

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS



Assessment of Student Learning Policy

University Policy #2160

Section 1. Purpose

Student learning is Metropolitan State University's central purpose. As an Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) institution, Metropolitan State is committed to the continuous improvement of learning through systematic assessment of student learning. The University further acknowledges its obligation to share assessment findings as integral to accreditation and accountability.

Section 2. Authority

This policy is issued pursuant to authority granted under the Rules and Regulations of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU).

Section 3. Effective Date

This policy shall become effective upon signature by the president and shall remain in effect until modified or expressly revoked.

Section 4. Responsibility

Responsibility for implementation of this policy is assigned to the provost and vice president academic affairs.

Faculty and administration share responsibility for assessing student learning at Metropolitan State University.

Faculty in an academic program have responsibility for assessment of the program's student learning outcomes. The University recognizes the central role of the faculty in the assessment of student learning outcomes and the continuous improvement of student learning.

The provost, in concert with the academic deans, will ensure that appropriate assessment of student learning is occurring in all of the University's academic programs. The provost and academic deans are responsible to provide professional development opportunities in support of assessment.

Section 5. Definitions

For purposes of this policy:

- A. The term “program” includes undergraduate majors, graduate degree programs, and General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS).
- B. The phrase “student learning outcomes” refers to the knowledge and skills that a graduate of a program is expected to have achieved.
- C. The phrase “assessment of student learning outcomes” refers to a systematic and iterative process of defining a program’s student learning outcomes, collecting and analyzing data on achievement of those outcomes, and using the findings to continuously improve student learning.

Section 6. Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

Metropolitan State University recognizes the 9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning which were developed under the auspices of the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) Assessment Forum with support from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education:

1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values.
2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time.
3. Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes.
4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes, but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.
5. Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.
6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the education community are involved.
7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.
8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.
9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public.

Section 7. Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes

- A. The faculty of each academic program shall define student learning outcomes for the program and develop and implement a plan for assessing student achievement of the outcomes. The General Education Committee (or its successor) will review and consult on processes and procedures related to the assessment of student learning outcomes for the General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) program.
- B. Program faculty shall communicate the defined student learning outcomes to current and prospective students via the University website and other appropriate channels.
- C. By December 1 of each year, the faculty of each program shall provide a written report to the dean (or the dean’s designee) on the previous academic year’s assessment activities. The report shall list the student learning outcomes assessed and describe the method(s) to assess achievement of the outcomes, the assessment findings, and actions taken or planned on the basis of the findings. A copy of the report shall be sent to the provost for use in institutional accreditation processes.

D. The dean (or designee) shall review the report and provide a written response to the program faculty by February 1.

Section 8. Assessment of Other Learning Outcomes

- A. The provost, in consultation with the faculty and the academic deans, is responsible for the assessment of other student learning outcomes as required by MnSCU policy and/or participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability (or its successor).
- B. The findings of such assessment shall be made available via the University web site and other appropriate channels.

Section 9. Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy require approval from the provost and vice president academic affairs.

Section 10. Review

This policy will be reviewed and modified as appropriate.

Section 11. Signatures

Issued on this 8th day of August, 2011.



Gary Seiler, Interim Provost and Vice President Academic Affairs



Sue K. Hammersmith, President