

Shorter University Academic Assessment Policy

Shorter University's success is dependent upon the quality and effectiveness of its academic programs. The primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of academic programs is with faculty (SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.4.12). Administration is tasked with the responsibility to affirm that academic programs are consistent with the mission of the university, to affirm that the university possess the resources and organization to maintain the quality of its academic programs, and to affirm that academic programs are in compliance with accreditation standards (SACSCOC Comprehensive Standards 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5).

The purposes of this policy are to:

- Achieve the overall mission of Shorter University.
- Ensure excellence and continuous improvement in Shorter University academic programs through faculty involvement in the assessment process to promote student achievement.
- Meet accreditation requirements and standards for the following agencies: Commission on Colleges Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC), Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC), National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), and the Georgia Board of Nursing.

Assessment Plan

1. Mission Statement
Each school/department will have a clearly defined and published mission statement specific to the school/department and linked to the university mission statement.
2. Administrative Objectives/outcomes
 - a. Each school/department will develop a set of program objectives/outcomes. Program objectives/outcomes should be mapped to Shorter University Educational Principles.
 - b. Each school/department is responsible for continuous assessment (annual and five-year cycles).
3. Assessment Plan
Each school/department should outline a specific plan for conducting continuous assessments (annual and five-year cycles). The plan should include:
 - a. Written Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that address both the content and level of attainment.
 - b. SLOs should include both acceptable and ideal targets
 - c. A description of direct and indirect methods that will be used to assess the extent to which the SLOs are met.
 - d. Rubrics for direct assessment methods.
4. Implementation
Each school/department in accord with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (OIER) calendar should:
 - a. Develop annual and five-year plans for assessment. The plans should include (a) a description of the assessment cycle, (b) a calendar for assessing individual courses, and (c) personnel responsible.

- b. Implement assessment in selected courses as delineated in the school/department and General Education assessment plans.
 - c. Collect the data using direct and indirect methods within the appropriate timeframe (assessment cycle, term, semester, academic year).
 - d. List training opportunities provided by OIER.
5. Analysis
- a. Assessments results are meaningful and useful only if they are interpreted. Interpretation of assessment results provides the evidence to effect change in academic programs.
 - b. Assessment results are assessed by academic and operation department heads using a rubric, as well as by OIER.
6. Assessment Reporting
- Reporting assessment findings is essential for demonstrating how continuous assessment has been used to make improvements in the academic program during the assessment cycle. When reporting findings, schools/departments should provide the following information:
- a. Assessment results
 - b. Substantiating Evidence
 - c. A summary of the findings
 - d. Recommendations (when applicable)
 - e. Budget implications (as appropriate)
7. Follow-up
- Follow-up, i.e., “closing the loop” is essential for improvement.
- a. Use of results should be included in assessment reporting.
 - b. A strategy for implementing proposed changes in the next assessment cycle should also be included when reporting findings..

All institutionally approved academic programs of study and the individual majors within each degree program including General Education Curriculum and first year classes/seminars at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels must comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually. Recommendations can be sent to ekellett@shorter.edu.