

Purpose

Examining and reflecting on school/college goals and success outcomes to inform decision-making is an important practice undertaken by Dean's Offices. The scope of success outcomes created for an assessment and action plan is wide to reflect a school/college's current operations and the many decision-making areas within it. This plan is different from the strategic plan. A strategic plan is future oriented and helps a school/college move forward, while an assessment and action plan fosters reflection on progress made and the effectiveness of operations. Both of these efforts support Syracuse University in meeting its commitments for MSCHE institutional accreditation.

Connecting to MSCHE Accreditation Standards

MSCHE provides flexibility in how goals and success outcomes are established and assessed. Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the Dean's Offices, identified recommended goal categories.

Two MSCHE standards articulate expectations at the Dean's Office level, including the following criteria:

Standard VI - Planning, Resources, & Institutional Improvement

1. institutional [success outcomes], both institution wide and for individual units, that are clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation

2. clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes that provide for constituent participation, and incorporate the use of assessment results

Standard VII - Governance, Leadership, & Administration

4. an administration possessing or demonstrating:
f. systematic procedures for evaluating administrative units and for using assessment data to enhance operations.

Best Practices

To sustain assessment practices, the following guidance is offered to Dean's Offices and faculty and staff engaged in the process:

- Periodically review and revise success outcomes as needed in a collaborative effort between the Dean's Office and faculty/staff associated with areas included in the plan.
- Build time into regular meetings throughout the year to share and discuss data identified to measure success of the outcome(s). Take meeting notes to document the discussion.
- Consider placing success outcomes on a rotating schedule in the University's 4-year assessment cycle (a planning [template](#) is available on the IEA website under Common Tools & Templates).
- Utilize the summer to compile findings and meeting notes to update the annual assessment and action plan in Planning & Self-Study prior to the start of the fall semester.
- Distribute responsibility for documenting success outcomes to appropriate faculty/staff. Designated individuals can receive direct access to the assessment planning platform or they can complete the [assessment and action plan worksheet](#) for their success outcome(s) to be entered into the platform by a member of the Dean's Office.

Goals and Success Outcomes

Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the Dean’s Offices, identified goal categories to guide schools/colleges in establishing success outcomes that align with the scope of current operations. Schools/colleges establish success outcomes that are meaningful to the structure and environment of the school/college and align with its mission. Two to four success outcomes are written using action verbs that describe, in a specific and measurable way, operational aspects of each area within the Dean’s Office. For assistance in developing and implementing a Dean’s Office assessment and action plan, please contact the [Assessment Working Team](#) or visit the [IE website](#).

| Goal Category | Focus of Success Outcomes |
|--|---|
| Academic Operations | School/college’s delivery of curricula and participation in institutional processes that enhance teaching and learning. |
| Communications | School/college’s actions and operations regarding communication with various stakeholders. |
| External Relations and Advancement | School/college’s alumni engagement operations and fundraising goals and actions. |
| Finances and Budget | School/college’s fiscal health and resource allocation. |
| Facilities | School/college’s physical infrastructure and information technology. |
| Personnel | School/college’s professional development, recruitment, and retention of faculty and staff. |
| Student Experience | School/college’s student support units to foster equity and student success. |
| Recruitment, Enrollment Management, and Admissions | School/college’s graduate and/or undergraduate program recruitment, admission, and retention operations. |

Important Dates

- Annual assessment and action plan updates are due every November 1
- Assessment period is from July 1 to June 30th
- Four-year assessment cycle is from fall 2021 to spring 2025



Contact the **Assessment Working Team** with any questions or feedback:
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