

St. Petersburg College

SPC

Academic Effectiveness



St. Petersburg College

An Overview of the Academic Assessment and Evaluation Processes at SPC

General Education Outcomes, Educational Program Outcomes,
Program Viability, and Program Review

Department of Academic Effectiveness and Assessment
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An Overview of the Academic Assessment and Evaluation Processes at SPC

Introduction

This document will provide an overview of the academic effectiveness process at St. Petersburg College and the assessment methodology used to assess student learning outcomes at the college.

Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional Effectiveness is the integrated, systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against the SPC mission for the purposes of continuous improvement of academic programs, administrative services, and educational support services offered by the College.

Operationally, the institutional effectiveness process ensures that the stated purposes of the College are accomplished. In other words did the institution successfully execute its mission, goals, and objectives? At SPC the Offices of Planning, Budgeting and Research work with all departments and units to establish measurable statements of intent that are used to analyze effectiveness and to guide continuous quality improvement efforts. Each of St. Petersburg College's units is required to participate in the institutional effectiveness process.

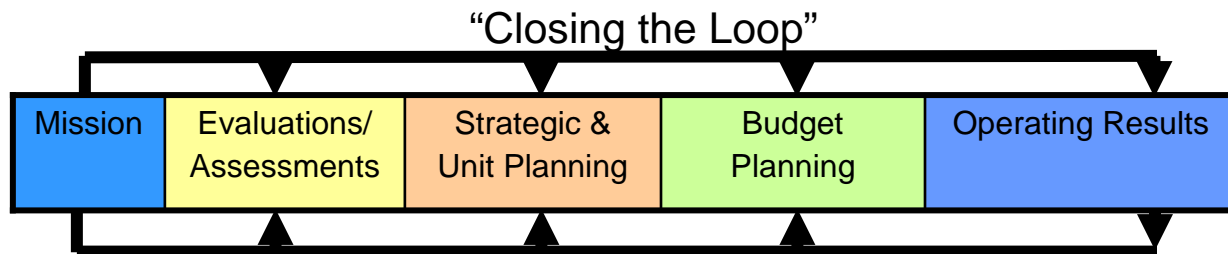


Figure 1. *The alignment between the mission and the phases of the Institutional Effectiveness process.*

The bottom-line from SPC’s institutional effectiveness process is improvement. Once SPC has identified what it is going to do then it acts through the process of teaching, researching, and managing to accomplish its desired outcomes. The level of success of SPC’s actions is then evaluated. A straightforward assessment process requires a realistic consideration of the intended outcomes that the institution has set and an explicit evaluation of the evidence that the institution is achieving that intent.

There is no single right or best way to measure success, improvement or quality. Nevertheless, objectives must be established, data related to those objectives must be collected and analyzed, and the results of those findings must be used to improve the

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institution in the future. The educational assessment is a critical component of St. Petersburg College's institutional effectiveness process.

While there are a number of SACS and state requirements related to assessment and evaluation. A well functioning education institution goes beyond accreditation and state requirements and endorses a philosophy of performance improvement.

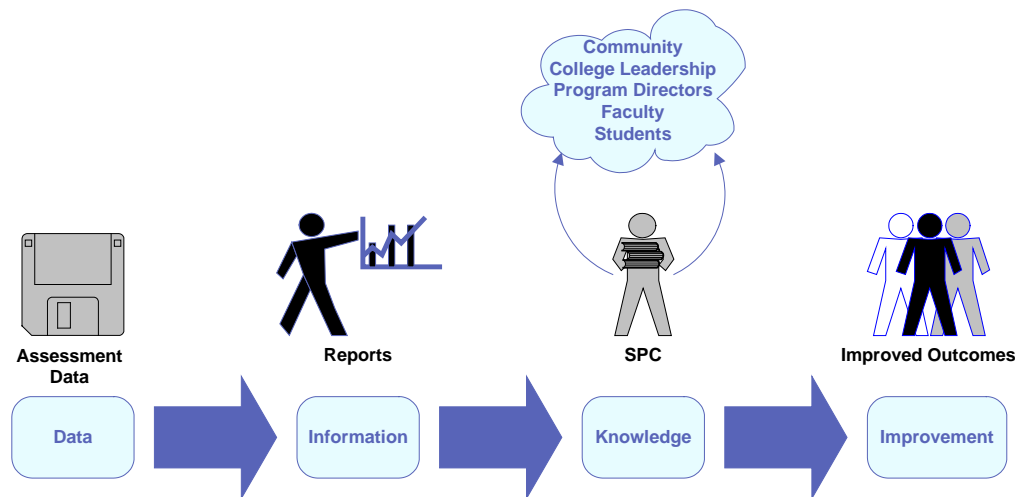


Figure 2. *From Compliance to Performance Improvement*

Evaluation and Assessment Processes

St. Petersburg College educational programs employ a variety of evaluation/assessment methods to improve their effectiveness. Assessment and evaluation measures are used at various levels throughout the institution to provide provosts, deans, program managers, and faculty vital information on how successful our efforts have been.

SPC's Evaluation & Assessment Processes are centered on the following mission-driven outcomes:

- 30 organizational units comprising 41 academic programs (lower division)
- 7 Colleges and Schools comprising 23 baccalaureate programs (upper division)
- Key administrative and educational support services

Analysis of outcome results is on-going and captured through various assessment reports. The following are the key assessments used in the IE processes.

Academic Program Assessments include internally and externally developed direct measures for General Education (e.g., Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress-

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MAPP), AAS/AS Program Assessments, BAS/BS Program Assessments, and Program Reviews.

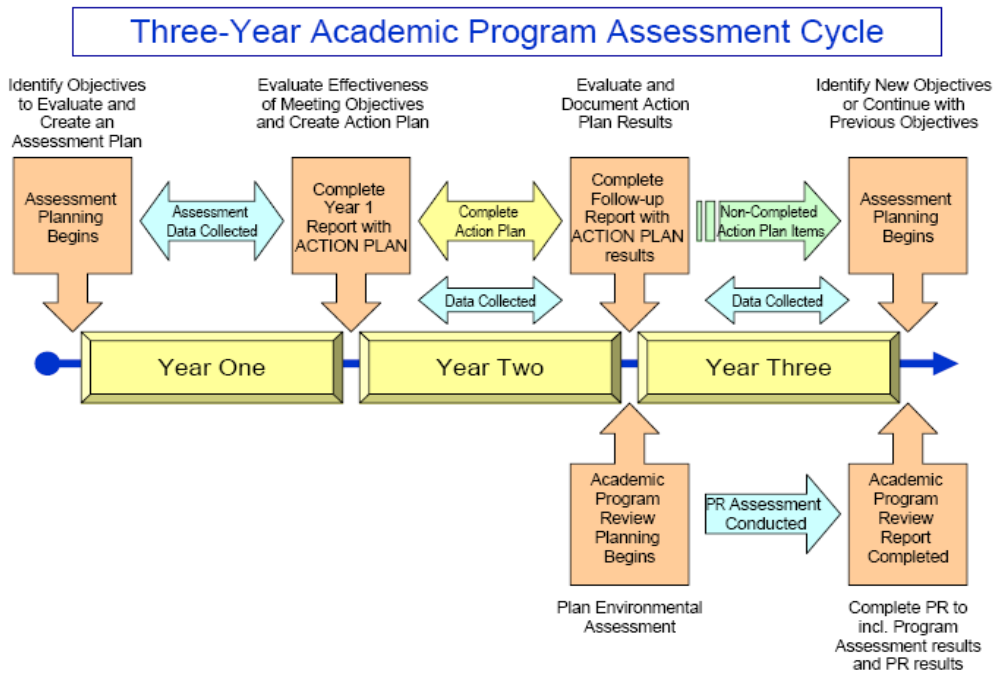


Figure 3. The relationship between the three-year academic program assessment and academic program review cycles.

Academic/Services Assessments include indirect measures for Entering Students, Enrolled Students, Graduating Students, Recent Alumni, Employer surveys, and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).

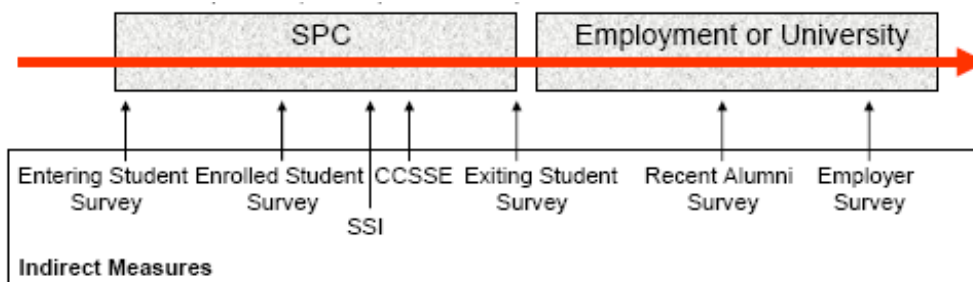


Figure 4. Student survey assessment points

Other Assessments include the Strategic Directions and Institutional Objectives (SD&IOs) portion of President’s Annual Evaluation, State Accountability Measures,

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Core Effectiveness Indicators, environmental scan / trends analysis, and other department/function-specific assessments.

Use of Results

Academic programs are evaluated on a three-year cycle. Administrative and educational support services are evaluated annually. Results of college wide student surveys are further refined and augmented through additional departmental-specific assessments. These various college-wide assessment results are then aggregated and presented to one of the four domain-specific oversight committees at the start of the planning year; closing the loop with the planning and budgeting processes.

SPC Mission – Assessments – Closing the Loop

SPC Mission Components	Evaluations / Assessments	Recurring Cycle
Accessible Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ BS, BAS, AA, AS Degrees ■ Technical Certificates ■ Applied Tech. Diplomas ■ Distance Education ■ Developmental Education ■ Continuing Education 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Education Oversight Group (EOG) Reports 2. Academic Program Assessment Reports (APARs) 3. Academic Program Viability Reviews (APVRs) 4. Comprehensive Academic Program Reviews (CAPRs) 5. End-of-year SD-IOs Assessment Report 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual 2. Every 3-years / program 3. Annual 4. Every 3-years / program 5. Annual
Partnerships / Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Student Services ■ Community Services ■ Other Institutions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Entering Students Survey 2. Enrolled Students Survey 3. Graduating Students Survey 4. Employer Survey 5. Recent Alumni Survey 6. Budget. Planning, IR Survey 7. Technology Resources Allocation Survey 8. Other Department-specific Surveys 9. Administrative Services Oversight (ASOG) Reports 10. Student Services Oversight (SSO) Report 11. Education Support Services (ESS) Reports (Libraries, Learning Support Centers) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual 2. Annual 3. Annual 4. Annual 5. Annual 6. Annual 7. Annual 8. Annual 9. Annual 10. Annual 11. Annual
Economic & Workforce Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ AS Degrees & PSAV Programs ■ WorkNet One-Stop Ops. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environmental Scans 2. Trends Analysis 3. WorkNet Surveys & Exit Interviews 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-going 2. On-going 3. Annual

Assessing Student-learning Outcomes

While the focus of a particular educational assessment area may change, the assessment strategies remain consistent and integrated to the fullest extent possible. The focus for *Associate in Arts degrees* is targeted for students continuing on to four-year degree programs as opposed to the *Associate in Applied Science, Associate in Science, and Baccalaureate programs* which are targeted towards students seeking employable skills. The *General Education* based assessments focus on the general learning outcomes from all degree programs, while Program Review looks at the viability of the specific programs. These individual reports while unique by their

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individual nature are nevertheless written to address how the assessments and their associated action plans have improved learning in their program.

The Educational Outcomes Assessment Reporting process was initiated college-wide in 1999 and is centered on mission-driven outcomes. Academic effectiveness at SPC assesses all degree programs and courses, regardless of mode of delivery. SPC also evaluates all student services to ensure students are provided the best support possible to ensure student success. Analysis of outcome results is on-going and captured in various assessment reports. It is the intent of St. Petersburg College to incorporate continuous improvement practices in all areas. Assessment reports provide comparisons of present and past results which are used to identify topics where improvement is possible. SPC has used assessment reports as a vital tool in achieving its commitment to continuous improvement.

Academic Program Assessment Report

The student-learning outcomes in the academic workforce programs primarily evaluated using the Academic Program Assessment Report (APAR). The APAR contains various direct and indirect student outcome measures. It is completed according to a three-year cycle and consists of the following eight sections. (See Figure 3):

- 1) Introduction w/ use of past results
- 2) Major Learning Outcomes – program specific
- 3) Assessment methodology
- 4) Criteria for success
- 5) Summary of assessment findings
- 6) Discussion & analysis
- 7) Action plan & time table
- 8) Budgetary & planning implications

The introduction section of the APAR will include use of past results in improving the program performances based on historical program action plans. This information provides the foundation for examining the current year's assessment performance. The document also includes the program's major learning outcomes and assessment specifics such as methodology, criteria for success, and the summary of assessment findings.

The discussion and analysis section details the comparison between the current year's assessment results and the established thresholds set in the criteria of success section of the document. This information is used to drive change and improvement in the program as learning outcome areas which do not meet established thresholds are highlighted and appropriate action plans are established in the action plan section.

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The action plan and time table is created by the program administrator to address issues identified in the assessment findings and drive program improvement. A year after the publication of the APAR, a follow-up report is completed to document the status of the action plan items and provide a focus for future improvement. Data collection on student outcomes is an ongoing yearly process.

Assessment and follow-up reports are created by program administrators with the assistance of the Academic Effectiveness office within a secure online environment (<https://it.spcollege.edu/edoutcomes/>). An automated email-based approval process ensures senior leadership review by the program administrator, the campus provost and the senior vice president of Academic and Student Affairs. This online environment while providing a standardization of the assessment process also permits college-wide access to completed and approved assessment reports.

To better align program assessment and program review processes, SPC reduced the recommended program review timeline to three years in order to coincide with the three-year academic program assessment cycle, producing a more coherent and integrated assessment process.

Program Review

The program review process at St. Petersburg College (SPC) is a collaborative effort to continuously measure and improve the quality of educational services provided to the community. The procedures described below go far beyond the “periodic review of existing programs” required by the State Board of Community Colleges; and exceed the necessary guidelines within the Southern Association of Community Colleges and Schools (SACS) review procedures. State guidelines require institutions to conduct program reviews every five years as mandated in chapter 1001.02(6) of the Florida Statutes.

Academic Program Viability Report

The Academic Program Viability Report (APVR) was designed as an abbreviated yearly summative evaluation of a program’s viability and productivity. It provides key College stakeholders such as the President Cabinet members a snapshot of relevant program specific information in order to highlight program trends and issues. The publication of this report begins the process of making critical decisions regarding the continued sustainability of a program.

Reports indicating positive program trends may be used to identify and document best practices that can be utilized by programs throughout the College. Programmatic issues can be further investigated through the Comprehensive Academic Program Review (CAPR) process. Normally occurring on a three-year cycle, the CAPR process may also be initiated by Cabinet request.

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Comprehensive Academic Program Review

The Comprehensive Academic Program Review (CAPR) was developed by the Department of Institutional Research and Effectiveness at SPC and is specifically designed to be a summative evaluation of the various lower division technical programs at the College.

The CAPR was developed to meet three objectives within the academic assessment process; specifically,

- To provide a comprehensive report that summarizes all elements of the program's viability and productivity from a 360-degree perspective,
- To provide comprehensive and relevant program-specific information to key College stakeholders, such as the President's Cabinet members, in order to make critical decisions regarding the continued sustainability of a program, and
- To provide program leadership a vehicle to support and document actionable change for the purposes of performance improvement.

The development of the CAPR was a multi-departmental effort and involved numerous academic programs as well as all administrative offices in the area of institutional effectiveness. The evolution of the CAPR process has intentionally remained dynamic allowing for changes and adjustments to measures, definitions, and types of attachments with each new program review. New revisions to the document are weighted between the best measures to describe and evaluate an individual program and the global impact of the revisions on future program reviews.

SPC reduced the recommended program review timeline to three years to coincide with the long-standing, three-year academic program assessment cycle, producing a more coherent and integrated review process.

Traditionally, program reviews at SPC consisted primarily of a community focus group and a few occupational growth measures. This information was presented to the President's Cabinet for evaluation. The CAPR was designed to be more representative of a program's quality and as such, contains measures involving a number of stakeholder perspectives. These measures include the program description, program performance measures, program profitability measures, academic outcomes, stakeholder perceptions, occupation trends and information, state graduate-outcomes information, and the program director's description of program issues, trends, and recent success.

To encourage the use of results, the program director and provost are required to provide an action plan for improving the performance of the program. A follow-up report on these results is required the following year. The CAPR process also includes a review of the CAPR documentation by the technical advisory committee and the President's Cabinet.

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Dissemination of Information

SPC developed an Educational Assessment Website (<https://it.spcollege.edu/edoutcomes>) to provide a medium for completing the educational assessment reports as well as establishing a repository for program specific information. College administration and instructional staff are provided access to “completed” assessment reports including the CAPR. This online access further encourages the use of assessment data as well as highlighting “best practices” across the College.

Sections within the CAPR

The first section of the CAPR document is the Executive Summary which summarizes the relevant program specific information that is contained within the document.

The Introduction section begins with the SPC mission statement and includes a description of the institutional effectiveness process at the College as well as an overview of educational assessment and the program review process.

The Program Description section contains a program description (Source: 2007-08 SPC Course Catalog) and recent program accreditation information (Source: Personal correspondence with the program director).

The Program Performance section begins the program specific measures within the document. These measures include actual course enrollment (Source: PeopleSoft Course Management Summary, Report ID: S_CMSUMM), SSH productivity (Source: PeopleSoft Student Administration System, report ID: S_CMSUMM), program graduates (Source: SPC 2007-08 Factbook, Table 31), grade distributions (Source: Collegewide grade distribution report generated at the end of the session), and fulltime/adjunct faculty ratio (Source: PeopleSoft Student Administration System, report ID: S_FACRAT).

The Program Profitability section includes the relative profitability index [RPI-T] (Source: PeopleSoft Financial Production database, report ID: ORGBUDSI) and the Program Improvement section includes the capital expenditure measures (Source: PeopleSoft Financial Production System: Summary of Monthly Organization Budget & Actuals Status Report ORGBUDA1 from End of Fiscal Year).

The Academic Outcomes section contains the program’s major learning outcomes as well as a summary of the results of the most recent Academic Program Assessment Report [APAR] (Source: Academic Outcomes 2006-07 Assessment Report).

The Stakeholder Perceptions section contains program level Student Survey of Instruction (SSI) data including lecture, non-lecture, clinical, and eCampus survey data (Source: PeopleSoft Query S_SSI_CHRT_QRY_CAMPUS), a summary of the most

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recent technical advisory committee meeting minutes, and survey results from the Recent Graduate Survey (Source: 2005-06 Graduate Survey Results), and Employer Surveys (Source: 2005-06 Employer Survey Results).

The Occupation Profile section contains the occupation description and economic data such as the US, state, and area wage information (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Survey; Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation) and employment trends (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections; Florida Employment Projections and Source: FL Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics & Wages Program). This section also contains information on state graduate outcomes (Source: Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program FETPIP: Community College Vocational Reports: <http://www.fldoe.org/fetpip/pdf/0304pdf/cc0304asc.pdf>)

In addition to the various sections listed above, the CAPR also includes

- program director's perspective of program trends, issues, and recent success (Source: Personal correspondence with the program director),
- President's Cabinet's review and comments,
- Recommendations/action plan created by the program director and the provost (Source: Personal correspondence with the program director),
- action plan follow-up (to be completed one year later),
- assessment personnel contact information, and
- appendix containing the C&I program plan overview as well as the Technical Advisory Committee minutes and Recommendations from the last three years.

CAPR Assessment Process

CAPRs are created according to a three-year schedule. Program Directors are notified that a CAPR is being developed and are requested to provide initial information such as program accreditation, any outstanding Technical Advisory Minutes, and capital expenditure purchases information. The Assessment Coordinators begin the process of collecting the relevant program information from the sources mentioned above and creating appropriate charts and graphs of the trend information. The next step in the process is the formatting of the document such as updating the relevant program descriptions and adding the necessary appendix information.

Once the draft document containing the updated measures has been compiled, the program director is again contacted to review the draft document and create the program trends, issues, and recent success sections as well as the action plan for the upcoming year. Once these sections have been drafted and sent to the Assessment Coordinators, the sections are formatted and inserted into the CAPR document.

The final draft is then disseminated by the Program Director to the members of the advisory committee and faculty members for review and discussion. Relevant comments are included within the document. The updated document is then approved and signed by the Program Director and the Provost. This version is presented to the

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President's Cabinet by the Program Director and the Provost in a brief 5 - 8 minute presentation. Any comments from the President's Cabinet can then be inserted into the final document. The first stage of the process is concluded with the President's signature.

The approved document is subsequently uploaded to the Ed Outcomes website for dissemination. The Program Director and faculty will then begin the process of implementing the action plan items. The second phase of the process occurs one year later when the action plan follow-up section is completed by the Program Director and the Provost with assistance from the Assessment Coordinators and the final document is uploaded into the Ed Outcomes website.

Student Surveys

One measure used for indirectly evaluating educational outcomes as well as student services is by surveying students. Student surveys are used to evaluate administrative and educational support services annually. Results of collegewide student surveys are further refined and augmented through additional departmental-specific assessments.

During their tenure at St. Petersburg College, students are surveyed multiple times, at specific points throughout their education. Academic/Student Services Assessments include indirect measures for Entering Student Survey, Enrolled Student Survey, Graduating Student Survey, Recent Alumni Survey, Employer Survey, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).

Entering Student Survey

The primary purpose of the Entering Student Survey is to develop a demographic profile of the students entering the College, discover what factors influence their decision to apply to the College, discern how they learned about the College, and measure their perception of the importance of various academic, student support services and tutoring areas provided to them by the College. The online questionnaire was embedded in the application process for the 2007-08 academic year.

Enrolled Student Survey

The focus of the Enrolled Student Survey is to ascertain how our enrolled students perceive the College and determine both the importance and level of satisfaction of enrolled students with the College's academic and student support services. Subsequently, this information is to be used by the faculty and administration to establish quality improvement initiatives that benefit our students.

Graduating Student Survey

The Graduating Student Survey is part of a comprehensive college-wide assessment program developed to examine the demographic profile of the responding graduates, assess their perceptions of the educational experience at the College and to determine

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how the educational process at the College has changed their behavior and/or their knowledge as it relates to some specific areas of inquiry (educational outcomes).

Recent Alumni Survey

The Recent Alumni Survey was designed to gain insight into alumni's perceptions of the quality of general education and career preparation and determine the current activities of former students such as employment information and educational status

Employer Survey

The Employer Survey was designed to gain insight into an employer's perceptions of hired SPC graduates in the areas of key general education competencies and foundational skills, provide the employee's major job responsibilities and wage information, as well as employer's willingness to hire another SPC graduate, and identify employer's willingness to support various college activities.

Student Survey of Instruction

The purpose of the Student Survey of Instruction is to provide stakeholders (Faculty, Program Administrators, etc.) student perception information to assist in making curriculum related decisions.

Strategic Direction

In addition to program-level improvement, assessment data is also used to guide the strategic direction of the college through the college goal and yearly institutional initiative process. The President's Cabinet is provided recommendations from the four college oversight groups including the Education Oversight Group. Members of the Education Oversight Group are appointed by the senior vice president of Academic & Student Affairs. Their focus area is to review key educational outcomes information including but not limited to Educational Outcome Assessment Reports, State Accountability Measures Reports, and Student Survey Reports.

Looking Forward/Next Steps

SPC's assessment focus is to continue to standardizing institutional performance measures (e.g., retention and progression) while emphasizing quality improvement through best practices and encouraging data driven decision-making. The ultimate goal is to provide stakeholders 'timely', 'relevant', 'accurate', and 'interpretable' data through formatted (dashboard) style reports, and on-demand customizable reporting, with valid, reliable, and standardized measures.