

WHAT IS ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT ASSESSMENT (AUA)?

- Administrative unit assessment is the process by which administrative offices, including academic and student support areas, engage in and document cycles of continuous improvement.
- Engaging in this process enables administrative units to obtain data that can be used to inform the improvement of their processes and functions, as they relate to the institution's mission and strategic plan.

Source: Jaime L. Williams, Virginia Commonwealth University

KEY FEATURES OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT ASSESSMENT

- Administrative Unit Assessment (AUA)
 - Focus is on administrative functions
 - Outcomes are desired (Std. 7.3) or intended (8.2.c)
 - Measures often consist of tracking numbers, counts, surveys
 - Targets and findings focused on percent increase/decrease, improvements in efficiency
 - Uses of results are about changes that will be made to improve the unit

Adapted from: Jaime L. Williams, Virginia Commonwealth University

WHY ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT ASSESSMENT (AUA) IS IMPORTANT

- Help clarify/reinforce the mission of the unit
- Engage in documented cycles of continuous improvement
- Use evidence (not anecdotes) to improve unit efficiency and effectiveness
- Provide evidence of continuous improvement to unit stakeholders
- Inform students as to what they are expected to achieve, when applicable
- Meet SACSCOC accreditation standards

THE RATIONALE @VT

- Virginia Tech: Large Research I institution with several layers in the organizational chart.
 - Challenge: not reasonable or manageable to require every administrative unit/department to submit annual assessment reports.
- Rationale for selecting units: Senior management areas and units that report directly to those areas.
 - Include the President's office and any units reporting directly to the President
 - Include all VP division offices
 - Include all units that directly report to the VP's (with a few exceptions)
 - Other units encouraged to participate, but are not required

Source: Jaime L. Williams, Virginia Commonwealth University

SACSCOC STANDARDS

- Two sections of the standards are referenced in the administrative unit assessment (AUA) process:
 - Section 7, Institutional Planning and Effectiveness (SACSCOC Std. 7.3)
 - Section 8, Student Achievement (SACSCOC 8.2.c)

Adapted from : Jaime L. Williams,
Virginia Commonwealth University

AUA PROCESS OVERVIEW

- Data collection occurs throughout the year
- Units typically complete their report (aka Blueprint) before the beginning of the academic or fiscal year
- Ideally, the report is updated with findings, action plans, and other relevant information throughout the year
- At the end of the [fiscal] year, units should share findings, create/implement action plans, make improvements, update the report, and close the loop
- Reports from the previous year are requested by OIRAA each fall semester (usually by September 1)
- Reports are received by OIRAA in the fall semester
- OIRAA feedback are sent to units by the end of fall semester
- Final reports are shared with Budget Committees

Adapted from: Jaime L. Williams,
Virginia Commonwealth University

ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT ASSESSMENT LEADER (AUA)

- Manage/maintain/improve the process
- Set clear expectations
- Educate unit leaders and are assessment contacts
- To the extent possible, remove barriers to building an assessment culture

Source: Jaime L. Williams, Virginia
Commonwealth University

FINAL THOUGHTS

“There is no magic formula to creating a culture of assessment. What works on any campus depends on its culture, history, and values.”

(Linda Suskie, 2009, p. 78)

Source: Jaime L. Williams, Virginia
Commonwealth University

REFERENCES

- *Administrative Unit Assessment Part I: The Plan* (2018). Presentation created for administrative unit assessment leaders at Virginia Tech.
- *Administrative Unit Assessment Part II: The Report* (2018). Presentation created for administrative unit assessment leaders at Virginia Tech.
- Suskie, L. (2004 and 2009). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.

Source: Jaime L. Williams, Virginia
Commonwealth University