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| Instructions for the Unit Assessment Plan  Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 |
| **Rationale** |

The University of Southern Mississippi is committed to high standards in all aspects of the institution. Administrative units are critical to achieving the University’s strategic plan. To that end, it is important to know where we are, where we want to go, and what our plan is for getting there. We also need to celebrate our progress and identify where we can continue to grow. To document our progress and achievements, each administrative unit submits an annual plan and report. These reports are used internally for improvement and decision-making and to demonstrate compliance with [SACSCOC accreditation standards](https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/2018PrinciplesOfAcreditation.pdf).

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| **Important Dates** |

* The **due date** for the FY 2024-2025 assessment **plan** is **November 1, 2024**.
* The **due date** for the FY 2024-2025 assessment **report** is **July 31, 2025**.
  + Instructions for the complete report will be sent out in Spring 2025.

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| **Important Reminders** |

* **Spell out** **acronyms** [e.g., Institutional Effectiveness (IE)] the first time they are used.
* **Be concise.** Each section should remain concise enough to fit comfortably within the table.
* **Be specific.**
* **Check for typos/spelling errors.**

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| The Assessment Plan – Due October 1, 2024 |

**Sections that are required to be completed for the assessment *plan* are highlighted in the assessment template document. The remaining (non-highlighted) pieces will be completed for the report due July 31, 2025; instructions for the complete report will be sent out in Spring 2025.**

The following sections are required for a complete assessment plan:

1. **Direct Report Units**: Units that report to your unit*. Please do not abbreviate the names of units.*
   1. Example: The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of Institutional Research are direct report units to the Senior Associate Provost for Institutional Success.
   2. All direct report units should be represented in the report. For example, every direct report unit will have at least one outcome.
2. **Unit Description**: The role of the unit and direct report units. This can be a broad summary.
3. **Outcomes**: What outcomes/goals does the unit plan to achieve for the upcoming year? Each unit should have a total of 3 – 5 outcomes, but units with several direct report units may choose to establish more than five outcomes. The unit’s outcomes should be aspirational but obtainable and relate to the unit’s primary functions. Outcomes should be measurable. The included outcomes may be administrative and/or student learning outcomes. Outcomes should be specific to your unit(s) rather than university wide.
   1. **Administrative Outcomes**: Outcomes which revolve around administrative functions such as efficiency and quality of services. Some units may only have administrative outcomes; these may include finance and procurement, facilities and physical plant, administrative services, development/advancement, research office, president’s office, etc.
   2. **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**: In addition to administrative outcomes, units that have direct instructional responsibilities or provide specific co-curricular activities *may* have SLOs. These outcomes focus on student learning – what students should know or do after having contact with your unit. These outcomes are included in the total number of outcomes a unit may have.
      1. Example: When students [complete some activity/service the unit provides] they will [be able to do X].
      2. Units that *may* have SLOs include public safety, financial aid, library, tutoring, writing centers, residence life, student activities, dean of student’s office, student disability support centers, etc.
4. **Measures**: How will you measure each outcome? Each outcome should have one measure. The measure should be succinct and explain how the unit can meaningfully determine if expectations were met.
   1. Examples: Energy usage, response times, monetary targets, error rates, successful audits, etc.
   2. Student exit survey data (found in the “Faculty and Staff Data Access” portal of [the Office of Institutional Research’s website](https://www.usm.edu/institutional-research/institutional_data.php) – use SOAR credentials to log-in) may be used. Student satisfaction with some services is indicated.
5. **Targets**: The target is included with the measure, and it states the goal the unit is trying to achieve.
   1. Example: All new staff orientation training will be completed within two weeks.
   2. Example: 85% of survey responders will select “Exceeds Expectations.”
   3. Example: 95% of help tickets will be responded to within 24 hours.
   4. Units that serve multiple populations should consider establishing targets for each population.
6. **Plan Submission**: Please upload the assessment plan document in Weave as a project attachment, then change the status of the project to “In Progress.” For assistance contact Claire Blackwell ([claire.blackwell@usm.edu](mailto:claire.blackwell@usm.edu)).

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| WEAVE |

Weave is the assessment platform used by USM. Each unit has its own project located in Weave. If you have access to Weave, you may find your project by:

1. Going to <https://app.weaveeducation.com/login>.
2. Logging-in to Weave using the institution's sign-on: USM
   1. Please do not make a username or password or try to log-in this way.
3. Going to the *Projects* tab at the top of the page.
4. If you do not see your project, search for it by title or project year.
   1. Unit projects will always be under a year titled “Unit.” FY 2024-2025 projects will be located under “Unit: FY 24-25.”

Please contact Claire Blackwell ([claire.blackwell@usm.edu](mailto:claire.blackwell@usm.edu)) or visit the Office of Institutional Effectiveness’ website for more information.

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| Resources |

If you have any questions regarding the assessment plan and guidelines or Weave, please contact Claire Blackwell (Claire.Blackwell@usm.edu) and Kathryn Lowery ([Kathryn.Lowery@usm.edu](mailto:Kathryn.Lowery@usm.edu)). Additionally, [the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website](https://www.usm.edu/institutional-effectiveness/index.php) contains resources regarding unit assessment, navigating weave, and SACSCOC requirements.

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| **Tips** |

* See the [unit assessment example](https://www.usm.edu/institutional-effectiveness/unit-assessment.php) on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website for reference.
* Proof-read the report; check for grammatical errors, spelling errors, and typos.
* Be specific.
  + Avoid vague words like “several, various, many, and few”.
  + Provide context to an outside reader/reviewer.
  + Do not abbreviate names of units, programs, etc.
* Additional data may be found on [the Office of Institutional Research website](https://www.usm.edu/institutional-research/institutional_data.php).

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| ***Thank you for your efforts and commitment to continuous improvement!*** |