

Mississippi University for Women
Institutional-Effectiveness Planning Guide, 2010-15
(Revised 2/8/2013; Effective 8/15/2013)

Mississippi University for Women values continuous improvement. To that end, MUW invites internal and external stakeholders to participate in processes that will promote institutional effectiveness. The work of institutional effectiveness begins with the University's Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles (MVGP). The MVGP provides the overarching framework for strategic goals and for student-learning goals. To evaluate the University's progress towards meeting these goals, the University asks campus units to participate in as many as two parallel processes.

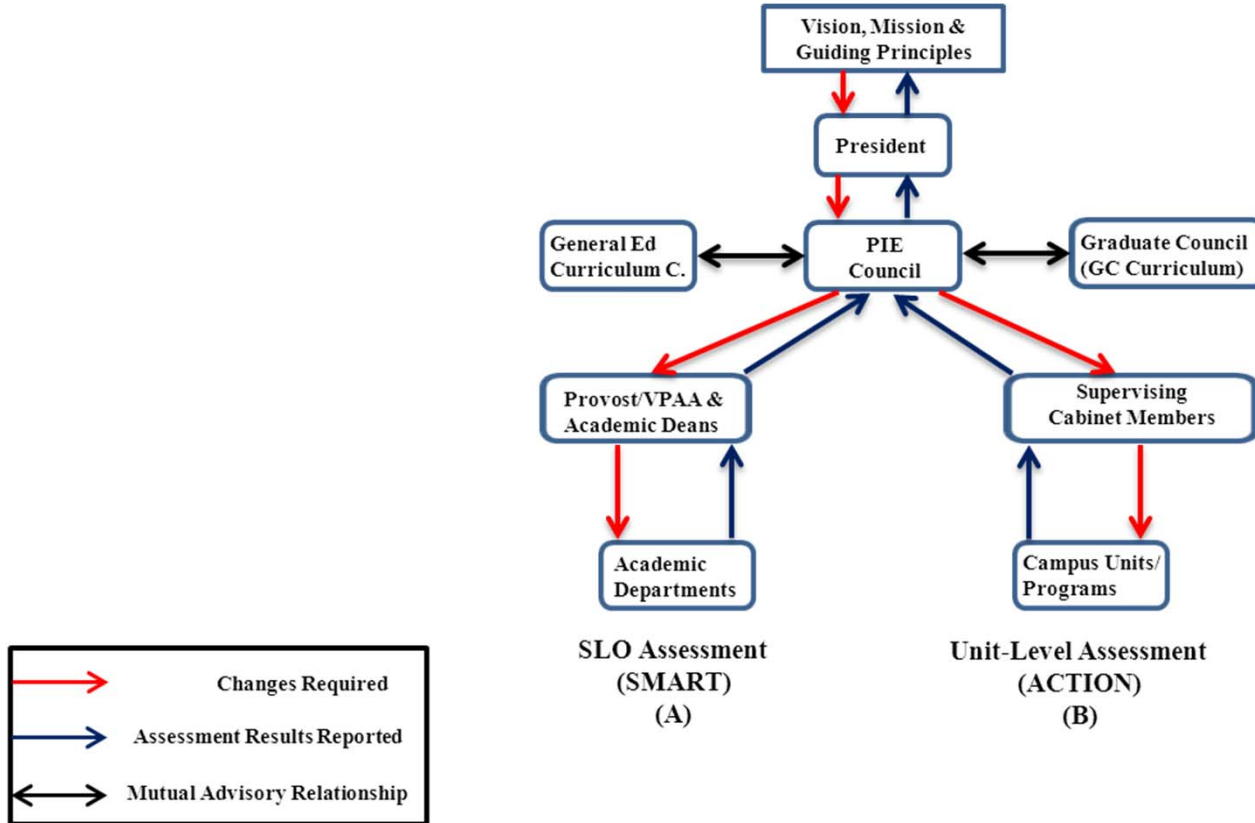
One institutional-effectiveness process evaluates institutional operations (ACTION). This process asks cabinet members and their direct reports to align two-year strategies with the six-year strategic goals and asks campus units to create action steps that support the strategies, to tie action steps to benchmarks, and to identify appropriate measures in November. Then campus units take action steps throughout the calendar year. The following November campus units observe results and notify PIE Council about their plans for improvement. PIE Council reviews ACTION Planning and Reporting forms and gives appropriate feedback. The PIE Council website provides additional resources: (<http://web2.muw.edu/index.php/en/main-pie>). ACTION Assessment Documents are archived on the PIE Council website: (<http://web2.muw.edu/index.php/en/pie-action-assessments.html>).

The other institutional-effectiveness process assesses student learning (SMART). This process asks academic programs to set student-learning goals, student-learning outcomes, and achievement targets; to map the curriculum; and to design assessment measures in August. Then programs assess student learning throughout the academic year. The following August academic programs review assessment results and transfer information into action to improve student learning. The Assessment Committee reviews SMART Assessment Plans and Reports and gives appropriate feedback. The Assessment website provides additional resources: (<http://web2.muw.edu/index.php/en/vpaa-assessment.html>).

This planning guide provides the following information:

- Institutional-Effectiveness Flowchart
- MUW's Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles
- MUW's Strategic Goals, 2010-15
- MUW's Parallel Assessment Processes (Outlining SMART & ACTION Assessment Timelines)
- Steps for Preparing the ACTION Form
- Steps for Preparing the SMART Form
- MUW's Process for Ensuring Strategic Planning Guides Calendar-based Implementation of Policies & Procedures

Institutional Effectiveness Flowchart



1. President & Cabinet Members send approved general SLO and campus Unit-Level Expectations/Changes to PIE Council
2. GECC engages PIE Council concerning general education assessment/implementation expectations; Graduate Council engages PIE Council concerning any specific assessment/implementation expectations
3. PIE Council's Assessment Committees send memos to (A) Provost/VPAA & Academic Deans concerning general SLO (SMART) goals & assessment expectations and to (B) Supervising Cabinet Members/Direct Reports concerning general program (ACTION) goals & assessment expectations
4. (A) Academic Deans & Department Chairs implement specific SLO (SMART) changes to goals & assessment procedures; (B) Supervising Cabinet Members/Direct Reports & Campus Units/Programs implement specific program (ACTION) goals and assessment procedures
5. (A) Academic Departments assess SLO SMART changes, report results, & propose changes to Deans; (B) Campus Units/Programs assess ACTION changes, report results, & propose changes to Supervising Cabinet Members/Direct Reports
6. (A) Academic Deans & Provost/VPAA forward approved Department reports and create summative College reports & plans for PIE Council and Academic Departments; (B) Supervising Cabinet Members/Direct Reports forward approved Unit/Program reports and create summative reports & plans for PIE Council & Units/Programs
7. PIE Council discusses all SLO (SMART) and program (ACTION) reports in context of strategic planning annual budget-based goal-setting/review, in consultation with both the General Education Curriculum Committee (GECC) and Graduate Council, forwards reports to President's Cabinet, and creates and forwards a summative report and annual budget-based goal-setting documentation to President's Cabinet
8. President's Cabinet approves and/or establishes new general SLO and Unit-Level changes with consideration of PIE Council recommendations and incorporates assessment processes in overall strategic planning that includes annual review of Vision, Mission & Guiding Principles

Mississippi University for Women

Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles

Vision:

Building on its long tradition of excellence in liberal arts and professional education, as well as its historic focus on academic and leadership development for women, Mississippi University for Women will continue to be a university that prepares both women and men for successful lives by providing a high-quality education in a personalized learning environment.

Mission:

A Carnegie Master's S public institution, Mississippi University for Women (MUW) provides high-quality undergraduate and graduate education for women and men in a variety of liberal arts and professional programs, while maintaining its historic commitment to academic and leadership development for women. MUW emphasizes a personalized learning environment in all of its educational programs, which are offered through the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business and Professional Studies, College of Education and Human Sciences, and College of Nursing and Speech Language Pathology. MUW delivers selected programs and courses through distance education formats to provide educational opportunities throughout Mississippi and the United States, while addressing the unique educational and public service needs of northeast Mississippi and adjoining counties in northwest Alabama. MUW supports research, scholarship, and creativity to enhance faculty development and student learning and to advance knowledge in the disciplines offered by the university.

Revised August 15, 2013.

Guiding Principles:

1. MUW provides high-quality instructional programs that emphasize teaching and learning. With faculty and staff of the highest caliber, MUW is dedicated to providing a campus environment that encourages lifelong learning, strong career preparation, and personal growth. Graduates are expected to have skills in communication, technology, and critical thinking, as well as an awareness of self, gender-related issues, cultural diversity, and responsible citizenship.
2. MUW is student oriented. MUW provides small classes and emphasizes personalized student attention, so that each student will have the opportunity to succeed. MUW offers a student-life program that stimulates learning and leadership development.
3. MUW values research, scholarship, and creativity. While MUW is primarily a teaching institution, the university supports research, scholarship, and creativity to enhance the professional development of faculty and staff in order to better prepare students.
4. MUW is committed to diversity among its faculty, staff, and students of MUW represent the global society in which we live. MUW believes that diversity allows students to grow in their understanding of self and others.
5. MUW endorses sound organizational principles and is committed to operational efficiency, collaborative strategic planning, institutional effectiveness, and creative problem solving.
6. MUW meets regional, state, and national needs for higher education. The University responds to the needs of the local community by providing cultural activities; programs for intellectual, professional, and social development; and by assisting in economic development. MUW extends its outreach to the state and nation using multiple delivery methods, including the internet and other advanced systems.
7. MUW is committed to public service. MUW forms partnerships with businesses, as well as with educational, governmental, public service, and charitable organizations, to create opportunities that provide economic and social advantages for the institution, community, and region.

Mississippi University for Women
Strategic Goals, 2010-15

1. The University will provide an innovative, high-quality academic enterprise that engages students, faculty, and staff by:

- fostering students' deep learning, engagement, and holistic development; and
- recruiting, developing, and retaining a highly qualified, diverse faculty and staff.

2. The University will cultivate a dynamic student body that can benefit from, and contribute to, the institution by:

- recruiting qualified, diverse students;
- promoting student access, success, retention, and graduation; and
- cultivating a student-first institutional culture.

3. The University will promote internal operations that advance institutional efficiency and priorities by:

- maintaining, enhancing, and effectively utilizing the campus facilities, space, and infrastructure;
- providing appropriate resources, equipment, and technology;
- designing effective, efficient procedures and policies; and
- fostering a culture of accountability to ensure ongoing quality enhancement.

4. The University will promote external relations that advance its public mission and fiscal priorities by:

- forging meaningful and engaged partnerships with external stakeholders;
- providing services and enhancing relationships in the community, region, and state; and
- seeking innovative revenue enhancement through external fund raising and auxiliary management.

MUW's Parallel Assessment Processes

Student Learning Outcomes (SMART)

- **August: Review Results & Design Assessment Plan for upcoming year**
- **September 15: Departments submit Assessment Results & Plans to College Deans**
- **September 30: Deans submit approved Assessment Results & Plans to AVPAA for review prior to posting to MUW website**
- **AVPAA and Assessment Committee review Department SMART plans to provide additional feedback for consideration by College Deans and verify final approved Plans prior to posting SMART Results & Plans to MUW website**
- **Sept – Aug: Departments Assess Student Learning**

Program/Unit-Based Assessment (ACTION)

- **November: Each campus Unit begins 'Review & Design' Talks based upon the previous calendar year's ACTION Results & current Strategic Planning Initiatives**
- **January 15: Each campus Unit submits their ACTION Document to their supervising MUW Cabinet Officer – Each ACTION Document includes both the Results from the previous year & their Plan for the upcoming year**
- **January 30: MUW Cabinet Officers submit approved ACTION Results & Plans to Chair of PIE Council for review prior to posting to MUW website**
- **PIE Council reviews each Unit's ACTION plans to provide additional feedback for consideration by MUW Cabinet Officers and verify final approved Plans before posting ACTION Results & Plans to MUW website**
- **Jan – Nov: Implement & Assess Plans**

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Preparing ACTION Forms

Your supervising cabinet member and your unit will follow these steps to prepare the ACTION Planning and Reporting Form for Institutional Effectiveness.

1. Align a five-year strategy with one of MUW's six-year strategic goals: The President with the Cabinet may set priorities within the strategic goals. Working with his or her direct reports, your supervising Cabinet member will develop a five-year strategy to support one of MUW's six-year strategic goals. Five-year strategies are derived from the institution's five-year strategic plan. If, for example, the strategic goal addresses a student-first culture, your supervising Cabinet member along with his or her direct reports will establish one or more strategies to support that goal. Then your supervising Cabinet member will designate which of their reporting campus units will be responsible for which strategies. Although your supervising Cabinet member may develop multiple strategies for this goal, typically an individual reporting campus unit will work on only one strategy per goal during a given reporting cycle. Finally, your supervising Cabinet member will add the appropriate strategy to the goal in the 'A' space (yellow) on the ACTION form. Your supervising Cabinet member will repeat this step for each goal before sending the form to you in November. Once you receive the form, you will use steps 2-4 below to prepare the 'C,' 'T,' and 'I' spaces (green) on the ACTION form to plan for the next calendar year.

2. Create a specific, measurable action step that supports the strategy: Review your unit's strategy. Who will do what in what way and/or with what resources to fulfill the strategy? If, for example, your strategy is to provide good customer service in an effort to promote a student-first culture, what will your unit do to provide good customer service? Typically, individual campus units will develop one action step per strategy for a given reporting cycle. Place an action step in the 'C' space of the ACTION form. This action step may change every year.

3. Tie the action step to a benchmark that indicates criteria of success: Review your unit's action step. What level, number, degree, or rate will indicate the action's effectiveness? If, for example, your action step is to provide a specific service to students in a timely and efficient manner, to what degree or at what level will you need to perform this action step for your unit to feel that it has fulfilled the strategy? Place the benchmark in the 'T' space of the ACTION form. The benchmark may change every year as your unit improves and meets its criteria for success.

4. Identify the means of measuring if the benchmark has been met: Review the action step and the benchmark. How will your unit evaluate the action's effectiveness? If, for example, your benchmark is a 75% student satisfaction rate for a specific service in your unit, how will you determine if you have met that benchmark? Provide a brief description of the means of evaluation in the 'I' space of the ACTION form. The means of evaluation may change every year as your unit refines its measures.

Repeat steps 2-4 for each strategy. You should submit the completed form electronically on December 15 to PIE Council through your supervising Cabinet member. (If you are in a department in Academic Affairs, submit your form to your dean, who will submit the form to the Provost, your supervising President's Cabinet Member.) The form will be archived on the PIE Council website for review and access by the campus community: <http://www.muw.edu/pie/>.

At the end of the next calendar year, you will take the form that you submitted the previous December 15 and, using steps 5-6, will prepare the 'O' and 'N' spaces (gray) on the ACTION form to report results from that calendar year.

5. Observe the actual results of the action step: Collect data, and measure results against the benchmark and best practices in higher education. What is the actual level, number, degree, or rate of the action's effectiveness? If, for example, your unit improved a service, conducted a student- satisfaction survey, and collected data, how do these results compare to your benchmark and to best practices? Record your results and observations in the 'O' space of the ACTION form.

6. Notify PIE Council about how the unit plans to use the results: Review your data and observations. How will your unit improve or sustain the action's effectiveness? If, for example, your student satisfaction survey yielded a 70% satisfaction rate, what will your unit do to improve that service next year? Record your plans for next year in the 'N' space.

Notify the institution by submitting your ACTION form electronically on December 15 to PIE Council through your supervising Cabinet member. (If you are in a department in Academic Affairs, submit your form to your dean, who will submit the form to the Provost, your supervising President's Cabinet Member.) PIE Council will prepare an institutional report of aggregate results for review by the campus community.

Note: The ACTION assessment process does not replace Annual Reporting; ACTION assessment supplements Annual Reports.

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Preparing SMART Forms

Step 1. Setting Goals: Determine broad student-learning goals for each program (major specific). In other words make a list of the general (overall) cognitive skills, attitudes, conceptual skills, and lab/studio skills that the department expects students to have gained or improved by the end of their academic career. Once you've agreed upon these goals (there may be quite a long list), the department should try to agree upon which goals are the most highly valued. Program goals must align with college and institutional goals.

Step 2. Creating Outcomes: Of the most highly valued learning goals, select two or three goals and determine the following for each:

- The components of the goal (stated as what the student knows, demonstrates, does, etc.). These more refined statements will become your student-learning outcomes.
- Select those outcomes that can be measured (selecting three outcomes to measure per goal will allow you to triangulate your results).
- Spend time writing your outcomes. Well-written outcomes will save time/effort down the road.
- Student learning outcomes must be stated as actions that are both meaningful and measurable.

Your selected goals and corresponding learning outcomes will go in the 'S' block of the SMART form.

Step 3. Map Your Outcomes to the Curriculum: In order to know where to sample the outcome, determine the following for each outcome you plan to use:

- Where in the curriculum do you introduce and reinforce the outcomes? Where in the curriculum do students practice or produce evidence of mastering the outcomes?
- How do you deliver (teach) the outcomes? If you do not teach the outcomes, should you modify the curriculum?
- How are the outcomes evaluated?

This information will go in the 'M' block of the SMART form.

Step 4. Setting Criteria for Success: Discuss and determine your criteria for success. What is an acceptable level of student demonstration of acquisition of each outcome? For example: what percentage of your sample group should be able to demonstrate the outcome at what level (e.g.: 80% of sampled students should be able to demonstrate proficiency at the sophomore year and mastery by the senior year). This information will go in the 'S' block of the SMART form.

Step 5. Collecting Data: Determine how you will sample the acquisition of the individual outcomes throughout the curriculum and over time. Identify the assignments (projects, papers, etc.) that you will collect, create rubrics if appropriate, and decide how to control for inter-evaluator reliability. Note: If multiple individuals are going to review the material, assessment rubrics can help ensure that the data collected will be helpful. This information will go in the 'A' block of the SMART form.

Step 6. Sequencing Assessment Methods and Sampling: Determine what methods you'll use to collect data and samples of the outcome. Decide when and how to collect the information, how many samples to collect, and who will collect the information for each outcome. Begin collecting information related to your student learning outcomes. This information will go in the 'A' block of the SMART form.

Step 7. Reviewing the Information: Take time to review the information and determine what it tells us about the students' ability to demonstrate acquisition of the outcome at the level the department determined is relevant to the curriculum. If students are not performing as expected, it is time to ask questions about why. If students are performing as expected, celebrate! Be sure to review the reliability of the data and assessment collection methodology. Did we ask the right questions? Did the samples assess the right objectives? This information will go in the 'R' block of the SMART form.

Step 8. Use Information to Improve Teaching and Learning: Once you have enough information to inform decision-making, take steps to use the information to improve the program, revise processes and procedures, make changes to the curriculum or individual classes, etc. Be sure to keep records of changes. Using assessment to make continuous improvement to the curriculum to generate genuine learning around the goals you value is the heart of assessment. This information will go in the 'T' block of the SMART form.

Step 9: Archiving and Reporting Your Results: Keep your data, instruments, information, and minutes of discussions in your departmental archives. At the appointed time, complete the SMART Assessment Forms and send them forward as indicated on the SMART form.

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MUW's Process for Ensuring Strategic Planning Guides Calendar-based Implementation of Policies & Procedures

Web Organization of Institutional Effectiveness



Policies formalize strategic planning processes; institutional-level policies are published on Mississippi University for Women's website:

<http://web2.muw.edu/index.php/en/personnel-policies.html>

Any proposed change to institutional policy, either introduction of a new policy or revision of a current policy, requires formal review and approval and must follow the following protocol:

- Indication if proposal is for a new policy or policy revision (new policies must include proposed procedures for implementation);
- Indication if proposal is for a new procedure or revision to procedure (new procedures must include proposed calendar dates for implementation);
- Indication if proposal is for new calendar dates or revision of calendar dates for implementation).

The Policy Statement Transmittal Form guides this process and is published on Mississippi University for Women's website:

<http://web2.muw.edu/index.php/en/personnel-policies.html>

Each new policy is linked to its parent strategic plan and all procedural documents and related calendar items essential for its proper implementation. Policy implementation is communicated on Mississippi University for Women's website.