

## Brief Assessment Overview for Academic Units

To help WSSU maintain accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and to show continuous improvement, all academic and administrative areas on campus should engage in the assessment process.

Best practices indicate that departments and programs should meet regularly to work on their assessment plan, which includes defining/revising outcomes for the unit, establishing ways to assess those outcomes (assessment methods), gathering results, and determining necessary actions/follow ups based on the results. Units should continually engage in this assessment cycle to help show institutional effectiveness.

Department chairs are responsible for overseeing these assessment activities and ensuring their units' assessment information is reported through Nuventive Improve (TracDat), the university's assessment management system. There are **department-level** and **major-level** units within Nuventive Improve (TracDat). Both types of units should be considered when discussing academic assessment at WSSU. Each unit should have 3-5 active outcomes within the Nuventive Improve (TracDat) system.

### Department-Level Assessment Plans

- Should report *process-oriented* outcomes that are compatible with the unit and university mission and explain the service or product that the department desires to deliver
- Department-level outcome topics could include: advising, curriculum review/offerings/coherency, faculty productivity, quality of faculty, quality of instruction, service, student success, incorporation of high impact practices (HIPs), etc.

### Major-Level Assessment Plans

- Should include *student learning outcomes* (SLOs) that define what students should know, think, or be able to do upon completion of the program
- The SLOs in your major-level assessment plans should match the SLOs in the university course catalog

### Annual Assessment Audit

Each year, normally during the spring, Institutional Assessment and Research conducts the academic assessment audit. The audit is intended to be a helpful exercise that keeps individuals involved in the assessment process and shows SACSCOC that appropriate checks-and-balances are in place regarding the university's assessment activities. The

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purpose of the assessment audit is to ensure that relevant individuals are entering, reviewing, and discussing information that has been entered into the Nuventive Improve (TracDat) system; it is not intended to be an intimidating, stressful task!

Information regarding the assessment audits, including timelines, forms, and information on audit responsibilities, can be found on the Institutional Assessment & Research website: <https://www.wssu.edu/about/assessment-and-research/audits.html>.

### **WSSU Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

Winston-Salem State University has seven student learning outcomes: Critical Reading, Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Oral Communication, Quantitative Literacy, Scientific Literacy, and Written Communication. WSSU's goal is to incorporate and assess the seven student learning outcomes across the curriculum as well as in co-curricular activities. Rubric data for courses and co-curricular activities mapped to a WSSU student learning outcome are submitted through an online survey. Units are also encouraged to report and store additional information in Nuventive Improve (TracDat), the university's assessment management system. For additional information, visit Institutional Assessment & Research's student learning outcomes website: <https://www.wssu.edu/about/assessment-and-research/student-learning-outcomes.html>.