

University-Wide Assessment Plan

Academic programs have developed *Purpose Statements*, *Program Goals*, *Program Components*, and intended student *Learning Outcomes* that support the institutional goals which are based on the university's mission statement. Further, each academic program has identified course objectives and descriptions to coordinate with the intended student learning outcomes and the curricula to provide degree requirements that permit the program to achieve its purpose. Identified assessment methods are used to demonstrate the attainment of intended student learning outcomes and areas for improvement.

Faculty members meet throughout the year to discuss student learning, assessment results, and strategies to enhance learning. At the end of the academic year, the department chairs and their representatives submit a report listing a summary of the assessments used, results, actions taken, and recommendations to improve student learning. The Office of Assessment receives the reports and makes them available for the university community to view. The Office of Assessment also prepares summaries of the reports for the Vice President for Academic Affairs who reviews them and oversees the routing of these recommendations through, as appropriate, the General Education Task Force, the Teacher Education and Admissions Committee, the Catalog and Curriculum Committee, and/or the Graduate Committee. At any stage during the process, the Vice President or a committee can initiate actions, which feed into annual budget recommendations and directly back into the program or make recommendations to other administrative or academic support units that feed into their strategic planning process. Items that necessitate major expenditures in facilities or equipment are forwarded on to the Strategic Planning Committee for possible inclusion in the *Strategic Plan*.

Assessment of academic programs also includes the assessment of the General Education curriculum. Departments work together in developing their plan that includes goals, learning outcomes, and assessments. They collect data, report results, note actions taken, and create strategies and recommendations to support student learning outcomes in an annual report submitted to the Office of Assessment. If appropriate, they develop recommendations. Reports of their actions and recommendations flow through the same process as detailed above.

Administrative and academic support units have also developed *Purpose Statements* and *Objectives* that support the *Institutional Goals* based on the mission statement. The administrative and academic support units have identified appropriate assessment methods and assessment criteria for measuring their success in attaining their objectives. After conducting appropriate assessment activities, each unit itemizes and analyzes the results and documents them in the results section of the assessment reports. Recommendations are forwarded up the administrative chain of command to the appropriate Vice President or Executive Director in order to facilitate both annual and

strategic planning by initiating actions and/or forwarding the unit's recommendations to other administrative or academic support units for action. Along each stage of the process, the reports feed into annual budgeting and strategic planning process.

Annual planning strategies are based on assessment and immediately feed back from the programs and units. The Strategic Planning Committee receives all strategic planning recommendations and develops goals and strategies for accomplishing the goals. The President's Cabinet completes *Strategic Budgeting* that permits implementation at the program or unit level, thus completing the strategic feedback loop. In addition, the Strategic Planning Committee monitors the direction of the University with regard to the mission statement and the institutional goals. The current Strategic Plan, entitled *In Pursuit of Vita Abundantior*, approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2004, reflects the depth and breadth of planning at University of the Cumberlands. This plan was based upon an exhaustive review of the institution's facilities, programs and past performance. It was developed with input from all elements of the campus community. In its final detailed format, identification of responsible parties for various strategies and timeline for implementation, this document illustrates a major development of planning and assessment processes at the University of the Cumberlands over the past decade.

Assessment Support Services

Institutional Research assists with the identification of appropriate assessment methods and analyses and performs necessary data analysis. The Assessment Committee assesses and, as necessary, modifies the process. The Director of Assessment serves as the reporting authority. After collating all annual assessment reports, the Assessment Committee forwards the reports and its summaries to the Vice Presidents and Executive Directors.

Commitment

The University of the Cumberlands continues to improve its assessment program. In the spring of 2005 the University developed a more comprehensive assessment calendar to schedule all assessment activities, reports, and evaluations of University programs and units. This calendar is included in the *Comprehensive Assessment Plan*. In 2005, the University also employed a Director of Assessment to work with the Assessment Committee in coordinating the planning, administering, reporting, and evaluating of all assessment instruments and ensuring the use of assessment results in improving University programs. In 2007, this position was combined with Director of QEP. For further detail regarding University of the Cumberlands' assessment plan and the expected outcomes for each department and unit, see *A Comprehensive Plan for Assessing the Institutional Effectiveness of the University of the Cumberlands*, as well as the Assessment Summaries. These are available at the Office of Assessment and recent ones are available at:

Improvement Based On Assessment

Both academic departments and non-academic units use assessment results to develop strategies for improvement. This section first reviews examples of changes in programs, assessments, or purchase of equipment by academic departments. The second section notes changes in General Education as noted in the *2007-2008 Assessment Summary*. Third, actions by academic and support units are noted.

Academic Programs

Art - In Summer 2007, the art faculty revised the art major, reducing the total number of hours. Changes were accepted by the TEAC Committee and the Catalog Committee in the fall of 2007.

Business Administration - B.S. in Management Information Systems was introduced in Fall 2007.

Chemistry – Increased emphasis on computer software in chemistry applications. Purchasing a new IR spectrometer in the fall 2008 semester.

Communication Arts- In Fall 2007, a minor in Journalism was added to the department including courses in Print and Web Journalism, Media Law, Communication Graphics, and Journalism Practicum. To accommodate students' needs, COMM 235 is being offered during the fall and spring semesters.

Education - Field hours in capstone courses EDUC 432, ELEM 430, and ELMS 430 were redesigned to more intentionally focus on special needs students. Rubrics for the electronic portfolio have been revised to provide more specific data related to KY and UC standards

Graduate Education – All graduate programs were rewritten to improve their impact on P-2 learning. Additional degree offerings were written including M.A. in School Counseling, Ed.S. in Administration and Supervision, Ed.S. In Special Education, Ed.S. in Reading and Writing, ELS in Instruction and Curriculum, and an Ed.D. program in Administration. The department developed online courses so that most of the graduate programs are now offered online. The Graduate Admissions Office was established with 3 full-time staff members for admissions, initial enrollment, and initial advising. The Department has developed on-line courses so that most graduate programs are available totally through on-line delivery.

English - Implementation of an assessment rubric during Fall 2006 in ENGL 230. This rubric focused on assessing mastery of critical theory, particularly as reflected in the implementation of well-focused and well-organized literary

HESS - ESS 231, Care & Prevention of Athletic Injuries was added to classes under clinical experience. Clinical Experience will be added in ESS 131, 435, 437, 231 in 2008-2009. HESS 233 was established as a pre-requisite for ESS 330 to better prepare students for projects in this class.

Mathematics - Microteaching Experience was added. Moved adjunct professor to full time status.

Modern Foreign Languages - Plans are being implemented to offer a major in Spanish beginning in fall 2008.

Music- The Theory Four Written Project was revised for the Spring 2008 school year. The new addition of the computer software (using Finale or a comparable notation program) has allowed this project to become a vital component of the class.

Physics – A new dual-degree Applied Physics major was expanded to permit students to transfer to other ABET – accredited engineering schools other than the University of Kentucky. Students in PHYS 332 Experimental Physics and PHYS 337 electronics used a variety of instruments for data acquisition; computers, oscilloscopes, function generators, power supplies, multimeters, etc. Students were required to perform data analysis on the computer.

Psychology – The department started a concerted effort to get students to take Research Design early in their sophomore year to help reinforce this area prior to the ACAT exam.

Religion and Philosophy - Decided to invite more outside speakers with expertise into classes and for Theta Alpha Kappa presentations. Added a library in Bennet Building to house resources.

Theatre - Decided to develop capstone project for assessment purposes with new faculty for THTR 331, 332, 336, 431, and 437. The Theatre program will update practices for Theatre Outreach and Theatre Outreach Lab to reach long term goals.

General Education

A committee has been assembled with representatives from each department to review the General Education curriculum during 2008-2009 to decide if there is a

need for revision. In the meantime, assessment of General Education curriculum in 2007-2008 led to a variety of actions to better assess expected student learning outcomes and to improve student learning. Some examples are the following:

Written Communication - English began tracking diagnostic pre and post tests for individual students and proposed a rubric to assess writing competency on ENGL 131 and ENGL 132 final essay covering 4-8 writing standards. The English Department is also reviewing texts in light of the QEP Critical Thinking across the Curriculum initiative.

Christian Faith and Service – To more accurately reflect the QEP commitment to improving critical thinking in reading and writing, all religion courses are increasing writing assignments that require reflection. Discussions about how to strengthen assessment of INST 101 and LEAD 100 are underway.

Scientific and Mathematical Awareness - Physics introduced inquiry based mini-labs for the purpose of developing a better conceptual understanding. Final exam is being revised in Biology 131 and 132 students' final exam assessing foundational concepts.

Physical and Social Well-Being - Health faculty decided to begin tracking pre and post exams for Health & Wellness, pilot use of MyHealthLab computer program in HLTH236 ,and implementing writing rubrics in Fall 2008.

Human and Social Behavior - Assignments, quizzes, and a comprehensive final exams are used to reflect understanding. The content and assessment measures are being re-evaluated.

World Perspective - Additional assignments were added in Fall 2007 that require regular writing assignments that reflect understanding of information and of the significance of the information. English established a writing rubric for use in all English composition, English Literature, and American Literature courses. History is discussing use of pre and post tests. Music replaced MUSC 235, Survey of Music Literature with MUSC 335 World Music to add diversity to the General Education Curriculum. Political Science- replaced POLS 234 *State and Local Government* with POLS 235 *Introduction to International Relations* since POLS 234 is offered once every two years and POLS 235 is offered annually.

Academic Support and Administrative Units

Academic Support and Administrative Units also made recommendations regarding purchasing new equipment, hiring personnel, and providing new services. These recommendations and their status as “Completed,” “In Progress,” or “Not Completed” can be found in the *2007-2008 Assessment Summary for*

Academic Support and Administrative Units. Some examples are as follows:

Admissions – Literature updated to better portray the University, academic programs, etc. Two “Meet and Eat” events were changed to attract more students from particular areas

Academic Resource Center – Online Sign-up form, started in September 2007, provides a printable record of each tutoring request.

Alumni Services - Q-Base contract of December 26, 2007 provided data on alumni. Data received August 5, 2008 for processing.

Athletic Training - Purchased 3 additional Sports Ware Plus programs in July 2008 to help alleviate access problems by the staff. Began using Ambir Docket Scan technology to scan medical reports, insurance cards and other sensitive materials into reporting system to decrease hard paper accumulation and better direct information storage for the future. ATC staff members maintain Professional Rescuer and Lay Responder Instructor Status in order to provide yearly certification for athletic department personnel. Challenge courses for Recertification as well as refresher courses were made available in May 2008 for coaching staff recertification for the upcoming year. Will encourage coaches to have study halls for athletes.

Career Services- Purchased new materials to keep information current. Relocated in May 2006 to BCC for better facilities to serve students. Established requirement for all freshmen to enroll in Alcohol and Substance Abuse preventative program www.mystudentbody.com that is being funded through a mini-grant from KYASAP Board.

Center for Teaching and Learning – CTL programs increased outreach for retention efforts through personal contacts and student success seminars. Additional effort has also been made to form new collaborations to increase awareness of and access to resources to promote critical thinking and use of resources, especially web sites.

Church Relations - Combined mailings with those from Admissions to minimize costs.

Cumberland Inn - Pool and pool deck were resurfaced. New tile and coping were added to pool. Replaced roof on Barna Log home and replaced mattresses in the Inn.

Hagan Memorial Library- Added two additional databases to support new programs in Business and Education. Requested 1 new scanner and 12 optical

to improve computer equipment. Added two additional databases to support new programs in Business and Education. Interlibrary loan form and web site are being revised to make them easier to use. Library instruction was revised to better train students in information literacy strategies. The library staff is renewing the current electronic databases and has added two additional databases to support new programs in Business and Education.

Human Resources - New positions include Director of Ed.D. program, two Graduate Education support staff, one support staff in IT, one in Human Services, and a Director of MBA program.

Information Technologies – University decided to upgrade Internet bandwidth to 45Mbps. Purchased PowerCAMPUS administrative system to provide better access to information.

Intramural Program - Added a 9-hole golf scramble and badminton tournament to the schedule.

Media Relations – A new camera was purchased to allow the department to cover multiple events.

Plant operations - Improvements include painting, carpeting, VCT flooring, furnishings and HVAC, addition of new media and smart boards in McGaw Music Building, repair and expansion of parking lots. Implemented an energy conservation plant that will retrofit boilers, cooling towers and other key HVAC equipment with new controls and sensors.

Registrar's Office – During the 2007-08 academic year, executive decision was made to upgrade to a new Administrative Computer System, through SunGARD Higher Education.

Residence Life - Safety Programs are being increased.

Safety - Security - Complete camera system installed in Robinson and Cook Hall. Emergency public address system was installed on chimes tower for use in emergencies, implemented Emergency Alert Mass notification System to send emergency messages to students, faculty and staff by cell, text, email, and land lines. Installed additional weather alert radios throughout campus.

Sports Information – Continue to update equipment. Secured additional assistants. Provided webcast of most of UC's athletic games and hopes to do more. Plans to expand webcasting capability to other sports.

Video Productions -- Recommended providing the Admissions Promotional Video

on the University website and in DVD.

All of the improvement mentioned above came directly from the assessment process. These actions improve the academic programs and student services to enhance student learning. The University of the Cumberland's *Strategic Plan - In Pursuit of Vita Abundantior* adopted in 2004 calls for regular audits of the plan further demonstrate the analysis of assessment data leading to improvements on the campus. Current initiatives reflect items in the plan for 2007 – 2008

Goal 1 3 E (1): Strengthen the University's academic programs.

3. Add, modify, and eliminate programs as needed both to implement the mission of the University and to meet the market demands for students and the region.

The decision was made in 2006 to phase out the PACE program due to declining enrollment and increased opportunities to serve the same population in nearby areas. Persons already enrolled in the PACE program at the time are now completing the last of their coursework.

The Computer Science major was replaced by a new Management Information Systems program in the School of Business.

UC expanded its academic offerings with a doctorate in educational leadership and an M.B.A. degree implemented in Fall 08.

University of the Cumberland will offer the Master of Arts in Professional Counseling program. The program, based upon a cohort, 8-week, bi-term model, will begin with the fall 2009 semester. Upon completion of the 60-hour M.A.P.C. program, graduates will be prepared to sit for the examination to become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC).

The University appointed a task force with representatives from each department to review the General Education curriculum and the rationale for the curriculum. The task force completed will submit proposals for faculty approval in fall 2009 and, if approved, implementation will begin in fall 2010.

4. Expand and develop the international study program.

Due to increased recruitment, we have had an increase in international students. At the same time, expanded opportunities and programs allowed for increased participation in study abroad by our students.

5. Promote, nurture, and reward excellence in teaching and service.

At the 2008 Annual Awards Banquet Sandra Jones was recognized as a staff member who performed extraordinary community service, Dr. Chris Leskiw was received the Miles Award for his community service, and Dr. Al Pilant was recognized for his teaching. At the 2009 Annual Awards Banquet, Susan Felts received the staff award, Dr. Anita Bowman received the Miles Award, and Dr. Larry Newquist received the teaching award.

In addition, in 2007, faculty and staff were invited to apply for special recognition by submitting a portfolio with winners to be selected for cash awards by an external review committee. Dr. Sara Ash, Dr. Chris Leskiw, and Dr. Eric Stephens received faculty awards. Mrs. Emily Meadors and Ms. Linda Carter received staff awards.

D. Strengthen the University's program of professional evaluation and collegial support, with priority given to the review of the current faculty evaluation system. (2) Review and revise all evaluation instruments and procedures.

A committee revised the faculty evaluation forms and new forms were first used in Spring 2008.

6. Develop and implement a comprehensive graduation enhancement program in order to improve retention and graduation rates.

A retention committee was formed in 2007 by Dr. Tom Fish, Associate Dean. Students reported to his office were tracked for indications of excessive absences or other academic or social issues. These students were referred to members of the committee for individual follow up and, if appropriate, referral.

A. Expand programs for academically gifted students. (3) Integrate programmatic enhancements for academically gifted students into a comprehensive honors program.

Although we did not form an honors program, new honoraries were established in Business and Chemistry. These and existing honoraries offered opportunities for research, internships and presentations were offered. Dr. Bob Dunston is secretary of the National Religion Honorary. The history honorary, Phi Alpha Theta, won national recognition as best chapter in the nation.

Goal II. Strengthen the co-curricular facilities and programs necessary to support the needs and expectations of a diverse campus community.

3. Study the feasibility of building a student activities center, including

significant recreational space.

5. Expand and upgrade current varsity athletic facilities.

C. Develop a new soccer complex, giving serious consideration to utilizing the current football practice field.

A new soccer complex was completed in Summer of 2007.

Basketball court and intramural court were resurfaced in 2008.

Plans are in place to begin work on a recreation facility and remodel the Boswell Student Center.

Goal III: Maintain, improve, and develop the facilities and equipment required to support the programs of the University.

4. Renovate current and construct new facilities for biology, chemistry, mathematics, and physics.

A Identify specific needs or deficiencies with current facilities.

B. Establish priorities for addressing these needs and deficiencies.

C. Develop and implement plans for renovation and construction,

D. At all stages of planning and implementation, consult with affected departments.

Renovation began in 2006 and construction of the new Correll Science Building was begun and completed in 2008. The result is the Correll Science Complex that involved total renovation of existing building and a 26,000 sq. ft. new addition.

Goal IV: Foster high morale and well-being among the campus community.

Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to participate in the Fitness Five Dare to Compare events held semi-annually.

Opportunities for aerobics (including aqua aerobics), yoga, and weight training were expanded.

3. Develop an online directory of information on faculty and current students.

In 2007, a new webmail was implemented that included an online directory and calendar to foster improved ease in communication and arranging meetings.

Goal V: Provide competitive salary and benefits.

New options in health care and dental care were offered. In addition, faculty and staff received raises. Additional opportunities

Goal VI: Strengthen the public image of the University.

The University of the Cumberland was featured in Southern Living, US News and World Report, Newsweek, and regional magazines and

online. Additionally, billboards and other marketing efforts increased our visibility.

B. Study the feasibility of developing a communications center to include the Office of Public Information, video productions, Channel 19, the campus radio station, and the webmaster.
Media Relations relocated in 2006.

1. Expand services and upgrade equipment for Office of Public Information (now Office of Media Relations)

New equipment has been purchased as needed.

Goal VII: Develop and implement a long-range technology plan.

5. Enhance the availability and use of distance learning technologies on campus.

B. Build additional laboratory classrooms to support distance learning and other technology intense academic activities.

Wireless access was expanded in the across campus including the residence halls and academic buildings. (2007)

New sympodiums equipped with internet, laptops, dvd players, and projection / sound systems were installed in classrooms in Bennett Building and the ground floor of the library building and the Anderson building. (2007)

Plans were initiated to replace Jenzabar with Sungard.2009