Core Requirement 2.5  
Institutional Effectiveness  
*University of South Carolina Upstate*

The University of South Carolina Upstate (USC Upstate) engages in formal planning and evaluation of its activities and the outcomes of those activities in support of the Institution’s mission and continuous improvement endeavors. As indicated in the schematic, all assessment endeavors, including the development of goals, outcomes, and student learning outcomes (SLOs) as appropriate, are completed within the context of how the areas assessed support the Mission, Vision, and Values of the University. USC Upstate’s assessment activities can be broadly subdivided into three types of assessments.

1. **Outcomes Assessments**—Academic program assessment, administrative area assessment, and general education competency assessment make up this group. The annual planning, assessment, and reporting timeline for each of these is different to accommodate the academic and budgeting calendars. Timelines for these assessments can be found in the respective policies and procedures documents for General Education, Program Assessment, and Administrative Assessment.

2. **Climate Analyses**—This area includes investigations of student, faculty, and financial datasets; State Appropriation projections; investigations of community and regional needs; and formal and informal SWOT analyses.

3. **Strategic Assessment**—Organized by the University’s six major goals and their corresponding objectives, strategic planning provides an overarching framework,
in effect operationalizing the University’s mission, vision, and values. Strategic Assessments track units’ progress toward completion of their strategic initiatives that support the University’s goals. The timeline for Strategic Assessment can be found in the Strategic Planning Process document.

All of these assessments are informed by formal and informal student assessments; internal and external data provided by the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning and other units; state budget projections; and/or employee, constituent, and community surveys. The findings and continuous improvement measures from these assessment activities are used by department heads, deans, and administrators in determining budgetary priorities and funnel into the budgeting and finance process early in the spring semester, when preliminary budgets and major initiatives for the upcoming fiscal year are developed.