

UPDATES for Assessment of Academic Degree Programs, Spring 2015

1. Overall Plan: JMU endeavors for programs to evolve from exemplary assessment to exemplary learning improvement.
2. NO URGENT ACTION NEEDED FROM PROGRAMS. This update is regarding strategic planning and potential partnerships.
3. Target in JMU’s strategic plan is for **five programs** to demonstrate such improvement by 2020.
4. Slight, but important change to rubric reflecting emphasis on learning improvement (affecting 6a). See http://www.jmu.edu/assessment/APT/APT_Rubric_2015new.pdf for full rubric.

1 – Beginning	2 – Developing	3 – Good	4 – Exemplary	Cusp of National Model for Learning Improvement	National Model for Learning Improvement
6. Documents the use of results for improvement					
A. Program modification and improvement regarding student learning and development					
No mention of any modifications.	Examples of modifications documented but the link between them and the assessment findings is not clear.	Examples of modifications. (or plans to modify) documented and directly related to findings of assessment. However, the modifications lack specificity.	Examples of modifications (or plans to modify) documented and directly related to findings of assessment. These modifications are very specific (e.g., approximate dates of implementation and where in curriculum they will occur.)	Evidence, from direct measures, suggesting learning improvement due to program modifications. This program responded to previous assessment results, made curricular and/or pedagogical modifications, RE-assessed, and found that student learning improved. Lack of clarity regarding the interventions or methodological issues (unrepresentative sampling, concerns regarding student motivation, etc.) leave legitimate questions regarding the improvement interpretation.	Strong evidence, from direct measures, supporting substantive learning improvement due to program modifications. This program responded to previous assessment results, made curricular and/or pedagogical modifications, RE-assessed, and found that student learning improved. The rationale and explanation of the modifications leading to the change are clearly laid out. The methodology is of sufficient strength that most reasonable alternative hypotheses can be ruled out (e.g., sampling concerns, validity issues with instrument or student motivation). In essence, the improvement interpretation can withstand reasonable critique from faculty, curriculum experts, assessment experts, and external stakeholders.

5. APTs will be rated the same way, with the exception of noting Cusp of National Model and National Model for Learning Improvement status.
6. CARS and CFI are building infrastructure to help programs achieve the National Model. More details and guidance to come next year.
7. Over the next several years, consider if your program would like to partner with CARS and CFI on a learning improvement project. It’s a competitive process. Your program must already have exemplary assessment (3.4 average) and successfully respond to a request for proposals from CARS/CFI.
8. For more context regarding the learning improvement process, including an example, see: http://learningoutcomesassessment.org/documents/Occasional_Paper_23.pdf