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Academic Assessment Update

Office of Institutional Assessment and  
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8-2020

## Academic Assessment Update

Georgia Southern University

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## ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT UPDATE

In this edition of our newsletter, we offer advice for addressing the impacts of remote instruction on your assessment processes and documentation, provide details about assessment document submission for 2019-2020, fill you in on what IAA was up to over the summer, share one of our exemplary core course assessment stories, and give you a preview of upcoming events.

[Visit our Website](#)

### Document Submission Process Updates

All core course and academic program assessment documents are **due for submission on October**

**1.** We wanted to bring a few changes to your attention as you compile and finalize your assessment documentation.

**1. Optional cover letter** -- This year, you will have the opportunity to submit a cover letter with your assessment document. The cover letter should clarify how you addressed feedback from the peer-reviewers on last year's submission. You can also provide additional context regarding the impacts of COVID-19 and remote instruction on the 2019-2020 assessment cycle.

**2. Table of contents** -- IAA will be providing templates for your assessment document with a table of contents feature that will allow you to easily navigate from one section to another. The template will preserve the table of contents functionality when saved as a pdf for submission. This added feature will also help peer-reviewers to efficiently read and review assessment documents.

**3. Smartsheet form submission** -- IAA will be sending requests for submission through an email

form generated by Smartsheet. You will need to complete the form fields and upload your document using the form provided. (Additional details about Smartsheet below.)

IAA has adopted Smartsheet as a database to manage assessment document submissions and the peer-review process following submission. This powerful software combines the features of a spreadsheet with the interactivity of forms and integrated dashboards in a user-friendly and streamlined format. Smartsheet submission requests will be sent to all academic program and core course assessment coordinators **August 31**.

**Program A: Assessment Document Submission Request**

Dear Brad,

As part of Georgia Southern's on-going commitment to student success, academic degree programs engage in an intentional, systematic, and self-reflective process of assessing student learning outcomes to make strategic decisions aimed at improving curriculum, teaching, and learning. This assessment process is documented following the guidelines provided in the Academic Program Assessment template and rubric. Each Academic Program Assessment document is submitted to Institutional Assessment and Accreditation who facilitates the peer-review process of assessment documents conducted by the Academic Assessment Steering Committee.

Our records indicate that Program A is on a 2 years reporting cycle and is scheduled to submit an academic program assessment document Fall 2020. The assessment document submission should contain information from academic year 2018-2019,2019-2020.

As you prepare for the 10/01/20 submission date, please refer to the linked documents containing the most recent academic program assessment document submitted to our office along with the feedback from the peer-review process conducted by the AASC.

Please click the "Open Update Form" link in this email to submit your program Assessment Document as a PDF file upload and confirm your submission. Please use the file naming structure ProgramName2019-2020.pdf (e.g., BA Art 2019-2020).

Our office is available to assist you with any questions.

Institutional Assessment and Accreditation

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**PRIOR ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTS AND FEEDBACK**

Document:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3wZKBfzCs3GaJJsQm9FODUwS1E/view?usp=sharing>

Feedback:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3wZKBfzCs3GUmYtMDhuTJRaSW8/view?usp=sharing>

Academic Program Assessment Template:  
<https://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/vpie/files/Template-for-Annual-Academic-Assessment-Reports-2017-2018.docx>

Academic Program Assessment Rubric:  
<https://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/vpie/files/Academic-Assessment-Rubric-Final-Revised-5-10-2017.docx>

**RESOURCES**


Academic Program Handbook:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aKsHlKubk0Z2fgEzPDDyfeSJQudA4RG2/view?usp=sharing>

**Program Name**  
Program A

**Link to Assessment Document: 2018-2019**  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3wZKBfzCs3GaJJsQm9FODUwS1E/view?usp=sharing>

**Link to Assessment Document Feedback: 2018-2019**  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3wZKBfzCs3GUmYtMDhuTJRaSW8/view?usp=sharing>

**Submission: Deadline**  
10/01/20

**Assessment Document Submission Date**  
 

**Attachments**

## From the Assessment Coordinator

### Use an Asterisk\*

Over the past six months, we've all been working together to respond to some of the most complex challenges faced by higher education in the U.S. We realize that these circumstances have impacted your teaching plans on every level, including assessment of student learning. As we approach the **October 1st submission date** for assessment documents, I wanted to encourage you to be transparent and honest about how the emergency transition to remote learning affected you, your students, and your assessment process.

In the first weeks of remote instruction, [Natasha Jankowski](#), Executive Director of the [National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment \(NILOA\)](#), shared some perspective with assessment professionals across the country: "There will be an asterisk by the data." Our office has embraced that phrase as we consider that no one has been working under expected or predictable circumstances for the past two semesters, and we face uncertainty ahead as we transition to face-to-face classes with social distancing.



As you prepare your assessment documents for submission, we want to encourage you to make use of the asterisk to offer explanations about changes to course curriculum and instruction, issues with student access, academic integrity concerns, adaptations of assessment methods, and gaps in data collected. Below, I'd like to offer some suggestions for what those asterisks might say:

*\*Due to the rapid transition to remote instruction resulting from COVID-19, we were not able to collect data from all sections of the course as we had planned. Moving forward, we have developed (x plan) to ensure that assessment processes are in place to accommodate emergency transitions in instruction. (See appendix for details.)*

*\*Due to the rapid transition to remote instruction resulting from COVID-19, we found it necessary to adjust our assessment method to \_\_\_\_\_. We found this was a [very effective, equally effective, less effective] method of assessing student learning.*

*\*Due to the rapid transition to remote instruction resulting from COVID-19, the department does not have full confidence that this data is an accurate reflection of student learning. Concerns were raised about academic integrity, consistency in instruction and student access to course materials, and the effects of additional stress on faculty and student performance.*

Please remember that the assessment team at IAA is here to answer questions and provide feedback as you compile your assessment documents. We appreciate the time, effort, and care that you contribute to equipping our students for success, and we are honored to partner with you towards this goal.

With sincere appreciation,

[Jaime](#)

[Link to Additional Resources](#)

## New Assessment Resources

### Assessment Document Handbooks

We are pleased to announce the release of our new assessment documentation handbooks! A top request from assessment coordinators across campus has been for strong examples of previous assessment documents submitted. We took that request to heart and created the [Academic Program Assessment Document Handbook](#) and the [Core Course Assessment Document Handbook](#). These handbooks include an overview of academic assessment at Georgia Southern, a description of the peer-review process, guidelines for content in each section of the assessment document template along with writing tips, and annotated example excerpts from assessment documents that point out connections to the peer-review rubric.

core curriculum outcome as well as the course learning outcomes and fit the main levels of Bloom's taxonomy (Table 3).

Author includes a test blueprint that shows how questions from the test map onto course SLOs and levels of Bloom's taxonomy.

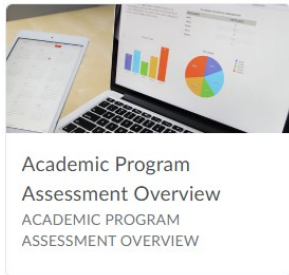
Table 3. Test blueprint for Concepts of Biology (BIOL 1103). Each question number is categorized under the relevant core & course learning outcome as well as the Bloom's Taxonomy level being assessed. Learning outcome 6 is not specifically addressed on the test, but the scientific literacy skills pertaining to this outcome would need to be utilized to answer question 13, for example, which has students evaluate an investigation of possible correlations between genetic disorders and incarcerated individuals.

Author provides an explanation for an apparent gap in the test blueprint.

Outcome	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing/Evaluating
Course 1	4, 19, 22, 26, 27	3, 5, 8	21	
Course 2	25	12, 17, 18		15, 16
Course 3	6, 29	28	14, 20	11
Course 4				9
Course 5			7, 10	
Course 6				
Course 7 / Core	2, 23	1, 24		13

Test blueprint aligns to course outcomes, which were previously aligned to core area outcome.

Test items are also mapped to level of Bloom's taxonomy to show that different levels of knowledge are applied.



Academic Program  
Assessment Overview  
ACADEMIC PROGRAM  
ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

### Assessment Overview Folio Courses

In addition to the Assessment Document Handbooks, we wanted to provide an asynchronous, step-by-step guide for the development of assessment documents. Drawing from the materials in the handbooks and additional worksheets and checklists developed over the summer, we built two Folio courses: [Academic Program Assessment Overview](#) and [Core Course Assessment Overview](#). These courses are available to all assessment coordinators for program and core assessment, and we plan to further develop the materials included based on faculty use and feedback.

## Gen Ed Redesign Planning

In Spring 2020, the GECC resolved to hold a series of Town Hall meetings in the 2020-2021 academic year to begin to collect feedback and suggestions from faculty, staff, students, and alumni regarding the proposed General Education Redesign. Coordinating such an event under social distancing guidelines meant developing an extensive schedule of Zoom webinars to allow for maximum participation from all stakeholders. We hope you will plan to join us for one of the Town Hall sessions. Check the [schedule](#) for dates and times available for specific groups and [register](#). Zoom links will be sent the morning of each session.

### GENERAL EDUCATION REDESIGN TOWN HALL SCHEDULE

FACULTY		STUDENTS		STAFF	
Monday 8/24	9:05 - 9:55 a.m.	Tuesday 8/25	8:00 - 8:50 a.m.	Wednesday 8/26	11:15 - 12:05 p.m.
	10:10 - 11:00 a.m.		9:30 - 10:20 a.m.	Wednesday 9/2	12:20 - 1:10 p.m.
	11:15 - 12:05 p.m.		11:00 - 11:50 a.m.	ALUMNI	
Thursday 8/27	8:00 - 8:50 a.m.	Friday 8/28	9:05 - 9:55 a.m.	Thursday 9/3	6 - 6:50 p.m.
	9:30 - 10:20 a.m.		10:10 - 11:00 a.m.	OPEN TO ALL	
	11:00 - 11:50 a.m.		11:15 - 12:05 a.m.	Wednesday 8/26	9:05 - 9:55 a.m.
Tuesday 9/1	12:30 - 1:20 p.m.	Monday 8/31	12:20 - 1:10 p.m.		10:10 - 11:00 a.m.
	2:00 - 2:50 p.m.		1:25 - 2:15 p.m.	Wednesday 9/2	1:25 - 2:15 p.m.
	3:30 - 4:20 p.m.		2:30 - 3:20 p.m.		2:30 - 3:20 p.m.
Friday 9/4	12:20 - 1:10 p.m.	Thursday 9/3	12:30 - 1:20 p.m.	<b>REGISTER</b>	
	1:25 - 2:15 p.m.		2:00 - 2:50 p.m.		
	2:30 - 3:20 p.m.		3:30 - 4:20 p.m.		

## Assessment Document Writers Groups

Over the summer, IAA offered two sessions of an Assessment Document Writers Group. Each session lasted four weeks, and participants engaged in twelve interactive workshops focusing on distinct

components of the assessment process and compiling documentation. Additional resources and activities were offered through a Folio course.

28 faculty participated, representing all eight colleges and nineteen departments. Here are some highlights collected from attendee feedback:

*Thank you for your time and energy in this! The information is helpful and provided a solid foundation for the process. I really appreciate the synchronous meetings - as the organic interaction is helpful and energizing. I also feel the recordings are a good supplement. I intend to continue to access the recordings in FOLIO - I hope that is okay!*

*It is clear that putting this workshop together required extensive time and effort by the IAA and I sincerely appreciate it! The process ahead of me is extremely daunting but I feel better about moving forward because of this workshop and the approach-ability of the IAA. Thank you!*

## Excellence in Core Course Assessment: PHIL 2010 and PHIL 2030

Following consolidation, the philosophy department was presented with some unique challenges for teaching and collecting assessment data for two core courses offered on multiple campuses taught by up to 15 different professors. The inclusion of PHIL 2010 Introduction to Philosophy and PHIL 2030 Introduction to Ethics in core area C also meant a significant increase in enrollment. Previously, the courses had been assessed using essays and written work from students, but with the increased complexity and scope of the assessment after consolidation, the department thought it was time to pursue a new approach.

Beth Butterfield, core course assessment coordinator for both courses, worked closely with faculty teaching the courses to develop objective tests for both courses that directly connected with course student learning outcomes in alignment with the corresponding core area learning outcome and also engaged students in more complex learning at the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. Beth also worked closely with the assessment team in IAA to develop a test blueprint showing the distribution of test items across SLOs and levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and used the Remark software available in IAA to streamline item analysis following the exam.

Data collected was compared across campus locations, with PHIL 2010 showing equivalent student learning for Armstrong and Statesboro campuses and PHIL 2030 showing some discrepancies in scores for students on the Statesboro campus compared to Armstrong and Liberty. The disparity in scores was addressed in the action plan for the 2020-2021 academic year, based on factors unique to the student populations and faculty teaching the course on the three campuses. In addition, the data allowed the department to identify specific opportunities to improve student learning relevant to the core area C learning outcome.

Following the 2018-2019 assessment cycle, the department decided to transition the objective test from paper administration to a quiz administered through Folio. Working with IAA, they were able to create a quiz in Folio that could be shared and administered by all faculty teaching the course. The timing of this transition supported consistency in the assessment process through the pivot to emergency remote instruction.

## Upcoming Events

**Gen Ed Redesign Town Hall Meetings**



[Register](#)

The GECC is offering a series of Town Hall meetings to collect suggestions and feedback from faculty, staff, students, and alumni as we initiate the redesign process at Georgia Southern. We have scheduled 31 sessions total across two weeks to make these discussions broadly accessible. Please join us at a time convenient to your schedule.

## Data Day!

[Register](#)

Collecting your assessment data can be a time consuming and complex process, even more so under current circumstances. But once you have it, what's the best way to make sense of it?

IAA is offering Data Day as an opportunity for individual consultations with a member of our assessment team to review, answer questions, and suggest best practices for analyzing and presenting your assessment results.

September 11, 2020 @ 8:00 – 5:00 pm  
30 minute Zoom Consultations by Appointment

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REGISTRATION: follow registration link, navigate to September 11 on your calendar, and select the time you'd like to reserve

## Assessment Document Charrettes

[Register](#)

Assessment Document Charrettes offer an opportunity to do a test run of a draft of your complete assessment document and get some targeted feedback that you can quickly implement prior to submission for peer review. The charrette format allows for quick, collaborative review of documents in a small group with all participants providing structured feedback to each other. It's a great (and fun) way to generate ideas and make meaningful improvements.

Those interested in participating will need to submit a complete (but not final) draft of your assessment document by **Thursday, September 3**.

September 17, 2020 @ 1:00 – 4:00 pm  
September 18, 2020 @ 8:00 – 11:00 am

## REMINDER: Assessment Document Submissions due October 1

Institutional Assessment and Accreditation (IAA) works collaboratively with faculty, staff, and administration to ensure the quality of the programs and educational experiences offered by the university, addressing the unique assessment needs of courses, departments, colleges, or units through individual and group consultations, professional development workshops,



recommendations for technology implementation, and best practice reference materials.

IAA website

Assessment Services Request