The Assessment Cycle

K-State developed a deliberate, incremental approach to assessment across the university in order to encourage widespread commitment toward a sustainable program and a culture of assessment. All academic programs – undergraduate, graduate, minors, and certificates – as well as academic assistance units across the university, are required to participate in all aspects of assessing student learning. The assessment cycle began in 2004 when programs developed student learning outcomes (SLOs) that were measurable and relevant to expected student learning. All programs/units have developed their SLOs and assessment plans, with some much further along than others. Responsibility for developing the SLOs was delegated to the faculty and unit staff who interact with students in the programs/units being assessed. Many programs incorporate outcomes or competencies designated by accrediting bodies. With the SLOs selected based upon program curricula, oversight is more local and involves the faculty. Programs/units use these assessment results as evidence relevant to the objectives, and to “close the loop” of assessment through making changes to the curriculum if results suggest such changes. The Office of Assessment monitors the assessment of all programs and units using an annual report.

Undergraduate Degree Student Learning Assessment Cycle

Undergraduate programs are required to submit Annual Progress Reports on their assessment activities each year. The process is as follows:

1. Programs and units assess all or a portion of their SLOs on an annual basis. In the case where programs/units have a large number of SLOs, they can choose to assess portions of their SLOs on a two or three year repeated cycle.
2. In the Fall, faculty review and discuss assessment data to determine if the data suggest actions needed to maintain or improve student learning.
3. By March 1, Annual Progress Reports (APRs) on Assessment of Student Learning (ASL) for the academic year are submitted to the College Assessment Review Committee (CARC) for review and feedback. Summaries of APRs are to be posted to each program or unit website for public access.
4. By June 1, the APRs are approved by College Deans for undergraduate programs. Summary reports of the departmental Annual Progress Reports on Assessment of Student Learning and copies of the evaluative rubrics and comments are submitted by the Deans’ offices to the Office of Assessment.
5. By Fall, the Office of Assessment provides feedback to the program directors, deans, and CARCs. A summary report on this feedback is also submitted to the Provost.

Graduate Degree Student Learning Assessment Cycle

Reporting on the assessment of graduate programs occurs every four years. Since the graduate programs at K-State are on a formal 8-year cycle of program review with the Kansas Board of Regents, the Provost’s office initiated an internal “Mid-Cycle” review that would include the assessment of student learning. This process began in 2007. During the Mid-Cycle Review, graduate programs prepare and receive feedback on the detailed reports the same as they would for a “Full” KBOR review. These finalized reports are then forwarded to the Offices of
Planning and Analysis and Assessment for final review. Graduate programs are scheduled for the Mid-Cycle Review and “Full” Review on a staggered basis to avoid overloading reviewers. When a program is due for assessment reporting, the following process is used:

1. In early April, graduate programs that are scheduled for full KBOR review submit draft Detailed Program Review Reports (PRR) and the draft Detailed Assessment of Student Learning (ASL) reports to the Graduate School.

2. During late May and Early June, the Graduate School Dean and the Graduate Council Assessment Review Committee discuss, review, and prepare a list of changes, comments, or additional documentation needed for the final detailed reports and provides this information to the graduate programs by mid-June.

3. The graduate degree programs submit their revised PRR and ASL reports to the Graduate School in early September. The graduate programs are then asked to prepare 2-page summaries of both reports and provide them to the Graduate School by early November.

4. In early February (of the next calendar year), the PRRs (detailed and summarized) are then forwarded from the Graduate School to the Office of Planning and Analysis and the ASL reports (detailed and summarized) are forwarded from the Graduate School to the Office of Assessment. These offices then conduct a final review and prepare the five-page Institutional Overview Report, the one-page Institutional Estimate of the Fiscal Implication, and the one page degree program summaries and submit them to the BOR.

5. By mid-May the Kansas Board of Regents holds their Meeting on Program Review. The appropriate Dean may be asked to attend the BOR session when the review of degree programs is presented. By June, the Provost provides feedback to the graduate programs regarding the outcome of the KBOR review of the programs.