

## **Addendum 2**

### **Combining Two or More Degree Programs into One Assessment Plan**

#### **Starting Point**

Annual assessment of program outcomes and student learning outcomes is required of all UA undergraduate and graduate degree programs listed in the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) Inventory. Assessment of program outcomes and student learning outcomes is also required of all UA degree programs offered online and/or at off-campus locations. Each of these ACHE-listed degree programs became an “entity” in UA’s new WEAVEonline Accreditation Management System during the 2011-12 academic year.

In August, 2012, the decision was made to permit UA academic departments the option to combine degree programs into one common annual assessment plan rather than require a separate annual assessment plan for every degree program. Under special circumstances and following specific procedures, it would be permissible, for example, to combine a BS and a BA degree program into one annual assessment plan. Or, it might be possible to combine the BS degree programs offered on campus, online and at off-campus sites into one assessment plan. Similarly, if different tracks or concentrations are offered within a degree program, it would be possible to create one common assessment plan to address all the degrees’ tracks. Or finally, it might be possible to add one additional student learning outcome to the core set of student learning outcomes in the combined assessment plan that would address the uniqueness of a particular degree program, track of delivery modality.

#### **Criteria**

The overarching criteria for combining degree programs into one annual assessment plan are:

- a) the respective program outcomes and student learning outcomes are essentially the same with only minor exceptions, and
- b) the assessment of the achievement of each outcome includes a representative sample of all constituents in the combined degree programs.

There are many different instances where overlapping program outcomes and student learning outcomes may exist (i.e., a BS and BA degree program, an MS and MA degree program, an online and an on-campus offering of the same degree program, multiple tracks or concentrations within a given degree program, etc.)

#### **Who Decides**

The decision to combine degree programs or degree offerings into one annual assessment plan should preferably originate from the program faculty. It will then be approved and advanced by the Department Chair where the degree program(s) reside and will ultimately be approved by the Dean of the respective college. An official memo of record is prepared and posted in the respective WEAVEonline Document Repository. (If a SACS off-site or on-site review committee inquires about

the assessment of outcomes of a degree program that has been subsumed into a combined annual assessment plan, this document will serve as the evidence affirming the rationale for the combined assessment approach)

### **Implementation Process**

The attached form is to be used to combine two or more degree programs or degree offerings into a single assessment plan (see attached *Request to Combine Degree Programs Into One Common Assessment Plan*):

- a. The Department Chair or his/her designee should complete the form.
- b. The Department Chair should secure the Dean's approval on the form.
- c. The Department Chair should send a signed copy of the completed form to Dr. Smallwood ([Bob.Smallwood@ua.edu](mailto:Bob.Smallwood@ua.edu))
- d. Dr. Smallwood will then post a copy of the signed form in the appropriate Document Repository in the 2012-13 WEAVE cycle. He will also amend the list of degree program WEAVE entities within the respective academic department.