Electronically portfolio will continue to be built over Christmas Break and early January.

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1 - Institutional Effectiveness

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas: educational programs, to include student learning outcomes.

(SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement, 2012, Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1)

Findings of the Off-Site Committee:

The institution addresses the documentation of institutional effectiveness with respect to its academic programs through the TracDat assessment tracking software. Most degree programs have been involved in the assessment process sufficiently long enough to have at least four cycles of assessment evidence documented. The narrative provided by the institution describes a rubric-based process designed by the Office of Planning and Assessment for ensuring that the assessment process is addressing student learning outcomes adequately.

While some programs provided very comprehensive assessment plans, most of the program reports reviewed by the committee did not reflect the mature assessment program and general assessment audit suggested by the institution’s narrative on this standard. Degree program assessment reports identified program outcomes, strategic outcomes, and student learning outcomes. In general, student learning outcomes presented were very generic and reflected overarching goals with multiple outcomes compacted within a single item. In many cases, outcomes identified as student learning outcomes did not reflect what faculty wanted the students to know or to be able to do (the definition of expected learning outcomes provided in the institution’s assessment handbook).

The committee found that while criteria for “success” were sometimes articulated and could be inferred occasionally, they did not find compelling evidence that the majority of degree programs had clearly established criteria or targets prior to collecting data.
Assessment methods were often presented as overall assessment plans and were not necessarily descriptive of the particular measure for which results were reported. Despite the inclusion of a variety of methods/measures in the assessment method description, results were often presented for a single measurement that may or may not have been included in the assessment method description. Many programs relied heavily on course grades, faculty surveys on student learning, and self-assessments as a means of assessing student learning.

As indicated above, scant results were provided. In general, the committee was unable to confirm that the assessment had occurred as described in the Assessment Method due to the brevity of the results.

Action plans were thin and minimally developed. This was true for programs that appeared to have declining performance as well as for those programs whose students seem to be successfully achieving the expected outcomes.

Student learning outcomes for distance programs were not addressed specifically within this narrative.

**Texas Tech University’s Response:**

Texas Tech University does not classify its students based on the modality of a program. For example, if a student is enrolled in the online Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, that educational program has the same learning outcomes as the Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction that is delivered on the main campus, via traditional face-to-face instruction. Syllabi for both online and face-to-face course have been provided that show identical student learning outcomes [link to comparative course syllabi].

In response to the off-site committee’s comments regarding the presentation of evidence provided for CS 3.3.1.1, Texas Tech has re-organized the evidence to provide greater clarity for the reviewers. The off-site reviewers noted the volume of evidence in their remarks, namely
3,000 pages. A separate portfolio has been created exclusively for the Focused Report [hyperlink to 3.3.1.1 evidence portfolio]. The portfolio section of this response contains 4-column assessment reports generated from TracDat for all active Texas Tech educational programs. These reports include assessment findings and evidence of use for improvement; narratives addressing multi-year analyses of improvements made to each educational program from 2010 – 2014, and rubrics indicating departmental chairperson and dean review of each assessment artifact within TracDat. To assist the evaluators, the documents are organized by College or School, and degree programs and majors within Colleges and Schools. Texas Tech considered a sampling methodology, but opted for a comprehensive documentation of all educational program student learning outcomes. Please see the following document that highlights several brief case studies which demonstrate Texas Tech’s commitment to a sustainable process for assessing student learning [hyperlink to Assessment Champions].

In summary, program coordinators were asked to submit three unique forms of evidence related to their assessment activities since Texas Tech’s last reaffirmation of accreditation. First, each program coordinator submitted a copy of each degree program’s 4-column TracDat report. Second, each program coordinator submitted a completed rubric, demonstrating that the department chairperson and dean reviewed each assessment artifact within TracDat. Third, each program coordinator was asked to provide a continuous improvement narrative that provides a summative assessment of improvements made to the educational program from 2010 – 2014.

Conclusion

Texas Tech University is compliant with CS 3.3.1.1. Texas Tech has submitted all educational programs as part of its evidence for compliance with CS 3.3.1.1, and has provided evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results within each educational program.