

## Why is assessment important?

According to SACS accreditation requirements and MUW's Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles (VMGP) listed below, assessment is essential for maintaining the university's very existence – SACS approval – and maintaining the university's integrity – MUW's core values (VMGP). Therefore, assessing academic programs and non-academic units is vital to Mississippi University for Women.

### **SACS Principle 7.1 (Section 7: Institutional Planning and Effectiveness)**

The institution engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that (a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and (b) incorporates a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission. (*Institutional planning*) - (Resource Manual for The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement, SACS COC, pg. 56)

### **SACS Principle 7.3 (Section 7: Institutional Planning and Effectiveness)**

The institution identifies expected outcomes of its administrative support services and demonstrates the extent to which the outcomes are achieved. (*Administrative effectiveness*) - (Resource Manual for The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement, SACS COC, pg. 61)

### **SACS Principle 8.1 (Section 8: Student Achievement)**

The institution identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success. (*Student achievement*) - (Resource Manual for The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement, SACS COC, pg. 64)

### **SACS Principle 8.2 (Section 8: Student Achievement)**

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

8.2.a. – Student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs. (*Student outcomes: educational programs*)

8.2.c. – Academic and student services that support student success. (*Student outcomes: academic and student services*)

(Resource Manual for The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement, SACS COC, pg. 66)

## **MUW's 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.

## Non-Academic Assessment Procedural Guide

### Mission

Mississippi University for Women (MUW), a public institution since 1884, **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, Sciences, and Education, College of Business and Professional Studies, and College of Nursing and Health Sciences. MUW delivers selected programs and courses through distance education formats to provide educational opportunities throughout Mississippi and the United States, while addressing 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 October 19, 2017

### Guiding Principles

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.

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.

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.**

MUW is **committed to diversity** among its faculty, staff, and students. The 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.**

MUW **endorses sound organizational principles** and is **committed to operational efficiency, collaborative strategic planning, institutional effectiveness, and creative problem solving.**

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.

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.**

## Non-Academic/Administrative Assessment

### Who assesses?

Non-academic units, including academic, student, and administrative support services, must complete an assessment plan annually (see Assessment Timeline Process at the end of document).

### Definitions

**Mission Statement:** Statement that reflects the purpose of the unit. The mission statement is succinct, only three to five sentences. Structure of a mission statement: The mission of (name of your program or unit) is to (your primary purpose) by providing (your primary functions or activities) to (your stakeholders).

**Goal:** Goals are broad, general statements of what the unit intends to accomplish. Goals describe broad operational outcomes and concepts expressed in general terms. Goals should provide a framework for determining the more specific operational objectives of the unit, and should be consistent with the mission of the unit and the mission of the institution. A single goal may have many specific subordinate operational objectives {outcomes}.

The operational goals must be selected from the university's Strategic Priorities and Goals and be labeled to reflect the priority or goal that is selected. (i.e. SPG 1.a. or SPG 4.c.)

\*\*\*Must have **at least TWO Goals** for the assessment plan!

### MUW's Strategic Priorities/Goals 2016-2021

1. The University will cultivate a culture of **Advancement Excellence** to strengthen engagement among its constituencies by:
  - a. creating a culture of giving;
  - b. establishing and maintaining affinity groups;
  - c. fostering pride in University events and private giving; and
  - d. increasing awareness of university programs and strengths.
2. The University will promote **Regional Stewardship** through partnerships across campus and the region by:
  - a. cultivating collaborations that increase health and well-being;
  - b. providing outreach to underserved populations;
  - c. strengthening and expanding K-12 partnerships;
  - d. contributing to the creative economy; and
  - e. forging meaningful and engaged partnerships that provide real-life experiences for students.
3. The University will foster a **21<sup>st</sup> Century** learning environment by:
  - a. enhancing and effectively utilizing advanced instructional technologies;
  - b. broadening educational opportunities and programs for the diverse student body;
  - c. maintaining, enhancing and expanding international partnerships;
  - d. increasing emphasis on diversity of faculty and staff;
  - e. cultivating communities to create opportunities for academic engagement;
  - f. fostering leadership development and a commitment to a safe ethical environment; and

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- g. enhancing business processes and the campus infrastructure, ensuring continuing financial sustainability.
4. The University will cultivate a comprehensive approach that enhances retention, **Completion** and student success by:
  - a. enhancing student advising, mentoring, and support services;
  - b. recruiting a diverse student body to ensure a vital university community;
  - c. providing resources to assist students with achieving and maintaining financial stability; and
  - d. providing academic programs to meet the needs of today's student and workforce.

Outcomes: Outcomes are brief, clear statements that describe the desired quality (timeliness, accuracy, responsiveness, etc.) of key functions and services within the administrative unit and exactly what the services should promote (understanding, knowledge, awareness, appreciation, etc.).

**\*\*\*Must have at least FOUR Outcomes throughout the assessment plan!**

Achievement Target: Benchmark value to **measure** whether or not the unit has met the outcome. How do you know if the unit met the outcome?

**\*\*\*Recommended to have no more than three Achievement Targets per outcome!**

Assessment Method: Method of evaluating the Achievement Target. There are two types of assessment: (1) Direct and (2) Indirect

### Examples

#### (1) Direct (each individual)

- a. Customer Satisfaction
- b. Retention
- c. Time
- d. Cost
- e. Efficiency
- f. Productivity

#### (2) Indirect (sample)

- a. Perceived Timeliness
- b. Perceived Capability

#### More Examples:

- Analysis of error rates, processing time – Direct
- External funds awards – Direct
- Funds raised in response to outreach efforts – Direct
- Analysis of service usage – Direct
- Review of website hits and downloads – Direct
- Audit reports – Direct
- Percentage of requests for services fulfilled – Direct

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- Surveys of customer satisfaction – Indirect
- Focus groups, individual interviews, phone surveys – Indirect
- Formal feedback from advisory groups or committees – Indirect
- Percentage of target students served – Indirect
- Comparisons to best practices in the profession – Indirect
- Benchmarking with peer institutions – Indirect
- Student success rates (e.g., employment) – Indirect
- External reviews by consultants or accrediting bodies – Indirect

### Some Questions to Ask Yourself when Writing your Assessment Method

1. What are you going to use?
  - a. Operational Data
  - b. Survey
  - c. Observation
  - d. Performance Rating
2. Of and/or by whom?
  - a. Student
  - b. Focus Group
  - c. Customer
  - d. Process
3. Context (where or when)?
  - a. Point-of-Service
  - b. Throughout the Year
  - c. End of the Program
4. For what purpose?
  - a. Desired Program Outcome

*{For example: Survey the faculty at the end of the academic year for their satisfaction with library holdings.}*

\*\*\*Below is list of surveys administered by the Institutional Research and Assessment Department that may be useful as a means of assessing an outcome. The results will be available on our website soon.

#### **Surveys**

- Commencement
- Alumni (sent out every three years; last one sent in 2016)
- Faculty Satisfaction
- Staff Satisfaction

Non-Academic/Administrative Assessment Plan Form

Below is an outline that you will need to fill out accordingly. Please remember that you must have **at least 2 goals** and **at least 4 outcomes overall**. Meaning, you may have three outcomes for goal 1 and only one outcome for goal 2, etc. Also, please remember to number your Goals SPG's and your outcomes and that you must have **no more than three Achievement Targets per outcome**.

**Goal 1:** (SPG #) The University will ... {number the goal appropriately, i.e. SPG 1.c.}

**Outcome 1.1:** Outcomes are brief, clear statements that describe the desired quality (timeliness, accuracy, responsiveness, etc.) of key functions and services within the administrative unit and exactly what the services should promote (understanding, knowledge, awareness, appreciation, etc.).

**Assessment Method 1.1:** Method of evaluating the Achievement Target. There are two types of assessment: (1) Direct and (2) Indirect {Please specify if your assessment method is Direct or Indirect.}

**Achievement Target 1.1.a.:** Benchmark value to measure whether or not the unit has met the outcome. How do you know if the unit met the outcome?

**Goal 2:** (SPG #) The University will ... {number the goal appropriately, i.e. SPG 1.c.}

**Outcome 2.1:** Outcomes are brief, clear statements that describe the desired quality (timeliness, accuracy, responsiveness, etc.) of key functions and services within the administrative unit and exactly what the services should promote (understanding, knowledge, awareness, appreciation, etc.).

**Assessment Method 2.1:** Method of evaluating the Achievement Target. There are two types of assessment: (1) Direct and (2) Indirect {Please specify if your assessment method is Direct or Indirect.}

**Achievement Target 2.1.a.:** Benchmark value to measure whether or not the unit has met the outcome. How do you know if the unit met the outcome?

**\*Continue the format with the numbering system to complete the requirements of the plan.**

**Non-Academic/Administrative Assessment Plan Checklist**

\_\_\_\_\_ One Mission Statement

\_\_\_\_\_ At Least Two Goals Selected from MUW's Strategic Priorities/Goals

\_\_\_\_\_ Goals Labeled by its Corresponding Strategic Priorities/Goals (i.e. SPG 1.a. or SPG 4.c.)

\_\_\_\_\_ At Least Four Outcomes

\_\_\_\_\_ Outcomes Numbered According to the Corresponding Goal (i.e. 1.1, 2.2, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ No More Than Three Achievement Targets per Outcome

**MUW's Assessment Timeline Process**

***Non-Academic Assessment***

June – July:

Coordinators submit the Non-Academic Assessment Follow-Ups, Results, Action Statements and Related/Supporting Documentation in the assessment software by **July 15<sup>th</sup>**.

- Action Statements are based on the review of the results to determine what actions to take for the upcoming fiscal year, i.e. make any changes to the assessment plan.

August:

Supervisors/Cabinet Members review their Non-Academic Units' assessment data and submit their Review Comments in the assessment software by **August 7<sup>th</sup>**.

Assessment Specialist runs the archived reports for the fiscal year and uploads them into the assessment software and disseminates the reports to the Coordinators and Supervisors/Cabinet Members.

July – June:

Implement and Assess Plans.

August – December:

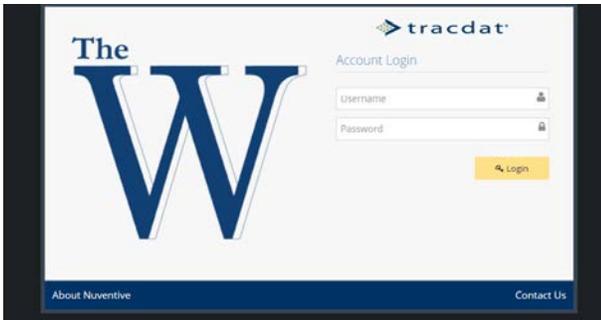
Beginning in Fall 2019, every three years, PIE Council reviews the collective results to provide feedback for consideration by the Directors and Cabinet Members. Beginning Spring 2021, every five years, PIE Council reviews the new assessment plans to make any recommendations for the Directors and Cabinet Members to consider.

**The following is the instructions for inputting:  
Follow-Ups,  
Results and Analysis,  
Action Statements,  
and Supporting/Related Documentation.**

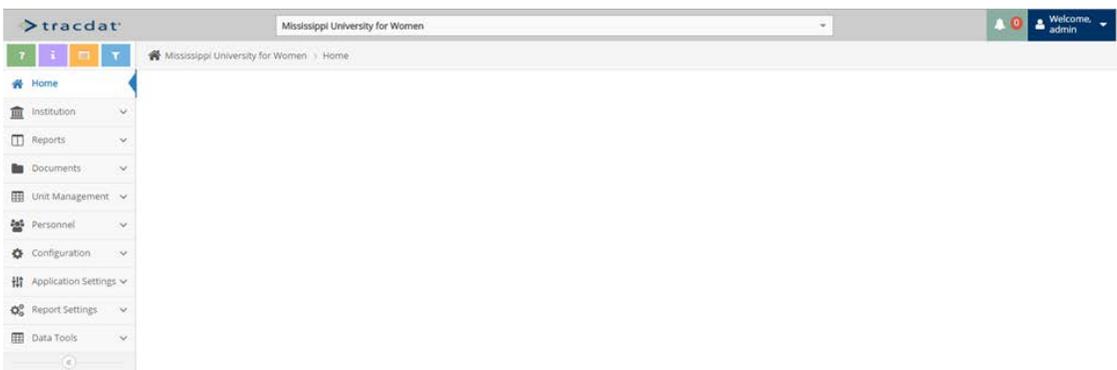
Go to <http://tracdat.muw.edu/tracdat/>

Add a bookmark to your browser for this site.

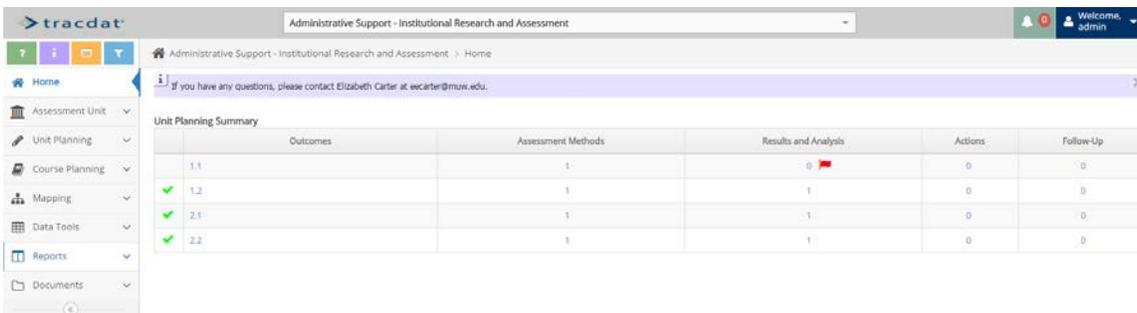
Log in screen:



Once you log in, you will see a screen like this:



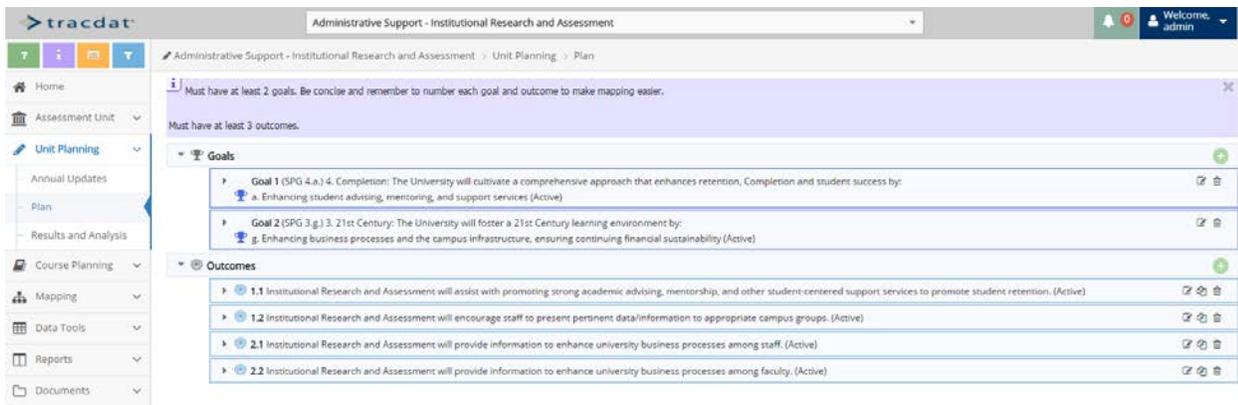
From the drop-down list box at the top center, you will choose your non-academic program for editing.



Browsing through the left-sided tabs, you can see that each one's purpose is self-explanatory.

The tabs that you will be utilizing most are "Unit Planning" and "Documents."

Each tab has a subtab. For editing purposes to your program's plan, the "Unit Planning" tab will be your destination.

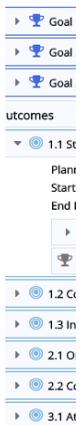


The basic icons' uses:



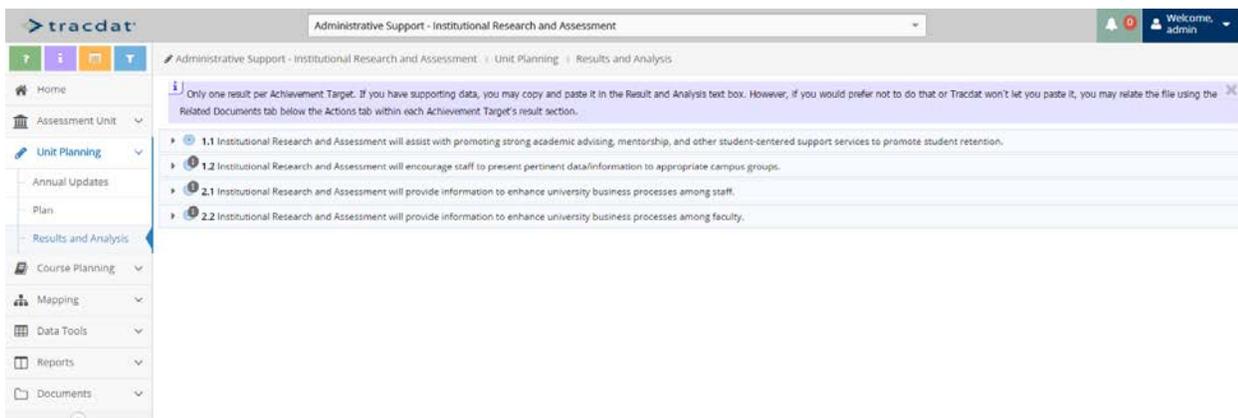
When editing your program, **ALWAYS click SAVE and RETURN**. Please Do NOT press the back button in your browser. This will cause issues with your edits.

To open each section press the arrow next to the headings.

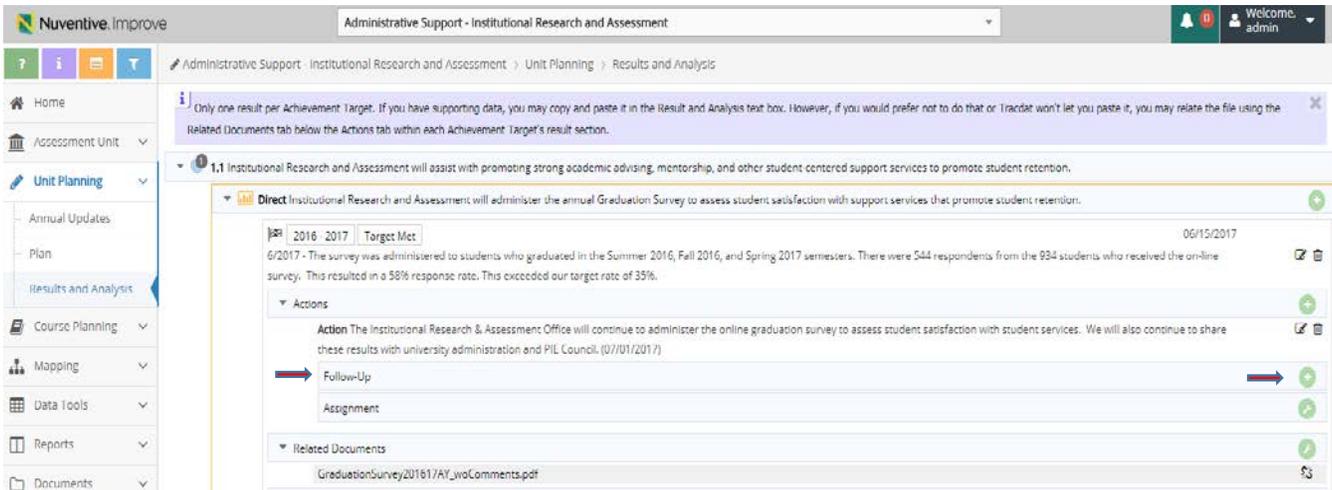


This will allow you to expand the boxes for more information.

Under "Unit Planning," go to "Results and Analysis." When you click "Results and Analysis," your screen will look like this:



Just like in the other section, these can be expanded and edited.

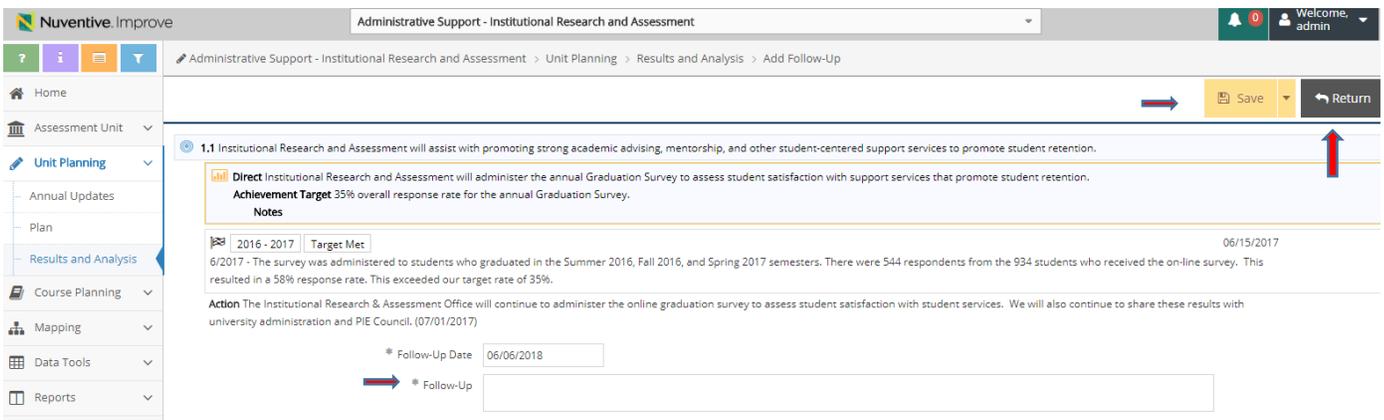


To complete the **Follow-Up** for **last year's** Action Statements, look below the "Action" for the "**Follow-Up**" box and click the Green Plus button to the far right of the box. See above image.

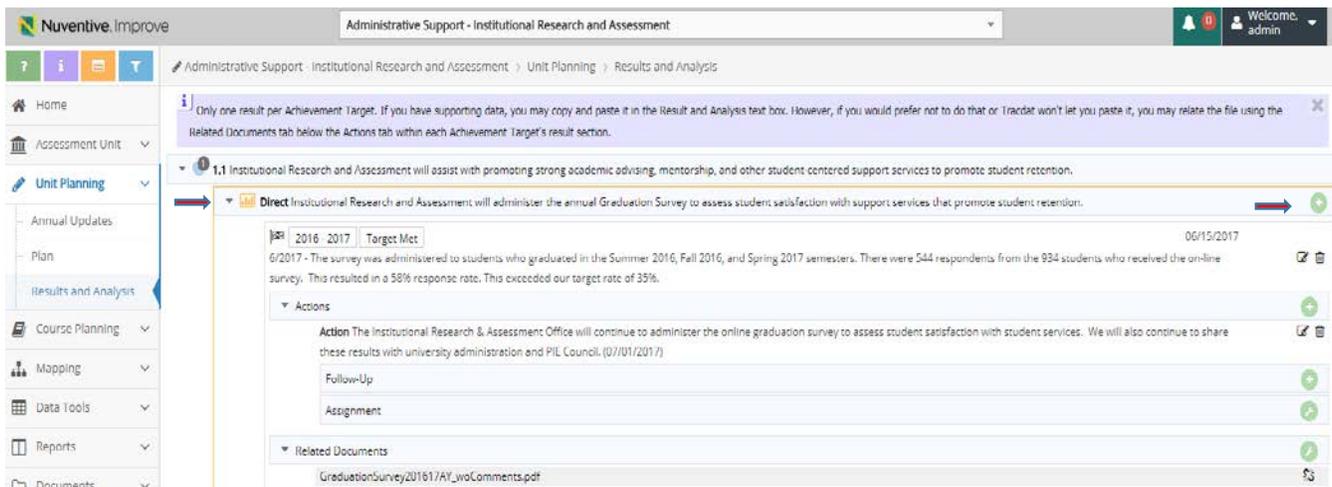
When you click the Green Plus button, your screen should look similar to the image below.

In the "**Follow-Up**" text box, explain what actually occurred over the past year. If the Action Statement was not followed through, please explain why.

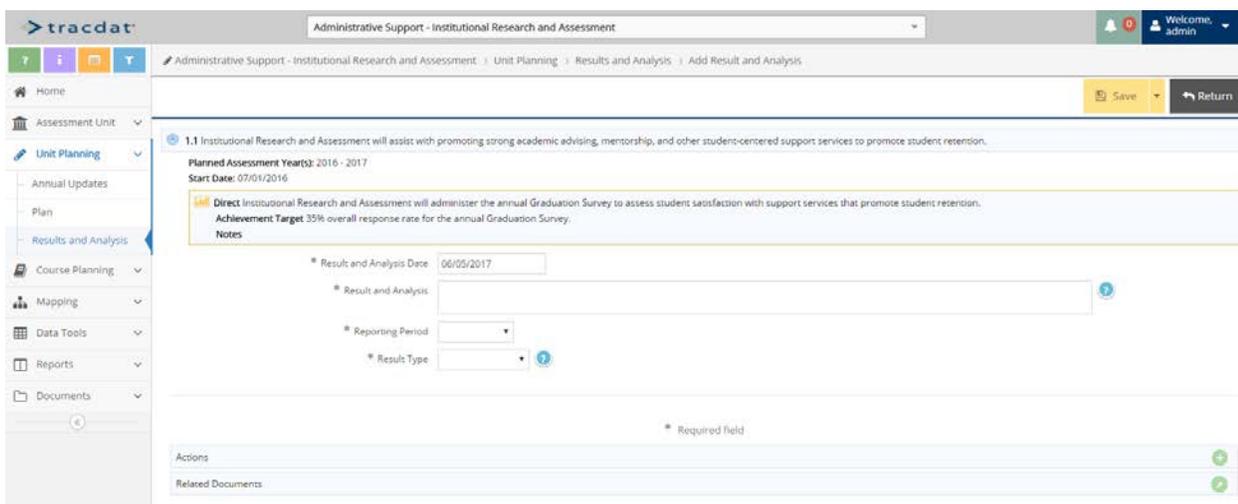
After you have finished, REMEMBER to click the "SAVE" button in the upper right-hand corner and then "RETURN."



To add Results for each Achievement Target, click the Green Plus button to the far right of the screen directly beneath the Outcome. See below image.



When you click the Green Plus button, your screen should be like this:



The **Results and Analysis Date** will be defaulted to the date that you enter the results.

The **Reporting Period** will be for the current fiscal year.

The **Result Type** will either be “Inconclusive, Target Met and Target Not Met.” *\*\*\*Only select “Inconclusive” if there was NO DATA collected or if this is a Baseline Year in a growth Achievement Target.*

Once finished, click Save and Return.

Scroll down on your “Results and Analysis” page to the “Action” section, click the Add New Green Plus button to the far right and the screen will look like this:

The screenshot shows the 'Add Action' form in the Tracdat system. The form is titled '2.1 Institutional Research and Assessment will provide information to enhance university business processes among staff.' It includes a 'Notes' section with the text: 'Direct Institutional Research and Assessment will administer the annual Staff Satisfaction Survey to assess staff satisfaction with specific university processes, such as planning/budgeting. Achievement Target 30% overall response rate for the annual Staff Satisfaction Survey.' Below the notes, there is a table with columns for 'Year', 'Target Met', and 'Date'. The table shows '2016 - 2017' with 'Target Met' and '02/24/2017'. There is also a row for '1/2017 - 46% Participation Rate'. The form includes a required field for 'Action Date' (06/05/2017) and a required field for 'Action'. A 'Save' button and a 'Return' button are visible at the top right.

The **Action Date** should be July 1<sup>st</sup> every year to follow the fiscal year calendar.

As you can see, the **Action** is a required field, so even if your target was met, an Action Statement is still required. The Action Statement is a statement of intent = *Now that you know the results, what changes, if any, do you plan to implement for the upcoming fiscal year.*

**\*\*\*If you want to make any changes to your assessment plan, please provide an explanation for your supervisor in the Action Statement and state exactly what changes you recommend.**

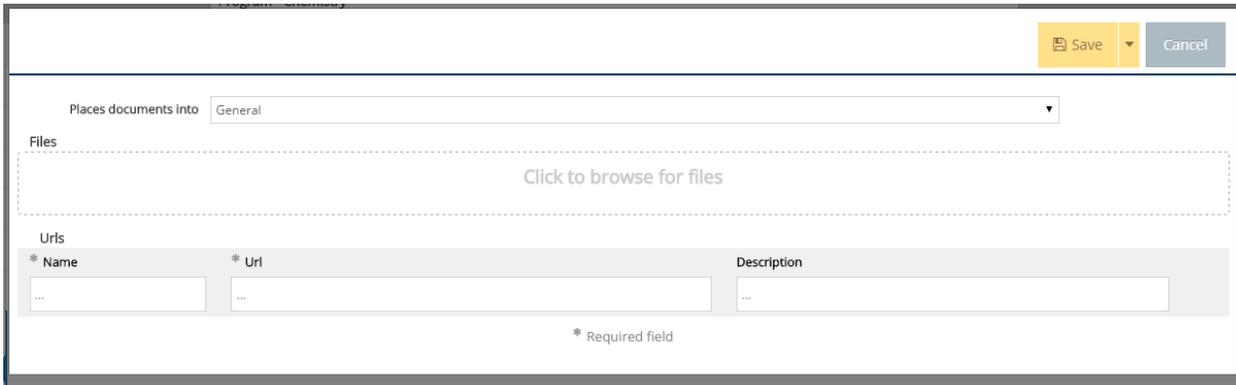
Once finished, click Save and Return.

**\*For attached Supporting/Related Documentation, please follow the directions below.**

Next go to the “Documents” tab, then click the “Document Repository,” which is like attaching a file in an email. This will enable you to look at any documents that pertain to your assessment, such as surveys or charts/tables for your results, etc.

The screenshot shows the 'Document Repository' interface in the Tracdat system. It features a message at the top: 'This is a filing system for any information pertaining to your assessment. Reports, supporting data for results, or any additional information, you may save the information here.' Below the message, there is a 'Document Repository' section with a plus sign icon and a 'General' folder. The interface is designed for uploading and managing documents related to the assessment.

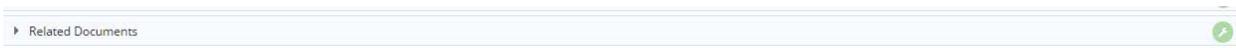
Click the Add New button. Your screen should look like this:



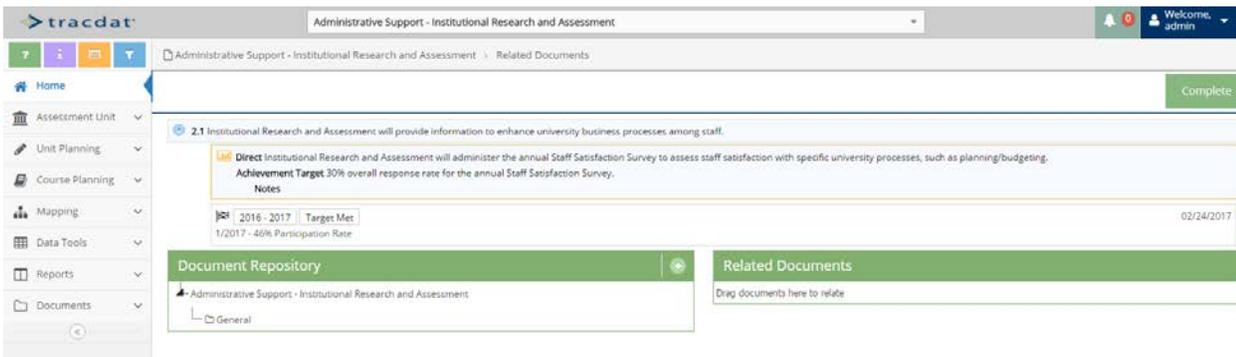
The screenshot shows a web form for adding a new document. At the top right, there are 'Save' and 'Cancel' buttons. Below them is a dropdown menu labeled 'Places documents into' with 'General' selected. A large dashed box contains the text 'Click to browse for files'. Below this is a table with three columns: '\* Name', '\* Url', and 'Description'. Each column has an input field. A legend at the bottom indicates '\* Required field'.

“Click to browse for files” and the rest is like attaching a file to an email. You may give a more specific description if you like. Once finished, click Save.

Once you have your files uploaded, you can pull these to support your plan and results by choosing to “Relate Document” by clicking the tool wrench button to the right.



Then you simply drag and drop the documents that pertain to that particular aspect of the plan.



The screenshot shows the Tracdat web application interface. The top navigation bar includes the Tracdat logo, a dropdown menu for 'Administrative Support - Institutional Research and Assessment', and a user profile for 'Welcome, admin'. The main content area displays a document titled '2.1 Institutional Research and Assessment will provide information to enhance university business processes among staff.' with a 'Direct' label and a note about a 30% target response rate for a survey. Below the document is a 'Document Repository' section with a wrench icon and a 'Related Documents' section with a text prompt 'Drag documents here to relate'.

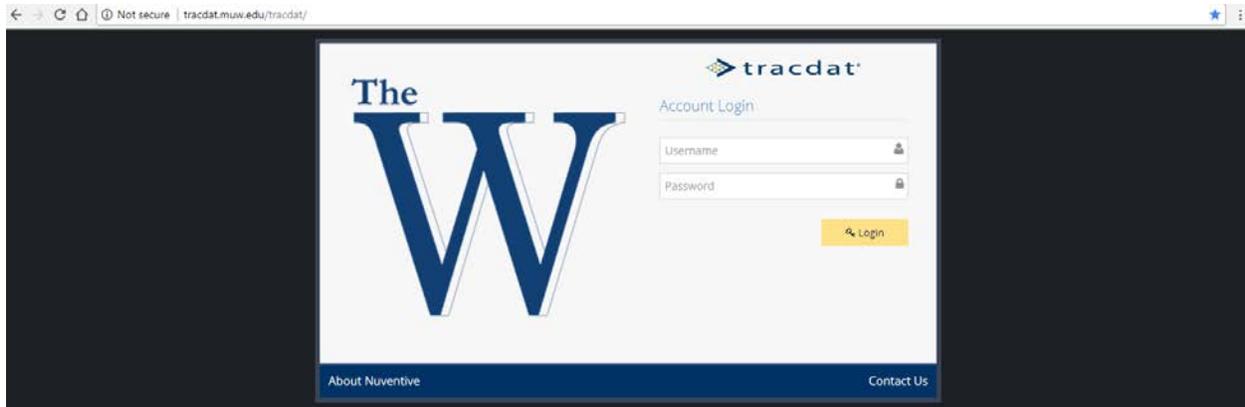
Once you drop them, click Complete in the upper right-hand corner.

**The following is the Supervisors' instructions for inputting Review Comments.**

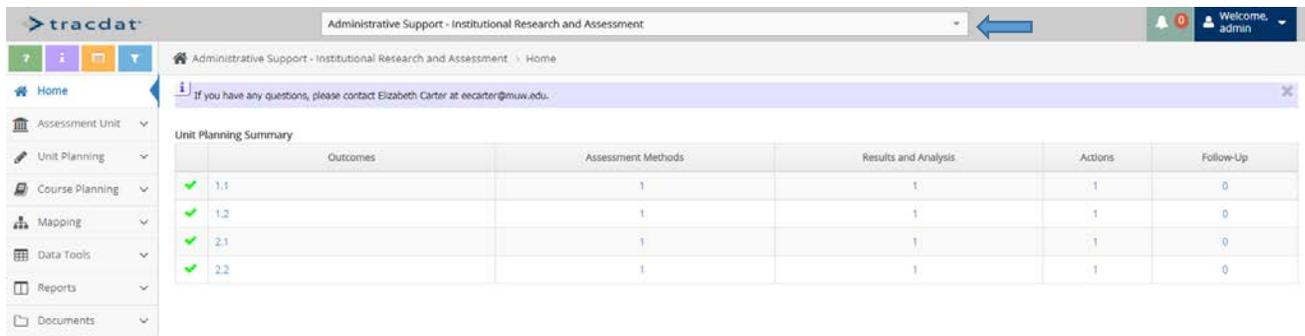
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After you have reviewed the assessment results report(s) attached in your email, please log into Tracdat/Nuventive using your **name portion of your email** as your **username** and, if you haven't changed your password, **muw123** as your **password**. If you have changed your password and have forgotten it, please let me know. I will be glad to reset it for you.

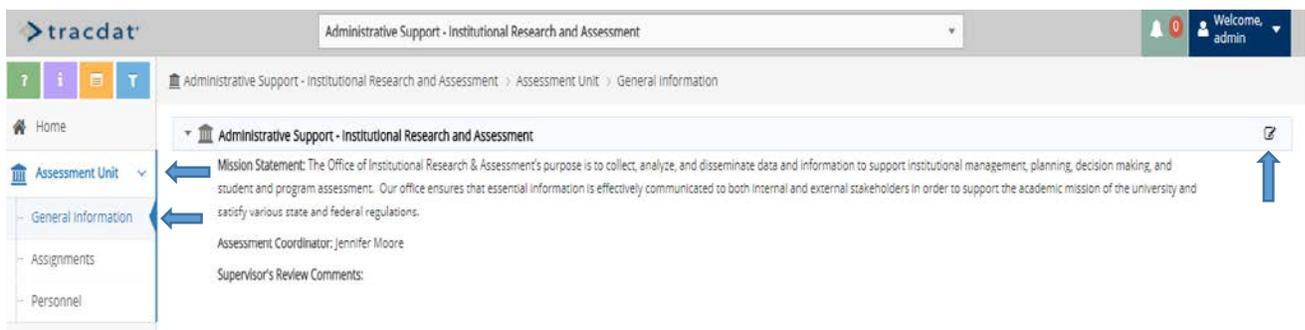
Click here to go to the login page for Tracdat/Nuventive <http://tracdat.muw.edu/tracdat/>



You may have multiple assessment units that need to be reviewed. In order to select the assessment unit in need of review, you will need to select it from the top center drop-down box on the page.



Once you select the proper assessment unit, your home page will look similar to the image above. To leave your review confirmation and comments, please select the "Assessment Unit" tab to the left of the screen. Then, select the "General Information" subtab. Your screen should be similar to the image below. You will also see an edit icon button (notepad and pen) to the far right of the screen. Please click on it to open the edit page to leave your review comments.



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Your edit page will look like the image below. Please enter **THIS YEAR'S** review comments **BEFORE** last year's review. Once you have entered your review confirmation and comments, please **sign and date it at the end in parentheses**. Always remember to select **"Save"** and then **"Return"** in the upper right-hand corner before switching to another assessment unit.

The screenshot shows the Tracdat web application interface. The breadcrumb trail is: Administrative Support - Institutional Research and Assessment > Assessment Unit > General Information > Edit General Information. The page title is 'Administrative Support - Institutional Research and Assessment'. The 'Name' field is filled with 'Administrative Support - Institutional Research and Assessment'. The 'Mission Statement' field contains the text: 'The Office of Institutional Research & Assessment's purpose is to collect, analyze, and disseminate data and information to support institutional management, planning, decision making, and student and program assessment. Our office ensures that essential information is effectively communicated to both internal and external stakeholders in order to support the academic mission of the university and satisfy various state and federal regulations.' The 'Assessment Coordinator' field is filled with 'Jennifer Moore'. The 'Supervisor's Review Comments' field is empty and has a blue arrow pointing to it. In the top right corner, there are 'Save' and 'Return' buttons, with blue arrows pointing to them.

**\*\*\*\*** If you have any objections or concerns regarding any of the Action statements in a results report, please state them in your review comments. From there, I will work with the assessment coordinator for that unit to make any necessary edits; however, before any changes are made, I will contact you to gain final approval.