

# Recommendation

Proposal: Gaining Endorsement for a Long-Term  
Plan for Improvement of Assessment in the Education Unit

Assessment Working Group

August 01, 2014

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 3

II. NEED & OBJECTIVE ..... 4

III. RECOMMENDATION..... 4

IV. BUDGET ..... 4

VII. APPENDIX ..... 4

# I. Executive Summary

In performing an environmental scan of resources related to assessment, members of the Assessment Working Group culled through a wealth of material. While perusal of the articles, books, and obtaining access to testimony about current practices in the unit proved beneficial in their own right, it occurred to us that we ought to do something valuable with the collected information. Thus, we developed a so-called White Paper designed to formulate a set of defensible statements about best practices in the organization of assessment and assuring that solid data were collected and employed in the unit's continuous improvement.

The White Paper summarizes our findings regarding best practices as they apply specifically to the culture of St. Cloud State University. In addition, we outlined a set of practices and proposals tied to our findings. These are specifically designed to guide the practice of assessment at SCSU and to initiate the process of planning around best practices, guiding 2014-2015 work of the team.

We assume that the White Paper (attached), though approved in draft form by members of the AWG, will need to be refined and amended at every step in the endorsement process (e.g. the Coordinating Team, the Assessment and Accreditation Committee, the dean of the SOE, the provost, perhaps even the University Assessment Committee, but certainly members of TEAC and ETEC). We see the paper in its current manifestation and always in the future as an organize document subject to being revisited on a regular basis.

One aspect of the WP and its approval process is a bit out of the ordinary. The WP is designed not just as a guide to assessment and continuous improvement in the education unit, but also as a guide to program evaluation. This guide to program evaluation is currently applied to such practices as applied under the auspices of Bush grant activities, but we intend that these procedures might have application to expectations regarding the assessment and evaluation of new programs even after the grant ends.

The objectives and rationale for seeking endorsement of the WP are bulleted below:

- It provides a touchstone to literature regarding best practices in assessment and program evaluation
- It provides a set of guidelines for practice of assessment in the education unit
- It advocates for a system integrated with the rest of the university's practices
- This living document is likely to serve to focus the content of debates about assessment likely to occur
- It can be used to orient new faculty and staff members to their responsibilities regarding continuous program improvement
- If endorsed by appropriate constituencies, the roadmap can serve as support for efforts to procure soft monies for innovation.

## II. Need & Objective

<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Need</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Current Outreach</u>	<u>Roadblocks</u>
1. Outlining best practices in assessment such that all constituencies in the education unit roughly endorse the document	At present, our efforts to define ourselves and to look forward have not been systematically addressed—we tend to look at them in a piecemeal and/or ad hoc basis at time of intense need	The attached WP will be edited and then receive endorsement as a statement of practices and intentions in the education unit by (a) the TPI CT, (b) the unit Assessment-Accreditation Committee, (C) the DAC, (d) TEAC, (e) ETEC by December 1, 2014	Our assessment, accreditation, and evaluation practices have never been thoroughly examined or endorsed. The closest we have come is to generate statements regarding Standard II (assessment) when accreditation time comes around. We have not endorsed a vision of best practices	Assessment can be very controversial—whereas the WP endorses the use of “hard” data in a continuous improvement loop, this is not without controversy in the field (because it is seen in some circles) as a model more aligned with business and industry. It is a debate worth having

## III. Recommendation

<u>Recommendation Strategies</u>	<u>Rationale</u>
1. Formally request consideration (amendments) from members of the Coordinating Team	Though asking for endorsement of a plan does not meet the strict construction of a TPI proposal and certainly will require no expenditure of resources, we believe that offering it formally will invoke the governance structure and help members of the AWG configure the report such that it becomes a working document for the education unit.
2. Formally request and receive endorsement from members of the Coordinating Team.	See above
3. With the permission of the CT, move the document through the education unit’s governance structure, specifically the education unit’s Assessment-Accreditation Committee, DAC, departments and programs as necessary, TEAC, and ETEC.	See above

## IV. Budget

No budget request accompanies this proposal.

## VII. Appendix

Include supporting materials and references in this section.