Guidelines for the Assessment of Administrative Support Units

There are two major components of a nonacademic assessment report:
1. The mission, or purpose of the nonacademic unit
2. The assessment summary, which outlines *HOW* your unit will fulfill its mission

I. MISSION

A. University Mission
This section will be pre-populated, therefore no additional information is required on your part.

B. Departmental Mission
Your mission statement should state who you are and why you exist—your purpose at UT Dallas.

C. How Does the Departmental Mission Relate to the University Mission?
Every office on campus contributes to the overall function and purpose of the university. For this section, we simply ask that you state how your mission explicitly ties to the university's mission statement.

Tip: Directly connect words or phrases from your mission and the university's mission.

II. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Tip: Start by establishing departmental goals that focus on the key functions or tasks that you will accomplish in order to carry out your mission. Your goals should be more specific than your mission, but still somewhat broad and general, and they should be semi-long term, with a target achievement date of two or three years. Goals are not a required component of your assessment report, and thus do not need to be documented, however they are a helpful reference point when developing your outcomes and measures.

Sample Goal: Educate students and faculty about how to use technology that enhances teaching and learning.

A. Outcomes
Outcomes are essentially sub-goals that specifically outline how your goals will be accomplished. Your outcomes should be:

Specific to your unit
Measurable
Achievable
Results-oriented
Time-bound

Tip: Consider what your staff or clientele will know or be able to do as a result of the functions of your office.

Note: I recommend that you have a total of 3-6 outcomes.

Sample Outcomes:
1. Faculty and staff will understand important diversity issues at the university.
2. Students will be able to use bibliographic resources at the library.

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B. Measures
These are the tools you will use to collect data (e.g., survey, complaint or satisfaction log, pre-/post-test, headcount of participants, etc.). Your measures should be able to provide you with data that can tell you whether you have achieved your outcomes.

Note: I recommend that you have 2-4 measures per outcome.

Sample Measures (based on the above sample outcomes):
> *1. Pre-/Post-test comparison of knowledge following safe zone training.*
> *2. HEDS (Higher Education Data Sharing) Research Practices survey results*

It is also important to determine a target (i.e., criteria for success) for each measure. For example, for the first measure, the target might be that 85% of faculty and staff will show improvement on the post-test. This simply shows what is required for this particular measure to demonstrate that the outcome has been met.

C. Results
What did you find? After collecting your data, did you find that you met/did not meet your expected outcome?

D. Use of Information
Now that you have this information, what are you doing with it? Are you making changes to areas in need of improvement? Are you celebrating some of your successes? Try to avoid stating too much of what you *will do* and instead, state what you *are doing* to make progress within your unit.

Tip: Start by conducting a SWOT analysis in which you use the results of your assessment report to determine your unit's:

> **S**trengths
> **W**eaknesses
> **O**pportunities for growth
> **T**hreats to success

Then, use this information to guide your plans for improvement.