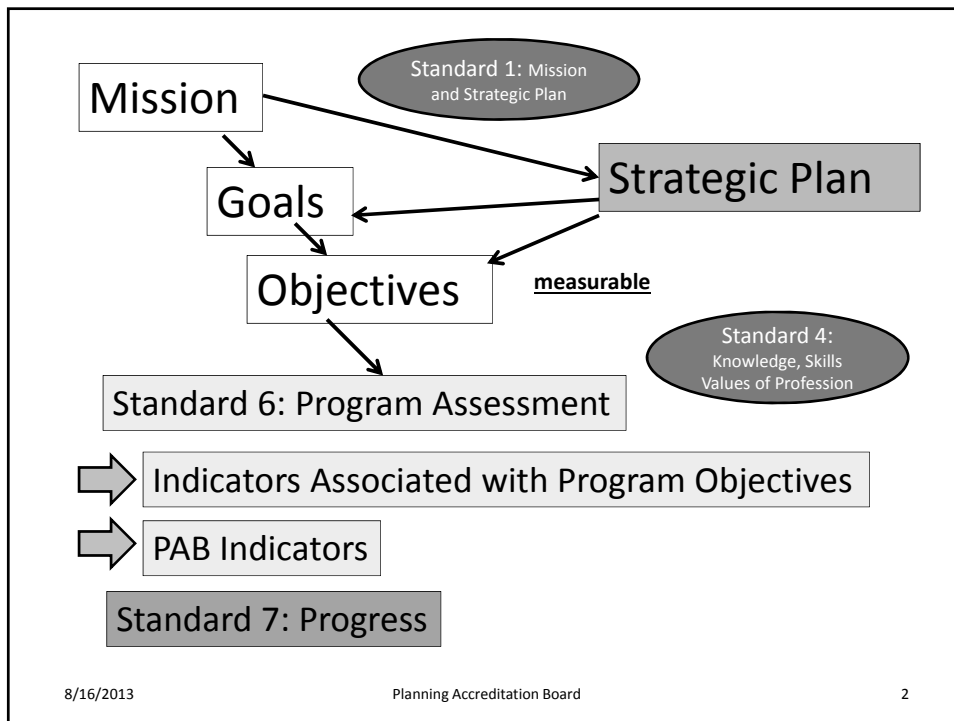


Outcomes Assessment in Planning Programs Conducting a Review

What does PAB Expect?

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Outcomes Assessment Process

What: Preamble Standard 6

- “The program, or the department in which it resides, **shall** have a clearly defined approach, methodology, and indicators for measuring the program’s success in achieving the goals it articulated in its Mission and Strategic Plan. “

Standard 6

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Outcomes Assessment Process

How

- Developing a process for defining and measuring outcomes is an ongoing, collaborative process involving the Program’s key stakeholders (faculty, students, alumni, employers and others).

PAB Outcomes Assessment Manual

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Description of Process Should Include:

- How the program developed the process it will use to assess outcomes;
- Who was involved in developing the process, and what roles key stakeholders played in that development;
- The components of the process;
- The timeline for implementation of the process;
- How the program has used/will use the results of the assessment to evaluate, support and improve teaching and learning.

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Outcomes Assessment Should

- Provide healthy balance of both internal and external performance indicators. *Internal measures include things like GPAs, the quality a final project, a faculty panel assessment, etc. External performance indicators include things like AICP exam pass rates, employer satisfaction/surveys, longitudinal data on graduates' career trajectories, etc.*
- The ultimate objective and greatest benefit of outcomes assessment is that programs will use all the data they collect to develop an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning.

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Outcomes Associated With Program Goals and Objectives

- Follows from Standard 1: Mission and Goals
- Important to identify the following
 - Measurable objectives
 - Specific measures – multiple is ideal
 - Gather relevant data
 - Analyze results and identify issues to address
 - Identify actions and apply to practice
 - Results and Actions are documented in response to Standard 7 Progress

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Standard 6: Program Assessment

Following a discussion of the program assessment process outlined in the preamble to Standard 6, the program must respond in each of the following areas:

- A. Faculty research/scholarly contributions to the profession: The program shall provide evidence of faculty contributions to the advancement of the profession through research (theoretical and applied) and scholarship.
- B. Student learning and achievement: The program shall report clear indicators of student success in learning the Core Knowledge, Skills, and Values of the profession. Such evidence should clearly identify the learning outcomes sought and achieved for students at either cohort or year level over the accreditation review period. (we talk about this last)

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Program Assessment Areas

(continued)

- C. Student retention and graduation rates: The program shall report student retention and graduation rates (including number of degrees produced each year) relative to program enrollment and to targets set by the program.

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Program Assessment Areas (continued)

- D. Outcomes: The program **shall** report student achievement and success after graduation in at least the areas specified below:
1. Graduate satisfaction: The program shall document the percentage of graduates who, two to five years after graduation, report being satisfied or highly satisfied with how the program prepared them for their current employment.
 2. Graduate Employment: The program shall document the percentage of graduates who secure employment within one year of graduation in professional planning, planning-related, or other positions, and the definitions thereof.

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PAB Defined Outcomes (continued)

3. Graduate certification: The program shall document the percentage of master's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 3 years of graduation, and/or the percentage of bachelor's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 5 years of graduation. If the program believes that alternative credentials are meaningful to its goals and objectives, the program may supplement its AICP data.
4. Graduate service to community and profession: The program shall provide evidence of graduates' contributions to meeting community needs and to providing service to the planning profession, such evidence obtained between 2 and 5 years after graduation.

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6B Student Learning & Achievement

A more complex, program-defined area

Standard 6B. Student learning and achievement:

The program shall:

- report clear indicators of student success in learning the Core Knowledge, Skills, and Values of the Profession. (outlined in Standard 4A).
- Such evidence should clearly identify the learning outcomes sought and achieved for students at either cohort or year level over the accreditation review period.

Required Knowledge, Skills and Values of the Profession (Standard 4A) “Student Learning Outcomes”

- **General Planning Knowledge**: The comprehension, representation, and use of ideas and information in the planning field, including appropriate perspectives from history, social science, and the design professions.
 - Purpose and Meaning of Planning
 - Planning Theory
 - Planning Law
 - Human Settlements and History of Planning:
 - Global Dimensions of Planning
- **Planning Skills**: The use and application of knowledge to perform specific tasks required in the practice of planning.
 - Research
 - Written, Oral and Graphic Communication
 - Quantitative and Qualitative Methods
 - Plan Creation and Implementation
 - Planning Process Methods
 - Leadership

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Required Knowledge, Skills and Values of the Profession (Standard 4A) (continued)

- **Values and Ethics**: Values inform ethical and normative principles used to guide planning in a democratic society. The program shall appropriately incorporate issues of diversity and social justice into all required courses of the curriculum, including:
 - Professional Ethics and Responsibility
 - Governance and Participation
 - Sustainability and Environmental Quality
 - Growth and Development
 - Social Justice

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Common Direct and Indirect Measures of Student Learning

Direct

- Tests/Test items assessing particular skills or knowledge
- Portfolios of student work
- Capstone projects evaluations
- Scoring rubrics applied to project or paper
- Field supervisor ratings on specific knowledge/skill/values areas
- Employer ratings of knowledge, skills, values
- Scores and pass rates on licensure exams

Indirect

- *Course grades*
- Satisfaction surveys
- Focus groups
- Student self-ratings
- Alumni satisfaction with learning
- Honors, awards, and scholarships

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Points for On-Site Team Members

- Has the program identified targeted outcomes?
- Do these specific outcomes address the Core Knowledge, Skills and Values?
- Are indicators (measures) identified which appropriately address the specific outcome?
- Has the program arranged for applying the measures in a consistent way?
- Is there a reasonable expectation that data arising from the measure present a valid/unbiased picture of student learning?

Points for On-Site Team Members

(continued)

- Is there a coherent plan for applying these measures consistent with the stated program assessment process?
- Do results arising from these measures show promise for providing sufficient information to allow for program improvement?
- Is there evidence that the program has fully implemented the data collection to measures student learning outcomes?

Standard 7: Progress *What Does PAB Expect?*

The key elements of an outcomes-based assessment plan include making decisions about programmatic changes based on analyzing the outcomes data collected, and by connecting the changes made to long-term objectives, including those objectives that aim towards excellence.

Standard 7: Progress

A. Progress towards goal attainment: The program shall demonstrate its progress since the last accreditation review in meeting program goals and objectives as measured by performance on the outcomes identified in Standard 6.

- Have they reached their identified goals?
- What evidence is presented to support?
- Is the evidence valid to address reaching the goal

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Outcomes Assessment Plan

Goal 1:					
Outcome/ Objective	Performance Indicator/Measurement Tool	Program Benchmark	Timeframe	Results	Analysis/Action Plan
Goal 2:					
Outcome/ Objective	Performance Indicator/Measurement Tool	Program Benchmark	Timeframe	Results	Analysis/Action Plan

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Standard 7: Progress

- B. Programmatic changes: The program shall document programmatic changes recently completed or currently underway to advance the outcomes identified in Standard 6.
- C. Strategic issues for the next 5-7 years: The program shall identify the critical steps needed to advance its goals and progress during the next reaccreditation period.

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Standard 7: Progress

- D. Public Information: The program shall routinely provide reliable information to the public on its performance. Such information shall appear in easily accessible locations including program websites. Information shall include, but not be limited to:
1. student achievement as determined by the program;
 2. the cost (tuition and fees) for a full-time student for one academic year;
 3. student retention and graduation rates, including the number of degrees produced each year, the percentage of master's students graduating within 4 years, and/or the percentage of bachelor's students graduating within 6 years

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Standard 7: Progress

D. Public Information: (continued)

4. the percentage of master's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 3 years after graduation and/or the percentage of bachelor's graduates who pass the AICP exam within 5 years of graduation; and
5. the employment rate of fulltime graduates in a professional planning or planning-related job within 1 year of graduation.

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Things to Remember

- First, go to the standard as the basis for your evaluation of compliance
- Rely on your colleagues to discuss potential areas of concern
- Be prepared to ask specific questions in the interview with the Program Director regarding program assessment and progress
- Ask yourselves if the evidence shows that the program assessment process is truly implemented and effective