

Administrative Assessment at Northern Kentucky University

Administrative assessment at Northern Kentucky University (NKU) encompasses all non-academic units and divisions and is coordinated by the Office of Planning and Institutional Research (PIR). PIR supports a culture of assessment that advances institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement in alignment with NKU's mission and vision.

Administrative leadership plays a critical role in sustaining this culture by developing division-level mission statements and goals and supporting the implementation of assessment-informed action plans.

The current Administrative and Support Services assessment process was implemented during the 2023–24 academic year. It replaced the former annual reporting system, which was suspended in 2022–23 due to university reorganizations, staffing changes within PIR, and inconsistent participation across units.

The current process emphasizes assessment planning and quality assurance at the division or sub-division level. Division-level assessment plans support continuous improvement, demonstrate institutional effectiveness, and serve as documentation for SACSCOC accreditation. While individual departments are encouraged to maintain unit-level assessment plans for internal use, PIR does not review these plans for quality assurance or submit them as evidence for accreditation purposes.

Developing an Administrative Assessment Plan

The assessment planning process begins with a review of the division's mission to ensure alignment with NKU's mission. The division's mission statement guides the development of overarching goals. SMART objectives—reflecting the work of all units within the division—clearly articulate how these goals will be achieved.

By structuring assessment planning, reporting, and management at the division or sub-division level, administrative areas can more effectively demonstrate alignment with NKU's strategic plan and mission, thereby strengthening institutional effectiveness and supporting continuous improvement.

For more details on assessment at NKU, please refer to the published [Assessment Guidebook](#) on PIR's Planning webpage.

Professional Development and Assessment Support

The PIR Assessment Team co-sponsors an annual Assessment Summit with Undergraduate Academic Affairs prior to the start of each assessment cycle. First held in September 2023, the Assessment Summit promotes a culture of continuous improvement by sharing best practices, tools, and strategies for meaningful assessment.

The summit brings together faculty, staff, and administrators to build cross-campus connections, align assessment efforts with institutional goals, and support professional development. Through presentations, discussions, and examples of innovative practices, the event highlights how assessment results can be transformed into actionable insights that strengthen programs, enhance student success, and advance NKU's mission.

In addition to the summit, the PIR Assessment Team remains available throughout the assessment cycle to provide ongoing support to Administrative and Support Services divisions and sub-divisions.

Administrative Assessment Planning Calendar

PIR follows the published [Assessment Milestones Schedule](#) and provides access to a detailed [Assessment Cycle Calendar](#) on PIR's Planning webpage.

Administrative Assessment Terminology and Content Expectations

Clear assessment terminology and content expectations are essential to ensure consistency and quality across assessment plans. NKU uses the terminology and definitions embedded in the WEAVE platform to support a shared understanding of assessment components.

To further promote consistency, PIR publishes an [assessment glossary](#) and detailed [content expectations](#) on its Planning webpage. These resources are available throughout the entire assessment cycle.

Administrative Assessment Reviews and Quality Assurance

To support continuous improvement within and across assessment cycles, the PIR Assessment Team conducts two internal reviews of division-level assessment plans each year. Using a standardized [rubric](#), PIR evaluates content requirements, content quality, and the extent to which each plan comprehensively represents all units within the division.

Mid-Cycle Review (Begins January 15)

Beginning in 2023–24, PIR implemented a formal mid-cycle review process. During January and February, the PIR Assessment Team reviews division assessment plans to ensure quality

assurance and to provide timely, actionable feedback to assessment leaders by the end of February.

Following the review, PIR sends each division an email outlining next steps in the assessment process. This communication includes the evaluated assessment plan report and the completed rubric with detailed feedback. PIR also schedules a follow-up meeting with each division to discuss the feedback, address questions, and offer additional support as needed.

This structured timeline allows divisions to revise their assessment plans, if necessary, before implementation or data collection begins.

Assessment components reviewed during the Mid-Cycle Review include:

- Mission statement
- Goals
- Objectives
- Supported initiatives
- Measures
- Targets
- Evidence that the plan is comprehensive and represents all units within the division

End-of-Cycle Review (Begins September 15)

Each September, the PIR Assessment Team conducts an end-of-cycle review to ensure quality assurance and provide summative feedback on completed assessment plans. At this stage, all assessment components should be finalized, including findings and analysis.

Following the review, PIR communicates next steps to each division via email, including the evaluated assessment plan report and the completed rubric. Because the end-of-cycle review overlaps with the beginning of the next assessment cycle, divisions are encouraged to use the feedback to inform strategic planning and guide the development of their subsequent assessment plans.