

Annual Assessment Report Terminology

Mission Statement is a clear concise statement of the fundamental purpose of a unit. The statement describes what the organization does (its function), who it serves (target population) and results it intends to achieve (intended outcomes). The mission statement should answer the question, “why does this specific unit exist?” The statement describes the unique role of this organization.

The mission statement communicates the core purpose of an organization, makes its unique role clear, describes results it intends to achieve, and may communicate the motivation for doing the work – what is most important to the organization.

Core Functions are the primary activities of the unit; the main categories of work; what the unit does toward fulfillment of its mission. For our purposes, please state each core function in 3-4 words.

Intended Outcome(s) – For each core function, the results the unit intends to achieve – directly related to the fundamental purpose of the unit. The extent to which intended outcomes are achieved is indicated by measurement of Key Performance Indicators. SACSCOC requires that each unit identify intended outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes (KPIs), and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results (of KPI measures).

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) is something that is measured/examined, to indicate the extent to which expected result is achieved. A KPI indicates some aspect of core function performance by providing specific data that indicate the extent to which an intended outcome was achieved. KPIs are not statements that describe work that will be done or action that will be taken. In student affairs, KPI’s often include participation numbers, measures of participant satisfaction and/or perceptions of program quality, and self-reported learning/development.

Participation / Usage - for example, a KPI might be the number of students the organization serves (and/or targeted populations within total numbers served). (Indicates the extent to which students perceive the need for, or value of, the program or service).

Participant Satisfaction / Perceptions of Effectiveness – for example, a KPI might be a specific item or specific combination of items from a survey asking participants their perceptions about the quality of a program, service, or office, and/or their satisfaction with it. (Indicates the extent to which students find the program or service to be effective, of value to them.)

Self-reported learning/development – for example, a KPI might be a specific item or specific combination of items from a survey asking participants to describe their learning/developmental gains from participation in the program. (Indicates the extent to which students developed the skills the program aimed to advance).

Assessment methods are the practices used to obtain the indicator data (KPI) regarding the effectiveness of the core function in producing the intended outcomes. Description of assessment method should include: how was the KPI data obtained (if attendee numbers, how was attendance recorded), (if the indicator is student satisfaction, or self-reported learning/development, how was that measured). If a survey or exam was conducted to obtain KPI data, how was the survey or exam conducted, who was assessed (who/how many received the survey or exam; who/how many completed the survey or exam) and how assessment is conducted (how/when do they receive the survey/exam).

KPI Results - what is the current value for the KPI (for example, if attendance, what are current numbers; if student satisfaction, what are current satisfaction ratings).