

Nyack College Plan for Assessment and Improvement

September 2009

Academic Assessment Committee

Nyack College
Nyack, New York

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Introduction

Institutional Mission Statements

Assessment and improvement is grounded by the institutional mission and core values. The institutional mission of Nyack College and Seminary is:

Nyack College, A Christian & Missionary Alliance Educational Institution, through its undergraduate, graduate, and seminary programs, pursues its historic mission of preparing men and women to 'take the whole Gospel to the whole world.'

Nyack College is guided by the following mission statement:

Nyack College, a Christian liberal arts college of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, seeks to assist students in their spiritual, intellectual, and social formation, preparing them for lives of service to Christ and His church and to society in a way that reflects the Kingdom of God and its ethnic diversity.

Alliance Theological Seminary expresses its mission as the following:

Alliance Theological Seminary (ATS) is an evangelical seminary committed to preparing servants of Jesus Christ in the areas of heart (personal formation experiences), mind (educational experience), and feet (ministry experience).

Alliance Theological Seminary is the national seminary of The Christian & Missionary Alliance, centered in metropolitan New York with extensions in other parts of the United States and abroad. As a multicultural, evangelical seminary, ATS is committed to developing in men and women a personal knowledge of God and His work in the world in order to equip them for the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the extension of His Church.

Core Values

Another key element to the assessment of the institution are the core values expressed by the Board of Trustees:

Nyack College and Alliance Theological Seminary seek to exalt Jesus Christ and fulfill their mission by being:

Academically Excellent

Pursuing academic excellence in the spirit of grace and humility.

Globally Engaged

Fostering a global perspective within a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Christian academic community.

Intentionally Diverse

Providing Educational Access and Support to motivated students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Personally Transforming

Emphasizing the integration of faith, learning and spiritual transformation.

Socially Relevant

Preparing students to serve in ministerial, educational, healing and community-building professions.

Assessment

This document intends to identify how Nyack College will determine how the above mission is achieved and if the core values are reflected in the process. The cyclical process is designed to provide information about how the institution determines how its goals are accomplished. The plan for assessment also has the purpose of directing and informing change to better incorporate the core values in fulfilling the institutional mission statement. The result is a process that directs change to improve the education and services provided by the institution.

Assessment at Nyack College is focused on student learning and administrative strategic planning. Historically student formation has been central to the mission of the college and seminary. Therefore, the focus on assessment of student learning becomes key in assessing the effectiveness of the programs and services of the institution. Assessment is the gathering of information to determine if the mission of the institution is being achieved. This information is helpful in creating change in areas where the mission is not being achieved and where improvements can be made to better serve the mission of the institution. This cycle of data collection, evaluation and improvement is the primary means of institutional improvement.

Assessment at Nyack College is focused on two dimensions of information gathering, student learning and institutional or administrative function. Student learning is central to the mission of Nyack College. Assessment of student learning is therefore a priority to the process of assessment. However, institutional services and administrative processes also impact student achievement. The effectiveness of these services and practices is also necessary. This is generally carried out by the institutional strategic plan and annual goal setting by the administration.

Assessment is not the evaluation of individual performance. Some instruments used will evaluate individuals such as course exams or products. Assessment will use the results of these individual evaluations in aggregate. The purpose of collecting data is to help students learn.

All academic programs have an assessment plan that engages in the gathering of data related to student learning outcomes that will show the attainment of program or core goals. Several institutional offices and support services also enhance student learning and the college experience. Ongoing evaluation of these services is important and must be ongoing.

College wide assessment is achieved by the gathering of goals and assessment outcomes that are related to the core values and undergraduate core student learning outcomes of the institution. When the plan presented is fully implemented there will be a reasonable basis for the assessment of the goals of academic programs and the institution as a whole. Additionally this information

will provide the basis for positive and constructive change to the process of education and services provided by Nyack College.

History of Assessment at Nyack College

A history of assessment prior to 2005 is included in Appendix C 2005 Review of Assessment History. This detailed account was provided to Middle States in 2005 for the midterm report.

Assessment since 2005 has been driven by the work of the assessment committee that functioned from 2000 to 2005 and external accreditation. The committee began several initiatives that were not continued institutionally as the college and seminary reorganized into the university model. Many of these initiatives were maintained by the deans of the various schools. Specifically course level assessment reports and department assessment reports were still encouraged but not collected and reviewed by the office of institutional research. The continuing collection of assessment data is evidenced in part by the institution receiving NCATE and NCTSW accreditation in 2005 and 2007 respectively. Both organizations require a detailed assessment plan and the gathering, evaluation and use of assessment data for program improvement.

Like many educational institutions, responses to external accreditation like NCATE and Middle States began to change the look of assessment on campus. Demands for outcome based assessment and evidence of a cycle of assessment, results, analysis and actions based on assessment became the norm for external agencies. Nyack College has responded in some areas quickly and slower in others. Because reorganization of the institution was the priority some of the work needed to change prior methods of assessment was postponed. For many departments this change was from one of process – how we set up and run our programs – to one that reflects student learning outcomes.

Beginning in 2007 an assistant provost was appointed to assist in the organization and administration of institutional assessment. At that point assessment was again redefined for the academic programs with a focus on student outcomes for each program. The work of the assessment committee from 2000-2005 was evident. Courses now have well defined student learning outcomes and programs began to look at student assessment data to support needed changes. As a result some programs had well defined student learning outcomes but others did not. Programs began the process of reviewing or identifying student learning outcomes in 07-08. The following year (08-09) each program reviewed or created plans for the assessment of student learning goals. Full implementation and use of data for improvement will follow in subsequent years.

Simultaneously several other planning and assessment initiatives were started in 07-08. The undergraduate core student learning goals were re-written by the faculty Curriculum and Assessment Committee and the administration developed improved planning documents related to the strategic plan.

The undergraduate curriculum committee reviewed and revised the undergraduate curriculum core student learning outcomes. The core values were the organizing conceptual framework for

the new core student learning outcomes. The following year, 08-09 they began the process of evaluating the core courses in light of the revisions. This process began to suggest changes in the courses and the core.

The undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees also undertook the process of program evaluation based on the plan for Academic Program Review in Appendix C. The program review process had been delayed because of the academic reorganization and restructuring. The first reviews under the new plan and model are scheduled for 09-10.

The administration of the institution began the process of strategic planning under the leadership of a new President. The President developed a strategic vision for Nyack College during his first year in office. The Vice-Presidents took that strategic vision and developed a basic strategic plan and indicators of success during the 07-08 school year. This basic plan was further developed and expanded in 08-09 and refined into the current strategic plan in 2009. The President refined the vision by developing a written document(Appendix A) based on the core values of the college. Each vice-president developed a master plan for their area. This included the Academic Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan, Case Statement from advancement, and Short term and Long Term Strategic Goals for the management of the college.

The planning and assessment process is always in a state of revision and improvement. The process results in consistent and studied improvement of the teaching learning process. The purpose of this plan is not to summarize the ongoing efforts but to articulate the central principals that guide the assessment and improvement of the college. The ongoing plan for the improvement of student learning will be developed. In addition this plan will also inventory the assessment instruments used by the college and the schedule of future assessments that are planned for use in improving student learning and institutional effectiveness.

General Guidelines and Terms

The following terms are defined for the reader as they are used in the context of the plan.

Assessment – The process of determining if the mission of the institution and the goals for the area are being achieved.

Direct Assessments – Direct evidence of student learning provided by observation or student performance or behavior. Direct evidence of administrative work may use metrics of administrative accomplishments or other direct observations to generate data.

Indirect Assessments – Data generated from surveys on perceptions of students and faculty such as student satisfaction inventories, surveys of allumni, employer surveys, focus groups and exit interviews.

Outcomes – The actual results of assessments as compared to the student learning goals for the program.

Program Assessment – The results of several summary assessments of students that encompass all program student learning goals.

Program Student Learning Goals – The knowledge, skills and dispositions that all students in the program should demonstrate on assessments used for program assessment.

Student Learning Goal – The expectations for student learning - the knowledge, skills and dispositions that a student is to demonstrate at the end of the course or program.

Principles for Institutional Assessment

The following principles have been established to guide assessment at the institution. These principles will guide the establishment of student learning goals, how those goals are measured, and the use of data collected on student performance to guide change in the institution.

1. Purpose - The purpose of assessment is to improve student learning and institution functions. Assessment must be tied to the core values of the institution. Assessment helps in decision making and helps the institution define and measure the extent to which it meets its goals.
2. Planning - Assessment plans are ongoing, reviewed and modified on an annual basis. Assessment results are used for the improvement of the program.
3. Faculty - Academic assessment is done by the faculty. Faculty must therefore own the assessment process by setting reasonable goals, gathering assessment data and evaluating results.
4. Alignment - Student learning goals should reflect the institution's core values and should be aligned with the published standards in the academic disciplines by specialized professional agencies.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for drafting, reviewing, and modifying the assessment plan lies with the Assistant Provost for Assessment in conjunction with the two faculty committees for Curriculum and Assessment (Graduate and Undergraduate) and the Institutional Assessment Committee with the assistance of the Deans and Provost.

The Curriculum and Assessment Committees are responsible to oversee the assessment of the core and to review the assessment plan for each academic program. The Curriculum and Assessment Committees review the assessment plans and results during the program review process by the examination of the results of external accreditation or by following the procedure for Program Academic Review found in Appendix B. The President's Executive Council and the Institutional Assessment Committee will monitor the development of the plan, including the non-academic components dealing with on-going assessment and support services review.

The vice presidents, deans, department heads, and directors of programs of the college will implement the plan. Ultimately the leadership will rely on the faculty and staff for implementation. The Curriculum and Assessment Committees will monitor assessment

practices, assist with training and development of the faculty for the continuing improvement of the assessment process at the college. The committees will work in conjunction with the Provost's office for needed resources. The Assistant Provost is tasked with institutional assessment and is an ex officio member of the Curriculum Committees to assist with communication and implementation of the assessment plan. The Deans have the responsibility to implement assessment plans constructed for each school, college or division.

The Institutional Assessment Committee will review the plan and the results of assessment annually. The Provost's office is responsible for implementation and maintenance of the plan.

Assessment of Student Learning

Student learning is defined by the student learning goals for each program and course. The student learning goals outline the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that are a result of the instructional process. At Nyack College each academic program and each support program has developed student learning goals. In addition programs have developed program goals that are specific to the development of the program. Examples of program goals include curriculum changes or additions, additional faculty, facilities, equipment and training for faculty. Assessment of student learning goals has largely been at the course level. Recent progress has been made to extend this assessment to the program level. While some programs have actively assessed program SLGs for a number of years other programs have only recently defined assessments for program level assessment of SLGs.

Student Learning Goals

The faculty develops student learning goals at all levels. Institution level goals are developed by the appropriate faculty committee. Program faculty develop program student learning goals and program goals. All professors list the course student learning goals in the course syllabus and link those goals to program goals and to specific assessments within the course. At times these assessments also become the key assessments identified by the program for the assessment of program SLGs.

Institutional Student Learning Goals

The undergraduate Committee for Curriculum and Assessment of the faculty has developed student learning goals for the undergraduate core curriculum. The current goals were developed over a two year process. The core goals are in alignment with the Core Values of the college. The undergraduate curriculum committee is responsible to review the goals on a regular basis and to monitor the performance of students in the core goals. This is done by the regular review of each program in the college and by assessments given by the Office of Institutional Research. Currently the Office of Institutional Research has begun a four year study of value added learning using the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). The Committee for Curriculum and Assessment and the Institutional Assessment Committee will review the results. The Committee for Curriculum and Assessment will also review other assessment results related to the core on a regular basis.

Program Student Learning Goals

The faculty of each program or major are responsible for developing Program Student Learning Goals for their respective program. The deans lead this process by working with the department chairs (undergraduate), program directors (graduate) and the faculty of each department. It is the responsibility of the faculty to review the goals periodically. Programs list all program SLGs in the catalog.

To assess the program SLGs the program faculty must develop an assessment plan with multiple assessments that address the knowledge, skills and dispositions of program candidates. The purpose is to improve student learning so clear learning goals are essential. Goals should focus on the central and important learning the institution, program, and faculty desire. The Dean of the program will review the program SLGs initially. The SLGs are reviewed by the department head annually when reporting assessment results and by the faculty during the academic program review process (Appendix B) and by the Institutional Assessment Committee.

Course Learning Goals

Faculty in a program are responsible for developing course level SLGs for courses in the program. The faculty in the program will decide how this will be done. It is the responsibility of the faculty, under the leadership of the department chair/program director, to review the course SLGs to insure that all program SLGs are being adequately addressed and assessed in the course level SLGs. All sections of a given course should have common student learning goals that focus on program SLGs. Faculty should identify these common goals together and add any additional learning goals they feel are necessary for their own course.

All syllabi contain the student learning goals for that course. The goals are linked to program and other standards using a matrix like the one below.

Student Learning Goals The Student will be able to:	Program Goals	Core Goals	Assignments & Assessments Used
1.			
2.			
3.			

Core Learning Goals

The undergraduate Committee for Curriculum and Assessment developed the core SLGs. This committee also has the responsibility to review the goals on a regular basis and to monitor the assessment of the core goals. The current version of the core goals are found in the undergraduate catalog. Revision of the core goals requires approval of the committee and the faculty assembly. They are then forwarded to the President and Board of Trustees for final approval.

Faculty in programs responsible for core courses will integrate the core SLGs into the courses offered by that program for the core. The undergraduate Curriculum and Assessment Committee is responsible for insuring that core courses have an adequate coverage and proper assessment of the core SLGs.

Assessing Program Student Learning Goals

Program assessments should be designed to give a comprehensive measure of the outcomes. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches to assessment may be used. Direct measures of student learning are preferred but indirect methods should also be considered. All students in a

program should participate in each designated assessment. In the case of course imbedded assessments with multiple sections, professors should agree upon a standard assessment.

Program assessments are given annually and the results reported in the Annual Program Assessment Report. The Dean of the program and the Institutional Assessment Committee annually review assessment results.

Communication of Results

The program will include a brief program assessment plan in the catalog. The results for individual assessments are communicated with individual students. Programs may include assessment results in an aggregate form in the catalog or other college publication. Disaggregated data will not be made public and should be stored and used in a way that is compliant with FERPA standards.

Course Level Assessment

The Office of Institutional Assessment has monitored course level assessment in the past using a course assessment report. While some deans continue that process as a way to monitor and insure quality course level assessment, it is not collected and reviewed institutionally at the time of this writing. It has been beneficial in raising the awareness of faculty to the quality of assessments and to the variety of assessment tools available.

Faculty members are encouraged to link course level assessments with course objectives. This is done using the chart shown above on page 10. Training in appropriate assessments for a given discipline is at the discretion of the dean and/or department head/program director. Training in the creation of effective assessments is done institutionally on an irregular basis by the Library faculty or other qualified faculty.

Curriculum Mapping

Curriculum mapping is done at all levels of the curriculum. The curriculum is mapped to emphasize the Mission and Core Values of the college. Core Values at the school and course level are related to student learning outcomes.

Core Values to Program Goals

Program Student Learning Goals are mapped to the Core Values of the college. Assessment data collected on each SLG may therefore be directly related to the Core Values. This data is not currently collected in Core Value categories in a summary fashion for institutional use. Each program is asked to inspect the results of program assessment in terms of the core values. It follows then that the programs will address deficiencies in the achievement of core values as it “closes the loop” by using assessment for improvement.

Program Goals to Course Level Goals

All program SLGs are mapped to course level SLGs. Professors are asked to create a chart of this mapping, such as the one on page 11 above, in each syllabus. This chart shows the relationship of the SLG for the course to the corresponding program SLG.

Core Goals to the Course Level Goals

All course level SLGs are related to the core goals in the same chart on page 11. While all course SLGs may not relate directly to the core goals the professor maps those that are in the SLG chart.

Using Assessment Results for Improvement of Student Learning

The purposes of assessment are not singular but have impact in multiple ways. The process of assessment has several benefits to the program.

- Identify the essential elements (Program SLGs) of the curriculum that all students will master.
- Insure that all essential elements (Program SLGs) are taught at some point in the curriculum,
- Identify metrics to determine if students are learning what is intended,
- Plan for improved instruction using the results of assessments to identify program curriculum weaknesses.

Each of these steps is valuable to program improvement. The entire process results in a loop of improvement that includes the four steps above and repeats in loops that includes all four steps, modification of SLGs, further assessment, continual assessment result review, and planning for improvement.

Timeline for Implementation of Planning for Improvement

The college has begun the implementation of all four steps of the assessment loop. All programs completed program SLGs by 2008. Each program submitted a program assessment plan during the 2008-9 school year and followed with an Annual Program Report in 2009. Several programs have completed all steps and have done so for several years. All programs should be on track to assess and plan after collecting data during the 2009-2010 school year.

Future years should see all programs and departments review the program SLGs based on assessment results, review the appropriateness of metrics used, review the results of current metrics and plan for changes to improve student learning. This process will be summarized in an Annual Program Report submitted in the summer or fall following any given school year. The report is reviewed annually by the Institutional Assessment Committee.

Institutional Assessment

In addition to the assessment of student learning goals, other assessment activities already in place in the institution can produce useful information about the improvement of student learning and the educational process. These ongoing assessment activities are described below and include institution wide activities in 1) student learning and development, 2) program assessment and 3) academic and administrative processes and functions.

The Institutional Assessment Committee, the Provost's Cabinet, the Academic Administrative Council, the President's Cabinet and other campus leaders review the results of these assessment activities annually. Each group will make observations and suggestions for changes or in depth study to the appropriate group. Opportunities for improvement will be identified, priorities set, resources allocated and plans developed for the improvement of teaching and administrative functions.

Institutional Assessments

The following tools are used by the institution currently or are planned for the near future. The office of Institutional Assessment manages these assessments.

Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is a tool designed to measure writing, critical thinking, problem solving skills and analytical reasoning. It was administered for the first time at Nyack College in fall 2009. The CLA is given to first time freshmen in the fall and seniors who were first time freshmen in the spring in a cross-sectional design to measure value added. The fall 2009 freshmen will be tracked in a longitudinal study by giving the CLA in the spring of their sophomore year and again in the spring of their senior year.

CLA results are compared with SAT scores to determine expected performance and to determine value added. Using SAT scores allows comparison to other institutions with similar populations of students. Students who do not have an SAT score take an additional test for comparison.

	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18
Freshmen	X				X				X
Sophmores		X				X			
Juniors									
Seniors	X			X	X			X	X

Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP)

The CIRP is a survey administered to entering traditional students who are first-time college students and transfers. The CIRP is administered during freshmen orientation or registration. There are indications that the CIRP was first used by Nyack as early as the mid eighties. The CIRP is administered on a bi-annual pattern. There are results of CIRP for 2000, 2002 and 2004. There are no results for 2006. This break in the bi-annual pattern is most likely due to employee

transition within Institutional Research. Administration of the CIRP in 2008 yielded low numbers of participants and as a result it was administered in Fall 2009, breaking the bi-annual pattern once again. The Fall 2009 report was given only to true first time freshmen.

The CIRP gathers information on entering freshmen that provides a profile of a wide range of student characteristics: parental income and education, ethnicity, and other demographic items; financial aid; secondary school achievement and activities; educational and career plans; and values, attitudes, beliefs, and self-concept. The CIRP is part of an annual data gathering effort involving approximately 700 two-year colleges, four-year colleges and universities that administer the CIRP Freshman Survey to over 400,000. National results are published annually in "The American Freshman." The results from these surveys continue to provide a comprehensive portrait of the changing character of student entering American colleges and universities.

Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)

The SSI is a tool that measures student satisfaction as it pertains to college related items and identifies student priorities. It uses the responses to assess the strengths and challenges of colleges. Findings from the Student Satisfaction Inventory™ are automatically compared to national standards by institution type on the following scales. **Academic Advising Effectiveness** (also called Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness) assesses the academic advising program, evaluating advisors and counselors on their knowledge, competence, approachability, and personal concern for students.

Campus Climate evaluates how the institution promotes a sense of campus pride and belonging.

Campus Support Services assesses the quality of support programs and services.

Concern for the Individual assesses your commitment to treating each student as an individual. This assessment includes groups who deal personally with students (e.g., faculty, advisors, counselors, and staff).

Instructional Effectiveness measures students' academic experiences, the curriculum, and the campus's commitment to academic excellence.

Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness measures the competence of admissions counselors, along with students' perceptions of the financial aid programs.

Registration Effectiveness assesses registration and billing, including how smooth the registration process is.

Responsiveness to Diverse Populations assesses the institution's commitment to specific groups of students enrolled at the institution (e.g., under-represented populations, students with disabilities, commuters, part-time students, and adult learners).

Safety and Security measures the campus' responsiveness to students' personal safety and security.

Service Excellence measures quality of service and personal concern for students in various areas of campus.

Student Centeredness measures the institution's attitude toward students and the extent to which they feel welcome and valued

The SSI is given in mid to late Fall in conjunction with the schedule of the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities in an attempt to establish norms against which Christian colleges can

compare their results with other Christian colleges. The SSI is administered on a bi-annual basis. Results are available for 2003, 2005 and 2007. Fall 2009 is the last administration of the SSI. The SSI will be replaced by the NSSE.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

The NSSE is the choice for student engagement in the variety of activities and functions of a residential campus. It is also appropriate for the commuter campus in NYC. The past decade similar information was gathered using the Student Satisfaction Survey. A change will be made due to the length and usefulness of the SSI when compared to the NSSE.

The NSSE obtains information about student participation in programs and activities that institutions provide for their learning and personal development. The results provide an estimate of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college. Survey items on the NSSE represent empirically confirmed "good practices" in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college.

The NSSE will be given in fall 2010 for the first time and repeated every two years.

Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)

The FSSE was designed to complement the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which is administered to undergraduate students. The FSSE is used to determine the faculty's perceptions of how often students engage in various activities, the importance faculty place on various areas of learning and development, the nature and frequency of faculty-student interactions and how faculty members organize their time, both in and out of the classroom.

American College Testing (ACT)

The ACT for post-secondary institutions is responsible for several instruments newly implemented by Nyack College. These include the following:

The Alumni Survey

The Alumni Survey gathers employment history, financial information and furtherance of education. It was administered to 2008 Nyack College graduates (not restricted to undergrads) during the summer of 2009.

The Withdrawing/Non-Returning Student Survey(WNRSS)

This is a newly implemented tool to be administered to students who withdraw without filling out a withdrawal survey and/or who do not complete an exit interview. It is to be mailed and/or administered via telephone.

Adult Learner Needs Assessment Survey(ALNAS)

The ALNAS is designed to provide feedback from the adult student perspective. It was first used in October 2009 with adult students in the undergraduate program for Organizational Leadership.

Entering Student Questionnaire (ESQ)

The ESQ is a survey given to entering Alliance Theological Seminary (ATS) students. The ESQ is developed by The Association of Theological Schools (TATS). The ESQ is designed to gain insight into students' motivations for entering into seminary. A report is generated by TATS and distributed to the Nyack College ATS Dean. The ESQ is administered during registration or orientation in August/September and in January. TATS provides annual comparative reports using data from similar seminaries for ATS. There are reports for ATS as early as 2001.

Graduate Student Questionnaire (GSQ)

The GSQ is a survey given to graduating ATS students. It is developed by TATS. The GSQ is designed to gain insight into the students' level of satisfaction with their seminary education and post graduate intentions. A report is generated by TATS and distributed to the ATS Dean. The GSQ is given in May just prior to graduation.

Alumni Questionnaire (AQ)

The AQ is a survey given to ATS alumni. It is developed by TATS. The AQ was administered at ATS in 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2009. The AQ collects financial information, employment history and persistent satisfaction with seminary education.

Student Instructional Survey (SIS)

The SIS assesses student perceptions about the courses they take. It is administered at the end of the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters. The survey moved to an on-line format in the fall of 2008 to provide prompt results to faculty. The students respond to questions about the professor, the integration of faith and learning, and the course. Summary reports are provided to the professor for each class and to each Dean on all courses in that school.

Fact Book

The Office of Institutional Research develops an annual fact book of more than 30 pages that describe the current and past academic year for the entire institution. The fact book contains current enrollment by site and program, presents demographic information by program and site, gives historical enrollment data, FTE, citizenship, C&MA enrollment, denominational affiliation of students, admissions data, first time freshmen data, degree enrollment, degrees conferred in the previous year, retention data, graduation rates, state or country of origin, faculty information, tuition and fee information, and a summary of facilities. Caveats as to just what should be included in the Fact Book and to what extent is an on-going process. Fact Books for the last ten years are available. Fact Books are on file in various forms dating back to the 1980s.

An addition to the fact book is planned that will summarize the findings of Program Assessment as outlined in the following sections.

Program Assessment

Program assessment is based on program SLGs and metrics selected by the program to assess the SLGs. Each program submits an annual report on the results of program assessment and this becomes the record of assessment results for that academic year. The rationale and procedures are provided in the Nyack College and Alliance Theological Seminary Guide to Planning and Assessment found in Appendix D.

Annual Program Report

The Annual Program Report (APR) is submitted during the summer or fall following the school year. The report (found at the end of Appendix D) gives an overview of assessment results, analysis of assessment data, changes made as a result of past assessment results, revised assessment plan and plans for future changes. The report is reviewed annually by the Institutional Assessment Committee.

Annual Assessment Results

Assessment results are reported annually with the APR. Analysis of the data is included in the APR. The APR is found in Appendix D.

Assessment Plans

Assessment plans are updated annually as a part of the APR. The format for program assessment plans is found in Appendix D.

Institutional Assessment Committee

The Institutional Assessment Committee meets twice monthly and reviews one or two programs of the college during each meeting. The committee includes the Provost, Assistant Provost and the Director of Institutional Research. Each week the Dean and other appropriate faculty and staff are included in the meeting to review their area of the college.

Institutional Program Review

The institution reviews all programs on a regular basis. A procedure and schedule for program review are included in Appendix B.

Programs that are reviewed using external specialized professional agencies (SPA) as the primary review are scheduled using the timeline of the SPA. The SPA self-study, visit report and program reply are reviewed by the appropriate faculty Curriculum and Assessment Committee, Institutional Assessment Committee, and the administration.

Programs that are reviewed using internal committees use a five year cycle. The appropriate faculty Curriculum and Assessment Committee will appoint a committee to oversee the process of the self-study, the review of the self-study and curriculum, and the writing of a summary report.

The review process for both external and internal review is outlined in Appendix B of this document. The Office of the Provost works with the appropriate faculty Curriculum and Assessment Committee to insure reviews are completed.

Periodic Studies of Selected Issues

The assessment of institutional quality and performance is enhanced by periodic studies conducted by the office of Institutional Research for administration, divisions or schools. The office of institutional research (IR) produces an annual factbook and multiple reports to a variety of state, federal and private agencies. Examples of the studies produced are those used to address specific questions or targeting specific groups of students. Example of IR reporting would be:

- Graduation and retention
- Admissions – students who apply and do not come
- Transfer students
- GPA and Admission status
- Chapel Satisfaction

In addition to IR some divisions and schools produce studies and reports focused on specific issues to increase effectiveness or modify curriculum. An example of this type of study is the learning resource center survey of users.

Appendix A Mission Statement and Core Values

Mission Statement

“Nyack College, A Christian & Missionary Alliance Educational Institution, through its undergraduate, graduate, and seminary programs, pursues its historic mission of preparing men and women to ‘take the whole Gospel to the whole world.’”

Nyack College Mission Statement

Nyack College, a Christian liberal arts college of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, seeks to assist students in their spiritual, intellectual, and social formation, preparing them for lives of service to Christ and His church and to society in a way that reflects the Kingdom of God and its ethnic diversity.

ATS Mission Statement

Alliance Theological Seminary (ATS) is an evangelical seminary committed to preparing servants of Jesus Christ in the areas of heart (personal formation experiences), mind (educational experience), and feet (ministry experience).

“Alliance Theological Seminary is the national seminary of The Christian & Missionary Alliance, centered in metropolitan New York with extensions in other parts of the United States and abroad. As a multicultural, evangelical seminary, ATS is committed to developing in men and women a personal knowledge of God and His work in the world in order to equip them for the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the extension of His Church.”

Vision

“A University Alone Can Fill the Demand...”

A.B. Simpson, 1904

Today, for Nyack is to be as Academically Excellent, Globally Engaged, Intentionally Diverse, Personally Transforming, and Socially Relevant as our mission demands that we be, Nyack must do so as a university.

Nyack’s Vision

Why A University?

If Nyack is to meet the demand of its mission, we must provide the breadth and diversity of academic programming of a university. It is this breadth and diversity of programming that is critical to our mission, not the term, “university”.

CORE VALUES

Nyack College and Alliance Theological Seminary seek to exalt Jesus Christ and fulfill their mission by being:

Academically Excellent

Pursuing academic excellence in the spirit of grace and humility.

Globally Engaged

Fostering a global perspective within a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Christian academic community.

Intentionally Diverse

Providing Educational Access and Support to motivated students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Personally Transforming

Emphasizing the integration of faith, learning and spiritual transformation.

Socially Relevant

Preparing students to serve in ministerial, educational, healing and community-building professions.

Appendix B Academic Program Review

Academic Program Review

Introduction

This document explains the purpose of, and procedures for, academic reviews at Nyack College and Seminary. Academic Program Review (APR) is a function of the Office of the Provost in cooperation with the Faculty committees on Curriculum and Assessment. It is designed to evaluate the quality, productivity, and role of each academic program and program in the fulfillment of Nyack's mission and core values.

APR serves to encourage self-study and planning within programs, to ensure comparability among review reports, and to strengthen the linkages connecting the planning agendas and practices of individual programs with those of their colleges and of Nyack as a whole. Reviews inform budgetary planning decisions at every level of administration. Although this document has been designed for the review of academic programs, it can also serve as a model for the review of other types of programs that exist within Nyack including interdisciplinary programs and academic support services by using relevant items in the self-study guidelines and review report.

The Process

1. The Provost and Deans select programs to be reviewed on a five-year rotation.
2. Provost sets the schedule for review. The curriculum committee appoints an Academic Review Team (ART) for each program.
3. The program under review conducts a thorough "self study"; and submits to the Dean for distribution to the Review Team.
4. The ART reviews the self-study and may request additional information from program.
5. The ART conducts full review of the program and prepares report to the Curriculum and Assessment Committee, Dean and Provost.
6. The program may prepare a formal response to the ART report and submits the response to Provost and Dean.
7. The Provost, Dean and Program Chair or Director hold "follow-up" meeting to discuss the final Academic Program Review (APR) (self study, review team report, program response), to formalize the programs response to recommendations and steps needed to meet new goals.
8. The Dean prepares the school's response to the APR report indicating priorities to be pursued and how the program fits into the school's goals. The school's response is submitted to the Provost along with the APR report.
9. The APR, departmental response and dean's report are reviewed by the Provost and the appropriate faculty Curriculum and Assessment Committee.

Organization and Responsibilities

Academic programs will normally be reviewed at five-year intervals. Academic program reviews will not be needed if an appropriate external review is done on a regular basis. The faculty Curriculum and Assessment Committees will have the opportunity to suggest programs or programmatic areas for review. The undergraduate Curriculum and Assessment Committee will review the core curriculum every five years. The Provost coordinates all reviews, working

with the program under review and with the review panel to ensure that the process will be fair, efficient, and effective.

Each review is conducted by a Academic Review Team (ART). The ART will normally be composed of three to five members, typically three Curriculum Committee members, one faculty member at large, with the possibility of one external faculty member. The external reviewer comes from disciplines related to that of the program under review. The ART members will be selected as follows:

1. Three members of the appropriate faculty Curriculum and Assessment Committee. They should not be part of the program under review.
2. The program under review may choose one additional Nyack faculty member.
3. If needed, one external member chosen by the Dean of the division or school whose program is under review.

The Chair of the Curriculum Committee with approval of the Provost will appoint one of the team members to be chairperson of the panel. The Provost will establish the time of the review in advance and set a schedule for the accomplishment of the review. The Dean of the program under review is responsible for handling hotel accommodations for external reviewers and will provide the necessary travel information to the reviewers.

The review process can be summarized into three parts: *self-study*, *review*, and *follow-up*. In preparation for the review, the program will undertake a self-study based on the guidelines that appear later in this document. The self-study phase sets the agenda and establishes the program's responsibility for its own planning and goal setting within the context of school and Nyack College priorities.

The review is done by the ART who reads the self-study carefully and is encouraged to request additional materials as needed. The Provost, Dean and Program Chair or Program Director will work to ensure that representatives from diverse constituencies within the program are included in the review process. The ART may want to interview program professors and students, review syllabi, review historical data, and visit classes. The ART may need to set a review day to complete the report. During the review day, all Review Board Team members are expected to participate in the full schedule of events. All ART members will participate in the review and in the formation of the team's written report. It is the responsibility of the ART chairperson to ensure that the internal and external members of the ART work together throughout the review and that the final report reflects the interaction of all members of the ART.

The effectiveness of the review will depend on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the self-study and team report. Since implementation will be tied directly to the incorporation of the goals that have been defined for the program in relation to Nyack's core values, it is essential that the team approach its charge from the perspective of the program's role within the academic school and the college as a whole. The ART's report should be completed within one month of the review and forwarded by the ART Chairperson to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee and the Provost. A schedule for reviews and format for self-studies and team reports are included in this document.

Upon receipt of the review team's report by the Provost, it is distributed to the Dean, head of the program, and program faculty for reading and response. The department then provides a formal response to the report and submits it to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee, Provost and Dean. If necessary, the ART report and program response are discussed at a follow-up meeting with the Provost, the Program Chair or Director, and the Dean. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the recommendations of the report and the next steps that will be taken

to reach institution, school, and program goals. The results of this meeting are summarized in a written document to be prepared by the Dean. This document will be used for planning and budgeting decisions regarding the program and be used in revision of the strategic plan. The appropriate Curriculum and Assessment Committee will review the self-study, panel report, department response, and dean's report during regularly scheduled meetings, generally the following year.

In the case of external reviews by accrediting agencies, the self-study is submitted as required by the external reviewers. The agency's visiting team will write a response to the self-study. A ART will also read the self-study and response. A short report will be submitted based on those reports to the Curriculum Committee, Dean, and Provost. A follow-up meeting will take place after all reports are received between the Dean, program chairs or program directors, and Provost. The Dean will summarize the meeting in a written document that will outline follow-up deemed necessary from the program(s) self-study and review report(s). The Curriculum and Assessment Committee will review these reports during regularly scheduled meetings.

Self-Study Guidelines

The self-study document describes the program as it has evolved and is presently constituted and indicates its aspirations for both short-term and long-term development. It should place the program within the context of college and Nyack's academic priorities and of developments within the program's discipline; and it should address the major issues confronting the program and suggest how they might be resolved. It is highly recommended that the preparation of this document be based upon open discussions that include all faculty (and in some cases, professional staff) in the program.

The self-study document shall include the following elements (where appropriate):

1. General information about the program:
 - History of the program.
 - Data on students, faculty, staff, facilities, etc.
 - Data on the growth or trends in the program over the past five years.
2. A statement of intended student learning goals at the program level.
3. A plan for assessing these outcomes. The plan should include the methods of assessment of programmatic student learning outcomes by direct measurement.
4. Program Student Learning Outcome data:
 - Executive summary of assessment results to date.
 - Description of the analysis of the data, interpretations of the data and recommendations for improvement.
 - A description of the use of assessment results to make program improvements.
 - Impact of curricular or programmatic changes made as a result.
5. The research and scholarly productivity of the program.
 - Summary of each professors scholarly work in the past five years.
 - Analysis of the relation of research productivity to faculty workload, teaching, and support of students.
 - Evidence of faculty/professional staff productivity.
 - Data on the sources and amount of external research funding.

- Description of the program's relationship to other institutional research and to other interdisciplinary research groups.
 - Regional and national professional activities of the faculty, staff and students.
6. The results of a focused inquiry addressing issues of particular interest/concern to the program. This theme of inquiry is proposed by the program faculty to the Dean and Provost for approval. The inquiry should be addressed as questions that can be answered by data presently in hand or readily available.
 7. Summary and Conclusion that includes recommended strategic goals for the program and modifications to the Student Learning Outcomes for the program.

Items of special interest to Nyack College and Seminary for the 2007-10 years include:

1. The relation of the core values to the student learning outcomes and student achievement as related to the core values.
2. Attention to factors affecting retention and graduation rates.
3. Allignment of program learning outcomes to school and college outcomes and core values.
4. Evidence of the program's emphasis on the development of cultural and global competence of students.
5. Evidence of the integration of the Christian faith in the learning of students.

Typical Review Schedule

The purpose of a day for the ART to focus on the review and a review schedule is to ensure that reviews are thorough and fair. It is not necessary to schedule one day for these events but if an external team member is present as much of the schedule below should be included as possible.

All members of the program under review should have the opportunity to interact with the review team. Reviews normally begin with an orientation to the review and give team members the opportunity to ask questions about the program. The chairperson of the ART is usually selected prior to the orientation. The ART members will meet with all faculty from the program. Designated program faculty escort the team on a tour of the program's facilities and other campus facilities pertinent to the program's operations. Classes may be visited while in progress if appropriate and some time may need to be spent at both the NYC campus and Rockland campus to fully understand the program.

The team will meet with the department chair or program director. Appropriate representatives from other college-wide offices are interviewed as needed. During the review, time should be set aside for professional staff to meet with the team, if requested. The panel will also meet with undergraduate and graduate students from the program both in individual sessions and as a group.

The ART may also meet with the Provost or the person designated by the Provost. Members of the committee may also conduct any other interviews that they, the Provost, the Dean, or the Program Chair or Director will request.

The review will include time for the team to meet alone to outline their report and to distribute the writing responsibilities. The report is due one month following the completion of the review. At the conclusion of the review, the team will hold an exit interview with the Program Chair or Program Director, Dean, and Provost.

The Review Report

The report should place the program under review in the larger context of Nyack's academic priorities and of developments in the program's discipline. It should take account of the program's role within Nyack. It should address the major issues facing the program, comment on the compatibility of the program's purpose, achievements, plans and goals with those of the college and Nyack's academic priorities, and suggest strategies for achieving program and Nyack goals. To accomplish these purposes the report should consider the following points as appropriate to the mission of the program.

Assessment Plan and Results

- Is the assessment plan adequate and appropriate?
- Are the data used for program improvement?
- Are the Student Learning Outcomes realistic and appropriate?
- Is the analysis of the data useful?

Competitiveness

- What will the program have to do to achieve or maintain national or regional competitiveness in the next decade?

Students

- How well is the program performing its teaching function?
- Is there evidence that the program has clear goals on student learning outcomes, assessment process(es) are in place and that the results are being utilized?
- Do undergraduate students receive appropriate mentoring and advisement?
- Is the curriculum sound and sufficiently rigorous?
- Is the program properly staffed to fulfill its undergraduate responsibilities?
- Are classes the appropriate size to accomplish its teaching and learning goals?
- Is the program fulfilling its responsibilities to majors and non-majors with regard to the general education initiative including first year experiences, study abroad, research, service learning and other discovery learning programs, capstone course(s), core requirements, multicultural courses, the Honors Program, and pre-requisites for other programs?

Faculty Research and Scholarship

- Are the research, creative activity, and scholarship of the faculty appropriate to the program's mission and overall responsibilities with regard to quality and quantity?
- Are research facilities and library resources appropriate to support faculty research?
- Are faculty generating external funding to the degree that they might?
- Are the faculty engaged in regional and national professional organizations?

Faculty and Staff

- How well are faculty and staff resources being used?
- Are faculty and staff workloads equitable?
- Are staff positions and expectations clearly defined?

Service

- Is the program active in serving the community?

Core Values

- Is the program addressing all of Nyack's Core Values?

Diversity

- Is the program taking appropriate steps to meet Nyack’s goal to achieve a diverse faculty and student body, to offer multicultural courses, and to promote respect for all people?

Support

- Is the program receiving adequate support from the college at large in the context of budgetary constraints affecting higher education in general.
- Are library and other resources appropriate to support the program's programs?

Plans, Goals, and Resource Allocation

- To what degree is the program central to the academic priorities of Nyack and to the program's college priorities?
- How do the program's plans and goals serve to fulfill its mission?
- Is the program trying to do too much?
- What, if any, of the program's requests for additional resources does the team support, and why? How might the program's resources be redistributed to realize its goals and those of Nyack?

Focused Inquiry

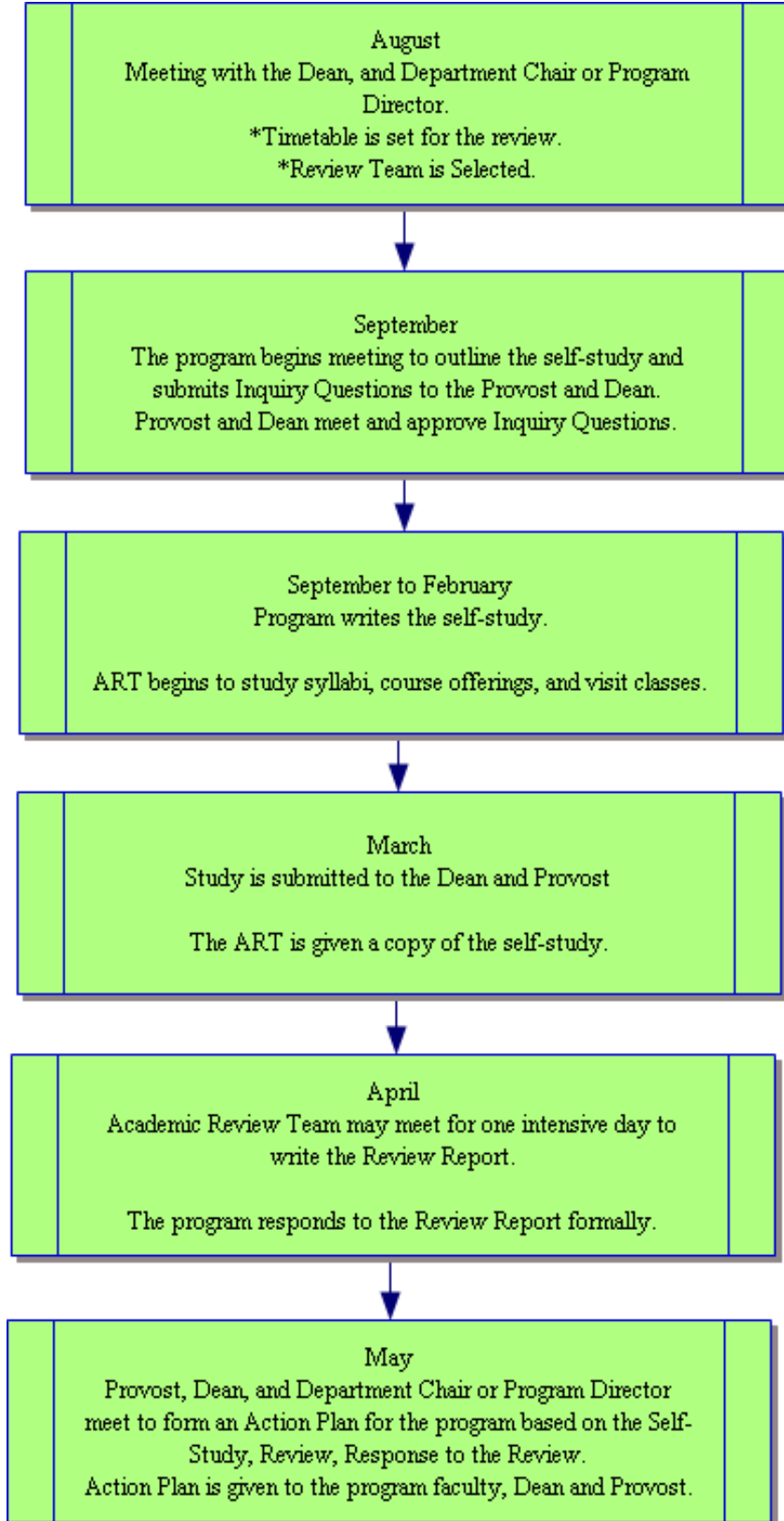
- Has the program adequately responded to the focus of the inquiry?
- Are the recommendations appropriate?
- Are there other recommendations that should be included?
- Is the strategic plan of the department realistic and achievable?

Sources

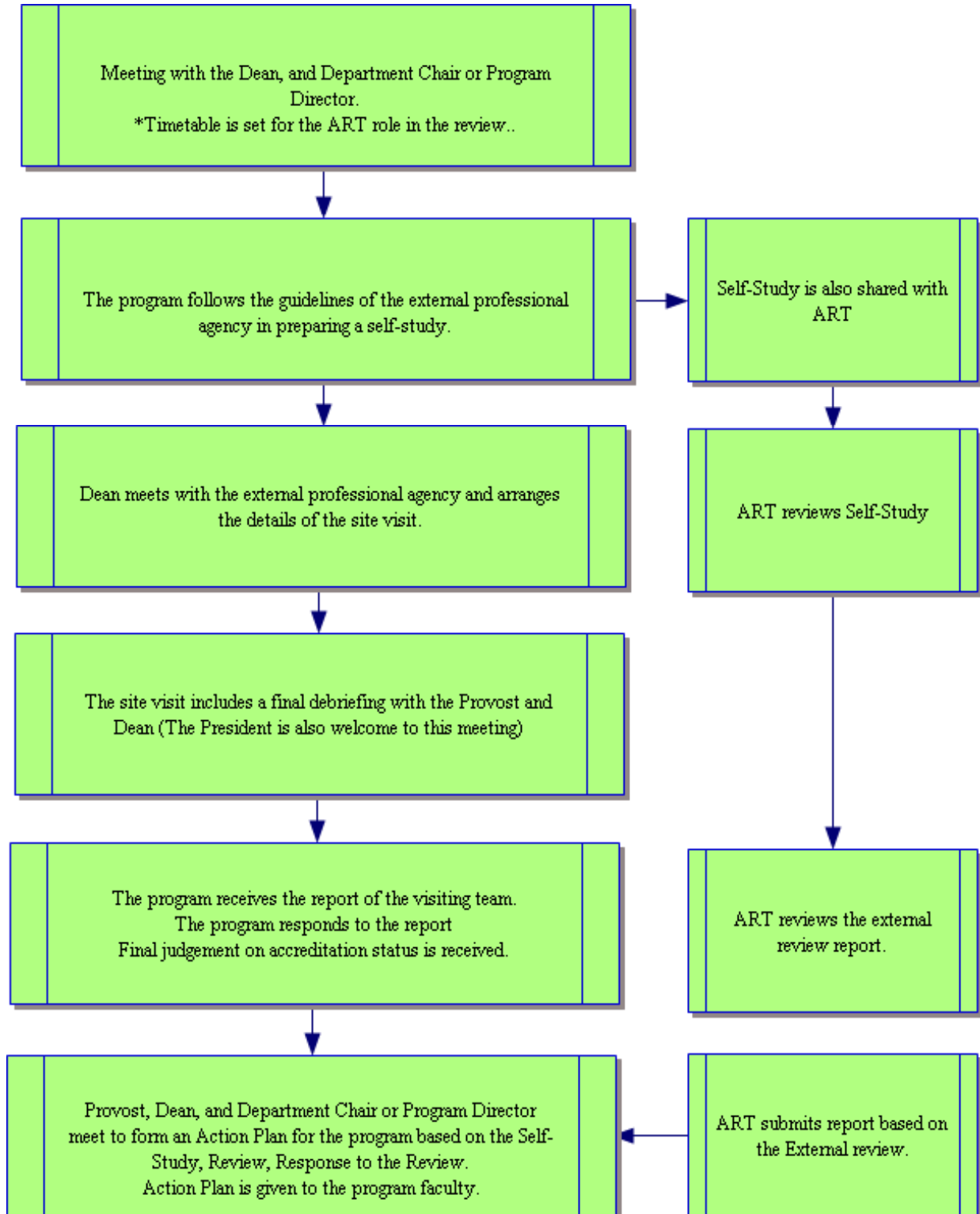
University of Delaware Academic Program Review, www.udel.edu.

California Polytechnic State University, Academic Program Review, www.academicprograms.calpoly.edu.

Process Flowchart for Internal Program Review



Process Flowchart for External Academic Program Review



Program Review Schedule

Program	EXTERNAL REVIEW AGENCY	Last Reviewed	Next Review
Alliance Theological Seminary	The Association of Theological Schools	2000	2010
Biblical Lit. NT			
Biblical Lit. OT			
Intercultural Studies			
Theology and Missions			
Urban Ministry			
School of Education	The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)	2005	2011
	The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)	2005	2015
Early Childhood	National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	New	2010
Childhood	Association of Childhood Education International (ACEI)	2005	2010
Childhood Grad	National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	New	2010
Childhood/SPED	Both ACEI and CEC	New	2010
SPED Grad	Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)	New	2010
Adolescent English	National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)	2005	2010
Adolescent Math	National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)	2005	2010
Adolescent Social Studies	National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)	2005	2010
TESOL	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	2005	2010
Inclusive Education Gifted	National Association for Gifted Children -Council for Exceptional Children (NAGC-CEC)	New	2010
Inclusive Education Middle School	National Middle School Association (NMSA)	New	2010

Program	EXTERNAL REVIEW AGENCY	Last Reviewed	Next Review
Inclusive Education Bilingual Education	Teacher's of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	Not offered yet	new
School of Music	The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)	2000	2010
Church Music			
Composition			
Instrumental Performance			
Music			
Music Education			
Piano Performance			
Voice Performance			
Center for Biblical and Ministerial Studies			
Biblical and Theological Studies			2011-12
Intercultural Studies and Missiology			2012-13
Pastoral Ministry			2013-14
Youth Ministry and Christian Educaiton			2010-11
College of Arts and Science			
Biology and Chemistry	No Degree		2011-12
Communications			2010-11
English			2012-13
Fine Arts	No Degree		2013-14
History and Political Science			2009-10
Interdisciplinary Studies			2010-11
Mathematics			2011-12
Modern Languages and Linguistics	No Degree		2012-13
Philosophy			2013-14
Physical Education	No Degree		2011-12
Physical Sciences	No Degree		2011-12
Psychology			2012-13
Religion			2009-10
Sociology			2013-14

Program	EXTERNAL REVIEW AGENCY	Last Reviewed	Next Review
School of Human Services			
Social Work	The Council for Social Work Education	2004-05	2012
Alliance Graduate School of Counseling – Counseling	Began Preparation for Accreditation in 2008		2011
AGSC – Marriage and Family Therapy		New	2011
School of Business and Leadership	Began Preparation for Accreditation in 2008		2012
Accounting			2012
Business Administration			2012
Computer Science			2012
Distance Education	No Degree		2012
Organizational Management			2012
Master of Business Administration		2007-8	2012
MS Organizational Management			2012
Division of Student Success			
Disability Support Services			2011-12
ESL			2012-13
First Year Studies			2013-14
HEOP			2009-10
Learning Assistance Services			2010-11
NIA			2012-13
Academic Development			2011-12
Division of Library Services			
ATS			2011-12
NYC			2012-13
Rockland			2013-14
Division of Academic Records			
Undergraduate			2011-12
Graduate			2012-13
Division of Student			

Program	EXTERNAL REVIEW AGENCY	Last Reviewed	Next Review
Development			
Career Services			2011-12
Counseling Services			2012-13
Residence Life			2013-14
Spiritual Formation			2010-11

Appendix C. 2005 Review of Assessment History

Nyack College has had a strong plan for and implementation of institution-level assessment since 1996-97 and began program-level assessment in 1998-99. The 2000 Report of the Middle States Evaluation Team commended the College for all that it had accomplished in assessment. Since their visit, the half-time Director of Institutional Research, who directs the institution's assessment efforts, has become full-time and now has the support of a half-time administrative assistant. Further, the College plans to add the position of Associate Provost for Assessment and Strategic Planning in either the fall of 2006 or 2007. In 2003, an Assessment Taskforce was appointed by the VPAA to develop a plan for and implement a program of course-level assessment. What follows is a discussion of the institution's efforts since the last Self Study in the areas of institution, program and course-level assessments. The Assessment Plan of the College are found in Attachment 14.

Institution-Level Assessment

The broad range of institution-level assessment activities that occur at the College are delineated in the Assessment Plan of the College. Progress made since the last Self Study is indicated below.

Prior to 1996, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs carried out a comprehensive schedule of assessment activities. However, there was no formal articulation of an institutional plan for assessment. In 1996, under the direction of the Director of Institutional Research, an Assessment Committee was formed with the charge to develop an institutional assessment plan for student learning. The Seminary, under a separate administrative structure, was not a part of this process. Before completing the plan, the Committee completed the preparatory steps recommended in 1995 Middle States report, *Outcomes Assessment in the Middle States Region*. These included an inventory of the institution's operative statements of missions, goals and objectives, and an inventory and thorough examination of the assessment activities and instruments already in place. Additional assessment instruments and activities were considered and selected to round out the range of activities that would assure the availability of data for evaluating the institution-level student learning goals.

At the end of academic year 1998-1999, the Committee disbanded and was not reappointed as it was felt that the Committee had achieved its objective. Indeed, the Middle States team that visited in spring 2000 noted the positive progress that had occurred in assessment to that date.

Since the 2000 Self Study, institution-level assessment has been carried out according to the Assessment Plan formalized in April 1998, a plan which has and does continue to evolve to accommodate the changing needs of the institution. Priorities and accomplishments in institution-level assessment in the last five years are as follows:

1. Extending assessment practices and projects to branches and extensions, particularly to the campus in New York City where the bi-annual Student Satisfaction Survey, Survey of

Seniors, Faculty Survey and Vocational/Educational Preference Survey were successfully implemented.

2. Establishing new vehicles of communication for more effectively disseminating assessment results and resources: Institutional Research web page at the Nyack College website; electronic version of the institution's *Factbook*; Institutional Research Bulletin and Briefs (electronic newsletter to the campus community); electronic location for storage of assessment findings and resources that are accessible to any employee.
3. Identifying appropriate groups or offices on campus to take ownership of routine institution-level assessment in order to promote the best possible participation and best use of results.
4. Establishing the Office of Institutional Research as the source on campus for comprehensive data useful for assessment purposes: state, federal and accreditation reporting was brought into the Office; the Office also became the site for warehousing of term enrollment data and assessment results which enables the more efficient preparation of longitudinal studies.

Program-Level Assessment

Program-level assessment has evolved in the following manner in the past seven years:

1998-99	Academic departments were required to submit formal assessment plans for assessment of the major. For many, this meant developing program-level student learning goals. In addition, at least one assessment activity was to be implemented during the year and a report summarizing the assessment process submitted by year-end. A faculty development seminar in November and several meetings with department heads occurred to guide them in these processes. Compliance: 17 assessment plans submitted (some covering several majors); reports covering 23 (of 33) majors were submitted.
1999-00	At the fall Faculty Retreat, to inspire departments in the program-level assessment process, two departments (Youth Ministry and Religion) shared how assessment results led to program-level improvements in their areas. Annual assessment reports, along with updated assessment plans, were required. Personal contact was made with non-compliant department heads from the prior year to offer assistance and urge their compliance in the current year. Compliance: 20 reports covering 25 (of 33) majors were submitted.

2000-01	<p>A faculty “Peer Reading Group for Departmental Assessment Reports” was formed to “read the annual assessment reports of academic departments and interact with the departments to recommend improvements in processes related to assessment of the major.” The group prepared by reading background materials relevant to major field assessment. An evaluative tool was provided to guide the group as they read the major field assessment reports from the prior year. The group found that there had been too little progress in too many departments, and determined that minimal standards should be set for the current year. Guidelines for annual assessment activities and reporting requirements were re-written to include specific instructions requiring that (a) student learning outcomes must be the focus of assessment activities, and (b) at least one direct assessment of student learning would be undertaken in the current year. By the end of the year, oversight for major level assessment was re-assigned to the Office of the VPAA to release the Director of Institutional Research, who provided directorship of all assessment up to this time, for other new responsibilities relative to the student record-keeping system conversion slated for the fall term.</p>
2001-02	<p>Program-level assessment continued under the direction of the office of the VPAA. Annual assessment reports were required again in this year as per the manual for academic department heads.</p>
2002-03	<p>In spring 2003, following re-structuring in the office of the VPAA, oversight for program-level assessment returned to the Director of Institutional Research. Annual assessment reports were again required as per the manual for academic department heads. (Compliance: 9 reports covering 16 of 34 majors)</p>
2003-04	<p>The Peer Reading Group made concerted efforts during the fall term to promote participation in program-level assessment. Presentations were made to faculty at each of the fall and spring retreats; the Peer Reading Group worked with the new school deans to inform them of their responsibility to oversee the compliance of their departments, and assessment manuals were distributed to all department heads. The format for annual assessment reports was re-designed in a way that guided the process. For the first time, program-level assessment reports and plans were required for graduate and seminary programs, and academic support and co-curricular programs were encouraged to join the process. (Compliance: 18 undergraduate reports were submitted covering 22 of the 34 majors; 3 seminary and graduate reports were submitted covering 3 of 7 degree programs; 1 academic support program report was submitted).</p>

2004-05	Program-level assessment reports were again required for all undergraduate major programs and seminary and graduate degree programs. Efforts were made to extend the requirement to additional co-curricular and academic support programs as staffing resources allow.
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Central to the progress made over the last five years in program-level assessment is the Faculty Peer Reading Group. The purpose of the Faculty Peer Reading Group is to encourage a climate of assessment on campus by the education of members who will subsequently share that knowledge with others and apply it to other assessment processes in which they are involved. Members become educated via pre-requisite reading of integral literature (e.g., the Middle States guide on Student Learning Assessment) in the area of assessment, exposure to the variety of assessment methods articulated in the multiple reports which they read and meaningful dialogue with other committee members on issues related to assessment as they work in a team to evaluate assessment reports. The group provides a non-threatening form of feedback (i.e., from peers rather than supervisors) to program heads with regard to their program-level assessment.

Faculty who have served as Peer Reading Group members are as follows:

- 2000-01 Dr. Bennett Schepens, Dr. George Stratis, Dr. Jonathan Gates, Dr. Richard Pease
- 2003-04 Dr. Eleanor Pease, Dr. Elaine Bow, Dr. Charles Awasu, Dr. Stephen Bennett
- 2004-05 John Bucher, Dr. Ronald Walborn, Denise Hirschlein, Dr. Anita Underwood

Under the current institutional assessment plan, program-level assessment is conducted on an on-going basis in accordance with the assessment plan for each respective program as developed by the department giving oversight to the program. Assessment activities are reported annually with reports subject to review by the supervising Deans and, under the guidance of the Director of Institutional Research, the Faculty Peer Reading Group. Attachment 14 contains samples of the program-level assessment reports completed for the 2003-04 academic year.

Course-Level Assessment

In August 2003, the VPAA authorized the creation of an Assessment Task Force whose charter was to:

Further develop and refine an assessment process, which already includes institutional and program-level assessment, but needed to develop a coherent plan for course-level assessment to conform to the new “university model.” The Taskforce was asked to focus on course-level assessment since institution and program-level assessment would continue to occur through the Office of Institutional Research. Approved course-level assessment plans were to be implemented in academic year 2003-04 and recycled in

academic year 2004-05.

The task force began its work in September 2003 and was structured with broad representation from academic and non-academic support centers within the college. The initial task force was structured as follows:

1. Dr. George Stratis (Co-Chair)– Associate Dean of the School of Business, Computer Science, And Communication; Professor of Business and Finance
2. Dr. Elaine C. Bow (Co-Chair)– Associate Professor of Industrial and Organizational Psychology
3. Adelaide J. Pabon – Director of Academic Development
4. Dr. Claire P. Henry – Dean of Students
5. Dr. Dion Harrigan – Head, Department of Adolescent Education; Assistant Professor of Education
6. Elena Murphy – Director of Assessment of Prior Learning
7. Dr. Glenn Koponen – Associate Dean of the School of Music; Professor of Music Education and Applied Music
8. Karen Widbin – Director of Institutional Research
9. Earl S. Miller – Vice President for Student Development
10. Dr. Evangeline Tolley – Assistant Professor of Counseling
11. Dr. Jan Dale – Associate Professor of Christian Education and Discipleship
12. Linda K. Poston – Associate Dean of Library
13. Keith Davie – Director of Athletics
- 14. Dona Schepens – Assistant Treasurer**
- 15. Dr. Franklin MacArthur – Assistant Professor of Counseling**

The Task Force laid out the following five assumptions that would be foundations for the process and achieve the goal of developing a coherent plan for course-level assessment:

1. Ensure conformity to Core Values and Strategic Initiatives. The intent of this goal was to give prominence to the core values and strategic initiatives of the institution and to assure that the assessment process was in step with these institutional directions. Institutional values and initiatives were to be adopted by each school, department and course as appropriate and implemented throughout the institution. Since the Core Values were developed late in the work of the Taskforce, further work will need to be done to develop institutional learning goals in alignment with these Values.

2. Include academic support functions in the assessment process. The Taskforce aim was to include all areas of the College in the assessment processes and to include non-academic functions critical to support of academic functions. Hence representatives from Student Development, Financial Aid and Athletics were included on the Taskforce.

3. Develop a seamless flow from institutional goals to school or division goals, to department goals and finally to the goals of each course offering. Each assessment goal at the course level must be linked to institutional goals where applicable. Course-level goals not in alignment with

higher-level goals will need to be revised.

4. *Integrate the assessment process with recommendations from the Information Literacy Sub-committee.* These recommendations have an important impact on course-level assessment and need to be recognized and included in the overall assessment process. A sub-committee was formed to focus on the definition and means to achieve information literacy. A substantial level of progress was made in this area, and is articulated fully in the Information Literacy assessment plan summary and related documents in Attachment 14.

5. *Provide measurable outcomes and realistic remedies for deficient outcomes.* Assessment goals must be measurable in order to achieve outcomes and direct remedial efforts. Assessment tools included quantitative measures as well as qualitative measure where more appropriate.

This Taskforce was designed to build on prior efforts and thus relied heavily upon the Director of Institutional Research for a historical understanding of institution, program and course-level assessment which operated separately at the College and the Seminary, and for guidance concerning the feasibility of the process to implement course-level assessment institution-wide. It was also recognized that the process would have to evolve over a number of years as the Taskforce recommendations were implemented. In addition, during this project, the Taskforce had to contend with the change to the new “university model” and the implementation of new governance initiatives, as well as the definition of Core Values. Consequently, the course-level assessment initiative utilized the learning goals already developed at the College and at the Seminary, rather than waiting for the development of a new set of institution-wide learning goals that would come about as the result of the academic restructuring.

The focus of the process was to allow the school deans, in conjunction with their faculties, to examine the course-level assessment results via formal reports submitted by their faculty in order to identify school wide trends and take remedial action. It was also decided to focus limited resources primarily on academic assessment in the initial two-year phase of the project.

A review of course level assessments will be conducted every semester, but the Taskforce has recommended that the College limit the formal reporting requirement to 25% of the courses taught each semester to capture all courses systematically over a two-year period. The Taskforce also recommended that course level assessment reporting requirements be restricted to full time and regular adjunct professors who can benefit from and embrace assessment results. Department heads will ensure that adjuncts that teach sporadically comply with principles garnered from the overall assessment results.

Taskforce members were asked to share the design of the reporting instrument with faculty members in their school or division and return with comments. The resultant instrument identifies the specific course, time and instructor information. Key to the report is column one that asks for a list of student learning goals assessed. Professors are asked to limit these to five goals with one of the five associated with the information literacy requirements defined by Information Literacy Sub-Committee. Each goal is linked to assessment measures such as quizzes, tests, projects, and class work with appropriate weightings specific to each course. A subjective scale for rating student learning success is also applied to each goal. Outcomes for

each goal are also to be noted with possible rationales for why goals were not met. Critical to the assessment report is the articulation of actions taken or planned to effect course improvement with the objective of enhanced student learning.

The course-level assessment initiative was implemented in the Spring 2004 semester. A follow-up study will be undertaken following completion of a two year cycle of the new initiative. Attachment 14 includes a sampling of course-level assessments.

Priorities for improving the assessment process over the next five years are as follows:

1. Establishing site-based planning committees and clearly spelling out the policies and procedures that will govern these committees and the school or division based planning committees.
2. Realigning the plan for assessment of student learning outcomes with the anticipated revision of institution-level student learning goals.
3. Continuing to extend assessment practices and policies into all extension sites.
4. Further development of the institutional assessment plan.
5. Expanding the participation of co-curricular and academic support offices in the assessment process.
6. Developing hands-on workshops to educate faculty and staff who are faced with new assessment responsibilities.
7. Expanding the institution-level plan for student learning to articulate the relationship between the assessment plan and the strategic plan.
8. Expanding institutional assessment to areas outside of student learning in order to define overall institutional effectiveness.
9. Articulating, in the assessment plan, the relationship between course, program and institutional level goals so as to assure the full spectrum of activities needed to achieve institutional goals.

Appendix D. Assessment Handbook

Nyack College and Alliance Theological Seminary Guide to Planning and Assessment

The purpose of this guide is to provide a resource for understanding the planning and assessment process. The majority of the guide focuses on the work of the professor and department chair. The guide is also an aid to help us fulfill God's calling in our lives.

Faculty already assess students systematically by testing and grading products and performances as part of determining the appropriate grade for each student. Staff track services provided, numbers of students contacted and other measures of performance. In short we already assess and evaluate the progress of our students.

The landscape of higher education is changing. Driving that change are the multitude of accreditation agencies and organizations that set the standards the programs and institution must meet to achieve accredited status. These multiple accreditations are the indicator to the world that we are indeed a quality institution. The change is intended to create a culture of accountability for all aspects of the college and seminary. We are called to teach and serve His children, to prepare the next generation for the Kingdom of God. Our call is to do the work of Christ well and to be accountable to Christ.

Accreditation – The Old Approach

The old approach had two components. First one would ask “What should students learn?” and then a class with the appropriate content would be provided to accomplish the learning. The college's goals were linked to the process of education. Accreditors asked questions like: What courses are offered? What is the sequence of study?

Generally goals would be set as:

Students will write well	So English Composition was required.
Student will think clearly	So Logic was required.
Students will appreciate science	So a Lab Science was required
Students will understand diversity	So Multicultural America was required
Students will have basic math skills	So a Math course was required

The evaluation of the college and its programs was simply looking for clearly stated **Goals** and then for **Processes** in place to meet the goals. The college could then simply point to the % of students passing English Composition as evidence of meeting the goal that students write well. It is easy to see that system of thinking in our literature, academic requirements and practice.

Accreditation – The New Approach

Research began to accumulate that shows this system was surprisingly weak. The link between the **process** and the **learning** wasn't strong and could not, therefore, be assumed. In fact

embarrassingly some learning outcomes were worse after four years of college than upon entering. Its easy to see how this might occur if a student takes a English composition course during the first year and is not required to write anything significant from that point forward. And of course the response of many schools was to develop more processes. You might remember “writing across the curriculum”. Not a bad idea but most colleges still had no clear knowledge of how well students wrote.

The dissonance between what was expected by colleges and actual student performance made it clear that a new approach was needed. The answer was simple:

Students will write well	So measure how well they write.
Student will think clearly	So measure students’ ability to think.
Students will have basic math skills	So measure what they know.

This approach to evaluation links the college’s or seminary’s good intentions (goals) with some direct measurement of the students’ performance, product or belief. How does this impact Nyack?

You already know the goals of the department and you already do some measurement of these goals in classes as you assign grades. This new system formalizes the assessment process. You might take several steps to do this:

- Your department/program identifies the most important things a student should learn as a ‘goal’ or ‘outcome’.
- Your department/program identifies several ways to measure these goals directly. Grades are influences by a number of factors so in this new model one doesn’t use grades.
- At the end of a class the professor reports to the department/program head the results of the assessment(s) Generally this is done at three or four levels. The percent that exceed expectations, percent that meet expectation, percent that approach expectation and those that are incomplete or fall far short of the expected level of performance.
- Some departments will track data by student and others by assessment. These results will be reported to the Provost on a yearly basis.
- Improvements will be planned based on the results of the assessments.

These steps will be expanded later in the guide.

Assessment and Planning for Assessment

The standards of all accreditation groups now require assessment to be a part in parcel of what we do as educators. The Middle States standards express it as a Culture of Assessment and a Culture of Continuous Improvement. Another college assessment guide expressed it like this: “In addition to having the right dollars in the right pots, having qualified faculty, sufficient students, safe residence halls, well lit classrooms, ethical practices, and a clear and appropriate mission, they also want to see that:

(Culture of Assessment) we are continuously measuring. In the case of learning, we are measuring to determine to what extent the students have learned what we have identified as important; that we do so every semester in every course; and that the data is accumulated appropriately and evaluated carefully so that...

(Culture of Continuous Improvement) we can fix that which is broken and upgrade that which is working and add that which will help our students. The processes leading to these changes are the step called ‘completing the loop’, using the data to build in improvements the impact of which can be evaluated next year.” (Geneva College, 2006)

The assessment process is not a single snapshot of the school at a given time but an album of photos taken over time from different angles and with different cameras. Our assessments will be differentiated, complex, and multiple. They may cover a single program learning goal or many. This continuing process of assessment is summarized at the end of the academic year and used to inform the next year, making changes to facilitate improvement.

The paragraph above simply describes academic assessment. On a parallel track the school must also provide institutional planning and assessment for the administrative functions. This planning is done by the president’s office and carried out by the VPs and staff of the college and seminary. The planning starts with a strategic plan that emphasizes the vision and strategic goals of the institution as well as the benchmarks that spell success. The planning is developed by the VPs and staff of the various departments by articulating goals that support their area and the strategic goals. Assessment is done annually by noting the progress towards the established benchmarks, three years and ten years distant.

These two strands of assessment will establish the culture of assessment and the culture of continuous improvement that allows Nyack College and Alliance Theological Seminary fulfill God’s purpose.

The Assessment Cycle

The basic academic assessment process is cyclical. Student learning goals are established, learning strategies are implemented, assessment data is collected and change is planned based on the assessment data. Often called closing the loop as Figure 1 illustrates.

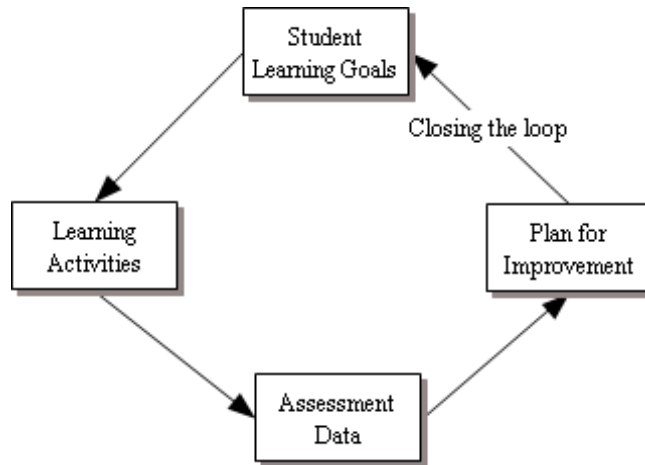


Figure 1

The assessment cycle must be seen in all programs. Documentation is required for every department/program in the college and seminary. It doesn't happen by accident – assessment must be planned in advance.

Program Level Assessment

The cycle of assessment is used in the assessment of the individual programs of the college and seminary.

Figure 2 shows the variety of inputs into the development of program goals. Once program goals have been developed and the program has developed the courses and experiences that will allow the student to meet the goals a set of assessments is determined. These assessments are usually part of the assessment that takes place in courses or experiences required by the program. In some cases all students might take an outside assessment like a teacher certification exam that can be used for program assessment.

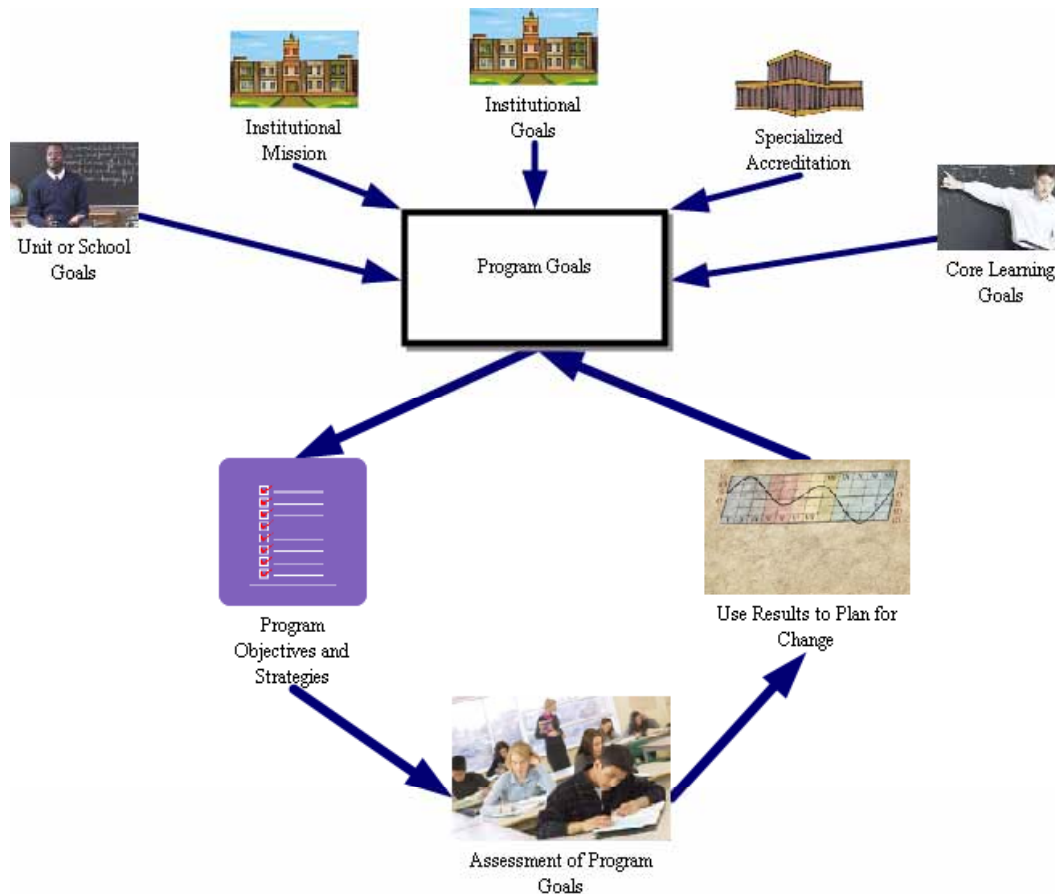


Figure 2

Each department/program will designate several assessments that measure the student learning outcomes set for the program. The department chair or program director will collect the results of the assessments annually, make a brief report on the results and analyze the data for modifications that might be needed based on the data. It might be the case that the only recommendation is to celebrate because the results are great!

As the assessment system matures the department or program will need to assess the goals to insure they are comprehensive enough and determine if the assessments chosen assess the goals to the extent desired. The goal is to develop a paper trail of goals, results, evaluation and change over time. The larger goal is to get better at what we do so we can serve our students better over time.

The professors, department head/program director and dean will evaluate programs annually. Evaluation can be done by answering several simple questions:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. What do we intend our students to learn? | Outcomes/SLG |
| 2. Are students learning what we intend? | Assessment of SLG |
| 3. Are students learning well enough? | Program Standards |
| 4. What picture is the data giving us? | Evaluation |

5. What changes should be implemented?
(curriculum, texts, methods, experiences, etc.)

Application

Course Assessment

Assessment at the course level in the past has been about giving grades. Now every course has student learning goals. Course assessment is to determine if the students learn the goals listed and to what extent. Each course also links to program level student learning goals so are also part of each course. Course assessments must also determine success in learning at the program level.

The professor uses assessment to give grades. But there are a number of other uses for good assessment. Are the students learning the program goals? How do my students compare with others in the department? Did my students perform to the maximum of their capabilities? Did my students improve? What changes should be made so students learn the course and program goals? And of course, is my teaching improving?

The course assessment process is intended to assist the professor in going through the process of using assessment for more than giving grades. The form in Appendix A is the form currently in use for course assessment. It is recommended that every course is evaluated using the assessment form on a regular basis. The department head should review assessment forms annually. The dean of the school will collect the form, syllabus, rubrics, and work samples electronically.

Accreditation and Assessment

There are many reasons for accreditation. The central reason is to make us better at what we do by looking at ourselves with a critical eye. That's why the document prepared is called a Self-Study. The accreditation visit is one to verify that all we say about ourselves is true. While it is true Middle State and other accreditation agencies have standards that must be met, there is generally little doubt that we meet those standards. Our primary purpose is not to meet the minimum required but to excel beyond the requirements. Nyack's self-study will help us formulate ways to affirm excellence in our institution and improve to excellence in areas we identify in need of strengthening.

Accreditation extends many benefits to the institution. Our students' degrees are recognized by other institutions and allow them to enter graduate programs or transfer credits. Students can obtain federal and state financial aid. Education students can be certified by many states because of NCATE accreditation. Faculty are eligible for grants. Few students would choose to come to Nyack without the knowledge that the college, seminary and often the specific program are accredited.

The standards haven't changed much recently but the methods for verification have changed. What is explained above is the expected way of verification for all programs, divisions and units in the institution. The move from program content and design to assessment of goals and change based on assessment evidence is the standard of the future. For Nyack the future is now – our

next visits will require this type of verification of our excellence. Assessment of outcomes is new work, important work, and essential work. It is how Nyack will function from this time on.

Institutional Goals

Institutionally we are driven by a mission statement and a set of core values:

Nyack College Mission Statement

Nyack College, a Christian liberal arts college of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, seeks to assist students in their spiritual, intellectual, and social formation, preparing them for lives of service to Christ and His church and to society in a way that reflects the Kingdom of God and its ethnic diversity.

ATS Mission Statement

Alliance Theological Seminary (ATS) is an evangelical seminary committed to preparing servants of Jesus Christ in the areas of heart (personal formation experiences), mind (educational experience), and feet (ministry experience).

Core Values

Nyack College and Alliance Theological Seminary seek to exalt Jesus Christ and fulfill their mission by being:

Socially Relevant: Preparing students to serve in ministerial, educational, healing, and community-building professions.

Academically Excellent: Pursuing academic excellence in the spirit of grace and humility.

Globally Engaged: Fostering a global perspective within a multi-ethnic and multicultural Christian academic community.

Intentionally Diverse: Providing educational access and support to motivated students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Personally Transforming: Emphasizing the integration of faith, learning, and spiritual transformation.

Institutional goals come from the core values and consist of two types, academic goals like the core curriculum goals and administrative goals like the number of students we want to recruit annually. Most accreditation agencies look at both sides of the institution, the academic performance and the administrative performance. Appendix C outlines the various areas that make goals each year. The academic and administrative goals are evaluated on performance outcomes annually. Administrative planning all links back to the support of academic programs and success of the institution.

Sources

Geneva College, (2006). A User's Guide to Course Level Assessment

Hollowell, D., Middaugh, M. & Sibolski, E. (2006). Intergrating Higher Education Planning and Assessment: A Practical Guide. Society for College and University Planning.

Middle States Commission on Higher Education, (2003). Student Learning Assessment. www.msche.org .

Middle States Commission on Higher Education, (2006). Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education. www.msche.org .

Appendix A

Course Assessment Form

Course Number:	
Course Title:	
Professor:	
Semester:	
Course Description:	
Attach Syllabus	

Student Learning Goals/Assessment Matrix (Attach Standards List)

Student Learning Goals	Assessment(s)	Program Standards Addressed

Assessments

Description of Assessment:			
Attach Rubric or Rating Scale for Product or Performance Assessments			
Performance Evidence:			
# of Students	% of Total	Rating	Score Range
		Exceeds Expectations	
		Meets Expectations	
		Approaches Expectations	
		Do Not Meet Expectations	
		Total Number of Students in Course	
Analysis of Data:			
Changes Recommended:			
Attach a sample of student product at two or more levels if possible.			

Description of Assessment:			
Attach Rubric or Rating Scale for Product or Performance Assessments			
Performance Evidence:			
# of Students	% of Total	Rating	Score Range
		Exceeds Expectations	
		Meets Expectations	
		Approaches Expectations	
		Do Not Meet Expectations	
	Total Number of Students in Course		
Analysis of Data:			
Changes Recommended:			
Attach a sample of student product at two or more levels if possible.			

Description of Assessment:			
Attach Rubric or Rating Scale for Product or Performance Assessments			
Performance Evidence:			
# of Students	% of Total	Rating	Score Range
		Exceeds Expectations	
		Meets Expectations	
		Approaches Expectations	
		Do Not Meet Expectations	
	Total Number of Students in Course		
Analysis of Data:			
Changes Recommended:			
Attach a sample of student product at two or more levels if possible.			

Appendix B

Annual Program Report

Date:
 Program:
 Chair or Director:
 Program Faculty & Staff:

1. Changes to the program instituted in the past 12 months.

a. Specific change:

b. Student learning goal addressed with the change.

c. Data used to guide and justify the change.

2. Analysis of Data for current year (and historical data),

a. Observations of Admissions and Demographic data.

b. Observations of Liberal Arts Core data if available for your program.

c. Observations based on program specific data.

d. Observations of data gathered about graduates.

3. Program changes recommended based on data for next year.

4. Assessment Plan changes recommended for current year.

Attachments:

1. Assessment Plan including
 - a. Mission Statement
 - b. Program Student Learning Goals
 - c. Assessments
 - d. Alignment with Student Learning Goals
 - e. Alignment with Nyack College Core Values
2. Program Data

Appendix C

Assessment Plan

Guidelines for Assessment Plans

Mission Statement

1. One or two sentences
2. Comprehensive in nature
3. Brings focus on the central purposes of the program.

Program Student Learning Goals

1. Number of goals: from 5 to 10.
2. Focus is on student knowledge, skills, or dispositions (KSD).
3. Measurable – focus on what the student will learn, perform or produce while enrolled.
4. Include goals for essential KSD.
5. Include goals for capstone KSD
6. Relate all goals to Nyack Core Values.
7. Relate new goals to Student Learning Outcomes.

Measurement of Student Learning Outcomes

1. Choose at least one academic measurement of KSD for this academic year.
2. Expand to two or three in the following academic year.
3. Expand to insure all Student Learning Outcomes are measured in the third year.
4. Begin plans for graduate surveys and deliver one survey by year's end (2008-09).

Program Goals

1. Goals not related directly to student learning. Examples: new courses to be produced, number of graduates desired, careers graduates choose as a result of program preparation, number of students who enter graduate programs, etc.
2. Include goals for program development.
3. Relate goals to Student Learning Outcomes, suggestions from past reviews of the program and graduate survey data.
4. Include short-term – one or two year goals, and long term – five year goals.

**Assessment Plan for
2008-09**

Mission Statement

Program Student Learning Goals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Measurement of Student Learning Outcomes

Assessment 1:

Time administered and frequency:

Assessment 2:

Time administered and frequency:

Assessment 3:

Time administered and frequency:

Assessment 4:

Time administered and frequency:

Assessment 5:

Time administered and frequency:

Program Goals

Short Term Goals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Long-Term Goals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.