

# USNA Institutional Assessment Plan

## I. Introduction

An effective institution of higher learning is one that has a clear vision and mission, measures the effectiveness of programs and support units in achieving their purpose, uses the information gathered to determine if outcome goals have been met or if improvements are needed, makes recommendations for improvement based on a thorough analysis of assessment results (including root cause analysis), and identifies resources needed to carry out each recommendation.

Assessment at USNA begins with the Academy's strategic plan. From this starting point, all programs, Cost Centers and functional units align their midshipmen development and operational goals or objectives with the strategic imperatives and objectives. This institutional assessment plan describes the various processes by which USNA assesses the institution as a whole and its component programs, courses and services to achieve the following assessment goals:

- To assess the Academy's overall effectiveness and the effectiveness of different component programs and support services using outcome data related to their goals and objectives.
- To interpret the assessment results and as appropriate, implement action plans for improvement based on those results.

## II. U.S. Naval Academy Strategic Plan

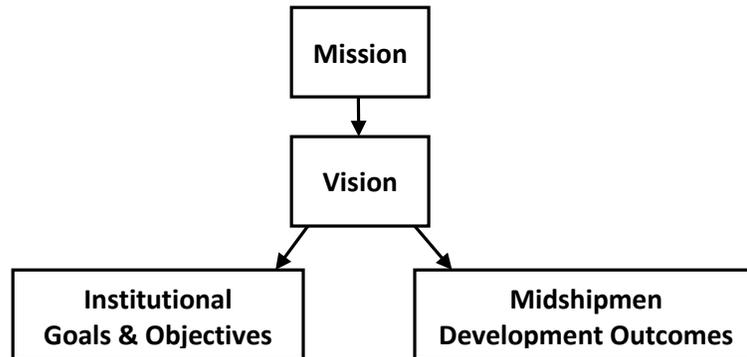
Founded in 1845, USNA is charged with providing, each year, newly commissioned officers to the Navy and Marine Corps that have been immersed in the history, traditions, and professional values of the Naval Service and developed to be leaders of character, dedicated to a career of professional excellence in service to the Nation. The accession of these officers generates a core group of innovative leaders capable of thinking critically who will exert positive peer influence to convey and sustain these traditions, attitudes, values, and beliefs essential to the long-term readiness and success of the Naval Service. In executing this charge, USNA is guided by the following mission statement and vision.

**Naval Academy Mission:** *To develop midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to graduate leaders who are dedicated to a career of naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character, to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government.*

**Vision:** *To be the premier educational institution for developing future naval officers from across the Nation to serve and lead in an increasingly interdependent and volatile world.*

In executing our mission and vision, USNA is guided by the same values as our Navy and Marine Corps: honor, courage and commitment.

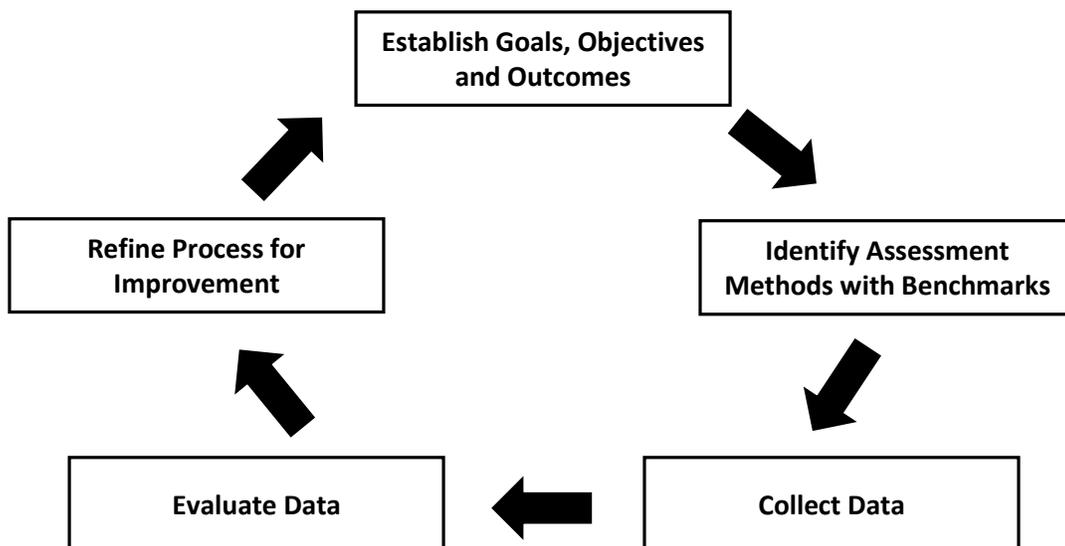
The Academy strives to meet this mission and vision through both institutional strategic goals and objectives as well as midshipmen development outcomes (graduate attributes).



USNA’s institutional goals and objectives and midshipmen development outcomes are further defined in enclosure (1).

### III. Principles of Institutional Assessment

With a clear mission and vision established, the continuous improvement of the quality and effectiveness of USNA is best accomplished through institutional assessment. This includes a systematic process, depicted below, undertaken with the support and collaboration of administration, faculty, staff and other key stakeholders to measure and evaluate intended mission outcomes and subsequently make appropriate adjustments to programs, practices and resource allocation.



This recurring periodic assessment feedback loop can and should be used at all levels of the Naval Academy to improve institutional, program and support unit effectiveness. In order to facilitate USNA's assessment process, there must be a commitment to:

- Completing full-cycles of assessment. The assessment process is not complete until measures of effectiveness are considered by leadership, discussions of options with appropriate stakeholders take place, and decisions are made and implemented as appropriate. Following implementation, assessment continues with determining the effectiveness of changes.
- The iterative nature of assessment. Institutional assessment is an iterative process requiring sustained energy and attention as the cycle repeats itself with necessary adjustments and monitoring before effectiveness is ascertained.
- Transparency of activities. Communication of the activities and results of direction, guidance, and decisions to constituents is essential.

#### **IV. Organization and Responsibilities for Institutional Assessment**

##### **A. Academy Effectiveness Board (AEB)**

The AEB serves as the Superintendent's agent for developing and maintaining an effective and robust USNA assessment process; monitoring and reporting to the Superintendent and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) the Academy's overall effectiveness in fulfilling its mission to produce combat leaders of character. The institution-wide focus requires the AEB to assess the Academy's current Strategic Plan and all three mission areas (moral, mental and physical) as well as mission-supported functions related to the four-year leadership immersion program and compliance with higher level directives (enclosure (2)). Comprised of members representing all areas of the Naval Academy, the AEB is charged with:

- Executing institution-wide assessment that crosses individual cost centers.
- Collaborating in planning and implementing effectiveness assessment within and among the Academy's three mission areas.
- Providing models and support for the development and implementation of effectiveness assessment within the USNA mission-support functions.
- Monitoring the Academy-wide institution assessment plan; including receiving and documenting Cost Center assessment plans, activities and results.

- Advising the Superintendent and SLT on actions that may be taken as a result of the assessment process.
- Providing reports of results and decisions to appropriate constituencies including faculty, staff, and midshipmen.

Further delineation of the composition, responsibilities and duties of the Academy Effectiveness Board is delineated in USNAINST 5420.36.

## **B. Cost Centers**

Each Cost Center is responsible for creating and implementing an annual assessment plan. These plans should not only assess Cost Center as a whole, but also the major programs and/or functional units within the Cost Center. Depending on the Cost Center, the assessment plans may include up to three main areas of focus: (1) institutional effectiveness, (2) midshipman development outcomes assessment, and (3) service assessment.

1. Institutional effectiveness assessment includes progress on the goals and/or objectives highlighted in USNA's Strategic Plan, or Cost Center goals established that support the Strategic Plan.
2. Midshipmen Development Outcomes (graduate attributes) assessment will primarily be done by the respective leaders of USNA's mission areas (Commandant, Academic Dean, and Athletic Director).
3. Service assessment should be completed on programs and functional units that deliver a service to employees and/or midshipmen.

Each Cost Center should complete an annual assessment report and forward to the AEB for review and documentation. The report should include the following:

- Goals of the Cost Center (functional unit/program assessments may be included as desired) and where appropriate, how they align to USNA's Strategic Plan.
- Specific, measureable desired outcomes
- Assessment process and results
- Results of Cost Center analysis
- Recommendations/improvements
- Resource implications

A sample template is included in enclosure (3).

## V. Overview of the Assessment Year

The annual cycle of institutional assessment is shown in the following table:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Assessment and Planning</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
July	Submission of Functional Unit annual reports	Unit Directors
August	Review of Functional Unit reports	Cost Center Heads
August	Submission of Cost Center annual reports	Cost Center Heads
September	Review of Cost Center annual reports	AEB
September	Conduct cross Cost Center, institution-wide assessment.	AEB
October	Presentation of findings to Superintendent, SLT	AEB
November	Presentation of findings to faculty, staff, AERB and BOV	Superintendent, AEB

## VI. Communication Plan

Instrumental to the success of an effective assessment plan is communicating findings and decisions to key constituents. For USNA, this includes both internal (SLT, faculty, staff) and external (Advanced Education Review Board, Board of Visitors) stakeholders. The AEB is charged with producing annual assessment results which will include:

- An annual Academy-wide institutional effectiveness assessment status report for the Superintendent and the SLT in guiding overall USNA improvement efforts. This report, as well as the latest status of all ongoing AEB level assessments, will be made available to stakeholders (including but not limited to faculty, staff, and midshipmen).
- “Dashboard” charts of USNA execution in key areas including graduation and attrition rates; admissions; Brigade performance in the moral, mental and physical missions; resources (including manning); and post-commissioning performance of USNA graduates.

## **USNA Strategic Imperatives, Objectives and Midshipmen Development Outcomes**

As delineated in the USNA Strategic Plan, we strive to meet our mission and vision through the following institutional strategic imperatives and objectives and Midshipmen Development Outcomes (graduate attributes).

### **Midshipmen Development Outcomes – Attributes of a Naval Graduate**

USNA strives to graduate midshipmen who are ready to meet the demands of a country at war or peace. USNA graduates must be:

- **Selfless** – selfless leaders who value diversity and create an ethical command climate through their example of personal integrity and moral courage.
- **Inspirational** – mentally resilient and physically fit officers who inspire their team to accomplish the most challenging missions and are prepared to lead in combat.
- **Proficient** – technically and academically proficient professionals with a commitment to continual learning.
- **Innovative** – critical thinkers and creative decision makers with a bias for action.
- **Articulate** – effective communicators.
- **Adaptable** – adaptable individuals who understand and appreciate global and cross-cultural dynamics.
- **Professional** – role models dedicated to the profession of arms, the traditions and values of the Naval Service and the constitutional foundation of the United States.

### **Strategic Imperatives and Objectives**

These are our highest priority imperatives and associated objectives that will enable us to remain faithful to the mission while achieving our vision.

1. Recruit, admit and graduate a talented and diverse Brigade of Midshipmen.
  - Strengthen the Academy's outreach and recruiting efforts to attract and admit individuals of diverse backgrounds with potential for success at USNA and in the Fleet and Marine Corps.
  - Transform NAPS into an exemplary model of an academy preparatory program.
  - Enhance academic support and skills development programs at the Naval Academy to provide every midshipman with the assistance needed to succeed.
2. Graduate officers whose attributes and educational and experiential preparation meet the Navy and Marine Corps' current and future requirements.
  - Graduate the appropriate number of technical and non-technical majors to meet the Navy and Marine Corps' requirements.

Enclosure (1)

- Expand and periodically assess opportunities for midshipmen to develop language skills, cultural awareness and regional expertise.
  - Employ traditional educational and training methods, as well as innovative technologies and strategies, to prepare midshipmen for the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century warfare.
  - Obtain and assess feedback from the Fleet and Fleet Marine Force on the performance of recent Academy graduates.
3. Attract, develop, and retain faculty, staff and coaches who model the highest professional standards and who educate, enrich and inspire a diverse and talented Brigade.
- Return to an appropriate balance between professional educators and operationally current naval officers.
  - Refine recruiting and retention strategies to ensure diversity among faculty, staff and coaches.
  - Expand opportunities for faculty members to learn and apply best practices in pedagogy and remain leaders in their respective disciplines.
4. Align all midshipmen's moral, mental, and physical core experiences to prepare them for future service in naval warfare community.
- Periodically assess the core curriculum and its resource requirements, in each of the three mission areas to best meet the needs of the Naval Service.
  - Develop the professional and academic venues to provide midshipmen with the knowledge and skills to operate effectively as officers in a cyber environment.
  - Identify and offer opportunities for midshipmen to develop language skills, regional expertise, and cultural awareness (LREC) in accordance with direction from senior Navy leadership.
5. Integrate ethical leadership and character development efforts across all academic, professional, athletic and extracurricular programs.
- Implement an organizational structure to ensure alignment between all ethical leadership and character development programs.
  - Strengthen the Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership's support of Academy ethics, leadership, and character programs.
  - Develop, articulate, and systematically embed common ethical leadership themes in the Academy's three mission areas.
6. Leverage internal and external collaborations to engage midshipmen in relevant learning opportunities that develop the broad range of competencies required by the 21<sup>st</sup> century Naval Service.
- Enhance moral, mental and physical project-based learning opportunities throughout the curriculum.

- Foster an educational environment that supports and encourages innovative and critical thinking, lifelong learning, and persuasive communications.
- Intensify efforts to establish partnerships with international naval academies.

7. Establish and maintain state-of-the-art facilities that inspire and support the pursuit of academic, professional and athletic excellence.

- Provide academic facilities consistent with the growing needs of the faculty and midshipmen and the technological advances of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Provide professional development facilities that prepare midshipmen to face the challenges of present and future warfare.
- Provide athletic facilities consistent with the need to offer a dynamic and challenging physical preparation program and compete in intercollegiate athletics in keeping with the Naval Service traditions of teamwork, persistence, and victory.
- Provide expanded spaces for midshipmen study areas and extra-curricular, recreational and social activities.

8. Apply exemplary business and assessment practices that ensure the sound stewardship of all resources and result in continual process and program improvement.

- Expand the Academy's institutional research and assessment capabilities.
- Use the Academy Effectiveness Board to provide systematic analysis of the Strategic Plan's execution.
- Examine the budget development and execution process to ensure the Academy optimizes its resource allocation decisions in support of the Naval Academy's priority mission areas.
- Strengthen information technology support to resource allocation, strategic plan implementation, and enterprise management processes.
- Develop and adhere to a ten year Academy-wide master facilities plan that includes the requirement to address deferred maintenance and ongoing preventive maintenance activities.

9. Develop strategic relationships with alumni, friends, and national institutions of influence that contribute to the Naval Academy's success and America's security and prosperity.

- Assess, in partnership with the Naval Academy Foundation, the feasibility of a comprehensive private gifts fundraising campaign to support the USNA Strategic Plan.
- Provide a facility that enables the Alumni Association and Foundation to co-locate on the Academy grounds and enhances the ongoing relationship between the Academy and Alumni Association and Foundation.
- Promote collaboration in the field of ethical leadership with alumni and private and public sector organizations.

- Strengthen the engagement with and stewardship of all donors who support the Naval Academy.
- Connect alumni with one another, the Brigade, and the Naval Academy by offering relevant programs and engagement opportunities.

10. Maintain institutional flexibility and achieve a margin of excellence by working collaboratively with the Naval Academy Foundation to emphasize the strategic importance of unrestricted gifts and prudently steward these essential resources.

- Communicate the importance of unrestricted gifts in providing institutional flexibility to meet emergent strategic priorities, while developing long-range funding plans for these programs.
- Communicate the importance of restricted gifts in establishing innovative programs that provide a margin of excellence to the Academy.
- Identify the Academy's priority requirements where gift funds can be most appropriately and usefully applied.
- Ensure strategic alignment between the Academy and the Foundation in cultivating and stewarding private gifts.

## USNA Higher Level Governing Directives

USNA is charged with executing its mission in compliance with numerous Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of the Navy (DON) directives. While not all inclusive, the following list includes many goals and objectives complimentary to those delineated in our strategic plan.

**DOD Instruction 1322.22: Service Academies** – establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures for DoD oversight of Service Academies. Included in its direction:

- USNA provide, each year, newly commissioned officers that have been immersed in the history, traditions, and professional values of the Military Services and developed to be leaders of character, dedicated to a career of professional excellence in service to the Nation.
- USNA graduation rates should be at least 75 percent.
- The ratio of the number of NAPS students entering the Academy to the number entering NAPS should be 70 percent or greater.
- NAPS academy graduation rate should not drop more than 5 percent below the direct appointees' graduation rate.

**SECNAV Instruction 1531.2: United States Naval Academy Curriculum and Admissions Policy** – publishes regulations regarding the Naval Academy curriculum and admissions policy.

**OPNAV Instruction 5450.330: Mission, Functions and Tasks of the United States Naval Academy** – publishes functions and tasks of USNA. Included in its direction:

- Commission officers to meet the annually mandated officer recruiting goals established by CNO (N1).
- Commission no less than 95 percent of those midshipmen being appointed in the Navy as unrestricted line officers.

**OPNAV Instruction 1530.8 – Midshipman Summer Training Program** – issues general guidelines on the Midshipmen Summer Training Program in USNA. Included in its direction:

- Execute summer training program that includes an enlisted fleet cruise (3/C), PROTRAMID (2/C), and fleet cruise or Leatherneck (1/C).
- Ensure midshipmen participate in at least one fleet cruise prior to commissioning; midshipmen should be assigned to ships with 10 or more days scheduled underway, if possible
- For midshipmen seeking a commission in the Marine Corps, attendance at Leatherneck is mandated (MAGTF waiver possible).

**CNO (N1) Memo of 19 Oct 2007** – directs USNA to ensure a minimum of 65 percent of Navy-option graduates complete a technical degree program before commissioning.

## Sample Annual Assessment Report Template

An effective institution of higher learning measures the effectiveness of programs and support units in achieving their purpose, makes recommendations for improvement based on a thorough analysis of assessment results (including root cause analysis), and identifies resources needed to carry out each recommendation. Both the Department of the Navy and our accrediting body, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, expect that we self-assess in an ongoing way and that we make decisions based on shared information among our Cost Centers, functional units and programs. The following format for annual assessment reporting is designed to help each Cost Center, functional unit or program participate in the practice of *institutional effectiveness*. Each entity should produce an annual report that demonstrates the effectiveness of their program during the previous year and the goals of the program for the coming year. While not intended to be prescriptive in nature, the following guidelines are designed to aid in the completion of this important annual activity.

### PART ONE

1. **Executive Summary of Findings**, which should be prepared after all other work on the report is completed. Recommend highlighting one or two program goals that the unit has worked deliberately to improve over the past year. For each of these, briefly describe the assessment tools used, the assessment results, the intended next steps to improve results or how the unit has “closed the loop” for the goal or outcome, and how budgetary resources may be affected by proposed decisions/decisions made.
2. **Progress report on Cost Center/functional unit/program outcomes from the past academic year.** Use the results of both quantitative and qualitative measurements, and discuss how those results have been used to design and/or implement programmatic improvements. Include brief narratives about specific initiatives as desired. Where appropriate, indicate how the assessment supports the following:
  - A. Institutional effectiveness, including progress on the goals and/or objectives highlighted in USNA’s Strategic Plan (at enclosure (1)), or Cost Center goals established that support the Strategic Plan.
  - B. Midshipmen Development Outcomes (graduate attributes) highlighted in enclosure (1).
3. **Progress report on recent graduates.** Where applicable, report on the most recent graduating classes (e.g. success in graduate school or initial training commands). Note that this section may not be applicable to many Cost Centers, functional units and programs.
4. **Self-assessment of Annual Report.** Cost Centers are encouraged to use the rubric found in enclosure (4), which is based on the SUNY Council on Assessment Institutional Assessment Rubric, to evaluate the quality of the annual report prepared, and consider submitting a copy of the rubric highlighted with a self-assessment of their annual report.

Enclosure (3)

## **PART TWO: Goals and Outcomes for the Coming Year**

Present a list Cost Center/functional unit/program goals for the coming year and discuss those goals in terms of expected assessment plans. Where applicable, at least one goal should be related to the strategic goals and objectives highlighted in enclosure (1) and at least one goal should be related to Midshipmen Development Outcomes. For each goal, units should have one or more stated measurable outcomes. Functional units/programs below the Cost Center level will likely only have one or two goals. Where applicable, all goals should have clearly defined cost implications, to the degree that they can be determined.

## USNA Institutional Effectiveness Rubric

Aspect	Element	Goal	Level 0: Not Evident	Level 1: Emerging	Level 2: Proficient	Level 3: Excelling
Design	Plan	USNA/Cost Centers have a formal assessment plan that documents an organized, sustained assessment process covering all major administrative units, support services, and midshipmen development programs.	There is no overall USNA/Cost Center plan for assessment. Assessment may be conducted, but when it occurs, it is completed on an ad hoc basis, perhaps in response to specific challenges.	Some Cost Centers conduct assessment systematically and have policies and plans that pertain to assessment within the unit; there is no coordination of or standards for assessment set by USNA/Cost Centers.	All Cost Centers conduct assessment systematically and may have policies to guide the process. There is no overall USNA/Cost Center plan that services to coordinate use of assessment data to improve effectiveness.	There is a written plan that specifies responsibility for conducting assessment at both USNA and Cost Centers that identifies reporting timelines and procedures. The plan also indicates how assessment data is channeled into the strategic planning and budgeting process.
	Outcomes	Measurable outcomes have been articulated for USNA and within Cost Centers, including for functional units and programs.	Outcomes either have not been written, or where they exist, they are not stated in ways that directly suggest how to measure them.	Some but not all Cost Centers have their own outcome statements.	All Cost Centers have outcome statements, but not all of these are stated in terms that link to measurable operations.	All Cost Centers and USNA as a whole have clearly stated and measurable outcomes.
	Alignment	Specific subordinate outcomes are aligned with broader, higher-level outcomes within Cost Centers and these are aligned with USNA's mission, goals and values.	Cost Center or more specific program outcomes are not aligned with higher level outcomes nor are they shown to be related to USNA's mission, goals and values.	Alignment of outcomes has been achieved in some but not all Cost Centers/functional units.	Alignment of lower level outcomes to higher level outcomes within Cost Centers is mostly complete.	All Cost Centers indicate how their outcomes are aligned with USNA mission, goals and values. Alignment within Cost Centers is appropriate, and alignment of outcomes indicates a strong sense of shared purpose within USNA.
Implementation	Resources	Financial, human, technical, and/or physical resources are adequate to support assessment.	No resources are available to support assessment.	Resources to support assessment are handled on an ad hoc basis.	There is budgetary support of assessment activities within Cost Centers, but there is no overall USNA plan for providing the full range of resources to support assessment.	USNA and each Cost Center have made a commitment to assessment and provide all necessary resources for assessment.
	Culture	All members of the faculty and staff are involved in assessment activities	Assessment, if occurring, is done by lone individuals charged with assessment responsibilities	Some Cost Centers involve faculty/staff in assessment planning, collection and review of data.	All Cost Centers involve faculty/staff in some aspect of assessment planning, collection and/or review of data.	All USNA faculty/staff are involved in assessment activities within their Cost Centers. USNA leaders frequently articulate importance of assessment.

Aspect	Element	Goal	Level 0: Not Evident	Level 1: Emerging	Level 2: Proficient	Level 3: Excelling
Implementation	Data Focus	Data from multiple sources and measures are considered in assessment	Assessment data are not collected.	Assessment data are collected in one or more units but consists primarily of survey results.	All Cost Centers collect some combination of direct and indirect evidence to assess performance.	Assessment is based on multiple measures of performance including direct/indirect measures and quantitative/qualitative data.
	Sustainability	Assessment is conducted regularly, and in a manner that is sustainable over the long term	USNA cannot document that there is sustainable assessment activity occurring within any Cost Center.	USNA can document sustainable assessment activity is occurring within several Cost Centers, but practices are either not universal or not sustainable.	Assessment is routinely conducted in most Cost Centers. Sustainability varies in terms of how regularly it occurs or in how systematically outcomes/goals are assessed.	Assessment is routinely conducted in all Cost Centers and is part of their functioning. Sustainability of assessment is evident, occurring regularly and systemically and has been ongoing for years.
	Monitoring	Mechanisms are in place to systematically monitor the implementation of the assessment plan.	There is little or no evidence that USNA has in place or is developing effective systematic monitoring of the quality and implementation of assessment activities within and across Cost Centers.	Assessment plans are in place. Systematic monitoring of the implementation of quality assessment activities is occurring within some Cost Centers, but not others. There is little evidence of USNA-level monitoring of assessment activities.	Systemic monitoring of the quality and implementation of assessment activities is occurring within most Cost Centers. USNA has begun establishing a means for ensuring that all Cost Centers regularly conduct and report assessment activities.	There is evidence of systematic monitoring of the quality and implementation of assessment activities within all Cost Centers. USNA has an established mechanism for monitoring Cost Center compliance with USNA assessment policies.
Impact	Communication	Assessment results are readily available to all parties with an interest in them.	Assessment results, if they exist, "live in the individual unit and are not broadly communicated.	Assessment results are owned by the Cost Centers and are shared with others on an as-needed basis.	Cost Centers share assessment results routinely with each other or make them accessible to others at USNA. Public disclosure of appropriate assessment data is limited.	Assessment results are disseminated to appropriate audiences at appropriate times; data appropriate to external audiences are easily accessible; data needed for internal decision making are readily accessible.
	Strategic Planning and Budgeting	Assessment data are routinely considered in strategic planning and budgeting.	Assessment data stay within the area in which they were collected. They do not factor into USNA's strategic planning and budgeting.	One or more Cost Centers use assessment results in budgetary requests or to inform strategic planning.	Assessment data are used in strategic planning & budgeting, but there is no clear mechanism in place to ensure routine use.	USNA is able to demonstrate that strategic planning and budgeting processes have routinely used assessment data in decision making.
	Closing the Loop	Assessment data have been used for institutional improvement.	There is little or no evidence that assessment results are used to improve USNA.	Assessment results are occasionally used to improve USNA.	All Cost Centers regularly use assessment results to inform improvements.	USNA is committed to using assessment results to inform decisions; all Cost Centers regularly use assessment data.