

# Guiding Principles

The following principles are the foundation of the university's assessment plan:

- **Institutional Commitment:** The American University in Cairo is committed to establishing an assessment environment that encourages open reflection, supports innovation and experimentation in assessment methods, and promotes a culture of evidence in decision-making.
- **Primacy of Student Learning Outcomes:** The process of improving our student's acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities and values is at the core of the AUC mission. Assessment of student learning outcomes is therefore the university's priority in the development of an institution-wide assessment program.
- **Community "Ownership":** The involvement and support of faculty, faculty governance structures, administrators and staff are essential to the success of assessment at AUC.
  - Faculty members of each program shall have the primary responsibility for the development, implementation, and maintenance of assessment activities.
  - Clearly defined outcomes for each educational program shall originate with and be approved by the faculty who teach in those programs.
- **Multiple assessment measures:** Student learning should be assessed by both direct and indirect methods and quantitative and qualitative data to provide an informed, well-rounded, and accurate analysis.
- **Confidentiality:** Non-aggregated data gathered for assessment purposes shall remain confidential and shall be used only for the purposes of assessment.
- **A Secure Environment:** The results of student learning outcomes assessment shall not be used to evaluate faculty. However, demonstration of involvement in student learning outcomes assessment, the use of assessment results to improve teaching, development of new curricula based on assessment results, and other evidence of implementation of outcomes assessment in the classroom constitute important evidence of faculty commitment to improving teaching effectiveness.
- **Resources to Support Assessment:** The university shall provide resources to assist in the implementation of effective outcomes assessment, including financial support for faculty and administration training, institutional support for improvements in areas identified through assessment, and consideration of assessment activities in merit and promotion/retention/tenure decisions.
- **Open Access to Information:** Effective communication is critical to assessment success. Academic departments and units must communicate learning outcomes clearly and consistently in all communication materials. Course outcomes should be listed in individual course syllabi. When students understand what is expected of them and how their progress will be assessed, they become partners in the learning process.
  - Communication and collaboration between departments is also critical, particularly for interdisciplinary programs. Learning outcomes, departmental and unit assessment plans and reports, as well as best practices are information that should be shared openly across campus to reward innovation, spread awareness and provide learning tools for others.
- **Simplicity:** Assessment should be simple, workable, and consistent with the university's mission.