ACE Assessment Digest
OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT FOR CURRICULAR EFFECTIVENESS

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Introduction to Our New Assessment Specialist Armine Ghalachyan

We're pleased to announce that Armine Ghalachyan has joined the ACE team as an Assessment Specialist! Previously, she was a faculty member in the Department of Apparel, Merchandising, Design and Textiles at WSU, where she served as the undergraduate program assessment coordinator. Armine has years of teaching experience and is passionate about mentoring student research and creative activities as well as curricular assessment for improvement of student learning. For more information about Armine and the rest of our team, including who to contact for support for your program assessment efforts, see our ACE Staff pages.

Reminder: 2024 Undergraduate Degree Program Assessment Reporting Window Open

WSU undergraduate degree programs are responsible for reporting annually on program-level assessment, submitting a report during the open reporting window — **anytime from mid-December 2024 through February 2025**. Undergraduate programs will again use Qualtrics to submit their 2024 annual report about program assessment conducted during the 2024 calendar year (Jan 1 – Dec 31) and program assessment coordinators received emails from ace.office@wsu.edu in mid-December with unique links to access the Qualtrics form.

For general information and resources related to annual reporting, visit our Annual Program Assessment Reporting webpages. We are also available to help assessment coordinators complete the report; contact us for additional information.

Program Assessment Spotlight: Engaging Faculty in Curriculum Mapping (Strategic Communication)

Curriculum mapping is a vital tool for academic programs, offering a clear alignment between program-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) and the courses within a degree program. Simplified, a curriculum map is a matrix that visually represents how each course in a program contributes to the overarching program-level SLOs. The complexity of these maps can vary to best suit the needs of a program, but their primary function is to enable faculty to design intentional curricula that systematically build and deepen students' skills and knowledge throughout the undergraduate experience, leading to mastery of program-level SLOs. By making this relationship visible, curriculum maps empower faculty to create a cohesive learning experience that appropriately scaffolds student achievement of key educational goals.

Following a refresh of the program-level SLOs for the BA in Strategic Communication by program faculty, WSU's Department of Strategic Communication undertook an initiative to update their curriculum maps during the 2023-24 academic year for their four majors: Advertising, Public Relations, Integrated Strategic Communication, and Risk & Crisis Communication. The faculty assessment coordinator began by reviewing syllabi from all required courses for each of the four majors, using a curriculum mapping template adapted from WSU's Office of Assessment for Curricular Effectiveness. This involved entering course-level SLOs from the syllabi into the template and aligning these with the program-level SLOs. A pilot phase was conducted where the faculty assessment coordinator met with faculty teaching specific courses to review this alignment and discuss how course assignments support program-level SLOs. >> Read More …

Curriculum Mapping Toolkit: Resources for Developing and Updating Curriculum Maps

Curriculum maps help faculty understand the specific role courses play within the broader curriculum, clarifying how their teaching contributes to the advancement of program-level SLOs. Additionally, curriculum maps can be used to help investigate assessment findings and plan interventions to address identified gaps or areas for improvement. For example, program faculty can use the curriculum map to explore the following questions:

- When is competency expected and how do prior course learning experiences help ensure success?
- Are program SLOs first introduced and then reinforced? Do students get practice on program SLOs before being assessed for competency?
- Do some program SLOs get more coverage than others? Is that intentional?

Our Curriculum Maps Toolkit includes resources intended to help WSU programs and faculty as they develop or update their curriculum maps:

- Quick Guide to Curriculum Maps (PDF)
- Curriculum Map Template (XLSX)
- Quality Checklist for Curriculum Maps (DOCX)

We are also available to collaborate with undergraduate degree programs to develop or update curriculum maps; contact us for information.

Mark Your Calendars for NSSE 2025 Promotion

This spring, plan to help get the word out to eligible seniors and first-year students on all WSU campuses about NSSE 2025! **The main window for NSSE 2025 promotion will be in March and early April**, and the nsse.wsu.edu website will have additional information about key dates and materials to help faculty and staff promote the NSSE 2025 survey at WSU.

Every two years, WSU participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to help assess senior and first-year student engagement in educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development. After each administration, our office collaborates with WSU's Office of Institutional Research to disaggregate results for undergraduate degree programs and colleges, focusing on responses from seniors. These disaggregated NSSE reports are distributed to WSU programs in which 10 or more seniors respond to the survey. See our webpage focused on NSSE for program-level assessment for more information.

Recognition of Program Assessment Activities in Faculty Annual Review

WSU's faculty manual provides recognition for faculty participation in program-level assessment in the annual review process, as part of Teaching or Service accomplishments, depending on the activity. This aligns with the university's EPPM policies on assessment, which include recognizing assessment work in annual review at all levels.

Additionally, Activity Insight includes drop-down menus and built-in prompts for reporting assessment activities connected to teaching and curriculum in the *Teaching/Mentoring* section, as well as the ability to report work coordinating assessment and serving on related committees in the *Service* section. For more information, see the Office of the Provost's Activity Insight/Faculty Success Reference Guide.

Assessment Internship Opportunity for Undergraduate Students

James Madison University is offering summer internship experiences in assessment and quantitative psychology for highly-qualified undergraduate students. For 2025, the internships are offered virtually or in person. Interns will learn about assessment and quantitative methods and engage in research opportunities. If you or a colleague know a student who would benefit from this opportunity, please feel free to share this information with them. The priority application deadline is February 18, 2025, and more details are available on the JMU website.

FYI – Calendar of Spring 2025 Dates Related to Program Assessment

Month	Date	Activity
Dec	Mid Dec	Program assessment coordinators receive an email from ACE with a unique link to their 2024 Undergraduate Program Assessment Reporting form in Qualtrics. Assessment coordinators can submit their report during the open reporting window — **anytime from mid-Dec 2024 through Feb 2025**.
Jan	3rd	Fall 2024 [CAPS] Assessment Reports for UCORE are due (i.e., reporting closes).
	6th	First day of instruction for the spring term.
Feb	1st	Spring submission deadline for major Curricular Change Requests for new and revised courses.
	Early Feb	Fall 2024 [CAPS] instructors receive a pdf copy of their [CAPS] Assessment Report for UCORE from UCORE via email. *Note: Typically, assessment in a [CAPS] course for majors can contribute toward degree program-level assessment of student learning – see our resource related to [CAPS] Assessment Reporting for UCORE as part of degree program assessment.*
	4th	Deadline for undergraduate students to drop a course without record.
	Late Feb	Spring 2025 [CAPS] instructors receive an email from UCORE with initial information about [CAPS] Assessment Reporting for UCORE for the spring term.
	28th	2024 Undergraduate Program Assessment Reports are due (i.e., reporting closes). Assessment coordinators (or another knowledgeable assessment contact) need to be available to answer questions **until March 31**.
March	3rd	NSSE 2025 opens at WSU. Faculty and staff can help promote NSSE to eligible seniors and first-year students on all WSU campuses.
April	11th	Deadline for undergraduate students to withdraw from a course.
	Mid to Late April	Each program will receive a PDF copy of their final 2024 Undergraduate Program Assessment Report from ACE for their continued use and archive.
	Late April	Spring 2025 [CAPS] instructors receive their link to the [CAPS] Assessment Reporting for UCORE form in Qualtrics via email (i.e., reporting opens).
	25th	Last day of instruction for the term.
May	6th	Final grade submission ends.
	15th	Spring 2025 [CAPS] Assessment Reports for UCORE are due (i.e., reporting closes).

ACE Support for Program Assessment Efforts

We work with colleges and programs to assess student learning towards the improvement of undergraduate degree programs. ACE also provides learning outcomes assessment support for university-wide undergraduate education, serving all colleges, campuses, and UCORE general education. See What We Do for more information, including our mission.

ACE's Assessment Specialists are happy to answer any questions and consult with programs on their assessment efforts! For information about who to contact, see our ACE Staff page.