NORTH CAROLINA
AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL
STATE UNIVERSITY

GREENSBORO 27411

Steps and Principles of
Basic Assessment Model

Office of Institutional Assessment
"Information for Excellence"

Division of Academic Affairs
MISSION OF THE OFFICE

The primary purpose of the Office of Institutional Assessment is the coordination of activities associated with assessing the overall effectiveness of the University. The office has direct responsibility for:

• The Institutional Assessment plan required by the new “accountability” legislation that mandates annual assessment of student learning and development, faculty development and quality, and progress towards the University’s Mission.

• An annual report and other reports as needed on how the mission of the university has been enhanced by the use of the flexibility granted as a “special responsibility constituent institution.”

• Ensuring that institutional effectiveness measures as defined by the Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools are ongoing and continuous.

REPORTING OF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Annually, academic and administrative units from each division are selected for assessment at varying points over a five year time period. (SEE SCHEDULE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND ACADEMIC UNITS)

Assessment activities occur during fall semesters with assessment results reported during spring semesters. Assessment results for academic majors are presented during spring school/college faculty meetings by chairpersons or their designee. Academic unit directors present Assessment Results for their units during spring meetings of the Academic Affairs Administrative Council. Administrative Unit directors present Assessment Results for their units during spring meetings of their respective divisions.

BASIC ASSESSMENT MODEL

1. The institution defines its mission, and its educational, scholarly, and service goals.

2. Each of the departments (academic and non-academic) defines what role it plays in moving toward each of these goals.

3. While presented from an academic program viewpoint, the main steps and principles apply to all institutional operations, including academic support, administration, student services, buildings and maintenance, and campus security. Each program (major, minor, general education, graduate degree) then:

• Defines its goals related to institutional goals, applicant interest, and consumer needs.

• Operationalizes its objectives in terms of student learning and development outcomes.

• Relates objectives to program strategies in which curricular components and requirements ensure each objective.

• Assesses the attainment of each objective to determine each strategy’s effectiveness.

• Evaluates the effectiveness of its assessment strategies.

4. Program assessment results are combined at the department level and constitute the primary basis for evaluating effectiveness.

5. Program assessment results become the main database for immediate changes in objectives, curriculum, assessment procedures, and even goals, as well as for short-and long-term planning and budgeting.

6. Resources are then allocated according to the budget, serving as consequences (both rewards and sanctions) for program effectiveness efforts and feedback on the quality of assessment and planning.

7. Assessment provides ongoing evaluation data on effectiveness assessment and “closes the loop” with program planning, budgeting, and resource allocation. Each serves as a continuous feedback system on the quality of the other.
CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT PLAN

To be effective, an assessment plan needs to contain the following important characteristics:

• Assessment should flow from the mission statement and needs to be both ongoing and built into the department’s program.

• Assessment should use multiple measures, both qualitative as well as quantitative, rather than relying on one instrument or activity.

• A successful assessment program requires faculty ownership and responsibility since the faculty members, more than anyone else, are directly involved in the process of student learning.

• Finally, the results of assessment activities should lead to improvement and be seen as a means rather than an end.