



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
Office of the Provost

## Office of Planning & Assessment

# Degree Program Assessment Evaluation 2018-2019 Summary Report

### Introduction of the Program Assessment Rubric

The Program Assessment Rubric (PAR) was designed to measure baseline evidence of student learning outcomes assessment as well as provide qualitative and quantitative feedback to academic departments regarding their assessment documentation. At the start of the 2019-2020 academic year, the PAR was reviewed for possible changes and any relevant adjustments were made to the rubric. One of the more significant changes to the rubric was to separate the Follow-Up Statements into a category separate from Actions for Improvement.

There are now five components to the rubric, each reflecting key assessment expectations. The maximum score for each of the five components is a 4.0. The scores for each component are averaged to reflect an overall score for the assessment plan, ranging from “Initial” to “Highly Developed.” An overall average score of 4.0 reflects a “Highly Developed” assessment report. The minimum score a degree program can receive to still be considered as meeting baseline criteria would be a “Developed” score of 3.0. Lower than “Developed” would be either “Emerging” (a score of 2.0) or “Initial” (a score of 1.0). A degree program can also be found “Non-Compliant” if any section of the assessment report was not completed. The assessment report components are as follows:

- *Student Learning Outcomes* - 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* - Each outcome requires multiple methods of assessment that are measurable and related to the outcome.

- *Results* - 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. Documentation of results is encouraged.
- *Actions for Improvement* - 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 for every result, but there should be evidence that quality improvements are regularly implemented.
- *Follow-Up Statements* – Follow-Up Statements are required to be documented for all Actions for Improvement specified in the previous assessment cycle. Follow-Ups are essential for closing the loop and demonstrate steps that were taken as a direct result of the Actions for Improvement.

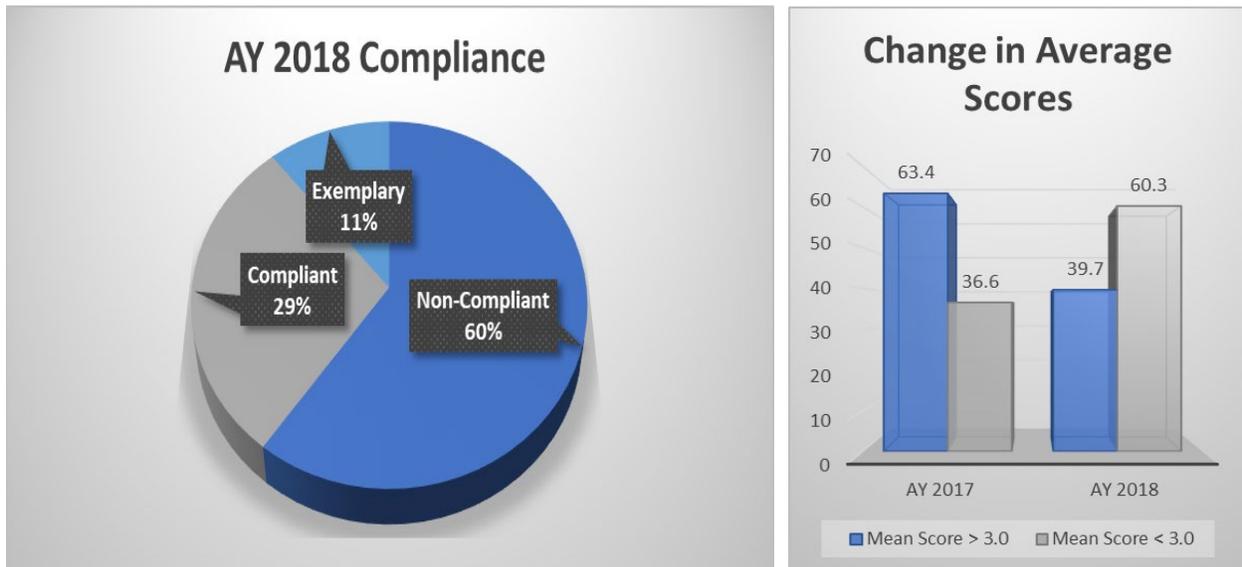
### **2018-2019 Degree Program Review Process**

A total of 239 academic degree programs were reviewed for the 2018-2019 assessment cycle. Each degree program was evaluated by two reviewers to ensure interrater reliability. In addition, OPA included faculty peers in hopes that qualitative feedback could be gathered from an academic discipline perspective. Reviewers were provided the 4-column assessment reports from OPA's assessment software, Nuventive Improve, and submitted their evaluations based on the revised PAR in Qualtrics.

Of those 239 degree programs, 60% (143 programs) were found to be Non-Compliant with an overall average score below 3.0, or a Developed classification. This is a 13% increase in Non-Compliant degree program accounts as compared to the 2017-2018 assessment cycle. This can be attributed to the more stringent changes that were made to the Program Assessment Rubric, and the separation of Actions for Improvement and Follow-Up Statements into individual categories. OPA is putting greater emphasis on ensuring degree program coordinators provide Follow-Ups from their identified Actions to close the assessment loop, and this is better achieved by pinpointing where the degree program is falling short.

Of the remaining 40% of Compliant degree programs, 11% (26 programs) were identified as Exemplary. This is a 4% increase in Exemplary degree programs as compared to 2017-2018. Exemplary degree programs are considered those which demonstrate best practices,

such as inclusion of related documentation for Assessment Methods and Results, reflective analysis of Results statements, and well-rounded Actions for Improvement and Follow-Ups. The below graphs summarize overall compliance for the 2018 academic year as well as the change in overall scores as compared to the previous academic year.



### Delivery of PAR Feedback to Departments

The Office of Planning and Assessment meets with academic departments annually to review the results of the PAR analysis as well as to answer questions and provide programmatic consultation. A departmental program-level report provides a component area score, an overall score, qualitative feedback from the reviewers, and three comparative charts. The charts highlight the average scores by component area, a comparison of scores for the current assessment cycle and the previous assessment cycle, and a comparison of each report component by college, department, and all TTU degree programs. During these consultations, OPA provides recommendations for improving future reporting and, when appropriate, directions to ensure compliance. Below is a template of the feedback report provided to department chairs during these annual meetings.

**Texas Tech University Program Assessment Rubric Review for AY 201 8-2019**  
**College – Department – Program**

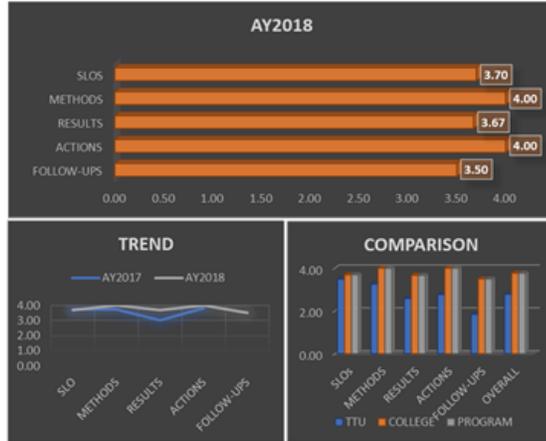
The following report provides a summary of degree program assessment evaluation scores derived from the TTU Program Assessment Rubric (PAR). This analysis was completed by the Office of Planning and Assessment (OPA) and provides an assessment of Student Learning Outcomes documentation. The PAR feedback reflects the substantive evaluation of individual reports by multiple reviewers.

The rubric allows four scores: (1) Initial, (2) Emerging, (3) Developed, and (4) Highly Developed. The components evaluated are Student Learning Outcomes, Assessment Methods, Results, Actions for Improvement, and Follow-Up Statements. The rating designated per component is the average of the two evaluation scores. To achieve compliance, a minimum of a 3.0 is required both for individual report elements and the overall score.

Report Element	Score	Level
Student Learning Outcomes	3.70	Developed
Assessment Methods	4.00	Highly Developed
Results	3.67	Developed
Actions for Improvement	4.00	Highly Developed
Follow-Up Statements	3.50	Developed
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>3.77</b>	<b>Developed</b>

**Overall**  
 Report should be recognized as an exemplar for SACSCOC Standard 8.2.a

**Comments**  
 Comments



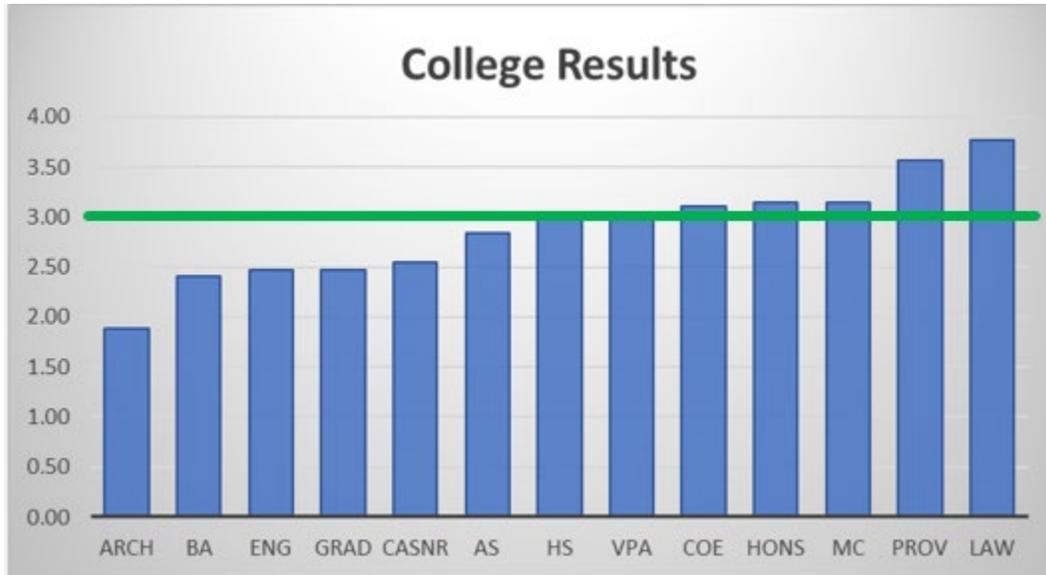
To discuss this report or to set up an opportunity for an in-person consultation, contact the Office of Planning and Assessment by phone at 806-742-1505 or by email at  
 Dr. Jennifer Hughes, Managing Director - jennifer.s.hughes@ttu.edu  
 Libby Spradlin, Associate Director - libby.spradlin@ttu.edu

## College Comparison

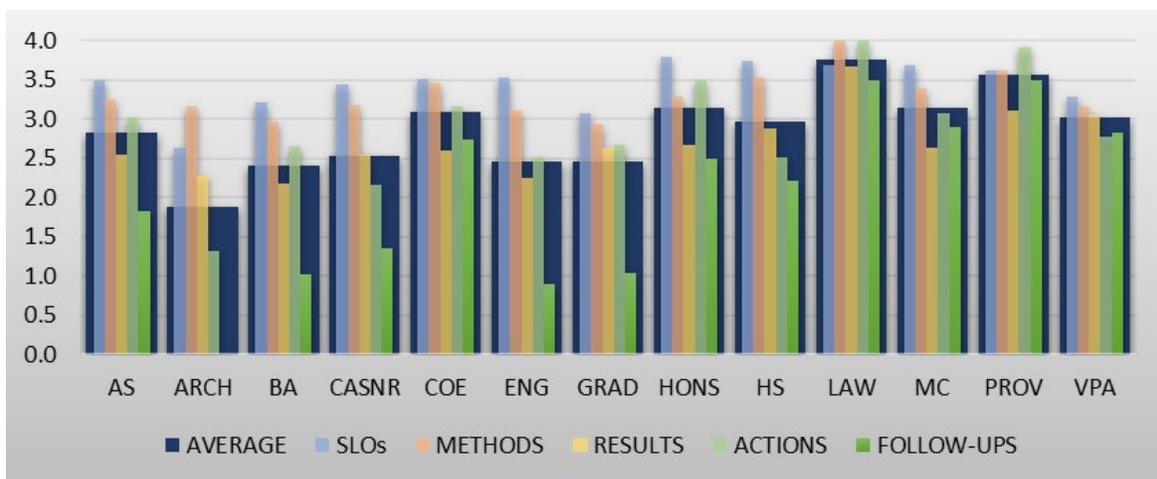
The overall college-level scores from the PAR evaluation resulted in a mean score of 2.79, which equates to an Emerging designation. This is a decrease of .27 in scores from the 2017-2018 assessment cycle and does not meet OPA’s threshold of 3.0 or higher for compliance. As previously stated, this can be attributed to separating the Actions for Improvement and Follow-Up Statements into distinctively scored categories. When comparing evaluation scores across colleges, it is important to bear in mind the significant variability in college size. For example, the largest TTU academic college, Arts & Sciences, houses 78 degree programs while Architecture houses only 3.

The variance in college-level evaluation scores can likely be attributed to several factors such as internal reporting structure, centralized oversight of assessment, and factors related to institutional effectiveness measures. However, the most significant factor that impacted scores was not providing evidence of follow-ups from previously stated actions for improvement. Overall, there were 86 degree programs which did not provide any evidence of follow-ups. The

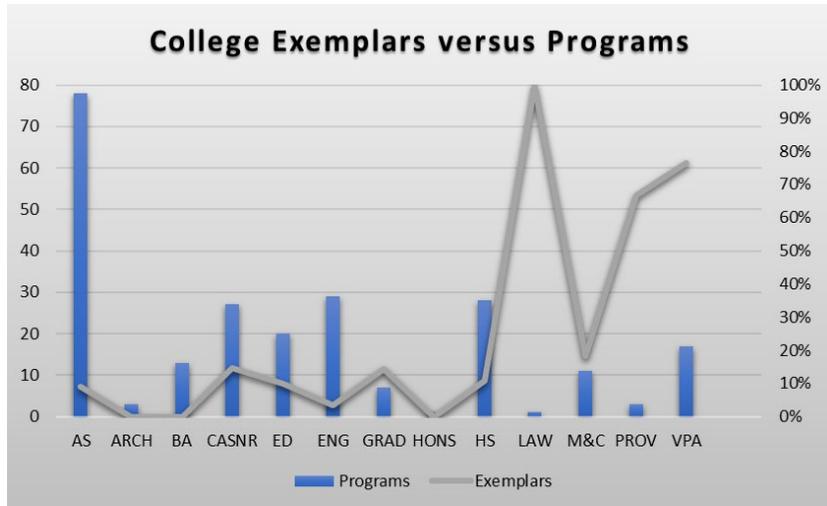
below graph summarizes overall evaluation scores by college relative to the 3.0 compliance threshold. This chart shows that 7 of 13 of academic colleges received an average overall score of 3.0 or higher with their degree programs combined.



Additionally, the below graph provides a breakdown of evaluation scores by individual assessment component for each academic college. This graph demonstrates that most academic colleges scored below the 3.0 threshold of compliance regarding Follow-Up Statements, with an average Follow-Up score of 2.03. This data is useful evidence that demonstrates the need for further education to help departments understand the importance of Follow-Up Statements and how they relate to closing the assessment loop and making programmatic improvements.



However, OPA also noticed an increase in Exemplary programs for the 2018-2019 assessment cycle. The below graph summarizes the number of programs in each academic college and highlights the percentage of programs that were evaluated as Exemplary. For example, the School of Law has one degree program and it was identified as an Exemplar, whereas the College of Arts & Sciences has 78 degree programs and seven of them were identified as Exemplary.



The below chart demonstrates the variance among evaluation scores at Texas Tech University. With an institutional average of 2.79, there are more degree programs not meeting institutional assessment expectations than in previous years. Strategies for improvement need to be targeted and specific to the college or department to assist programs with ensuring compliance and understanding the value of student learning assessment.



## **Faculty Peer Reviews**

The Program Assessment Rubric is the primary method of evaluation degree program assessment. However, the review process is supplemented by a Faculty Peer Review process that was established by the University Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Committee. The IE Committee consists of representatives from each of the 13 academic colleges who are charged to oversee a College-Level Institutional Effectiveness Committee. The College-Level IE Committee annually conducts a peer review of a sampling of degree program reports based on a simplified PAR rubric. The Simplified Peer Review Rubric asks faculty to provide feedback on a 6-point scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) on the following questions:

1. The Student Learning Outcomes identified by this program are applicable and appropriate for the program.
2. The Assessment Methods used by this program for measuring student learning are applicable and appropriate to meet the disciplinary needs of the program.
3. The Results that the program entered are useful for understanding the extent to which students learned the intended outcomes.
4. The Actions for Improvement that the program entered will help that program better assess student learning or improve student learning in general.
5. Comments

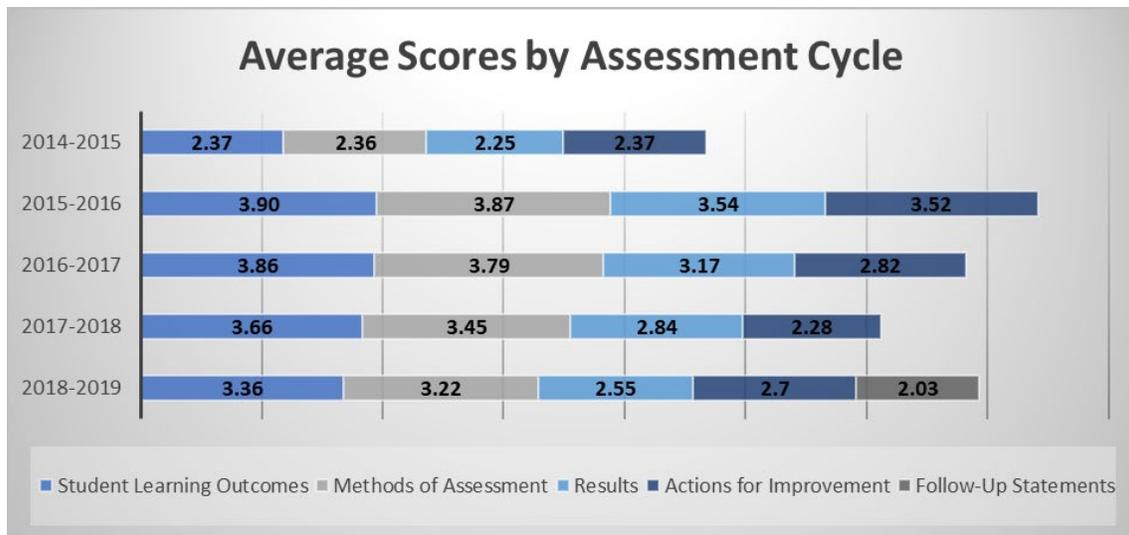
The overarching purpose of the Faculty Peer Review process is to evaluate the appropriateness of assessment plans from a disciplinary perspective. While the PAR is more extensive, it is designed to evaluate completeness of reporting and general assessment practices that is intended to assist programs in developing more meaningful assessment. The Faculty Peer Review is conducted by disciplinary peers that can provide feedback on the types of learning expected and the methods selected. Combined, these review processes provide a holistic review of assessment practices at the degree program-level.

## **Strategies for Improvement**

The Office of Planning and Assessment is currently collecting programmatic academic assessment evidence in preparation for submission of the March 2021 SACSCOC Fifth-Year

Report. The documentation of student learning assessment and demonstration of a commitment to continuous improvement is critical to a successful response to Standard 8.2.a, which states, “the institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results for student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.”

The below graph summarizes the overall average score by component area for the past several assessment cycles. This graph demonstrates that while OPA saw an increase in mean scores around the time of the 2015 Compliance Certification Report, scores have continued to decrease in subsequent assessment cycles. This can likely be attributed to more stringent review processes by OPA and placing an emphasis on programs providing meaningful actions for improvement and appropriate follow-up evidence that demonstrates assessment practices focused on continuous improvement.



Based on these results, OPA will continue to offer educational outreach opportunities to engage faculty members in meaningful assessment and will build partnerships with new college leadership across the campus. Department Chair visits will include greater emphasis on documenting actions for improvement and follow-up statements within the assessment plan. OPA will also refine its strategies for identifying non-compliant departments to rectify submission of late assessment reports while also strengthening assessment plans where necessary.