Annual Academic Departmental Assessment (AADA)
Reporting Instructions, 2017-18 Cycle

Rationale: Academic departmental assessment focuses on improving student learning within academic programs. Each year, the process should involve:
- Direct measurement of student proficiency in one or more program-level learning outcomes
- Broad engagement of program faculty in analysis and discussion of assessment findings
- Planning and implementing change in response findings and analysis
- Reassessment of learning following changes made in prior years' assessments

Annual reports on academic program assessment of student learning provide evidence to the college, the institution, external accreditors, and our multiple and varied constituents that faculty and administrators are invested in providing optimal learning experiences for our students. Documentation about how assessment practices and reflection on student learning guide curricular, instructional and administrative decision-making demonstrates intentionality and accountability to all audiences.

Reporting requirements: All NMSU departments are expected to be engaged in ongoing outcomes assessment for the purposes of improved student learning. Each academic department must submit annually at least one report for its undergraduate (UG) programs and at least one report for its graduate (GR) programs. Departments with multiple degree programs at a given level (UG or GR) may submit a combined report or individual reports for each degree program at their discretion. In addition, those departments may choose to report on only a subset of their programs in a given year. (For example, a department with three UG and two GR programs may choose to submit an undergraduate report on one of its UG programs and another report on one of its GR programs.) Every program must be evaluated within a three-year period.

Due Date: Reports for the 2017-18 assessment cycle are due on Thursday, November 1st, 2018.

Reporting formats: There are two acceptable reporting formats:
1. Template-based format. The report is prepared using the Word template provided by the Office of Assessment.
2. Alternative format. The report is provided in any format such as, for example, one used in satisfying accreditation requirements. Using this option, the Word template document should also be submitted where each section either is completed (if the requested information is not found in the report) or contains a clear description of where (page #s) the requested information is found in the report file.

Supporting Documents: Supporting documents such as assessment instruments, rubrics, etc., may be submitted as needed. Please refer to the supporting documents where appropriate in the main report. Supporting documents that aren’t referenced will not be read by the reviewers.

Report sections: (expand or collapse the space allotted for each section as needed)

1. Mission Statement: Include your departmental mission statement(s) as developed, for example, through your strategic planning process. This is intended to provide context for the assessment report.

2. Degree Programs: List all departmental degree programs at the level (undergraduate or graduate) of the report including the current enrollment or # of declared majors. (Approximate values are sufficient.) Check the box in the first column for each degree program that is a subject of the report. In any given cycle, a department may choose to report on assessment activities for only a subset of
its programs at a given level. *Note, however, that all programs must be assessed within a period not to exceed three years.*

3. **Program-Level Learning Goals (Objectives):** *Note: some prefer to use the term “objective” for items that fit the following description.* For reporting purposes, we define a learning goal as a general description of an intended purpose (“to develop students’ written communication skills”) or expected result (“students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking”) of a program’s activities. Learning goals should be learning centered rather than reflecting more general performance metrics such as graduate placement, # of publications, etc.

4. **Data Collection and Analysis:** Describe your assessment data collection and analysis activities during the 2017-18 academic year. Elements of the narrative should include:

   - **Measure(s):** A Measure is a specific and detailed description of how a particular outcome will be assessed. Are all students in a given cohort assessed? How will the assessment be “scored” to determine whether an outcome was achieved or not? Details of the methodology used in collecting and analyzing data should go in this section. Example: “Written laboratory reports will be collected from… and scored according to the following rubric…”

   - **Outcome(s):** An Outcome is a specific specific statement of intended results or consequences of the program’s or entity's activities that are the subject of the current year’s or ongoing assessment. For a student learning outcome, this should reflect what a student knows, is able to do, or values. It should be closely associated with one or more learning goals. A valid outcome must be measureable. Example: “Undergraduate majors will demonstrate proficiency in written communication of scientific information in an appropriate journal style.”

   - **Target(s):** Desired level of achievement. A target is “met” if the findings indicate a level of achievement greater than or equal to the target level. Example target: “90% of students will achieve a composite score of 8 or higher out of a possible 12 on the assessment.” Setting targets, while not required, often helps in focusing improvement efforts. *Setting ambitious targets is encouraged as a means of stimulating productive conversations related to analysis of assessment findings and development of action plans. There are NO negative consequences associated with failure to meet a target!* and targets (i.e., desired levels of achievement).

   - **Findings:** A description of data collected from the assessment including the measured level of achievement for each target. A complete and clear presentation of findings should be included. Use of tables, charts, etc. is encouraged. Findings should be *analyzed* to identify areas of need in order to guide improvement efforts.

5. **Action Plans:** An Action Plan is a detailed description of curricular and other changes that have a specific goal of improving student learning and that are planned in response to the assessment findings. *Process improvements made by the department should be discussed in the Assessment Process section rather than with the Action Plan.*

   Action Plans provide an ideal mechanism for tracking year-to-year progress on assessment projects. This section therefore contains two parts, one for discussion of new action plans related directly to the current cycle’s assessment findings, and a second that prompts departments to reflect and report on their previous Action Plans. This is intended to help in establishing a department’s commitment to making meaningful curricular changes and to
reassessment of student learning following those changes. Parts (a) and (b) in this section may be combined for multi-year assessment processes.

6. **Assessment Process:** This section focuses on who was involved with the assessment and how the assessment processes could be improved.
   (a) **Engagement:** Participation of all program faculty in discussions of assessment findings, analysis, and decision making is an essential aspect of assessment. Engagement of other stakeholders such as students, advisory boards, and alumni may also be useful.
   (b) **Process Improvement:** Changes made to your assessment process should be documented here. Making changes to the assessment process is not required if the assessment process is working well. However, completing this section is required if the assessment process did not yield information useful in developing an Action Plan.

7. **Assessment Schedule/Plan:** Beginning with the 2018-19 assessment cycle, departments are expected to develop a plan to assess all learning goals for their degree programs over a period of no more than three years. Reporting on these plans is optional in the 2017-18 cycle but will be required starting with next year’s reports.

**Submitting Reports:** Reports may be submitted either through e-mail or by uploading into departmental folders on the Assessment SharePoint site. Access to departmental SharePoint folders is restricted to authorized users only including department heads and designated assessment coordinators. Please contact David Smith (davsmith@nmsu.edu, 646-7621) to request access.