

# **Continuous Improvement Report**

**Academic Programs**

**Administrative Units**

**Student Support Units**

**2017-18**

Prepared by:

Dr. Noreen Gaubatz

Director of Assessment

Winthrop University

## Introduction

With the approval of senior leadership in fall 2017, the Office of Assessment proceeded to establish an annual institutional assessment process, including peer review to address quality and rigor of continuous improvement efforts. SACSCOC standards require that “an institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results” for educational programs, student support services, and administrative units (*The Principles of Accreditation*, standards 7.3 and 8.2). Additionally, this assessment initiative enables unit outcomes to align with the strategic goals of Winthrop University, an area of particular interest to senior leadership and the Board of Trustees.

## Assessment Process

Winthrop University has followed an annual assessment cycle for academic programs, and in 2017-18 initiated a similar process for administrative and student support units. Key elements of this process include identification of student learning/operational outcomes; activities; assessment methods; performance targets; data collection, analysis, and interpretation; and continuous improvement action plans. Administrative and student support units completed a newly developed reporting template, while the academic units used the OARS reporting template. For the 2018-19 reports, all units will use the same template.

## Assessment Committees

Three Assessment Committees, established in 2017-18, provide a quality review of the Continuous Improvement Reports (CIR) and Continuous Improvement Plans (CIP), based on established criteria specified in the Continuous Improvement Rubrics. The rubrics are a tool for providing specific feedback to improve the quality and increase the rigor of the CIRs and CIPs by setting expectations and promoting discussion. The Assessment Committees are comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators from across all colleges and divisions – Academic Assessment Committee (20 members), Administrative Assessment Committee (16 members), Student Support Assessment Committee (14 members). In preparation for the review process, committee members attended assessment workshops in spring 2018 and engaged in rubric norming in fall 2018.

## Assessment Timelines

- **September 1:** 2017-18 CIRs and 2018-19 CIPs for administrative units submitted to Blackboard.
- **September 1 – October 15:** Administrative Assessment Committee members conducted quality reviews and completed Continuous Improvement Rubrics, which were returned to the respective units.
- **September 15:** 2017-18 CIRs and 2018-19 CIPs for academic and student supports units submitted to Blackboard (student support units) and OARS (academic programs).
- **September 15 – October 30:** Academic Assessment Committee members and Student Support Assessment Committee members conducted quality reviews and completed Continuous Improvement Rubrics, which were returned to the respective academic programs and units.

### Participation Rates in the 2017-18 Assessment Cycle

One hundred and thirteen programs/units were responsible for developing, implementing, and reporting on their continuous improvement process in 2017-18. **Table 1** provides the participation rates for academic programs (i.e., completion of a 2017-18 CIR). Academic units did not complete a 2018-19 Continuous Improvement Plan for a number of reasons, but will be expected to submit one in the subsequent assessment cycle. **Table 2** indicates participation rates for administrative and student support units (i.e., completion of a 2017-18 CIR and 2018-19 CIP).

**Table 1. Participation Rates in the Continuous Improvement Process for Academic Programs**

Academic Colleges	# of Programs	2017-18 CIR Participation Rate
College of Arts and Sciences	28	100%
College of Business Administration	6	100%
College of Education	16	94%*
College of Visual and Performing Arts	18	100%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>99%</b>

\* Due to extenuating circumstances, one academic program did not submit a CIR.

**Table 2. Participation Rates in the Continuous Improvement Process for Administrative and Student Support Units**

Administrative/Student Support Divisions	# of Units	2017-18 CIR Participation Rate	2018-19 CIP Participation Rate
Academic Affairs	11	100%	100%
Access and Enrollment Management	3	100%	100%
Athletics	3	100%	100%
Finance and Business	6	33%	33%
Human Resources	1	100%	100%
President's Office	1	0%	0%
Student Affairs	11	100%	100%
University Advancement	3	67%	67%
University College	5	100%	100%
University Relations	1	100%	100%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>87%</b>

**Alignment of the Continuous Improvement Process with *The Winthrop Plan***

In the true spirit of assessment, administrative and student support units aligned their outcomes with the strategic initiatives of the University’s Strategic Plan, which in turn reflects the institutional status in fulfilling its mission. **Table 3** summarizes the number of outcomes supporting each institutional strategic initiative. The reporting template used by academic programs did not allow for this type of alignment, however, this will be addressed in the new 2018-19 template.

**Table 3. Institutional Strategic Initiatives Supported by Administrative and Student Support Units**

Administrative/Student Support Divisions	Number of Outcomes				
	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4	Goal 5
Academic Affairs	7	9	4	12	5
Access and Enrollment Management	4	1	0	2	2
Athletics	1	3	2	1	3
Finance and Business	4	0	0	0	4
Human Resources	0	0	4	0	0
President’s Office	0	0	0	0	0
Student Affairs	13	16	1	5	0
University Advancement	0	1	0	0	9
University College	14	2	1	1	0
University Relations	5	0	1	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>

**Goal 1** – Support inclusive excellence by expanding our impact on students and our communities through enrollment growth and increases in retention and graduation rates.

**Goal 2** – Continually enhance the quality of the Winthrop experience for all students by promoting a culture of innovation, with an emphasis on global and community engagement.

**Goal 3** – Attract and retain high quality and diverse faculty, staff, and administrators.

**Goal 4** – Provide facilities, technology, and programs that support Winthrop students and the overall Winthrop experience.

**Goal 5** – Ensure financial stability and sustainability.

**Appendix A** expands on **Table 3** by providing the (1) Outcome, (2) 2017-18 Impact, and (3) 2018-19 Continuous Improvement Plan by unit for each of the institutional strategic initiatives. For ease of use, **Appendix A** is organized first by institutional strategic initiative, then by division, and then by unit.