

# CREATING A MISSION STATEMENT

Understanding and articulating what your program is trying to accomplish is necessary for a successful assessment plan. It is important to carefully specify and obtain a consensus from faculty members in your program on the program's vision, values and goals that will serve as guiding principles for developing outcomes and collecting data. Thus the time you and your faculty spend developing your mission statement is important.

Definition of a Mission Statement:

*A mission statement is a broad statement of what the program is, what it does, and for whom it does it. It is the initial point of reference for any program. (Adapted from University of Central Florida UCF Academic Program Assessment Handbook February 2005 Information, Analysis, and Assessment)*

For any given program a mission statement should 1) provide a clear description of the purpose of the program and its primary functions; 2) identify who the program will serve and ; 3) contain a description of how the program will contribute to the development and careers of the students participating.

The mission statement should be clear, powerful and broad enough to guide your decision-making and provide the foundation for your learning outcomes. In addition, the mission statement should be able to stand on its own and distinguish itself from other programs if the program's name were removed. Most importantly the mission statement should be aligned with the mission statement of the University and School.

Sample mission statements are included on the following pages for your information as well as a worksheet to help develop your mission statement. Once the exercise has been completed, you can take the answers from the worksheet to complete the template on the following page. After completing the template, have program faculty review it using the checklist on page on the last page of this section

## Sample Mission Statements

*The anthropological perspective trains students to think critically and globally, and teaches our students to embrace a world view which they can apply to any profession. The Public Archaeology concentration provides students with both theoretical and practical expertise in cultural resource management, preparing students for future careers in archaeological consulting or with regulatory agencies, as well as museum and academic positions in archaeology. The Cultural Anthropology concentration guides students through a comprehensive liberal arts/social science curriculum, preparing students for future careers in business, social services, government agencies, teaching, or graduate school in anthropology, law or other specialized fields.*

*The mission of the Biology Program is to provide students with a broad background in the biological sciences allowing for flexibility in making career choices. The Bachelor of Science program is designed to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for employment in the biotechnology, environmental, health-related, and teaching areas, as well as providing a sound foundation for graduate or professional school. The Bachelor of Arts permits the student to explore personal interests in biology while developing the background needed to use biological knowledge in association with a field such as sales, illustration, or elementary education. The overall goal of our program is to expose students to the scientific process and to promote a student's ability to think critically. Ultimately, the aim is to transform the student into a more analytical thinker and to improve his/her confidence, both academically and professionally. It is our mission to graduate students who are competent in application of the scientific method and able to think independently as they embark on their graduate or professional careers*

*The criminal justice major offers students a focused interdisciplinary exposure to all aspects of crime and criminal justice. Courses in the program deal with crime and delinquency and the responses to these problems by police, courts, corrections and other organizations. The examination of institutional responses to crime entails an engagement with contemporary criminal justice issues, ethical concerns and research. Students are introduced to a variety of theoretical perspectives and competing viewpoints throughout the curriculum and are equipped with the analytical and research tools for understanding and exploring issues in crime and justice. The program is designed to provide students majoring in criminal justice with excellent preparation for further study in graduate or professional schools as well as for careers in criminal justice*

*(From Bridgewater State Assessment Guidebook, 2000)*

## Worksheet to Create A Mission Statement

*By completing the questions below, you will be able to create a program mission statement. It may be helpful to do this as a group exercise with program faculty or your program assessment committee.*

**1. What is your academic program's primary educational purpose?** For example, does your program provide certain types of skills (critical thinking, analytical thinking, writing or communication skills, etc.) or broad background/theoretical foundation in a certain academic discipline(s) (e.g., art history, biology, philosophy, sociology, etc.)?

**2. What is your program providing to your students to meet this purpose?** For example, what activities does your program utilize to facilitate this learning? Coursework, labs, research projects, etc.?

**3. Who are your program's key stakeholders?** In other words, who does your program serve? Undergraduate students? Graduate students? Non-traditional students? Students preparing for graduate school?

**4. What type of careers or further study will the program prepare students for?**

## Mission Statement Template

*Using the information you entered on the previous worksheet, complete the template below to form your mission statement. (NOTE: This template is just to facilitate your writing a mission statement. You are not required to use this wording but you should include all of its components in your statement.)*

**The mission of [** *insert the name of your program here* **]** **is to**

*[insert your response from question 1 on the worksheet]*

**by providing majors**

*[insert your response from question 2 on the worksheet]*

**in order to**

*[insert your response from question 3 on the worksheet]*

*[OPTIONAL: Insert additional clarifying statements including a description of how the program will contribute to students' educational and professional opportunities]*

*(Adapted from University of Central Florida UCF Academic Program Assessment Handbook February 2005 Information, Analysis, and Assessment)*

## Mission Statement Checklist

*Now that you have created your mission statement, use this checklist to help determine if your statement is effective and clearly defines the goals and vision of the program. Please fill out the questions listed below.*

	YES	NO
Is the mission statement brief and memorable?		
Is the mission statement distinctive? (Can it stand on its own and distinguish itself from other programs if the program's name were removed?)		
Does it clearly state the purpose of the program?		
Does it indicate the primary functions or activities that the program offers?		
Does it identify the major stakeholders?		
Does it support the University's and school's mission?		

*(Material adapted from University of Central Florida UCF Academic Program Assessment Handbook February 2005 Information, Analysis, and Assessment)*

*If you checked "NO" on any of the items above, go back and revise your mission statement accordingly.*

*When you are able to check "YES" on all of the items above, your mission statement is complete and you are ready to go to the next section where you will develop your learning outcomes.*

## Sample Completed Mission Statement Template

*Using the information you entered on the previous worksheet, complete the template below to form your mission statement.*

The mission of the Portuguese major is to

expose students to a variety of perspectives in Portuguese language and Iberian and Latin American culture, civilization and history

by providing majors

with training in writing and communication as well as cultural and historical analysis

in order to

develop students into critical and global thinkers prepared for careers in business, social service, and government or for graduate study in Iberian and Latin American Studies.