

K-State 8 Assessment Plan Proposal

Kansas State University

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Contacts for the Proposed Assessment Plan

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The K-State 8 Assessment Plan has been developed by the K-State 8 Faculty Council in consultation with faculty and the Office of Assessment. This assessment plan is and will be an ongoing development. The present document outlines the basic structure of the plan as devised to date. Questions for the K-State 8 assessment survey will be designed under the leadership of the Office of Assessment with advice and consent from the K-State 8 Faculty Council, the K-State 8 College Council, and the K-State 8 Provost Designate. Faculty Senate will approve the final draft prior to implementation.

The proposed assessment design is not intended to assess specific learning content in courses tagged for the K-State 8. Rather this assessment design focuses on how the K-State 8 fits within the larger context of assessment of K-State's five undergraduate student learning outcomes – Knowledge, Critical thinking, Communication, Diversity, and Academic and professional integrity.

K-State's "Knowledge" undergraduate learning outcome has two parts:

- 1) *Students will demonstrate a depth of knowledge and apply the methods of inquiry in a discipline of their choosing, and*
- 2) *they will demonstrate a breadth of knowledge across their choice of varied disciplines.*

The goals and intentions for student learning from the K-State 8 General Education Program are clearly presented in several statements in the K-State 8 Proposal approved by Faculty Senate on May 12, 2009:

- “to ensure that every student begins to develop *a breadth of knowledge*”
- “to encourage students to be intellectual explorers”
- “to assist students in developing a diverse set of *beginning literacies* to reflect a breadth of general knowledge”
- “to awaken and ignite students' interest in varying disciplines”
- “for students to explore the perspectives of disciplines that may be quite different from those of their own majors”

These statements are reflected in a single learning outcome that is already part of what Kansas State University expects of students in all degree programs: *Students will demonstrate a breadth of knowledge across their choice of varied disciplines.*

Indirect Assessment of Student Learning – Administered by the Office of Assessment

Survey questions will be embedded in the Senior Survey currently administered to graduating seniors by the Office of Assessment. The K-State 8 survey questions will ask students to reflect

on what they have learned that “demonstrates a breadth of knowledge across their choice of varied disciplines.” This assessment can serve three purposes – 1) determining students’ perceptions as to the contribution of the K-State 8 to their breadth of understanding in and beyond their disciplinary areas of study, 2) providing an opportunity for students to recognize their own progress in developing a breadth of knowledge, and 3) suggesting corrective actions for weaknesses identified in the assessment.

The K-State 8 survey questions will be developed under the leadership of the Office of Assessment in collaboration with the K-State 8 Faculty Council, the K-State 8 College Council, and the K-State 8 Provost Designate. Advice will be sought from faculty members with expertise in the development of assessment surveys. Proposed questions will be made available for comment from all academic departments during the pilot offerings and before the questionnaire is officially implemented. Potential questions are provided in a separate document only for the purpose of sharing possibilities. They are not part of this proposal.

The first pilot of the online survey will be conducted in Fall 2011 with a minimum of 500 randomly selected students representing all undergraduate colleges. Usability tests will also be conducted via open-ended interviews with a few students. The first pilot and usability tests will correct problems that lead to students misunderstanding the intent of survey questions.

A second pilot will be administered in Spring 2012 to confirm that students will understand the survey questions. Beginning Fall 2012, all seniors who have met K-State 8 requirements and who have been cleared for graduation by their respective colleges will participate in this survey.

The survey will be designed to assess students’ perceptions as to the contribution of the K-State 8 to their breadth of understanding in and beyond their disciplinary areas of study. An acceptable assessment should indicate that 68% of seniors recognize the educational contribution of breadth of knowledge and can identify courses that contributed to their breadth of knowledge in specific K-State 8 areas.

Assessment scores will provide indications of student perception across the university, but also will be disaggregated by college and department. These reports will be provided annually by the Office of Assessment, and will be periodically reviewed by the K-State 8 Provost Designate and the K-State 8 Faculty Council.

Reports will be provided to the colleges to share with their departments. Departments will be encouraged to consider how the assessment results demonstrate their majors’ breadth of knowledge across the K-State 8 as well as how effectively their tagged courses contribute to the K-State 8. Solutions to fill educational gaps will continue to be the responsibility of the academic programs.

Program Assessment – *Conducted under the leadership of the Provost Designate, the K-State 8 Faculty Council, and the K-State 8 College Council*

1. Analysis of randomly selected student transcripts to determine actual representation of K-State 8 breadth beyond the minimum requirements of the K-State 8 program.
2. Audit of K-State 8 tags to confirm the validity of tags and the scope of courses available to students to fulfill their K-State 8 requirements.