I. INTRODUCTION

Institutional Effectiveness is the process in which Florida State University assesses continuing improvement of the university. These guidelines govern the university’s conduct of institutional effectiveness and establishes the methods by which the university assesses performance against its mission. It includes using performance in pursuit of the institution’s mission and goals, as well as the development, implementation, review, and assessment of student learning and program outcomes for the university’s educational programs, academic support, administrative support and student support services, infrastructure, and, as appropriate, research and community/public services.

These guidelines cover all academic programs delivering instruction at the main and branch campuses and through any mode of delivery as well as educational support, student support and administrative programs. Division Vice Presidents responsible for these activities must develop, implement, review and assess outcomes associated with the programs by which such services are delivered. These guidelines comply with Florida Board of Governors Regulation 8.016 (Student Learning Outcomes Assessment), Regulation 8.015 (Academic Program Review), and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Principles of Accreditation.

II. POLICY

A. Definitions

1. Assessment Processes
   Institutional Effectiveness assessment requires the provision of specific methods, criteria/standards and measures to establish and gauge performance. These criteria/standards are the point of comparison against which the actual evidence of student learning or program performance will be judged once it is collected.

2. Assessment Unit
   The student learning and program outcomes of the university are achieved by organizational units across its campuses. The outcomes identified as key to the responsibilities of an organizational unit are identified within assessment units. Assessment units are the basic element of the university assessment system and consist of relevant student learning and program outcomes for each unit.

3. Budget and Planning Process
   The process initiated annually by the university president and coordinated in consultation with the university budget office solicits information on university activities taken over the course of an academic year relative to unit goals linked to university priorities. The process reports
on the progress of units towards their individual goals and articulates plans for improvement and budget actions recommended as a result of the assessment process.

4. Improvement Plans

Improvements Plans, also known as Action Plans, are reports designed to build on the analysis of results of assessment unit outcomes and initiate further actions in accordance with unit assessment goals to continue or sustain improvement or achievement of goals.

5. Institutional Effectiveness (“IE”) Portal

Institutional Effectiveness assessment processes, improvement plans, results, and analysis are required to be reported and maintained by assessment units in a university electronic reporting portal. All reports must be compliant with the institution’s Information Technology, Information Security, and Personally Identifiable Information (“PII”) Privacy Regulations.

6. Mission Statement

The mission statement is a comprehensive statement outlining the reason for the university's existence, addressing all aspects of institutional function and consistent with other related terminology, such as purpose.

7. Program Outcome

A program outcome statement describes the consequence of the program that reflects the program or institutional goal. Program outcomes can reflect academic instruction, educational support, administrative support, research and community/public service goals. Program outcomes are developed using the same criteria as used in student learning outcomes (specific outcome statements, assessment methods and standards, results and analyses and improvements/action plans). The program outcomes of administrative support units are subject to the standards of these guidelines, but differ in that they are evaluated against benchmarks that have been justified by their organization.

8. Results and Analysis

Results and analysis of assessment processes are essential elements in the evaluation of student learning and program outcomes. A results statement which includes both results and an analysis of the results’ effectiveness in achieving assessment unit outcomes for each assessment process must be incorporated as part of the unit’s reporting in the Institutional Effectiveness reporting portal. The analysis of the results should explain why the results were achieved.

9. Student Learning Outcome

A student learning outcome consists of the identification of knowledge, skills or abilities students will have learned at the completion of the course of study that could not previously be demonstrated at inception. Student learning outcomes must be framed as specific,
measurable results whose attainment can be assessed after the student has undertaken a set of educational experiences.

III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Institutional effectiveness is assessed for performance against the university and unit mission and the goals and activities of the university aligned with its mission. The institutional effectiveness process consists of detailed performance evaluation reports submitted by assessment units in furtherance of academic program development, academic support and administrative services, and achievement of university strategic planning activities. Academic assessment units must identify and assess student learning and program outcomes and their efforts to achieve them. Units must report on outcomes in the Institutional Effectiveness reporting portal on a scheduled basis. The minimum requirements for compliance with these guidelines are that within each assessment unit:

a. There must be at least five student learning outcomes and one program outcome reported within the Institutional Effectiveness Portal for each baccalaureate degree program. Each outcome shall be classified as to whether it addresses content and discipline knowledge skills, communication skills, and/or critical thinking skills.

b. There must be at least two student learning outcomes and one program outcome reported for each masters, advanced masters, specialist, doctoral and professional degree program.

c. There must be at least two student learning outcomes and one program outcome reported for each college credit certificate program. Information on college credit certificates reported with the IE Portal shall be consistent with the University Certificate Policy and ensure the privacy of students and faculty associated with programs.

d. There must be at least two program outcomes reported in the IE Portal for each substantial university academic, administrative support and student support service program.

Research and Community Service activities, as determined appropriate, are reported at the institutional level within the Institutional Effectiveness Portal and will contain a sufficient number of student learning and/or program outcomes to describe major activities.

All assessment units focused on educational (including educational support) outcomes will include analyses of results and demonstration of continuous improvement through specific strategies. Multiple assessment artifacts will be used in each area where appropriate. Letter grades alone are insufficient and shall not be used for the assessment of educational programs. There may be cases where results indicate such high quality that continuous improvement for a specific outcome is not practical. This determination will be made by the appropriate academic department, program director, academic dean or vice president. In these cases, specific actions that demonstrate the ability to sustain such results must be provided. Any budget implications should be identified.

The expected outcomes of administrative support services shall be included in the Institutional
Effectiveness Portal. The results will record the extent to which the outcomes of administrative support are achieved. This may include outcomes specific to the efficiency and quality of service targets or goals. Effectiveness reporting on administrative support should include explanations of how and why these elements were identified for assessment. The expected outcomes of administrative support services should not be judged against standards of continuous improvement but rather achievement of normed performance or a benchmark that has been justified by the unit.

Results must be reported for distance and on-line learning programs and for approved off-campus sites. They must be reported separate and distinct for each assessment outcome. A comparative assessment of the student performance at different sites or using different instructional delivery methods must be included within improvement plans. The comparison should note any significant differences in the results of between delivery types or locations, provide explanations and, if necessary, address them in the action plan for continuous improvement.

Institutional Effectiveness outcomes and assessment processes shall be an integral part of the university-wide academic program Quality Enhancement Review (QER) process and shall be included in the State University System academic program review process. Outcomes shall be compatible with the university and unit mission and strategic plans.

The information recorded in the IE Portal regarding each assessment unit containing student learning outcomes or program outcomes will consist of five components: 1) outcome definition, 2) assessment processes and methods, 3) results, 4) analysis of results, and 5) improvements plans. Appropriate documentation must be included in reports as evidence of performance. Documented change in results will constitute evidence of improvement. For administrative support assessments, expected outcomes should be interpreted in a manner consistent with the administrative unit’s role in the university. If improvement plans are likely to have budget implications, they should be noted in the report.

Baccalaureate program student learning outcomes and assessment procedures shall constitute the university’s academic learning compact for each program, and shall be published to the university’s public website.

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY/RESPONSIBILITY

Primary responsibility for implementation of these guidelines resides with the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. Academic Deans and Vice Presidents are responsible for the quality review and timely submission of assessment unit reports for which they are responsible, consistent with the standards of this policy.

The faculty responsible for each educational degree or college credit certificate program will identify the required Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Program Outcomes (POs) for each program and will develop these outcomes through the processes adopted by each program, often using curriculum committees. Each assessment unit will report on their outcomes, assessment processes, results, analysis of results, and improvement plans on a scheduled basis. Academic Deans (including the Dean of the Graduate School and Dean of Undergraduate Studies) will ensure compliance with standards for
submission and review set forth in these.
The Director of the Office of Liberal Studies, in consultation with the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, will be responsible for submitting student learning outcomes associated with liberal studies.

The Director of the Quality Enhancement Plan will be responsible for its submitting student learning outcomes and program outcomes.

Program Directors, department heads or designated individuals, will develop program outcomes for educational, academic, student and administrative support or infrastructural programs under their authority. These programs will be designated for institutional effectiveness reporting as assessment units by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice Presidents overseeing the assessment units will be responsible for the identification and review of appropriate program outcomes for these assessment units, ensuring required information is reported in a timely manner, and will review entries for completeness and compliance with the standards set forth in these guidelines.

V. SCHEDULE

The Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President shall maintain and operate an electronic Institutional Effectiveness reporting portal. Student learning and program outcomes and their related assessments, results, analysis and improvement plans reported for each assessment unit will be recorded in and conform to the data collection templates provided in the reporting portal.

Assessment units shall record reports in the reporting portal each academic year in the Fall semester, as per the instructions and schedule set forth by Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs each reporting cycle. An institutional effectiveness reporting cycle will consist of a single academic year, from Fall to Summer semesters.

Assessment units shall enter results, analysis of results, and improvement plans for each outcome based on activities associated with the outcome that occurred during the previous cycle. Once results and improvement plans have been recorded, assessment units shall determine which outcomes should persist into the next academic cycle. New outcomes should be recorded in the reporting portal in preparation for the next reporting cycle. Outcomes that have been discontinued or altered shall be archived with the appropriate annotation and dates in the reporting portal.

Academic Deans, Division Vice Presidents or President’s Chief of Staff (or designee) responsible for assessment units will conduct reviews of assessment unit report information for quality, assessment rigor, and mission statement relevance each academic year following the submission of reports in the reporting portal. Reviews will be conducted per the schedule set forth by Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.
VI. PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW
Student learning and program outcomes, along with their associated assessment processes, results, analyses and improvement plans shall be reviewed on an annual basis and changes to existing outcomes shall be made by the personnel assigned to each assessment unit during the subsequent reporting cycle. Reviews of assessment unit reports shall consist of the following elements:

a. Review of all assessment unit Student Learning Outcomes for completeness, accuracy, and relevance in regards to the assessment unit’s academic goals and mission statement.

b. Review of all assessment unit Program Outcomes for completeness, accuracy, and relevance to the assessment unit’s program goals and mission statement. Program outcomes shall align to institutional strategic planning goals and should not exist in conflict with any goals or initiatives.

c. Review of the assessment process associated with each outcome for rigor and completeness. Assessment processes should be defined by quantifiable, measurable criteria that can be demonstrated improvement efforts through the results obtained from the assessment process.

d. Review of all results, analyses and improvement plan associated with each outcome for completeness and relevance. Each outcome should have a detailed analysis of results and an improvement plan designed to provide actionable steps to achieve further improvement.

During each Fall semester, the Department Chair, Program Director or unit supervisor for each assessment unit shall be responsible for the initial submission and review of the outcomes, assessment processes, results, analyses and improvement plans, and associated information for the assessment unit. This initial review shall be conducted as part of the assessment unit’s submission and all submissions are considered approved by the reviewer upon entry to the IE Portal.

The Academic Dean, Vice President, President’s Chief of Staff (or designee) responsible for the oversight of the assessment unit shall conduct a review and approve the unit’s outcomes for quality, assessment rigor, and mission statement relevance of each outcome, subsequent to the initial unit review and submission. Any review which determines further actions are required by an assessment unit to meet the standards of quality consistent with this, or any, institutional guidelines, procedure, state law, best practice, or principles of accreditation shall be recorded in the IE Portal and notification shall be sent to the assessment unit and the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. The review shall apply criteria consistent with the standards of these guidelines, and shall comply with scheduling criteria as set forth by the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will periodically review assessment unit submissions to ensure conformity with these guidelines. The office will report findings as necessary to the appropriate Academic Dean or Vice President.
These guidelines will be reviewed periodically and modified as needed to comport with institutional processes and structure, accreditation principles, state law and continued advancement of the interests of the university.

VII. FAMU – FSU COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Notwithstanding the provisions of these guidelines, the jointly administered FAMU – FSU College of Engineering may follow the policies and practices of either institution regarding Institutional Effectiveness.