

# Example

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THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

## Non-Instructional Units: Outcomes Assessment Plan and Report

Plan updated: \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Year Reported: 2016-17

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**Mission:** Our mission is to support engaged scholarship that contributes to better lives for the citizens of North Carolina and the world. The Center promotes the University’s research, teaching, and service mission by helping researchers broaden the impact of their work on society and contributing to the preparation of the next generation of leaders and researchers. We do this through providing: activities that engage our students and faculty with communities, training in research methodology and field work techniques, and opportunities for professional development and interdisciplinary collaboration.

**Expected Outcome #1:** The Center’s research and outreach activities in the local communities will help address challenges faced by those citizens.

(Aligned with University-level Public Service goal #2 “Apply research expertise for the benefit of North Carolina and beyond,” and #3 “Provide service that is responsive to the needs of the state and contributes to the public good.” Also aligned with University-level Research Goal #2 “To Apply Knowledge”)

Assessment Methods Used to Measure Achievement of this Outcome	Results of Assessments Conducted and Analysis	Descriptions of Improvements or Enhancements Made or Other Actions Taken in Response to These Results
<p><b>Method 1:</b> Assessment of the effectiveness of the engagement of our students and faculty with communities associated with our network of field sites, through annual focus group interviews conducted by Center staff with partnering community agencies.</p> <p><b>Performance Target:</b> Positive feedback on the usefulness of faculty/student projects to the community and suggestions for enhancing our outreach.</p> <p><b>Assessment Schedule:</b> Annually</p>	<p>The focus group results suggested that the projects undertaken by our faculty and students have practical value for the communities they serve. Community partners reported that the activities at the three rural field sites in eastern NC focused on working with social service agencies to disseminate information to families needing eldercare were very successful. The partners described high levels of satisfaction with both the quality and relevance of the student and faculty work, and indicated that they were applying the promotional techniques used in this projects to others. Feedback received on 2 similar projects in western NC indicated that community members might not have understood the role of the faculty and students and were somewhat reluctant to work with them.</p>	<p>Based on these results, we worked with the community partners to revise strategies for communicating the purpose and goals of the projects to local citizens. The successful model used in the eastern NC projects, which included mailings, an article in the local newspaper, and a faculty/student presentation to community leaders, was adopted in the most recently implemented projects, with positive feedback. We added a student with fluency in Spanish to the team this year in order to improve our ability to communicate directly with citizens with limited English language skills.</p>

**Expected Outcome #2:** Faculty and graduate students are provided with skills needed to conduct applied research and to compete for external funding.

(Aligned with University-level Research Goal #4 “To prepare the next generation of researchers and students with the skills and knowledge for original inquiry in their fields of study.”)

Assessment Methods Used	Results of Assessments Conducted and Analysis	Descriptions of Improvements or Enhancements Made or Other Actions Taken in Response to These Results
<p><b>Method 1:</b> Tracked enrollment in the Center’s workshops on grant writing and research/ evaluation in non-profit agencies, overall and by department and school.</p>	<p>Total annual enrollment in training courses has grown from 700 three years ago to over 1,000 this past year. Of 40 courses offered, 36 were 100% filled. Enrollments by students and faculty in STEM departments have grown from</p>	<p>To keep up with demands for seats in our courses, we added five additional courses, two on STEM-related topics. These filled up within a day of posting, and a waiting list was maintained. We also added more examples and applications</p>

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<p><b>Performance Target:</b> Enrollments in training courses for each training offering will exceed 70% of the stated maximum capacity.</p> <p><b>Assessment Schedule:</b> Annually</p>	<p>20% to nearly 40% of all participants.</p>	<p>to science and health in our existing workshops. We are developing web- based training as a cost-effective approach to expanding our training services.</p>
<p><b>Method 2:</b> Participant evaluation forms completed at the conclusion of each course.</p> <p><b>Performance Target:</b> 90% of participants rate the training course as useful</p> <p><b>Assessment Schedule:</b> Annually</p>	<p>Over 92% of the participants rated their training experience as “Useful” or “Highly Useful”. Specific enhancements recommended by participants included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend coverage of issues in the collection and use of sensitive individual data from community members;</li> <li>• Provide additional instruction on collecting qualitative data in the field</li> <li>• Increase hands-on training with software</li> <li>• Offer some evening sessions for faculty and students working in clinics and off-campus sites.</li> </ul>	<p>In response to user requests, we made the following changes in our training courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added a session related to IRB concerns and methods for management of sensitive data. This was so well attended that we are adding more.</li> <li>• Implemented a new course on collecting and analyzing administrative data from community agencies</li> <li>• Instructors revised their syllabi to focus more class time to hands-on practice in the computer lab rather than lectures.. Participant evaluations have reflected satisfaction with this change.</li> <li>• Added evening sessions to increase access. Attendance is building as students learn about the extended hours.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Method 3:</b> Annual faculty evaluation and needs assessment survey</p> <p><b>Performance Target:</b> 80% will agree or strongly agree that the Center’s offerings are aligned with faculty needs; 80% will report the perception that the Center’s offerings are contributing to faculty and student professional development.</p> <p><b>Assessment Schedule:</b> Annually</p>	<p>Results indicated that 75% of respondents perceived that the center’s offerings were well aligned with their needs, just short of our target of 80%. Both junior faculty and graduate students could use more training on proposal writing, particularly for agencies that fund STEM-related topics. Consistent with past years, faculty perceptions of the impact of the Center’s offerings on their skills and those of their students were generally positive (90% agreement).</p>	<p>Although our funds were quite limited this year, we introduced one new workshop on proposal writing. In response to the increasing interest of STEM researchers the course focused on the specific criteria used by NSF and NIH proposal reviewers.</p>
<p><b>Expected Outcome #3:</b> The Center supports interdisciplinary research initiatives that enable faculty and students across campus to collaborate on funded research.</p> <p>(Aligned with University-level Research Goal # 1 “To create knowledge”; also aligned with Academic Plan Priority #3 “Increase interdisciplinarity in teaching, research, and public engagement.”)</p>		
<p><b>Assessment Methods Used</b></p>	<p><b>Results of Assessments Conducted and Analysis</b></p>	<p><b>Descriptions of Improvements or Enhancements Made or Other Actions Taken in Response to These Results</b></p>
<p><b>Method 1:</b> Tracked the number of interdisciplinary initiatives offered each year and review trends over the most recent four-year period.</p> <p><b>Performance Target:</b> Add an average of one new initiative per year.</p> <p><b>Assessment Schedule:</b> Annually</p>	<p>Added two new interdisciplinary initiatives this year: the Applied Research Consortium and the Ethical Uses of Data Training Program, bringing our total number of new initiatives to 5 over the most recent 4-year period.</p>	<p>Since the Center has been meeting its annual goal for adding initiatives, we began considering other ways of supporting these opportunities. This year we attempted to broaden participation in the existing initiatives by inviting faculty and students from other campuses as well as from different departments within UNC-Chapel Hill.</p>

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<p><b>Method 2:</b> Tracked success in funding new interdisciplinary initiatives on campus.</p> <p><b>Performance Target:</b> To increase pool of funds available to support initiatives.</p> <p><b>Assessment Schedule:</b> Annually</p>	<p>The Center requested and received \$30,000 in one-time funds from the Provost's Office to sponsor a multidisciplinary seed grant proposal process this year that yielded 42 proposals from across campus. Grants were awarded to 6 projects in 4 schools, all involving multi-discipline research teams focusing on poverty in NC.</p>	<p>The quantity and quality of the proposals received and the public impact of the funded projects were so encouraging that we requested and received additional seed grant funds from the Provost's Office again this year. We also submitted a proposal to the US Dept of Education for a 5-year grant to enable us to expand the scope of our current</p>
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		projects.
<p><b>Method 3:</b> Evaluated the quality of interdisciplinary initiatives as part of the Center’s five-year external peer review using stakeholder interviews and examination of program documentation.</p> <p><b>Performance Target:</b> Positive feedback from reviewers, numbers of publications and professional conference presentations.</p> <p><b>Assessment Schedule:</b> Annually</p>	<p>Reviewers reported that the Center was providing excellent opportunities for researchers from different disciplines to collaborate on topics related to the University’s public service mission. Faculty interviews confirmed the value of these activities to their careers. The peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations resulting from Center- supported projects (ave. of 30/ year) is further evidence of the quality of the work produced. Reviewers encouraged the Center to revisit past projects to analyze the long-term impact on the communities that were served.</p>	<p>Based on review team recommendations, the Center offered additional funds to selected projects to support follow- up evaluations. We also rewrote our proposal guidelines and selection criteria to encourage PIs to expand their evaluation plans to include impact analyses where feasible.</p>

### Additional Improvements and Enhancements Made as Part of Continuous Quality Improvement Efforts

**Please use this section to provide examples of any other program improvements and enhancements not described above. Include the rationale for the change. Examples might include:**

- Follow-up actions taken in response to plans you described in your last assessment report (under “Use of Results for Improvement”).
- Improvements in response to recommendations or new requirements from accreditors, the UNC System, professional standards, or other quality review processes, etc.
- Progress on long-term improvement projects not included above (e.g., development of new services, ERP implementation, development of strategic plans, etc.)
- Actions taken to reduce costs

Our recent five-year external review yielded other assessment findings that we have since used to guide improvement. The reviewers observed that centers of comparable size at peer institutions and other areas of UNC-Chapel Hill tended to have a full-time faculty leader. We successfully sought funds to raise our director’s FTE from .50 to 1.00, which had an immediate impact on our ability to do fundraising and to develop new community partnerships. The reviewers also suggested that we collaborate with other centers on campus to expand access to research opportunities for underrepresented minority students with interests in STEM fields and public service. We developed 10 new summer field experiences that are co-sponsored with the STEM Diversity Office.

We make regular reports and presentations to our Center’s Advisory Board, made up of faculty, students, and community partners. The Board meets twice a year, which gives us an opportunity to present both our strategic plans and metrics as well as to share the results of our evaluations and obtain their input on improvements we might make. The feedback from the Board provides us with multiple perspectives on the value of our work and is extremely helpful in identifying our strengths, weaknesses, and areas of opportunity. Their letters of support have also been instrumental in the success we have had in requesting additional resources from the University.