



Academic Program Evaluation Plan

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Evaluation Plan for Academic Programs Offered by UW-Extension

1. Introduction

This document presents a general evaluation plan for all academic programs offered by UW-Extension. This plan provides a framework with process steps on how programs should be evaluated on a regular basis and does not provide details on specific programs. Each program offered by UW-Extension is expected to have a separate document with a detailed assessment plan that outlines the specifics on how it will conduct assessment, gather results, and utilize them for continuous improvement. UW system requires that all programs go through the program evaluation process once every seven years. This plan helps guide programs in conducting program evaluations.

Program evaluation is the process of conducting a self-study of the program with the following goals:

- Evaluate student experience in the program from multiple perspectives that include the curriculum, faculty, enrollment, advising, registration, tutoring, library services, career services, retention, and graduation.
- Identify the strengths of the program and improvements needed for students to succeed better.
- Arrive at a plan for implementing changes to the program.
- Make changes to the program and study its impact on student experience.

While a significant part of program evaluation is based on evaluating the curriculum, a study of student support services is required to arrive at meaningful recommendations for improvement. The rest of this document is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the general process for conducting program evaluation at UW-Extension. Section 3 describes how to conduct curricular assessment and arrive at annual assessment reports for programs. Appendix A presents a template for the program evaluation report, while Appendix B provides a template for the project-level assessment report.

2. Program Evaluation Process

Figure 1 depicts the general program evaluation process as cross-functional flowchart. The rows in the cross-functional flowchart depict the personnel involved and the columns show the process group (or a series of steps) that needs to be completed. The following list of items present the different process steps in conducting the program evaluation. Though these process steps are shown as sequential, some of them can take place simultaneously.

1. Each year, the provost (or provost's designee) arrives at a list of programs that need to be evaluated (consistent with the system policy). For each program, the provost notifies the dean that the program evaluation needs to be conducted.
2. Dean notifies the academic director and program faculty about the program evaluation (self-study) and directs personnel in such areas as student support,

- registration, advising, tutoring, and library to assist the academic director and program faculty.
3. Academic director, faculty, and student support services review the previous program evaluation report and changes implemented as a result; they also review the annual assessment reports for the intervening years since the last program evaluation.
 4. Academic director works with student support services to obtain input on what is working and what is not working. Academic director works with the registrar, dean of students, and IT staff to obtain specific metrics such as admissions, graduation rates and retention rates.
 5. Academic director compiles the program evaluation report and works with internal stakeholders (faculty, student support services, administration personnel, and Flex option steering committee) to review, revise and finalize the program evaluation report.
 6. Academic director submits the program evaluation report to the dean.
 7. Dean identifies two external reviews for the program and sends them the relevant materials including the program evaluation report.
 8. External reviewers visit the campus and examine various areas such as curriculum and student support services.
 9. External reviewers submit a feedback report to the dean.
 10. Dean discusses the feedback with various stakeholders and builds a consensus on what changes are needed to serve students in the program better. Some of the changes may be curricular changes, while some changes may take place in the student support areas. Stakeholders agree on a plan and a timeline for changes.
 11. Dean provides resources for making changes.
 12. Academic director, faculty, and student support services implement the changes.
 13. Dean works with the department and UW-Extension faculty senate to seek formal approval for the program evaluation report.
 14. Once approved, provost receives and approves the program evaluation report.
 15. Provost compiles an annual report of all program evaluations at UW-Extension.
 16. Provost shares the annual program evaluation report with the Board of Regents.
 17. Board of Regents review and approve the annual program evaluation report submitted by the provost.

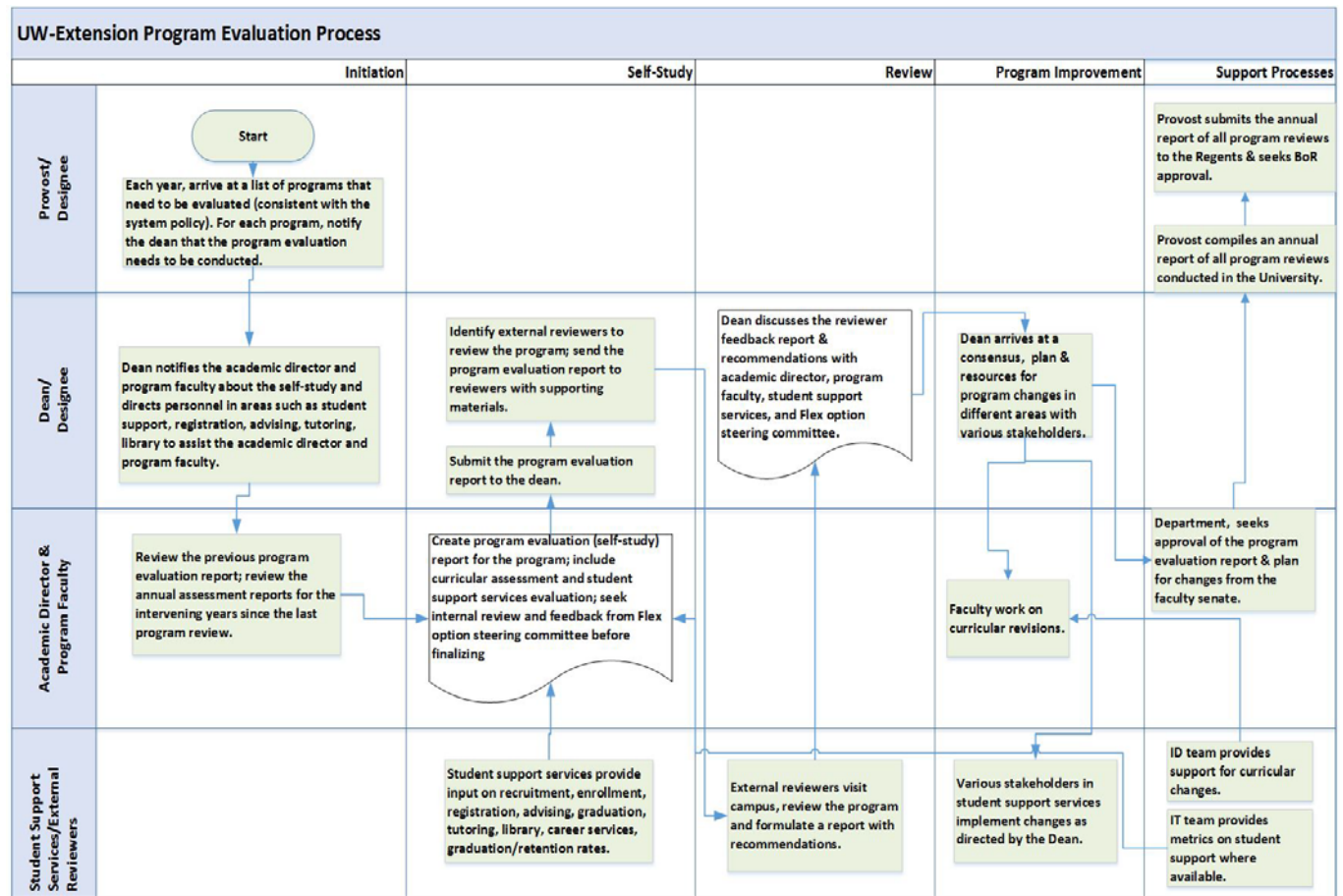


Figure 1: Program Evaluation Process at UW-Extension.

Appendix A presents a template for the program evaluation report. While most of the data program evaluation can be based on academic assessment, the following data is needed to arrive at a quality program evaluation report:

- Exit surveys of graduating students
- Alumni surveys
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Enrollment numbers by year, graduation and retention rates by year, and trends

For a program that conducts annual curricular assessments and reviews assessment results for program improvements, the program evaluation process can be relatively straightforward. This is because such programs would have implemented many changes, based on assessment results, in the intervening years since the last program review. However, for programs that do not conduct regular curricular assessments and suddenly face the prospect of conducting a program review after a number of years, program review process can be daunting; this latter approach is not advisable and programs are strongly encouraged to conduct annual assessments. Further, accreditation agencies such as the Higher Learning Commission expect institutions to have a strong culture of assessment and encourage programs to conduct assessment on an ongoing basis rather than

sporadically. Thus, as a rule, programs offered by UW-Extension are expected to conduct annual curricular assessments.

3. Conducting Annual Curricular Assessments

A significant aspect of program evaluation is based on assessment of the curriculum. Each program offered by UW-Extension is expected to have an academic (curricular) assessment plan as part of the degree design process. The assessment plan discusses the following:

- Curricular map indicating where each of the program-level competencies are introduced, reinforced, and assessed in the projects.
- Metrics for assessment of competencies and projects; in other words, how well students are demonstrating mastery of competencies and projects.
- Direct measures for assessment based on student performance.
- Indirect measures for assessment based on feedback from students, faculty, ASCs, Advisory Board, and other stakeholders.
- Yearly plan for assessment indicating what projects will be assessed in which year during the assessment cycle.
- Resources needed to gather results and compile an annual assessment report.

Figure 2 indicates a cross-functional flowchart with steps for gathering assessment results and compiling an annual assessment report for each program. Appendix B provides a template with different components of an assessment report at the project level.

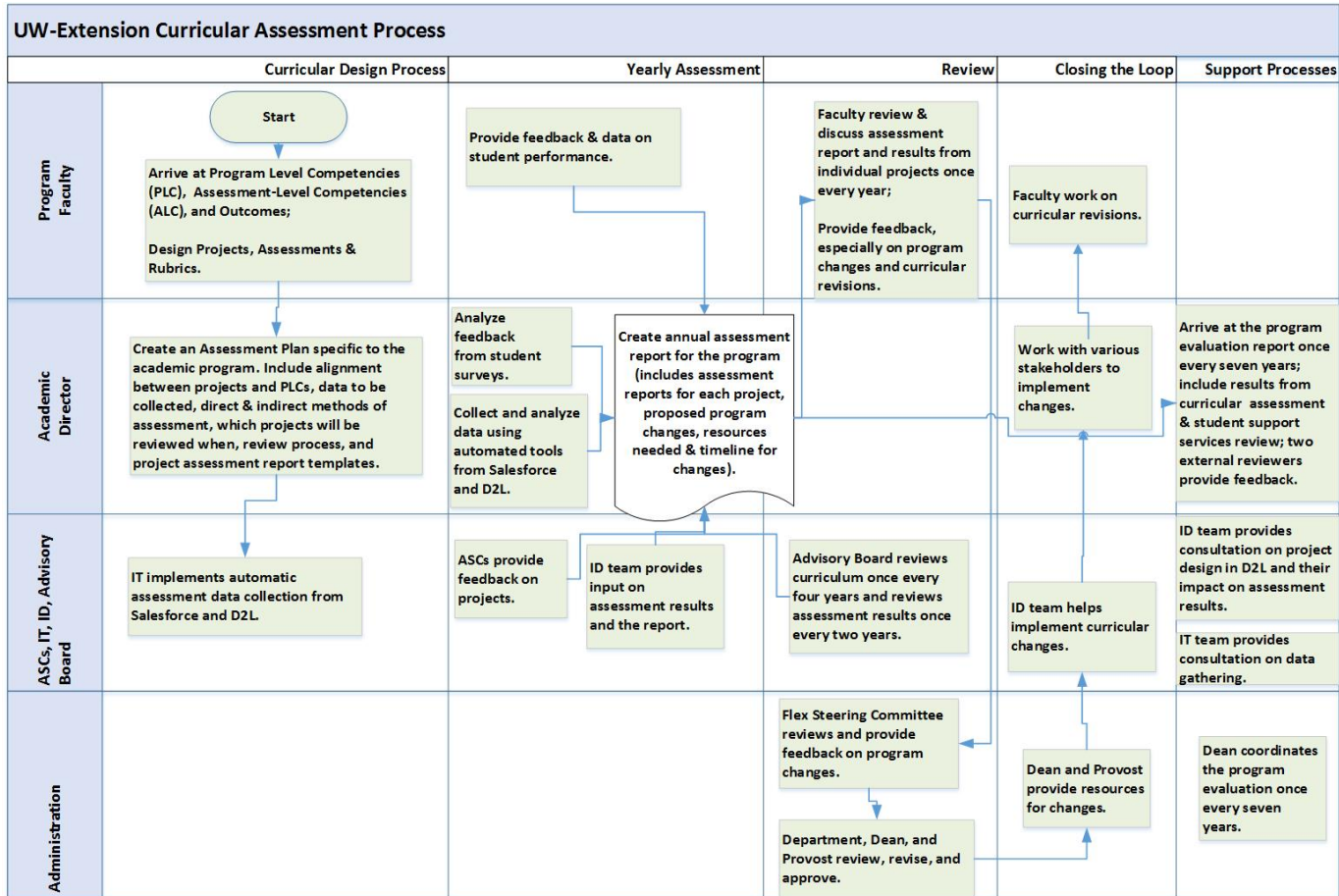


Figure 2: Annual Curricular Assessment Process for Each Program.

Programs seeking to construct assessment plans and go through the assessment and evaluation processes are encouraged to consult with other programs such as flex BSBA that may have implemented these processes.

APPENDIX A: A Template for Program Evaluation Report

The following template suggests the sections to be included in a program evaluation report for any academic program offered by UW-Extension.

1. Executive Summary
 - <<A one-page summary that presents significant results from program evaluation>>

2. Program Overview
 - <<Include program level competencies and curricular details of the academic program>>

 - How does the program serve UW-Extension's mission?
 - Describe program requirements
 - Program learning competencies
 - What is the program's structure? For example, is it a single program or does it have informal tracks/concentrations, formal named options or certificates?
 - Describe any substantial relation between the program and similar programs offered by UW-Extension
 - Faculty and administrative personnel/structure overseeing the program

3. Response to Previous Program Evaluation & Resulting Recommendations
 - Summarize recommendations from the previous program evaluation and external reviewers
 - Describe the changes made to the program as a result of the previous evaluation
 - Discuss the status of implementing the previous recommendations

4. Academic Program Assessment Results
 - Summarize the assessment plan used to evaluate how well students are demonstrating program competencies and how the program is engaged in a coherent process of continuous curricular and program improvement.
 - What has the program learned through assessment of program level competencies and projects? Provide key evidence.
 - What changes have been made to the program as a result of assessment?
 - What are the emerging changes in the discipline? What is being done and can be done to move forward and seize emerging/future opportunities?
 - What is the feedback from the Advisory Board If relevant to the program on the curriculum? How is their feedback incorporated in the continuous improvement process?

5. Recruiting, Admissions, and Enrollment

- Review marketing and recruitment efforts? Determine whether these efforts are successful in recruiting students. Describe changes that need to be made, if any.
- Has the program reached its enrollment targets? If the enrollments are low, what steps will be taken to improve enrollments?
- What effort has the program made to enhance student diversity (traditionally underrepresented groups in field)? Discuss how successful these efforts have been?

6. Advising and Student Support

- Discuss the model of academic advising including the role of Academic Success Coaches.
- Include the hiring process for ASCs
- Include the professional development activities and training the ASCs are expected to undergo.
- What is the ratio of ASCs to students? Is this ratio sufficient?
- How often do students interact with an ASC?
- How are ASCs evaluated on their performance?
- What is the process for student registration for project?
- How do students register for projects?
- What improvements are needed, if any, for services related to registration and student transcripts?
- How is library support provided for students? Describe the current status and improvements needed, if any.
- What type of tutoring resources available to students? Include tutoring resources for writing, math, and other areas. Describe the current status and improvements needed, if any.

7. Student Graduation and Retention Rates

- How long do students take to complete the degree? How does this compare with other institutions for similar degrees?
- Discuss the metrics (such as 4-year, 6-year graduation rates) for degree completion rates of students. What efforts have been made to improve degree completion rates?
- Review data on student retention. Are the retention rates satisfactory? What steps will be taken to improve retention?
- Do students from educationally underrepresented groups (racial/ethnic minority, low-income, first generation in college) succeed in the program at rates comparable to other students? How are gaps in their achievement compared to other students addressed?

8. Career Services and Post-Graduation Outcomes

- What resources are available for career counseling to students? Describe the current status and improvements needed, if any.
- What do students do after graduation? How does the program prepare them for careers or further academic training?
- Are program level competencies consistent with student careers?
- Does the program track the career progression of its graduates?

9. Conclusions and Recommendations for Program Improvement

<<Describe the overall strengths of the program. Include suggestions for program improvement with respect to curriculum, advising, registration, admissions, enrollment, career services, tutoring, retention, graduation, library support, etc. Not all areas may need improvements, limit this discussion to areas which need to be improved for the program.>>

APPENDIX B: A Template for Reporting Project Assessment Results

PROJECT ASSESSMENT REPORT				
(1) <u>Project</u> :				
(2) <u>Program Level Competency (List all PLCs that apply)</u> :				
(3) Results from Direct Assessment:				
3-A. Number of students who registered for the project during the assessment year:				
3-B. Number of withdrawals:				
3-C. Number of students who completed or are in progress (complete below):				
# Mastered with Distinction (Percent)	# Mastered (Percent)	# Not Yet Mastered (Percent)	TOTAL	
<<Number (Percent)>>				
3-D. Average Number of Subscription Periods Taken By Students to Complete:				
(4) Direct Assessment Results by Individual Competencies in the Project				
	# Mastered with Distinction	# Mastered	# Not Yet Mastered	TOTAL
<<ALC1>>	<<Number (Percent)>>			
<<ALC2>>				
... Add rows as necessary				
Graphical Representation of Results in Items (3) and (4):				
(5) Additional Assessment Data, if/when Warranted: Are there high percentages of students in the “not-yet-mastered” category in items (3) or (4)? If so, discuss the case(s) with the high percentage, and include observations about possible problems with those items. Where appropriate, include results for individual assessments based on rubrics. <<Include results as necessary>>				
(6) Observations from Direct Assessment Results: <<List Observations from Direct Assessment Results>>				
(7) Indirect Assessment Results Based on Student Survey Feedback: <<List Significant Suggestions from Students for Improvements>>				
(8) Indirect Assessment Results Based on Faculty Survey Feedback:				

<<List Significant Suggestions from Faculty for Improvements>>	
(9) Indirect Assessment Results Based on ASC Feedback:	<<List Significant Suggestions from ASCs for Improvements>>
(10) Indirect Assessment Results Based on Advisory Board Feedback:	<<List Significant Suggestions from Advisory Board for Improvements>>
(11) Suggested Changes to the Project:	<<List suggested changes to the project, needed resources, and an approximate timeline>>