

# Academic Program Assessment Report

**Assessment** is a term commonly used to encompass the process of gathering and using evidence to guide improvements.

SACSCOC requires that an institution "identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results".

**Be sure to SAVE your progress as you work!**

**Academic Program**  
Exercise Science, M.S.

**Submission Due Date**  
Fall 2025: October 1, 2025

**Assessment Coordinator Name**  
Martin Carmichael

**Enter Assessment Coordinator Email**  
mcarmichael@lander.edu

## Program Goal

### Goal

#### Goal 1

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

#### Program Goal

To enhance student understanding of human physiology & biomechanics in healthy and diseased populations, and demonstrate advanced knowledge in research methodology, data acquisition & interpretation.

#### Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

## Student Learning Outcome

### Enter Outcome

Percent of students who are "first-time test takers" and achieved a score of 70% or higher on the MS Comprehensive Exam.

### Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2024-2025

### Performance Target for "Met"

At least 80% of "first-time test takers" achieve a score of 70% or higher.

### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

70-79% of "first-time test takers" achieve a score of 70% or higher.

### Performance Target for "Not Met"

<70% of "first-time test takers" achieve a score of 70% or higher.

### Assessment Measure Used

Comprehensive Exam.

### Frequency of Assessment

Every semester for graduating students.

### Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

100

### Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

### Comments/Narrative

The expected outcome was met for this test. Four of the four students taking the Comprehensive Exam scored 70% or higher. This is a substantial improvement from the last assessment period.

### Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

One additional FTE faculty position beyond the currently vacant line.

### Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Additional FTE faculty positions for the Exercise Science MS program would allow for more consistent teaching assignments, ensure the highest quality student experience and removal of overload from current faculty and improve the likely hood that our students will continue to perform at this level.

## Goal Summary

### Goal Summary/Comments

The implementation of a system to inform students of potential study strategies and monthly reminders of the testing date I believe has contributed to the improvement in student performance. We will continue with this strategy and with the hiring of additional faculty I believe the resulting course assignments and consistency will continue to provide students with an environment that will be conducive for further success.

### Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

In addition to the changes described above, we have hired adjuncts with expertise in needed areas that have contributed to the current student outcomes.

### Upload Rubrics/Other Files

## Goal 2

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

### **Program Goal**

To provide an environment where students can review and/or author unique scientific research. Students are required to review scientific research articles in several courses and those students opting for the Thesis track will, with the help of their advisor, select a research topic and author a scientific review paper.

### **Pillar of Success Supported**

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## **Outcomes**

### **Outcome 1**

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Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

#### **What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

#### **Enter Outcome**

Percent of students that pass their review article assignment as determined by the members of their thesis committee.

#### **Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2024-2025

#### **Performance Target for "Met"**

At least 80% of students who pass their review article assignment as determined by the members of their thesis committee.

#### **Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

70-79% of students who pass their review article assignment as determined by the members of their thesis committee.

#### **Performance Target for "Not Met"**

<70% of students who pass their review article assignment as determined by the members of their thesis committee.

#### **Assessment Measure Used**

Decision of thesis committee.

#### **Frequency of Assessment**

Every Summer semester.

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**  
Summer 2025

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

**Comments/Narrative**

There were no students who opted for the Thesis track during the Academic Year 2024-2025.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

One additional FTE faculty position beyond the currently vacant line.

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

Additional FTE faculty positions for the Exercise Science MS program would allow for more consistent teaching assignments, ensure the highest quality student experience and removal of overload from current faculty.

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

Surprisingly no students decided on the Thesis track this academic year. All students after completing their first year are contacted and instructed to make a decision on taking the comprehensive exam or completing a thesis. All chose the comprehensive exam.

**Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

Faculty have discussed showcasing papers (or titles of papers) on the department's website authored by former students who have completed the thesis track as another way to bring attention to this option.

**Upload Rubrics/Other Files**

## Goal 3

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

**Program Goal**

Determine the percentage of MS Exercise Science graduates that are either 1) employed within their field of study or 2) attending graduate school in a related field of study within one year of graduation.

**Pillar of Success Supported**

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

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**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Operational Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Percentage of MS Exercise Science graduates that are either 1) employed within the field of study or 2) attending graduate school in a related field of study within one year of graduation.

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2024-2025

**Performance Target for "Met"**

At least 80% of MS Exercise Science graduates are either 1) employed within the field of study or 2) attending graduate school in a related field of study within one year of graduation.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

70-79% of MS Exercise Science graduates are either 1) employed within the field of study or 2) attending graduate school in a related field of study within one year of graduation.

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

<70% of MS Exercise Science graduates are either 1) employed within the field of study or 2) attending graduate school in a related field of study within one year of graduation.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Graduate survey deployed by Graduate Program Director approximately 1-year post graduation.

**Frequency of Assessment**

At the end of every Summer semester beginning 2025.

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

N/A

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

**Comments/Narrative**

The program is still recently developed and we decided, considering the very small sample size of graduates, to delay this survey by a calendar year. By next year our projected graduates should be doubled and provide, statistically, a better data set to analyze.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

One additional FTE faculty position beyond the currently vacant line.

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

Additional FTE faculty positions for the Exercise Science MS program would allow for more consistent teaching assignments, ensure the highest quality student experience and removal of overload from current faculty.

## Goal Summary

**Goal Summary/Comments**

Our hope is that we are able to track the professional success of our MS graduates once they leave our program and due to increased enrollment, we believe this information will prove to be invaluable. We recognize that status after one year does not define professional success. However, we would like to be able to communicate with future students as well as Admissions, about our success in placing students within the field.

### Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

Postponed data collection due to current small sample size. Will begin data collection this Spring 26.

### Upload Rubrics/Other Files

## Goal 4

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

### Program Goal

To comply with Program Productivity standards as defined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

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## Outcomes

### Outcome 1

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**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

### What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

### Enter Outcome

Major Enrollment

### Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2027-2028

### Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the MS Program is greater than or equal to 6.

### Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Not Applicable

### Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the MS Program is less than 6.

### Assessment Measure Used

### Frequency of Assessment

Enrollment & Graduate data from Academic Affairs office. Annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**  
12

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**  
3

**Comments/Narrative**

Though we have yet to reach our fifth year of Program implementation our three-year rolling average student enrollment has exceeded our goal of 6. We have experienced an increase in enrollment each of our three years thus far (9, 10, 17).

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

One additional FTE faculty position beyond the currently vacant line.

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

Additional FTE faculty positions for the Exercise Science MS program would allow for more consistent teaching assignments, ensure the highest quality student experience and removal of overload from current faculty.

## Outcome 2

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Operational Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Completions (Degrees Awarded)

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

Academic Year 2024-2025

**Performance Target for "Met"**

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded in the MS Program is greater than or equal to 3.

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

N/A

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded in the MS Program is less than 3.

**Assessment Measure Used**

Enrollment & Graduate data from Academic Affairs

**Frequency of Assessment**

office.

Annually

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

5

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

3

### **Comments/Narrative**

Though we have yet to reach our 5th year of Program implementation we have seen our second cohort of graduates (n=6) which exceeded our goal of 3.

### **Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

One additional FTE faculty position beyond the currently vacant line.

### **Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

Additional FTE faculty positions for the Exercise Science MS program would allow for more consistent teaching assignments, ensure the highest quality student experience and removal of overload from current faculty.

## **Goal Summary**

### **Goal Summary/Comments**

At the start of the fourth year of our Program's existence we have seen 'Enrollment' increase year over year and our goals exceeded. The number of 'Degrees Awarded' has remained elevated above our expected goals as well. We will continue to focus on recruitment and providing a quality educational experience to our students and expect to continue on this trend.

### **Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

Increased marketing efforts for the MS in Exercise Science program including continued participation in the graduate fair for the Southeast regional ACSM conference and are pursuing accreditation through both the CAAHEP and CASCE accrediting bodies to enhance program credibility and student recruitment.

### **Upload Rubrics/Other Files**

## **Goal 5**

**Program Goals** are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

### **Program Goal**

Demonstrate skills of assessment and laboratory methods.

### **Pillar of Success Supported**

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## **Outcomes**

### **Outcome 1**

**Outcomes** are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge,

skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

**Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.**

**What type of Outcome would you like to add?**

Student Learning Outcome

**Enter Outcome**

Students will exhibit expertise in principles and techniques along with the current technologies/methods used in the assessment of physical fitness and health.

**Timeframe for this Outcome**

2024-2025

**Performance Target for "Met"**

At least 80% of students achieve a score of 70% or higher on written and practical assessments in all clinical courses (PEES 713 - Rehabilitative Exercise, PEES 762 - Advanced Exercise/Fitness Assessment, PEES 763 - Exercise Prescription & Chronic Disease Management, PEES 764 - Perspectives for Special Populations and PEES 765 - Exercise Testing for Clinical Populations).

**Performance Target for "Partially Met"**

70-79% of students achieve a score of 70% or higher on written and practical assessments in all clinical courses (PEES 713 - Rehabilitative Exercise, PEES 762 - Advanced Exercise/Fitness Assessment, PEES 763 - Exercise Prescription & Chronic Disease Management, PEES 764 - Perspectives for Special Populations and PEES 765 - Exercise Testing for Clinical Populations).

**Performance Target for "Not Met"**

<70% of students achieve a score of 70% or higher on written and practical assessments in all clinical courses (PEES 713 - Rehabilitative Exercise, PEES 762 - Advanced Exercise/Fitness Assessment, PEES 763 - Exercise Prescription & Chronic Disease Management, PEES 764 - Perspectives for Special Populations and PEES 765 - Exercise Testing for Clinical Populations).

**Assessment Measure Used**

Combined assessment scores from clinical courses.

**Frequency of Assessment**

Every Summer beginning 2024.

**Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)**

75%

**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**

3

**Comments/Narrative**

The expected outcome of students exhibiting expertise in principles and techniques along with the current technologies/methods used in the assessment of physical fitness and health was met. Five out of five students required to attempt the comprehensive examination scored 70% or higher. We expect as student enrollment continues to increase and more students take the exam, performance on this Outcome will continue to improve and our goal will be met in the future as well.

**Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**

One additional FTE faculty position beyond the currently vacant line.

**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

Additional FTE faculty positions for the Exercise Science MS program would allow for more consistent teaching assignments, ensure the highest quality student experience and removal of overload from current faculty.

**Goal Summary****Goal Summary/Comments**

Part of the improvement in test scores can be attributed to an early "alert" system we have initiated to better inform students of the test and provide guidance and recommendations that better prepare them for optimal performance. At the end of their first-year emails are sent out to students describing the exam and the components that will be assessed. We then reach out to students again a semester prior to their graduation to assess their preparation and answer any questions they may have regarding best strategies to employ to best prepare themselves.

**Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal**

Early Alert system and follow-up.

**Upload Rubrics/Other Files****Dean's Email Address**

sbismarck@lander.edu

**Approved by Dean?**

Yes

**Signature of Dean**

Stephen Bismarck

**Comments from Dean's Review**

**Thank you for reviewing and approving this report. The approval and a copy of the report will be emailed to you and the Assessment Coordinator.**