New Mexico Highlands University
Co-Curricular Outcomes Assessment (CCOA) Guidelines
Draft Version
July 1, 2019

Background: Mission, Vision, and Goals of New Mexico Highlands University

Mission
New Mexico Highlands University is a public comprehensive university serving our local and global communities. Our mission is to provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to attain an exceptional education by fostering creativity, critical thinking and research in the liberal arts, sciences, and professions within a diverse community.

Vision
Our vision is to be a premier comprehensive university transforming lives and communities now and for generations to come.

Core Values
- Excellence
- Diversity
- Accessibility
- Responsiveness

Strategic Goals for 2020
1. *Highlands University will achieve academic excellence, academic integration and student success.*
2. *Highlands University will achieve strategic enrollment management.*
3. *Highlands University will achieve a vibrant campus life.*
4. *Highlands University will be a community partner.*
5. *Highlands University will achieve technological advancement and innovation.*
6. *Highlands University will achieve enhanced communication and efficiency.*

Essential Traits
- Mastery of content knowledge and skills
- Effective communication skills
- Critical and reflective thinking skills
- Effective use of technology

Co-Curricular Outcomes Assessment (CCOA) Process at NMHU

Definitions
At NMHU, co-curricular activities are defined as out-of-class experiences that complement and extend the formal learning experience of a course or academic program. Co-curricular activities develop a student's social, intellectual, cultural, democratic, civic, and aesthetic domains. They are supervised and/or financed by the institution and facilitate the attainment of NMHU's four essential traits (or general student learning outcomes). These experiences are typically voluntary, ungraded, and non-credited.

Goals
In support of NMHU Strategic Goals noted above, the goal of the Co-Curricular Outcomes Assessment (CCOA) process is to regularly assess the various co-curricular programs at NMHU, including the assessment of student participation in the program, student satisfaction with the program, impact on the four NMHU essential traits, and areas for improvement. By closing the loop and providing feedback, this process will help the co-curricular programs and activities better serve our students by engaging in a process of continual improvement. Our CCOA process is designed to be consistent with and to support the stated goals of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), specifically that member institutions provide meaningful, quality assessment of co-curricular programs and activities that support student learning.

Basic Principles of Assessment
Some basic principles of all assessment activities are listed below.
- All levels of assessment should inform and build upon the others.
- Assessment is an ongoing process and should be embedded within program activities whenever possible.
- Assessment is concerned with evaluating the effectiveness of programs and services, not individuals.
- While the student learning outcomes should be linked to the four university traits, the specifics of outcomes assessment procedures and reporting should be flexible enough to accommodate the varied needs of the programs.
- The results of assessment activities should be clearly linked to program improvements.
- The results of assessment activities should be publicly available.

Participating Offices and Programs
As of July 2019, the following NMHU offices and programs are expected to participate in the CCOA process. This list may be updated in the future as administrative structures evolve or as program needs and services change.
- Academic Support
- ARMAS
- Career Services Office
- HUE Programs
- Language Learning Center
- Library
- Student Employment Office
- Wellness Center
- Writing Center

CCOA Committee
The CCOA Committee is responsible for coordinating the CCOA process. The CCOA Committee charter, including specific duties and responsibilities of the committee, is available in a separate document.

Overview of CCOA Process
There are four basic steps in the CCOA process, as outlined below. Each step is described in more detail in subsequent sections of this document.
- Development of Assessment Plan
- Collection of Assessment Data
- Preparation of Assessment Report
- Closing the Loop

Multiple sources of support are available to units participating in the CCOA process. Sample plans and reports are available from previous CCOA cycles. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research is available for support and guidance throughout all steps in the process. Units participating in the CCOA process are encouraged to communicate and work with each other in preparing their plans and reports.

Development of Assessment Plan
The first step in the CCOA process is development of the Assessment Plan. This plan defines the outcomes of interest that will assist the program or office in determining if appropriate student outcomes are being realized. Some basic principles in developing the CCOA plan are outlined below.
- Assessment plans are designed by the programs to meet their specific program outcomes, utilizing the template provided in Appendix A.
- In developing the assessment plan, the key question is: *What information would be useful in improving the services this program provides to students?*
- Assessment plans can and should be modified as the needs of the program change.
- The four essential traits should be reflected in the assessment plans.
  - Mastery of content knowledge and skills
  - Effective communication skills
  - Critical and reflective thinking skills
  - Effective use of technology

As a guide to preparing the assessment plan, a standard template is provided in Appendix A. However, offices and programs are free to modify this template in accordance with their specific needs.

Following are some general guidelines for preparing the assessment plan.
- Identify two to five student learning outcomes relevant to the office or program.
- Each learning outcome should be linked to one or more of the four essential traits (see above).
- Define one or more methods of assessment for each learning outcome. A method of assessment can be anything related to your student learning outcomes: assignment scores, performance on a rubric, presentations at conferences, survey results, etc.
- Specify the threshold necessary to determine whether when the learning outcome has been met, e.g. 80% of survey respondents will express satisfaction with office services. The data should be transferrable into 0's (did not meet threshold) or 1's (did meet threshold) for ease of data entry and analysis.
- Identify the timeline for measurement, e.g. a survey administered in the spring semester of each academic year.

The completed Assessment Plan should be sent to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research as well as to the executive officer in charge of the participating unit.

Appendix C contains a rubric for evaluating the quality and thoroughness of the Assessment Plan.

Collection of Assessment Data
Based on the student learning outcomes specified in the Assessment Plan, units will collect the appropriate data on an annual basis to determine if each of the student learning outcomes have been met. These data can be summarized in whatever format is most appropriate for each outcome, e.g. an Excel spreadsheet, survey output, student artifacts, etc. These data should be available for review as needed.

Preparation of CCOA Report
The third step in the CCOA process is the preparation of an annual CCOA Report. This report basically summarizes the extent to which each learning outcome specified in the Assessment Plan has been met. The report should include a summary of the assessment data as well as a discussion of how effectively the learning outcomes were met. Appendix B provides a template for preparation of the CCOA Report, but units are free to modify this format to meet their own needs. The completed CCOA Report should be sent to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research as well as to the executive officer in charge of the participating unit.

Appendix C contains a rubric for evaluating the quality and thoroughness of the CCOA Report.

Closing the Loop
The last step in the CCOA process is "closing the loop." The key question here is, how will the results of CCOA process inform improvement within each participating unit? The answer(s) to this question should be included in the CCOA Report, and might also be reflected in revisions to the Assessment Plan. While there is no requirement that the Assessment Plan be revised on an annual basis, units are encouraged to review their plan on a regular basis to determine whether changes are needed, based on the results from the previous CCOA cycle.

Units participating in the CCOA process are encouraged to communicate with other units, to help determine best practices and to offer constructive criticism and feedback throughout the CCOA process.

Finally, at the end of each CCOA cycle the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research will prepare a summary document from all the unit reports. This document will be posted online to inform the NMHU community about the activities of participating units.

Appendix A: Co-Curricular Activities Outcomes Assessment Plan Template

Program / office name:
Writing Center

Main contact and email:
Writing Center writingcenter@nmhu.edu
Director, Dr. Benjamin J. Villarreal bjvillarreal@nmhu.edu

Program / office mission:
The New Mexico Highlands University Writing Center offers writing support to undergraduates and graduates in all disciplines. We assist students at any level of writing and at any stage in the writing process, whether it is with brainstorming, drafting, or rewriting and revising. Our tutors serve as guides, rather than editors, working in collaboration with students to facilitate their growth as independent, writers, speakers, and thinkers. We believe that talking about and practicing writing are the best ways to develop effective writing skills.

Intended audience or participants for program:
NM Students, Faculty, Staff, and Administration

Instructions
Using the template on the next page, please identify your learning outcomes and methods of assessment. A brief explanation of each column is provided below.
- *Student learning outcomes: list each of your learning outcomes (typically 2 to 5) in the first column*
- *University trait(s) linked to outcome: for each outcome, identify the university trait(s) that are addressed by that outcome. The four university traits are listed below.*
  - *Mastery of content knowledge and skills*
  - *Effective communication skills*
  - *Critical and reflective thinking skills*
  - *Effective use of technology*
- *Measures of assessment: identify the means for assessing whether the learning outcome has been achieved, e.g. test scores, survey results, participation rates etc.*
- *Timeline for measurement: specify when the assessment process will take place, e.g. at the end of the fall term, in April of the spring term, etc.*

- *Threshold to determine if outcome achieved: the numeric value that will indicate if the learning outcome has been attained, e.g. "80% of students will express satisfaction on survey items" or "75% of students will successfully complete task" or "At least 100 students will participate in program"*

Co-Curricular Outcomes Assessment Plan Template				AY: 2019-20
Student learning outcome	University trait(s) linked to outcome	Measures of assessment	Timeline for measurement	Threshold to determine if outcome achieved
1.Students who participate in a tutoring session will feel as though they learned skills that can be applied to other writing tasks.	• Mastery of content knowledge and skills • Effective communitcation skills • Critical and reflective thinking skills	Data will be collected through a post-session survey.	Data will be collected at the end of the academic year and will include fall and spring semesters.	60% or more of students will feel as though the skills they learned during the sessions are applicable to other writing situations.
2.Students who participate in a tutoring session will feel more confident about revising their drafts.	• Mastery of content knowledge and skills • Effective communication skills • Critical and reflective thinking skills	Data will be collected through a post-session survey.	Data will be collected at the end of the academic year and will include fall and spring semesters.	60% or more of students will feel more confident about revising their drafts.
3.Students who participate in a tutoring session will feel as though their concerns were addressed.	• Mastery of content knowledge and skills • Effective communication skills • Critical and reflective thinking skills	Data will be collected through a post-session survey.	Data will be collected at the end of the academic year and will include fall and spring semesters.	80% or more of students will feel as though their concerns were addressed.

4.Tutors who participate in a tutoring session will feel as though they learned skills that can be applied to other teaching and tutoring tasks.	• Mastery of content knowledge and skills • Effective communication skills • Critical and reflective thinking skills	Data will be collected through a survey and/or focus-group interviews.	Data will be collected at the end of the academic year and will include the spring semester.	60% or more of tutors will feel as though the skills they learned during sessions are applicable to other teaching and tutoring situations.
5. Tutors who lead a workshop will feel more confident about teaching and tutoring.	• Mastery of content knowledge and skills • Effective communication skills • Critical and reflective thinking skills • Effective use of technology	Data will be collected through a survey and/or focus-group interviews.	Data will be collected at the end of the academic year and will include the spring semester.	60% or more of students will feel more confident about about teaching and tutoring.

Appendix B: Co-Curricular Activities Outcomes Assessment Report Template

Program / office name:
Writing Center

Main contact and email:
Writing Center writingcenter@nmhu.edu
Director, Dr. Benjamin J. Villarreal bjvillarreal@nmhu.edu

Program / office mission:
The New Mexico Highlands University Writing Center offers writing support to undergraduates and graduates in all disciplines. We assist students at any level of writing and at any stage in the writing process, whether it is with brainstorming, drafting, or rewriting and revising. Our tutors serve as guides, rather than editors, working in collaboration with students to facilitate their growth as independent, writers, speakers, and thinkers. We believe that talking about and practicing writing are the best ways to develop effective writing skills.

Intended audience or participants for program:
NM Students, Faculty, Staff, and Administration

Student utilization of program over the past year (e.g. number of participating students, number of contacts, etc.):

Instructions
For each learning outcome specified in the Assessment Plan, complete the following items as specified in the template on the following pages.
- *State the learning outcome under review.*
- *Specify the university trait(s) linked to the outcome. The four university traits are:*
    - *Mastery of content knowledge and skills*
    - *Effective communication skills*
    - *Critical and reflective thinking skills*
    - *Effective use of technology*
- *Indicate the means of assessment for the learning outcome, as specified in the Assessment Plan*
- *Indicate the timeline for measurement, as specified in the Assessment Plan*
- *Provide a summary of what the assessment data indicate or suggest*
- *Outline a brief strategy for program improvement based on the assessment results*

At the end of the CCOA report, there are three additional summary sections. A paragraph or two will suffice for each of these sections.
- *Overall summary of assessment data*
- *Overall plans for program improvement based on assessment data*

- *Proposed changes to the Assessment Plan itself (this is an optional step; there is no requirement to change the Assessment Plan every year)*

Describe how you measure student satisfaction with your program and results for this year:

Student Learning Outcome 1:

     University Traits Linked to SLO:

     Means of Assessment:

     Timeline for Measurement:

Summary of Data:

Strategy for Improvement:

Student Learning Outcome 2

     University Traits Linked to SLO:

     Means of Assessment:

     Timeline for Measurement:

Summary of Data:

Strategy for Improvement:

Student Learning Outcome 3:

    University Traits Linked to SLO:

    Means of Assessment:

    Timeline for Measurement:

Summary of Data:

Strategy for Improvement:

[Additional learning outcomes can be added if needed]

Summary of the Outcomes Assessment Data:

Based on your assessment, what are your overall plans for program improvement in the upcoming year?

What, if any, changes or improvements need to be made to your assessment plan for next year?

EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR CO-CURRICULAR OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLANS AND REPORTS

PROGRAM:_____

LEARNING OUTCOMES:	Fully Developed and Implemented	Developing/Partially Implemented	No Evidence	Comments
Learning outcomes are clearly linked to the program's mission statement	Anyone reading the report would clearly see how the learning outcomes are central outcomes of the program's mission.	While some learning outcomes have a clear, specific link to the mission, for others this link is absent or hard to see.	The mission is missing or the learning outcomes are generic, with no clear and specific link between the learning outcomes and the mission.	
Learning outcomes and means of assessment are clearly linked to at least one of the four NMHU traits	Each learning outcome is measured in a way that is logically linked with the identified trait and with an objective means of assessment.	Some learning outcomes included and measured but are not linked to one of the traits.	The learning outcomes are not linked to one of the four NMHU traits and are not measured/assessed.	
Learning outcomes are clear and measurable	The learning outcomes and the means of measurement are clearly explained, so that anyone reading the report can understand them.	While some learning outcomes have a clear, logical means of measurement, others are either generic or hard to understand.	The learning outcomes are vague or abstract to the point that they cannot be objectively measured. "Students will become better citizens."	

Learning outcomes span multiple levels of outcomes (attitudes, knowledge, skills, ultimate outcomes/achievements such as employment)	Learning outcomes span the range of levels, including information on the rate at which program graduates achieve expected behavioral goals.	Learning outcomes include attitudes and knowledge acquisition, but lack any measure of behavioral change or goal attainment, such as job attainment, scholarly publications, enrollment in grad school, or licensure attainment.	Learning outcomes focus entirely on one level, such as students' satisfaction with the program.	
ASSESSMENT METHODS:	**Fully Developed and Implemented**	**Developing/Partially Implemented**	**No Evidence**	**Comments**
Multiple assessment measures are identified	Learning outcomes are measured in more than one way.	Multiple sources of data may be used, but they are lumped together as one means of assessment.	Only one means of assessment is listed for each learning outcome.	
Direct measures of student learning or achievements that are clearly aligned to the learning outcomes are emphasized	The means of assessment is a clear, direct measure of the learning outcome and is as objective as possible, such as specific course assignments or student achievements directly focused on the learning outcome.	The quality, objectivity and validity of assessment measures is mixed.	Measures are limited to global assessments that have little clear connection to the learning outcome, such as course grades or student satisfaction measures. The overall validity of the means of assessment is questionable.	

Assessment measures allow student performance to be gauged over time	The choice of measures allows for the assessment throughout the program.	Assessments focus heavily, but not exclusively, on one group of students.	Only one group of students is assessed (such as program graduates), allowing for no measurement of students over time or students who are not successful in the program.	
If the program is present at the Centers or online, those students are included in the data collection and report	Data from Center or online students is clearly and consistently collected and discussed.	Data from Center or online students is collected inconsistently.	The program is offered at the Centers or online, but there is no indication of data collected from Center or online students.	
REPORTING AND USE OF RESULTS:	*Fully Developed and Implemented*	*Developing/Partially Implemented*	*No Evidence*	*Comments*
Assessment results are reported	Data is reported for all measures.	Some data is reported, but some is missing.	No or very little data is reported.	
Assessment results are clearly explained	Interpretations of results are clearly linked back to the learning outcome and what the results mean for students and the program is explained.	Interpretations go beyond just a description of the results to include some explanation of what the results mean.	Any data that is presented has no or minimal interpretations (e.g., "80% of students met this goal" with no other explanations).	
Assessment results are used by the program faculty or staff to improve student learning (e.g., change/revise learning outcomes, change/revise courses or curriculum)	The report provides specific ways in which the academic program has been modified and improved based upon outcomes results.	The data may have been used to identify an area for improvement, but no changes have been made.	There is no indication that the results have been used to improve the academic program.	

Assessment results are used to identify how the assessment process should be modified	Clear plans to improve the assessment process based upon the data are included.	Recognition that some aspects of the assessment process could be improved but no plans to change them	No discussion of using the results to improve the outcomes assessment process.	
Information from the assessment results is shared with multiple constituents	The final report is written in such a way that anyone, including prospective students and their parents, can read the report and clearly understand the goals of the program, and the successes and challenges the program has had in achieving those outcomes.	The report may be understandable to a wide audience, but it provides little useful information (i.e., all students meet all the learning outcomes, or this is a program that is designed to lead to licensure but no data on licensure attainment is provided).	The report is difficult for anyone outside of the program to understand, or it provides little to no information that gives a clear picture of what students in the program achieve.	