

Student Assessment and Evaluation

1. Background

a. DAU provides certification training as mandated by the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act. The University also sponsors and provides a variety of specialized and continuing education curricula for the acquisition workforce. The acquisition workforce participates in DAU courses in order to meet or exceed certification requirements, assignment-specific, and continuous learning requirements relevant to explicit acquisition career fields. DAU offers students curricular opportunities in a variety of learning modes. Such approaches include, but are not limited to: traditional classroom, distance learning (DL), DL-hybrids, asynchronous, and asynchronous-hybrids. Due to the diversity of the DAU curricula levels and delivery modes, student learning assessments will be equally diverse.

b. From an institutional perspective, and in order to meet accreditation requirements, DAU is required to demonstrate student learning progress. Therefore the institution must have students' exhibit levels of performance on either measures of general skills and competencies or on tests of specific knowledge related to occupational education and/or specialty curricula.

c. Outcome assessment planning is governed by the principles and guidelines outlined in the DAU Curriculum and E-Learning Asset Development Guides. Assessment information is gained from criteria-based (rather than norm-referenced) tools through the systematic collection and examination of assessment-aggregated data (rather than the performance of students on a particular examination) in order to document and improve student learning.

2. Policies

a. Mastery Standards. DAU does not assign letter grades for course completions. DAU employs a mastery (level required for graduation) system. Students must meet prescribed mastery standards to successfully complete a DAU course. For classroom-based and distance learning courses, the standards are as follows:

(1) Classroom-based courses. Mastery is achieving an aggregate score of 80 percent or higher on the cumulative assessments and/or required coursework. These standards, as well as student assessment methods, typically will be discussed on the first day of class and provided to the student in writing.

(2) Distance Learning courses. Mastery is scoring 100 percent on each online assessment. *The student will have three (3) opportunities for achieving 100 percent on each assessment.* Students are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from the assigned faculty prior to making a third attempt. Students failing the third test attempt will be dropped from the course as a failure and must be re-enrolled. To re-enroll, the student must wait at least 48 hours for their enrollment status to be updated on the registration website. It should be noted that any progress made in the course will NOT carry over into the new enrollment.

(3) Continuous Learning Modules (CLMs). There is no limit on the number of attempts a student may make to achieve 100 percent in completing a CLM.

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(4) Students who achieve the mastery standards and successfully complete the course requirements will graduate from the course. The course completion, i.e., credit, will be displayed on the student's official transcript.

b. Failing to Achieve Mastery Standards

(1) Classroom-based courses. For students who fail to achieve mastery standards (i.e. receive an attrition code of "A" for Comprehension/Academic Failure), they have the right to contest their failure within three (3) business days of the course completion by providing a written request to review their assessment instruments to the teaching campus Associate Dean of Academics. If a student does not contest a failing grade, or where a failing grade is upheld after review of graded exercises, the teaching campus Associate Dean for Academics or designee will issue a failure letter notice to the student with a copy provided to the student's supervisor and to the Director, Performance and Resource Management (PRM), Attention: Center for Scheduling and Student Support. The letter will state that the student failed to achieve mastery standards.

(a) If, prior to graduation, it has been determined that a student will fail to achieve mastery criteria given the remaining assessments and assuming the student were to receive maximum credit possible on the remaining assessments, the student may be retained in the course if that is the desire of the student and the student's parent organization. For these students, following actions will occur:

1 The course lead instructor will notify the student and inquire as to the student's desire to continue in the course.

2 The student will seek guidance as to whether or not the student will be returned to their place of duty or remain in the course through graduation. It will be ASSUMED that the student will remain in the course through graduation unless the student obtains written authorization to return to their place of duty. Written authorization can be in the form of an e-mail addressed to the course lead instructor originated from the student's supervisor or other appropriate organizational official. Students returning home will not participate in any further course activities. Students being retained will continue to participate in all activities and assessments.

3 Failing students who remain in the classroom are expected to participate fully in all course activities and assessments as well as abide by the Standards of Conduct outlined in Attachment 1, *Student Standards of Conduct*. Failure to do so may be cause for removal from the classroom and the assignment of an attrition code of "K" for *Disciplinary/Misconduct*. Failing students will not be authorized to complete an end of class survey.

(2) Distance Learning courses. Students who fail to achieve mastery standards may contest a failure by requesting a test reset if they believe the failure was due to a "bad" test question or the course material does not support the test question. Procedures for requesting a test reset are outlined in Attachment 11, *Test Reset Policy and Procedures*.

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(3) Students who fail to achieve mastery standards will not receive credit for the course. An attrition code of “A” for comprehensive/academic failure will be entered on the student’s official record. The failure however, will not appear on the student’s official transcript.

c. Course Student Assessment Plan (CSAP). Each course will have a CSAP which is part of the course Plan of Instruction (POI). At a minimum, the CSAP outlines the:

- Student Assessment Strategy;
- Course Outcomes (terminal learning objectives);
- The Level of Cognitive Complexity (Bloom’s level);
- Assessment Method(s); and
- Types of Assessment Scoring Instrument(s).

d. Student Assessments. Student assessments will clearly identify student achievements, to include providing feedback on student mastery or lack of mastery on all learner-focused outcomes as described in the CSAP.

3. Responsibilities. The primary responsibility for the quality and standards of student/participant assessment in DAU lies close to the point of delivery with the individual faculty and in some instances with the mode of delivery (e.g., DL). However, effective leadership and good management also are vital to ensure faculty members are supported in designing and implementing assessment strategies, as follows:

a. The University ensures that:

- (1) Assessment practices are explicit, fair and consistent across the institution.
- (2) Assessment procedures are monitored throughout the region or college and other sites so they meet the criteria set out in this document.
- (3) Resources are available to provide faculty and staff with access to information and expertise on the theory and practice of assessment.
- (4) Policies regarding special consideration following sickness or other misadventure, and for students with disabilities, are explicit and applied consistently.
- (5) Policies on plagiarism and cheating, including penalties for breaches, are explicit and consistently applied.
- (6) Appropriate appeal processes are available and publicized.

b. Director, Foundational Learning Directorate (FLD); Dean, Defense Systems Management College (DSMC); Dean, College of Contract Management (CCM). Working through their Center Directors or other appropriate faculty along with their supporting Instructional System Designers, ensure that:

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(1) CSAPs are completed and learning outcomes state the performance expected of the student; that the outcome statements are clear, specific, concise, and measurable; and that the outcomes are reflective of the implied or stated performance requirements of the associated competency based upon the level of instruction.

(2) Developed courseware includes a discussion of learning outcomes at the beginning of the learning event and opportunities for providing student feedback are built into the design.

(3) The overall success of the curricula within their charge is evaluated regularly (at least tri-annually) and institutes improvement plans as required.

c. Learning Directors and Course Managers. Working with their supporting Instructional Systems Designer, will:

(1) Develop assessment instruments and rubrics consistent with the performance measures outline in the outcomes.

(2) Design student feedback mechanism for their assigned course.

(3) Review regularly (at least tri-annually) assessment instruments and rubrics utilized in their assigned course(s) against student results for appropriateness.

(4) Develop a grade book for recording student progress consistent with the course CSAP.

d. Instructional Faculty. The Lead Instructor for a resident course will ensure that:

(1) Assessments and/or rubrics are used and student feedback is provided as designed/approved and outlined in the POI and instructor supporting materials.

(2) Each student's grade book is properly maintained as well as other student training records as outlined in Attachment 12, *Student Transcripts, Records Retention, and Disclosure of Academic Information (Privacy)*.

(3) That proper feedback is provided to the student in a timely manner relative to the assessed learning event.

(4) Students are properly notified if their progress in a course falls below acceptable standards for course mastery.

(5) Learning outcomes are discussed with students prior to the learning event.

e. Students. Comply with the Standards of Conduct outlined in Attachment 1 of this directive as related to all work and attendance requirements associated with a DAU course.