Program Assessment: Writing a Mission Statement

Identify program goals

Specify intended outcomes

The Program Assessment Process

Improve your program based on results

Measure whether students are meeting those outcomes

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To help you write a mission statement, this presentation provides:

* an explanation of what a mission statement is
* examples from various universities’ academic and student support programs
* guiding questions to help your program develop a mission statement
* pitfalls to avoid when developing a mission statement
Mission Statement

- A brief description of the program’s:
  - **Purpose** - Why the program exists, including its *unique or signature features*
  - **Offerings** – What students or clients will gain from the program (in broad terms, but specific to the discipline)
  - **Target audience/Stakeholders** – Who benefits from the program
  - Aligned with the University and division missions
  - Realistic and achievable
A mission statement is like a guiding principle: explicitly articulating it helps guide programmatic decisions.

For example, you can use your mission statement to

- prioritize your use of and requests for funding, faculty lines, course offerings, extra curricular programs
- Decide which courses should be required or elective
- Identify new areas of expansion
The mission of the **Northern Arizona University Social Work** Program, grounded in the history, purpose, and values of the profession, is to educate competent, generalist social workers for practice with diverse populations and multi-level social systems in local, regional and global contexts. The generalist practice for which we educate is based on social work knowledge, values, and skills; geared to practice with rural and Indigenous populations of the Southwest; and, focused on addressing poverty, structural racism, and oppression. This practice provides leadership in promoting human rights and social and economic justice, and service with vulnerable and underserved populations locally, regionally, and globally.

http://nau.edu/OCLDAA/Assessment-Process/Annual-Assessment-Reporting/Degree-Program-Mission/
The mission of the Biology B.S. degree program is to prepare students for employment in various biology-related areas and/or for the pursuit of advanced degrees in biology or health-related professional schools by educating them in the fundamental concepts, knowledge and laboratory/field techniques and skills of the life sciences.

http://assessment.uconn.edu/docs/HowToWriteMission.pdf/
It is the mission of the CEAS advising office to create an atmosphere that fosters success. We are committed to quality academic advising in an environment that is welcoming, inclusive and supportive. Our programs and services are designed to help students develop decision making skills that will empower them to take full advantage of their educational experience.
To help you get started on your mission statement, you might discuss the following questions with your colleagues:

* What need(s) does the program fulfill?
* What will the students know, value, and be able to do as a result of your program?
* What does this program uniquely offer that differentiates it from other programs?
Mission Statement: Pitfalls to Avoid

Wording that is:
* Too general to lead to any specific learning outcomes
* Not clearly related to the program’s learning outcomes
* Focused on teaching rather than student learning
* Written for a specialist/expert audience rather than a general audience
Local Resources for Program Assessment

* Cathy Barrette, WSU Director of Assessment
  c.barrette@wayne.edu
  (313)577-1615
  4129 F/AB
* WSU Assessment website (temporary url)
  http://undergrad.wayne.edu/assessment.php
* OTL staff, workshops and website:
  http://otl.wayne.edu/