**Guidelines for Graduate Program Assessment**

**Basic Assessment Plans**

For many graduate degrees, assessment can easily build on what faculty and students are already doing. In many cases, students are asked to pull together what they’ve learned in a research project, comprehensive exam, thesis, field placement or other culminating experience or assignment. These can serve as the basis for assessing program learning outcomes. It will also be the case in many programs that faculty often get together to discuss the program and how students are performing, and might make program changes as a result.

A graduate program assessment plan should therefore take these existing activities where they exist and provide more structure to the assessments, faculty conversations and resulting actions. Where a culminating assignment does not exist, faculty should identify common assignments across the curriculum that can serve as the basis for evaluating one or more learning outcomes. In short, a graduate program assessment plan needs to identify:

1. Degree program learning outcomes (see examples below)
2. Existing assignments that can serve as a basis for evaluation of learning outcomes
3. A schedule describing which outcomes will be assessed each year
4. A description of a systematic means of assessment for each outcome. This might be a rubric-based assessment of an assignment, or an evaluation of the results of comprehensive exams or defenses. It might also include % of students completing required trainings such as ethics or teaching trainings.
5. A scheduled conversation among faculty each year to discuss results of assessment and make curricular recommendations where warranted
6. A simple report each year to capture outcomes and plans

These plans and reports should be done using the templates on the Office of the Provost website (<https://provost.uoregon.edu/curriculum-assessment-resources>).

**Learning Outcomes**

Consider the following as examples of broad learning outcomes that might be appropriate for most graduate programs. These could be modified to meet the needs of specific programs.

For coursework masters’ students:

1. Demonstrate mastery of subject content knowledge.
2. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of basic lab safety and the requirements to assist in establishing a safe lab environment.
4. Understand ethical issues and responsibilities especially in matters related to professionalism and (if applicable) in matters related the laboratory setting and in writing and publishing scientific papers.

For thesis masters’ students:

1. Demonstrate mastery of subject content knowledge.
2. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills.
3. Conduct independent research and analysis in their disciple and contribute substantive work in their field.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of basic lab safety and the requirements to assist in establishing a safe lab environment.
5. Understand ethical issues and responsibilities especially in matters related to professionalism, data collection, the laboratory setting and in writing and publishing theses, dissertations and scientific papers.

For doctoral students:

1. Demonstrate mastery of subject content knowledge.
2. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills.
3. Conduct independent research and analysis in their disciple and contribute original and substantive work in their field.
4. Demonstrate independent scientific thinking and advanced knowledge in their current discipline and in related areas of their discipline.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of basic lab safety and the requirements to assist in establishing a safe lab environment.
6. Understand ethical issues and responsibilities especially in matters related to professionalism, data collection, the laboratory setting and in writing and publishing theses, dissertations and scientific papers.
7. Professionalization into the field of study: publications, presentations, attended conferences, received funded fellowships, and professional association activities.