



September 17, 2025

From: Kevin B. Vichcales, Ph.D.
Associate Provost Institutional Accreditation and Academic Effectiveness
SACSCOC Liaison

To: Deans, Chairs, Directors, Coordinators

Re: Annual Program Assessment Review Process 2025-26

As part of the University of the Incarnate Word's commitment to educational excellence and support for a culture of assessment, we allocate time each year to assess program goals and student learning outcomes employing – Institutional Effectiveness Annual Academic Program Assessment (see attachment).

The template itself has undergone significant changes to assist the UIW community in achieving compliance with SACSCOC accreditation standard (8.2.a). SACSCOC expects that each academic program (a) identifies expected student learning outcomes; (b) periodically assesses the extent to which it achieves these student learning outcomes; and (c) provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results. UIW defines “periodic” as within a 2- to 3-year cycle, ensuring the student learning outcome process is both manageable and aligned with SACSCOC's expectations.

The revised template is designed to capture relevant information yet remain simple to use. It contains the following sections:

Section 1: Academic Program Information

- Identifies basic program information and relevant contact information

Section 2: Program Mission Statement

- A program mission statement is a brief, clear, and concise description of the program's purpose, its guiding principles, and its core activities, outlining what the program is, what it does, and for whom it serves

Section 3: Program Goals (PGs)

- Program goals are broad, overarching statements that define what a program aims to achieve in the long term. They serve as a roadmap, guiding the program's direction and providing a framework for measuring its success. These goals are typically derived from the program's mission and should be aspirational, yet realistic, and aligned with the needs of the target population. This section is expandable to capture all program goals.

Section 4: Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- Student Learning Outcomes are concise, measurable statements that define what students should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of a course, program, or other learning experience. This section is expandable to capture all student learning outcomes.

- SACSCOC expects that each academic program “periodically” assesses their student learning outcomes. UIW has defined “periodic” as within a 2- to 3-year cycle to create an SLO assessment process that is both manageable and aligned with SACSCOC’s expectations. Thus, we ask you to identify your assessment cycle (2 or 3 years) and note the assessment year for each SLO to ensure tracking and documentation within the cycle.

Section 5: Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) from Prior Year

- Describe one or more changes made to your program based on last year’s assessment results and describe any improvements you have noted as a result.
- This “look back” section is designed to document your changes and their results. This is a critical component of the continuous improvement process whereby we review assessment data, implement changes, and document the impacts of those changes to determine if we were successful.

Section 6: Academic Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for THIS year

- This section assesses the student learning outcomes identified by the program for the current year. It contains five components (a) SLO description; (b) achievement target; (c) measurement process; (d) assessment results summary; and (e) assessment loop closure. Component “e” is critically important as it documents actions taken as a result of the assessment results and is linked to Section 5 for the subsequent assessment year.

Section 7: Steps/Plans for Improving Assessment Process (Guiding Questions)

- This section focuses on documenting any changes to your assessment plan (methods; rubrics employed; etc.) as well as the evidence that prompted the change to your assessment plan.

Section 8: Meta Assessment

- This section is designed to receive critical feedback from the UIW community to improve our assessment processes.

Section 9: Review Comments and Acknowledgment Signatures

- This section is designed to ensure review and comments about your process and findings. It features a two-level review process conducted first by your academic Dean and then by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Deadlines

- The University has set May 31st as the deadline for the annual program assessment process. It is our expectation that academic programs will complete their annual program reviews at different times but that all will submit to our office by the deadline.

Let us keep at the forefront of our thinking that the goal of assessment is to help students learn and to seek continuous means of improvement. The reporting process is designed to foster meaningful dialogue among program faculty and their deans, while encouraging the use of current assessment findings to strengthen degree programs. These reports also serve a broader audience, support the work of faculty and students, inform prospective members of the community, and provide essential documentation for accreditation efforts.

To assist Deans and academic program leadership (Chairs, Directors, and Coordinators) the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will host a training session on Friday, September 26, 2025, from 9:00-10:30 a.m. in SEC 2030-32. A calendar invitation will be sent to Deans and program leadership for your convenience.

If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact me at your earliest convenience. I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your assistance with facilitating UIW's Annual Program Assessment Review process.