

Academic Planning & Improvement Process

Adopted: 1/16/20

Reviewed and Recommended for Adoption:

- Strategic Planning Committee: 11/21/19
- Assessment Steering Committee: 12/4/19
- Faculty Association Meet & Confer: 1/16/20

Purpose

The purpose of the Academic Planning & Continuous Improvement Process is to ensure the rigor, relevance, and viability of St. Cloud State University's academic program portfolio through coordinated planning and continuous improvement via data-driven strategic analysis and management. The process will allow the University to make strategic choices about resource allocation and report on outcomes and achievements to our external constituents.

The outcomes are to:

- Align our academic strategies and program portfolio with St. Cloud State's mission and current strategic plan
- Provide a framework for planning and quality improvement at the university, college/school and department/program levels that links strategic and annual planning and budgeting with assessment, program review and accreditation self-study
- Position St. Cloud State's colleges and schools so they can respond quickly to new opportunities and provide a clear direction for future initiatives
- Identify new/updated program opportunities to respond to changes in workforce demand, student need, and/or enrollment fluctuations
- Demonstrate accountability to SCSU's stakeholders through purposeful measurement and reporting

Guiding Principles

The Academic Planning & Continuous Improvement Process should:

1. Be comprehensive and fully transparent
2. Involve faculty and staff
3. Use data-driven and evidence-based decision making in conjunction with discipline-specific knowledge
4. Support future growth that is responsive to student and external needs and demands
5. Be implemented regularly and integrated with our planning and resource distribution processes

Alignment with Higher Learning Commission

St. Cloud State University's Academic Planning & Continuous Quality Improvement Process is designed to support successful alignment with the criteria and expectation of the Higher Learning Commission, SCSU's regional accreditor.

HLC Criterion 4. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

Core Component 4.A: The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs

4.A.1: The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.

Consistent with the HLC's Pathway process, the Academic Planning & Continuous Quality Improvement Process will contain both a quality assurance component and a continuous improvement component. The Program Review self-study and report aligns with the HLC's Assurance Process, including the expectation of evidence from assessment and evaluation, to support the arguments made in the self-study. The annual planning and reporting

cycle supports the HLC's Improvement Process, including the articulation of improvement initiatives in the annual planning documents, as identified through the assessment and evaluation.

Alignment with Minnesota State Board Policy

The 5-year Academic Program Review process is designed to comply with Minnesota State Board of Trustees Policy 3.36, which states:

Part 8. Academic Review. Each system college and university shall regularly review its academic programs for the purpose of academic planning and improvement. The chancellor may conduct statewide or regional reviews of academic programs or program clusters, report findings to the board and, when necessary, impose conditions on academic programs.

Assumptions

1. "Department/program" for this work is defined by the dean
2. Department/program makes recommendations to the dean; Dean makes recommendations to the provost; Provost makes recommendations to the president; President approves the college/school portfolio

Process Elements

1. Comprehensive and Mid-Cycle Reviews (Merged Program Review and PPM Process)

Approximately every 6 years, all programs in each College and School will complete a Comprehensive Review. The Comprehensive Review creates an opportunity to conduct a summative evaluation of the programs and services provided in each College or School and to create a rich, consistent, and comprehensive information set that will inform the development of the College or School's strategic, academic, and assessment plans.

During Year 4 of the Academic Planning & Improvement Process, each College and School will conduct a Mid-cycle Review. During this time, programs will receive updated stakeholder and performance data and submit any updates to their self-studies. Based on the updated program information, the Dean will provide an updated Program Portfolio Matrix and strategic and academic plan.

The Comprehensive Review and Mid-Cycle Review processes can be found in Appendix A.

2. College/School Strategic and Academic Plan

As a result of the Comprehensive Review, each college/school will develop a strategic and academic plan that supports the achievement of SCSU's Strategic Plan and the goals of the Academic Planning & Improvement Process (see page 1).

Each college/school strategic and academic plan should include:

- Clear mission and vision statement
- Environmental scan, including current trends and market data
- Articulation of the results of the Comprehensive Review, including assessment results and external reviewer and stakeholder feedback
- Strategic objectives and initiatives with clear links to SCSU's Strategic Plan and that address the results of the Comprehensive Review completed in the prior year
- A multi-year academic plan for all programs in the college/school, including program revisions and new program development
- College-wide and program-specific assessment plans

3. Assessment

All academic programs, co-curricular activities and St. Cloud State University's Our Husky Compact (institutional learning outcomes) will have an active and complete assessment plan on file with the Office of Assessment & Accreditation that meet criteria and core components defined by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

SCSU's official Assessment Policy establishes the expectations, structure and principles that will:

- Underpin the expectations for quality assessment at St. Cloud State University
- Support students' development and progressive demonstration of the institutional outcomes in the Our Husky Compact
- Inform the development of curriculum, both academic and co-curricular, and program quality and development
- Encourage faculty to use the results of assessment activities as part of personal and professional growth
- Encompass and inform program review and programmatic accreditation

A complete assessment plan contains the following components:

- Mission Statement
- Learning Outcomes
- Curriculum Map (defining which learning outcomes are taught in which courses)

- Timeline (defining which outcomes will be assessed at what time or during a particular cycle)

Annually, programs and units will submit an assessment report that will include assessment activity for the year, analysis of the data and information collected through the assessment process and actions and changes that occur as a result of assessment data. Annual assessment reporting will be made via SCSU's official assessment management system (*see SCSU's Assessment Policy for additional detail*).

As part of Comprehensive Review, all programs in the college or school will undergo meta-assessment, which involves a peer team of SCSU faculty and staff that will review the current assessment plans and provide feedback for improvement. Those programs that receive an "Established" finding through meta-assessment will be allowed to submit an assessment report every two years.

4. OHC + LEP Assessment Participation

Our Husky Compact

All academic programs are expected to demonstrate alignment between curricular content taught in the program and the dimensions of Our Husky Compact and to actively engage in assessment of student learning in the OHC Dimensions. Programs will have on file the OHC Dimension Alignment Matrix that identifies the courses in their program that provide the clearest evidence of student learning for the outcomes of each OHC dimension at the Introductory and Mastery levels (up to 2 courses total for each outcome). Programs will participate in the data collection cycles for each OHC Dimension of the Year by providing student artifacts for use in the OHC assessment process. Programs will also report any additional assessment of the OHC dimensions as part of their annual assessment reports (*see Our Husky Compact Assessment Plan for additional detail*).

Liberal Education Program

Those programs with courses offered through SCSU's Liberal Education Program (LEP) are required to participate in assessment of the LEP Goal Areas based on the established assessment cycle and in alignment with the OHC assessment cycle. Courses that are not assessed as part of the assessment cycle will be removed from the LEP schedule (*see Liberal Education Program: Assessment Plan for additional detail*).

Alignment with Our Husky Compact Dimension of the Year

- ACT: Goals 9 and 10
- SEEK: Goal 3
- INTEGRATE: Goal 5
- COMMUNICATE: Goals 1 and 4
- ENGAGE: Goals 7 and 8
- THINK: Goals 2 and 6

5. Stakeholder Data Collection

Comprehensive Review and strategic and academic planning for colleges and schools and their programs should be informed by high-quality data collected from stakeholders. To support this effort and provide consistent data, SCSU will provide original data collection for use in the Comprehensive Review and Mid-cycle Review processes and provide standard dashboards and metrics through the PowerBI environment that are updated at least annually.

SCSU's Office of Analytics and Institutional Research (AIR) will develop, collect and distribute survey data from the following stakeholders:

- Program alumni (3-yrs and 10-yrs post-graduation)
- Current student (sample across all cohorts)
- External partners and employers (as identified by the programs and college/schools and Career Services)
- College and school employees
- Market demand

At least annually, AIR and the Office of Assessment and Accreditation will collect and disseminate:

- Graduating Senior Survey Results
- Graduate Placement Outcomes
- Academic Program Performance
- Program faculty participation in EAB Navigate
- Assessment Policy Compliance
- OHC Assessment Participation
- LEP Assessment Participation

Process Description (6-year cycle)

Each College and School will complete the full Academic Planning & Continuous Quality Improvement Process over a six-year cycle (or an adapted cycle as required by a school-level external accrediting body). The six-year cycle will occur along the following annual timeline:

Year 1: Comprehensive Review

During Year 1 of the cycle, all programs within a college or school will complete a self-study (Appendix A). The purpose is to do a summative evaluation of each program, using data from institutional alignment (strategic and OHC), program assessment, including LEP as appropriate, stakeholder feedback, and market demand and employer expectations. The purpose of the Comprehensive Review is to create a rich, consistent, and comprehensive information set that will inform the development of the College or School's strategic, academic, and assessment plans and program-level plans and strategies. The Comprehensive Review will include an external evaluation at the program or college/school level as determined by the Dean.

Standard Timeline:

- Program self-study completed by March 1
- External review completed by May 15

Year 2: New Plan Completion

During Year 2, colleges and schools and their programs will develop new (or revise existing) strategic and academic plans, including detailed action plans for all programs. The plan will include an updated assessment plan that incorporates feedback from meta-assessment in Year 1, as well as alignment with the OHC and LEP assessment schedules.

Standard Timeline:

- Initial drafts completed by Fall Convocation
- Strategic, Academic, and Assessment plans completed by December 1

Year 3: Updates

At the end of Year 3, colleges and schools and their programs will provide a progress report on the implementation of their strategic plan, academic plan, and assessment plan.

Standard Timeline:

- Report submitted by May 15

Year 4: Mid-cycle Review

During Year 4, colleges and schools and their programs will complete a Mid-cycle Review that will focus on a review of updated stakeholder and market data, assessment progress reports and strategic and academic plan implementation. The outcome of the Mid-cycle Review will be an update/revision to the college/schools strategic and academic plan as necessary.

Standard Timeline:

- Program self-study updates completed by March 1
- Plan updates completed by following September 1

Year 5: Updates

At the end of Year 5, colleges and schools and their programs will provide a progress report on the implementation of their strategic plan, academic plan, and assessment plan.

Standard Timeline:

- Report submitted by May 15

Year 6: Updates

At the end of Year 6, colleges and schools and their programs will provide a progress report on the implementation of their strategic plan, academic plan, and assessment plan.

Standard Timeline:

- Report submitted by May 15

Academic Planning & Continuous Improvement Process (6-yr cycle)

Draft: 11/12/19

	Year 1 Comprehensive Review		Year 2 New Plan Completion	Year 3 Update	4 Mid-Cycle Review	Year 5 Update	Year 6 Update
College/ School Strategic and Academic Plan			New plan developed	Progress Report and Update		Progress Report and Update	Progress Report and Update
Merged Program Review and PPM Process	Comprehensive Review				Mid-cycle Review		
Assessment	Meta- Assessment Results	Established	New Assessment Plan	Assessment Progress Report		Assessment Progress Report	
		Absent/ Initial/ Emerging	New Assessment Plan	Assessment Progress Report	Assessment Progress Report	Assessment Progress Report	Assessment Progress Report
OHC + LEP Assessment Participation	OHC + LEP Schedule		OHC + LEP Schedule	OHC + LEP Schedule	OHC + LEP Schedule	OHC + LEP Schedule	OHC + LEP Schedule
Stakeholder Data Collection	Alumni, Student, Partners and Employer, Employee GSS		GSS NSSE	GSS	Alumni, Student, Partners and Employer, Employee GSS NSSE	GSS	GSS, NSSE

Appendix A: Comprehensive Review Process

Note: Program self-study reports and all evidence to support self-study must be submitted via AEFIS Assessment Management System starting in January 2020. Training and support will be provided by SCSU's Office of Assessment & Accreditation. The overall self-study and each section will have word limits in place.

Step 1: Program Self-study Preparation

As part of the self-study process, all programs will prepare a self-study report with the following sections. The self-study should specifically address data and measures provided by the university, as well as program and college specific data collected through local assessment and evaluation efforts. All claims made in the self-study must be supported by documented evidence, which will be loaded into the evidence folders within the assessment management system. Items in the evidence folder will not be included in the word count.

Section 1: Outcomes and Achievements [maximum: 1000 words]:

1. Based on evidence from assessment and evaluation efforts, describe the outcomes and achievements of the department/program over the last six years. Specifically provide evidence that demonstrates the quality and effectiveness of the department or program. Provide peer comparisons whenever possible.
2. Describe changes to your department over the last six years and provide your interpretation of the department or program's performance on those measures.

Institutional Metrics:

- Graduate Placement Outcomes [source: Graduate Placement Survey]
- Student retention and completion rates [source: student record data]
- Student retention and completion gap [source: student record data]
- Student belonging index [source: student survey]
- Student satisfaction [source: student survey]
- Alumni satisfaction [source: alumni survey]

Section 2: Programs and Services [maximum: 2500 words]:

- A. **Program Quality:** This section must be linked directly to evidence acquired through assessment and evaluation of the program, including the direct and indirect assessment of student learning outcomes.
 - a. **Current Assessment Results:** The following should be uploaded in AEFIS assessment management system (*this section is not included in word count*):
 - i. Student learning outcomes for each program
 - ii. Department/program assessment plan
 - iii. Copies of the last five annual assessment findings and reports
 - b. **Provide a summary of major changes you have made as a result of assessment findings (program, course, Our Husky Compact, and Liberal Education Program)**
 - c. **Distinctive Program Characteristic: How do your current program outcomes align with professional standards and/or career options for your graduates?**
 - d. Describe examples of discipline-specific best practices and program innovation that have occurred in your program since your last program review.
 - e. **Distinctive Program Characteristic: What are the applied and experiential learning requirements or opportunities for your program? How are these aligned with your program outcomes?**
 - f. Describe your current process for ensuring instructional quality within your program? Provide evidence that this process is effective.

- B. **Student Success and Engagement:**

- a. **Distinctive Program Characteristic: How does the program provide individualized student support (i.e. Navigate, Student Success Maps, Huskies Advance, other)**
 - b. Provide a brief description of how students are advised in your program? Provide evidence that this process is effective. *(Include a copy of the full departmental advising plan in the evidence file)*
 - c. Describe any co-curricular activities that support achievement of your program outcomes (student leadership development, volunteering or community engagement, academic clubs and organizations, research/scholarship/creative projects).
 - d. **Distinctive Program Characteristic: How does your program provide ongoing, life-long learning opportunities in your field?**
- C. **Program Demand and Potential:** Assertions in this section must be supported by internal demand and/or market data.
- a. What is the current and future demand for the program?
 - b. How will the program respond to current and future local, regional, state and/or national needs?
 - c. What does data indicate about employment opportunities in the careers your students pursue? What are the projections for the growth in jobs that your graduates are likely to pursue?
 - d. How is this program distinctive or unique? Are similar programs offered elsewhere in the state?
 - e. What is the potential for alternative program delivery (online, Alnwick, Plymouth, 2+2, etc.)

Institutional Metrics:

- Program enrollment over the past 6 years [source: student record data]
- Program average market share over past 6 years [source: student record data]
- Employer demand for program graduates [source: DEED data]
- Assessment Policy Compliance [source: AEFIS]
- Meta-assessment results [source: AEFIS]
- OHC Assessment Participation and Outcomes [source: AEFIS]
- LEP Assessment Participation and Outcomes [source: AEFIS]
- Program faculty participation in EAB Navigate [source: EAB Navigate]
- Instructional quality of program [source: student survey]

Section 3: Constituents and External Stakeholders [maximum: 1500 words]

A. Needs assessment:

- a. **Distinctive Program Characteristic: Who are the external stakeholders/partners for the department or program?** *[Information should be updated in SCSU's Partnership Inventory. Not included in word count]*
- b. How does the department or program learn about the needs, perceptions and priorities of constituents and external stakeholders, such as employers, graduate schools, educational and community partners, and alumni?
- c. How has needs assessment data informed program and service revision and development?

B. Collaboration: Describe your current and possible future collaborations with:

- a. **Other units within St. Cloud State University, especially as they relate to the 4 Areas of Distinction (Health, Leadership, Education, Engineering & Applied Science)**
- b. Other colleges and universities within MnSCU
- c. Other colleges and universities nationally, and internationally
- d. Community organizations, business, industry, and government

C. Community Engagement:

- a. How does the program/faculty contribute to the community?
- b. How does the department share its expertise with local groups or organizations?
- c. How does the department sponsor activities which are open to and/or benefit the community?

Institutional metrics:

- Employer/partner satisfaction [source: partners and employers survey]
- Community engagement activity of program faculty [source: partners and employers survey]
- Applied research and scholarship activity of program faculty [source: partners and employers survey]

Section 4: Strategic and Resource Planning [maximum: 1000 words]

- A. Provide your current department/program mission and strategic plan, including date of last revision (*not included in word count*)
- B. How does the department or program align with and support the University and college/school mission, vision and strategic plan?
- C. Provide an evaluation of currently available department resources (financial, library holdings, facilities, equipment, technology, etc.). What resource adjustments or reallocations will need to occur to address future programmatic needs as well as those of students?
- D. Assuming current rates of funding for students and existing resources, what programmatic changes will need to occur to address these resource constraints?

Institutional Metrics:

- E. Revenue/cost ratio [source: system HR and finance data]
- F. Productivity ratios [source: system HR and finance data]

Section 5: Faculty and Staff [maximum: 1000 words]

- A. Provide a current or update existing vita for all faculty and staff in the department or program in the AEFIS faculty qualifications system (*not included in word count*). How does the faculty members' professional training and experience relate to the academic program(s) offered?
- B. How does the program support the Engaged Teacher/Scholar Model? What are the faculty members' activities relative to University, college and departmental goals, teaching, scholarly activity/research, student growth, and community service?**
- C. How does the department or program create a positive climate within the area and facilitate personal and professional development of its faculty and staff?
- D. How are contingent faculty trained and supported to ensure that programmatic quality and student support is maintained?
- E. What are the long-term hiring needs of the department or program? How does the unit promote the recruitment and hiring of diverse faculty and staff?

Institutional Metrics:

- % of program faculty with current vitae on file [source: AEFIS]
- Employee engagement and satisfaction [source: employee survey]
- Diversity of department faculty and staff [source: Office of Institutional Equity & Access]

Section 6: Leadership and Governance [maximum: 1000 words]

- A. Describe the process by which departmental or programmatic decisions are made. Provide the current department/program policies and procedures, including the dates of the most recent revisions (*not included in word count*).
- B. How does your department/program encourage engagement and innovation among all members of the unit in both department activities and programs?
- C. How does the department or program contribute to the institution? How are faculty members involved in university--wide committee work?

Institutional Metrics:

- Employee engagement and satisfaction [source: employee survey]

Section 7: Future Direction and Continuous Improvement [maximum: 1500 words]

This section should provide a self--evaluation of the program's strengths, weaknesses, and possible future directions based on assessment and evaluation findings, changing student demographic, market and trend data, and information on disciplinary changes, best practices, student interest, etc.)

- A. What are the changing dimensions of the discipline? How are the needs of graduates and employers changing? What changes will need to occur within your department's offerings/programs in order to respond?
- B. **What is the program's plans for new and/or alternative program delivery, especially as they relate to the 4 Areas of Distinction (Health, Leadership, Education, Engineering & Applied Science)**
- C. What support will the program need to implement these plans?

Step 2: External Review and Follow-up

At the beginning of the review process, the Dean will work with the programs in the college or school to identify an appropriate panel of external reviewers that fit the program portfolio of the college/school and that align with the strategic needs and interests of the college. The programs can submit 3-5 names of potential reviewers to the Dean for consideration. *Programs are encouraged to consider reviewers with both disciplinary and industry/sector experience and expertise.* The Dean of the Graduate School also should be consulted to ensure the specific needs of the graduate programs within the college or school are addressed. The Dean will make the final determination about the number and expertise of the external review panel and the structure of the visit(s) based on the strategic and programmatic needs of the college or school.

The reviewers' final written report(s) should be sent directly to the Dean for distribution to the programs. The department will prepare a written response to the reviewers' report and give it to the Dean within three weeks of receiving the report. The department should respond to statements and recommendations made by the review team.

Timeline

The final Comprehensive Review Timeline for each college and school will be determined by the Dean but the following is a suggested timeline:

- Preparation of the program self--study reports is begun in spring of the year prior to the review and completed by March 1 of the review year.
- External review process (consultants' visit, departmental response, etc.) to be completed by May 15 of the review year.
- By September 1 of the year following the review, the Dean must provide a copy of the self--study reports, the consultants' reports, departmental responses, and the Dean's written comments to the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Assessment and Accreditation for institutional documentation.

Step 3: College Program Portfolio Assessment

Based on the results of Comprehensive Review of each program, the Dean will update the college/school Program Portfolio Management (PPM) matrices and 3-year Program Development Plan using the following review and consultation process (Appendix B):

- A. The Dean shares the college/school PPM matrices, associated strategies, and 3-year Program Development Plan with the college/school Dean's Academic Council (DAC), faculty, and staff.
- B. Dean submits updated PPM matrices, associated strategies, and 3-year Program Development Plan framework to Provost for discussion.

- C. Provost and/or President share key recommendations with Deans Council, FA Executive Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, and others as deemed appropriate.
- D. Dean engages appropriate units across the University and impacted departments to create the 3-year Program Development Plans and associated implementation plans and timelines.

The resulting effort will result in the college/school academic plan that will be included as part of the unit's strategic plan developed during Year 2.

Appendix B: Program Portfolio Management Templates

Program Portfolio Management (PPM) Matrix

Program: Using the PPM matrix criteria, identify on the matrix where your program is currently and where you expect it to be in three years. Use the 3-year Program Development Plan to describe how the program will develop from/maintain its current state.

Dean: Create one PPM matrix to identify where the college/school programs are currently. Create a second PPM matrix to identify where the college/school programs will be in three years after implementing the 3-year Program Development Plan.

		Program Strength		
Internal/External Demand		Strong	Moderate	Challenged
	High			
	Moderate			
	Limited			

Program Portfolio Management (PPM) Matrix Strategies

Based on the placement of your program on the PPM matrix, the following strategies may be considered.

(Adapted from <http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/11745.pdf>)

		Program Strength		
Internal/External Demand		Strong	Moderate	Challenged
	High	Invest Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grow program; concentrate on program strengths and areas of competitive advantage Grow enrollment 	Invest Resources Selectively/Align Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve program strength; concentrate on areas where the program has competitive advantage Grow enrollment 	Align Resources Selectively/Shift Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve program strength; specialize program around strengths Grow enrollment Shift resources if program strength indicators do not show progress
	Moderate	Invest Resources Selectively/Align Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase market share Serve new niche markets Grow enrollment 	Align Resources Selectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect program in markets where demand is strongest and competition is limited Maintain enrollment 	Align Resources Selectively/Shift Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control/minimize risks Maintain enrollment Shift resources if strength indicators do not show progress
	Limited	Align Resources Selectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on the viable market segments Maintain enrollment Redirect program strengths to new programs/markets 	Align Resources Selectively/Shift Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on the viable market segments Maintain enrollment Shift resources if market continues to shrink 	Shift Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divest program

3-Year Program Development Plan

Degree Program	PPM Matrix Strategy	Current HC Enrollment (FY)	FY + 1 Estimated Enrollment	FY + 2 Estimated Enrollment	FY + 3 Estimated Enrollment

- 1) Aligned with the program's PPM matrix strategy, please briefly describe:

- the activities planned to grow/maintain enrollment
- the activities planned to improve degree completion/student success

How will the success of these efforts impact program strength, internal/external market demand, and position on the Strategic Program Portfolio Management matrix?

- 2) If investment in resources is part of the PPM matrix strategy, please describe:

- additional (over and above the current year's budget) budget needed to fund the new resources
- use of the new resources
- expected return on the investment (ROI), in terms of additional (over and above the current year's enrollment) enrollment/enrollment revenue.

Overall Program Enrollment Impact

	Undergraduate Degrees and Credentials	Graduate Degrees and Credentials	Professional Credentials (non-credit or continuing ed)
St. Cloud			
Plymouth			
Alnwick			
Online and Hybrid			
Partner-based Delivery			
Total Target Enrollment			