Periodic Unit Review (PUR) Guidelines

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AES Assessment framework

The assessment of the AES units supports institutional effectiveness by demonstrating the degree to which the College is achieving its mission through ongoing assessment and continuous improvement, as evidenced by annually tracking the progress made in achieving institutional, divisional and unit-level goals, assessing the attainment of the College's strategic goals and evaluating the quality of programs and services. Each of these processes is not only critical for assessing continual improvement, but also conforms to the expectations of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) assessment and planning standards.

The AES assessment cycle involves annual assessments, as well as periodic reviews which build on the results and analyses of the annual plans for the previous four to six years. AES units apply cycles of inquiry, undergo annual assessments, receive feedback, and reflect on what they learn – all in order to take meaningful actions to improve their processes, planning, and outcomes (including learning outcomes) and to contribute to the College's and divisions successful accomplishment of their missions and priorities.

The annual and periodic AES assessment processes are meant to answer questions such as:

- What do we want the Unit to accomplish?
- How do the Unit's priorities align with those of the College and of the Unit's division?
- How well does the Unit meet its goals and objectives, including the learning outcomes?
- What are the successes and challenges in achieving the Unit's goals?
- How can we use data to improve the quality of Unit's processes and practices?
- Should we change our activities and add new initiatives to accomplish our objectives?
- How did the assessment results contribute to continuous improvement?
- Did the program reviews prompted revisions to the Unit's Mission, goals and objectives?

In the annual AES assessments plan, units evaluate if they have successfully achieved their goals and objectives by establishing measures, analyzing the results and reviewing their annual activities and initiatives. Units provide evidence of actual improvement in their processes or outcomes based on analysis of the results, in comparison to previous years and anticipated targets. Based on the results for any given year, a Unit may re-assess its measures and activities and incorporate its next steps, resulting actions and initiatives in the annual assessment plan for the following year.

The PUR is a two-year process used to evaluate the Unit's success at the end of an assessment cycle of several years of annual assessments (4-6 years in the case of AES assessments). The PUR should be considered the Unit's Self-Study - examining the capacity, processes, and outcomes of a Unit over time in order to evaluate quality and effectiveness and to support continuous improvement. A PUR is more comprehensive and systematic than an annual review and provides a formal process for thorough, fact-based documentation and evaluation of the Unit, its supporting infrastructure, and its growth and improvement plans. The PUR includes both assessment (where the Unit is now and how it got there) and planning (the Unit's vision for the future is and how it will get there). The PUR culminates in a short summary report which can contain supporting documents, where necessary.

Periodic Unit Review (PUR)

Both annual assessments and PURs ensure that key processes meet the needs and expectations of students, parents, employers, faculty, and other stakeholders in student success at the College. As mentioned, the PUR is conducted every 4-6 years and provides an opportunity to engage in an extended period of critical reflection on the successes and challenges the Unit. It is also a time to looking forward, reviewing and revising the mission, goals, objectives and plans for achieving them.

The PUR process takes two years. In the first year, the annual assessment trend data results are reviewed and a new multi-year assessment plan is proposed in which the Mission, Goals, Objectives and measures are evaluated in light of the previous assessment results and of the Unit, Division and College priories. In the second year, the Unit generates a PUR Report presenting the PUR process and resulting revisions to the Unit's Mission, goals, objectives and annual Assessment Plan.

First Year: Starting the process, reviewing annual assessment data and Unit's priorities

Timeline for the Program Unit Review

Year 1 – Starting the process, reviewing annual assessment data and Unit's priorities	
September	Prep meeting of the entire Unit; selecting a point person
October - January	Reviewing the annual assessment trend data
February - April	In light of the data and the Unit's priorities and the College's Strategic Plan, review and revise Mission, goals and objectives
May - July	Based on the revised goals and objectives, establish measures and targets for the next cycle of the annual assessments. Include resources and cross-divisional cooperation
August	Mid-point review / Draft Annual Assessment Plan
Year 2 – Writing the PUR Report	
September - December	Create a draft report, and submit to the AES Liaison and OIRA for initial feedback
January - February	Based on the initial feedback, Revise the report and submit to external review
March – April	External Review
May - June	Revise the draft base on the external reviewers' feedback and submit for the division's VP feedback
July - August	Final Report including Final Assessment Plan with results **or** progress notes
Year 3 – Resume annual assessment	

Steps for the first year: review and exploration:
   a. Select a point person
   b. Review the results of the previous annual assessment plans
   c. Review and revise the Unit's Mission, Goals and Objectives
   d. Review measures and targets, discuss resources and collaboration
   e. Conduct the mid-point review/draft assessment plan

a. Select a Point Person to Guide the Process

The process begins with the Unit staff engaging in the PUR process, beginning in the fall of the year in which the cycle is scheduled to commence. The process is similar to a self-study, exploring the Unit's success in accomplishing its mission and strategic priorities and their alignment with the College's Mission and Strategic Plan. The PUR process should be guided by the Unit's director or the designated staff member(s) who coordinates the review process. Over the course of that year, all Unit staff members should be involved in the PUR process.

b. Review the Trend in Annual Assessment Data

The annual assessment plans and processes of the Units provide the bulk of data which Units use during the periodic review (the outcomes also act as anchors for other activities conducted - and for reports generated - between reviews). The Units should examine the results over time, whether progress was made and if they were successful in achieving their targets.

Review and evaluate the annual assessment plans and their success in achieving the goals by examining the results, the achievement of the annual and end of cycle targets, and the accomplishment of the next steps and new initiatives. Keep in mind that because most units did not have baseline measures, initially they were not required to set annual targets; however, when possible, units began submitting their annual or end of cycle targets in 2020-21, based on their 2019-20 baseline data. The review process should generate questions, areas for evaluation and reflection, and issues of concern or interest. Make sure that you include an appraisal of how the Unit is "closing the loop" by using the results for improvement, including making changes to existing practices and processes and forming new priorities and initiatives.

Possible lines of inquiry:
- When targets are specified, were they achieved?
- Were the measures appropriate and consistent with the objectives?
- If you used Learning Outcomes (LO) in your assessment plan, describe them and how the results were used.
- How were the resulting actions and future initiatives integrated into the next year activities?
- How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your activities/initiatives?
- Did you see an improvement over the years?
- Did you close the loop?

| | | | Summary of AES Annual Assessment Plans | | | | | | | | |

| Year: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unit/Department: | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Goals | Objective/ Outcomes | College Strategic Plan alignment* | Annual assessment results | | | | | | Target /baseline | Indicator** |
			2018-19 (5 units)	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24		
Goal 1	Objective 1.1									
	Objective 1.2									
Goal 2	Objective 2.1									
	Objective 2.2									
Goal 3	Objective 3.1									
	Objective 3.2									

** Target indicators (baseline if no target)
Surpassed; Met; Unchanged/Mixed; Not Met

c. Review and revise the Unit's Mission, Goals and Objectives

Consider the Unit's core values and guiding principles which lead its work, including future direction and new initiatives, as well as the College's Mission and Strategic Plan goals. Evaluate the Unit's overall performance, including annual assessment results, analysis, activities and initiatives, and assess if the existing goals and objectives should be modified. The entire Unit - with the guidance of the AES liaison and the Division's representative - should be involved in the discussion. Integrate the Division's work plans and its strategic initiatives into the AES plans and priorities.

Possible lines of inquiry:
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis.
- Are there any changes in the Unit's direction, core values or primary functions that warrant revising its Mission?
- Based on the Unit's Mission, key functions and initiatives, should the goals be revised?
- Based on experience with assessment, should the Unit expand its goals and objectives?
- Adding learning outcomes?

d. Review Measures and Targets, discuss Resources and Collaboration

Based on the revised goals and objectives, review the Unit's measures and targets. Occasionally, measures require the development and implementation of new tools, but they often rely on analysis of previously collected data. Targets are the specific values for each measure which the Unit would like to

reach – targets should be <u>realistically ambitious</u>: What is the minimum result / value that will represent success at achieving a particular outcome for a particular measure? Note that many AES assessment plans set annual targets, while others set targets intended to be met only at the end of the assessment cycle.

Possible lines of inquiry for measures:
- Are the measures clearly linked to the objectives?
- Are the measures already collected?
- Do the measures demonstrate that the Unit achieves its objectives?
- Do the measures employ a combination of methods (indirect/direct, qualitative/quantitative) and forms (participation, satisfaction, grades, leaning outcomes, retention, tasks, etc.)?
- Is it possible to include learning outcomes?

Possible lines of inquiry for targets:
- Based on annual assessment results, can annual targets be suggested?
- Based on the Unit's review of best practices or a target established by outside agency (CUNY, accrediting agency, etc.) – what are the end of cycle targets?
- Targets can be a number (applications, grant money, violations, participants), a percent (5% increase compare to the previous year, 90% of students report they are satisfied with this service), or successful accomplishment (100% of reports are submitted by the first Monday of each month, successfully creating or maintaining a dashboard on time, etc.)

e. Mid-point Review (August) / Draft Assessment Plan

- Create a new annual assessment plan draft with phase 1 and 2, including targets
- Meet and discuss with the Division liaison and the OIRA team
- Present the plan to the VP for feedback

Second Year - Writing the PUR Report

Steps for writing the PUR report

a. Start with an overview of the Unit.
b. Evaluate the annual assessment trend data.
c. Review the Unit's Mission, goals and objectives.
d. Discuss Measures and Associated Targets.
e. Specify your strategies for improvement, including required resources.
f. Conclusion
g. Feedback, revisions and final submission

a. Overview of the Unit

Start with a brief description and overview of the Unit. Describe process, key users / stakeholders, functions, priorities and vision. Consider the Unit's core values and guiding principles directing its work, operations and processes, and contribution to student success. Describe their alignment with the College's and the Division's priorities and vision, including future direction and initiatives.

b. Evaluate the Annual Assessment Trend Data

Describe the overall impact of the annual assessment results and changes which were instituted. Include the summary table of the results over the years. Use the conclusions in your discussion about revising Unit's goals and objectives in section **c.**

Analysis of the trend results:

- Were the targets achieved? If not, why?
- Based on the observed outcomes, should the Goals and Objectives be revised?
- Are there other readily available measures that could be used?
- Discuss the Learning Outcomes (LO) results and implications.
- Did you see an improvement over the years?
- How do you evaluate the effectiveness of your activities/initiatives?

c. Review the Unit's Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The Mission, goals, or objectives can either be revised or preserved as a result of the PUR. Describe the process that led to those decisions. Indicate how the Unit's Mission and goals are aligned with LaGuardia's Mission and Strategic Plan, and with the Division's priorities. Meet with Division leadership to discuss the Unit in the context of the Division overall direction and priorities.

- Are there any changes in the Unit's direction, core values or primary functions which warrant revising its Mission?
- Based on the Unit's Mission, annual assessment results, key functions and Unit's initiatives, should the goals be revised?
- List the data sources that the Unit used to guide the team's discussion. The primary sources should be the Unit's annual assessment plans, but there may also be other sources - such as national data, a project the Unit is working on, or divisional priorities.
- What is the alignment with the College's Mission and Strategic Plan?
- Are the Division's/College's priorities reflected in the proposed/revised goals, objectives and activities / initiatives?
- Describe the results of the Unit's SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. Be fair and honest in your discussion. If there are real strengths or weaknesses within the Unit, this is the opportunity to voice them. You can use the enclosed worksheet – ask that each member compete the worksheet before your meeting and discuss the SWOT results as a group, prioritizing the results.
  - Strengths: *Which of the Unit's identified strengths can either be further leveraged or used to mitigate against a potential threat your Unit might be facing?*
  - Weaknesses: *For which identified weakness(es) might your Unit have a potential way of strengthening?*
  - Opportunities: *Are any of these opportunities ones that your Unit can immediately act upon? Which ones?*
  - Threats: *Which of your Unit's identified threats is most pressing? Is there a threat that your Unit might have a way of actively mitigating against or ward off?*

d. Measures and Associated Targets

Based on the revised goals and objectives, review the Unit's measures and targets. Occasionally, measures require the development and implementation of new tools (frequently surveys), but they often rely on analysis of previously collected data. Targets are the specific values for each measure which the Unit would like to reach. Targets should be realistically ambitious:

- Are the measures clearly linked to the objectives?
- Are the data for the measures already collected, or should new measures be developed?
- Do the measures demonstrate that the Unit achieves its objectives?
- Do the measures employ a combination of methods (indirect/direct, qualitative/quantitative) and forms (participation, satisfaction, grades, retention, tasks accomplished, etc.)?
- Consider adding Learning Outcomes (LOs) to future assessment plans.
- Can annual targets be provided? What is the minimum outcome / value that represents success?

e. Specify the Unit's Strategies for Improvement, including Required Resources

Determine how the PUR results will be used to achieve continuous improvement. Consider adding a planning document which includes future activities and initiatives, and when you foresee these actions taking place. If cross-divisional collaborations are needed for accomplishing the Unit's planning, include them as well. Also state who will be responsible for leading the Unit's planning and activities. If additional resources are needed – budget, staff, technology, assessment support, etc. - specify them as well.

Goal	Activities/Strategies	New Resources needed	Leading person
Objective 1			
Objective 2			

f. Conclusion

Add a short summary with reflections on the Unit's overall directions, key findings and major recommendations.

g. Feedback, External Review, Revisions and Final Submissions (March to August)

1. The AES division's liaison and OIRA will provide the initial feedback and work with the Unit on revising of the PUR report.
2. The report is submitted to external evaluators. Reviewers from other colleges and universities, which have similar functions or from other units at the College, provide an outsider's perspective on the Unit, the PUR and future plans. Reviewers feedback can also include prioritized recommendations based on observations, interactions with the staff, and their own experiences.
3. Following the external review recommendations – the PUR Report is revised.
4. Division leader (Vice-President (VP), President, or representative) reviews the revised draft and provides feedback for the final draft.
5. Following the recommendation - the final report is submitted.
6. A Revised annual Assessment Plan with either results or progress notes for phase 3 is submitted.