

Tyler Junior College

Assessment Manual

Revised 2015



**Executive Director, Institutional
Effectiveness, Planning & Research**

Dr. Cheryl Rogers
(903)510-3217
crog@tjc.edu

**Assistant Director,
Institutional Effectiveness**

Dr. Molly McCoy
(903)510-3318
mmcc@tjc.edu

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Organization of Assessment	2
Strategic Plan Assessment	2
General Education/Core Curriculum Assessment	3
<i>General Education Committee</i>	
College Program Review	5
<i>College Program Review Committee</i>	
Administrative Departmental Review	6
Annual Assessment	7
<i>Illustration of Annual Assessment Cycle</i>	
Academic Assessment Units	9
<i>Academic Assessment Committee</i>	
<i>Process for Assessment of Academic Plans and Reports</i>	
Administrative Assessment Units	11
<i>Process for Assessment of Administrative Plans and Reports</i>	
Definitions	13

Introduction

Assessment at Tyler Junior College strives to create a climate in which activities are continuously considered in light of how outcomes for students and other stakeholders may be improved. Assessment activities are carried out by academic and administrative units on an ongoing basis, with all departments and programs completing a Program or Departmental Review every five years and an Annual Assessment Report each year. Annual Assessment Reports are also created for the General Education/Core Curriculum and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), in addition to their year-end reports. All Annual Assessment Reports, including General Education and QEP, are documented in TracDat, the assessment management software used by the College. The current Strategic Plan is effective for five years and progress toward its goals is reported annually. Strategic Plan Objectives and Initiatives are dynamic and may be updated each year in response to completion or change of focus. The Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research (IEPR) office coordinates all assessment activities, procedures, records and reports. Further information regarding IEPR and assessment activities is available on the [IEPR website](#).

Organization of Assessment

Assessments at TJC are carried out according to varying timelines and follow different processes. Strategic Plan Assessment occurs at the institutional level, while all other assessment occurs at the program level. A procedural calendar developed each year by IEPR sets out the due dates for numerous activities and reports, including those involving assessment. The [Procedural Calendar](#) is distributed to those responsible for overseeing the various activities and is also available on the IEPR website. More detailed information on the assessment timelines and processes for [College Program Review](#) and [Administrative Departmental Program Review](#) can be found in their respective Rationale and Calendar documents.

Strategic Plan Assessment

The TJC Strategic Plan is assessed annually, with an informal semi-annual progress report followed by a full report at the conclusion of the fiscal year. The end-of-year [Strategic Plan Report](#) is posted on the IEPR website after it has been approved by the TJC Board of Trustees.

The structure of the Strategic Plan may be illustrated thus:

Goal – very broad in scope

- Objective – more specific but still broad
 - Initiative – a significant, measurable step toward completion of an Objective
 - Action/Strategy – a smaller task which contributes to the completion of an Initiative

Sixteen Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to measure the success of the Initiatives. Each Initiative is owned by one or more people who complete, or assign to others, actions or strategies to accomplish various parts of the Initiative. Each action/strategy has a target against which its success is measured. The resulting data points, when compiled under the Initiative, indicate whether the KPI has been achieved.

The Strategic Plan Report indicates the status of each Action/Strategy, reflecting progress toward achievement of the associated Initiative, Objective and Goal. An additional report, the Five Column Report, is generated in TracDat, the assessment software used at TJC. This report illustrates the alignment of all program and department level student learning and administrative outcomes with the Goals, Objectives and Initiatives of the Strategic Plan.

General Education/Core Curriculum Assessment

Under the leadership of the General Education Committee (GEC), the Tyler Junior College Core Curriculum was developed in response to a mandate from the State of Texas, and complies with specific directions from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

The [Core Curriculum](#) consists of approved courses in eight Foundational Component Areas (FCAs): Communication; Mathematics; Life and Physical Sciences; Language, Philosophy and Culture; Creative Arts; American History; Government/Political Science; and Social and Behavioral Sciences. Six Core Objectives – Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility – were identified by the THECB. College Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs), developed by the GEC and College faculty for each of the Core Objectives, are assessed in all Core Curriculum courses during each long semester. [Click here](#) for a link to these items, including an illustration of their alignment. Plans for assessing the CSLOs are submitted as part of the process of course approval for the Core Curriculum. Individual artifacts are assessed using the [College Rubrics](#) or variations requested by and approved for specific disciplines. Participating faculty receive calibration training to develop consistency in scoring.

A process is in place for changing various aspects of the assessments and for proposing new courses for the Core. Change Forms, and all other Core Curriculum forms and documents, can be found in Apache Access on the Faculty Tab, Core Curriculum Proposal Forms Channel, or by clicking [here](#).

Effective in fall 2014, all required Core Objectives are taught and assessed in all approved Core Curriculum courses, under the guidance and supervision of the General Education Committee.

Details of the components of the assessment plan are:

- **Assessment Methods:** Direct and indirect assessments are used for all Core Objectives. All direct assessments are course embedded assessments, which are performed every year. Indirect assessment is the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), which is administered in alternating years.
- **Criteria/Targets:** Each of the twelve College rubrics sets forth specific criteria and performance indicators. The institutional target for direct assessments of each Core Objective is for 70 percent of all qualified students (those who have already completed twenty college credits) to achieve or exceed expectations on each objective/criteria specified on each Core Objective rubric. The institutional target for CCSSE is to equal or surpass the frequency distribution of Tyler Junior College's cohort group on the questions identified as being related to each Core Objective.
- **Analysis:** Institutional Research extracts, collates, and analyzes data for all six Core Objectives each year, separating out all artifacts produced by students with fewer than 20 earned credit hours. The purpose of the twenty hour minimum is to capture only those students who have had opportunities in multiple Foundational Component Areas to acquire the competencies of the Core Curriculum. Data from the students with less than twenty hours may later be used to verify improvement of students with more than 20 completed semester hours.
- **Actions and Follow-up:** Following a period during which trend data is established, faculty in Foundational Component Areas use data from disaggregated results to develop and submit action plans as needed for improvement of student achievement on specific CSLOs.

General Education Committee

The General Education Committee, a College Standing Committee, bears primary responsibility for ensuring that assessment of the Core Curriculum is carried out in all sections of all Core courses during every long semester. The GEC coordinates assessment of the artifacts, using methods appropriate to each Core Objective. For example, an interdisciplinary faculty team may be trained to assess the writing and oral/visual artifacts, while teamwork results may be compiled by the faculty member teaching the course. Aggregate results are analyzed for a broad understanding of student achievement, and disaggregated by Foundational Component Area and criteria/performance indicators in order to identify specific strengths and weaknesses. In addition, the GEC evaluates the effectiveness of the assessments and rubrics, and follows the established process (see link to Core Curriculum documents and forms, above) to allow revisions when problems are identified.

Professional development provided by the GEC includes instruction in the use of the rubrics and calibrating them for reliability, techniques for teaching and assessing Core Objectives, and any other area that is deemed necessary. The GEC also assists faculty in developing action plans for deficient areas. After changes have been implemented,

follow-up results are compared to prior years to determine whether changes provided measurable improvement.

The GEC provides an annual report to the College with the results of the assessments compiled and analyzed during the previous year, including identification of areas of low attainment.

College Program Review

Tyler Junior College's College Program Review is a comprehensive, systematic method of self-evaluation and review of achievement of departmental/program purposes and goals. The program review process complements on-going institutional effectiveness and is a vital part of the Tyler Junior College strategic planning effort. It is the means by which all instructional programs periodically review themselves according to a set of established criteria.

All academic departments and programs undertake a program review every five years, following a schedule published in the College Program Review Rationale and Calendar. Each department/program performs an in-depth self-study which is reviewed by their Dean prior to submission to the College Program Review Committee, in accordance with the timeline included in the Rationale and Calendar. Following the completion of all steps of the process, the report is submitted to the Provost who reviews it and provides feedback to the department or program chair. The Provost also uses the report to take administrative action and/or in the budget process to allocate financial resources that may have been requested for use in the next academic year.

All documents pertaining to the College Program Review process can be viewed [here](#).

College Program Review Committee

The College Program Review Committee, a College Standing Committee, oversees the process of College Program Review and assists departments/programs with their reviews. Responsibilities of committee members are to:

- Help deans/department chairs in devising and implementing an ongoing process of program review that is appropriate for each department/program.
- Provide resources and recommendations to departments pertaining to the means and methods of program review at appropriate intervals for the purpose of departmental and institutional development.
- Encourage a campus-wide conversation that establishes the value of a College program review process for our own use.

- Monitor concerns over the review process and to respond to expressed concerns as appropriate.
- Work with and advise the Director of Institutional Research in establishing institutional policies for the collection and reporting of student/program data.
- Make recommendations to the Provost regarding the rationale and procedure for regular program review and to make recommendations regarding changes to program review standards.
- Submit to the Dean's Office the Reviewer's Feedback Form for use in making revisions of the self-study and developing the Executive Summary.

Administrative Departmental Review

The Tyler Junior College Administrative Departmental Review is a comprehensive, systematic method of self-evaluation and a review of progress toward achievement of departmental purposes and goals. The review process has been developed to complement on-going institutional effectiveness and has become a vital part of Tyler Junior College strategic planning efforts. It is the means by which all administrative departments periodically review themselves according to a set of established criteria.

For purposes of the Administrative Departmental Review, administrative department is defined as follows:

Any department of the College whose function is to provide administrative, academic and student support services to the students, faculty, staff, or other stakeholders of the College. The primary focus of an administrative department is *on process and/or student learning outcomes that foster student development*. An administrative division/department is allocated fiscal resources (i.e. budget) on an annual basis.

The Administrative Departmental Review process is intended to:

- Identify roles and functions of the department and its sub-units and their impact on the institution by:
 - Enhancing knowledge of department functions and activities
 - Validating strengths of department functions
 - Ascertaining opportunities for improvement
 - Determining future directions and needs
 - Defining goals and identifying obstacles that may inhibit the division/department from achieving them
 - Documenting evidence of excellence
- Assess department strengths and opportunities for improvement by:

- Facilitating and encouraging feedback from all stakeholders
 - Holding department administrators accountable for achievement
 - Ascertaining whether resources are adequately and properly utilized
 - Determining whether the department is supporting the College's mission
 - Generating information and statistics that serve other institutional purposes
 - Serving as a checkpoint between the College and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, or other accreditation agencies, between reaffirmation visits
- Apply assessment results by:
 - Linking stakeholders to improvement opportunities
 - Providing a mechanism for improvement of department services and ensuring improvement of same
 - Fostering a collaborative workplace
 - Accelerating progress toward institutional goals by supporting institutional effectiveness
 - Developing ways in which department obstacles can be overcome

All administrative departments within the College undertake a review every five years. The schedule is included in the Rationale and Calendar each year, and is updated annually as needed. Each September the departments scheduled to be reviewed are notified by the College officer to whom they report and department heads are invited to an orientation given by Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research (IEPR). Any variations to the review schedule must be approved by the appropriate Vice President, Provost, or President. Following completion of the Review each department presents an executive summary to the Executive Cabinet. The President uses the report to take administrative action and/or in the budget process to allocate financial resources that may have been requested for use in the next academic year.

All documents pertaining to the Administrative Departmental Review process can be viewed [here](#).

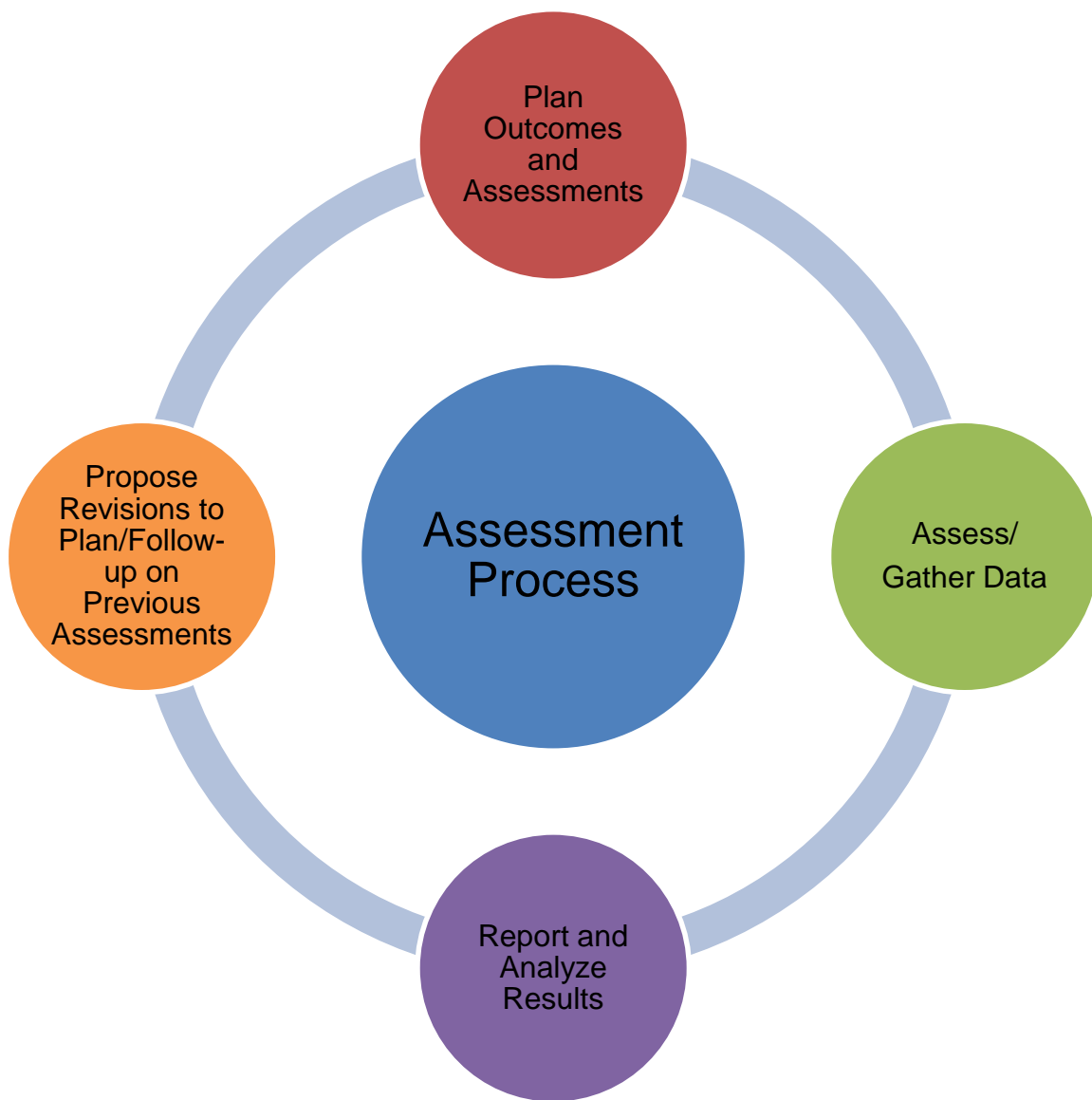
Annual Assessment

Every assessment unit (academic department or program, administrative department) at Tyler Junior College prepares an Annual Assessment Plan (AAP) and creates an Annual Assessment Report (AAR) which details the completion of that plan. Plans and Reports are entered in TracDat in accordance with the Procedural Calendar dates approved by the Deans and the Executive Cabinet. Academic units develop and assess program level student learning outcomes as well as administrative outcomes related to other aspects of the program. These may include faculty development, persistence and graduation rates, having industry-standard equipment, community outreach, recruiting, or other indicators the unit finds significant for program success. Administrative units plan and assess outcomes related to process and improvement of

department functions and, when appropriate, student learning outcomes focused on student development.

Training on developing outcomes and assessing them, creating useful documents, and determining what to do with results of assessments, is offered by IEPR periodically, and not less than once each year. Training for new users of TracDat who will be responsible for entering assessment information is offered at least twice a year.

Illustration of Annual Assessment Cycle



Academic Assessment Units

The annual assessment cycle for academic units follows the academic year calendar, beginning in mid-August when fall classes begin and ending in May at the conclusion of the spring semester. (For programs which run a 12-month calendar the cycle ends at the conclusion of the summer sessions). Faculty from each academic unit identify expected outcomes along with assessment methods and criteria for success of each outcome. They assess, in all modes of delivery and at all locations, the extent to which outcomes are achieved and, based on analysis of results, determine whether to:

- 1) use the results to plan changes directed at improvement,
- 2) continue the assessment in the same manner in order to look for trends, or
- 3) move on to assess a different outcome.

This information is entered in TracDat in accordance with the due dates published in the Procedural Calendar. Reporting includes the entry of follow-up to prior year outcomes in which the criterion was not met, detailing what results were achieved after changes were made and further assessment was completed.

Alongside and concurrent with this process, Institutional Effectiveness and the Tyler Junior College Assessment Committee review the assessment plans and reports and assist units in improving assessments and ensuring their completion.

Academic Assessment Committee

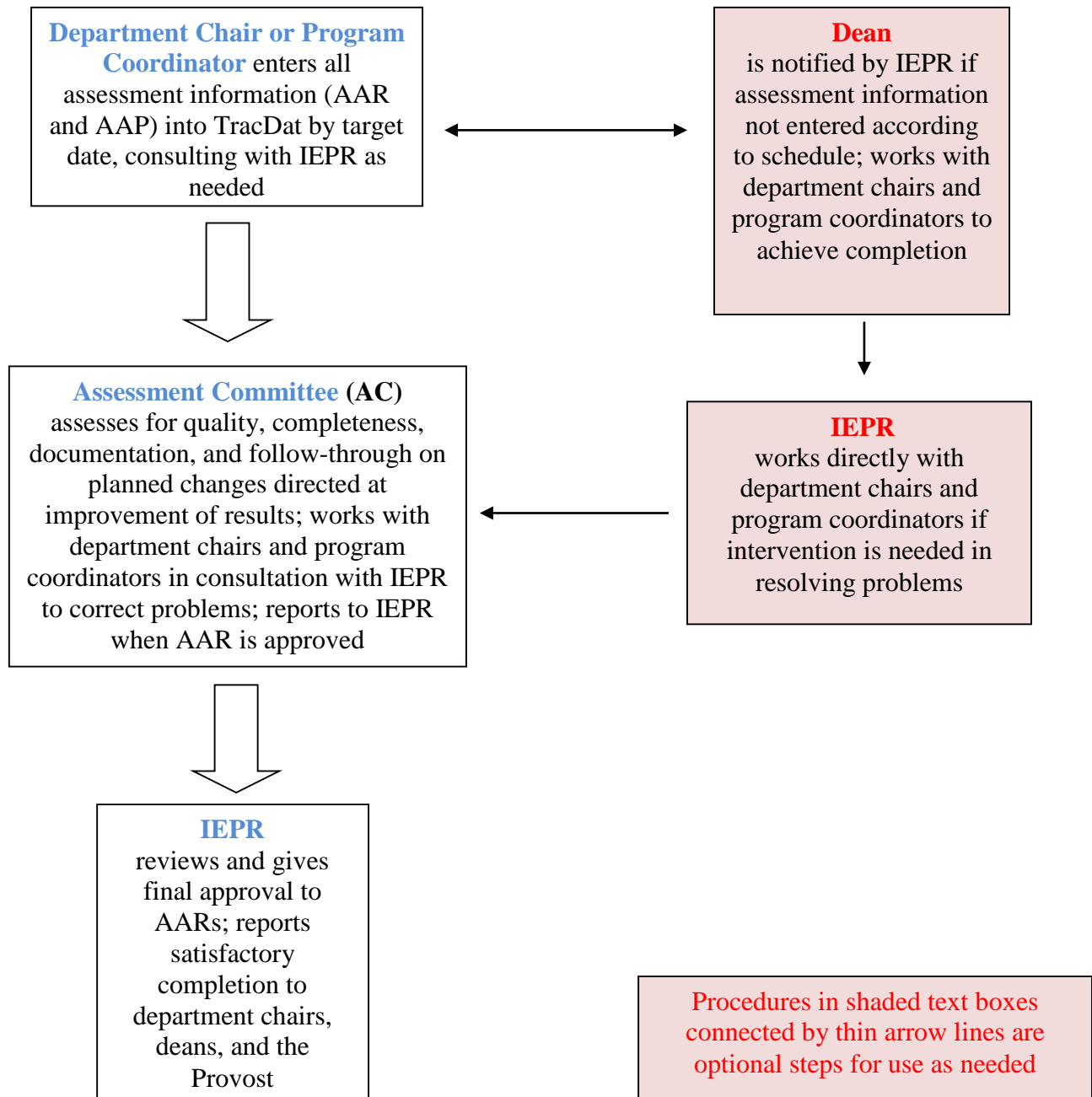
The purpose of the Assessment Committee, a College Standing Committee, is: To promote continuous improvement and enhancement of student learning through the use of assessment data; to discuss and share assessment strategies, make assessment resources available to encourage continued learning about assessment, and maintain the College's learning outcomes; to serve as a repository for faculty, department, and school assessment efforts; and to encourage challenging and creative student-centered instruction.

The primary duties of the committee are to:

- Assist IEPR by serving as peer reviewers of academic departments' Annual Assessment Reports and facilitators for the development, completion, and reporting of all Academic Program Level Assessments.
- Consult with and assist department chairs and program coordinators in the identification of meaningful program level student learning outcomes that align with the goals of TJC's Strategic Plan, and the determination of appropriate criteria and assessment methods for use in assessing these outcomes.
- Advise and assist department chairs and program coordinators with the completion of Annual Assessment Reports. This includes the documentation of assessment results in a useful format, reporting of results, analysis of those results, and determination of steps to be taken to address shortcomings. Committee members also strive to ensure the reporting of follow-up activities and results which allow for "closing the loop" on an assessment.

- Assess academic departments' and programs' Annual Assessment Plans (AAPs) and completed Annual Assessment Reports (AARs).
- Identify departments and programs which have done outstanding work in student learning outcomes assessment, or are making significant strides in improving assessment, and publicly recognize them with the presentation of Academic Assessment Awards.

Process for Assessment of Academic Plans and Reports



Administrative Assessment Units

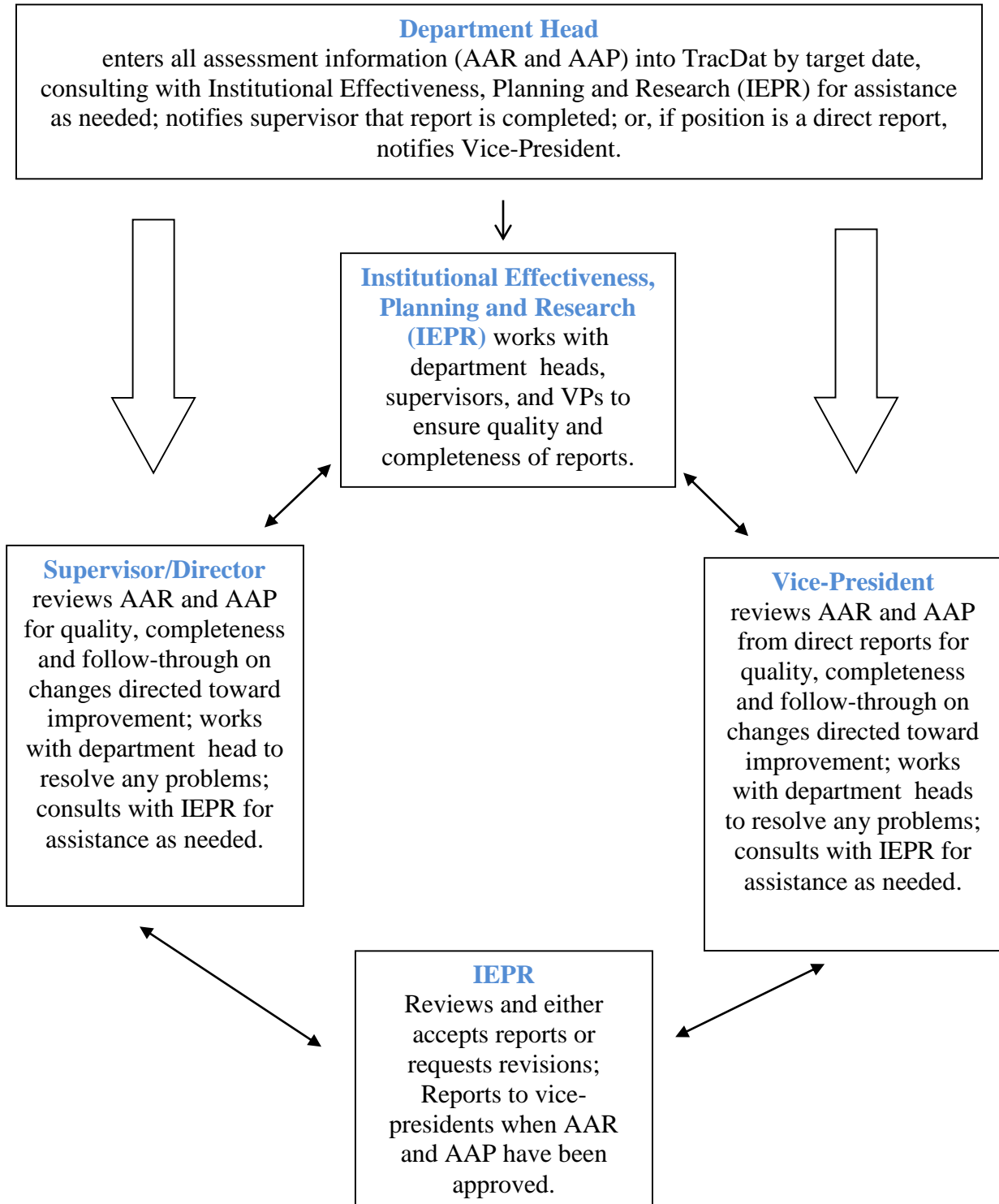
The annual assessment cycle for administrative units follows the fiscal year calendar, beginning on September 1 and ending on August 31. Outcomes are developed by each department and entered in TracDat at the beginning of the cycle, along with assessment methods and criteria for success of each outcome. Throughout the year departments implement and assess the plans. Shortly after the end of the assessment year they report the results, analyze the success of each outcome, and determine whether to

- 1) create a plan for improvement,
- 2) continue the assessment until the criterion is met, or
- 3) move on to a new outcome.

This information is entered in TracDat in accordance with the due dates published in the Procedural Calendar. TracDat reporting includes the entry of follow-up to prior year outcomes in which the criterion was not met, detailing what results were achieved after changes were made or a project was completed.

IEPR staff reviews all Annual Assessment Plans and Annual Assessment Reports and works directly with department heads to ensure that Plans and Reports are complete and accurate. When the review process is complete, the department head and the supervisor are notified by IEPR that their Annual Assessment Report has been approved. An illustration of the process may be found on the next page.

Process for Assessment of Administrative Plans and Reports



Definitions

Annual Assessment Plan (AAP) – An annual plan for assessing outcomes in a unit. (A unit at TJC is a program of study or an administrative entity, e.g. English, Welding, Business, Advising, Testing Services, etc.) At the conclusion of an assessment year the faculty or staff of a unit meets to review the results of the previous year's assessments. They develop a plan for use of the results, either making changes for the coming year directed toward improving results, or developing new outcomes to replace those successfully achieved. The result of this process is the Annual Assessment Plan for the coming year, consisting of Outcomes, Means of Assessment, and Criterion for success.

Annual Assessment Report (AAR) – The annual report generated after completing the assessments created in the Annual Assessment Plan. In addition to Outcomes, Means of Assessment, and Criteria for success, the report includes the Results and Analysis of assessments and the Use of those Results directed at improvement. Follow-up is added to the previous year's Use of Result statement of each assessment whose criterion was not met in that year, describing the results of the changes planned in Use of Results. Appropriate documentation is provided for all aspects of the assessments.

TracDat - A Web-based assessment management system designed to help institutions manage assessment, planning, and quality improvement processes, and overcome common assessment obstacles. Tyler Junior College uses TracDat to generate Annual Assessment Plans and Annual Assessment Reports for all assessment units, and for reporting the alignment of all outcomes to the areas of the Strategic Plan that they support.