Student Assessment and Evaluation

1. Background

a. DAU provides certification training as mandated by the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act. The University also sponsors and provides a variety of specialized and continuing education curricula for the acquisition workforce. The acquisition workforce participates in DAU courses to meet or exceed certification, assignment-specific, and continuous learning requirements relevant to explicit acquisition career fields. DAU offers students curricular opportunities in a variety of learning modes. Such approaches include, but are not limited to, instructor led training (ILT) in the classroom and virtually (VILT), asynchronous online training (OLT) courses, and hybrids. Because of the diversity of the DAU curricula levels and delivery modes and tools, student learning assessments will be equally diverse.

b. From an institutional perspective, and to meet accreditation requirements, DAU is required to demonstrate student learning progress. Therefore, the institution must have students' exhibit levels of performance on either measures of general skills and competencies or on tests of specific knowledge related to occupational education or specialty curricula.

c. Outcome assessment planning is governed by the principles and guidelines outlined in the DAU Curriculum and E-Learning Asset Development Guides. Assessment information is gained from criteria-based (rather than norm-referenced) tools through the systematic collection and examination of assessment-aggregated data (rather than the performance of students on a particular examination) to document and improve student learning.

2. Policies

a. Mastery Standards: DAU does not assign letter grades for course completions. DAU employs a mastery (level required for graduation) system. Students must meet prescribed mastery standards to successfully complete a DAU course. For instructor led and online courses, the standards are as follows:

(1) Instructor Led/Virtual Instructor Led (ILT/VILT) Courses. Mastery is achieving an aggregate score of 80 percent or higher on the cumulative assessments or required coursework. These standards as well as student assessment methods will be discussed on the first day of class and provided to the student in writing.

(2) Online Training (OLT) Courses. The mastery standard is 80 percent on each exam in the course.

(3) Students who achieve the mastery standards and successfully complete the course requirements will graduate from the course. The course completion will be displayed on the student's official DAU transcript.

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b. Failing to Achieve Mastery Standards

(1) ILT/VILT Courses. Students who fail to achieve mastery standards (i.e. receive and attrition code of "A" for Comprehension/Academic Failure), have the right to contest their failure within three (3) business days of the course completion by providing a written request to review their assessment instruments to the teaching campus Associate Dean of Academics. If a student does not contest a failing grade or a failing grade is upheld after review of graded exercises, the teaching campus Associate Dean for Academics or designee will issue a failure letter notice to the student with a copy provided to the student's supervisor and to the Director, Performance and Resource Management (PRM), Attention: Center for Scheduling and Student Support. The letter will state that the student failed to achieve mastery standards. PRM Center for Scheduling and Student Support will maintain a copy of the letter.

(a) If, it has been determined that a student will fail to achieve mastery criteria (given the remaining assessments) and assuming the student were to receive maximum credit possible on the remaining assessments before graduation, the student may be retained in the course if that is the desire of both the student and the student's parent organization. For these students, following actions will occur:

1 The course lead instructor will notify the student and inquire about the student's desire to continue in the course.

2 The student will seek guidance about whether to return to the place of duty or remain in the course through graduation. It will be ASSUMED that the student will remain in the course through graduation unless the student obtains written authorization to return to the place of duty. Written authorization can be in the form of an e-mail addressed to the course lead instructor from the student's supervisor or other appropriate organizational official. A student returning home will not participate in any further course activities, and a student being retained will continue to participate in all activities and assessments.

3 Failing students who remain in the classroom are expected to participate fully in all course activities and assessments as well as abide by the Standards of Conduct outlined in Attachment 1, *Student Standards of Conduct*. Failure to do so may be cause for removal from the classroom and the assignment of an attrition code of "K" for *Disciplinary/Misconduct*. Failing students will not be authorized to complete an end of class survey.

(2) OLT Courses. *The student will have three (3) opportunities for achieving 80 percent on each exam.* Students are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from the assigned faculty before making a third attempt. Students who fail the third test attempt will be required to repeat the course from the beginning. There is no reenrollment requirement.

(a) If a students who fail to achieve mastery standards on the final (third) exam attempt, the student may contest the failure by initiating a test item challenge if they believe the failure was due to a "bad" test question or the course material does not support the test question. Procedures for initiating a test item challenge are outlined in Attachment 11, *Test Item Challenge Policy and Procedures*.

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c. Course Student Assessment Plan (CSAP). Each course will have a CSAP consisting of the Individual Objectives and their Assessment Plan (IOAP), the Student Assessment Strategy and a listing of the assessment instruments and/or requirements all of which are part of the course Plan of Instruction (POI). At a minimum, the CSAP outlines the following:

- Student Assessment Strategy;
- Course Outcomes (terminal leaning objectives);
- The Level of Cognitive Complexity (Bloom's level);
- Assessment Method(s); and
- Types of Assessment Scoring Instrument(s).

d. Student Assessments. Student assessments will clearly identify student achievements, including providing feedback on student mastery or lack of mastery on all learner-focused outcomes as described in the CSAP.

3. Responsibilities. The primary responsibility for the quality and standards of student/participant assessment in DAU lies close to the point of delivery. Effective leadership and good management also are vital to ensure faculty members are supported in designing and implementing assessment strategies as follows:

a. The University ensures that:

(1) Assessment practices are explicit, fair and consistent across the institution.

(2) Assessment procedures are monitored throughout the region or college and other sites so they meet the criteria set out in this document.

(3) Resources are available to provide faculty and staff with access to information and expertise on the theory and practice of assessment.

(4) Policies regarding special consideration following sickness or other misadventure, and for students with disabilities, are explicit and applied consistently.

(5) Policies on plagiarism and cheating, including penalties for breaches, are explicit and consistently applied.

(6) Appropriate appeal processes are available and publicized.

b. Director, Foundational Learning Directorate (FLD); Dean, Defense Systems Management College (DSMC); Dean, College of Contract Management (CCM). Working through their Center Directors or other appropriate faculty along with their supporting Instructional System Designers, ensure that:

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(1) CSAPs are completed and learning outcomes state the performance expected of the student; that the outcome statements are clear, specific, concise, and measurable; and that the outcomes are reflective of the implied or stated performance requirements of the associated competency based upon the level of instruction.

(2) Developed courseware includes a discussion of learning outcomes at the beginning of the learning event and opportunities for providing student feedback are built into the design.

(3) The overall success of the curricula within their charge is evaluated regularly (at least tri-annually) and institutes improvement plans as required.

c. Learning Directors and Course Managers. With their supporting Instructional Systems Designer, will:

(1) Develop assessment instruments and rubrics consistent with the performance measures outline in the outcomes.

(2) Design student feedback mechanism for their assigned course.

(3) Review regularly (at least tri-annually) assessment instruments and rubrics utilized in their assigned course(s) against student results for appropriateness.

(4) Develop a gradebook for recording student progress consistent with the course CSAP.

d. Instructional Faculty. The Lead Instructor for an ILT/VILT course will ensure that:

(1) Assessments or rubrics are used and student feedback is provided as designed and approved and is outlined in the POI and instructor supporting materials.

(2) Each student's gradebook and other training records are properly maintained as outlined in Attachment 12, *Student Transcripts, Records Retention, and Disclosure of Academic Information (Privacy).*

(3) Students receive proper feedback related to the assessed learning event in a timely manner.

 (4) Students are properly notified if their progress in a course falls below acceptable standards for course mastery.

(5) Learning outcomes are discussed with students before the learning event.

e. Students. Comply with the Standards of Conduct outlined in Attachment 1 of this directive as related to all work and attendance requirements associated with a DAU course.