

# Assessment Handbook



## Atlanta Metropolitan College

*Revised 2010*

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## **Mission Statement**

Atlanta Metropolitan College, a unit of the University of System of Georgia, focuses on excellence, where outstanding faculty members and committed staff teach and facilitate the successful academic matriculation and holistic development of students. The College offers an affordable liberal arts education and prepares students from a diverse urban community to function in a global society.

# **Introduction**

## **Purpose of the Institutional Effectiveness/Assessment Plan and Guide**

The Atlanta Metropolitan College Institutional Effectiveness (IE)/Assessment Plan and Guide is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of basic methodologies utilized in the planning, assessment and evaluation and the method in which the results from these processes are used to improve programs and services of the College. The impetus for these processes is based on the principle of continuous improvement in academic programs, services, and overall institutional effectiveness.

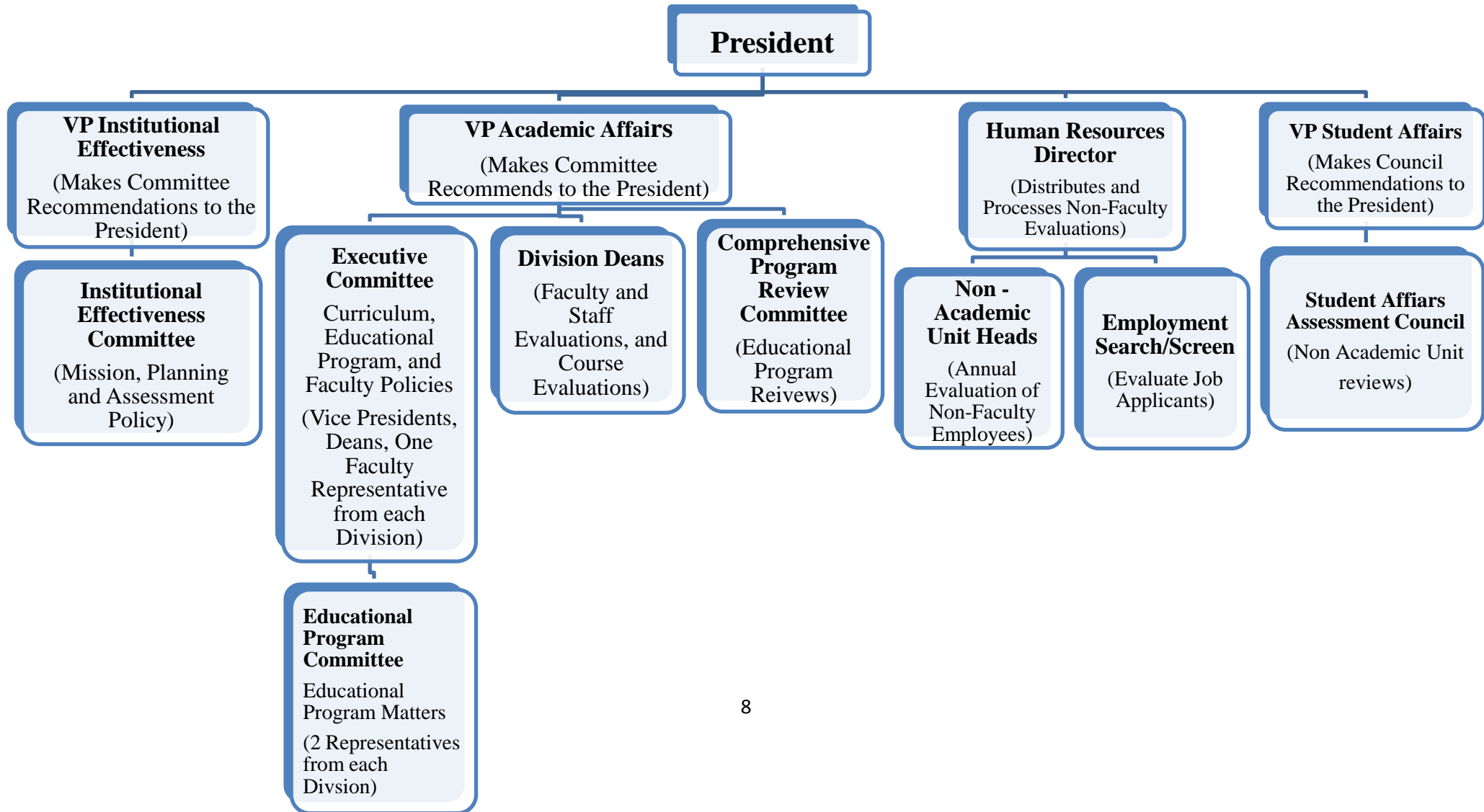
## **Institutional Effectiveness Model of Atlanta Metropolitan College**

Institutional effectiveness is an on-going, comprehensive integrated system designed to enhance and improve the Institution through an internal and external assessment process as well as demonstrate the degree to which the institution has effectively fulfilled or achieved its stated mission or purpose. Therefore, institutional effectiveness involves a systematic comparison of proposed institutional performance to actual outcomes and the extent to which the college uses assessment results for improving effectiveness. The Atlanta Metropolitan College Comprehensive Assessment/Evaluation Plan and Guide is the instructional document for the evaluation of institutional effectiveness.

Atlanta Metropolitan College is committed to providing excellent academic programs and educational support services and as such channels all activities and resources to that end. The institutional effectiveness process integrates assessment, evaluation, planning, monitoring, implementation, state and federal compliance, accountability, and budgeting to improve the quality of all functions of the College. The AMC Institutional Effectiveness System is comprehensive in scope and encompasses all sectors of the College. The goal of institutional effectiveness at Atlanta Metropolitan College is to assess the outcomes of educational programs and services and utilize the results to make improvements.

The College has identified Indicators of Effectiveness (IOE) attributes essential to success, which measure the institution's performance. Formative and summative evaluations provide the foundation for assessing effectiveness at the Institution and forming the basis for determining progress toward the accomplishment of the institution's stated mission and goals. Operational (annual) goals and objectives that are not accomplished during the fiscal year are reviewed for modification, elimination, or continuation into the new fiscal year. This analysis is conducted via the annual Strategic Planning Audit. (Refer to the Atlanta Metropolitan College Strategic Planning Manual for a more comprehensive overview of the long-range planning.

Exhibit 1. Planning and Assessment Organization Structure



# The IE Components at Atlanta Metropolitan College

The AMC institutional effectiveness process has four components: planning (Exhibit xxx), implementation, assessment, and use of assessment results to improve programs. A description of these components follows:

Exhibit 2. Primary Components of the Institutional Effectiveness Process





## **A. Strategic and Operational Planning**

The strategic planning process at Atlanta Metropolitan College (AMC) is designed to guide academic and administrative units of the college through a structured planning process that is based on on-going monitoring, evaluation, and outcomes assessment. The strategic planning process focuses on continuous quality improvement systems and projects to meet the future needs and priorities of the college. The strategic plan will set the direction for Atlanta Metropolitan College to achieve its mission (Refer to the Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive overview of the planning process).

## **B. Implementation**

All unit employees are expected to take part in the planning and implementation of unit objectives. The implementation phase is guided by an action plan which identifies who and when (called the timeline) will carry out the unit objectives.

## **C. Budgeting**

Budgeting involves the allocation of fiscal resources required to carry out the strategic and operational plans of the College. Planning should always precede the budgeting process.

## **D. Assessment/Evaluation**

This component measures the extent that AMC achieves its goals and objectives. More specifically, it indicates how assessment findings are applied to ameliorate or alleviate weaknesses and maintain or enhance strengths in the quality of programs or services.

## **E. Use of the Results to Improve Programs and Services**

The use of assessment results is perhaps the most important component of the IE process. All units are expect to use the assessment results to improve its programs and services, a process that is often called “closing the loop.”

**Exhibit 3. Scheduling of Institutional Effectiveness Activities**

<b>Area Assessed/Evaluated</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Cycle</b>
Instruction/Faculty	Students	Annual
Mission	College and Community	Five-Year
Faculty	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Division Chairpersons	Annual
Administrators/Staff	Unit Heads	Annual
Institutional Effectiveness	Internal Customers	Annual
Institution	Graduates	Annual
Educational Programs	Divisions and External Evaluators	Five-Year
Student Services	Students	Annual
Planning Units/Subunits	Unit Heads	Annual
Unit Processes	Internal/External Evaluators	Three-Year

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the IE Committee has the primary responsibility for the development and administration of the comprehensive assessment and evaluation document; however, the following administrative units have primary responsibilities for implementation of respective unit plans and assessments.

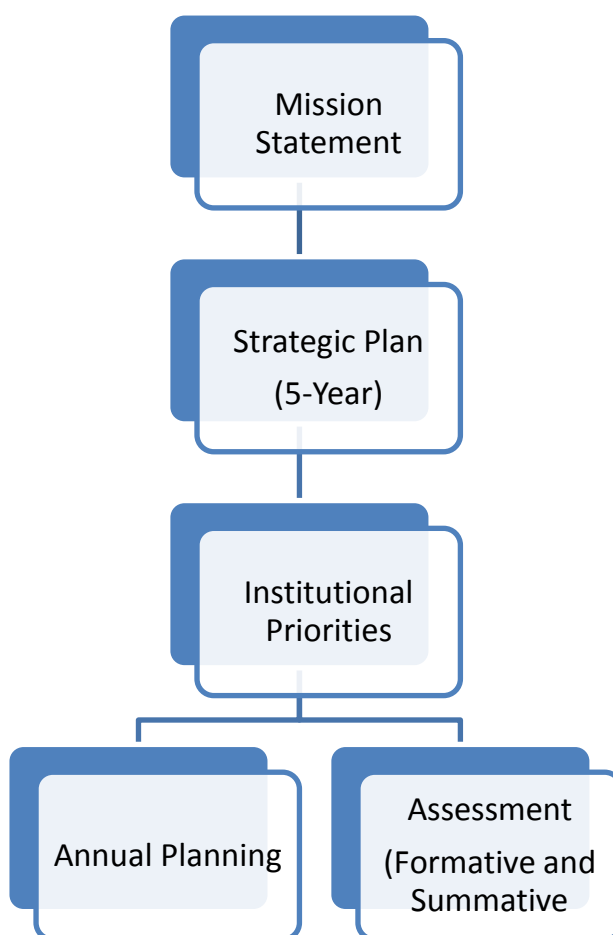
**Exhibit 4. Primary Documents for Assessment**

<b>ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION PLAN DOCUMENTS</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT</b>
ACT Student Opinion Survey Report	Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment
AMC Comprehensive Assessment/Evaluation Plan and Guide	Institutional Effectiveness
Academic Program Review Manual	Academic Affairs: Comprehensive Program Review Committee (CPRC)
Academic Assessment Handbook/Learning Outcomes	Academic Affairs: Academic Divisions
The Faculty Evaluation System Handbook	Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA)
Performance Evaluation Process for Professional, Administrative, and Non-Exempt Staff	Fiscal Affairs (Human Resources)

# Planning, Budgeting and Assessment Model

The planning and assessment structure (Figure xxx) of AMC are integrated, broad-based, and interrelated. All IE activities are based on the College's mission. The Strategic Plans, both for the Institution and units, are long-range in nature and are implemented primarily through the annual planning process. Formative and summative assessments are implemented throughout the planning and assessment model. Institutional priorities provide the flexibility to address unanticipated internal/external threats and provides a risk management structure for the College to address such events. A brief description of each component follows.

**Exhibit 5. Planning, Budgeting and Assessment Model**

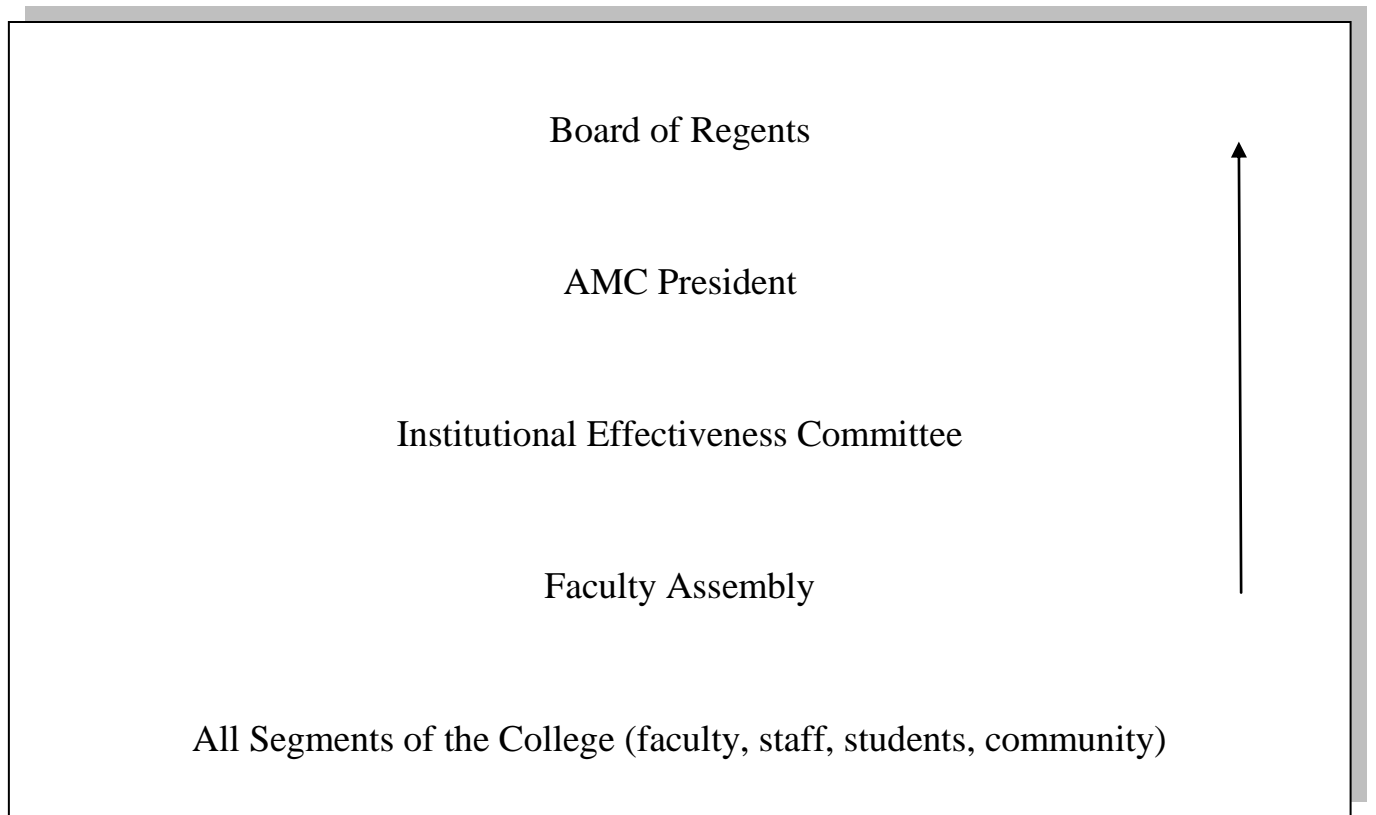


# Mission Statement Review Process

The AMC mission statement guides all aspects of the College’s planning, budget and assessment processes. The review and evaluation of the AMC mission statement occurs at least once in every five-year cycle, consistent with the College’s Strategic Planning Cycle. All components of the College, including community participate in the Mission Statement review and evaluation process. Approval of the Mission Statement is follows the same process (Fig. xxxx) as other core documents of the college.

A campus-wide Mission Review Committee, consisting of representatives from all sectors (i.e. students, faculty, staff) of the College, is responsible for conducting the Mission Statement review. Based on feedback from the College community, the Mission Review Committee makes recommendations to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, who presents the findings to the faculty assembly for approval. If approved by the faculty assembly, the Vice-President for Institutional Effectiveness makes any recommendation to the College President, who subsequently submits mission statement recommendation changes to the University System of Georgia Board of Regents for final approval.

Exhibit 6. **Review Levels of Mission Statement**



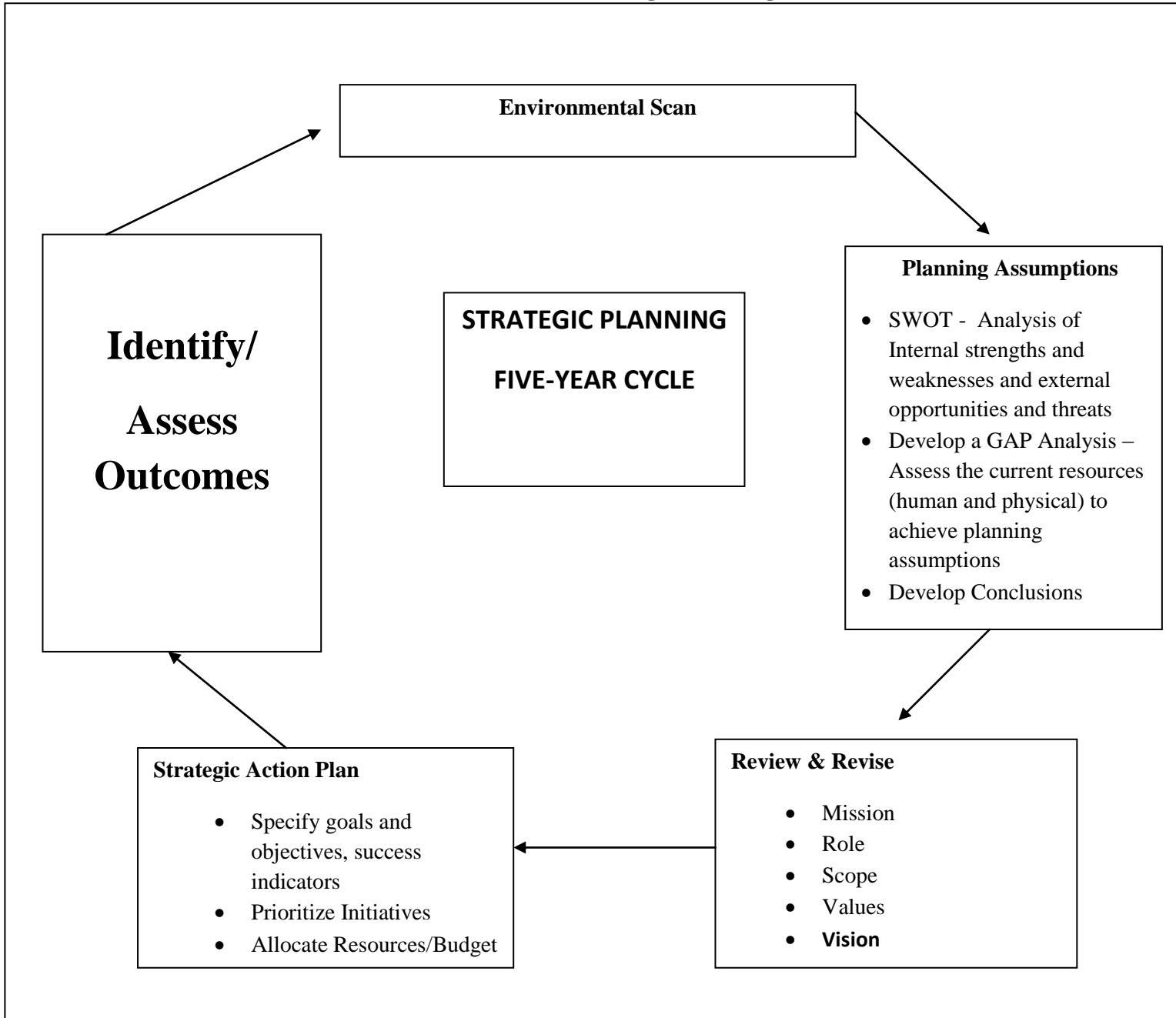
**Exhibit 7. Mission Statement Assessment Rubric**

<p>An acceptable mission statement should be concise, comprehensive, indicating the College’s purpose, who it serves, the way in which it serves, and with what results (indicators)</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary	<input type="checkbox"/> Acceptable	<input type="checkbox"/> Developing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly and Concisely Stated Purpose</li> <li>• Comprehensive, identifies Stakeholders</li> <li>• Purpose is specific and appropriate for capability</li> <li>• Purpose Aligned with USG and external needs/demands</li> <li>• Outcomes are measurable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of purpose</li> <li>• Broadly refers to stakeholders</li> <li>• Questionable Capacity to carry out purpose</li> <li>• Mostly aligned with USG and external needs/demands</li> <li>• Outcomes are measurable, but needs refining and/or clarity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unclear, incomplete purpose</li> <li>• Purpose is not comprehensive and inconsistent with what the College does</li> <li>• Purpose is beyond capacity</li> <li>• Most of Purpose is misaligned with needs</li> <li>• Most Outcomes are not measurable</li> </ul>

# Planning: Strategic and Annual Strategic

A full description of Institutional Strategic Planning is described in the Atlanta Metropolitan College Strategic Plan Document. Strategic Planning, both unit and Institutional, occurs on a five-year cycle, and is a multifaceted process involving various components. The AMC Strategic Planning model follows.

Exhibit 8. The AMC Strategic Planning Model



1. The annual planning cycle, Exhibit 8, is initiated by the President of the College, who will prioritize the institutional strategic goals. As necessary, the President may designate specific planning assignments.
2. In the **Planning Phase**, by April 15th, each unit will submit its annual plan. The annual plan consists of institutional strategic goal(s) and measurable objectives(s). Objectives include budget projections, expected outcomes/targets, and an implementation strategy, an action plan describing who will do what, how, when, and at what cost. Annual plans should be submitted to the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment (IRPA) using the Planning Forms (Figures 3-9) and the Budget Form (Figure 10). The Office of IRPA will review the unit plans, provide technical feedback as necessary, and submit the unit planning documents to the respective unit Vice Presidents for final approval.
3. In the **Implementation Phase**, units will implement their plans during the period occurring July-February. Unit requests for a change in scope and/or nature in their originally approved annual plans should be submitted to the respective unit head using the Audit Form, Figure 11. A copy of the audit form request should be submitted to the Office of IRPA.
4. In the **Assessment Phase**, during mid-March, each unit will evaluate/assess its progress toward achieving its annual goals and objectives, and submit its assessment and evaluation on the *Annual Assessment Form*, Figure 12. The Office of IRPA will then review the submitted forms, provide technical feedback to the units, and distribute unit assessment/evaluations to the Unit Heads and appropriate entities for the budget hearing process. The flow of information, p. 14, is the same in the Review Phase as that described earlier for the Planning Phase, except the process will culminate with the units presenting their annual progress and next year projections, including budgetary considerations, to the President and/or an appropriate group that he deems appropriate.



**Exhibit 9. Annual Plan Model and Schedule**

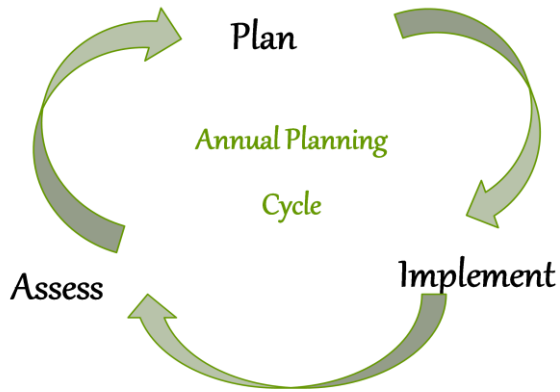
**October**

**Submission of Planning and Budget Forms for the Following Fiscal Year**

Deliverables – Units adopt and submit goals and objectives for the upcoming year, including budget projections; Process - Units submit annual plans to unit heads with technical support from the Office of IRPA.

**June - July**

**Assessment**



**October-May**

**Implementation Period**

**March**

**Budget & State-of-the-Unit Hearing**

# Exhibit 10. Unit Planning Form

## Annual Planning Form

*Educational Programs/Academic Services*

Planning Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**Strategic Goal 4:** Ensure effective and efficient educational programs and academic services that meet student and market demands.

Objective	Action Plan					Justification (Demonstrate need and benefit to AMC)
	*Activities for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Activities Timeline	Expected Outcome(s)	Indicators/Metrics	
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop science, math, teacher education, and/or other program initiatives, both collaborative and internal, to increase the underrepresented population of minorities in those areas. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a balance of transfer, career, and certificate educational programs that meet student demands. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure effective educational programs and academic support services that address student institutional requirements, such as the those associated with the Regents Exam and Learning Support. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement periodic and scheduled evaluation/assessment of educational programs to ensure their quality, consistency, and relevance to student needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Implement the Board of Regents strategic initiatives to enhance AMC's educational programs and services. <input type="checkbox"/> Employ a planning, evaluation, and budget process that ensures continuous improvement in the delivery of educational programs and academic services. <input type="checkbox"/> Other						
	<p><b>*Note: Include associated expenses on the "Budget Form."</b></p>					

Reviewed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office of Inst. Research, Planning, Assessment

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office of the Vice President

## Exhibit 11. Annual Planning Form

### Annual Planning Form

*Educational Programs/Academic Services*

Planning Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**Strategic Goal 4:** Ensure effective and efficient educational programs and academic services that meet student and market demands.

Objective	Action Plan					
	*Activities for Implementation	Person(s) Responsible	Activities Timeline	Expected Outcome(s)	Indicators/Metrics	Justification (Demonstrate need and benefit to AMC)
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop science, math, teacher education, and/or other program initiatives, both collaborative and internal, to increase the underrepresented population of minorities in those areas. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a balance of transfer, career, and certificate educational programs that meet student demands. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure effective educational programs and academic support services that address student institutional requirements, such as the those associated with the Regents Exam and Learning Support. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement periodic and scheduled evaluation/assessment of educational programs to ensure their quality, consistency, and relevance to student needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Implement the Board of Regents strategic initiatives to enhance AMC's educational programs and services. <input type="checkbox"/> Employ a planning, evaluation, and budget process that ensures continuous improvement in the delivery of educational programs and academic services. <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<p><b>*Note: Include associated expenses on the "Budget Form."</b></p>					

Reviewed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office of Inst. Research, Planning, Assessment

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Office of the Vice President

**Exhibit 12. Assessment Form**

Unit name \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_

Planning Activity (as listed on the planning form) _____ _____
---

<b>Actual Outcome</b> (or expected results, taken from the Planning Form)	<b>Outcome Assessment and Use of Results</b>			
	<b>Assessment Instrument</b> (Give a description or the instrument/method used to measure the progress of the expected outcome)	<b>Assessment of Progress</b> (Indicate your response by checking the appropriate box below)	<b>Summary of Results</b> (Provide a summary of the results)	<b>Use of Results</b> (Indicate how the results will be, or have been, used to improve your unit)
		Achieved or exceeded the expected outcome  Made significant progress towards achieving the expected outcome  Made some progress towards achieving the expected outcome  Made no progress towards achieving the expected outcome		

# Budget Form

**\*BUDGET FORM**

Unit Name \_\_\_\_\_

Fiscal Year \_\_\_\_\_

Planning Activity (List from the Planning Form): \_\_\_\_\_

Please Check one of the boxes:  
 Unit Head Signature/Approval  
 Total Amount Requested (Calculated)

One-time Budget Request

On-going Budget Request  
 Area Vice President Signature/Approval  
 0

CURRENT BUDGET	
Personnel Services	Cost
Salaries-Regular Faculty	
Salaries-Part-Time Faculty	
Salaries-Summer Faculty	
Salaries-Professional/Admin	
Salaries-Staff	
Fringe Benefits	
Other _____	
<b>Personnel Services Sub-total (Calculated)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Travel</b>	
Travel- Employee	
Other _____	
<b>Travel Sub-total (Calculated)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Operating Supplies &amp; Expenses</b>	
Purchase	
Supplies and Materials	
Repairs and Maintenance	
Software	
Subscriptions	
Computer Charges -Other	
Contracts	
Telecommunications	
Other _____	
<b>Operational Supplies/Exp Sub-total (Calc)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Equipment Purchase/Capital Outlay</b>	
Lease/Purchase	
Other _____	
<b>Equipment Purchase/Cap. Outlay Sub-total (Calc)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Current Budget</b>	<b>0</b>

PROJECTED BUDGET	
Personnel Services	
Salaries-Regular Faculty	
Salaries-Part-Time Faculty	
Salaries-Summer Faculty	
Salaries-Professional/Admin	
Salaries-Staff	
Fringe Benefits	
Other _____	
<b>Personnel Services Sub-total (Calculated)</b>	
<b>Travel</b>	
Travel - Employee	
Other _____	
<b>Travel Sub-total (Calculated)</b>	
<b>Operating Supplies &amp; Expenses</b>	
Purchase	
Supplies and Materials	
Repairs and Maintenance	
Software	
Subscriptions	
Computer Charges -Other	
Contracts	
Telecommunications	
Other _____	
<b>Operating Supplies/Expenses Sub-total (Calc)</b>	
<b>Equipment Purchase/Capital Outlay</b>	
Lease/Purchase	
Other _____	
<b>Equipment Purchase/Cap. Outlay Sub-total (Calc)</b>	
<b>Total Projected Budget</b>	

**\*Major Project and Year End Request**

Project Name \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description \_\_\_\_\_



# ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a measure of student learning. It is a cyclical process consisting of a sequence of decisions and procedures designed to focus attention on outcomes, as defined by the faculty and staff. Assessment is also designed to demonstrate, in a structured and objective manner, the degree to which those outcomes actually are being collectively achieved by the program's graduates and the unit's employees.

An assessment plan is an evolving document which guides the evaluation of student performance and learning outcomes in academic programs and administrative units. Like each program/unit it seeks to improve, the assessment process will change and improve over time, based on an evaluation of its own "outcomes." As the plan is implemented, changes will occur. The plan should remain flexible so that it can be adjusted or amended by any area or operational unit which identifies additional indicators of effectiveness. The assessment program is not intended to evaluate every aspect of student outcomes or administrative operations, but to assess the more significant aspects of each program or unit. It was not devised to be used just once to produce a "report card" on a degree program/unit and then be set aside. Moreover, it is neither a vehicle for comparing programs/units with one another internally, nor a device for comparing effectiveness among institutions. The assessment process is intended to be an integral component of the program it serves; operating in concert with instruction and other academic functions upon which it is focused.

A primary purpose of the Atlanta Metropolitan College assessment/evaluation process is to improve the quality of the Institution and to assist it in achieving academic excellence. In order to attain academic excellence, it is imperative for the institution's decision-makers to know whether or not the resources used for academic and administrative support are being utilized as effectively and efficiently as possible.

According to SACS, institutions must ensure that the results of an evaluation are used to improve institutional effectiveness. An important step in fulfilling that obligation is the clear communication of pertinent evaluation results to the institution's academic and administrative units. Evaluation results provided to each department should focus primarily upon that unit's operations and/or the accomplishment of its students.

## Evaluation results should be:

1. Easily understood by the persons expected to use it.
2. Clearly related to pertinent statements of goals or expected educational results/outcomes.
3. Compared (when feasible) to appropriate reference groups, either internal or external.
4. Analyzed in reference to comparable assessments repeated at periodic intervals.

Evaluation, in order to be effective and have a significant impact on the institution should involve the Institution's personnel and fiscal resource considerations. The results of the evaluation process should be useful to everyone involved throughout the college, especially decision-makers and other constituents.

The Institution's evaluation process provides documented data concerning actual performance. The evaluation system focuses on assessment of overall educational programs and support services success. It measures progress in achieving goals and objectives in all units of the Institution with emphasis on individual academic programs and non-academic services. The total evaluation program is highly participatory, involving faculty, students, staff, administration, and advisory committee members of the community as appropriate.

The evaluation results are used to plan, make predictions, and reduce uncertainty within the implementation process of the Institution. Administrative and academic units should use the evaluation process to assess the effectiveness of the units.

**Sources:** Southern Association of Schools and Colleges (SACS), *Resource Manual on Institutional Effectiveness*, 1989; James Nichols, *A Practitioner's Handbook for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Outcomes Assessment Implementation*, 1991.

Assessment is the systematic gathering of data/information to determine how well performance matches expectations. Moreover, it is a continual process that is integrated into all aspects of the College. Assessment at Atlanta Metropolitan College seeks to ensure that the college's goals are achieved and improvements are implemented as appropriate. More specifically, Atlanta Metropolitan College's assessment of programs and services focuses on whether or not assessment methodologies described have actually been implemented, the results of those methods analyzed, and the information garnered from the process, were utilized to improve overall institutional effectiveness.

The major goals of assessment are to improve student learning outcomes, faculty teaching, and to evaluate campus effectiveness as measured by student learning outcomes. Assessment is an interface between projected goals and the reality of learning. It pinpoints the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the college experience for students. It encompasses:

- Setting goals and raising questions about the education provided.
- Gathering information/data.
- "Closing the Loop" - using significant findings to improve educational programs, services, and operations.



# Common Assessment Instruments

What are commonly used assessment methods at AMC and institutions of higher education?

Various assessment methods are utilized at Atlanta Metropolitan College to measure student learning. It is critically important that the assessment method matches the learning outcome and that the course grading is consistent with both outcomes and assessment methods. To ensure quality assessment, various methods should be utilized for a given learning outcome. Various methods which point to the same assessment results validate and lends credibility to the assessment process. Following are various assessment methods, by learning level, adapted from Morris et al., that are commonly used in higher education.

## 1. Thinking critically and making judgments

(Developing arguments, reflecting, evaluating, assessing, judging)

- Essay
- Report
- Journal
- Letter of Advice to ....(about policy, public health matters .....
- Present a case for an interest group
- Prepare a committee briefing paper for a specific meeting
- Book review (or article) for a particular journal
- Write a newspaper article for a foreign newspaper
- Comment on an article's theoretical perspective

## 2. Solving problems and developing plans

(Identifying problems, posing problems, defining problems, analyzing data, reviewing, designing experiments, planning, applying information)

- Problem scenario
- Group Work
- Work-based problem
- Prepare a committee of enquiry report
- Draft a research bid to a realistic brief
- Analyze a case
- Conference paper (or notes for a conference paper plus annotated bibliography)

### **3. Performing procedures and demonstrating techniques**

(Computation, taking readings, using equipment, following laboratory procedures, following protocols, carrying out instructions)

- Demonstration
- Role Play
- Make a video (write script and produce/make a video)
- Produce a poster
- Lab report
- Prepare an illustrated manual on using the equipment, for a particular audience
- Observation of real or simulated professional practice

### **4. Managing and developing oneself**

(Working co-operatively, working independently, learning independently, being self-directed, managing time, managing tasks, organizing)

- Journal
- Portfolio
- Learning Contract
- Group work

### **5. Accessing and managing information**

(Researching, investigating, interpreting, organizing information, reviewing and paraphrasing information, collecting data, searching and managing information sources, observing and interpreting)

- Annotated bibliography
- Project
- Dissertation
- Applied task
- Applied problem

### **6. Demonstrating knowledge and understanding**

(Recalling, describing, reporting, recounting, recognizing, identifying, relating & interrelating)

- Written examination
- Oral examination
- Essay
- Report
- Comment on the accuracy of a set of records
- Devise an encyclopedia entry
- Produce an A - Z of ...
- Write an answer to a client's question
- Short answer questions: True/False/ Multiple Choice Questions (paper-based or computer-aided-assessment)

## **7. Designing, creating, performing**

(Imagining, visualizing, designing, producing, creating, innovating, performing)

- Portfolio
- Performance
- Presentation
- Hypothetical
- Projects

## **8. Communicating**

(One and two-way communication; communication within a group, verbal, written and non-verbal communication. Arguing, describing, advocating, interviewing, negotiating, presenting; using specific written forms)

- Written presentation (essay, report, reflective paper etc.)
- Oral presentation
- Group work
- Discussion/debate/role play
- Participate in a 'Court of Enquiry'
- Presentation to camera
- Observation of real or simulated professional practice

# Assessment of Learning Outcomes, Programs, and Services

Atlanta Metropolitan College (AMC) conducts assessments of its programs and operations as part of the institutional effectiveness/strategic planning initiatives. Each administrative and academic unit of AMC has conducted or will conduct its own self-analysis and share the findings with the Planning Committee. This Committee monitors the execution of area/operational unit and program plans by advising units on assessment strategies and assisting in the interpretation of assessment results that aid in the strategic planning process.

Methods of evaluating and monitoring College-wide plans should be customized for each academic and administrative component of the institution based on their individual needs and differences. These plans should focus on procedures to enhance effectiveness. Through planning, evaluation, and on-going monitoring, the institution's constituency identifies strengths and weaknesses and prescribes steps necessary for improvement.

Assessment occurs at various levels of the institution, including: general education, program, course, institutional mission, strategic plan, A description of these processes follow with the corresponding assessment document

# **Student Learning Outcomes**

# Student Learning Outcomes

## Purpose

Unequivocally, the most important assessment at AMC is that of student learning outcomes. The assessment of student learning outcomes is an on-going, comprehensive process by which all faculty participate. The assessment process has been implemented to systematically evaluate the quality of student learning and to use assessment results to enhance programs and services. There are three levels of student learning outcomes:

- **General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs)** – knowledge and/or skills that all AMC graduates should attain, regardless of the major. GELOs are measured at the institution level. The GELOs are implemented in courses from areas A-E in the curriculum, commonly called core or general education courses.
- **Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)** – knowledge and/or skills that students should attain who complete an academic program. PLOs are measured at the division level. The PLOs are implemented in courses from areas F in the curriculum, commonly called “courses in the program.”
- **Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)** – knowledge and/or skills that a student should attain who complete a course. SLOs are measure at the course level.

Generally, GELOs are a subset of PLOs, and PLOs are a subset of SLOs. The GELOs and PLOs are provided in the following tables. General Education and Program Learning outcomes are mapped to specific courses for implementation.

# Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

American colleges and universities 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 the curriculum, 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 frequent object of state mandates; 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.

## **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 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 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 experiences along the way--about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning experience.

**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.**

A 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 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 on. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such a campus, 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 a compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the public 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.

**Source:** American Association of Higher Education (AAHE)

# **STEPS FOR ASSESSING LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The AMC learning outcome assessment form (exhibit xxx) form should be utilized to assess all aspects of student learning. Following is a description of the steps involved in this process.

## **STEP ONE: DEFINE EXPECTED RESULTS**

The institution may define broad categories of general education outcomes which are consistent with its educational purpose and goals. Then it must define specific expected outcomes (expected results) within the framework of the categories. In this context, expected outcomes are the intended results of the educational experience, that is, the knowledge, skills, and perspectives which students are expected to acquire through the completion of a program of study. These expected results are sometimes termed measurable results, operationalized outcomes, or measurable outcomes. In social science terms, the expected result is a dependent variable with a defined criterion or expected measurement level stated in the outcome. Thus, an expected result is the criterion against which the observed student learning outcomes are measured; it is the student learning outcome that an institution strives to achieve.

**In establishing its assessment programs, AMC emphasizes two important guidelines:**

1. Expected outcomes should reflect the mission statement and overall goals of the institution.
2. Expected outcomes should be comprehensive, but not overly complex, and the number of outcomes should be manageable.

## **STEP TWO: ASSESS EACH EXPECTED OUTCOME**

This step involves stating each outcome in a measurable form, determining which method or methods are most appropriate for measuring each outcome, and assessing each accordingly. Expected outcomes must be stated in specific terms which can be assessed, as in “operationalizing” a variable. There may be more than one assessable aspect to an outcome that would require corresponding operationalizing.

## **STEP THREE: ANALYZE ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

The purpose of this step is to determine whether the institution is helping students achieve the expected outcomes of a formal education and, if not, why and where it is failing to do so. The most relevant analysis of assessment data should be internal and should determine how well students are acquiring skills, knowledge, and perspectives defined as expected outcomes. Also, by sampling student populations at different points in their educational programs, or by conducting a longitudinal study of the same students over a period of time, an institution will determine institutional progress.

#### **STEP FOUR: USE ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO (A) IDENTIFY CURRICULUM STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES, AND (B) CLARIFY (REFINE OR REDEFINE) EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES AND REVIEW ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES**

Taking into account the results of Step Three, the next step is to use the assessment results to review the curriculum. Beginning with the results that indicate which outcomes are being achieved and which are not, and which groups of students achieve or do not achieve the outcomes. Some questions that can be asked are: (1) How effective is the curriculum in achieving expected outcomes? (2) What areas of the curriculum are particularly effective in achieving certain outcomes? (3) What areas of the curriculum are less effective in achieving certain outcomes? (4) What are the reasons for the success or failure of the curriculum to achieve certain outcomes? The first of these questions is the seminal question of all assessment activity. It is assumed that the answer will be complex, reflecting the multidimensional nature of each expected outcome. Second, while an institution will define clearly its expected outcomes prior to assessment, after it analyzes its results it may be apparent that it needs to further clarify them. Some of the questions that it may ask are: (1) Was the expected result stated properly? (2) Did this outcome lend itself to assessment by the methods used? (3) Was the instrument used valid and reliable? (4) Was the assessment instrument administered properly and to appropriate students? (5) How were students selected? (6) Were students motivated to do their best on the assessment? Nearly all institutions will find that some assessment results do not answer the four questions listed above. Sometimes the answers are even contradictory; yet, rarely will institutions find that they cannot use the results to begin to improve the curriculum.

#### **STEP FIVE: DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENT MEASURES**

If answers to questions in Step Four indicate that the curriculum needs to be revised to improve the attainment of the institution's educational outcomes, further questions can be asked: (1) Can the existing curriculum be altered with minor adjustments to accomplish this purpose, or must there be a major revision of the curriculum? (2) Can a distribution model of the curriculum accomplish the institution's purpose, or does the institution need a more integrated curriculum?

## General Education Learning Outcomes

The broadest and most comprehensive assessment of the institutional based learning outcomes are general education learning outcomes; outcomes identified by the college as those which inculcate knowledge, develop and enhance skills, form attitudes, and define perspectives. General education is the common factor in the AMC experience and is central to the goals the institution has established for its students. At AMC, general education outcomes address the following domains which the college considers essential to student success:

- Communications
- Mathematics
- Science
- Culture and Values
- The Individual and Society
- Science and Technology
- Critical Thinking

The general education outcomes are assigned to specific general education courses (Areas A - Area F). Following is a list of the general education outcomes mapped to the specific courses that they are implemented.

### Area A

A1. Students will write effectively, demonstrating clear thinking, organization and structure, awareness of audience, appropriate writing conventions, language (grammar), and clear thesis development. (ENGL 1101, ENGL 1102)

A2. Students will demonstrate effective reading skills (e.g. comprehension, inference, analysis, recall, contextual clues) that transcend subject matter or genre. (ENGL 1101, ENGL 1102)

A3. Use mathematical operations and concepts to solve problems related to practical situations. (MATH 1001, 1101, 1111, 1113 or 2201)

### Area B

Students will demonstrate their ability to think critically, utilizing skills that include deductive and inductive reasoning, recognizing fallacies, as well as analyzing, evaluating and synthesizing information. (AMIR 1001)

### **Area C**

C1. Students will identify at least one genre of the fine and applied arts and discuss the social and historical contexts from which the art form emerged. (ARTS 1100, ARTS 2211, MUSC 1100, MUSC 1101, or THEA 1100)

C2. Students will identify at least one mode of communication (oral or written) and utilize appropriate guidelines and conventions in expressing ideas and/or opinions. (COMM 1100, COMM 1110, ENGL 1110, ENGL 2110, ENGL 2130, FREN 1002, FREN 2001, FREN 2002)

### **Area D**

D1. Recognize and apply basic science concepts. (BIOL 1101, BIOL 1102, BIOL 1107, CHEM 1151, CHEM 1211, GSCI 1101, GSCI 1102, PHYS 1011, PHYS 1012, PHYS 1111, PHYS 2211)

D2. Apply the steps and tenets of the scientific method. (BIOL 1101, BIOL 1102, BIOL 1107, CHEM 1151, CHEM 1211, GSCI 1101, GSCI 1102, PHYS 1011, PHYS 1012, PHYS 1111, PHYS 2211)

D3. Demonstrate an awareness of natural phenomena and the enduring, yet fragile nature of the global environment. (BIOL 1101, BIOL 1102, BIOL 1107, CHEM 1151, CHEM 1211, GSCI 1101, GSCI 1102, PHYS 1011, PHYS 1012, PHYS 1111, PHYS 2211)

D4. Recognize ethical implications of scientific and technological advances. (BIOL 1101, BIOL 1102, BIOL 1107, CHEM 1151, CHEM 1211, GSCI 1101, GSCI 1102, PHYS 1011, PHYS 1012, PHYS 1111, PHYS 2211)

### **Area E**

E1. Students will compare and contrast the United States to other world cultures, discussing similarities as well as differences among them. (HIST 2211 and HIST 2112)

E2. Discuss historical, political, and cultural factors that influence contemporary issues. (POLS 1101)

## Process for Implementation of General Education Learning Outcomes

The GELOs assessment at Atlanta Metropolitan College is a decentralized process, which means that the GELOs are assessed at the course level, specifically those course designated as GELO courses. Some institutions use the centralized GELO assessment approach where student are tested periodically, prior to graduation, utilizing a national standardized exam. Each semester, AMC faculty who teach GELO designated courses are expected to incorporate the appropriate GELOs into their course content and report the assessment results to the respective Division Office and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. A description of the GELO assessment process includes:

### Exhibit 13. General Education Learning Outcomes Implementation Process

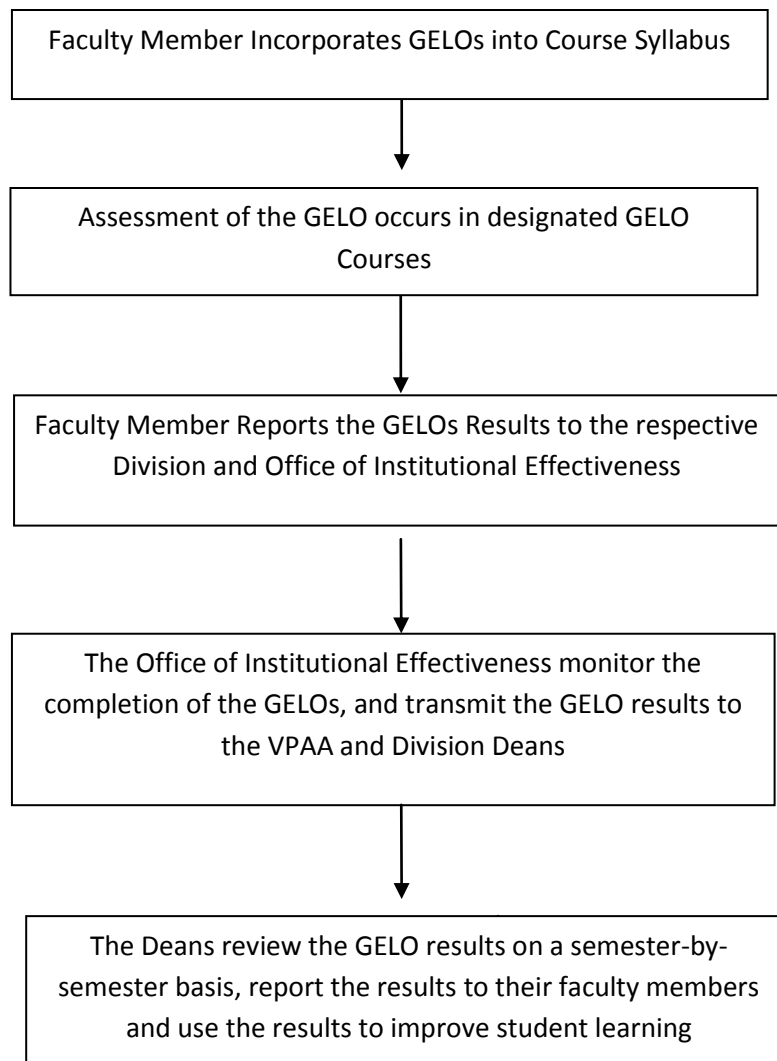
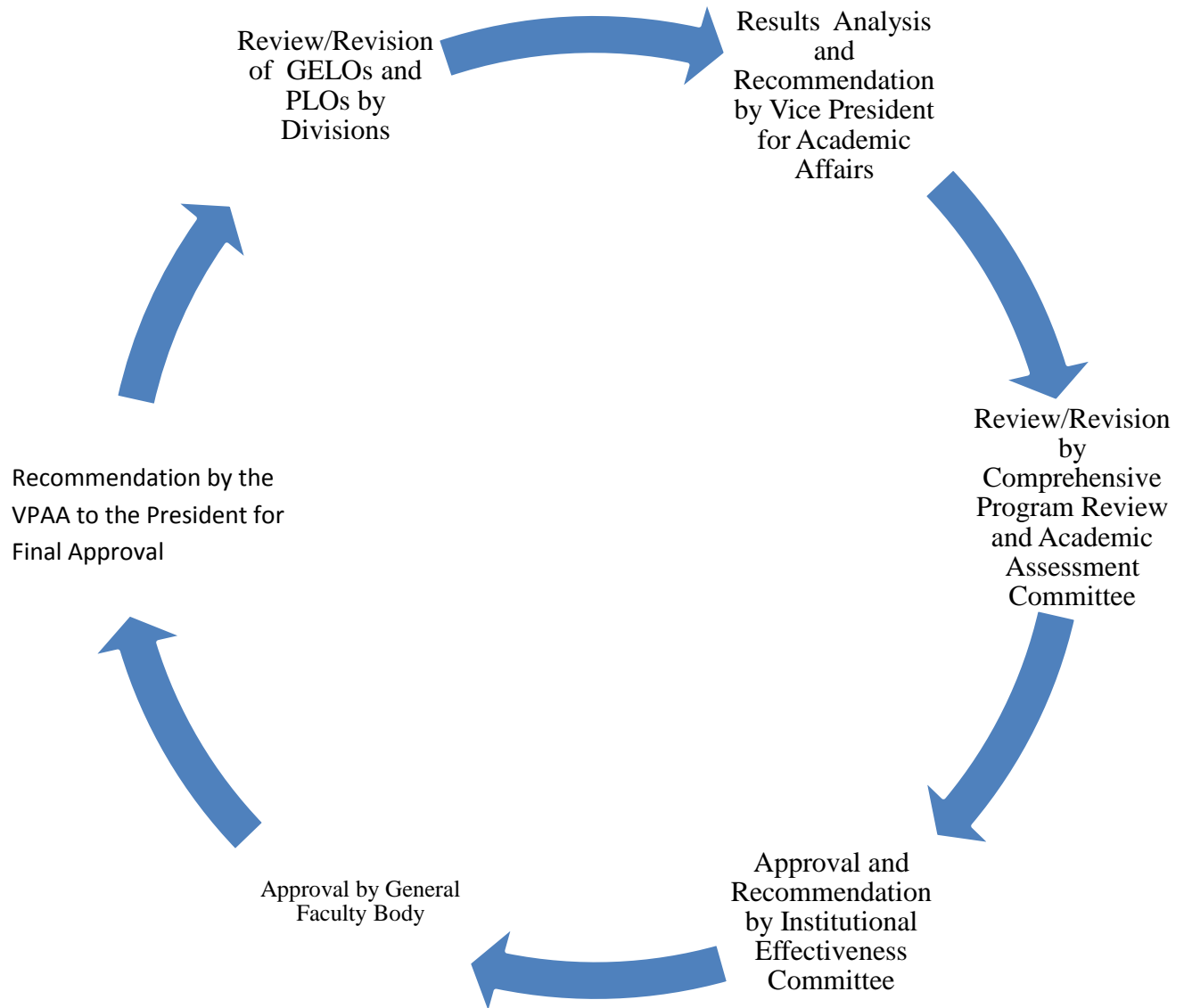


Exhibit 14. **Review/Revise General Education and Program Learning Outcomes Process**  
(Occurs on a Five-Year Cycle)

**\*Starting Point**



# Program Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment of Academic Programs

(Note: The Program Outcomes listed are currently under review)

## Program Learning Outcomes

Program learning outcomes define what a student should know or be able to do upon completion of the program. Courses in area F are utilized to implement program student learning outcomes. The program learning outcomes are listed below.

### Accountancy

1. Students will be able to create and analyze basic financial statements using general accepted accounting principles and practices.
2. Students will be required to demonstrate the ability to work in a group setting in order to achieve organizational goals.
3. Students will be able to utilize software applications to process raw data into information and reports that can be used to make business decisions.

### African-American Studies

1. By the end of the program, students will be able to discuss the strengths and weaknesses — the quality — of African American Studies research.
2. By the end of the program, students will be able to analyze Frazier's discussion of the historical development and manipulation of the black middle class.

### Art

1. Create in a variety of studio processes and media to generate a finished original work of art.
2. Students will identify at least one genre of the fine and applied arts and discuss the social and historical contexts from which the art form emerged.
3. Identify at least one genre of the fine and applied arts and discuss the social and historical contexts from which the art form emerged.



### **Automated Office Management**

1. Students will be required to demonstrate the ability to work in a group setting in order to achieve organizational goals.
2. Students will be able to create and analyze basic financial statements using general accepted accounting principles and practices.
3. Students will be able to utilize software applications to process raw data into information and reports that can be used to make business decisions.

### **Biology**

1. Compare and contrast scientific theories and research studies.
2. Communicate scientific concepts effectively through writing and speaking.
3. Collect and analyze scientific information from multiple resources.

### **Business Administration**

1. Students will be able to create and analyze basic financial statements using general accepted accounting principles and practices.
2. Students will be required to demonstrate the ability to work in a group setting in order to achieve organizational goals.
3. Students will utilize basic principles and theories of micro and macro economics to solve practical and applied problems that are related to our dynamic global economy.
4. Students will be able to utilize software applications to process raw data into information and reports that can be used to make business decisions.

### **Business Education**

1. Students will be able to create and analyze basic financial statements using general accepted accounting principles and practices.
2. Students will be required to demonstrate the ability to work in a group setting in order to achieve organizational goals.
3. Students will utilize basic principles and theories of micro and macro economics to solve practical and applied problems that are related to our dynamic global economy.

### **Business Management**

1. Students will be able to create and analyze basic financial statements using general accepted accounting principles and practices.
2. Students will be required to demonstrate the ability to work in a group setting in order to achieve organizational goals.
3. Students will be able to utilize software applications to process raw data into information and reports that can be used to make business decisions.

## **Chemistry**

1. Synthesize and assess basic mathematical and chemical concepts to solve chemical problems
2. Demonstrate ability to apply concepts of chemistry and mathematics to solve related problems.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of science on society and the global environment

## **Computer Information Systems**

1. Students will be able to create and analyze basic financial statements using general accepted accounting principles and practices.
2. Students will be required to design, code, debug, test and implement an application program using an object oriented programming language.
3. Students will be required to analyze complex problems and develop the appropriate software to solve the problems.

## **Computer Programming I**

1. Students will be required to design, code, debug, test and implement an application program using an object oriented programming language.
2. Students will be required to analyze complex problems and develop the appropriate software to solve the problems.

## **Computer Programming II**

1. Students will be required to design, code, debug, test and implement an application program using an object oriented programming language.
2. Students will be required to analyze complex problems and develop the appropriate software to solve the problems.

## **Computer Science**

1. Students will be required to design, code, debug, test and implement an application program using an object oriented programming language.
2. Students will be required to analyze complex problems and develop the appropriate software to solve the problems.

## **Computerized Office Management**

1. Students will be able to create and analyze basic financial statements using general accepted accounting principles and practices.
2. Students will be required to demonstrate the ability to work in a group setting in order to achieve organizational goals.
3. Students will be able to utilize software applications to process raw data into information and reports that can be used to make business decisions.

## **Criminal Justice I**

1. Identify and describe the various work groups in the Criminal Justice System.
2. Criminal Justice majors should be able to discuss the historical developments and summarize the current trends in law enforcement.

## **Criminal Justice II**

1. Criminal Justice students should be able to identify and describe the various work groups in the Criminal Justice System.
2. Criminal Justice majors should be able to discuss the historical developments and summarize the current trends in law enforcement.

## **English**

1. Demonstrate oral academic expression
2. Evaluate literary genres

## **Foreign Language**

1. Learners will be able to create and write a composition at the ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Intermediate lo-high proficiency level.
2. Learners will be able to differentiate and apply active reading strategies in order to identify and comprehend main ideas in texts in the target language at the ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Intermediate lo-high proficiency level.

## **General Studies**

1. Create interdisciplinary programs which will expand the Area F courses relevant to students' interests and/or career plans
2. Facilitate graduation so that students who have changed majors or are undecided can graduate in a timely manner
3. Students will have to fulfill PLOs in at least two Area F courses

## **Health & PE**

1. Discuss historical events that affected the field of Health and Physical Education.
2. Describe how philosophical ideas affect health and physical education.

## **Health Information Management Systems**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Health Information Management

## **History**

1. History students should be able to explain the relevance of history to the present.

## **Human Communication**

1. Students will identify appropriate guidelines for oral communication.

## **Mass Communications**

1. Competently use various media production and editing tools to create effective communication materials as a means of artistic, political, cultural and social expression.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the history, development, functions and theories of mass communications and multimedia technologies.

## **Mathematics**

1. Increase transfer rates of students graduating with AS in Mathematics into mathematics-related programs at four-year institutions.
2. Analyze and synthesize mathematical concepts and procedures to solve mathematical problems at the two-year level
3. Evaluate mathematical concepts, skills, and procedures used to solve various problems from the sciences.

## **Music I**

1. Students will identify at least one genre of the fine and applied arts and discuss the social and historical contexts from which the art form emerged.

## **Music II**

1. Students will identify at least one genre of the fine and applied arts and discuss the social and historical contexts from which the art form emerged.

### **Music III**

1. Students will identify at least one genre of the fine and applied arts and discuss the social and historical contexts from which the art form emerged.

### **Physics**

1. Apply those mathematical and foundational physics concepts, skills, and procedures necessary to solve physics problems.
2. Communicate scientific concepts effectively through writing and speaking.
3. Design and carry out an experimental investigation using appropriate techniques, skills, and tools.

### **Political Science**

1. Analyze political theories and ideologies in terms of how they manifest themselves in political issues and developments.
2. Explain the relationship between agencies (the process for political socialization, interest groups, political parties, representation and elections) and output agencies (the legislative, executive and judicial branches) of government.
3. Compare, contrast, and/or defend political systems of Western and Non-Western countries and the concepts, evolution, processes and consequences of transnational politics.

### **Pre-Dental**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Dental Hygiene.
2. Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.
3. Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to Pre-Dental Hygiene.

### **Pre-Engineering**

1. Apply those physics and mathematical concepts, skills, and procedures necessary to solve engineering problems.
2. Use the techniques, skills, and modern engineering tools necessary for engineering practice.
3. Formulate and solve engineering problems.

### **Pre-Engineering Technology**

1. Communicate scientific concepts effectively through writing and speaking.
2. Formulate and solve engineering technology problems.
3. Use the techniques, skills, and modern engineering technology tools necessary in engineering technology applications.
4. Apply those physics and mathematical concepts, skills, and procedures used in engineering technology applications.

### **Pre-Medical Technology**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Medical Technology
2. Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to Pre-Medical Technology
3. Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.

### **Pre-Nursing**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Nursing.
2. Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to pre-nursing.
3. Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.

### **Pre-Occupational Therapy**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Occupational Therapy.
2. Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to pre-occupational therapy.
3. Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.

### **Pre-Physical Therapy**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Occupational Therapy.
2. Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to pre-occupational therapy.
3. Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.

## **Psychology**

1. Psychology program students will be able to explain major psychological concepts, constructs, and theories.
2. Psychology program students will be able to compare major methodological perspectives in psychology.

## **Recreation**

1. Discuss and describe the principles and techniques of recreational programming.
2. List the requirements for employment in Recreational Leadership or public and private agencies.

## **Recreation Leadership**

1. Discuss and describe the principles and techniques of recreational programming.
2. List the requirements for employment in Recreational Leadership or public and private agencies.

## **Social Work**

1. Demonstrate an understanding of Social Work values, ethical standards and principles.
2. Understand and interpret the history of the Social Work profession and its impact on contemporary structures and issues.
3. Identify Social Work client systems and practice settings.
4. Apply critical thinking skills in identifying and analyzing social problems within the context of professional social work practice.

## **Sociology**

1. Perform satisfactorily in junior and senior level sociology courses.
2. Explain the means by which individuals, groups, and institutions create and maintain human society.
3. Explain how the scientific method is used to study the components that make up human society—individuals, groups, and institutions.
4. Demonstrate critical thinking skills by analyzing sociological problems.

## **Speech**

1. Demonstrate the skills of research and planning for organization of informative and persuasive presentations.
2. Successfully work with others in a group setting to demonstrate knowledge of nonverbal communication, listening, interviewing, small group behavior, conflict resolution and informative briefings
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively and ethically by presenting oral presentation.

## **Teacher Education I**

1. By the end of the program, students will be able to compare and contrast two learning theories (behaviorism & cognitive).

## **Teacher Education II**

1. By the end of the program, students will be able to compare and contrast two learning theories (behaviorism & cognitivism).

## **Teacher Education III**

1. By the end of the program, students will be able to compare and contrast two learning theories (behaviorism & cognitivism).



# **Course Level Learning Outcomes**

# Course Level Learning Outcomes Assessment

The final level of academic assessment occurs at the course level. While Atlanta Metropolitan College has always conducted classroom assessments via course grades and examinations, classroom assessment has become essential to enhancing teaching methodologies and improving learning outcomes. Faculty collect data on student learning via classroom observations of student responses and activities in their classes and by utilizing instruments and methods designed to assess student learning outcomes. Course-based outcomes, which are less comprehensive in scope than general education learning and programmatic outcomes, assess what students are expected to know, think, and do upon course completion.

Once outcomes have been determined, surveys, instruments, portfolios, common exams, and other methods of assessment, are designed and/or selected to serve assessment purposes. Course syllabi are developed and reviewed to ensure that coursework contains assignments designed to enhance expected knowledge and skill levels. Quantitative and qualitative data are collected from course and individual discipline assessments. Data from course and discipline assessments are collected, evaluated, analyzed, and shared with division faculty. Divisions discuss results obtained from various assessment instruments and exercises and formulate specific recommendations as to the modification of course content, course sequencing, program requirements, and the addition or deletion of courses, etc. Ultimately, assessment evidence measures knowledge levels of students, guides administrators in curriculum planning, and serves as an overall vehicle for educational improvement.

# Student Learning Outcome Review and Approval Form

UNIT: \_\_\_\_\_

UNIT HEAD/DIVISION DEAN: \_\_\_\_\_

Date SLO Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Exhibit 15

Analysis of Student Learning Outcome	Expected Outcome	Expected Cost	Assessment Procedures	Use of Assessment Findings	Actual Results	Actual Costs	Program/Student Improvement
<p># State the Student Learning Outcome to be Evaluated</p> <p># Identify which aspect of student learning the SLO targets:</p> <p>&lt; Skills</p> <p>&lt; Behaviours</p> <p>&lt; Knowledge/Information</p> <p>&lt; Values/Attitudes</p> <p>Evaluate whether the SLO is measurable and contains the appropriate action verb</p>	<p>State and describe in SPECIFIC DETAIL the degree to which students, after completion of the course ,program, and/or degree, is expected to possess any of the following:</p> <p>&lt; Skills</p> <p>&lt; Behaviors</p> <p>&lt; Knowledge/Information</p> <p>&lt; Values/Attitudes</p> <p># Use operational language to present these accomplishments in the form of assessable results.</p>	<p>Identify specific human and financial resources required to implement the SLO</p>	<p># Describe the methods and procedures which will be used to assess each expected outcome. Attach the actual assessment to this form</p> <p># For each method presented:</p> <p>&lt; Specify the person responsible for implementing the assessment.</p> <p>&lt; Indicate the cycle(s) in which the assessment will be implemented.</p> <p>&lt; Stipulate custodianship of</p>	<p># Stipulate how the assessment results of the expected outcome(s) will be utilized.</p> <p># Specify to whom the results will be reported and why:</p> <p>&lt; Students</p> <p>&lt; Faculty</p> <p>&lt; Administrators</p> <p>&lt; Alumni</p> <p>&lt; Outside Agencies</p>	<p># AFTER the assessment results of the expected results have been analyzed, record the ACTUAL results.</p> <p># Compare the ACTUAL results with EXPECTED results.</p>	<p>How much did it actually cost to carry out the SLO?</p>	<p># Describe the mechanisms and/or procedures through which the course and/or program will take action to improve the program and/or student outcomes as a result of the assessment findings.</p>

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Division Dean

# Exhibit 16. Student Learning Outcome Assessment

DEPARTMENT/SUBUNIT: \_\_\_\_\_ UNIT HEAD/DEAN : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Assessment Term: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Learning Outcome	Expected Outcome	Assessment Instrument	Student Achievement of SLO		Use of Assessment Findings	Responsibility For Assessment
State the Student Learning Outcome to be Evaluated	<input type="checkbox"/> What SPECIFIC <input type="checkbox"/> Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Info/ Knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Values/ Attitudes Perspectives should students have attained by achieving this SLO	Describe the assessment method used to measure the extent to which students achieved the SLO  Note: Attach the assessment instrument to this form	Indicate the number of students who achieved the SLO	Indicate the number of Students who did not achieve the SLO	<input type="checkbox"/> How was the assessment results analyzed? <input type="checkbox"/> What methods and procedures were used?  <input type="checkbox"/> How was the results of these analyses utilized?  <input type="checkbox"/> Who received or will receive reports of the results?	<input type="checkbox"/> What person(s) was responsible for implementing the assessment method

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

### **ASSESSMENT**

Please review the Distance Education Instructional Delivery Plan.

# **PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW**

Please review the Program Review Manual.

## **Program Management and Implementation**

Each program of the College has been assigned a coordinator, who is responsible for regularly monitoring the program learning outcomes and other aspects of programs to ensure that they are appropriated executed by faculty and the division, and that programs are viable, productive, and sustains high quality. The program coordinators are to review the program learning outcomes and course syllabi on a biannual basis and submit a written report of the results to the Division dean, who shall report the status to the VPAA. The Dean of the Division has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the program learning outcomes are consistently assessed and achieved, and when necessary, appropriate measures are put in place to regularly review PLOs to ensure that they are consistent with AMC standards and market demand.

## **Assessing Academic Programs**

### **Program Characteristics**

The Atlanta Metropolitan College assessment of academic program is based on continuous improvement. It has been developed to focus on the assessment of outcomes and the use of results to improve the quality of educational services offered and the formulation of new operational goals and objectives.

- # The academic program assessment is comprehensive and broad-based in scope. Atlanta Metropolitan College offers a full range of undergraduate programs at the associate degree level.
- # The assessment program provides meaningful information for students, faculty, and staff. The results of the assessment are made available to participants. Information gathered from assessment activities will enable the college to improve its educational offerings and services.
- # When appropriate, the assessment program should be discipline-specific. The activities occurring at the College and department levels should focus on goals and objectives of particular disciplines. All units should integrate assessment activities into its on-going educational activities. For example, ACT student opinion, library, and alumni surveys are conducted. Also, some surveys are conducted that include supplemental questionnaires designed for individual divisions and overall institutional effectiveness.
- # The assessment program reflects a collective effort. At the academic level many of the activities were guided by the Comprehensive Program Review and Academic Assessment Committee consisting of faculty, students, and professional staff and some members of the

Institutional Effectiveness and Advancement Committee.



## **SAMPLE DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM RELATED ACTIVITIES FORM**

In addition to college-wide assessment activities, there are assessment methods that focus on particular programs; they are usually administered by the group responsible for the program. Each division/department should state the academic objectives of their programs and provide evidence that the objectives are being met. A “sample matrix” has been provided to demonstrate where assessment activities should occur (i.e. cognitive or attitudinal). One sample is used; however, this application should apply to each division, unit, and program. (Refer to the Types of Assessment Activities matrix which follows.)

**Exhibit 17. Types of Assessment Activities**

Division of \_\_\_\_\_

Department	General Education		Major		Other
	<i>Cognitive</i>	<i>Attitudinal</i>	<i>Cognitive</i>	<i>Attitudinal</i>	
Art					
English					
History					
Foreign Languages					
Music					
Mathematics					

- # Program assessment is in a constant state of evolution. Assessment at various unit levels allow for experimentation and change as faculty evaluate the results of the activities. At the institutional level, an assessment advisory committee should meet regularly to plan activities, to study results, to develop approaches for sharing results, and to evaluate the success of projects. This will provide an opportunity to assess activities and improve and adjust activities when necessary.
- # When the collective results of program assessment activities are examined, faculty and administrators at all levels will be able to ask and answer meaningful questions. For example: What does this tell us? What can we do about it? Through raising and addressing these questions, the institution will be able to achieve the ultimate goal of assessment - the improvement of student learning outcomes.
- # The academic program assessment focuses on student learning (value-added assessment). Value-added assessment helps to address the question of the college's impact on student learning. Achievement and attitudinal data will be collected for comparative and longitudinal study by division, discipline, and individual student.
- # The assessment process is descriptive and analytical. Assessment needs to be formative in character rather than totally summative. It should be embedded in a framework for implementing organizational change and continuous quality improvement.
- # The assessment process has been designed to examine not only student learning outcomes but the teaching process as well.

# **RELATIONSHIP OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM ASSESSMENT TO GENERAL EDUCATION AND CORE REQUIREMENTS**

The philosophy of basic core learning provides guidance for assessment efforts that articulate the type of knowledge students are expected to acquire. The curriculum indicates that students will be able to analyze information, think critically, problem solve, communicate effectively, and demonstrate technological understanding. Because these statements articulate what students should know and be able to do, assessment activities will be related to these expected outcomes.

Basic skills assessments, such as the COMPASS Test, are used for identifying students who require remediation in the areas of reading, writing, or mathematics. College-level skills include a more sophisticated level of writing and math skills and higher-order thinking skills like problem-solving and/or critical thinking.

## **Program Review**

The assessment component of Program Review is fully outlined in the Atlanta Metropolitan College Program Review Manual. The outline of the process, responsibilities, and scheduling of the program reviews are outlined in this section.

## **Oversight and Management of Program Review**

The Comprehensive Program Review and Academic Assessment Committee is responsible for guiding and monitoring the review and assessment of academic programs. The committee's duties are to:

- develop and maintain a systematic process for assessing the degree of effectiveness of teaching and learning in academic programs
- review and assess how the General Education Learning Outcomes are realized
- monitor the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs
- determine the quality, productivity, and viability of the Career and Certificate Programs
- ensure that all programs are evaluated during the appropriate cycle

## **The Program Review Cycle Schedule**

- A. The Chairperson for the CPRAAC charges the Unit Program Review Committee (UPRC) to begin the review process by August 15.
- B. The Unit Head(s) designates subcommittee assignments and responsibilities by September 15.
- C. The UPRC presents the interim status report to the CPRAAC by December 5.
- D. Subcommittees will complete research, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of data, and determination of conclusions and recommendations by February 15.
- E. Final unit reports are compiled, edited, formatted, and submitted to the CPRAAC by March 1.
- F. The CPRAAC provides feedback to the unit committee Chairs for any modifications and/or revisions of their unit reports by March 4.
- G. As necessary, Unit reports are revised by the UPRC and resubmitted to the CPRAAC.
- H. The CPRAAC submits its final report of the program review findings and recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs by April 5.
- I. Upon final acceptance of the CPRAAC's report, the Vice President for Academic Affairs submits a final draft to the President by May 5.
- J. Upon acceptance of the report by the President, recommendations are submitted to the appropriate standing committees and a report is sent to the Board of Regents by June 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Exhibit 18. Program Review Implementation Timetable**  
**(5-year Cycle)**

<b>Academic Year of Review</b>	<b>Program to be Reviewed</b>
Year One	<b>Humanities and Fine Arts, Learning Support Program, Library, Academic Support Center</b>
Year Two – Year Four	<b>AS Transfer Program, AAS (Career Programs), Certificate Program</b> <b>Social Sciences - Year Two</b> <b>Business Administration – Year Three</b> <b>Science, Math, and Health Professions – Year Three</b>
Year Four	<b>Student Advising, Evening &amp; Weekend College, Distance Education Programs (Online Programs)</b>
Year Five	<b>Comprehensive Program Review Committee Review/Evaluation of General Education Learning Outcomes and Institutional Courses (Orientation and AMIR)</b>

**THE FACULTY**

**EVALUATION SYSTEM**

# FACULTY EVALUATION SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Atlanta Metropolitan College holds that one of its principal responsibilities is the evaluation of faculty with a view towards continuously improving faculty effectiveness. To assist with this responsibility, faculty and administrators of the college have developed an integrative evaluation system that utilizes a variety of information sources. Data gathered for review and evaluation are supplied by the faculty, the faculty member's students, Division Chairperson, and the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The handbook contains the purpose, objectives, scope, procedures, forms, and calendar that comprise the Faculty Evaluation system.

## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The faculty evaluation process at Atlanta Metropolitan College is intended to create a positive motivating force that assists faculty members in achieving their individual goals and those of the institution. Evaluation findings are also utilized in making decisions relative to promotion, tenure, pre- and post-tenure, and salary.

**The primary objectives of this assessment process are to:**

- a. Improve instructional effectiveness in order to promote student achievement,
- b. Encourage academic and professional development, and
- c. Recognize service to the College and community.



# SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION SYSTEM

Because of the diverse nature of the Atlanta Metropolitan College faculty, student body, and the unique mission of the College, it is difficult to identify and evaluate all roles of every faculty member. Although there is considerable diversity in the Atlanta Metropolitan College campus environment, three areas of job performance were identified as crucial to overall faculty effectiveness: They are:

- I. Teaching** - activities related to the delivery of instructional events, both in and out of the classroom. These include, but are not limited to, classroom performance, preparation of materials, record keeping, classroom management, and out-of-class responsibilities directly related to and in support of teaching.
- II. Academic and Professional Development** - the process of continual improvement to better fulfill duties and responsibilities related to the profession and the teaching/learning process.
- III. Service to the College and Community** - activities engaged in and services rendered to the division, College, and/or the community that help the college fulfill its mission and accomplish its goals and objectives.

**Exhibit 19. ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION ANNUAL CALENDAR**

First Division Meeting of the Academic Year	Introduce Faculty Evaluation System
Second Week of September	Faculty Workload Agreement between Faculty Member and Division Chairperson
Last Two Weeks of the Fall Semester	The Faculty Activity Report and Self-Evaluation are Distributed to Faculty
First Week of the Spring Semester	Completion of the Faculty Activity Report and Self-Evaluation
Second Week in February	Completion of the Division Chairperson's Evaluation of Faculty
During February	Division Chairperson/Faculty Member Conference
Last Week of April	Preliminary Faculty Workload Agreement Completed

# EVALUATION PROCESS COMPONENTS

- Faculty Workload Agreement
- Faculty Activity Report
- Classroom Observation
- Student Course Evaluations
- Faculty Self-Evaluation of Performance
- Division Chairperson Evaluation of Faculty Performance

**Source:** Faculty Evaluation System Handbook

**STUDENT AFFAIRS UNIT**  
**ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION**

## OVERVIEW

The nature and objective of the assessment process for the Student Affairs Division is to determine the effectiveness of service delivery to students, the quality of service, and to make recommendations on how to achieve and/or improve upon the expected outcomes. The completion of the assessment process should ensure the alignment of program operations with those of the division and institutional mission statement.

The program review process of the Student Affairs Division will involve three phases. The **first phase** is the self-study process. This document is representative of the initial effort. The self-study reviews serve goals and rationales, provides evidence that indicates the extent to which student service outcomes are met, and identifies existing problems. The final edition of the report will include long- and short-range plans to satisfy any recommendations that may be set forth. The preparation of this report is guided by a set of questions that focus on important issues relative to the operation of programs and services in the Student Affairs Division.

An analysis of the self-study report by a group of external evaluators constitutes the **second phase** of the program review. This group includes professionals in the field who will:

- study the internal assessment report
- review related document(s)
- interview staff, students, managers, and administrator(s)
- request additional information as needed
- provide feedback
- make appropriate recommendations

From the information generated from the above process, the group will prepare a report which comments on the self-study report findings and conclusions. A list of recommendations will be included in the report submitted by the external evaluators.

The **third phase** of the program review process provides an opportunity for unit managers and the Vice President of Student Affairs to revisit the self-study report and develop a set of recommendations and plans based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the reports prepared by the Assessment Council for Student Affairs and those provided by the external review team. Discussions at this point will focus exclusively on the quality of services provided to students. Several follow-up sessions will occur at periodic intervals to discuss improvements/changes in the program that resulted from the program review.

The internal program review process will be accomplished through meetings, conducting surveys, and tallying/summarizing responses in preparation for preliminary reports leading to the overall summary of the assessment process. It will be the responsibility of the Council Chairperson to serve as a resource staff person for the sub-committees, assist the Vice President with coordinating the activities of the program review, compile and submit a draft of the self-study report that contains major findings from the partial reports submitted by the co-chairpersons. The report consists of a summary of results and conclusions as they relate to the eight main topics studied. The topics are listed in the data collection section.

## **METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

In conducting a program review successfully, an internal assessment of the division must be executed. The documentation of quality of service, cost effectiveness, and accountability will help to determine the impact and effectiveness of the Student Affairs Division. Once an assessment has been conducted, the first step is to determine if there is a problem and then develop a method on how to address and/or solve the problem. In the case of Student Affairs, the nature of the review is to determine if services provided to students are sufficient enough to assist them with their academic endeavors. Two methods for conducting assessment were employed.

### **Quantitative**

The quantitative method should be employed first. It is a method using standardized measures where an array of perspectives and/or experiences of a larger sampling of students is selected and their responses are to a limited number of predetermined categories (a survey). This assessment process entails compiling data using a much larger sampling than qualitative, giving a more general overview of the group queried. Quantitative methods have an advantage over qualitative in that responses are in a measurable form to a limited set of questions, thus, allowing comparison and statistical aggregation of data compiled.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

The indicators of effectiveness (IOE) for Student Affairs unit reviews include:

- Centrality to the AMC Mission
  
- Quality of Unit Services and Programs
  
- Student and Employee Interviews and Focus Group Results
  
- Facilities and Equipment Quality
  
- Efficiency and Effectiveness of Unit Services and Programs
  
- Services and Program Demand
  
- Cost Effectiveness to Operate Unit
  
- Duplication of Services
  
- Critical Mass
  
- Customer Satisfaction from Results of Annual Internal/External Customer Service Services



**Staff Evaluations:**

**PERFORMANCE  
EVALUATION PROCESS  
FOR PROFESSIONAL,  
ADMINISTRATIVE,  
AND NON-EXEMPT  
STAFF**

**ATLANTA METROPOLITAN COLLEGE  
PROFESSIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND  
NON-EXEMPT STAFF  
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROCESS**

Atlanta Metropolitan College's policy on employee evaluation plays a vital role in the success of the College. An important reason for conducting employee performance evaluations is to communicate what performance is expected and how well the employee is performing relative to those expectations. Another objective for having an effective evaluation process is that it will create and maintain a working and learning environment that is positive, supportive, and productive for all employees. To this end, it is the policy of the college that all employee performance evaluations are provided in a timely, supportive, and respectful manner. Performance evaluations guidelines for classified staff and administrators must be flexible to meet departmental and/or program missions and objectives.

Each regular status employee of Atlanta Metropolitan College will be evaluated at the end of the first six months of employment and annually thereafter. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess job performance and enhance communication between employees and supervisors. The evaluations will also be used in determining eligibility for transfer, promotion, demotion, retention, supervisory assistance, wage adjustments, and employment references. Evaluations will be completed by the immediate supervisor and/or department head.

The employee evaluation process is comprised of three components:

**Performance Evaluation Form** - for classified exempt and non-exempt staff and administrators.

**Plans for Improvement Form** - identify areas of needed improvement and recommended ways of improving in those areas.

**Follow-Up Plan for Improvement Form** - follow-up on areas identified as needing improvement to ensure that a satisfactory level of performance is attained.

The evaluation packet includes the following forms:

#Performance Evaluation

#Plan for Improvement

#Follow-up for Improvement

All professional, administrative, and non-exempt staff evaluation instruments can be obtained from the AMC homepage, at the Human Resources website.

**Source:** AMC Office of Human Resources

**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM  
OF GEORGIA**

**ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION  
INITIATIVES**

## UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

# PEER REVIEW REPORTS ON GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT AND MAJOR AREA ASSESSMENT

During academic year 1996-1997, the Assessment Peer Review Team of the University System of Georgia examined the General Education Learning Outcomes section of Atlanta Metropolitan College's Academic Assessment Handbook and the Major Area Assessment. The purpose of these examinations was to determine if an effective mechanism was in place for improving the teaching-learning process and the degree to which the assessment process met both the letter and spirit of the University System's policies regarding general education outcomes assessment and assessment by major areas.

## METHODOLOGY

During Winter Quarter 1996, approximately forty-five University System faculty and staff met in order to conduct the first peer review of institutional programs for the assessment of student learning outcomes. Working in teams, participants reviewed the assessment summaries of all thirty-four System institutions. This examination resulted in the General Education and Major Area Peer Review Reports.

The two questionnaires that follow were developed in order to analyze AMC's assessment of educational outcomes processes.

They are: **Assessment Peer Review Process - Major Area Assessment Review Questions** and **Assessment Peer Review Process - General Education Assessment Review Questions**. The results of these analyses were used to:

1. Improve the overall assessment process and methods for academic programs.
2. To develop a more comprehensive means of utilizing assessment results/findings in order to improve academic effectiveness.
3. To provide evidence which demonstrates that the assessment methodologies described have been implemented, analyzed, and the data generated was used to improve general education outcomes thus "Closing the Loop."

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

**ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW PROCESS**  
**MAJOR AREA ASSESSMENT REVIEW**  
**QUESTIONS**

**I. Campus Assessment Organization**

- # Is the institution's assessment organization and process clearly described (e.g., organization chart, assignment of responsibilities, schedule of various activities, etc.)?
- # Is the specific organization process for assessment of academic majors (including associate degree career and college transfer programs) clearly described?
- # Are faculty involved in defining and assessing major area student learning outcomes?

**II. Student Learning Outcomes and Expected Results for Academic Majors**  
*(Including Associate Degree Career and College Transfer Programs)*

- # Does each student learning outcome broadly identify a particular component of the program's overall educational output?
- # As a collective set, do the student learning outcomes for a major program fully reflect the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and/or behaviors identified by program faculty as the primary educational attainments of students completing that program of study (i.e., do they seem to aim for the maximum or the minimum in subject matter content)?
- # Are the student learning outcomes narrowly focused (operationalized) into expected results that are specific enough to be directly assessable?
  - Are the expected results clearly linked to specific, broader learning outcomes?
  - Do the expected results accurately reflect those outcomes? (i.e., are they relevant and appropriate to the respective learning outcomes?)
  - Are there important aspects of the learning outcomes that are *NOT* operationalized by their respective expected results?
  - As a whole, are the student learning outcomes and expected results sufficiently clear and comprehensive enough to drive curricular development and revision (e.g., could the faculty use the learning outcomes to guide revision of the major area curricular?)

### **III. Assessment Methods and Instruments**

- # Is each method directly linked to a specific expected result?
- # Are multiple assessment methods used? (i.e., are all student learning outcomes and most expected results assessed by more than one method?)
- # Is each assessment method thoroughly described (i.e., how it works, its specific characteristics in that application, how it will be administered in the specific case, etc.)?
- # Is each method consistent with, and appropriate to, the expected result it is used to assess?
- # Is each method designed to generate accurate, meaningful, and practical information (data) that is useable for diagnostic and improvement purposes?
- # Does it appear that the method(s) selected with each expected result are appropriate to assess the desired learning outcome content?

### **IV. Using Assessment Data for Program Improvement - “Closing the Loop”**

- # As a whole, will the assessment process yield a body of information (data) that the institution could use to make improvements in student learning, (i.e., student acquisition of the desired learning outcomes?)
- # Does the institution’s assessment program, as summarized, provide a mechanism to insure that assessment information will be used for program improvement?
  - By the department faculty?
  - By the administration?
- # Is the process reasonable? Practically speaking, can it be implemented and will it be successful?
- # Has the institution made, or does it plan to make, specified improvements to major area programs based on information or data derived from the assessment process (e.g., curriculum revisions, changes in instructional delivery, reallocation of resources, etc.)?

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

**ASSESSMENT PEER REVIEW PROCESS  
GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT  
REVIEW QUESTIONS**

This worksheet should be used for recording comments on the basic components of an institutional assessment summary.

**Assessment organization**

- # Description of the institution's assessment organization and process (e.g., organization chart, assignment of responsibilities, schedule of various activities, etc.).
- # Is it evident that faculty was involved in defining and assessing outcomes?
- # Is there a separate description for general education?
- # Is general education defined? Is general education differentiated from the core curriculum?

**Student learning outcomes for general education**

*Content*

- # Is each outcome broadly stated? Does the set of outcomes reflect general education at that particular college? If general education spans four or more years (at all colleges except two-year colleges), do outcomes reflect totality of general education experience?

*Characteristics*

- # Do outcomes reflect knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and/or behaviors of students?

## Assessing outcomes

### # Expected result characteristics

Are expected results linked to specific learning outcomes?

# Are expected results more narrowly focused than outcomes (i.e., do they further develop the learning outcomes with which they are linked?)

# Do expected results appear to reflect outcomes? Are they measurable?

# Are the expected results meaningful?

# Are there important aspects of the learning outcomes that are not operationalized by the expected results?

### # Assessment method characteristics

Is each method linked to a specific expected result? Tied to an outcome?

# Is each assessment method described (i.e., how it works, its specific characteristics in that application, how it will be administered in the specific case, etc.)?

# Is the method consistent with, or appropriate to, the expected result? Does it appear to measure what it is intended to measure? Is it valid on the surface?

# If sampling is used, does the sample appear appropriate? If generalizations are being made about all students, does the sample support such generalizations? (Inferential statistics)

# Are multiple methods used?

# Does it appear that the method used will generate useful and meaningful information that can be used to diagnose problems?

## “Closing the Loop”

# Is the whole process cyclical in nature?

# Will it help improve the curriculum?

# Will it help to improve student learning?

# Is the process reasonable?

# Is there any way to link assessment results back to the decision-making process?

**NOTE:** *Appended to this plan are the comprehensive academic, faculty, and staff assessment/evaluation plans.*

**Source:** University System of Georgia



# **APPENDIX**

*Appendix I.*

# **ASSESSMENT METHODS, INSTRUMENTS, APPROACHES, AND TECHNIQUES**

All of the following are used, either singly or in combinations, to assess one or more of expected outcomes/results.

## **DEFINITIONS OF METHODS**

### **A. Capstone Oral Exam**

This exam can be given during or near the end of the student's final year to judge both the ability of the student to recall facts and to integrate those facts within the discipline and across disciplines. Also, this exam should test both the range of the student's knowledge and his interpretation skills.

### **B. Capstone Written Exam**

Directed at testing a student's ability to recall facts, analyze their meaning, and philosophically reflect upon their implications within and outside of the discipline.

### **C. Capstone Essays**

The essay provides the student an opportunity to discuss the nature and theory of the field. The topics should be specific enough to allow the student to reflect upon the implications of the material and to illustrate his/her command of a sophisticated writing style.

### **D. Capstone Courses**

Courses are designed to review, evaluate, and integrate work accomplished to a certain point, (e.g., the first years of college or a culminating experience in a program). The performance of students in such courses can be assessed as a measure of the effectiveness of their prior general education experiences.

### **E. Performance**

Situations can be structured so that the student can demonstrate a skill by performing an activity (e.g., make an oral presentation, perform a juried music recital, exhibit art works, write a short essay, or solve a problem which demonstrates critical thinking.)

### **F. Initial Writing Samples/Exit Writing Samples**

These samples can be used to determine the ability of students entering the major program and are most helpful when saved as part of a student portfolio and then measured against exit writing samples taken just before graduation.

### **G. Portfolios**

Portfolios can provide a continuous look at not only how individual students perform within a major program but how the program itself is doing with respect to their majors in general. Portfolios most often contain writing samples taken at regular intervals during the student's academic career.

### **H. Senior Seminars**

Senior seminar classes can be structured in order to test the graduating student's ability to synthesize and reflect upon not only the major experience but its relationship to other disciplines as well.

### **I. Exit Interviews**

In place of capstone courses or in addition to them, interviews should be structured to determine a student's response to the major program, teaching effectiveness, and the kind of student knowledge acquired during the major program. Such interviews foster a more informal and intimate survey of departmental achievement.

### **J. Senior Program Evaluations**

Written questionnaires or surveys can be given to graduating majors in an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the major program and the student response to it. These surveys could serve as an on-going evaluation of the department's programs, courses, faculty, and staff on an annual basis.

### **K. Alumni Surveys**

These surveys can include material covered in the exit interviews as well as the written graduate evaluations. They should also include questions relating to the appropriateness of programs and courses to required job skills and knowledge, and to the enrichment of life after college.

*Appendix II.*

## Evaluation/Assessment Terms and Definitions

**Institutional Effectiveness** – the extent an institution is able to achieve its stated mission

- **Evaluation** - classified and defined in various ways, but the most widely used definitions are:

**Exhibit 20. Formative vs. Summative Evaluations**

<b>Formative</b>	<b>Summative</b>
Occurs ongoing during a process	Occurs at the end of a process
Prospective	Retrospective
measures strengths and weaknesses towards improving	Document achievement
Feedback	Evidence
Examples include: quizzes, essays, lab reports, diagnostic tests	Examples include: Final Exams, Statewide Exams, National Tests (SAT, ACT)

- **Criterion-Referenced vs. Norm-Referenced Assessment**

Criterion-referenced assessment – compares performance to a standard or learning goal

Norm-reference assessment – compares performance to peers or a statistical group

Ipsative – compares performance to oneself over some length of time

- **Assessment Quality** – measured in terms of reliability and validity.

Reliability - the extent to which an assessment is consistent. Answers the question, does the assessment give the same results, within acceptable limits, under the same conditions?

Validity – the accuracy of an assessment. Answers the question, does the assessment actually measure what it is intended to measure?

Triangulation – multiple assessment methods results in the same outcome

Following is a list of definitions to guide assessment discussions. The definitions and associated principles discussed and presented have been derived from the literature on assessment.

**Assessment:** The term assessment is currently used to refer to a wide range of efforts to improve the quality of higher education. The primary goal of assessment is the improvement of

student learning. This can be done by defining student learning outcomes and determining, through systematic means, whether the outcomes are being met, and thus validating the effectiveness of programs, identifying the need to make changes in the teaching-learning process, and for certifying student performance.

Also, assessment is the process of determining the degree to which expected results have been achieved in the actual outcomes of non-instructional institutional programs and activities, and the performance of those programs and activities has been improved.

Assessment is accomplished through formal, systematic observation, measurement, statistical analysis, testing or equivalent means.

**Education/Learning Outcomes:** A degree program's educational outcomes (also frequently referred to as its "educational goals" or "program goals") are broadly stated and serve as a basis of the programs intended outcomes/expected results. Educational outcomes help define a degree program's academic purpose, but they are not stated in specific, assessable terms.

**Expected Results/Intended Outcomes:** The intended output, impact or other demonstrable outcome of the primary function(s) of a particular program or activity, (i.e., for student learning outcomes, the knowledge; skills; attitudes, values, or perspectives, and behaviors which students are expected to acquire through completion of a program of study.) In broad terms, the expected result is called an "outcome." Expected results are sometimes termed measurable results, operationalized outcomes, intended outcomes, or measurable outcomes. In social science terms, the expected result is a dependent variable with a defined criterion or expected measurement level stated in the outcome. Thus, an expected result is the criterion against which the observed student learning outcomes are compared.

**Actual Results/Observed Outcomes:** The outcomes which are actually produced through the operation of a particular program, (i.e., the observable and/or measurable results which are compared with the corresponding expected results to assess the program's effectiveness in achieving its expectations.)

### ***Appendix III. Assessment Program Elements***

Although many prefer the desirability of autonomy, variety, and innovation in stating expected results and in selecting and combining assessment methods, every valid assessment program should be comprised of the following elements, in order:

- a.** Selection of the degree program's learning outcomes.
- b.** Definition of specific expected results for each outcome to be assessed;
- c.** Selection and implementation of methods by which the degree of attainment of each expected result can be assessed.
- d.** Analysis of the evidence of effectiveness produced by assessment to determine the precise nature of the program's strength and shortcomings (and/or student strengths and weaknesses, in the case of instructional programs);
- e.** Design and implementation of appropriate program improvement measures; and
- f.** Repetition of the assessment cycle.

**Appendix IV. Learning Domains: Bloom's Domains**

Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Domains – a widely accepted description of the various learning levels, published in 1956 by Benjamin Bloom. Bloom's taxonomy includes the cognitive (mental skills), affective (attitude), and psychomotor (physical skills).

Exhibit 21. <b>Cognitive Domain</b>	<b>Higher Order Thinking Skills</b>
<b>Learning Level</b>	<b>Action Verbs</b>
<b>Evaluation</b> (to make judgement about knowledge)	appraise, compare, conclude, contrast, critique, defend, discriminate, evaluate, interpret, justify, argue, assess, estimate, judge, predict, rate, support, value
<b>Synthesis</b> (to create new ideas or things)	combine, compile, compose, create, devise, design, explain, generate, organize, reconstruct, revise, rewrite, summarize, assemble, collect, compose, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, plan, prepare, propose, set up
<b>Analysis</b> (to take information apart)	analyze, break down, compare, contrast, diagram, deconstruct, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, separate, analyze, appraise, calculate, categorize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test
<b>Application</b> (to use information)	apply, change, compute, construct, demonstrate, discover, manipulate, modify, operate, prepare, produce, show, solve, choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, practice, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write
<b>Comprehensive</b> (to understand information)	comprehend, convert, defend, distinguish, estimate, explain, extend, generalize, give examples, infer, interpret, paraphrase, predict, rewrite, summarize, translate. classify, describe, discuss, explain, express, identify, indicate, locate, recognize, report, restate, review, select, translate
<b>Knowledge</b> (to find or remember information)	define, describe, identify, label, list, match, name, outline, recall, recognize, reproduce, select, state, arrange, define, duplicate, label, list, memorize, name, order, recognize, relate, recall, repeat, reproduce state.

Exhibit 22. **Affective Domain**

**Lower Order Learning Higher Order Learning**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Receiving</b></p> <p>( Awareness, willingness to hear, selected attention)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Listen to others with respect. Listen for and remember the name of newly introduced people  <b>Action Verbs:</b> asks, chooses, describes, follows, gives, holds, identifies, locates, names</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Responding</b></p> <p>( Active participation on the part of the learners)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Participates in class discussions. Gives a presentation. Questions new ideals and concepts  <b>Keywords:</b> answers, assists, complies, conforms, discusses, greets, helps, labels, performs, practices, presents, reads, recites, reports, selects, tells</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Valuing</b></p> <p>(The worth attached to a particular object, phenomenon, or behavior)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Demonstrates belief in the democratic process. Is sensitive towards individual and cultural differences (value diversity). Shows the ability to solve problems. Proposes a plan to social improvement  <b>Keywords:</b> completes, demonstrates, differentiates, explains, follows, forms, initiates, invites, joins, justifies, proposes, reads, reports, selects, shares, studies, works</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Organization</b></p> <p>(priorities and creates a unique value system)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Recognizes the need for balance between freedom and responsible behavior. Accepts responsibility for one’s behavior. Accepts professional ethical standards. Creates a life plan in harmony with abilities, interests, and beliefs. Prioritizes time effectively to meet the needs of the organization, family, and self  <b>Keywords:</b> adheres, alters, arranges, combines, compares, completes, defends, explains, formulates, generalizes, identifies, integrates, modifies</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Characterizing</b></p> <p>( has a value system that controls behavior)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Shows self-reliance when working independently. Cooperates in group activities (displays teamwork). Uses an objective approach in problem solving. Displays a professional commitment to ethical practice on a daily basis.  <b>Keywords:</b> acts, discriminates, displays, influences, listens, modifies, performs, practices, proposes, qualifies, questions, revises, serves, solves, verifies.</p>



## Exhibit 23. Psychomotor Domain

### Most Complex Behaviour

### Lower Order Thinking Skills

<p><b>Origination</b></p> <p>(creating new movement patterns to fit a particular situation or specific problem)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Student can construct a new theory. Individual can develop a new and comprehensive training programming. Student creates a new dance routine. <b>Keywords:</b> arranges, builds, combines composes, constructs, creates, designs, initiates, makes</p>
<p><b>Adaption</b></p> <p>(the ability to modify movements to address special situations)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Student responds effectively to an unexpected experience. Teacher modifies instruction to meet the needs of the learners. <b>Keywords:</b> adapts, alters, changes, rearranges, reorganizes, revises, varies</p>
<p><b>Complex Overt Response</b></p> <p>(the skillful performance of motor acts that involve complex movement patterns)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> The ability to maneuver a car into a tight parallel parking spot. Operating a computer quickly and accurately. Displaying competence while playing the piano. <b>Keywords:</b> assembles, builds, calibrates, constructs, dismantles, displays, fastens, fixes</p>
<p><b>Mechanism</b></p> <p>(habitual and the movements can be performed with some confidence and proficiency)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Individual can keyboard using a personal computer. <b>Keywords:</b> measures, mends, mixes, organizes, sketches</p>
<p><b>Guided Response</b></p> <p>(imitation and trial and error)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Student performs a mathematical equation as demonstrated. Student follows instructions to build a model <b>Keywords:</b> copy, trace, follow, react, reproduce, respond</p>
<p><b>Set</b></p> <p>(the readiness to act. It includes mental, physical, and emotional sets)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Students know and act upon a sequence of steps in a manufacturing process. Students recognize their abilities and limitations. <b>Keywords:</b> begins, displays, explains, moves, proceeds</p>
<p><b>Perception</b></p> <p>(the ability to use sensory cues to guide motor activity)</p>	<p><b>Examples:</b> Individual detects non-verbal communication cues. Individual estimates where a ball will land after it is thrown. <b>Keywords:</b> chooses, describes, detects, estimates</p>

## **L. Employer Questionnaires**

Questionnaires may be used by a department to establish whether or not it is providing specific and explicitly stated job skills which employers find valuable. Questioning employers about individual students should be carefully considered with respect to invading the privacy of graduates. Sending such questionnaires to the graduates first and then to employers is one way of protecting such privacy.

## **M. Standardized Tests**

There are several national evaluation instruments on the market which can be used to assess a variety of expected results within a department. Two commonly utilized assessment/evaluation services are:

1. **The Educational Testing Service (ETS)** - This service offers Major Field Achievement Tests in a variety of formats to fit the needs of individual schools. Reports to the department will include scores, group reliable scores, demographic summaries, additional local questions, etc.
2. **The American College Testing Program (ACT)** - This program offers a variety of assessment instruments, but most are aimed at general education learning outcomes. ACT has a full range of survey services, some of which may be useful in assessing the major area.

*Appendix V.*

**OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Planning Unit** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date Submitted**

**Subunit** \_\_\_\_\_ **Submitted by**

**Directions:** Complete the section of the questionnaire that directly applies to your area of responsibility and situation only.

1. How is student academic performance assessed?
2. How are student professionals skills evaluated?
3. How are internships/cooperative educational experiences assessed?
4. What faculty evaluation process is in place by which the teaching faculty can obtain constructive, balanced information and feedback which enables them to better fulfill their academic responsibilities?
5. What staff performance evaluation process is in place by which they can obtain constructive, balanced information which enables them to better fulfill their responsibilities?
6. What administrative performance evaluation process is in place by which they can obtain constructive, balanced information and feedback on their performance which enables them to better fulfill their responsibilities?
7. What external evaluations are conducted to assess program and institutional effectiveness?

**Assessment VI.**

**Atlanta Metropolitan College Program Learning Outcome Outline**

**Spring 2011**

1. Accountancy
2. African-American Studies
3. Art
  - Students will identify at least one genre of the fine and applied arts and discuss the social and historical contexts from which the art form emerged.
  - Identify, analyze and apply effective principles of design with in a visual artistic method.
  - Create in a variety of studio processes and media to generate a finished original work of art.
4. Automated Office Management
5. Biology
  - Compare and contrast scientific theories and research studies.
6. Business Administration
7. Business Education
8. Business Management
9. Chemistry
  - Demonstrate ability to apply concepts of chemistry and mathematics to solve related problems.
  - Compare and contrast scientific theories and research studies.
10. Computer Info Systems
11. Computerized Office Management
12. Computer Programming, I
13. Computer Programming, II
14. Computer Science
15. Criminal Justice, I
  - Criminal Justice majors should be able to discuss the historical developments and summarize the current trends in law enforcement.
16. Criminal Justice, II
17. English
  - Demonstrate oral academic expression
  - Demonstrate written academic expression

- Evaluate literary genres

#### 18. Foreign Language

- Learners will be able to create and write a composition at the ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Intermediate lo-high proficiency level
- Learners will be able to differentiate and apply active reading strategies in order to identify main ideas in texts in the target language at the ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Intermediate lo-high proficiency level.
- Learners will be able to create sentences orally, interpret and comprehend someone else speaking in the target language at the ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) Intermediate lo-high of Foreign Languages) Intermediate lo-high proficiency level.

#### 19. General Studies

#### 20. Health & PE

- Describe how philosophical ideas affect health and physical education.
- Discuss historical events that effected the field of Health and Physical Education.

#### 21. Health Information Management Systems

- Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Health Information Management.
- Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.
- Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to Health Information Management.

#### 22. History

- History students should be able to explain the relevance of history to the present.

#### 23. Human Communication

#### 24. Mathematics

- Increase transfer rates of students graduating with AS in Mathematics into mathematics-related programs at four-year institutions.
- Effectively express mathematical concepts orally and in writing.
- Evaluate mathematical concepts, skills, and procedures used to solve various problems from the sciences.

#### 25. Music I

- Students will identify at least one genre of the fine and applied arts and discuss the social and historical contexts from which the art form emerged.

#### 26. Music II

27. Music III

28. Physics

- Apply those mathematical and foundational physics concepts, skills, and procedures necessary to solve physics problems.
- Communicate scientific concepts effectively through writing and speaking.
- Design and carry out an experimental investigation using appropriate techniques, skills, and tools.

29. Political Science

- Analyze political theories and ideologies in terms of how they manifest themselves in political issues and developments.

30. Pre-Dental Hygiene

- Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Dental Hygiene.
- Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.
- Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to Pre-Dental Hygiene.

31. Pre-Engineering

- Use the techniques, skills, and modern engineering tools necessary for engineering practice.
- Formulate and solve engineering problems.
- Apply those physics and mathematical concepts, skills, and procedures necessary to solve engineering problems.

32. Pre-Engineering Technology

- Apply those physics and mathematical concepts, skills, and procedures used in Engineering Technology applications.
- Use the techniques, skills, and modern engineering technology tools necessary in Engineering Technology applications.
- Formulate and solve engineering technology problems.
- Communicate scientific concepts effectively through writing and speaking.

33. Pre-Medical Technology

- Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Medical Technology.
- Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.

34. Pre-Nursing

- Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Nursing.
- Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.
- Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to Pre-Nursing.

#### 35. Pre-Occupational Therapy

- Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Occupational Therapy.
- Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.
- Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to pre-occupational therapy.

#### 36. Pre-Physical Therapy

- Gather and analyze information from multiple sources.
- Communicate orally and written to explain biological and chemical concepts related to pre-physical therapy.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the concepts of Biology and Chemistry as they relate to Pre-Physical Therapy.

#### 37. Psychology

#### 38. Recreation

- Discuss and describe the principles and techniques of recreational programming.

#### 39. Recreation Leadership

- List the requirements for employment in Recreational Leadership or public and private agencies.

#### 40. Social Work

- Demonstrate an understanding of Social Work values, ethical standards and principles.

#### 41. Sociology

- Perform satisfactorily in junior and senior level sociology courses.

#### 42. Speech

- Students will identify appropriate guidelines for oral communication.
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#### 43. Mass Communication

#### 44. Teacher Education I

#### 45. Teacher Education II

#### 46. Teacher Education III