



Policy Title
Institutional Course-Level Assessment Policy

Policy Number
6-005

Responsible Unit: Office of Institutional Accountability & Accreditation	Effective Date: February 11, 2022
Responsible Official: Vice Chancellor for Institutional Accountability & Accreditation	Last Reviewed Date: February 11, 2022
Policy Classification: Governance Policy	Origination Date: February 11, 2022

I. POLICY PURPOSE

This policy defines the Institutional Course-Level Assessment process for the Southern University Law Center (SULC), which is used as an internal measure of SULC’s adherence to its Institutional Learning Outcomes and is designed to evaluate each student’s ability to comprehend, analyze, and communicate information distributed within SULC’s assessment courses which are embedded in its curriculum.

II. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all enrolled law students and to the faculty members who have been assigned to teach one or more of SULC’s assessment courses. This Policy will only be exercised during the fall and spring semesters, and it will continuously be evaluated to maximize the value given to students during their matriculation through law school.

III. POLICY COMPLIANCE

Failure to adhere to the Institutional Course-Level Assessment Policy could jeopardize the Law Center’s accreditation status with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and with the American Bar Association (ABA). The law student who does not comply with this policy could negatively affect the trajectory of their matriculation through law school.

IV. POLICY DEFINITIONS

- A. SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT is the document that contains the applicable operating procedures for the development, staffing, administration,

analysis results reporting, and utilization of assessments.

- B. ASSESSMENT COURSES are the courses SULC identifies to gauge its students' ability to comprehend, and express their understanding of the concepts, principles and doctrines commonly tested on state bar examinations. Each assessment course is a required course for every student at the Law Center regardless of whether the student is enrolled in the common law or civil law curriculum. Current assessed courses are defined in the SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT.
- C. LEAD PROFESSORS are professors who have been appointed for each assessment course to guide the development of assessment questions. See the SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT for details.
- D. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS are essay questions administered to each student mid-way through the assessment course to provide meaningful feedback to them in advance of the summative assessment, which will take place at the end of the course. See the SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT for details.
- E. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT DATE is the specific date in which formative assessments are administered to law students during either the fall or spring semesters. See the SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT for details.
- F. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS are the assessment questions that are administered at the conclusion of the assessment course. These questions are designed to measure the student's overall degree of learning from the assessment course. The summative assessment question tests the same concepts as the formative assessment question but utilizes a different fact pattern. See the SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT for details.
- G. GRADING RUBRIC is the scoring mechanism supplied to the assessment professors which categorizes the student's performance in four areas, namely, Issue Spotting, Analysis, Quality of Writing, and Doctrinal Knowledge. For each category, the student will receive a score of either Excellent, Accomplished, Developing or Beginning. A student who receives a cumulative score at or below "Developing" on their summative assessment performance will be enrolled in the appropriate intervention course for the following semester. See the SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT for details.
- H. THIRD-PARTY GRADERS are selected by the Institutional Accountability and Accreditation Unit to grade the student's formative assessment essays. See the SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT for details.
- I. INTERVENTION COURSES are courses that have been approved by the SULC faculty and enforced by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs to assist students who have scored at a defined level in the assessment process. Each intervention course is designed to aid students with increasing their skill level, using the results from their

assessment performance. See the SULC ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT GUIDELINE DOCUMENT for details.

V. POLICY AND APPLICABLE PROCEDURES

SULC will designate the courses in which formative and summative assessments will be given during the Fall and Spring semesters of each academic year. The Institutional Accountability & Accreditation Unit (IA&A) is solely responsible for the development and implementation of the assessment procedure upon approval from the SULC faculty. The IA&A Unit will solicit advice and counsel from other SULC units as needed.

All assessments will be administered to students electronically. Formative assessments will be administered to all students on the third Wednesday of the third month during either the Fall or Spring semesters. After the formative assessments have been scored, students will be given access to all feedback on their assessment performance. Students will also be expected to meet with their professor(s) to obtain any additional feedback or guidance on how to increase their performance prior to the summative assessment cycle. Based on the results from the summative assessment performance, a student may be required to enroll in one of SULC's intervention courses.

VI. POLICY RELATED INFORMATION

Further information related to this assessment process may be found in the *SULC Academic Assessment Guideline Document* and the Institutional Effectiveness Manual, which is published on the SULC website at <https://www.sulc.edu/assets/sulc/Policies/Institutional-Effectiveness-Manual-April-2019.pdf>, or such later versions as will be adopted.

VII. POLICY HISTORY AND REVIEW CYCLE

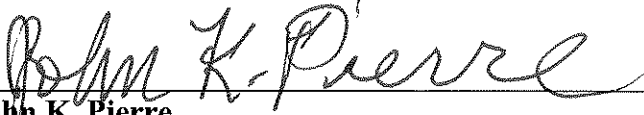
SULC started course-level assessments of its students in 2014. These assessments were performed pursuant to established practices. The current policy codifies the aforementioned practices into a coherent policy statement. The Vice Chancellor for Institutional Accountability & Accreditation shall be the responsible person for the implementation of the Institutional Course-Level Assessment Policy, and this Policy will continue to be developed, modified, and managed by SULC's IA&A Unit, subject to approval by SULC faculty, which shall timely recommend any modifications or adjustments to this process to insure the efficiency of the process and the reliability of its results. This policy is subject to a three-year policy review cycle.

VIII. PUBLICATION OF POLICY

The policy is published on the SULC website at www.sulc.edu.

IX. POLICY APPROVAL

This policy was approved by the faculty on February 11, 2022.



John K. Pierre
Chancellor

February 11, 2022
Date

SULC Academic Assessment Guideline Document

During the first month of the fall semester, first-year law students are informed of the Law Center's Assessment Process and given instructions on how to submit and review their assessments.

During the first month of the fall and spring semesters, assessment professors will likewise receive any needed access to this website, and a lead professor will be appointed for each assessment course being taught during the semester at issue.

The faculty teaching each assessment course will collaborate on the development of a formative assessment question, and the lead professor will submit the questions to the Institutional Accountability & Accreditation Unit. The assessment question will then be circulated to the students on the day assessments are to be administered according to such procedures as the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs may prescribe.

Each course's formative assessment answers will be distributed to the third-party graders assigned to that course. Third-party graders are given approximately two weeks after the Assessment Day to read, score, and offer helpful comments to the student regarding their performance.

Students are then encouraged to schedule a conference with their professors for any additional feedback on their performance.

The grades and the statistical data from the formative assessment for each assessment course will be distributed to the professors of that course so that they can adjust, where necessary, the remaining class sessions to improve student learning. Professors can facilitate student learning by offering additional assignments, scheduling multiple conferences with the students as needed, or scheduling and conducting additional review sessions with the students prior to the final examination and summative assessment date.

Prior to the final examination cycle, lead professors will develop a summative assessment question that addresses the same concept(s) tested on the formative assessment, but with a new fact pattern. Each assessment professor in a common assessment course is expected to include the common summative assessment question on their final examination with a heading identifying the summative assessment question. Each individual professor will determine the weight the summative assessment question will have on their own final examination.

After all final examinations have been administered, the assessment professors are expected to score the summative assessment question for each student and to upload these scores into the website where the statistical data is to be stored. All assessment professors will then be provided

with the statistical information from their respective courses to be used in preparation for subsequent semesters when that course will be offered.

Thereafter, SULC Analytics extracts formative and summative assessment data, and other relevant information, analyzes and models to this data to determine which students qualify for registration into one of SULC's intervention courses. The Vice Chancellor and the Registrar will assign the eligible student to the intervention course based on the student's matriculation status in law school to improve student learning.