WEAVEonline User Instructions: Entering Assessment Plans

Thomas Nelson Community College

This document outlines TNCC guidelines for entering assessment plan information into the WEAVEonline system. The following areas are covered: (1) mission statements, (2) goals, (3) outcomes, (4) measures, (5) targets, (6) results, and (7) action plans. Instructions for each of these areas can also be found within the WEAVEonline application, by clicking Show Instructions at the top of any of these pages.

General Information

When entering each component of your assessment plans within WEAVEonline, you will consistently be provided the opportunity to set the following: (1) Established in Cycle, (2) Active through Cycle, and (3) Entry Status. These generally appear at the bottom of the data entry form, right above the save and cancel buttons:

1. **Established in Cycle:** This allows you to select the first academic year in which the item you are entering became active. For example, if you created a program-level learning outcome in 2012-2013, you would select that cycle year when entering the outcome in WEAVEonline. Please note that the WEAVEonline system only goes back to 2011-2012. Therefore, for any items that were established prior to that year, please select 2011-2012.

2. **Active through Cycle:** This allows you to select an end date for the item you are entering. For example, if a measure you are using for one of your outcomes will only be used in 2012-2013, and you do not plan to use it again in the future, you would select 2012-2013. If however, you plan to use the measure in future academic years, you would set it to ‘Keep Active’. This means that it will persist forward into new cycles (academic years), as they are created in WEAVEonline.

3. **Entry Status:** This provides you with two options: (a) Draft / In Progress, or (b) Final. The first option denotes that the item you are entering has not been finalized and is still subject to review / change. The second option should be used once the item has been finalized.

Mission Statements

The mission statement connects the major functions of your unit to the overall college mission. When writing your mission statement, it may be helpful to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What are the primary functions of your unit?
2. What are the core activities that occur within your unit on a regular basis?
3. What should those your unit serves expect when they interact with it?
4. How does your unit further the mission of the college?
Examples:

Academic Program (Atmospheric Sciences AAS): To provide students with a broad understanding of the atmospheric sciences and a strong foundation in scientific reasoning and inquiry, ensuring they are prepared for transfer into a scientific discipline at a four-year institution.

Administrative Unit (Institutional Research and Effectiveness): To provide the college community with reliable, accessible information to support decision-making, improve programs and services, and further the institution’s shared mission.

Goals

The goals of your unit should capture the individual functions of your unit, and should align with your unit's mission statement. When writing your goals, it may be helpful to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What are the core, individual functions of your unit?
2. If you were asked for a list of the major ways your unit supports the college, what would you say?
3. When reflecting on your unit, what topics come to mind as major items that need attention and continuous improvement?

Examples:

Academic Program (Atmospheric Sciences AAS): Prepare students for transfer to a 4-year institution in a physical sciences field.

Administrative Unit (Institutional Research and Effectiveness): Provide the college community with reliable, consistent, and accessible data that can be used to inform decision-making.

Outcomes

Learning outcomes should focus on the end product of your services, and should describe what your stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, staff) should be able to know, do, or value after receiving your services/instruction.

Programmatic outcomes should focus on an end product, and should specify what the unit intends to accomplish.

All outcomes should be: (1) linked to the unit's mission, (2) actionable, (3) realistic/attainable, (4) measurable/observable, (5) under the unit's control, (6) meaningful, and (7) directed toward continuous improvement.
Examples:

**Academic Program (Atmospheric Sciences AAS):** Differentiate between weather and climate.

**Administrative Unit (Institutional Research and Effectiveness):** Improve responsiveness to internal data requests.

**Measures**

Measures are the sources of evidence you will use to determine the extent to which you are achieving your outcomes. Effective measures will (1) capture enough of the essence of the outcome to represent it adequately, and (2) be actionable without excessive cost or effort.

When writing your measures, it may be helpful to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What would you need to observe to be convinced that your outcome is being accomplished?
2. Where are you currently delivering the outcome to your stakeholders?
3. Do you already have practices in place that could function as measures?
4. How can you best measure the outcome with the resources available to you?

When entering your measure in WEAVEonline, please select from the list at the top the category that most closely matches that measure. If none of the categories closely represent your measure, please select ‘Other’.

**Examples:**

**Academic Program (Atmospheric Sciences AAS):** All sections of the capstone ATM course, ATM 250, will embed three common discussion questions related to the differences between weather and climate into their final exams. Student performance on these questions will be scored with a rubric that was collaboratively developed amongst ATM faculty.

**Administrative Unit (Institutional Research and Effectiveness):** The average amount of time required to fulfill a data request, as defined by the number of days from the initial request to formal delivery of results.

**Targets**

The target is the level of performance on the given measure that you will use as a threshold for achievement of the outcome. Targets should be realistic, yet aspirational. Whenever appropriate, targets should include a numeric value.
Examples:

**Academic Program (Atmospheric Sciences AAS):** Eighty percent (80%) of students will achieve a score of acceptable (70%) or higher on the embedded questions, as scored by the rubric.

**Administrative Unit (Institutional Research and Effectiveness):** The average amount of time required to fulfill a data request will be reduced by 20% over the previous year, from 10 business days to 8.

**Findings**

Findings present your actual results related to the outcome, as indicated by the given measure and in comparison to the target you set for that measure. Findings should be phrased in the same way as the target, so that direct comparisons can be made, and a level of achievement can be determined.

When entering your findings in WEAVEonline, please select the level of achievement of the given outcome, based on your results relative to the target you set. You are provided with the following options: (a) Met, (b) Partially Met, or (c) Not Met.

Examples:

**Academic Program (Atmospheric Sciences AAS):** In Fall 2011, 72% of students achieved a score of acceptable (70%) or higher on the embedded test questions. In the following term, Spring 2012, 76% of students achieved a score of acceptable (70%) or higher on the embedded test questions.

**Administrative Unit (Institutional Research and Effectiveness):** The average amount of time required to fulfill a data request was reduced by 10% over the previous year, from 10 business days to 9.

**Action Plans**

Action plans provide you with an opportunity to reflect on the results related to each of your outcomes, and provide analyses and next steps for continuous improvement. This section is intended to be used to provide a narrative explanation of activities your unit undertook in support of these results, any roadblocks that may have been encountered, and what you learned as a result of these activities.

The action plan should also include the steps your unit has decided to take to improve results in this area. If no additional actions are necessary, that should be stated here.

Examples:
Academic Program (Atmospheric Sciences AAS): Upon analysis of student performance on the embedded test questions related to the differences between weather and climate, we found that students consistently missed the question related to global warming and its impact on weather and climate. ATM faculty members have agreed to modify the lesson on global warming to focus on its relative impacts on weather and climate, and implement this change in Fall 2012. Students will be reassessed using the same questions in Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 to evaluate the impact of this change.

Administrative Unit (Institutional Research and Effectiveness): In support of this outcome, IRE focused efforts on streamlining the request process and creating a formal database of all data requests. Reports were generated to highlight upcoming deadlines and ensure that analysts were on track with project assignments. Despite these changes, the outcome was not met. Time to completion for data requests was only reduced by 10%, as opposed to the goal of 20%. IRE has analyzed processes from the year, and has determined that a large portion of projects require simple data extracts from standard files. By preparing a number of common reports from these files ahead of time, IRE hopes to further reduce time to completion for data requests in the coming year. This outcome will be re-evaluated in the upcoming year, and IRE will report on the impact of these proposed changes.