same class?)
- When students leave this course, what do they need to know or be able to do?
- Is there specific knowledge that the students will need to know in the future?
- Are there certain practical or professional skills that students will need to apply in the future?
- Five years from now, what do you hope students will remember from this course?
- What is it about this course that makes it unique or special?
- Why does the program offer this course?
- Why can't this course be "covered" as a sub-section of another course?
- What unique contributions to students' learning experience does this course make?
- What is the value of taking this course? How exactly does it enrich the program?

d. Write the Course Purpose.

- Answers to the questions from the previous pages should help determine the purpose of this course.
- The Course Purpose statement can be added to the syllabus in a separate section titled "Course Purpose" or as a subsection of the "Course Description".

Establishing expected SLOs for the course

When beginning to construct expected SLOs, think about the student learners in the course and try to answer the following questions:

- What are the most essential things the students need to know and/or be able to do at the end of this course?
- What knowledge and skills will they bring with them?
- What knowledge and skills should they gain from the course?

Then:

- a. List the major elements that you want your students to KNOW (i.e., facts, theories, concepts, models, etc.) at the end of the course.**

b. List the major things you want your students TO BE ABLE TO DO (i.e., skills, abilities, procedures, etc.) at the end of the course.

Brainstorm as many outcomes as you can. You can narrow down and prioritize these outcomes later.

c. List the expected SLOs.

Rewrite the expected SLOs you listed under steps 2a and 2b. Make sure that the SLOs you write follow the guidelines discussed earlier in this Guide. Begin with the following:

After completing this course, the student(s) will be able to:

1. SLO #1
2. SLO #2
- Etc.

d. Narrow down the SLOs through the process of prioritizing.

You can use a rank order process for determining the priorities, such as giving the most important SLO a #1, the second most important a #2, etc.

Or, if your list is long, first go through a process of elimination by giving your SLOs a 1, 2, 3 based on the following criteria:

- #1: Critical to know
- #2: Important to know
- #3: Nice to know

Then, eliminate the #3's and return to the rank order process.

Though most of the outcomes that you brainstormed may be important, you should select no more than 5 – 10 SLOs to be listed in your syllabus as the overall course-level outcomes. This allows you to keep the course and your assessment plan focused and manageable. Some of the SLOs you originally listed may be subsets of other outcomes for a particular unit, chapter, or assignment. You do not have to list them all in the syllabus.

Developing a plan to assess the expected SLOs

Assessment lets you know that your students have actually learned what you planned for them to learn. Assessment is larger than just grading the students' work and assigning grades. As discussed earlier, assessment can be FOR learning, OF learning, and AS learning. Some of your teaching methodologies will assist you in determining whether

the students are learning or not. (See the sections on formative and summative assessment techniques.)

Both traditional evaluation activities (such as exams, homework, or research papers) and classroom assessment techniques (such as class discussions, non-graded quizzes, or “One Minute Paper” exercises) can be used to assess the expected learning outcomes for a course.

Assessment methods can be broken down into direct methods and indirect methods. Listed below are examples of each:

◆ Direct Methods

- Case studies (formative)
- Class discussion participation (formative)
- Course and homework assignments (formative)
- Examinations (formative/summative)
- Grades based on explicit criteria related to learning goals (summative)
- Performance observations using explicit criteria (summative/formative)
- Quizzes (formative)
- Research papers/projects (formative/summative)
- Rubrics (summative/formative)
- Standardized tests (summative)
- Term papers/reports (formative/summative)

◆ Indirect Methods

- Annual student survey (summative)
- Course evaluations (summative)
- Focus groups (summative/formative)
- Grades not based on explicit criteria related to learning goals (summative)
- Number of student hours spent on homework, service learning, at intellectual or cultural activities related to the course, etc. (formative)
- Percent of class time spent in active learning (formative)

- Quality tools designed to help faculty provide immediate improvement, such as: Plus/Delta end-of-session evaluations, One Minute Papers, etc. (formative)

Following the example shown next, list the traditional methods (e.g., exams, papers, etc.) that you plan to use in the course. Then, relate your SLOs to the most appropriate type of assessment.

Traditional Assessment Method(s)	Related Student Learning Outcome(s)
Mid-Term Exam	SLO #1-3
Final Exam	SLO #4-8
Research Paper	SLO #7
Presentation (with rubric)	SLO #3
Team project	SLO #3

- a. Following the example shown below, list the nontraditional methods that you plan to use in the course. Then, relate your SLOs to the most appropriate type of assessment.**

Nontraditional Assessment Method(s)	Related Student Learning Outcome(s)
One-Minute Papers	SLO #4, 5, 7
Class Discussions	SLO #1, 2
Intrigue Journals	SLO #5-8
Plus/Delta (daily)	All

Compiling the course-level assessment plan

Complete your Assessment Plan using the form provided on p. 22. Prepare one form for each of your SLOs. An example is provided on the next page.

SAMPLE: Plan for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes

Course Title/Number Sample Course Department Sample Department

Expected Learning Outcome *(please use a separate form for each course-level learning outcome)*

Expected Learning Outcome # 1: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to describe . . .

How will this expected SLO be assessed? What methods will you use to measure student's mastery of this outcome?	When will this SLO be assessed? Provide the projected dates for each assessment technique listed in Column 1.	If these assessments show deficiencies in students' mastery of the SLO, what are your plans for improving student learning related to this outcome?
Exams 1, 2, and 3; following exams, do Item Analysis to look for problem areas.	October, November, and December	Review exam answers with class; review unclear concepts.
In-class activities	Weekly	Provide written feedback on activities, debrief common errors or misconceptions with the class.
Entry/Exit Cards	Daily	Discuss students' card comments/questions verbally in class in next class session or on Populi.
Non-Graded Quizzes	At the end of each chapter	Grade quiz with the class, being sure to provide the correct answers. Clarify any confusing areas; re-teach as necessary.

(Adapted from information from Texas Tech University accessed at http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opa/resources/docs/writing_learning_outcomes_handbook3.pdf)

Ecclesia College

Plan for Assessing Student Learning Outcomes

Course Title/Number _____ Department _____

Expected Learning Outcome *(please use a separate form for each course-level learning outcome)*

Expected Learning Outcome # 1: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to: _____

How will this expected SLO be assessed? What methods will you use to measure student's mastery of this outcome?	When will this SLO be assessed? Provide the projected dates for each assessment technique listed in Column 1.	If these assessments show deficiencies in students' mastery of the SLO, what are your plans for improving student learning related to this outcome?

(Adapted from information from Texas Tech University accessed at http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opa/resources/docs/writing_learning_outcomes_handbook3.pdf)

Identifying learning experiences/activities that will lead to the attainment of the SLOs

In this section, you will plan the types of learning experiences and activities that will lead to the attainment of SLOs. Given the preparatory work you have already completed, this section should be fairly easy to do.

This is where you can be creative and implement classroom strategies that you believe will help students succeed. Remember, the more involved the students are in the learning process, the more they will remember. Lecture only is not the best approach!

Communicate the Course-Level Assessment Plan most often through the course syllabus

At this point, you are ready to put your syllabus together. More to come later on that topic.

Additional Helpful Information

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) has provided data for research on deep/integrative learning. The following table is provided by Laird, et. al., in 2008. These practices are worth considering as you determine your SLOs and identify the learning experiences and activities you will use.

NSSE Deep/Integrative Learning Scale

- ◆ Integrating ideas or information from various sources
- ◆ Including diverse perspectives in class discussions/writing
- ◆ Putting together ideas from different courses
- ◆ Discussing ideas with faculty members outside of class
- ◆ Discussing ideas with others outside of class
- ◆ Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory
- ◆ Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experience
- ◆ Making judgements about the value of information
- ◆ Applying theories to practical problems or in new situations
- ◆ Examining the strengths and weaknesses of your own views
- ◆ Trying to better understand someone else's views
- ◆ Learning something that changed how you understand an issue

Using Formative Assessment to Improve Student Learning

Feedback is "... most effective when it is timely, perceived as relevant, meaningful and encouraging, and offers suggestions for improvement that are within a student's grasp." (Brown & Bull, 1997)

... improving learning through assessment depends on five, deceptively simple, key factors (Black & William, 1999)

What Is Formative Assessment, and What Is Its Value?

Put very simply, formative assessment is assessment for learning. When you assess student learning for purely formative reasons, there is no final mark on the paper and no summative grade in the grade book. Instead, assessment serves as practice for students, just as studying or homework does. But, it has the added value of receiving immediate feedback to improve and enhance learning. It supports learning in two ways:

- ◆ For the students, they are able to use the feedback to improve their own learning.
- ◆ For the instructors, they can adapt or modify instruction on the basis of evidence viewed in the classroom. This ultimately will improve student learning.

Tips for Improving Formative Assessment

- ◆ Provide an understandable vision of the learning target, standard or outcome.
- ◆ Whenever possible, offer descriptive feedback rather than grades on assignments.
- ◆ Ensure that your syllabus includes what will be included in the final grade and that students know this from the outset.
- ◆ Be as specific as possible in your feedback. Comments like “Great job!” or “You are not quite there yet” leave the students guessing. These phrases don’t give the students any insight into what they are doing correctly and what they are doing wrong. Be specific! And, if you notice an improvement, be sure to comment about what they did right. (Hattie, 2007)
- ◆ “Sooner is better than later!” Give feedback as soon as is feasible. (Stenger, 2014)
- ◆ Teach students how to set goals, keep track of their own learning, and self-assess.
- ◆ Engage students in self-reflection.
- ◆ Encourage students to work together in groups or teams and to share what they know.
- ◆ Teach the students focused revision. Have them practice on another person’s work, then on your work, then on their own work.

Formative Approaches for Assessing Student Learning

Exit/Admit Slips

The instructor poses 2-4 questions at the end of a lesson or class to assess student understanding of the key concepts covered in class. Students write responses and give their slips of papers to the instructor as they leave the classroom. The activity should take no more than five minutes. The instructor can quickly determine which concepts students understand and which students will need more help.

Admit slips can be like exit slips, except they are collected at the beginning of class. The instructor can write questions on the board and ask the students to write their answers while he/she is taking attendance.

An alternate approach can be used for admit slips. This involves having the students write out questions that arose during their studies that need to be answered before going on. This is a great way to quickly identify troublesome topics in a short period of time.

One-Minute Papers

One-minute papers are great for both teaching and learning. They benefit the students, and they benefit the instructor. Here are several of their benefits:

1. They promote writing skills no matter what course is being taught.
2. They are flexible. You can use them at the beginning of class, in the middle, and/or at the end.
3. They give you an idea of where students are in terms of understanding.
4. They promote critical thinking skills for the students.
5. If used at the end of class, they promote active listening, since the students are expected to give a short essay-type answer before they leave class.

Here are some examples of their use:

At the beginning of class: Ask the students a question like, "What question do you have from the reading for today?" (Hint: While they are writing, you can take attendance. Good use of their time!) At first, expect them to be a bit reticent in responding, but as they become used to the One-Minute Papers, you can expect to see improvement in their ability to express themselves in writing.

In the middle of class: "OK, we've just talked about the scientific flaws in Darwin's theory of evolution. Write for one minute on which of those you consider to be the most serious." You will learn about their understanding as well as a few things about your own teaching.

At the end of class: You can ask any of a number of different questions. Here are several examples: "What do you consider to be the most important thing you learned today?" "What did we cover today that leaves you still confused? – in other words, what do we need to clear up first thing next class before we move on?"

Be creative and come up with some great One-Minute Paper questions. There are many good ones on the Internet. Surf and search for good ideas!

Plus/Delta

A plus/delta is designed to assess, from the students' perspective, how things are going in the course. It can be used daily, weekly, or at other scheduled intervals, depending on the type of questions asked. The Plus indicates something that is going well, while the Delta (a sign for change) signals an opportunity for improvement.

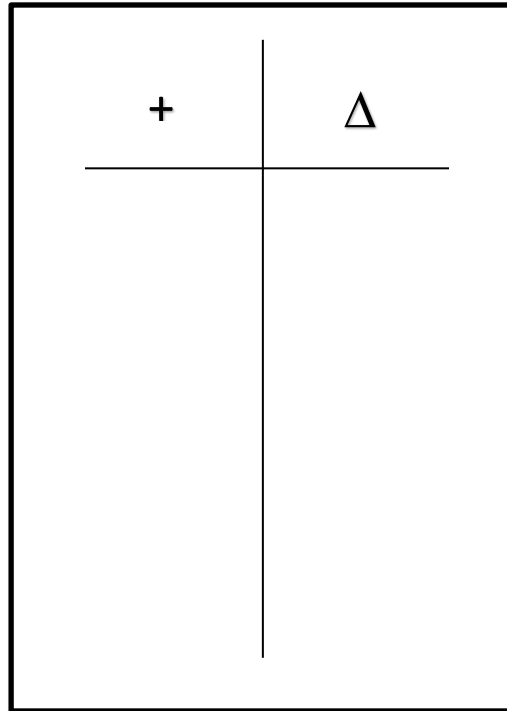
Instructors who use this tool each time the class meets are assessing for understanding of the day's content/concepts. The question is generally posed as, "What learning went well

today vs. what concept is still ‘muddy’ for you.” In other words, you are seeking to determine what needs to be dealt with before you can move on.

The value of this tool is that it asks students to focus on what is working to advance their learning in the course and what needs to be improved, by the instructor, the student(s), or both. When using a new classroom methodology, you can use a Plus/Delta to see what worked well about the new approach and how it can be improved in the future.

Most of all, it helps students to think about learning (metacognition) and what works best for them. Many of the students have never before been asked!

There are several simple ways to do a Plus/Delta: 1) Draw a horizontal line on the whiteboard/chalkboard or flipchart. Draw a vertical line near the top. Plus a plus (+) sign on the left and a delta (Δ) on the right just above the vertical line. Like this . . .



2.) A second approach is to have the students divide a sheet of paper into quadrants. On the top left quadrant the student identifies what is working to enhance learning in the course. In the lower left quadrant the student writes what he/she is doing to enhance his/her learning in the course. In the upper right quadrant the student identifies changes or improvements needed in the course or in the teaching approach to enhance learning. In the lower right quadrant the student identifies what he/she needs to change or improve in order to enhance his or her own learning.

+	Δ
What is helping me learn in this class?	What changes are needed in this class to improve my learning?
What am I doing to improve my learning in the class?	What do I need to do to improve my learning in this class?

Compiling the results can be handled in several ways. 1) The instructor can collect, summarize, and report the results back to the students at a subsequent class session. 2) The students can compile the results as a class exercise. This has the benefit of really engaging the students in use of the Plus/Delta for improvement. (No matter what career one enters, the Plus/Delta tool is useful for them all!) 3) The instructor can draw the four-quadrant chart on the board students can verbally offer responses. 4) You can post a flipchart that is always available. When a student encounters a plus or delta, he/she can write it on the flipchart immediately. It is a way to “catch” important thoughts before they are lost!

No matter which approach you select, it is very important to close the feedback loop. You must share the data with the students. They can help you determine best solutions.

Other Ideas

Edutopia has some great ideas for formative assessment. Though it is primarily for a K-12 audience, some of the approaches are quite transferrable. Here are some of examples:

Intrigue Journals: List the five most interesting, controversial, or resonant ideas you found in the readings this week. Include page #s and a short rationale (100 words) for your selection.

Advertisement: Create an ad, with visuals and text, for the newly learned concept.

Summary Poem (or Song) Activity:

- List 10 key words from the assigned text
- Do a free verse poem with the words you highlighted
- Write a summary of the reading based on these words.

Compare & Contrast

Identify the theory or idea the author is advancing. Then identify an opposite theory. What are the similarities between these ideas?

Opinion Chart

List opinions about the content in one half of a T-chart and support your opinions in the right column.

Misconception Check

Given a common misconception about a topic, students explain why they agree or disagree with it.

The Top Ten List

What are the most important takeaways from today's lesson, written with humor?

Part 4: The Plan for Assessing Student Learning

Academic Assessment Plan Goals

1. To embed within the curriculum at Ecclesia College desired Institutional Outcomes to be evidenced by all of its graduates.
2. To ensure that all Program Objectives are appropriate and will lead to favorable graduate outcomes, including employment and/or continuing higher education.
3. To align Course Objectives with Program Objectives and Institutional Outcomes.
4. To employ systematic processes for reviewing and analyzing student learning data related to Institutional Outcomes, Program Objectives, and Course Objectives that will lead to continuous improvement of student learning.
5. To provide faculty with training opportunities and assessment resources that will lead to improved student learning.

Assessment Action Plan

Assessment Plan Goals	Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline
<p>1. To embed within the curriculum at Ecclesia College desired Institutional Outcomes (IOs) to be evidenced by all of its graduates.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete curriculum mapping of Institutional Outcomes (IOs) with Course-level Student Learning Outcomes. 2. Ensure that IOs are assessed through rubrics and other non-traditional forms of assessment. 3. Plan and implement several new educational practices that will enable students to achieve IOs: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cross-curricular projects, where students will apply knowledge and skills from more than one discipline. b. More collaborative and team-based learning activities for students. 	<p>Division & Department Heads and Faculty</p>	<p>2014 and ongoing annually via template in Course Syllabus</p>
<p>2. To ensure that all Program Objectives are appropriate and will lead to favorable graduate outcomes, including employment and/or continuing higher education.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct program reviews on a four-year schedule*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2015-16 Associate of Biblical Studies, Bachelor of Biblical Studies, Associate of General Studies, Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Counseling - 2016-17 Bachelor of Arts in Communication, Bachelor of Music Ministries, Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Master of Christian Leadership (DE only) - 2017-18 Bachelor of Arts in Leadership, Bachelor of Arts in Political Science - 2018-19 Bachelor of Christian Leadership, Bachelor of Science in Sport Management, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Christian Executive MBA (DE only), TESL Certification (DE only) <p>* In the past, program reviews have been on a three-year cycle. Due to a growth in the number of programs, we are moving to a four-year cycle.</p> 2. Involve additional faculty in the Program Review process. 3. Encourage faculty to offer suggestions for improvement in programs and courses. 	<p>Division & Department Heads and Faculty</p>	<p>As noted</p>

Assessment Plan Goals	Action Steps	Responsibility	Timeline
3. To align and integrate, as appropriate, Institutional Outcomes, Program Objectives and Course-level Student Learning Outcomes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a Syllabus Review Committee initially weighted heavily with those who understand the process. Gradually, incorporate new volunteer faculty to learn the process. 2. Create cross-departmental teams to develop plans and strategies for implementing cross-curricular projects. 3. Align student learning outcomes regardless of delivery mode (traditional, distance learning, blended). 	Division & Department Heads and Faculty	Ongoing
4. To review and analyze student learning outcome data for continuous improvement of student learning.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve electronic storage and access to data and information. 2. Standardize scales within surveys and inventories. 3. Prepare faculty to focus on the continuous improvement of student learning through the use of formative assessment processes. 4. Locate an appropriate end-of-program instrument that can be delivered on-line for distance education students. 5. Conduct an institutional self-assessment using the "Excellent Practice in Student Learning Outcomes" self-assessment tool available from New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability for the purpose of ensuring improving student learning outcomes at Ecclesia College. 6. Implement improved practices based on findings of self-assessment in #5. 	<p>Academic Deans, Division & Department Heads and Faculty</p> <p>Dr. Bob Headrick</p> <p>Academic Deans, Division & Department Heads and Faculty</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Self-assessment to be completed by 12-31-2016</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
5. To provide faculty with training opportunities and resources that will lead to improved student learning.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a website for all faculty devoted to professional training and development. 2. Create short, focused on-line training segments. 3. Develop Internet-based sharing capabilities to encourage faculty participation and involvement. 4. Prepare faculty to develop a Course Assessment Plan and implement a Course Assessment Review. 	Academic Deans, Assistant to the Academic Dean	December 2016

Part 5: Participating in a Culture of Assessment, Continuous Innovation, and Quality Improvement

One of the recommendations given by the Secretary of Education's Commission on Future of Higher Education was for America's colleges and universities to "embrace a culture of continuous innovation and quality improvement by developing new pedagogies, curricula, and technologies to improve learning, particularly in the area of science and mathematical literacy" (U.S. Dept., 2006).

To accomplish this, we must change our emphasis from assessment as our duty, to assessment as a meaningful way to provide feedback on student and faculty performance.

What would this look like?

Perhaps it might look something like this:

- ◆ access to meaningful information
- ◆ sharing reports
- ◆ involving students and alumni in developing improvement strategies
- ◆ cross-curriculum planning and projects
- ◆ engaging in interactive peer reviews
- ◆ continually searching for best practices

This culture of assessment, continuous innovation, and quality improvement is one we can achieve at Ecclesia College. We invite your participation!

Appendix A:

Ecclesia College

**Mission, Motto, Foundational Values,
Distinctives, Educational Philosophy, and
Tenets of Faith**

Mission

As an institution of higher learning, Ecclesia College mentors effective leaders to strengthen the foundations of society through the life and values of Christ.

Motto

Where leaders are learning

Foundational Values

As an Institution of Higher Learning, holding that all truth is God's truth and biblically consistent, Ecclesia College embraces these 7 Core Foundational Values:

Bible-Based Education

We are called to study all disciplines in light of the Scriptures to “show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,” learning to think and walk honestly before Him in the light of His truth according to our ever-increasing frame of reference.

Lifelong Learning

Humankind is the highest order of intelligent beings on earth individually created by God in His own image for a unique purpose higher than ourselves to enjoy Him and be enjoyed by Him forever. We are called to a wholesome curiosity and continued learning of the *why, what, how to*, and eventual outcomes of the faithful stewardship of our thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust.

Comprehensive Learning

We are called to the ideal educational prescription of “adding virtue to faith and knowledge to virtue” in that order of cyclical increase through mentoring for life and learning, God-honoring and academically challenging classes, work learning internships, community service, and Christian outreach.

Inclusion of the Whole Body of Christ

The family of God under the Lordship of Christ is called to “maintain the Spirit of unity...until we come into the unity of the faith.” We are called to faithfully serve the whole Body of Christ, understanding that our true compatibility is based on our shared Christ-life, core foundational values, God-given vision, godly relationships, and wholehearted involvement.

Practical Norm for Life and Learning

The holy, spiritual, and eternal mindset of redeemed mankind eclipses and

surpasses the profane, carnal, and temporal mindset of fallen mankind while re-establishing the only truly practical norm for all things. We are called to live and learn now in light of eternal values, anticipating God's "well done."

Missions Priority

Christ's Great Commandment and Great Commission are integral to advancing His kingdom within ourselves and among all people groups in all nations. We are called to prepare and equip faithful ministry-minded persons of excellence, integrity, and order for professions across all aspects of society and to grow networking resources for them in their chosen vocations and further study, serving to increase and reinforce their quality of learning and service.

Community and Personal Wellness

We are called to interdependence over isolation based on God's firm principle of domain with forgiveness of trespasses as the basis for healthy, committed relationships aligned with His heart and ways. We also honor God in preparing for long-term, faithful service by following good healthful practices such as proper diet, adequate rest, regular exercise, and consistent meditation on Him.

Ecclesia College Distinctives

Shaping individuals into servant leaders with Christ-like character distinguishes Ecclesia College (EC). We begin the process of cultivating leaders throughout the First Year Program offered as Alpha and Beta Seminars. A student's education at EC is filled with discipline and purpose to help him/her in developing skills to become a lifelong learner.

The First Year Program uses a model focused on Biblical mentoring and expands through these components:

The **New Student Orientation** assists new and transferring students in transitioning to life in our college community. Current upper level students sharpen their leadership skills by helping incoming students adjust to their new home. The orientation program stresses the importance of excellence, integrity, and order for all of life.

The **Learning Community** (cohort classes; block programming) component ensures that groups of new and transfer students share at least four classes in their first two years at Ecclesia, promoting integration into academic life, structuring student time, and advocating participation in team projects and study.

The **Alpha Seminar** builds on the New Student Orientation program. This required, one-credit- hour course for new and transfer students includes readings, lectures, classroom discussions, and experiential activities facilitated by faculty, administrators, and peer leaders. The course explores important topics such as

character development, critical thinking, worldview, personal responsibility, accountability, and other College values.

All Ecclesia College students participate in the following:

The **Assemblies** underscore the College's biblical values and ideals. A whole-life Christian living approach is emphasized as Christian leaders, professionals, faculty, and students share their life lessons at required campus-wide assemblies that meet two times each week on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The **Small Group Sessions** are held weekly. Small group leaders act as role models in Christ-like life, vision, values, relationships, and campus involvement.

The **Work Learning Service Program** has a goal to strengthen students' understanding of work as a tool for experiential learning and serving the campus and regional community. Graduates leave Ecclesia College with not only an academic degree, but also experience in personnel management, teamwork, conflict resolution, and ethics in the workplace.

The **Service Learning** (Christian/Community Service) requirements begin in the first year and continue through the student's last term. Service projects enhance campus community and broaden the student's sense of personal and civic responsibility. Successful completion of Service Learning participation becomes one of the main criteria in determining Christian character and in nominating students for graduation by the Ecclesia College Faculty to the Board of Governance.

The **Code of Honor** is emphasized during the President's Assembly, usually held the first day of each semester. This is a time in which all students, faculty, and administration commit to uphold and champion the Ecclesia College standards of good conduct and character.

Ecclesia Educational Philosophy

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The educational philosophy of EC is based on the belief that the Bible is God's inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word. In accord with this, EC pursues biblical methods and practices in educating and equipping men and women for their chosen fields of service and for the wise conversion of their thought, time, talent, treasure, and trust into eternal riches to enjoy with God forever rather than passing, temporal values.

All truth is God's truth and biblically based and should, therefore, be integrated with the principle approach to education from the biblical perspective. Such basic principles include:

1. God desires all mankind to come to the knowledge of the truth.
2. God intends mankind to know Him and His ways with His creation.

3. God speaks His truth in love through His living Word.
4. God calls all mankind to believe in Himself through His Son by His Spirit.
5. God calls all believers to their highest good by building virtue on their faith and knowledge of the truth on their virtue (2 Pet. 1:5-7).

God values and blesses EC's five-point educational approach for learning, growing, and equipping:

1. Mentoring Program – Christ-centered mentoring for life and learning according to the student's giftings and callings (2 Tim. 2:2).
2. Academically challenging faith and character-based classroom (2 Pet. 1:5-7).
3. Work-Study Internship Program with hands-on in-service related to the student's chosen field of service and/or further study.
4. Community Service Program with practical application and outcomes.
5. Christian Outreach Program in response to God's loving heart for others.

EC's regular Assembly Program serves to communicate this educational approach, which addresses the three deepest heart questions of the student:

1. Leading students on their search for the “why” of each truth will inspire a growing knowledge, wisdom and understanding. This will deepen their enthusiasm and resolve of heart for excellence, integrity, and order to live their lives now in the light of eternity.
2. Leading students on their search for the “what” of each truth will clarify their frame of reference to know the highest good with the right objectives.
3. Leading students on their search for the “how to” will strengthen their confidence in God's ways as always best.

Tenets of Faith

Ecclesia College affirms support for the Tenets of Faith of the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

According to the Constitution of the Association for Biblical Higher Education, the following statement of faith is subscribed to annually by each member institution through the signatures of the president or of a board official.

1. We believe that there is one God, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious death and atonement through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal and visible return in power and glory.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God, and that he was tempted by

Satan and fell, and that, because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for salvation.

5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life, and by whom the Church is empowered to carry out Christ's great commission.
6. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost; those who are saved unto the resurrection of life and those who are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

Appendix B:

Ecclesia College Institutional Outcomes

Institutional Outcomes of Ecclesia College

Ecclesia College prepares and enables students to achieve competence in seven broad institutional outcomes within the first two years of their college experience:

1. **Biblical Worldview and Faith**: Ecclesia College graduates will make mature, independent choices based on principles of the Christian faith and a biblical worldview.
2. **Critical and Creative Thinking**: Ecclesia College graduates will apply critical thinking skills based on a biblical worldview and principles to making personal and professional decisions.
3. **Effective Communication**: Ecclesia College graduates will communicate effectively, using verbal, non-verbal, written, listening and electronic technologies, as appropriate to the occasion, task, and context.
4. **Integrity**: Ecclesia College graduates will live their lives, personally and professionally, based on integrity and the highest ethical standards.
5. **Leadership**: Ecclesia College graduates will demonstrate leadership skills within vocational, church, community, and service contexts.
6. **Lifelong Learning**: Ecclesia College graduates will pursue ongoing development of intellectual, creative, and theological knowledge and skills necessary to learn and grow throughout life.
7. **Service and Stewardship**: Ecclesia College graduates will practice the biblical imperatives to serve people and be faithful stewards of the Church and God's created resources.

Embedded in the general studies curriculum at Ecclesia College are the following specific desired outcomes to be evidenced by all its graduates:

1. **Biblical Worldview and Faith**
 - Articulate how a biblically-based worldview affects beliefs, values, decisions, and interactions with others.
 - Make life choices based on a biblically-based worldview and principles of the Christian faith.
 - Demonstrate patterns of devotional practice and personal growth that will equip one for spiritual leadership.
 - Demonstrate basic Scriptural interpretive skills.
2. **Critical and Creative Thinking**
 - Research, analyze, integrate, and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
 - Solve quantitative problems.
 - Use the scientific method to examine and interpret data, as applicable.

- Construct well-reasoned arguments and solutions.
 - Use existing knowledge to generate novel and innovative ideas.
 - Synthesize and transfer learning to new, more complex, and unscripted situations.
3. Effective Communication
- Communicate effectively using written, oral, and nonverbal skills.
 - Adapt communication style to the occasion, task, and audience.
 - Listen with understanding.
 - Interact with others appropriately in a culturally-diverse and increasingly pluralistic world.
 - Demonstrate proficiency in the use of electronic technologies common to the workplace.
4. Integrity
- Show honesty and integrity in interactions and situations.
 - Demonstrate responsibility and trustworthiness in the execution of duties.
 - Articulate and defend ethical position based on biblical principles and worldview.
 - Identify ethical issues in personal, professional, church, and civic life.
5. Leadership
- Exhibit leadership skills, as appropriate, to solve problems and strive for excellence.
 - Work cooperatively with others to accomplish a common goal.
 - Demonstrate accountability in one's actions and decisions.
6. Lifelong Learning
- Articulate the importance of lifelong learning.
 - Accept constructive criticism.
 - Recognize opportunities for improvement.
 - Apply strategies for a practice of lifelong learning.
 - Participate actively in organizations supporting one's profession.
7. Service and Stewardship
- Discuss current social problems in their cultural and historical contexts and suggest solutions for such problems based on biblical values and ethics.
 - Benefit their local church and communities through responsible engagement and leadership.

Students seeking a bachelor's degree also will be prepared to demonstrate Major Field Competence.

Appendix C:

Assessment of Student Learning Glossary

Assessment of Student Learning

Glossary

Action Plan: An agreed-upon strategy with specific action steps that will lead to accomplishment of a goal/objective, improve a process, and, ultimately, improve student learning.

Assessment: Broadly, is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development; more specifically, is the ongoing process of:

- Establishing clear, measurable objectives (expected outcomes) of student learning
- Ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to achieve outcomes
- Systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches our expectations
- Using the resulting information to understand and to improve student learning

(Linda Suskie, *Assessing Student Learning*, 2004)

Competency: The ability to do a given thing successfully; may be equated with a Student Learning Outcome (SLO).

Continuous Improvement: Continuous improvement, sometimes called continual improvement, is the ongoing improvement of educational outcomes through incremental and breakthrough improvements; is the ongoing, cyclical process used to plan, implement, review and analyze results, and make change(s) that will improve student learning.

Course Objectives: Knowledge and/or skills students should be able to demonstrate upon completing a specific course. Course-level objectives should relate to and be aligned with broader program objectives.

Course-level Assessment: Refers to methods of assessing student learning within the classroom environment, using a variety of assessment tools to determine if student has accomplished course-level objectives.

Curriculum Mapping: An analytical approach that allows faculty to identify important components of program curricula, place them in relation to each other in a visual format, and then capture an overarching curricular structure to support cognitive scaffolding for further analysis. A curriculum map is a visual tool that can be used to introduce new students and faculty to the program, curriculum discussion, accreditation requirements, and provides an approach to systematically study the curriculum. Curriculum mapping is especially helpful in implementing an assessment plan. (Cuevas, Matwev & Feit, 2009)

Direct Assessment of Learning: Occurs when measures of learning are based on student performance or demonstrates the learning itself. Scoring performance on tests, term papers, or the execution of lab skills are examples of direct assessment of learning. Direct assessment of

learning can occur within a course (e.g., performance on a series of tests) or could occur across courses or years (comparing writing scores from sophomore to senior year).

Formative Assessment: Refers to the gathering of information or data about student learning during a course or program that is used to guide improvements in teaching and learning. Formative assessment activities are usually low-stakes or no-stakes; they do not contribute substantially to the final evaluation or grade of the student or may not even be assessed at the individual student level. For example, posing a question in class and asking for a show of hands in support of different response options would be a formative assessment at the class level. Observing how many students responded incorrectly would be used to guide further teaching.

Indirect Assessment of Learning: Indirect measures assess opinions or thoughts about student knowledge, skills, attitudes, learning experiences, and perceptions. Examples of indirect measures are: student surveys; focus groups; alumni surveys; and employer surveys.

Institutional Outcomes: Knowledge and skills that a student will achieve at the end of an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): The operational statements describing specific student behaviors that evidence the acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, abilities, capacities, attitudes or dispositions. Learning outcomes can be usefully thought of as behavioral criteria for determining whether students are achieving the educational objectives of a program, and, ultimately, whether overall program goals are being successfully met.

Program Objectives: Broad statements of what the students will know and be able to do by the successful completion of the program. The program objectives allow each student to demonstrate competence in their chosen major field.

Program-Level Assessment: The process by which faculty and staff: (1) develop clear Program Objectives for a given program of study; (2) collect and analyze student results data from courses across the program in order to determine how well students are meeting Program Objectives; and (3) use the findings to make improvements in program curriculum with the ultimate purpose of helping students achieve competency in Program Objectives.

Rubrics: Scoring tools that provide performance expectations for an assignment or piece of work. A rubric divides the assigned work into component parts and provides clear descriptions of the characteristics of the work associated with each component, at varying levels of mastery. Rubrics can be used for a wide array of assignments: papers, oral presentations, artistic performances, group projects, etc. Rubrics can be used as scoring or grading guides, to provide formative feedback to support and guide ongoing learning efforts, or both.

Summative Assessment: The gathering of information at the conclusion of a course, program, or undergraduate career to improve instruction and to meet accountability demands. When used for improvement, impacts the next cohort of students taking the course or program. Examples: examining student final exams in a course to see if certain specific areas of the curriculum were understood less well than others; analyzing senior projects for the ability to integrate across disciplines.

Appendix D:

Bloom's Taxonomy Action Verbs

Bloom's Taxonomy Action Verbs

Level	Definition	Sample Verbs					Example
KNOWLEDGE	Student recalls or recognizes information, ideas, and principles in the approximate form in which they were learned.	arrange cite define describe duplicate	identify label list match memorize	name order outline quote read	recall recognize relate repeat reproduce	select state tabulate tell underline	The student will define the 6 levels of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain.
COMPREHENSION	Student translates, comprehends, or interprets information based on prior learning.	associate classify convert defend describe	discuss distinguish estimate explain express	extend generalize give example(s) identify illustrate	indicate infer locate paraphrase predict recognize	report review rewrite select summarize translate	The student will explain the purpose of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain.
APPLICATION	Student selects, transfers, and uses data and principles to complete a problem or task with a minimum of direction.	apply change choose compute construct	demonstrate discover dramatize employ illustrate	interpret manipulate modify operate practice	predict prepare produce relate schedule	show sketch solve use write	The student will write an instructional objective for each level of Bloom's taxonomy.
ANALYSIS	Student distinguishes, classifies, and relates the assumptions, hypotheses, evidence, or structure of a statement or question	analyze apply categorize compare contrast separate	change choose compute demonstrate discover dramatize	employ illustrate interpret manipulate modify operate	practice predict prepare produce relate schedule	show sketch solve use write	The student will compare and contrast the cognitive and affective domains.
SYNTHESIS	Student originates, integrates, and combines ideas into a product, plan or proposal that is new to him or her.	arrange assemble categorize collect combine comply	compose construct create design develop devise	explain formulate generate hypothesize invent plan	prepare rearrange reconstruct relate reorganize revise	rewrite set up summarize synthesize tell write	The student will design a classification scheme for writing educational objectives that combines the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.
EVALUATION	Student appraises, assesses, or critiques on a basis of specific standards and criteria.	appraise argue assess attach choose compare	conclude contrast critique defend describe	discriminate estimate evaluate explain judge	justify interpret predict rate relate	recommend select support summarize value	The student will judge the effectiveness of writing objectives using Bloom's taxonomy.

Reference: <http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/col/cogsys/bloom.html>

Appendix E:

References and URLs for Online Resources

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Helpful Online Resources

- National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
<http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/index.html>
- New Leadership Alliance (2012). *Committing to Quality: Guidelines for Assessment and Accountability in Higher Education*. Washington, DC: New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability. Retrieved from http://www.chea.org/alliance_publications/committing%20to%20quality-3rd%20edition.pdf.
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- Walvoord, B. E. & Bantam T. W. *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. ISBN 978-0470541197
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