UNIVERSITY POLICY AC-14.01-05/11

TO:	**University of West Florida Community**
FROM:	**Dr. Judith Bense, President**
SUBJECT:	**Academic Learning Plans**
Responsible Office:	**Academic Affairs**

Academic departments are responsible for developing student learning outcomes, completing a curriculum audit, and designing an assessment plan to generate evidence regarding the quality of their programs. The department chair or program director has formal responsibility for submitting the Academic Learning Plan for all advanced degree programs to the Director of the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment for review and the appropriate College Dean for approval. Department members are responsible for incorporating relevant elements of the Academic Learning Plan in new course proposals as well as new degree programs. Relevant student learning outcomes related to the ALP should be included in the design of course syllabi.

The UWF Academic Learning Plan incorporates student learning outcome activity across five domains that should characterize the skills and abilities of graduates from a master's or doctoral program at UWF, regardless of discipline. Every ALP will address the following five domains:

> discipline knowledge and skills
> communication
> critical thinking
> integrity/values
> project management.

These five domains represent student learning outcomes identified by faculty as essential to advanced degrees conferred by UWF. Departments may elect to include a sixth domain that uniquely characterizes work in their master's or doctoral program.

Academic Learning Plans should be written in jargon-free language that will be understandable to potential students. Each department or program will generate a two-sided handout that includes the following elements:

> Mission statement of the department
> Student learning outcomes associated with each ALP domain
> Roster of possible kinds of employment related to completion of the major
> Summary of the assessment plan by which the students would demonstrate the outcomes

URL address for the web site of the program.

Physical copies of the ALP handouts will be made available to students through the department and electronic copies will be available online at the web sites of the program/department and of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. The UWF Catalog will address the role of Academic Learning Plans in general terms.

Each program will identify a minimum of one direct (e.g., portfolio analysis, capstone performance) and one indirect (e.g., exit survey, alumni satisfaction survey) measure as the foundation of its assessment plan. The commitment of the Academic Learning Plan is that students who complete any advanced degree program will have had the experiences designed to develop competence in the targeted domains of the university plan.

The department chair or program director of a graduate program or a designee will systematically review and revise the outcomes as influenced by the data generated by the respective departmental assessment plans. At minimum, departments or programs will devote at least one formal meeting per year to review of their assessment data and planning for curricular refinement.

Academic departments will ensure that the ALP is a current representation of the curriculum and goals of the master's or doctoral program. Departments will create an ALP for each new master's or doctoral program proposal and make appropriate revisions to the ALP of existing programs that undergo significant program revision. New and revised ALPs will be submitted prior to final approval of new programs or program revisions.

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES

Posting Current ALP Documents on the Web

To ensure that all representations of ALP documents on the web are consistent, the current electronic copy of department ALP documents will be archived on the web site of the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. Departments should provide a link to these documents from the departmental web page(s). All other web sites (including the departmental web site) should access this electronic document by linking to the appropriate file maintained on the CUTLA web site.

Content of an ALP

Academic Learning Plan will include the following elements:

• Mission statement of the department

• Student learning outcomes across five domains:

1. discipline knowledge and skills (content)

2. communication

3. critical thinking

4. integrity/values

5. project management

6. (optional sixth domain elected by departments that uniquely characterizes discipline-specific skills in the major not identified by the other domains).

• Roster of possible kinds of employment related to completion of the major

• Summary of the assessment plan by which the students would demonstrate the outcomes

• URL address for the web site of the graduate program.

Assessment and Review of Student Learning
Each program or department will identify a minimum of one direct (e.g., portfolio analysis, capstone performance) and one indirect (e.g., exit survey, alumni satisfaction survey) measure as the foundation of the program assessment plan. The commitment of the Academic Learning Plan is that students who graduate from any master's or doctoral program will have had the experiences designed to develop competence in the targeted domains of the university plan. The assessment plan must be submitted to the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment or its designee for approval and feedback.

Curriculum Maps/Matrices
Each program will create a curriculum map/matrix in which the location of learning activities related to student learning outcomes for ALP domains and program-related embedded assessments are identified. Curriculum maps/matrices should clearly identify the program-level student learning outcomes and embedded assessment activities in terms of specific courses and other curriculum components. Curriculum maps/matrices will be housed on departmental web sites with a link to the CUTLA web site.

Reporting of Assessment Activity
Programs and departments will make progress reports on their insights from assessment in the annual report submitted to Academic Affairs and posted on the university's planning information system (UPIC). These reports will include a description of assessment methods and activities, examples of assessment methods used, and descriptions of the improvements in master's or doctoral programs and/or assessment processes motivated by the review and interpretation of assessment evidence.
The Director of the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment will develop and post an annual overarching assessment report to the university information system to summarize activity, highlight particular achievements, and facilitate appropriate institutional planning related to curriculum development.

Yearly Audit
The Office of Academic Affairs and the Center for University Teaching, Learning, and Assessment will conduct a yearly audit to ensure that current ALPs are posted on the CUTLA web site and that links from departmental web pages to these documents are functional.

Validation of Assessment Strategies
Graduate programs and departments at UWF will seek external validation of the selected outcomes and assessment plans. Evaluation of the assessment program will be a standard feature of the seven-year program review. Departments may also pursue other venues of confirmation (e.g., comparisons with national test data, comparisons against benchmarks for comparable programs).

Regular Review of Assessment Data
The department chair or program director or a designee (such as an assessment or curriculum committee) will systematically review the student learning outcomes, review data generated by their respective assessment plans, and make recommendations for ALP revisions and/or program modifications based on the evidence from assessment activity. At a minimum, departments or programs will devote at least one formal meeting per year to review of their assessment data and planning for curricular refinement.

Use of Assessment Data

The university is committed to the recursive nature of assessment. The information gained through measuring student achievement should influence department curricular design, which should in turn influence student achievement. As such, student learning outcomes and assessment plans will be in continuous improvement mode.

Periodic Review of ALPs and Assessment Data

At minimum, departments or programs will devote at least one formal meeting per year to review of their assessment data, planning for curricular refinement, and evaluation of instructional strategies. This review may include revision of the ALP document.

When departments initiate changes to degree programs, the student learning outcomes from their current ALP will be imported into the CCR system. The CCR review process will include an evaluation of whether program changes require alteration of the SLOs and ALP document.

Departments undergoing periodic program reviews or discipline-specific accreditation reviews will include an evaluation of program SLOs to ensure that the current ALP is representative of the goals of the program at the time of the program review.

Data from periodic assessment activities, review of assessment data, and associated modifications of programs, teaching strategies, and assessment methods will be used to meet SACS standards concerning continuous assessment, review, and improvement of program effectiveness.
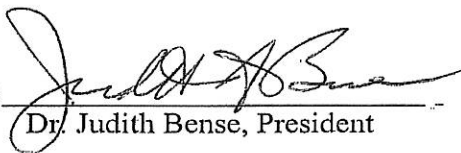
Revision of ALP Documents

Initiation of ALP revisions will reside with the individual departments.

Once a revision has been made by a department, the revised document should be sent to CUTLA, where it will be reviewed for language (including ensuring that all student learning outcomes are measurable) and formatting.

The document will then be routed to the appropriate College Dean for approval.

Documents that have been approved by the College Dean will then be posted to the CUTLA web site.

The previous version of the document will be archived by CUTLA.

Approved By: _____   Date: 5/14/11
Dr. Judith Bense, President

Approved by University of West Florida Faculty Senate March 19, 2010

Change Justification:

This policy is being repealed and is no longer needed because AC-14.01-05/11 Academic Learning Plans and AC-15.01-03/07 Academic Learning Compact Policies and Procedures were combined, amended, and restated in University Policy AC-43.01-09/16 Academic Learning Compacts and Academic Learning Plans.

History:

Academic Learning Plans, adopted May 2011; repealed hereby.

Approved: _____   Date: _____
           Dr. Judith A. Bense, President