

# Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

## Institutional Effectiveness Plan 2025-2027



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## Institutional Effectiveness Plan

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## Introduction

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania is committed to a comprehensive and data-driven approach to institutional effectiveness. This systematic process of assessment, evaluation, and enhancement ensures the university's ongoing ability to fulfill its mission and achieve strategic goals. The following institutional effectiveness plan establishes the framework for continually monitoring all facets of university operations and utilizing evidence to inform decision-making processes.

By engaging in regular and rigorous review cycles, the university identifies strengths and opportunities for improvement across academic programs, administrative units, and educational support services. Findings are analyzed through an objective lens to develop targeted initiatives and allocate resources optimally to drive institutional quality and foster an environment of constant progression. This protocol validates Kutztown's accountability to its stakeholders and positions the university as a responsible steward of public funds.

The overarching objectives of the institutional effectiveness plan are to:

- 1) Uphold the university's mission, values, and commitment to the public good.
- 2) Maintain academic excellence and continuously elevate student success, including student learning outcomes.
- 3) Optimize operational efficiency and sustainable resource utilization .
- 4) Instill a spirit of proactive advancement and self-evaluation throughout the institution.

Although an institutional effectiveness plan is but one aspect of the integrated planning necessary for an institution, it is key in providing the essential information on the university's health, impact, and performance. The Kutztown University Institutional Effectiveness Plan aims to ensure that the university produces and obtains the evidence needed to support impactful and resource-conscious decision making. In this plan, we outline the reflection on, and evaluation of, outcomes and processes that will drive improvements and innovation at the university, with the end of fulfilling our mission and achieving our goals as outlined in the strategic plan.

## Overview of Key Cycles

Foundational to any institutional effectiveness plan is establishing what should be assessed and the timeline for that assessment, given that the iterative nature of

institutional effectiveness is paramount to its success. Thus, Kutztown University establishes the following cycle of assessments:

Assessment	Cycle
University Mission	Every four (4) years
Strategic Plan	Annually
Financial Sustainability (CPP)	Annually
Institutional Accreditation (Middle States Commission on Higher Education)	Every eight (8) years
Shared Governance System	Every five (5) years
Student Success and Engagement (National Survey of Student Engagement)	Annually; Every three (3) years
Academic Department Goals and Results	Annually
Academic Programs (SLOs)	Annually
Academic Program Review	Every five (5) years
Administrative Units Goals and Results	Annually
Administrative Units Program Review	Every five (5) years
Institutional Effectiveness Plan	Every two (2) years

## University Mission and Strategic Plan

### Mission

As stipulated in the bylaws of the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee (SPRC), the Kutztown University mission is reviewed, revised as necessary, and reaffirmed every four years. The review process, initiated by the SPRC, shall afford all university stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the process by offering feedback. Affirmation of the mission begins in SPRC, moves to the President's Cabinet, and appears on the Council of Trustees agenda for the final endorsement.

### Strategic Plan

Kutztown University's strategic plan is a living document with five overarching pillars or goals. In an effort to remain agile and responsive to the changing academic environment, the university decided to make its strategic plan a rolling plan in 2022. There are several potential advantages to taking an iterative approach to strategic planning for a higher education institution, rather than adhering to a strict time-bound plan, including:

- Continuous Improvement: The iterative nature of our process is a perpetual analysis that promotes a culture of intentional, incremental progress.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Such a model provides more frequent opportunities to gather feedback from stakeholders and to incorporate those perspectives into updated goal setting.
- **Evolving Environmental Context:** To achieve its mission, Kutztown University must remain agile in the face of rapid changes, including technological advances and political shifts. Events such as the COVID-19 pandemic have made many institutions acutely aware of creating integrated strategic plans that are characterized by nimbleness while maintaining fiscal and operational stability.
- **Flexibility, Responsiveness, and Resource Optimization:** As these environmental circumstances change, resource allocation must be constantly examined to ensure the financial health of the university.

Throughout each academic year, the Strategic Initiatives subcommittee of the SPRC considers recommendations for changes made to the plan's objectives and actions, which, once approved by the full SPRC, move to a final vote in Cabinet. This process also includes the reaffirmation of the iterative plan model itself. It is our perspective that an iterative strategic plan vigilantly positions the institution to adapt intentionally and proactively, while maintaining a consistent overarching vision and framework for effectiveness.

## Financial Sustainability

Kutztown University's financial sustainability is evaluated on an annual basis as part of a system-wide process instituted by the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education's Boards of Governors and outlined in Policy 2019-01. Each September the university submits a Comprehensive Planning Narrative, which typically includes an executive summary, strategic goals, enrollment data with future year projections, workforce data, financial data with future year projections, and academic program strategies. As part of the evaluation process, the chief financial officers and the chief academic officers across the State System provide feedback and ask follow-up questions. This larger group of peers then meets to discuss the individual submissions and determine each school's financial status by placing them in one of four potential categories: No Plan (Green), Plan 1 (Yellow), Plan 2 (Orange), or Plan 3 (Red). The process also requires institutions to submit an annual progress report, typically in the spring semester. Kutztown University keeps the campus community apprised of the process and the results of the evaluation at various meetings (including Strategic Planning and Resources Committee, University Senate, Council of Trustees) and by means of a public website.

[KU's Comprehensive Planning Process](#)

Each February, Cabinet distributes templates and guidelines for strategic funding initiatives and base budget requests. This process allows departments to request one-time or base budget increases that support the advancement of the university's priorities. Departments must clearly demonstrate how their requests align with the university's strategic plan. Each vice president prioritizes the requests within their division, and Cabinet reviews all submissions and determines which will receive funding.

## Shared Governance System

Convened by the University Senate President in 2022, the university's Shared Governance Task Force established an evaluative cycle for the review of the shared governance structure at Kutztown University. In accordance with the recommendation of the task force, the Shared Governance structure shall be assessed every five years.

## Student Success Benchmarks and Assessment

Student success is a holistic term encompassing not only student learning and academic achievement, but also career-preparedness, well-being, and personal growth.

The Office of Institutional Research is responsible for tracking, posting, and reporting institutional markers of student success, such as retention, persistence, and completion. These metrics play a critical role in all aspects of planning for the university and impact ongoing initiatives at each level of the institution.

Student success is also evaluated by means of indirect assessments. Kutztown University, for instance, along with other institutions in the PASSHE System, administers the National Survey of Student Engagement every three years. Typically, two additional modules form part of the survey: First-Year Experience and Senior Transitions, and Academic Advising. Each of these modules aligns with the university's strategic plan and provides the means to evaluate our progress toward achieving our mission and goals. Given the critical nature of student success initiatives, outcomes are also assessed through roll-up reports on annual operational goals and outcomes from key student-facing offices, as well as through the program review process.

## Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

### Institutional Learning Outcomes

Kutztown University's institutional learning outcomes stem from the institutional mission and therefore are revised, reaffirmed, and/or realigned to the mission every four years. All

graduate programs map their learning outcomes directly to the institutional learning outcomes. At the undergraduate level, General Education learning outcomes are mapped to the Institutional Learning Outcomes, while programmatic learning outcomes are aligned to the General Education learning outcomes. This summary mapping (Mission -> Institutional Learning Outcomes -> General Education Learning Outcomes) is publicly available on the KU Institutional Effectiveness website. Additionally, the Nuventive platform houses all curriculum maps.

### [Summary Mapping](#)

## General Education Outcomes

The General Education program at Kutztown University, the cornerstone of the university's liberal arts curriculum, is on a five-year assessment cycle. In addition to the assessment of the eight student learning outcomes, student success metrics are collected annually by the Office of the Provost, including student success factors in the First-Year Seminar and the composition courses. These high impact educational experiences are foundational to students' education at Kutztown and thus merit extensive evaluation on a yearly basis. Finally, the General Education program participates in a full program review every five years, following the same guidelines as other academic programs at the university.

### [General Education Assessment Schedule](#)

## Programmatic Learning Outcomes

Academic programs—majors, stand-alone minors, and certificates—establish and assess student learning outcomes as an integral part of routine evaluation of educational outcomes. Assessment of each program's student learning outcomes occurs within a three-year cycle. Each program determines which SLOs they will assess during the cycle and submits the schedule to the Office of Assessment for posting on the public website. Inasmuch as outcomes are the focus, flexibility is expected as faculty observe shifts in student learning or introduce new courses that may impact results, provided that each SLO is assessed at least once during the three-year cycle.

Stand-alone minors are likewise assessed on this cycle.

Annual assessment reports are due from each academic program in late September, after which the personnel in the Office of Assessment provide feedback using the rubric approved by the Academic Assessment Council. Both the reports and the feedback are housed in our Nuventive software system.



In mid-February, action updates are collected from each program to ensure accurate tracking of progress. Feedback on this simple, but important, report is provided by the Office of Assessment, and these artifacts are also stored in Nuventive.

[Templates for Annual Assessment Report and Action Updates](#)

## Divisions, Administrative Units, Academic Departments

All divisions, administrative units, and academic departments establish annual operational goals to improve efficiency, move the office forward, and to help advance the university. Goals, objectives, and action plans should be determined with the input of as many members of the team in question as possible. Annual plans are shared with the appropriate vice president or dean before uploading directly into the assessment software system (Nuventive).

Results of the evaluation of annual goals should be completed by April 30, with goals for the upcoming year uploaded to Nuventive by June 30. Goals must include action plans and measurable outcomes, as well as be mapped to the university's Strategic Plan.

## Program Review

The provost, or designee, maintains an accurate, publicly available schedule for the review of both the academic programs and the administrative units. In the event that a program falls behind on the schedule, the next launch date of the cycle remains the same; in other words, a delayed cycle does not postpone the next review or reset the cycle.

[KU Program Review Schedules](#)

Local guidelines for program review are vigorous and respond to the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education policies and procedures regarding program review.

### Academic Program Review (APR)

Major programs, as well as stand-alone minor programs, undergo a full evaluative review every five years. The steps in the review are the following:

- Data collection, reflection, and drafting of the self-study.
- Two external experts in the discipline — chosen by the program faculty and approved by the appropriate dean and the provost — conduct a campus visit and draft a report.
- Meeting among the chair, program review chair, and the dean to summarize the college's portion of the cycle. The dean completes a summary of the review.



- All the above-mentioned documents are sent to the APR subcommittee of SPRC. The subcommittee presents a summative review to the entire committee, focusing on any strategic (budgeting) issues that warrant the attention of the organization.
- The APR subcommittee chair communicates the results of the SPRC review to the program, the dean, and the provost.
- The Office of the Provost schedules a final summary meeting with all stakeholders.
- The university submits an executive summary of the review to the State System.

For those programs with disciplinary accreditation, the accreditation report moves through the same cycle as listed above with the addition of any information required by the APR guidelines that is not required by the accreditor. The specific addenda to the accreditation report are determined by the dean and the department or program chair. Those programs whose accreditation cycle is every 10 years must complete a full academic review as per the non-accredited programs halfway through the cycle (i.e., fifth year). Such specialized accreditations reinforce our commitment to maintaining currency and providing an education that enables students to move successfully into their post-collegiate career activities.

APR guidelines shall be reviewed, revised if necessary, and reaffirmed at least every four years by the APR subcommittee of the SPRC.

### Administrative Program Review

Similar to academic programs, all administrative units conduct a summative assessment every five years, including a self-study and summary evaluation by the Administrative Program Review subcommittee of SPRC. As determined in consultation with the appropriate vice president, an external review should be conducted at least every 10 years. All administrative reviews focus on the assessment of the functions, processes, and services offered by the unit/office. As a systematic, iterative process, administrative program review promotes accountability, proactive enhancement, and optimal alignment of university resources with strategic priorities. A public schedule of the reviews is updated annually by the Associate Vice President for Accreditation, Assessment and Curriculum, confirmed by SPRC, and posted on the Office of Assessment website.

The administrative program review procedures are as follows:

- Data collection, reflection, and drafting of the self-study.
- An evaluation team composed of experienced administrators from peer institutions evaluates the self-study report and supplementary materials (at least once every other cycle).

- Unit supervisor meets with the vice president to summarize the findings, which are synthesized to generate a multi-year strategic plan that codifies new initiatives, responsibility matrices, timelines, and budgetary requirements.
- All documents are forwarded to the Administrative Program Review subcommittee of SPRC. The subcommittee presents a summative review to the larger committee, focusing on any strategic (budgeting) issues that warrant the attention of the organization.
- The chair of the subcommittee submits a summary report to the vice president.
- The university submits an executive summary of the review to the State System.
- Enacted strategies are monitored longitudinally via annual reports and key performance indicators tracked centrally.

The administrative program review process provides an objective framework for critical self-examination, planning, and translating findings into substantive actions. This reiterative practice drives coherence, quality, and continual refinement of Kutztown University's administrative apparatus.

## Summary

Kutztown University's Institutional Effectiveness Plan represents a comprehensive framework for systematic assessment, continuous improvement, and data-informed decision making across all institutional domains. Through regular evaluation cycles, clearly defined processes, and integrated planning mechanisms, the university demonstrates its commitment to academic excellence, student success, and operational efficiency. This living document aligns with the University's mission and strategic priorities while providing the flexibility needed to respond to evolving challenges in higher education. By establishing clear accountability measures, assessment protocols, and review cycles for academic programs, administrative units, and student learning outcomes, the plan ensures that Kutztown University maintains its standards of excellence while fostering a culture of evidence-based enhancement. As the institution moves forward, this plan will continue to serve as the foundational guide for measuring institutional performance, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing strategic changes that advance the Kutztown University's mission and goals. To that end, this Institutional Effectiveness Plan will be reviewed, revised, and amended as necessary on a two-year cycle.

Approved by Cabinet: 4 February 2025

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Infrastructure/Accountability

### *Academic Assessment Council*

The Academic Assessment Council guides and facilitates the processes and procedures surrounding the assessment of student learning outcomes. Decision about the adequacy of the assessments and any follow-up actions rest with the respective department faculty and college deans. Further, it is the responsibility of the AAC to write the university's annual assessment report, which is shared publicly on the Office of Assessment website.

### *Office of Assessment*

The Office of Assessment is staffed by two Assessment Fellows, faculty members who receive a half-time course release to serve as consultants on the assessment of student learning outcomes. The Assessment Fellows oversee the collection of annual reports on program learning outcomes, the uploading of the assessment data into Nuventive, and feedback on those annual reports to ensure the “closing of the loop.” The Office of Assessment is also tasked with writing the institution's annual assessment report.

### *General Education and Program Assessment Committee (GEPAC)*

GEPAC's purpose is to administer the General Education program, to collect and analyze assessment data from the program, and to submit data-informed recommendations to the Division of Academic Affairs and the University Curriculum Committee so as to enhance the structure, content, and outcomes of the General Education program at Kutztown University.

### *Institutional Research*

The Office of Institutional Research has primary responsibility for compliance reporting and measuring of institutional key performance indicators and student success benchmarks. By providing the campus with analytical, evidence-based data, Institutional Research supports effective planning, assessment, and decision making at all levels of the organization.

### *President's Cabinet*

The President and their Cabinet provide primary leadership for setting the strategic directions of the university. With input from all stakeholders at the university, particularly through divisional and departmental representatives on the Strategic Planning and Resources Committee, the President and Cabinet review recommendations, make final

determinations about changes to the strategic plan, and communicate those changes to the Council of Trustees and the campus community.

### *Strategic Planning and Resources Committee and its Subcommittees*

A University Senate committee, SPRC makes recommendations concerning strategic planning, budget, and development and allocation procedures for the university. In order to fulfill this responsibility, the committee develops and reviews all pertinent planning and budget materials.

## Appendix B: Support needed to implement the plan

### *Nuventive*

The Nuventive Platform is a centralized web-based tool that warehouses the institution's assessment data, including student learning outcomes summaries, program reviews, and strategic planning documents and reports. Real-time dashboards and roll-up reporting facilitate data-driven decision making and continual improvement.

### *Professional Learning*

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania strives to be a learning organization. As such, professional development plays an important role in supporting and advancing institutional effectiveness efforts on our campus. Professional development contributes to our institutional effectiveness in the following key areas:

1. Enhancing Faculty/Staff Capabilities

Professional learning provides opportunities for faculty and staff to continually improve their skills, knowledge and competencies related to teaching, research, administration and support services. This allows them to implement best practices, leverage new technologies/pedagogies, and elevate performance, all of which improve institutional effectiveness.

2. Aligning with Strategic Goals

Professional development programs can be purposefully designed to equip employees with the specific capabilities needed to execute the institution's strategic plan and effectiveness objectives.

3. Promoting Continuous Improvement

A culture of professional growth instills an ethic of lifelong learning and continuous improvement among personnel. This mindset catalyzes proactive efforts to evaluate processes/services and identify areas for optimization and enhanced institutional quality.

4. Developing Leadership Capacity and Succession Planning

Leadership development programs prepare emerging academic/administrative leaders with the vision and skills to effectively guide institutional effectiveness initiatives, drive change management, and make data-driven decisions.

5. Improving Retention/Engagement

Quality professional development opportunities can boost job satisfaction, morale and commitment among faculty/staff. This increased engagement supports productivity, academic excellence and exceptional service delivery.

6. Modeling Institutional Values

An institution's investment in professional development demonstrates its values around intellectual growth, innovation and leveraging talent — ideals that inspire stakeholder confidence.

By prioritizing ongoing professional development, Kutztown University equips our human capital with the evolving capabilities required to fulfill the institution's mission and continually advance effectiveness objectives.

## Appendix C: Glossary of terms employed in this plan

**Assessment** - The process of gathering and analyzing data to measure student learning, program quality, operational efficiency, and institutional performance against stated goals and objectives.

**Benchmark** - A standard, target metric, or point of reference against which institutional effectiveness measures are compared or evaluated. Benchmarks can be based on past performance, peer institutions, or established best practices.

**Co-Curricular** - Activities, programs and experiences that complement and augment the academic curriculum, such as student organizations, community service, internships, etc. These are reviewed in institutional effectiveness.

**Key Performance Indicator (KPI)** - A quantifiable measure used to evaluate the success of a particular objective or process related to institutional effectiveness and mission fulfillment.

**Mission Statement** - A formal summary describing an institution's core purposes, values, and aims that serve as the foundation for strategic planning and effectiveness reviews.

**Outcome** - The desired knowledge, skills, competencies or values that an institution aims to impart to its students and internal/external stakeholders. Measuring outcomes is central to institutional effectiveness.

**Program Review** - A comprehensive periodic evaluation of an academic program or administrative unit's quality, productivity, and alignment with institutional goals, informing decisions about strategic changes or resource allocation.

**Rubric** - A set of criteria and defined performance levels used to evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes or the quality of services, processes, or other institutional effectiveness components.

**Strategic Planning:** the establishment of priorities of critical importance to the fulfillment of Kutztown University's mission. For planning to be considered *strategic*, it must:

- Articulate the institution's relationship to our environment and stakeholders;
- Encompass the entirety of the organization as the unit of analysis;
- Rely on the inputs of the institution's functional areas;
- Provide direction for, and constraints on, administrative and operational goals, as well as actions throughout the university.

**Student Learning Outcome** - Specific competencies, knowledge or skills students are expected to acquire through a course, program or educational experience.

## Appendix D: Meta-assessment

### Feedback on Annual Assessment Reports from Academic Programs

<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>	Exemplary	Acceptable	Developing	N/A
Notes on SLOs				
<b>Methods and Measures</b>	Exemplary	Acceptable	Developing	N/A
Notes on Methods and Measures				
<b>Criteria of Success</b>	Exemplary	Acceptable	Developing	N/A
Notes on Criteria				
<b>Summary of Findings</b>	Exemplary	Acceptable	Developing	N/A
Notes for Summary of Findings				
<b>Analysis</b>	Exemplary	Acceptable	Developing	N/A
Notes for Analysis				
<b>Action Plans</b>	Exemplary	Acceptable	Developing	N/A
Notes for Action Plans				

<b>Changes based on Assessment Data</b>	Exemplary	Acceptable	Developing	N/A
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### Feedback on Action Plan Updates from Academic Programs

Was the Action Plan Updated Submitted? Yes/no.
Action Plan Update Comments/Feedback: