

***UMaine student learning outcomes assessment plan:
Originally approved 06/30/2014***

***Last updated: 11/7/19
Updated Approved by Interim Provost Gilbert***

The purpose of assessment is to improve student learning

UMaine's planned design for a comprehensive and meaningful system of learning assessment reflects the complexity of learning outcomes to be measured. Led by the Assistant Provost, reporting to the Senior Associate Provost of Academic Affairs, and with the guidance of the Assessment Advisory Board, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) will coordinate program-level and General Education outcomes-assessment for the purpose of improving student learning. UMaine's approach to assessment supports faculty who serve at the center of the process to determine the most appropriate data-based methods for their academic programs. UMaine will use multiple sources of faculty-determined evidence including program level measures, course-embedded assessments, and other faculty-selected approaches to document the progress and achievements of our students.

Core values for assessment at UMaine:

- Assessment is important at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Learning outcomes are created and endorsed by faculty and are reflections of what students know and can do.
- Student learning outcomes are measurable and reflect specific demonstrated skills that help us improve what and how we teach and how programs can best serve the needs of students.
- Data are collected through course-embedded and other routinely used measures given at key points during students' academic careers to serve the purpose of improving future student and program outcomes.
- Student engagement in campus and community experiences is a critical aspect of the UMaine experience and the impact of these experiences can be measured.
- The experiences of students after they graduate is a valuable source of information that can be used to inform curriculum and instruction.

Mission and responsibilities of the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA):

- There is a regular, reasonable, equitable, and transparent process for reporting student assessment data.
- Faculty, staff, and students will have access to a variety of high-quality online assessment resources to help them complete their work.
- Faculty, staff, and students will have access to high-quality professional development provided by their peers and assessment experts on assessment design, implementation, review, and usage.
- Faculty will have direct assistance to provide feedback, guide development, and offer suggestions about program assessment.

Proposed Assessment Policies for UMaine:¹

1. *Academic Program Review and Reporting*: All undergraduate, professional, and graduate academic programs at UMaine will be actively engaged in student learning outcomes assessment as evidenced by, but not limited to:

- a) Published student-learning-outcomes that are clear statements of what students are expected to know and be able to demonstrate at the completion of the academic program. These student learning outcomes and community engaged objectives will be published on the program's website via a link to the website for Assessment. Student-learning-outcomes and community engaged efforts will be periodically reviewed by the faculty in the respective academic programs for ongoing relevance.
- b) A plan of student learning outcomes assessment that is endorsed by the program's faculty. Plans should include a regular cycle for collecting and analyzing assessment data, for discussing curricular and programmatic changes, for implementing interventions, and for re-assessing the impact of implemented changes. Assessment plans will be published on program's website via a link to the OIRA website.
- c) Reports of student learning outcomes assessment that are provided to the OIRA using staggered cycles of no more than 3 years. Cycles for accredited programs will be adjusted to decrease redundancy of effort (See proposed reporting cycle in Appendix A).
 - a. Units report on a three year cycle at the program/department level using a set of self-study rubrics (any updates will still be reported as part of the college annual reporting process).

Three-year reports will include, but not be limited to:

- i. the specific learning outcomes examined during the current review cycle
- ii. the specific data/evidence used (beyond course grades) to determine that students have achieved outcomes
- iii. the evaluation process used to examine evidence of student learning. Specifically, the procedures and tools used, stated levels of performance, how the tools were scored, and how the data was compiled.
- iv. the results of the analysis of the evaluation data including a summary of quantitative results of student learning, analysis of programmatic strengths and weaknesses, identification of assessment strengths and weaknesses, reflections and conclusions.
- v. specific recommendations and planning for change based on assessment results including the specific changes intended, as well as a timeline for completion.

¹ UMaine uses the University of Rhode Island's assessment policies and reporting structure.

- b. *Review and Approval of Plans and Reports:* Evaluation of the three-year student learning outcomes assessment plans and reports will be made by the OIRA and the AAB. Programs will be notified directly with the evaluation results and suggestions for modification, if necessary. Reports will be published on the OIRA website. In an annual report to the Faculty Senate, AAB will provide commendations for outstanding examples of student learning outcomes assessment as well as a general summary on outcomes assessment.
- c. *Yearly Assessment Reporting:* All units not in the cohort submitting a three-year report for a given year will be expected to provide a yearly assessment update. For all programs, this update will include a) the program-level student learning outcomes that were assessed during the academic year, b) the assessment activities used to measure the corresponding learning outcomes, c) the results for at least one assessed learning outcome, and d) the assessment activities planned for the following year. Nonaccredited programs with recently completed external program reviews (i.e., within the last 12 months) will be expected to report on actions taken to address any curriculum or student learning concerns raised during the review. The OIRA, in collaboration with the AAB, will distribute a pre-populated online form that units can use to submit this information.

Assessment Cycle



2. *Office of Institutional Research and Assessment Support and Guidance for Academic Programs:* Guidelines for preparation of outcomes assessment plans and reports will be provided by the OIRA with the assistance and approval of the AAB. OIRA staff will be available to offer advice on the logistics of collecting assessment data, consultation on techniques to analyze results, and to provide feedback/guidance on designing curricular and programmatic changes. Rubrics for evaluating the plans and reports will be generated by the OIRA and posted on its website.

4. *University-Wide Student Learning Outcomes Assessment:* The OIRA will work with other university offices to collect, maintain, analyze, and distribute student learning outcomes assessment findings, derived from a variety of local and national sources. OIRA staff will identify patterns of student performance to inform ongoing program and institutional improvement. Assessment of General Education outcomes will follow a similar approach to implementation and reporting.

5. *Service Learning and Community Engagement:* The OIRA will work with key campus and community partners to identify and implement appropriate outcome measures for internships, service learning courses, volunteer opportunities, and other experiential learning activities.

Appendix A: Assessment Reporting Calendar (2015-2027)		
Department/Program/School	Reporting Cycle	Full Reports Due
Division of Lifelong Learning	A	2016 2019 2022 2025
Bachelor of University Studies		
Maine Business School		
Business		
MBA		
College of Education and Human Development		
Elementary Education		
Secondary Education		
Child Development and Family Relations		
Kinesiology and Physical Education		
Athletic Training		

Graduate Degrees		
College of Engineering		
Biomedical Engineering		
Chemical Engineering		
Civil Engineering		
Computer Engineering		
Construction Engineering Technology		
Electrical Engineering		
Electrical Engineering Technology		
Engineering Physics		
Mechanical Engineering		
Mechanical Engineering Technology		
Survey Engineering Technology		

Graduate Degrees: M.S		
College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture	B	2017 2020 2023 2026
School of Biology and Ecology		
Communication Sciences and Disorders		
School of Earth and Climate Sciences		
Ecology and Environmental Science		
School of Economics		
School of Food and Agriculture		
School of Forest Resources		
School of Marine Sciences		
Molecular and Biomedical Sciences		
School of Nursing		
School of Social Work		
Wildlife Ecology		
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	C	2018 2021 2024 2027
Anthropology		
Art		
Chemistry		
Communication and Journalism		
School of Computing Information Science		
English		
History		
International Affairs		
Mathematics and Statistics		
Modern Languages and Classics		
New Media		
Philosophy		
Physics and Astronomy		
Political Science		
Psychology		
School of Performing Arts: Music and Theatre		
Sociology		
Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies		

School of Policy and International Affairs		
Honors College		
Honors Program		

*Individual Department schedules may change based on accreditation review cycle.