

Current status of learning outcomes assessment instruments

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A variety of assessment tools are being used on a regular basis or as recent one-time inquiries. Most instruments ascertain student perceptions about their experiences at URI and some of the questions ask about aspects of learning. The following is a list of the instruments:

- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)
- Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education (several instruments)
- University College Orientation Surveys and URI101 Surveys
- URI Exit Surveys
- Career Services Survey of Recent Graduates
- Student Quality of Life and Satisfaction Survey (SQOLAS)
- Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET)
- General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment
- URI Perceptions (Branding Initiative) survey

The current instruments concentrate on the conditions related to learning (e.g., hours spent studying, number of papers written, interaction with instructors) rather than on actual measurements of learning. This should be balanced with assessment of how well the University's expected learning outcomes are achieved.

Little coordination exists among the instruments (except for Wabash & NSSE) because they are sponsored by different offices with different objectives. Consequently, there has been no comprehensive evaluation and discussion of results to produce an accurate and useful synthesis of information. Questions about statistical validity and peer comparisons need to be addressed.

A regular, coordinated assessment process should be developed to promote efficiency and effectiveness and it should include better dissemination of results and conclusions. The final step of developing better teaching practices based on the results of assessments should be taken to close the loop.