Guidelines for Preparing the TWU Academic Institutional Improvement Assessment Plan– Certificate Programs AIIAP-CP

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April 2013

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Introduction

Guidelines for Preparing the TWU Academic Institutional Improvement Assessment Plan (AIIAP) – Certificate Programs document serves to assist certificate program coordinators and faculty in facilitating the development of the new **Academic Institutional Improvement Assessment Plan for Certificate Programs** (*AIIAP-CPs*) that will be initially implemented beginning summer or fall 2013. We will be conducting student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessment of our certificate programs as part of SACS-COC CS 3.1.1.1 which states:

"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 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes."

SACS-COC defines educational programs as, "a coherent set of courses leading to a credential (degree, diploma, or certificate) awarded by the institution."

We look forward to a focus on continuous improvement within our certificate programs, in addition to our academic degree programs as a part of *Academic Institutional Improvement.* In addition to the "Guidelines" document, the Office of Academic Assessment is ready to assist and support program faculty as needed in this process. Please feel free to contact the Office of Academic Assessment at (940) 898-3029 any time to discuss possible options.

Section I: Alignment of Certificate Program to the TWU Mission Statement

The purpose of this section of the assessment plan is to ensure that the certificate program clearly aligns with the TWU Mission statement. The TWU Mission statement should drive all that goes on within the University. As such, it is important to be able to explicitly state how the certificate program relates directly to the university mission.

The TWU Mission statement is embedded in the shaded portion of the Section I table. Provide supporting rationale for how the certificate program is directly aligned with the TWU Mission in the Alignment Documentation space directly below the TWU Mission. This may be accomplished by bulleting a list of the elements from the Institutional Mission that clearly relate to the certificate program. Alternatively, program faculty may choose to write a text description that documents clear alignment.

Section II: Certificate Program Student Learning Outcome(s)

The purpose of Section II is to identify certificate program student learning outcomes (SLOs). A minimum of one SLO is required for each certificate program; however, more than one SLO is always encouraged.
All certificate program SLOs must be measurable. The SLOs will represent the essential higher *knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions* that students will possess upon *successful completion* of the certificate program.

Certificate program SLOs are to be written using *action verbs* (Bloom's Taxonomy) that convey the level of knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions that students will possess upon certificate completion. Consider what students will be able to do with the knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions they gain (exit competencies). Avoid the use of verbs such as, "demonstrate", "understand", "appreciate", etc. Rather, use action verbs that capture observable actions that can document student performance on a SLO. In addition to the use of action verbs, SLO statements are to include *conditions* that clarify the context/setting in which students will be able to perform the stated actions/behaviors. A few good examples of measurable program SLOs are provided.

By the end of the program of study students will be able to:

- Identify salient features of a variety of movement styles, repertory, and partnering work and articulate these physically in various performance contexts at the intermediate-advanced level. [BA – Dance, TWU]

- Plan and implement evidence-based teaching practices for successfully educating children with hearing loss by creating effective lessons, evaluating current teaching practices, and implementing a variety of lessons for students who are DHH. [MS – Deaf Education, TWU]

- By the end of the program of study, students will be able to produce literary analyses that cross disciplinary boundaries, add to scholarly understanding, or provide challenging perspectives. [MA – English, Florida Gulf Coast University]

- By the end of the program of study, students will be able to accurately interpret symptoms and select appropriate interventions to manage patient fear, anxiety, and/or pain in a nursing clinical setting.

If the certificate program is embedded within a degree program, coordinators may wish to determine if any of the degree program SLOs could be used (or be revised for use) as a certificate program SLO.

Section III: Alignment of Program SLOs to the Curriculum

This section of the Academic II Assessment Plan shows the *depth and breadth* to which the certificate program SLO(s) are integrated or threaded throughout the certificate program. This is a great tool to use in curriculum redesign/development as well. We know that our students are not going to be able to achieve the SLO(s) unless they are sufficiently developed during the program of study. Mapping out how the SLO(s) are addressed in various courses and/or experiences and the depth to which they are addressed provides intentional planning on the part of the program faculty to ensure that each SLO is addressed and assessed at various points in time within the curriculum. Similarly, it is also important to know when students are assessed either formatively (*ongoing* while developing/practicing knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions) or summatively (*toward the end* of the program of study) on the certificate program SLO(s) as well.

For Section III, begin to complete the matrix by briefly listing the certificate program SLO(s) within the shaded column at the top (Add additional columns to the right if the certificate program has multiple SLOs.). Next, in column 1, list all courses that students must take to complete the certificate program. For undergraduate programs, you may choose whether it's important to list the Texas Core (general education) courses as well if the courses are part of the certificate program. Courses for undergraduate programs should also be listed in order of the course prefix from lowest to highest (e.g., 1000-level, 2000-level, 3000-level, and 4000-level). Follow this same procedure for listing graduate program courses. Column 1 may also include certificate program-designated *experiences* that are essential in helping students to attain the certificate program SLO(s) that are not directly linked to specific courses.

Some certificate programs' (undergraduate or graduate) focus is predominantly *interdisciplinary* in nature; and therefore, several courses are typically taken outside of the department in which the certificate program resides. In these cases, the program faculty will need to determine the extent to which courses residing outside the department play a critical role in helping students to be able to develop and/or achieve the certificate program SLO(s). If the courses reside outside the department, but are directly related to the certificate program SLO(s), those courses should also be listed on the Section III matrix.

Once the SLO(s) and Courses/Experiences have been listed, use the coding key below the matrix to identify the courses/experiences where a program SLO is *addressed* and/or *assessed*.

Key: **AD/P** – SLO is addressed as a *primary* focus (SLO is addressed in depth within the course)
AD/S – SLO is addressed as a *secondary* focus (SLO is addressed, but less so than a primary focus)
AD/C – SLO is addressed as a *cursory* focus (SLO is briefly introduced, but only in relation to other content)

FA – SLO is assessed (formative assessment of developing knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions) – assists students by providing feedback while they continue to practice and develop skills
SA – SLO is assessed (summative assessment of knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions)—final assessment of the SLO to indicate final student performance specific to the SLO
CEPA – Course-embedded program assessment specific to the SLO

For example, if UNIV 1xxx only introduces SLO 1, then one would list AD/C in the appropriate cell. Or, if I'm an instructor in UNIV 2xxx, I might address that SLO as a secondary focus, meaning that some dedicated time is spent on it, but it is not a primary focus in the course. In this case, one would list AD/S in the corresponding cell. Additionally, the instructor may also *assess* the SLO. If that's the case, it is necessary to determine if the assessment measure(s) is/are formative or summative as it relates to the development of a certificate program SLO. Formative assessment occurs when students are *developing and/or practicing* the skills, knowledge, or dispositions associated with the certificate program SLO. Summative assessment occurs *at or toward the end* of the certificate program.

A *course-embedded certificate program assessment* (CEPA) designation will also be listed for any summative course assessment that the program faculty select to use as an assessment measure for a certificate program SLO (in the Academic II Assessment Plan). While not required, course-embedded program assessments can serve as direct measures of assessment when they occur *at or toward the end* of the certificate program of study; and therefore, these types of program assessments are encouraged for use in the certificate program assessment plan. An abbreviated example for Section III is provided below:

COURSES/EXPERIENCES [List in order of course prefix number from lowest to highest. Include abbreviated course title. If appropriate, include program experiences that are essential but are not tied to a specific course.]	SLO 1 [Briefly state here.]
UNIV 1013	AD/C
UNIV 1903	
UNIV 2103	AD/S
UNIV 2273	AD/S; FA
UNIV 3543	AD/P; FA
UNIV 3802	
UNIV 4113	AD/P; SA
UNIV 4873	AD/P; SA; CEPA

Section IV: Assessment of Certificate Program SLO(s)

Section IV moves into the heart of the assessment plan. Completion of the table in this section will provide detailed information about the assessment measures, assessment method, and various indicators/targets of individual student, and overall performance expectations specific to the certificate program SLO(s) which serves as the focal point for SLOs assessment. Implementation of this plan begins either summer 2013 or fall 2013 and continues for three or more years, dependent on the certificate program needs and numbers of students within the program.

The expectations for assessment of the certificate program SLO(s) is/are as follows. *For each certificate program:*

1. A *minimum* of one certificate program SLO must be assessed each year.
2. Two assessment measures are required per SLO assessed, one of which must be a direct measure of assessment.

The Section IV table provides category information (cells) for one certificate program SLO. If the certificate program has multiple SLO(s), program faculty can replicate the Section IV table as needed for this purpose.

To begin completing the table, insert certificate program SLO 1 in the top cell of the table. Use the first column on the left to list each assessment measure by name, and include a sufficient description of the assessment that indicates the nature of the assessment and the major components/elements to be assessed. The assessment measures will be used to document student performance on the selected certificate program SLO; and therefore, should be *directly aligned* with the *intent* of the SLO. At least one of the two assessment measures listed must be a direct measure of assessment. The assessment measures used must be conducted toward or

at the end (preferable) of the completion of the certificate program, since we wish to determine how well students are able to achieve the program SLO(s) at <u>the completion of the certificate program</u>.

In the second column, for each assessment measure listed, indicate whether the measure provided is a *direct* or *indirect measure* of assessment. Use the following definitions and examples to determine the type of measure:

- <u>Direct measure</u> – Students demonstrate mastery of the SLO by *an actual performance/product*, assessed by individuals *considered to be experts/professionals* (i.e., course instructor, juror, clinical/field supervisor, etc.) in the content/discipline. Examples of direct measures of assessment include projects, exams, papers, clinical assessments, performances, exhibitions, etc.

- <u>Indirect measure</u> – Students (or others) report *perceptions or opinions* of how well students have achieved an SLO. Examples of indirect measures of assessment include student surveys, satisfaction surveys, pre-post surveys (change in perception over time), qualitative data (focus groups, in-class group discussions, exit interviews) or institutional data (participation in activities, and post-graduation employment placement rates), etc.

Column 3, *Assessment Method*, is used to provide detailed information concerning how each assessment is conducted and scored. This will vary from assessment to assessment, dependent upon type and characteristics associated with each. The content in this section will indicate the strength or robustness of the program assessment system. The questions below will guide assessment method content:

1. How will the assessment be scored?
2. What tool(s) will be used to delineate various levels of student performance (i.e., scoring rubric)?
3. By whom will the assessment be scored?
4. Will disaggregated (category/major component) data be tabulated in addition to an overall score? (Disaggregated data are preferred because typically the data are more meaningful.)
5. What will be done to ensure the assessment results are trustworthy (validity and reliability)?
6. If using multiple assessors, how will inter-rater reliability be established?

Column 4, *Criterion for Success* will designate the acceptable level of <u>individual student performance</u> on the selected assessment measure. For example, an exam score of 75 (out of 100 points) might serve as the indicator. Or, if the assessment measure is a capstone project (worth a total of 250 points), an overall score of 187.5 points might be designated as the criterion for success. The program faculty will determine the indicator of acceptable performance.

Similarly, Column 5, *Realistic Target Goal*, will serve as a second standard of performance. Program faculty will use their professional judgment and/or related student performance data to establish a *reasonable/realistic target* for the <u>percentage of students in the certificate program</u> that will achieve the previously set *criterion for success.* If we look at one of the examples in the preceding paragraph (exam scores), what <u>percentage of students</u> would it be *reasonable* to expect a score of 75/100 or better on the exam?

The final column in Section IV is a *Stretch Target Goal*. The stretch target goal, asks faculty to push beyond what may be reasonable in order to raise the standard of performance on the certificate program SLO. The set target could take up to several years to accomplish, and is not necessarily a goal that could be achieved in a short period of time—thus the term "<u>stretch</u>" target goal. Here, program faculty will set a <u>challenging/stretch target goal</u> that indicates the *desired, yet potentially attainable* percentage of students that will achieve the designated criterion for success over a period of time. A comparable academic program example is provided on page 7.

BA Dance

SLO 1 *By the end of the academic program, students will be able to accurately analyze, apply, and assess diverse movement principles and dance making practices through the body as creative performers.*					
Assessments*	Direct or Indirect Measure?	Assessment Method	Criterion for Success	*Realistic* Program Goal	*Stretch* Program Goal
1) At the conclusion of Level 3, DNCE 3161, Intermediate-Advanced Modern Dance II, students will be given a movement and/or written final	Direct	Dance Making Practices Rubric composed of: 5 domains • Kinetic and Somatic Knowledge • Performance/Improvisation • Movement Vocabulary Development • Artistic Intention Integration • Self/Peer Assessment 5 assessment criteria • Exemplary (5) • Accomplished (4) • Proficient (3) • Marginal (2) • Unacceptable (1) Separate rubric filled out by each member of the assessment committee comprised of three TWU undergraduate faculty	Proficient (3)	85% Accomplished (4) and above	100% Accomplished (4) and at least 25% Exemplary (5)
2) At the conclusion of DNCE 4182, Concert Choreography, students will fill out a Dance Making Practices Rubric with Self Reflective justifications and evidence	Indirect	Dance Making Practices Rubric composed of: 5 domains • Kinetic and Somatic Knowledge • Performance/Improvisation • Movement Vocabulary Development • Artistic Intention Integration • Self and/or Peer Assessment 5 assessment criteria • Exemplary (5) • Accomplished (4) • Proficient (3) • Marginal (2) • Unacceptable (1) Separate rubric filled out by each graduating student and read by the assessment committee comprised of three TWU undergraduate faculty	Proficient (3)	85% Accomplished (4) and above	100% Accomplished (4) and at least 25% Exemplary (5)

Annual Reports and Periodic Program Reviews

Certificate program coordinators will be expected to submit an annual Certificate Program Institutional Improvement Report based on the respective AIIAP-CP, whether or not there are data to report (students completing the certificate program) in order to provide yearly documentation for *Institutional Improvement* and SACS-COC. Certificate program faculty will not be expected to analyze data, interpret results, and implement 1-2 programmatic actions/changes until sufficient data are available for a minimum of 20 certificate program students. This will ensure that data upon which changes will be implemented are reliable. In addition, as part of the academic program review process (undergraduate and graduate), certificate program student learning outcomes assessment will be evaluated and will be reported as an addendum to the periodic program review self-study documentation.

Section V: Assessment Plan Implementation Coordination

Section V is the final section of the Academic II Assessment Plan for Certificate Programs *(AIIAP-CPs)*. Section V communicates how the assessment plan will be implemented and coordinated beginning in Summer or Fall 2013. Several aspects specific to the actual implementation and administration of the certificate program assessment plan are delineated within the table. Determining assessment plan implementation coordination in advance will help to ensure that each aspect of the process has been identified prior to the start of the initial assessment period. All responsibilities and expectations are determined in advance, hopefully in a manner that *spreads the wealth*, rather than putting all responsibility on one or two individuals.

In column 1, list each of the assessment measures selected to assess SLO 1. (These can be copied from Table IV, Column 1). Indicate the month and year in which the assessment measure will be conducted or administered in column 2. Next, identify who will administer and/or collect the assessments in column 3. Data management and initial analysis should then be reported in column 4. Who will input the data and conduct the initial data analysis? And, when will the initial data analysis occur?

Activity in column 5 represents one of the most critical steps in academic SLOs assessment. Once the initial data analysis is available, program faculty must get together to interpret the data, and based on interpretation, initiate specific changes (actions) that will be implemented to continue to improve student learning within the certificate program. The first annual *Academic Institutional Improvement Report* (AIIR) for certificate programs is projected to occur mid-March, 2014. Use this date to guide the timing of analysis, interpretation, and actions/changes to be implemented. Next, determine what faculty need to be involved in this decision making process. Typically, faculty members most actively engaged in the ongoing implementation of the certificate program need to be the key players involved in developing and formulating changes/actions that will be implemented using certificate program assessment data.

Finally, in the last column identify when the actions/changes developed in column 5 will actually be implemented in order to improve student learning. Refer to a comparable *MSW Social Work* example below.

Assessment Measure [Insert name of each assessment measure below.]	Administration Period (Month/Year)	Who will administer/collect assessment?	Who will input data/ conduct initial data analysis and when?	When will interpretation of the data and development of changes to improve student learning occur? What program faculty will be involved?	When will changes to improve student learning be implemented?
SLO 1/Assessment 1 Field Instructor Evaluation	Field Instructor Evaluations are administered at the end of the Field Practicum, December, May, and August of each year	Field Instructors will complete the evaluation and submit the results to the Director of Field Education	Director of Field Education will submit individual level results for each of the 10 competencies to the Program Director the month following administration (June, January, and September). The Social Work Program Secretary will maintain an Excel spreadsheet of scores.	Each Fall, the faculty of the Social Work Program will meet to review the data and determine what, if any, changes are needed.	After a two consecutive cycles of failure to meet stated goals, faculty will develop course and/or curriculum changes to be made. Course changes may be made immediately, curriculum changes will be implemented during the beginning of a new academic year.

Assessment Measure [Insert name of each assessment measure below.]	Administration Period (Month/Year)	Who will administer/collect assessment?	Who will input data/ conduct initial data analysis and when?	When will interpretation of the data and development of changes to improve student learning occur? What program faculty will be involved?	When will changes to improve student learning be implemented?
SLO 1/Assessment 2 ACAT Exam	ACAT exams will be administered during the final senior semester, April, November, and July of each year	Program Director will be responsible for administering the 3 hour exam	Exams are scored by ACAT and the scores are reported individually and aggregated. Scores are received by the Program Director and will be entered in an Excel spreadsheet by the Social Work Program Secretary.	Each Fall, the faculty of the Social Work Program will meet to review the data and determine what, if any, changes are needed	After a two consecutive cycles of failure to meet stated goals, faculty will develop course and/or curriculum changes to be made. Course changes may be made immediately, curriculum changes will be implemented during the beginning of a new academic year

Final Comments on the Plan & Process

Determining what must be done in the certificate program to continue to improve program quality and student learning requires dedicated time and *intentionality*. Systematically assessing our certificate programs based on what we've determined that students should be able to do upon completion of the certificate program and making appropriate changes and/or decisions using certificate program assessment data of student learning will help us to move forward in the name of continuous improvement.

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