Guide to Creating Your Program Matrix and Timeline

Once you have your student learning outcomes, you have to figure out whether or not your courses are teaching them to students. You might find that one outcome is met in every class and another is sadly neglected. Nevertheless, this is important information to learn- you do want to know if your students are learning what you think they are, don't you? This is not a difficult process, but it will require cooperation from your colleagues in the program.

First: Identify the assignments and activities that demonstrate the achievement of each learning outcome

You could do this any number of ways:

- Formally in department or committee meetings
- Informally by chatting with colleagues
- Semi-formally through email exchanges

Choose the option that works best for you.

Next: Create a program matrix

You are about to create a chart. Use MS Excel, Word, Lotus 1-2-3 or whatever you feel the most comfortable with, but you will need a big table. List all of your student learning outcomes down the left hand side, and all of your program's courses across the top. Check off the courses in which each student learning outcome is met. You should end up with something that looks about like this generic model:

	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4	Course 5	Course 6	Other
Our student will embrace technology in the 21st C and use it for the forces of good	X		X	X		X	X
Our students will provide answers to questions		X		X	X		X
Our students will speak in hushed tones in libraries		X			X		

Options: Once you have the basics, consider adding the following information:

1. Where an outcome is introduced, reinforced and mastered.
2. The measure used in the course.
3. Distinguishing between assessment measures that are formative and summative. In an ideal world, formative assessments would come early enough in a program that changes could remediate problems before a summative assessment is done at the end of the program.

4. Distinguishing between assessment measures that are direct and indirect (in an ideal world you would have both for a given outcome).

Timeline

This is the last step in creating a complete assessment plan in accordance with university policy: create a schedule of when each outcome will be assessed. We recommend:

1. That you use a 5-year plan so that you go through an entire assessment cycle that corresponds with the 5-year program review timeframe.
2. That you align your outcome schedule with the Our Husky Compact Dimension of the Year schedule. This will allow the institution to gather artifacts from the diversity of campus and will provide you with assessment planning opportunities that meet your current needs.