

## **Andrews University Assessment Policies**

### **Assessment Validation Process**

The University's assessment processes are linked to the mission and goals of the University. Assessment plans of programs across the University are periodically evaluated for relevance to the University mission, as well as for reliability, validity, and usability, by the Committee for Institutional Assessment. Assessment plans of academic programs are also evaluated through the routine academic program review process facilitated by the Program Development and Review Committee. Proposals for new programs are submitted to the same committee, and are required to include an assessment plan. These committees include faculty from across the University at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition, the Committee for Institutional Assessment includes representatives from administration, Student Life, and other support services. Recommendations are sent to program faculty and/or staff for their review, input and where appropriate, implementation.

### **Annual Assessment Cycle and Data Collection**

Assessments of personnel, students, courses, programs, and the University follow a regular cycle. Staff, faculty, and administrators undergo a review each January, with staff evaluated by their supervisors, faculty by their department chairs, department chairs by the Deans, Deans by the Provost and faculty in their schools, and administrators by their peers. Areas for improvement and personal goals are noted in faculty files, and are reviewed the following year. Faculty and courses are assessed by students at the end of each semester through course evaluations. Throughout the year, faculty evaluate assessment data in courses for student achievement of course and program outcomes. Course outcomes are in harmony with program outcomes, and program outcomes are linked to University goals. Support programs and offices assess indicators of how well they are supporting the operations of the University, in order to facilitate student learning. Data for each program are aggregated and compiled by the departments at the end of each school year. Assessment summaries are reported in the University's assessment management system by the end of summer or shortly thereafter, and are shared with and reviewed by program faculty and/or staff. Any changes for program improvement are drafted and voted on by the appropriate group in early fall. Academic changes are included in the new Andrews University Bulletin.

### **Feedback Loop Process**

The feedback loop consists of formative feedback, plans for improvement, summative feedback, evaluation decisions, and revisions and renewal. The sequence of these elements leads toward improved student outcomes and may be recursive. For example, summative feedback leads to making evaluation decisions, which may lead back to further plans for improvement. The decisions may also lead to student advancement through a program, faculty/staff members' advancement on the salary scale or in rank, administrators' advancement on the salary scale, or revisions of University programs or operations. In any case, these evaluation decisions are treated as steps on the path to re-visioning and renewing University persons and programs. After action plans are developed for re-visioning or renewing, these plans are shared with key stakeholders in the programs. These stakeholders may provide corrective feedback that leads to re-thinking these plans. Eventually the feedback from the University's partners helps ensure that the University maintains quality programs for the preparation of qualified graduates.

**Follow-up Studies**

The University gathers follow-up information on all graduates and programs through such means as exit interviews or surveys, alumni surveys, and employer surveys. Exit interviews or surveys are conducted by some programs or departments prior to students' graduation. The University regularly conducts surveys of alumni after they graduate from their programs. Some programs also conduct their own alumni and employer surveys at intervals determined by the program faculty or their own external accreditation requirements. Follow-up studies gather information on job placement and the attainment of University goals, as well as information related to program quality.

**Assessment of Unit Operations**

Three different entities are responsible for managing the assessment of unit operations: the Provost, the school Deans, and the Director of Human Resources. The Provost is responsible for managing the processes related to evaluation of the Deans and directors of academic support units or programs. The official records for the relevant administrator Performance Reviews are kept in the office of the Provost. The School Deans are responsible for managing the processes related to budget accountability and chair evaluations. Department chairs are responsible for managing the processes related to faculty evaluations. Official budget records and the Faculty Annual Report documentation for chairs and faculty are kept in the offices of the School Deans. The Director of Human Resources is responsible for managing the processes related to support staff evaluations. Official records of support staff evaluations are kept in the Human Resources Department.

The Deans are also responsible for monitoring the assessment of unit operations that relate to overall program quality in their schools. The Assessment Director, in cooperation with the Deans, assists department chairs and program coordinators in developing and refining program assessment plans, and reviewing results. The Assessment Director monitors assessment activity and makes regular reports to the Deans regarding the progress of each of the programs in their schools. Department chairs and program coordinators submit annual assessment reports to their Deans each fall, including any recommendations program faculty have made for areas for improvement. The Deans take these recommendations into consideration as they prepare the budget for the upcoming year. The School Deans submit major recommendations for their schools to the Provost. Together in Dean's Council, the Provost and Deans make decisions for improvements to be made at the University level. (See Academic Assessment Process Map)

Similarly, directors of academic support units and programs are responsible for the assessment of their areas, with the support of the Assessment Director. The Assessment Director reports the progress of these units to the Provost. Directors submit their assessment reports to the Provost annually each fall, along with recommendations from their faculty or staff for program improvement. Major improvements and budget decisions are made in consultation with the Provost.