



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Office of the Provost

Office of Planning & Assessment

Executive Summary Degree Program Evaluation 2015-2016 Report

The Degree Program Evaluation for all **2015-2016** assessment reports in TracDat was completed in the fall 2016 term. The purpose of this evaluation was to provide feedback to each program coordinator for 2016-2017 assessment reporting. Most program coordinators were met with individually during the spring term to review results. The revised process has been implemented to provide more substantive feedback and has significantly exceeded the requirements to ensure both compliance and quality improvement.

The Program Assessment Rubric (PAR) was designed to measure baseline evidence of student learning outcome assessment as well as to provide developmental feedback to improve student learning outcomes assessment. There are four components to the rubric, each reflecting key assessment expectations. The maximum available score is 16, which reflects a 4 for each of the 4 components. However, the maximum score is divided by 4 to reflect an overall score for each of the components ranging from Initial to Highly Developed. A maximum score of 16 (a final score of 4.0) reflects a “Highly Developed” TracDat account. A minimum score that would still be considered to meet baseline criteria would be one step below “Highly Developed” for each component, or “Developed”. Lower than “Developed” would be either “Initial” (a score of 1) or “Emerging” (a score of 2). The components are as follows:

- *Student Learning Outcomes*- This component has a maximum score of 4. All programs are required to have three to five outcomes that specifically measure student learning. Two outcomes are satisfactory, contingent on the quality of the outcomes documented.
- *Assessment Methods*- This component has a maximum score of 4. Each outcome requires multiple methods of assessment that are measurable and related to the outcome.
- *Results*- This component has a maximum score of 4. Not only is it important to document results of the assessment methods, but it is important that the results demonstrate critical reflection so they can be used to improve student learning.
- *Actions for Improvement & Follow Up*- This component has a maximum score of 4. Each program is required to document how results were used (or are planned to be used) to make improvements to student learning within the program. OPA does not require Actions for Improvement or Follow up for every result, but there should be evidence that quality improvements are regularly made.

Of the 240 program accounts evaluated, all but 17 met the overall threshold of “Developed” with 113 having an overall score of “Highly Developed.” With the previous year’s report, the first year the evaluation process was conducted, only 22 programs met the threshold of “Developed”, or what OPA has determined to be the criteria for compliance with Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1. This evaluation assesses the face validity of annual assessment reports. Meaning, that the evaluation is intended to ensure that reports are complete and meet the established criteria. The rubric does not evaluate quality of assessment activity, necessarily. Therefore, the Office of Planning and Assessment provides qualitative feedback for each report. This information is intended to provide recommendations for each program on ways to strengthen program level assessment and reporting.



Each report begins with the following statement:

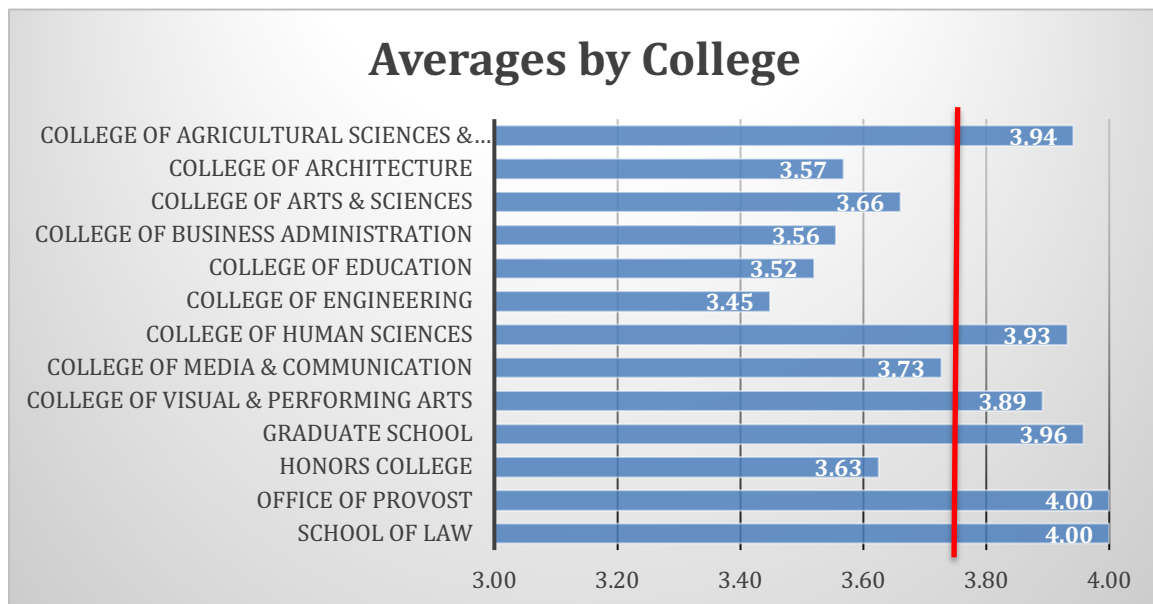
The following report provides a summary of degree-program results derived from the TTU Program Evaluation Rubric. This analysis was completed by an Office of Planning and Assessment staff member and provides an assessment of Student Learning outcomes documentation. It is an assessment of the quality of assessment documentation for each degree program within the department of _____. The rubric allows for a score of Initial (1) to Highly Developed (4) for multiple criteria within the following categories: Student Learning Outcome, Assessment Method, Results, and Actions for Improvement.

For each criterion, the rating assigned per component within the criteria is the overall assigned score. For example, if one component within a given criteria is receives an “Initial” score, but another component within the same criteria receives the higher score of “Emerging,” the given score for the criteria is “Initial.”

College Comparison

When looking at the total scores for all colleges, there is significantly less variance than from the previous year's report. The rubric allowed for a minimum sum score of 4.0 (a 1.0 for each of the four components) and a maximum sum score of 16.0 (a 4.0 for each of the four components). While not a rule, a sum score of 12 typically indicates a score that meets the criteria for compliance with CS 3.3.1.1. **The sum score is divided by 4, for each of the four components to provide the average score, providing a final evaluation ranging from 1.0 to 4.0.** The overall average for Texas Tech University when calculating each college's average score was 3.76 with a standard deviation of 0.20. There appears to be more consistent reporting within the first year following program level feedback. There are two colleges that exceed 1 standard deviation and two colleges with a score below one standard deviation from the rest of the university. While this data represents how each college performed in relation to the entire university, it is important to note that the goal is to see each college, department, and program achieving the highest standard possible in student learning assessment and documentation.

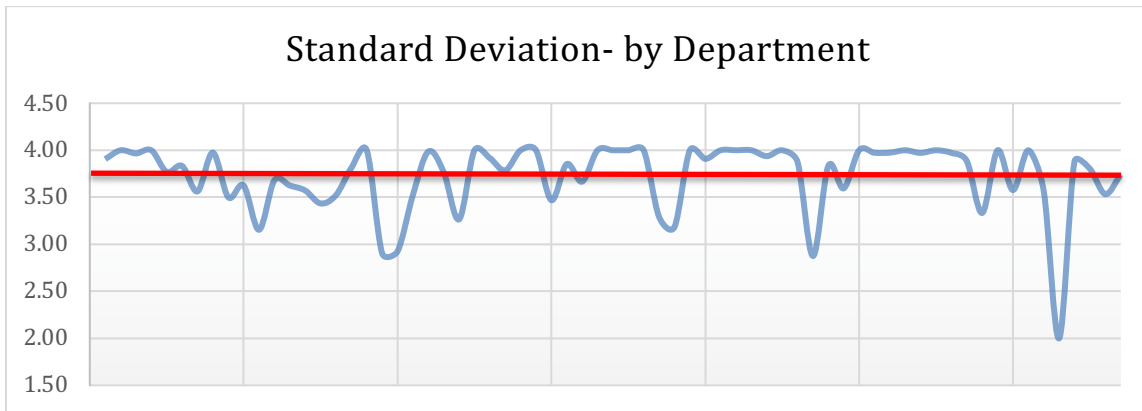
Total Numbers, N	13
Mean (Average):	3.757
Population Standard Deviation, s	0.202
Variance (Population Standard), s ²	0.041



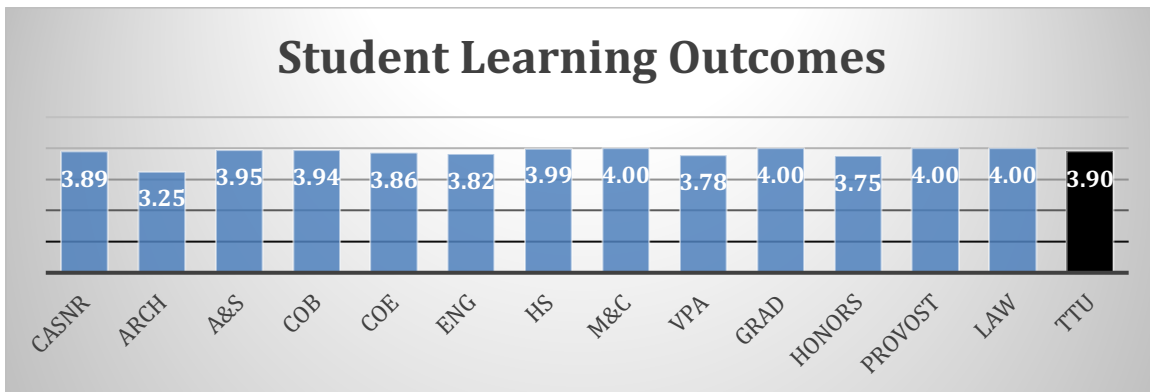
When comparing PAR scores by department, the variance is much more noticeable. Despite the improvements throughout the university, including all institutional departments, it is clear that there are some departments that, while improving their reports significantly, still have considerable room for improvement. There are 67 departments that were required to report in 2015-2016. That number will increase next

year with the inclusion of distance programs requiring separate reports. The following two graphics do not identify individual departments, but rather demonstrate the variance by department as it relates to the standard deviation for departments of 0.367.

Total Numbers, N	67
Mean (Average):	3.727
Population Standard Deviation, s	0.367
Variance (Population Standard), s^2	0.134

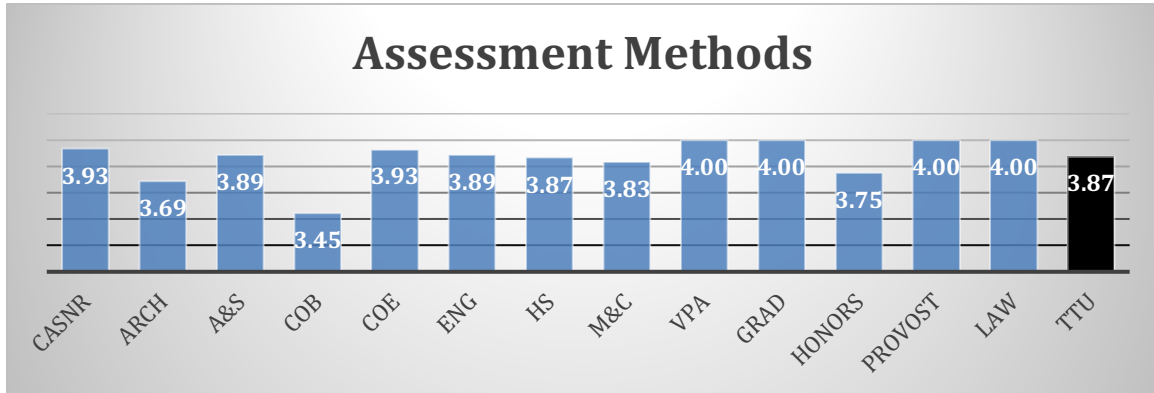


Evaluation by Component Area

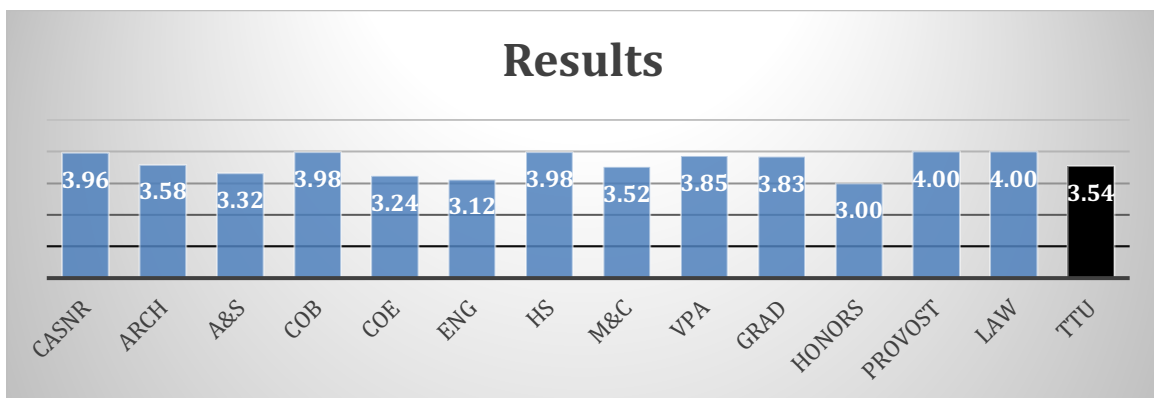


Student Learning Outcomes: Last year, the Executive Summary identified that the greatest area of concern was with the number and type of outcomes identified. Many programs did not have the required number of outcomes or the outcomes identified were not related to student learning. Resolving this issue was a priority. Through significant outreach and training, the issue has been resolved. Nearly every program has developed the required number of outcomes and are focused on student learning. Moving forward, there is still opportunity for improvement. OPA will continue to work with programs to further mature learning outcomes as well as provide consultation for

aligning outcomes required for this report with other reporting requirements that are related to student learning. However, since many programs went through such great efforts to resolve program level assessment plans, it is likely that there will be few changes over the next couple of years.

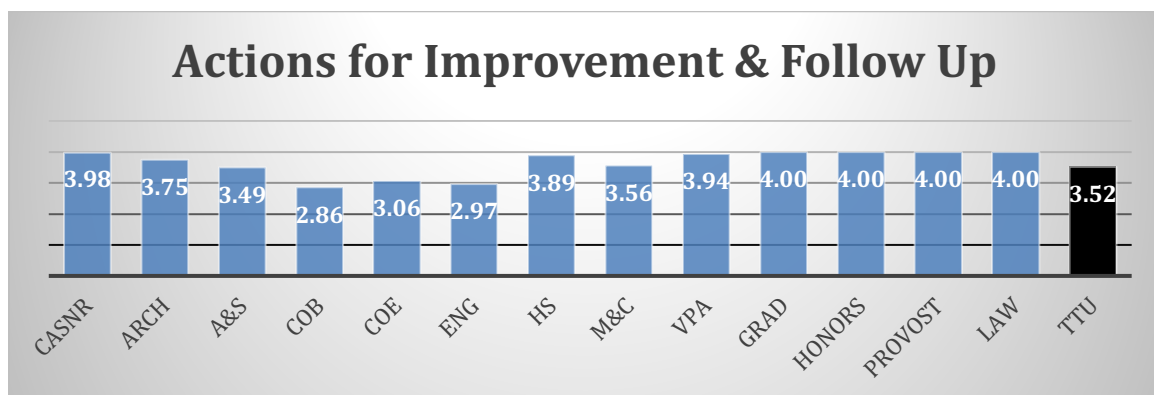


Assessment Methods: Previously, many programs failed to identify multiple forms of assessment per learning outcome. Due to the same outreach and training identified previously, this issue was nearly completely resolved with the most recent assessment reports. However, it was still the lowest score among the four aspects of this component. Many programs have made revisions for their 2016-2017 assessment plan, but more outreach will likely be required. Despite this being the lowest score of the four aspects measured for this component, it is another concern that has the most to offer for improvement. Many programs, using their existing learning outcomes, have opportunities for more mature assessment methodologies while developing strategic processes that reduce work. This includes embedded assessments, signature and capstone assignments, summative portfolio reviews, and more.



Results: The first two components represent the individual program’s assessment plan. The Results and Actions for Improvement components are the assessment report. While programs might make revisions to the assessment plan, new results are required annually. The evaluation of the Results section is dependent on the quality of the assessment plan. However, regardless of the assessment plan, the same expectations

exist. Primarily, this requires a critical reflection of data from the methods used. It is important to provide evidence of this degree of reflection because it indicates that the program is capable of making needed improvements to improve student learning. Even when criteria are met, programs should be able to indicate that new criteria are appropriate. Likewise, when criteria are not met, new measures may be appropriate. Because there were significant improvements to individual assessment plans, the Results section was greatly improved. For 2014-2015, the overall evaluation score was 2.25. This year the score improved to 3.54. While there is room for improvement, this is very impressive. The most common feedback given to programs is to encourage them to utilize Document Upload options within TracDat. This includes any document that a program can use to provide evidence of analysis while ensuring that the Results narrative is succinct and clear.



Actions for Improvement: The second component of the annual reporting requirements (the fourth component of a program’s overall assessment report) also saw an impressive increase in overall score from the 2014-2015 evaluation. For 2014-2015 the overall score was 2.37. This year the score increased by more than an entire point to 3.52. However, it is still the lowest score of the four components for the 2015-2016 evaluation. This is likely because both of the aspects of this component require a different step from all other components. Programs are here required to apply what they have discovered to making actionable improvements to either student learning or the assessment plan. This component takes up the majority of consultation time to discuss how to apply what has been learned or how to move forward when the results are adequate. The aspect of this component that will be more important for the next year’s evaluation is the documentation of Follow Ups. OPA will provide additional training for this aspect of reporting.

Conclusion

In 2014-2015, every degree program at Texas Tech University was evaluated using the first version of the Program Assessment Rubric to demonstrate compliance to Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1. The evaluation was successful for demonstrating compliance. In 2015-2016 the process was repeated with a new version of the PAR and

again demonstrated that TTU has implemented an effective process for improving student learning through providing substantive feedback to every program. This process includes not just this evaluation, but in person feedback, multiple training opportunities, and in depth consultations when requested. The results of this evaluation suggest that the process is working well. As noted at the beginning, the improvement from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016 saw an increase from 11% to 93% that met the “Developed” threshold. Additionally, 113 programs (47%) were evaluated as “Highly Developed.” The goal is for every program to be evaluated as “Highly Developed” and it is likely that that will occur. However, Highly Developed indicates criteria are met, not that assessment is best practice. While many programs are doing best practice assessment, there is room for improvement.

The greatest opportunities for improving program level learning assessment are:

- *Student Learning Outcomes*- working with programs to develop strategic SLOs that meet multiple reporting requirements that are clear and direct.
- *Methods of Assessment*- Developing methods for assessing student learning that utilize best practice in learning assessment such as signature and embedded assessments.
- *Results*- Working with program coordinators regarding how to document the level of critical reflection required in a succinct and direct way.
- *Actions for Improvement & Follow Up*- While there are still areas for improvement for the Actions aspect of this component, OPA should work with programs to better understand the Follow Up requirements.

