

AUSTIN W. MARXE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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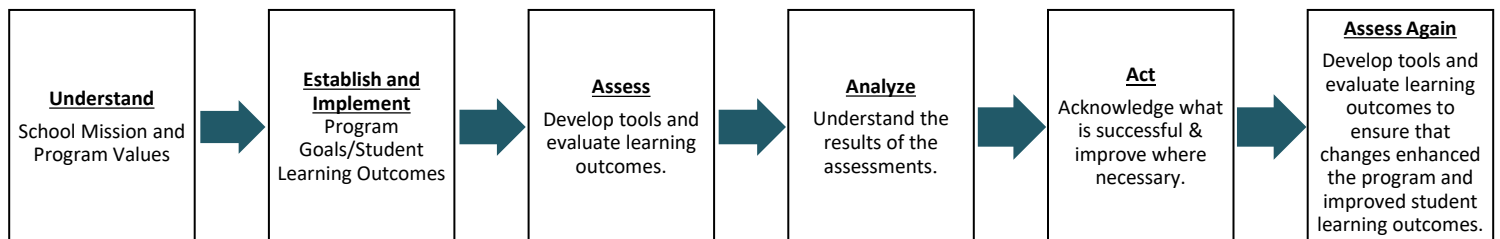
Academic Program Assessment

What is Academic Assessment?



Assessment is an organic process that consists of *designing* and *implementing* methods to gather data to improve teaching and student learning. When assessment is a *holistic initiative*, the focus expands to ascertain the knowledge and skills learned throughout the entire program and how effectively everyone involved is helping them learn.

Assessment Cycle



Why is Academic Program Assessment Important?

There are numerous benefits to assessment initiatives which fall into two categories:

- ✓ **Improvement** – program assessment provides a platform for faculty and administrators to examine the current state of the curriculum, identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ **Accountability** – program assessment becomes the method of demonstrating academic progress and achievements to *stakeholders*.

These stakeholders include *prospective students, employers, and accrediting bodies including NASPAA (Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration) and Middle States Commission on Higher Education.*

Assessment at Marxe

The Office of Academic Programs and Learning Assessment Committee (LAC) guide the assessment process. If you have any questions related to assessment, please contact Melissa Sultana, Deputy Director of Academic Programs at MSPIA.Assessment@baruch.cuny.edu


Guiding Principles for Assessment


The Office of Academic Programs has established clear objectives for assessment efforts:

- 1) **Assessment is successful when it is mission and value focused.**
- 2) **Assessment initiatives are most effective when faculty-driven in combination with administrative leadership to provide vision and support.**
- 3) **Assessment initiatives are most effective when a positive culture is cultivated and woven throughout all aspects of the academic environment.**
- 4) **The ultimate goal of assessment is *continuous* program improvement.**

What are Learning Goals?

Course and Program Goals within a degree provide an understanding of the significant expectations of that program.

 **Program learning goals or outcomes** are broad statements that address higher order learning as well as encompass the degree's mission, values, and overall expectations. Program goals address what a student should know and be able to demonstrate by graduation; they should be evident at various points throughout the curriculum.

 **Course goals**, which are specific to the content of a particular class, are often derived from program goals and provide course expectations and connect to activities associated with achieving them.

When relevant program goals are emphasized in class, students can align course goals with broader program expectations in order to draw curricular connections across the program. This allows students to understand their expectations and hold themselves accountable.

What You Need to Know as a Student

- The goal of assessment is to enhance the curriculum by evaluating student learning. This is accurately done by collecting a valid sample of work in different courses reflecting students' best effort.
 - **Direct Evidence:** methods that directly reveal student knowledge and abilities and include *case studies, capstones, portfolios, and oral presentations*.
 - **Indirect Evidence:** Methods that demonstrate perceived student learning such as *surveys* and *graduation rates*.
- All assignments collected are made **anonymous** when used for program assessment.
- Assignments are scored by neutral evaluators (often faculty members, but not the professor of that particular class) to better understand students' proficiency with program goals.
- Conclusions are drawn and actions determined based on what will best benefit the students and overall program.
- **The purpose of Assessment is to continually evaluate learning and enhance program and curriculum quality.**

Master of Science in Education Higher Education Administration (MSEd-HEA) Program

The mission of the Austin W. Marxe School of Public and International Affairs and its degree programs is to empower the next generation of public and nonprofit leaders, advance knowledge about public life and policy, and engage communities across our city, nation, and world to foster effective, inclusive institutions and societies.

Students within the MSEd-HEA degree program are expected to obtain knowledge and demonstrate skills associated with the following Program Learning Goals approved by the faculty and that fall under five Universal Competencies. *Note: These goals are taught at varied levels within the core courses and will be addressed in further detailed throughout the program.*

Program Learning Goal 1: Identify and navigate the complex structures of higher education to inform effective change.

Program Learning Goal 2: Analyze, think critically, and make evidence-based recommendations to advance higher education in a manner that recognizes historical context, organizational mission, accreditation standards, and/or strategic plans.

Program Learning Goal 3: Communicate and interact effectively with a highly diverse set of constituencies—including students, faculty, administrators, alumni, and/or community members—within and related to the field of higher education.

Program Learning Goal 4: Articulate and apply a set of values for cultivating an equitable, inclusive, and just higher education environment.

Program Learning Goal 5: Use leadership, management, and/or student development theories to analyze the design, operation, and governance of higher education institutions.

