

Assessment and Academic Program Review Handbook



Baptist Bible College
Office of Institutional Effectiveness

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Assessment and APR Handbook

Introduction: The assessment of institutional effectiveness at Baptist Bible College (BBC) is anchored to the College's mission, is comprehensive of all college operations, uses multiple sources and types of evidence, and involves all faculty and staff throughout the institution.

The valuation of institutional effectiveness, through the processes of assessment and academic program review, measures how well the institution fulfills the mission of the College and guides the College toward continuous improvement in student learning, educational programs, and administrative and educational support services.

Key components of effective institutional assessment are identifying learning outcomes, determining methods of assessment, collecting data, analyzing findings, and reviewing, recommending, and implementing change. Therefore, information gleaned from assessment is used to improve programs and processes at the College.

The two core mechanisms of the BBC's College assessment plan are:

1. Annual Department Assessment Report (ADAR)
2. Academic Program Review (APR)

Annual Department Assessment Report (ADAR): In order to improve student learning, Annual Program Assessment is the systematic collection, review and analysis of information, from various sources, about educational programs. Assessment focuses on what students know, what they are able to do, and what values they have when they graduate. Assessment is concerned with the collective impact of a program on student learning.

Academic Program Review (APR): Academic Program Reviews are completed every 5 years demonstrating the commitment of Baptist Bible College to sustaining a culture of assessment and seeking continuously to improve student learning, the learning environment, and support services.

The purpose of Academic Program Review, therefore, is to guide the development of academic programs on a continuous basis. Program review is a process that evaluates the status, effectiveness, and progress of academic programs and helps identify the future direction, needs, and priorities of those programs.

What is Assessment?

Assessment is the continuous, ongoing process of analyzing student learning to determine if academic programs are meeting the goals established for student learning. It involves designing measurable program learning outcomes, establishing assessment tools to measure the outcomes, gathering and interpreting the data, making recommendations from the findings, and creating and implementing plans for improvement. It is an ongoing process of evaluation and improvement to assure that students know and are able to do what the College wants them to know and do.

Assessment that monitors students' knowledge and performance in order to improve teaching and learning is called **formative assessment**. This type of assessment can help faculty to identify concepts that might be confusing students. It can also help students identify areas where they are strong and areas where they are struggling. In contrast, **summative assessment** evaluates students' knowledge and performance against set criteria. While this information may be used to make improvements for the next cohort, its primary goal is evaluative. In other words, it allows a judgment about student learning and/or course or program effectiveness to be made.

At Baptist Bible College, we believe that thoughtful and systematic assessment of student learning drives program improvement, academic excellence, and lifelong student success. We also believe in the importance of faculty-driven assessment of learning that is meaningfully integrated into courses and programs. This process includes:

- Identifying meaningful student learning outcomes that reflect the goals and values of specific disciplines, programs, or courses
- Defining what type of instrument would be appropriate to indicate whether students are on track to meet each outcome (formative assessment) and what type of instrument would allow for a final judgment about whether they had achieved each outcome (summative assessment)
- Analyzing the assessment data in a way that allows faculty, departments, and programs to make meaningful decisions about areas of strengths and weaknesses in order to improve student learning

The Assessment Process at BBC

Baptist Bible College has established a culture of assessment with systemized processes to guide assessment and academic program review. Following this ongoing structured approach, all members of faculty are involved in these processes. The College's "P" Drive and Populi, the Learning Management System (LMS), serve as the repository for all assessment data, documentation, program review documents, resources, templates, etc.

Components of assessment and academic program review include:

- Standardized syllabi for each course uploaded in the appropriate course file in Populi.
- Program curriculum maps reviewed annually and updated, as appropriate.
- Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) aligned to Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and clearly stated on syllabi.
- PLOs established for all programs and stated on syllabi for courses assessing assigned PLOs.
- PLO rubrics for all programs integrated into courses.
- PLO data submission due dates.
- Departmental faculty submit, review, and analyze assessment data.
- Annual Department Assessment Reports (ADARs) submitted for all programs.
- Academic Program Reviews (APRs) submitted for all programs in accordance with the APR calendar.
- Annual Program Assessment Checklist reviewed annually.
- Annual reports due the last Friday in October for the previous academic year.

At BBC, assessment is an ongoing process that enlists participation and analysis from each member of faculty. To better serve students, the BBC faculty is wholly committed to this process. The Assessment Committee and Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC) meet regularly to coordinate and review annual schedules and progress of institutional and program assessment.

The College Assessment Plan



The College Assessment Plan, is a broad effort to coordinate assessment practices in support of student and institutional learning and success. Effective academic assessment begins with articulating the expectations of the College. The expectations are set forth in the mission statement, institutional learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, and course learning outcomes of its academic departments.

COLLEGE MISSION

Every aspect of assessment at the College is tied to the College’s Mission and Institutional Learning Outcomes. The College offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs and defines its mission as:

Baptist Bible College educates, inspires, and equips students to serve as effective Christian leaders.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES (ILOs)

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are what the Institution values, the overarching knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that students are expected to develop as a result of their overall experience at Baptist Bible College. The Institutional Learning Outcomes of the College are expressed as follows:

Baptist Bible College graduates are equipped with biblical knowledge and scholarship, faith and commitment, and community and global awareness, thus preparing them to:

Apply the rigorous learning of biblical truth to real life challenges; **HEAD:**
[ILO 1]

Nurture their relationship with God above all else and to respond unequivocally to God's call on their lives; **HEART:** [ILO 2]

Engage a diverse global society, evangelizing and ministering both in and through the local church. **HAND:** [ILO 3]

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLOs)

For each educational program of the College, the faculty articulates a set of four to six Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). PLOs describe what the program wants students to have achieved in terms of knowledge, skills, and values upon completion of the program. Each PLO then is associated with (linked to) one or more of the three Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and is identified on each syllabus by a corresponding (ILO) number (see above).

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES (CLOs)

Course learning outcomes are specific and measurable statements that define the knowledge, skills, and competencies that students are expected to achieve upon successful completion of a course. Therefore, course learning outcomes are statements that describe significant and essential learning that students have achieved, and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course. Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) are connected to a specific Program Learning Outcome (PLO).

IN SUMMARY

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), are broad statements drawn out of the College's Mission Statement to provide a broad view of what students are expected to accomplish in completing degree requirements for each program offered at BBC. In order for these outcomes to be attained, every program has specific, measurable Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and every course has specific, measurable Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), which state the expectations of the learner's performance to prove his/her accomplishment of the program's objectives.

The use of acronyms for student learning outcomes vary among institutions. BBC has determined that the following acronyms will be defined as: (ILO) Institutional Learning Outcome, (PLO) Program Learning Outcome, and (CLO) Course Learning Outcome. (SLO) Student Learning Outcome and (CLO) Course Learning Outcome are often used interchangeably.

Assessment activities provide the opportunity for instructors to measure the progress of students toward fulfillment of Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), as well as Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs); thus, the Mission of the College is fulfilled.

The Assessment Cycle

To improve student learning, effective assessment follows an intentional and reflective process of identifying learning outcomes, developing measures of assessment, gathering data, analyzing data, and from information learned, revising and implementing changes to improve programs. The five steps in the BBC Assessment Cycle are: [1] Identify, [2] Assess, [3] Collect, [4] Analyze, [5] Review, Recommend, and Implement.

The graphic below shows how the Assessment Cycle is built on these five distinct but interrelated actions. Results at the conclusion of one step lead to the next step. Clearly articulated outcome statements guide course design, course activities yield data that measure student learning, and evaluation of data informs course and program revision.” The graphic also demonstrates that assessment is a continuous process. Evaluation of student learning may lead to revised outcomes, which are implemented, thereby, improving programs and “closing the loop” of the Assessment Cycle.



STEP 1: Identify Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

STEP 2: Determine methods of assessment for each Course Learning Outcome (CLOs)

STEP 3: Collect Data

STEP 4: Analyze Findings

STEP 5: Review, Recommend, and Implement Improvements “close the loop”

STEP 1: IDENTIFY PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

The first step in an assessment cycle is to identify the learning outcomes that should occur for each program. A well-formulated set of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) will describe what the faculty hope to accomplish in offering particular

programs to prospective students and/or what specific skills, competencies, and knowledge the faculty believes that graduates of the program will have attained by the time of completing the degree program. Each program should formulate between 3 and 5 learning outcomes that describe what students should be able to do (abilities), to know (knowledge), and appreciate (values and attitudes) following completion of the program.

The primary purpose of Program Learning Outcomes is to make teaching and learning purposeful. Program Learning Outcomes create the foundation for designing a program, because they identify the learning goals and objectives for the program. By first identifying the (PLOs), faculty can work to develop approaches to instruction and course progression that will achieve their stated learning outcomes for the degree program.

STEP 2: DETERMINE METHODS/CRITERIA OF ASSESSMENT

Methods of Assessment will vary depending on the learning outcome(s) to be measured. **Direct methods** are when students demonstrate that they have achieved a learning outcome or objective. **Indirect methods** are when students (or others) report perceptions of how well students have achieved an objective or outcome. Successful assessment is built on establishing multiple methods and instruments for assessing student work and the alignment of measurable CLOs with PLOs. Assessment criteria make it clear to students what they are expected to do to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes and factors instructors will consider when making judgments about their work. Assessment criteria are a way to provide formative feedback throughout a course to support ongoing learning, as well as to provide end-of-term summative evaluation.

STEP 3: COLLECT DATA

Methods for collecting data on student learning is generally split into two types of measures. **Direct measures** are assessment tools that measure student learning by having students create or perform a task directly based on their learning. There are a variety of tools that can be used to directly assess student learning, such as: standardized exams, multiple choice questions, short answer questions, essay questions, portfolios, writing assignments, etc. **Indirect measures** infer whether learning has taken place by asking for perception of learning, typically from students, but also from those with whom they have worked. Examples of indirect assessment are: surveys, exit interviews, focus groups, journaling, interviews, alumni database, etc.

STEP 4: ANALYZE FINDINGS

Analyzing data includes determining how to organize, synthesize, interrelate, compare, and present the assessment results. To give meaning to the information that has been collected, it needs to be analyzed for context, understanding, and to draw conclusions. This step gives assessment information meaning; it is essential to effectively communicate and utilize the assessment results. Since information may be able to be interpreted in various ways, it is always best to involve others in analyzing the findings. Therefore, departmental faculty should discuss the “successes,” “shortcomings,” and “failures” discovered in the findings and together determine the necessary steps toward improvement.

STEP 5: REVIEW, RECOMMEND, AND IMPLEMENT IMPROVEMENTS

The primary goal of course learning outcomes assessment is to improve student learning. Once evidence is collected and the faculty have analyzed it to determine if students are attaining the stated CLOs and PLOs, it is important to take the appropriate steps in response to that information. Does student learning meet or not meet expectations?

Assessment results are meant to improve teaching and learning as well as inform planning and decision making. Results can highlight successes, shortcomings, and/or failures. A program improvement plan is intended to provide programs a format for translating the recommendations made into actions for improvement or maintenance. Therefore, the act of “closing the loop” and making improvement based on the collection and analysis of student learning data allows a school to make claims about the strength of its courses, programs, and institution and therefore, ultimately, benefits not only students but faculty and the institution as well.

Purpose of Academic Program Review (APR)

Academic Program Review (APR) at Baptist Bible College, serves as a way of systematic evaluation of undergraduate and graduate degree programs (including General Education/Core Curriculum, and online programs). Academic Program Review provides a year-long opportunity for faculty, by examining their program objectives, learning outcomes, and effectiveness, to increase their knowledge and understanding about their program. The opportunity to engage in APR allows faculty and administrators to effectively respond to future needs and challenges that may arise through this collaborative process. It also provides direction for strategic planning of programs and, for the College as a whole, to be responsive to ongoing changes in higher education.

Additionally, under the supervision of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), it is expected that the institution demonstrate responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and to evaluate their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Also, under the supervision of the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), it is expected that first, the institution's academic programs are appropriate to the achievement of its mission and to the level of educational programs offered, and second, that the institution employs quality assurance processes including regular program review of both its academic and non-academic areas. Academic Program Reviews are intended to:

- assess the quality and effectiveness of academic programs;
- stimulate program planning and improvement;
- ensure that current and proposed programs are consistent with college-wide strategic priorities;
- promote fairness and efficiency in the allocation of academic resources in response to the needs of the college community;
- support the planning and budgeting processes of the College;
- respond systematically and efficiently to requirements for self-assessment from accrediting agencies.

APR Process, Cycle, and Calendar

PROCESS

At Baptist Bible College, Academic Program Reviews (APRs) are conducted as a stand-alone review of specific programs. APR occurs on a five-year cycle. APRs are initiated by the office of Institutional Effectiveness at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year in which the program will be reviewed. An initial meeting (orientation) is conducted with faculty, chairs, and directors who will assist and coordinate the self-study. This orientation process provides an overview of the institutional requirements for the self-study and direction on how the APR should be conducted. The degree program is expected to complete all the components of their self-study by the last week in October of the following academic year.

APR MASTER CALENDAR (2018-2023)

Academic Program Review occurs on a five-year cycle.

PROGRAMS	2018-19	20-19-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
M.A. in Biblical Counseling					●
M.A. in Church Ministry				●	
M.A. in Organizational Leadership					●
M. Div.				●	
B.A. in Missions/Intercultural Studies	●				
B.A. in Pastoral Studies	●				
B.S. in Biblical Counseling		●			
B.S. in Biblical Studies					●
B.S. in Business Administration					●
B.S. in Business Management	●				
B.S. in Christian Leadership					●
B.S. in Church Ministry/Family Ministry				●	
B.S. in Church Ministry/Worship				●	
B.S. in Early Childhood Education			●		
B.S. in Elementary Education			●		
B.S. in Middle School Education – Social Science					
B.S. in Secondary Education – Business					
B.S. in Secondary Education – Social Science					
B.S. in Missions/Intercultural Studies	●				
B.S. in Missions/Intercultural Studies/ASN Nursing	●				
B.S. in Pastoral Studies	●				
A.A. in Biblical Studies					●
A.A. in Business Administration					●
A.A. in Business Management	●				
A.A. in Christian Leadership					●
A.A. in Early Childhood Education			●		
Core Curriculum					●
Co-Curricular Programs (Student Life)					●

Online

SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION

Degree programs that also hold specialized accreditation and/or state certification, are still required to undergo the institutional APR. Prior to the start of APR, the office of Institutional Effectiveness will meet with the academic program personnel to determine how best to streamline specialized accreditation requirements, HLC regional accreditation, ABHE accreditation, and the institutional APR.