

Step 5: Collect and Analyze PLO Data

The fifth step in the assessment cycle is to collect and analyze the PLO data. To collect the data, departments will follow the procedures they devised during Step 4.

PLO Data Analysis

Qualitative Data Analysis. At least two faculty members should independently score the student products generated by a qualitative culminating assignment (e.g., capstone project manuscripts, essay questions on a comprehensive exam, oral presentations, performances, exhibits) using the rubric faculty members have devised for that assignment. All faculty members who serve as scorers should first be “calibrated” in the rubric. That is, they should practice scoring at least five students’ artifacts (not from the collection of randomly chosen ones) and work to develop consensus on what each score means so that their assessments converge. The Office of Assessment is available to help with rubric calibration. It also may be contacted if the program would like help developing a procedure for how to manage raters’ divergent rubric scores when evaluating the student products.

The data should be organized in a table. Here’s what a rubric scoring table might look like after the faculty have evaluated students’ product:

English BA Program Portfolio Rubric Ratings								
PLO		Raters’ Average Score						PLO Average (out of 5.00)
		Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 6	
ENGL- PLO-3	Closely analyzes literary texts using appropriate literary and critical vocabulary	4.10	1.98	4.89	3.12	2.12	3.92	3.36
ENGL- PLO-4	Synthesizes theoretical knowledge to produce original written interpretations of literary texts	2.97	.93	2.1	.78	1.43	3.2	1.90
ENGL- PLO-5	Appropriately employs pertinent secondary sources in writing	4.50	2.88	4.75	4.20	3.35	4.00	3.95
ENGL- PLO-6	Demonstrates effective communication skills in academic, professional, or creative writing	3.89	2.34	4.62	2.77	1.45	3.13	3.03

Sample rubric scoring table.

Quantitative Data Analysis. Quantitative data, such as that generated by closed-ended tests, whether created by department faculty or purchased from a standardized testing company, should be presented in a table so that people can make sense of the information.

When creating a table, be sure to give the table a descriptive title so that readers will know what is

being presented. Each of the columns and rows should also have a clear title. Each cell should contain only one piece of information (rather than multiple numbers separated by commas). The table should specify the following:

- Quarter (fall, winter, or spring) and year when the data were collected
- Number of students whose data is included
- PLO data

Any reader should be able to look at the table and understand it.

Here's what data for the first year might look like:

Music BM Program		
MFT Percentile Results – Spring 2014		
PLO Measured	MFT Sub-section	Average
MUSC-PLO-2	Written History	93%
MUSC-PLO-3	Listening Comprehension	84%
MUSC-PLO-8	Written Theory	92%
Number of Students		16

Sample table with one year of PLO results.

Data from multiple quarters should be included in the same table so that people can see whether there are trends over time:

Music BM Program – MFT Percentile Results					
PLO Measured	MFT Sub-section	Spr 14 Average	Fall 14 Average	Wnt 15 Average	Average
MUSC-PLO-2	Written History	93%	88%	91%	90%
MUSC-PLO-3	Listening Comprehension	84%	78%	82%	88%
MUSC-PLO-8	Written Theory	92%	86%	94%	92%
Number of Students		16	18	12	

Sample table with three quarters of PLO results.

The Office of Assessment and Accreditation can help faculty organize program data in tables.