ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLANNING IN COMPLIANCE ASSIST!

A. Overview

The Compliance Assist! (CA!) system is the heart of Tennessee State University's assessment documentation system. In it units provide their planning narratives and track the progress on measurable outcomes in the areas of performance and student learning designed to achieve the planning goals.

The organizational structure in CA! is a hierarchy of levels that follows the format of

Level 0. **Institution**

- **Level 1.** **Division** (e.g., Academic Affairs, Business and Finance)
  - **Level 2.** **Unit** (Colleges, Schools, Offices, e.g., College of Business, School of Graduate Studies, Finance and Accounting)
    - **Level 3.** **Sub-unit** (Departments)
      - **Level 4.** **Program** (e.g., B.S. Psychology, English B.A.)

Here is a snapshot from CA! expanded to show programs in the Department of Teaching and Learning, College of Education, Academic Affairs.
With the Levels indicated.

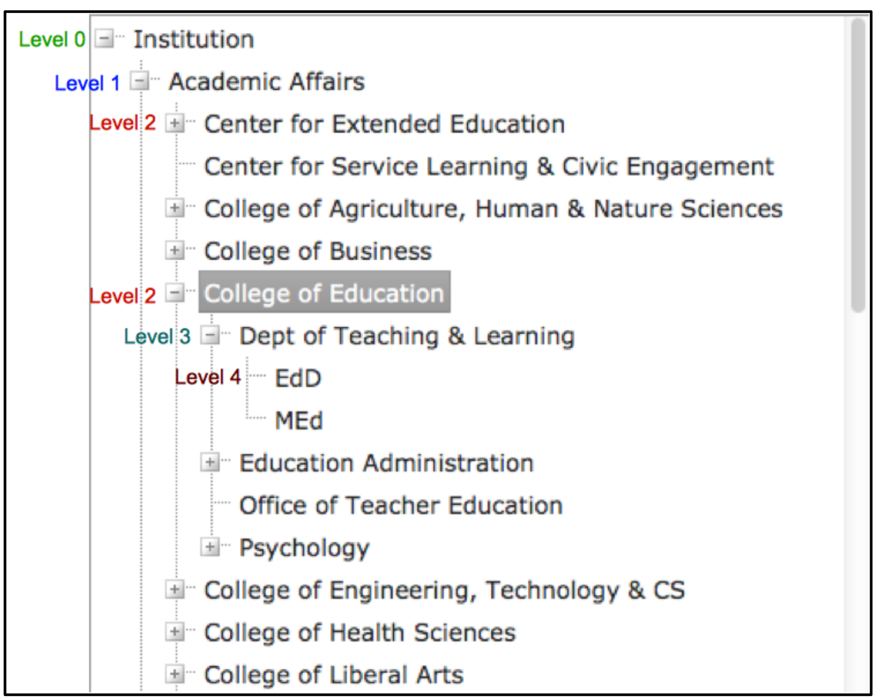


Figure 1.

The Organizational Coding System is based on this schema using codes for levels 1 – 3. For the example above, the code designation is Unit Code-Key Code-SubUnit Code: ACA 304 103. Using consistent coding where required greatly facilitates generating meaningful reports in CA!.

B. Log in

To start using Compliance Assist! You will need to point your browser to http://compliance.tnstate.edu/Planning. This takes you to the Authentication or Log In screen shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2.

The User Name will be your full TSU email address in the form of yname@tnstate.edu where yname is your tnstate username. The Password is the one assigned to you for CA! and is not necessarily the same as the one used to access the TSU system. Click the Log In button or just press the enter/return key on your keyboard and you'll be taken to the CA! Home screen. If you don't have a username and password for CA!, please contact the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment at 615-963-2551.

C. Home Screen

This is the Home screen in CA!:

Figure 3.

This screen contains announcements and the welcome message. Only two lines of the full message show on the screen. To get to the rest, you click on More > >. Expanding the Resources and Instructions 2011-2012 will take you to links for (1) Quality Improvement, (2) New Organizational Coding System, and (3) Relating outcomes to Mission and Strategic Plan which are described in the next section

D. Resources and Instructions 2011 – 2012

When you click on More >> under **Resources and Instructions 2011 – 2012** or on the title you'll get the screen shown in Figure 4.

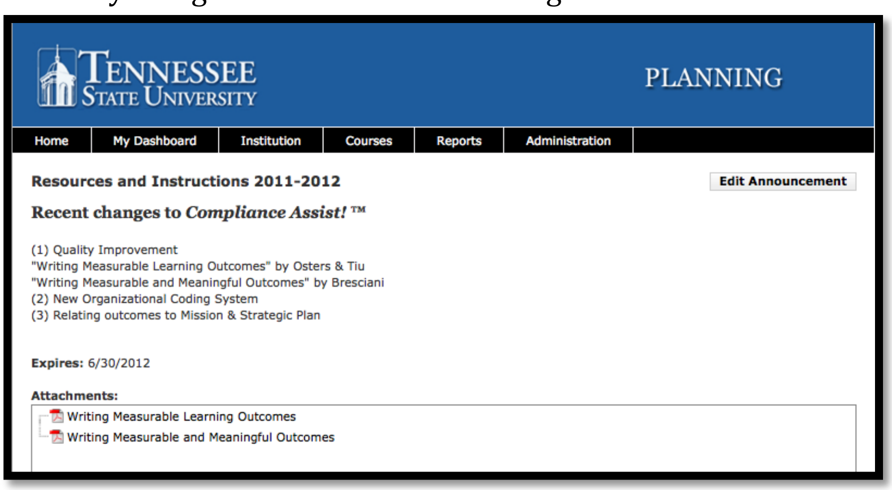


Figure 4.

For the purposes of this guide we will only need (2) New Organizational Coding System. The chart shows the coding you will use to identify outcomes for your unit. As explained above in the Overview, Codes have been assigned to each level below Institution which is Level 0. Every Division (Level 1) has been given a three character code. For example Academic Affairs has the Division code ACA. The next level (Level 2) has been designated a Unit and given a three-digit numeric Key code. Units are colleges, schools and in the non-academic areas, offices. The College of Liberal Arts is 302, Business 303, Education 304, etc. Sub-unit codes have been assigned to all entities at Level 3 and are typically in the 100s. Here are a couple of examples of the Combo Codes :

Example 2. Languages, Literature, and Philosophy<College of Liberal Arts<Academic Affairs = ACA 302 105.

Example 3. Human Resources<Business & Finance = BUS 401.

As long as the codes are consistent and follow the chart, any separator may be used. The following would all be equivalent in CA!: underscore ACA_302_105, hyphen ACA-302-105, or space ACA 302 105. What is important for reporting purposes that some separator is used between each part of the Combo Code.

E. Institution Tab

Your workspaces in CA! will be found by clicking the | Institution | tab in the strip below the blue Planning banner from any screen as shown in Figure 5.

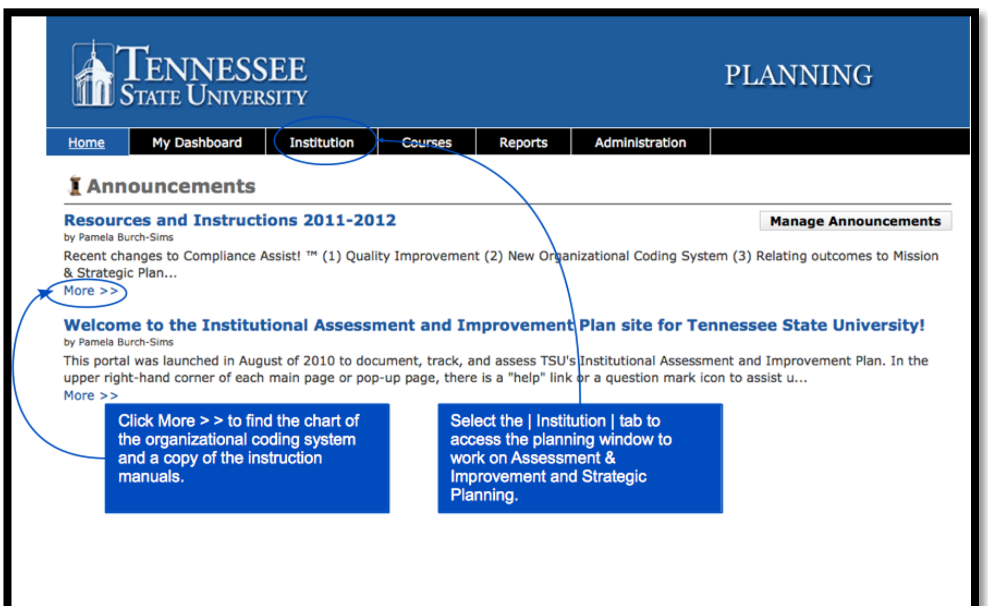


Figure 5.

Clicking on | Institution | will take you to the Institution screen area. You will land on the Assessment & Improvement Plan (A&IP) screen as shown in Figure 6 since it is the first tab under Institution.

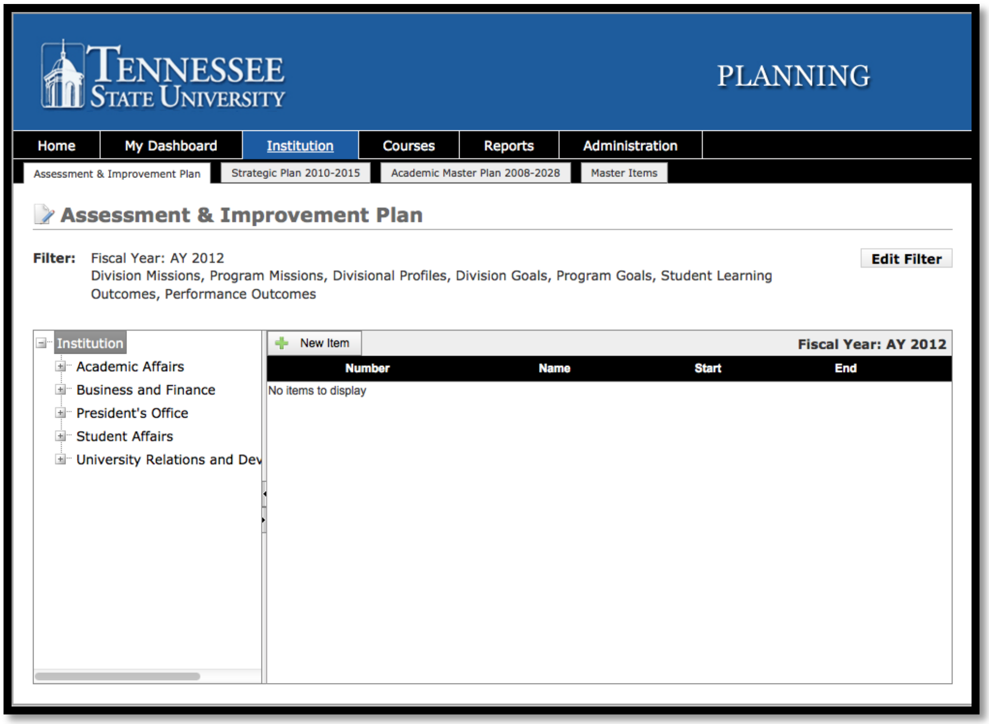


Figure 6.

Take a minute to familiarize yourself with the layout of the Institution screen. You'll see new tabs in the white area. In Figure 6 you see that you are in the Assessment & Improvement Plan tab which is where you'll be doing your entry related to outcomes in CA!. The other tab you may need to use is to the right of this one and is labeled Strategic Plan 2010-2015. You'll learn more about that in the next section.

Notice that the main screen is divided into two sections. On the left is the Navigation pane that allows you to move through the organizational chart to your specific area of responsibility. The [+] button indicates that there are sub-levels below the entry. Clicking the button expands to show the next level down and the button changes to [-]. Clicking by Academic Affairs, for instance, show a new column of units under Academic Affairs. Most of these can also be further expanded to find sub-units such as departments. Figure 7 shows the Navigation pane expanded to the program level for the General Education Literacy in the Department of Languages, Literature, and Philosophy which in the College of Liberal Arts under Academic Affairs.

In the right hand window you see the four Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for this program. This is the level where most of your work will be done: relating current Performance Outcomes (POs) and SLOs to the university mission and the College or non-academic subunit's strategic plan and/or creating and relating new ones to support the 2010 – 2015 plan.

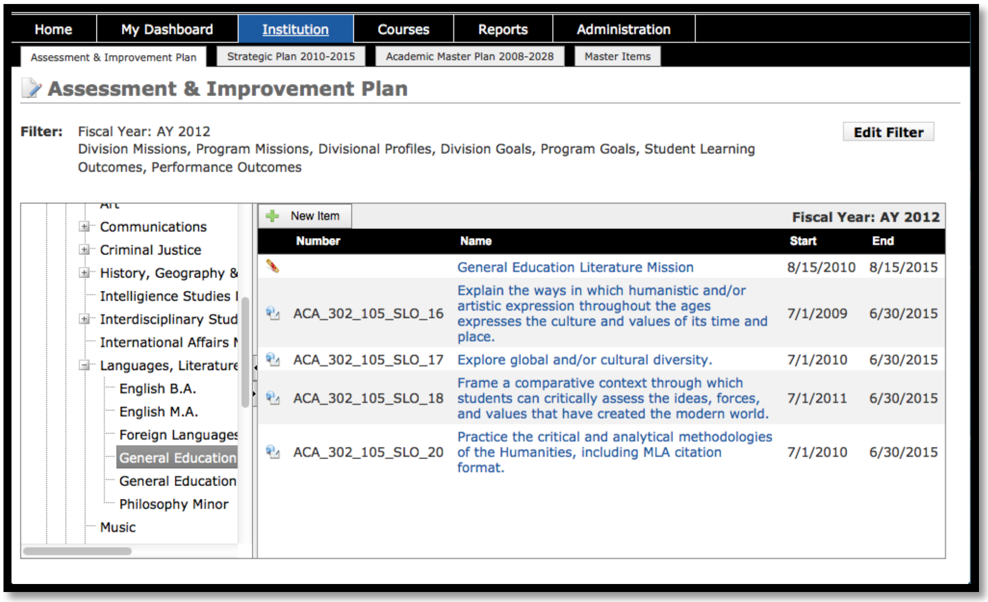


Figure 7.

Before looking at that process in more detail, you first need to know what your unit's Strategic Plan says. For that we will go to the | Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015 | tab in the Institution area of Compliance Assist!.

F. Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015

As an example of what you will see on the Strategic Plan side of things, Figure 8 shows you a view of the Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015 for the College of Education. For the most part, only units at this level and above will have planning narratives.

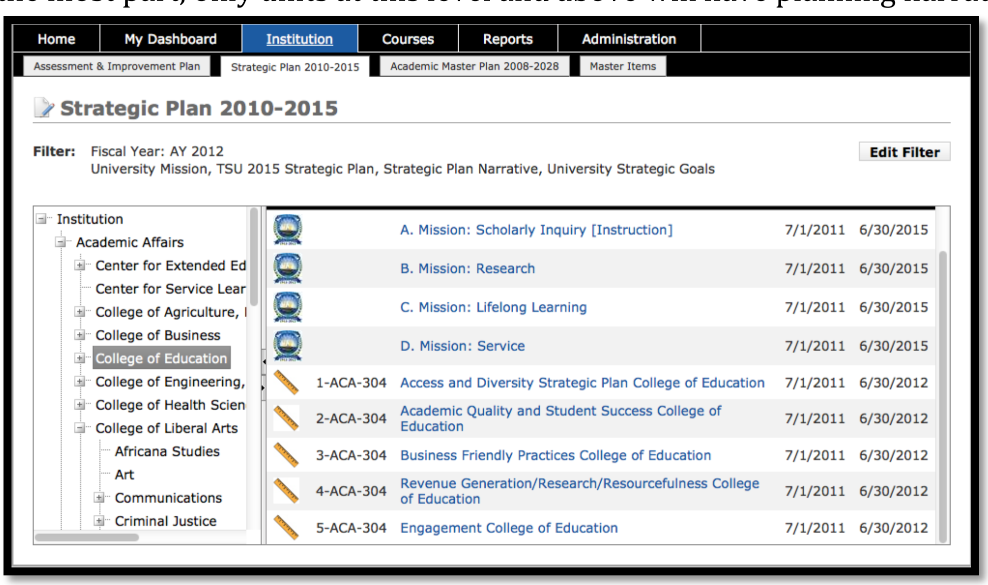


Figure 8.

The university's strategic plan is divided into five areas which we call Key Performance Indicators or KPIs:

1. Access and Diversity
2. Academic Quality and Student Achievement
3. Business Friendly Practices
4. Revenue Generation/Research/Resourcefulness
5. Engagement

Links have also been provided at each unit level to the parts of the University Mission statement: **Tennessee State University, an Historically Black College/University (HBCU), fosters scholarly inquiry and research, lifelong learning, and a commitment to service.**

A. ***Scholarly inquiry [Instruction]*** includes those initiatives at the University that are focused primarily on teaching and educating students.
B. ***Research*** includes those initiatives at the University that are focused primarily on generating new knowledge or expanding existing knowledge. Initiatives in this category generally result in a publishable product, including those that are submitted for publication and those that are actually published. This also includes research work presented at professional meetings/conferences. Also included in this category are those initiatives that result in creative products and productions.
C. ***Lifelong learning*** includes those initiatives at the University that promote, support, or help to develop the skills and commitment of students, faculty, staff, and the community to continue their intellectual and personal growth.
D. ***Service*** includes those initiatives at the University that are focused primarily on applying the expertise, skills, and knowledge of students, faculty and other employees for the betterment of the University's external and internal constituent communities

Figure 8 shows the five KPI narratives for the College of Education as well as the four parts of the University Mission. Notice that the KPIs follow a coding pattern. The College of Education code is 304 and it is a part of Academic Affairs (ACA). Each KPI has been entered with a number corresponding to the specific KPI followed by the organizational code, so the Access and Diversity KPI on this example is 1-ACA-304. Clicking on the title will take you to the narrative for the KPI in a separate pop-up window (Figure 9).

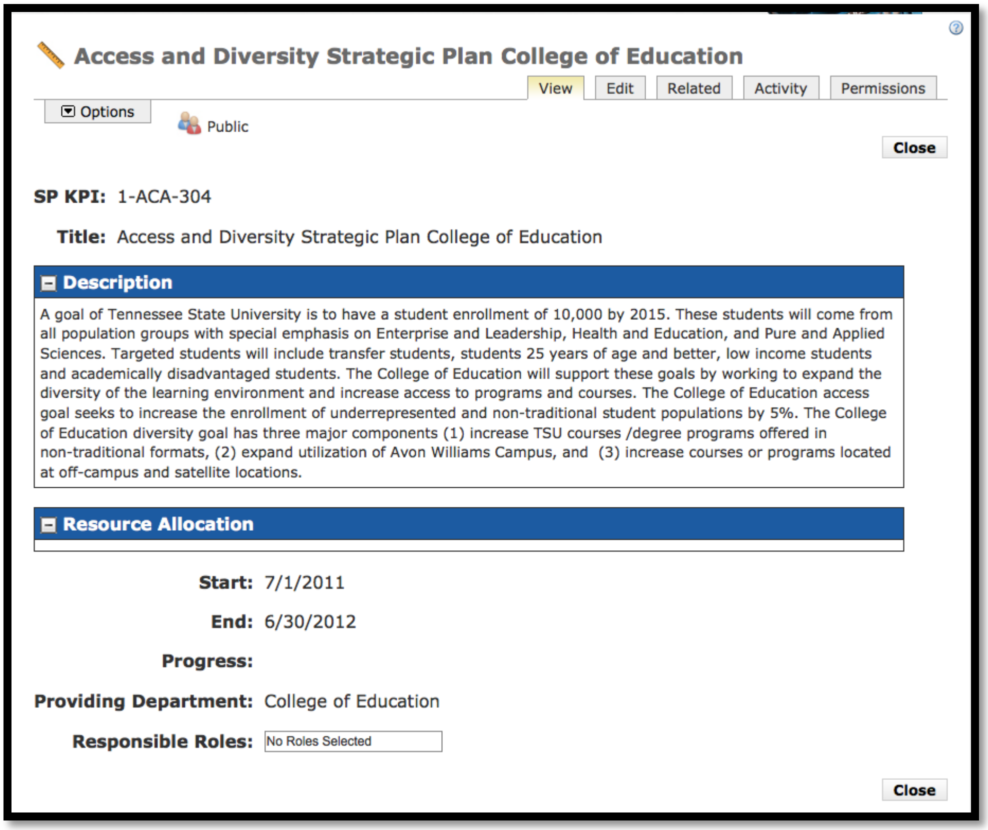


Figure 9

For convenience in relating and developing outcomes for your area, you may want to capture all of the KPIs of your unit in a single word processing document. Create a new blank document in your preferred word processing application (MS Word, Open Office, etc.) while you have the Planning window open in Compliance Assist! (see Figure 8). Click on the title of an item with the Ruler Icon to get the pop up window. Select the text in the Description field. Copy it and then paste in your wp document. Repeat the process till you've captured all of your unit's strategic plan descriptions and save the wp file. Because of levels of access privileges in the system, this may need to be done by Dean, Director, etc. who entered the data originally.

G. Assessment and Improvement Plan

Once you have studied the Strategic Plan KPIs for your unit, you are ready to relate your ongoing outcomes and add new once where they are needed. This all occurs under the Assessment and Improvement Plan tab discussed earlier. You'll only be working with outcome items in your programs. Performance Outcomes are identified by the PO icon and "describe what a program is expected to accomplish" (Osters & Tiu, p. 1). Student Learning Outcomes have the SLO icon and "describe what students are expected to accomplish" (Ibid). Both kinds of outcome are entered in the CA! system the same way and with the same six step process. We recommend that you read the two short articles on writing outcomes that are downloadable from the Resources and Instruction 2011 – 2012 announcement related to Quality Improvement on the CA! Home page.

Six Step Process

Let's look at the data entry screen for a new outcome to understand the process we are using. Figure 10 shows what the pop up window contains when you add a new SLO item to your assessment plan.

The first field is the **Number** of this outcome. The proper format for outcome numbering is to use the organizational code for the unit followed by an identifier and outcome number. For example, if this student learning outcome is for the M.Ed. program in the department of Teaching & Learning, its number might be ACA 304 103 MED SLO 01.

Next is **Step 1: Formulate Assessable Expected Outcome**. Here is where we would state what the students are expected to accomplish. This is followed by a **Start** and **End** date. The default dates are for the current year. Even when an outcome is ongoing, we prefer to see what is done year by year for reporting purposes.

Progress is a drop down field. The choices are: Completed, On Schedule, Ongoing, Overdue, Delayed, and Cancelled.

The **Providing Department** is filled in automatically with the label in the organizational chart to which this item is being added.

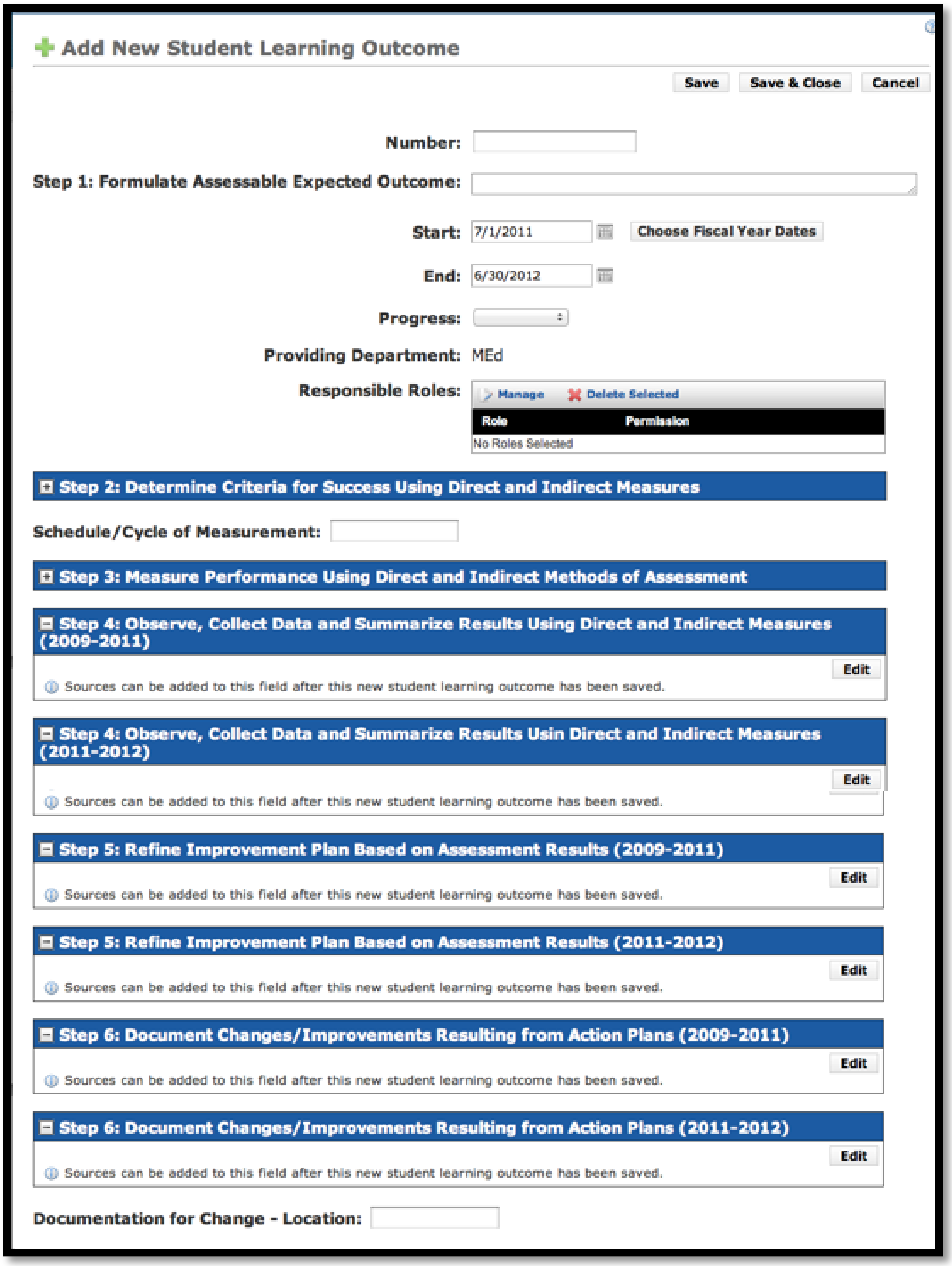


Figure 10.

Responsible Roles specifies the individual responsible for monitoring and entering the data for the outcome. To add a role, you click on **Manage** and use the role selection engine in the pop up window to search for the person or persons who will manage this SLO. You can search by role name, user name, or department. When the search results appear in the lower left window, check the box by the name and click the **Add** to choose **Selected –>** or **All –>**. The selection will appear on the right under **Selected Role(s)**. **Save & Close** the window and your selection should now appear in the SLO window. Figure 11 shows the search result for department head of Teaching & Learning just before adding the name and role to the field.

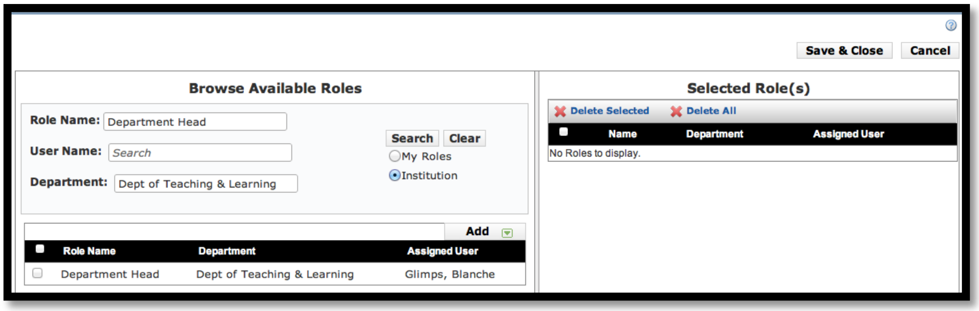


Figure 11.

Steps 2 and 3 are very closely related. Step 2 requires that the criteria for determining successful accomplishment of the outcome be specified while Step 3 specifies the methods of assessment that will be employed to measure the performance. Refer to the resource article "Writing Measureable Learning Outcomes" by Sandi Osters and F. Simone Tiu for concise discussion of what makes a good measurable outcome. Reproduced here is the chart from their article with examples of direct and indirect measures that might be considered for these steps.

Examples of Direct Assessment Methods:	Examples of Indirect Assessment Methods:
• Comprehensive exams • Performance assessment for graduating seniors • Writing proficiency exams • National Major Field Achievement Tests • GRE subject exams • Certification exams, licensure exams • Locally developed pre- and post- tests • Senior thesis / major project • Portfolio evaluation • Reflective journals • Capstone courses • Internship evaluations • Grading with scoring rubrics*	• Peer institutions comparison • Job placement • Employer surveys • Graduate school acceptance rates • Performance in graduate school • Student graduation/retention rates • Exit interviews • Focus group discussions • Alumni surveys • Tracking of alumni awards, achievements (national, state, international, etc.) • Curriculum/syllabus analysis

*Note: Grades alone do not provide adequate feedback to students' performance. However, if grading is tied to rubrics, it can be a useful tool to identify strengths and weaknesses of student performance. (Osters & Tiu p.5)

Note that to add the descriptions to Steps 2 – 6, you must click the [+] button to the left of the title and then click the [Edit] button at the far right of the field. You may need to drag the window wider to see Edit. Place the cursor on the left edge of the window then click and drag to change the width.

Steps 4 through 6 are completed once the data are collected. You may see duplicate fields for these steps. New fields for 2011-2012 data were added to facilitate refining the assessment system based on lessons learned from the first two years. Data for 2009-2011 were captured and archived in a Gallery, so nothing was lost. The new design allows us to capture annual progress on our intended outcomes and provide for an improved reporting mechanism.

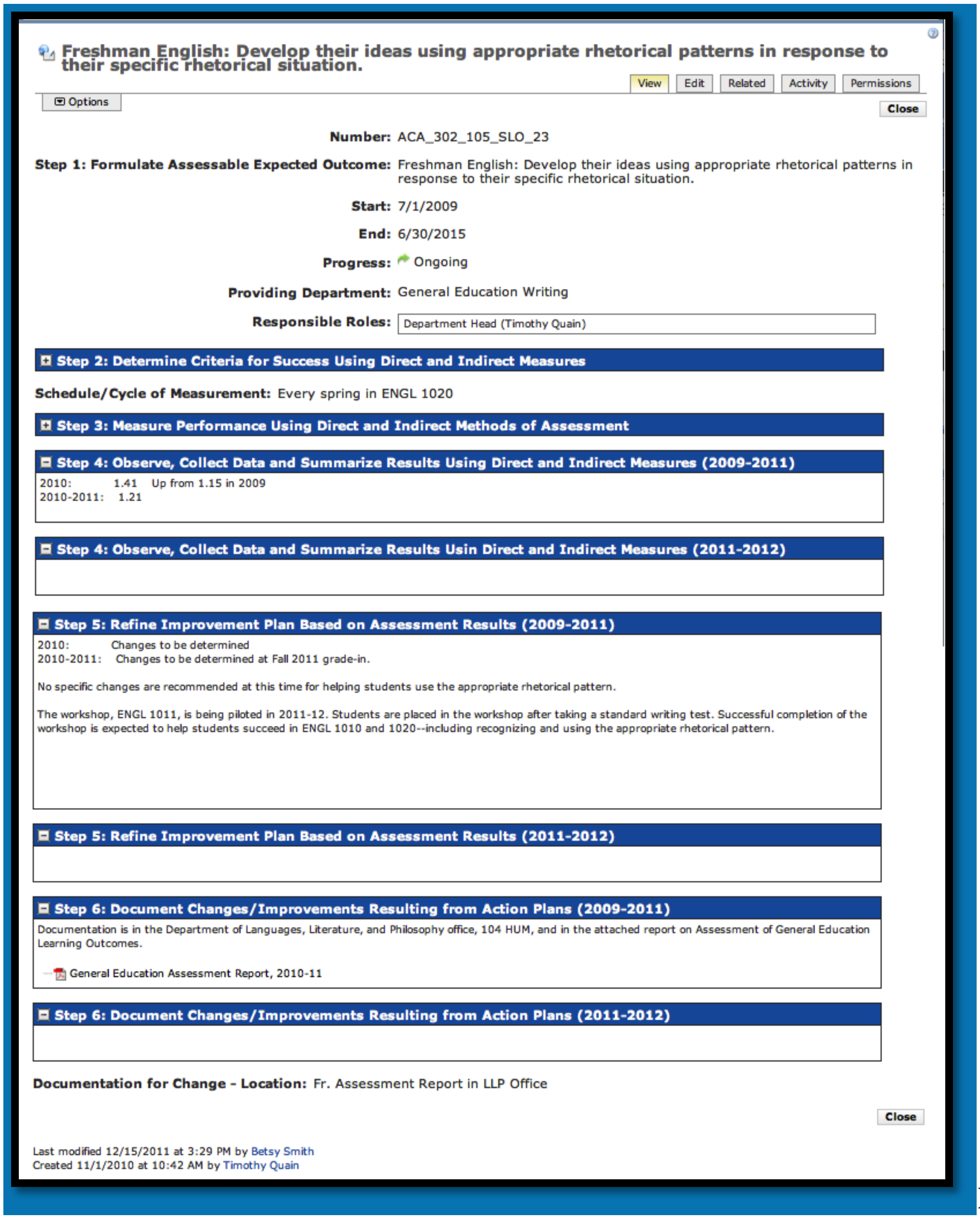
In **Step 4: Observe, Collect Data and Summarize Results ...** you will be summarizing the results of the data collected from the methods specified in Step 3. You will also see across the bottom of the field the statement that Sources can be added to this field after this new student learning outcome has been saved, so you can upload source data if needed, however this supporting information will not be included in reports from CA!.

Step 5: Refine Improvement Plan ... is the place to enter actions to be taken based on the results reported in Step 4. Did the results meet the criteria specified in Step 2? Where in your program were the knowledge, skills, or values of the outcome addressed? What changes might be made to improve performance in subsequent iterations? If the criteria were met, what needs to be done in order to maintain or improve this performance?

The final step of this cycle (yes, this is intended to be a cyclical process) is **Step 6: Document Changes/Improvements Resulting from Action Plans** specified in the previous step. This verifies that the refinements suggested have been acted on. Even when the data (Step 4) show that the criteria (Step 2) were met, it is still necessary to discuss the use of the results (Step 5) and document that action here in Step 6.

In many cases, the results through Step 6 of one outcome may provide insights that will lead to Step 1 of a new outcome for the next year's assessment cycle. After completing the final step, you may also need to go to the top of the form and change your selection for the **Progress:** field from Ongoing to Completed or perhaps even Discontinued if the results show that the stated outcome doesn't capture what your students or program need to do. This sets the stage for creating new, updated outcomes for next year.

Here is a sample of a completed SLO from the Department of Language, Literature, and Philosophy for their General Education Writing program (Figure 12).



Freshman English: Develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns in response to their specific rhetorical situation.

View | Edit | Related | Activity | Permissions

Options

Close

Number: ACA_302_105_SLO_23

Step 1: Formulate Assessable Expected Outcome: Freshman English: Develop their ideas using appropriate rhetorical patterns in response to their specific rhetorical situation.

Start: 7/1/2009

End: 6/30/2015

Progress: Ongoing

Providing Department: General Education Writing

Responsible Roles: Department Head (Timothy Quain)

Step 2: Determine Criteria for Success Using Direct and Indirect Measures

Schedule/Cycle of Measurement: Every spring in ENGL 1020

Step 3: Measure Performance Using Direct and Indirect Methods of Assessment

Step 4: Observe, Collect Data and Summarize Results Using Direct and Indirect Measures (2009-2011)

2010: 1.41 Up from 1.15 in 2009
2010-2011: 1.21

Step 4: Observe, Collect Data and Summarize Results Usin Direct and Indirect Measures (2011-2012)

Step 5: Refine Improvement Plan Based on Assessment Results (2009-2011)

2010: Changes to be determined
2010-2011: Changes to be determined at Fall 2011 grade-in.

No specific changes are recommended at this time for helping students use the appropriate rhetorical pattern.

The workshop, ENGL 1011, is being piloted in 2011-12. Students are placed in the workshop after taking a standard writing test. Successful completion of the workshop is expected to help students succeed in ENGL 1010 and 1020--including recognizing and using the appropriate rhetorical pattern.

Step 5: Refine Improvement Plan Based on Assessment Results (2011-2012)

Step 6: Document Changes/Improvements Resulting from Action Plans (2009-2011)

Documentation is in the Department of Languages, Literature, and Philosophy office, 104 HUM, and in the attached report on Assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes.

General Education Assessment Report, 2010-11

Step 6: Document Changes/Improvements Resulting from Action Plans (2011-2012)

Documentation for Change - Location: Fr. Assessment Report in LLP Office

Close

Last modified 12/15/2011 at 3:29 PM by Betsy Smith
Created 11/1/2010 at 10:42 AM by Timothy Quain

Figure 12.

Once an outcome has been saved, please note that you must use the | Edit | tab to make changes in the form fields. The procedures are the same as those for creating a new outcome as described in this section.

Relating Outcomes

An important aspect of the Assessment and Improvement Plan is to establish how the actions taken by units are related to the mission and goals of the university. In CA! this is done by selecting the items that individual outcomes support. This function is done by using the | Related | tab at the top of the form. Clicking this tab opens a new pop up window for setting the related items.

Whether you are working with a new outcome or using one that already exists in the system, you will need to establish new related items. One of the lessons learned from past years of using the CA! system is that there were far too many potential items from which to pick. Starting with 2011 – 2012, it is only necessary to relate outcomes to one of the four parts of the university mission and NO MORE THAN two Strategic Plan KPIs.

This is the stated mission of Tennessee State University: **Tennessee State University, an Historically Black College/University HBCU, fosters scholarly inquiry and research, lifelong learning, and a commitment to service.**

Each PO and SLO must be related to one of the four areas addressed in that statement: scholarly inquiry (which includes instruction), research, lifelong learning, and service. The four mission links have been duplicated from the Institution level (0) through the Division (1) and Unit (2) level.

Individual strategic planning narratives have been created by Units and Divisions that all relate to the Institutional Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015 as discussed in an earlier section. Each outcome will be related to at least one and no more than two of the Strategic Plan KPIs that are found in *the next level above* Level 3. This will become clearer when we look at a sample. It is important to also be aware that the five KPIs have been mapped to the other university planning documents such as the Academic Master Plan, Strategic Planning Goals, and Strategic Cornerstones.

Because of the limitations imposed (no more than three total related items) the decision about which items to select needs to be considered and very deliberate. Which part of the mission and which KPIs are *most closely* related to the intended purpose of each particular outcome.

Let's take a look at the process for relating items to outcomes (or outcomes to items) by going through a set of screens for an example from the Department of Teaching & Learning. The Student Learning Outcome we'll be relating was developed in the first iteration of using Compliance Assist! and is not one that will actually be continued by that department.

First we have to navigate through the organizational chart to the department in the Assessment and Improvement Plan tab (Figure 13).

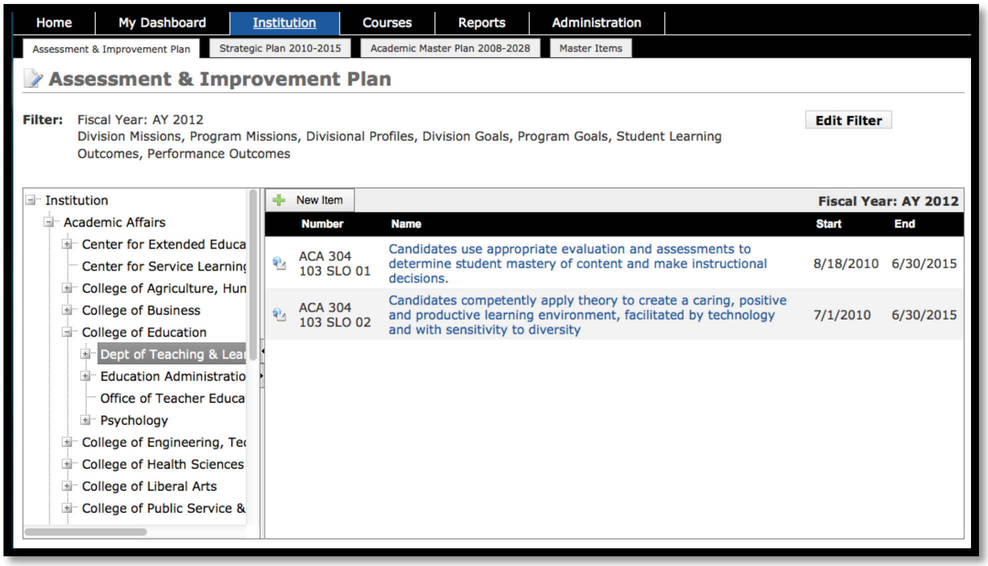


Figure 13.

We're going to choose ACA 304 103 SLO 02, "Candidates competently apply theory to create a caring, positive and productive learning environment, facilitated by technology and with sensitivity to diversity" by clicking on the Name in blue text. That will open the SLO form window (Figure 14).

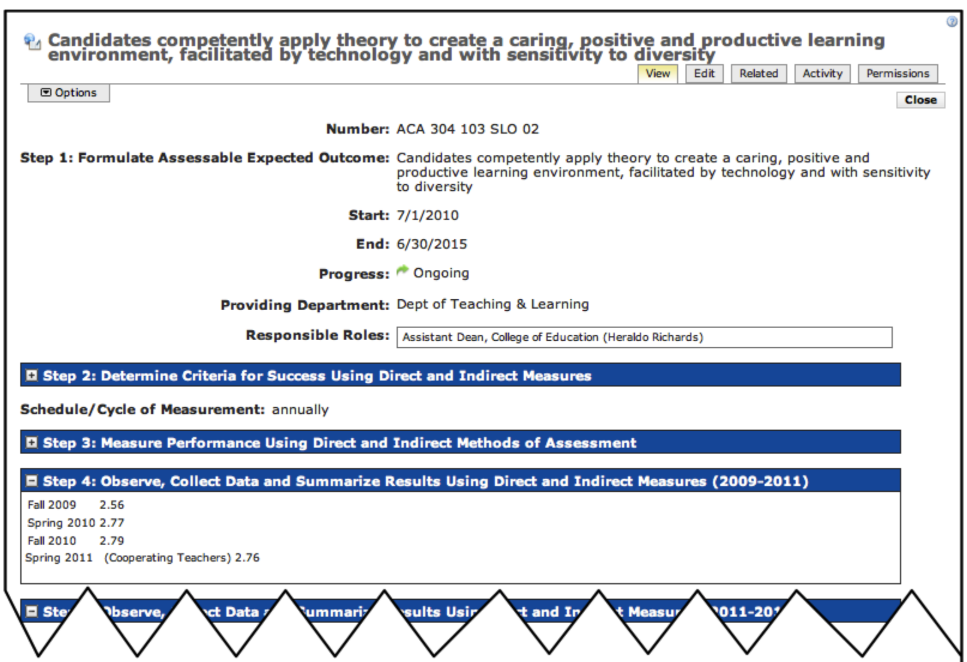


Figure 14.

Now we click on the | Related | tab to get the pop up window for selecting related items. (Figure 15).

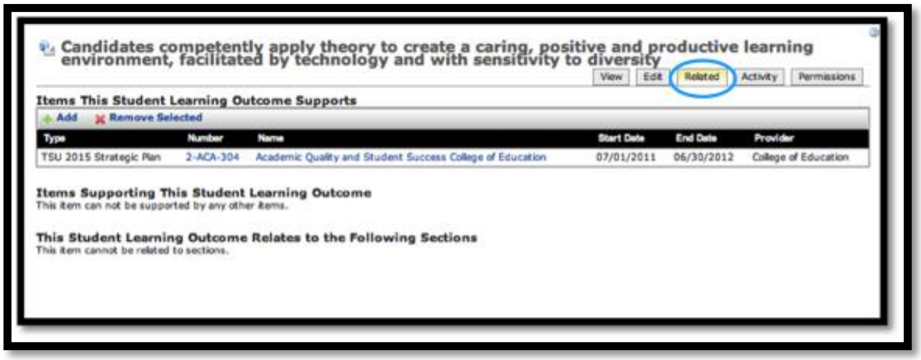


Figure 15.

Next click Add in the upper right of the bar below **Items This Student Learning Outcome Supports** to bring up the Add Related Item window (Figure 16).

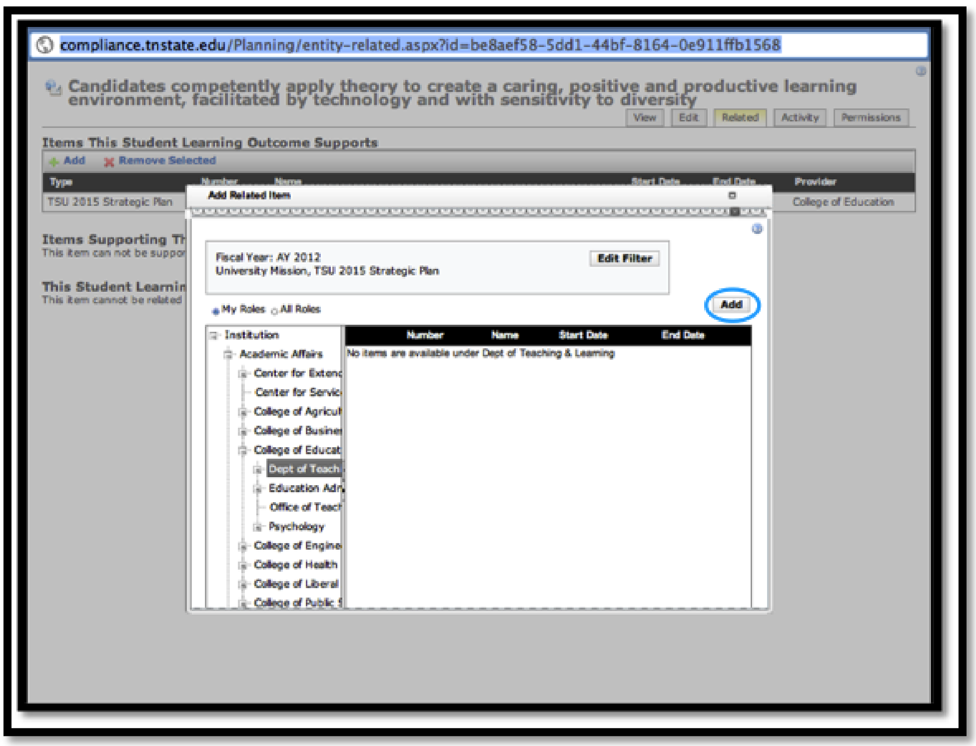


Figure 16.

In this window we need to navigate up to the parent level at Level 2. For a department as in this example that means going to the college. Even if we were at Level 4, the level of programs within a department, we would still choose the corresponding Level 2 unit from the Navigation pane on the left (Figure 17).

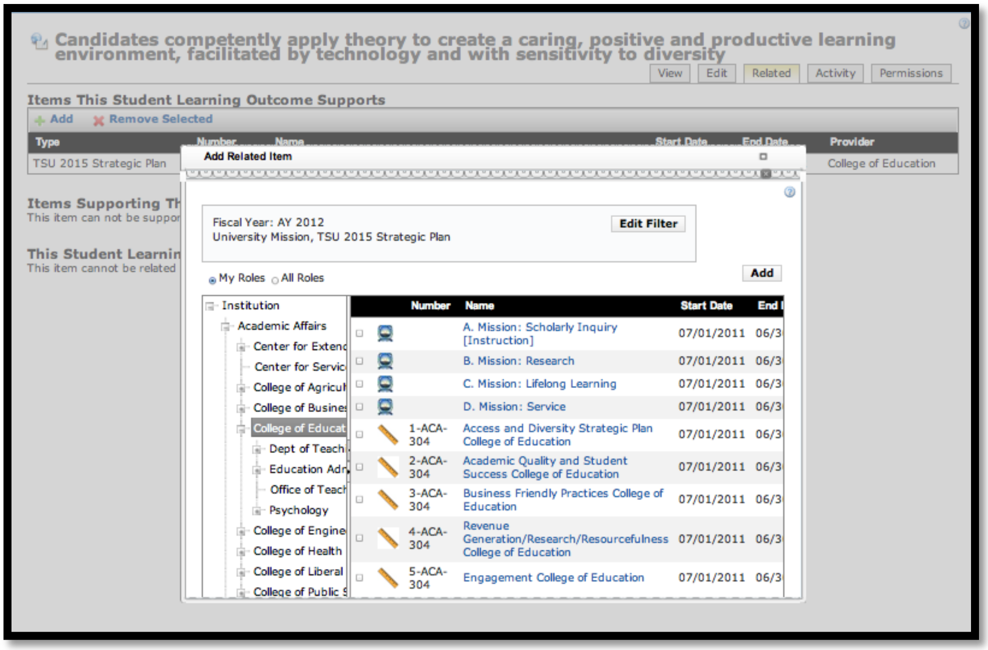


Figure 17.

Now we see all of the choices we need to establish related items for our SLO. Since this performance relates to teacher behavior in the classroom (this particular SLO uses data from student teacher assessments), we are going to select D. Mission: Service as the mission statement.

From the five KPIs we might select either or both 2-ACA-304 and 5-ACA-304. Lets see what the Descriptions say. 2-ACA-304 says: Tennessee State University views academic quality and student success as indications of how well the educational mission is being met. The College of Education will address these academic quality goals by (1) establishing processes to verify the academic quality of degree/certification programs, and (2) offering degree/certification programs that are relevant to addressing societal needs. Student academic success will be bolstered by the establishment of a comprehensive student success center. This center will provide effective advisement and support for the purpose of increasing student retention and progression to graduation.

5-ACA-304 reads: Tennessee State University seeks to remain actively involved in the community through dynamic engagement, land grant activities and international education. The College of Education will meet this goal through (1) Increasing the number of international exchanges or programs for both faculty and students, (2) Increasing the level of faculty engagement both within the College of Education and collaboratively with other units on campus, and (3) Increasing the level of engagement with the Nashville community.

It seems that 2-ACA-304 is the most related as this would be an indicator of the “quality of degree/certification programs,” as well as “offering degree/certification programs that are relevant to addressing societal needs.” So we are going to select this one as the related KPI.

We check the boxes next to D. Mission: Engagement and 2-ACA-304 and then click the [Add] button to relate these two items to our SLO. The resulting related screen is shown in Figure 18.

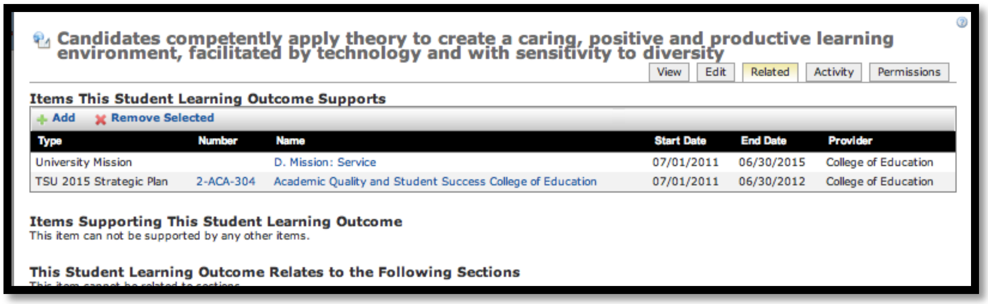


Figure 18.

Click the | View | tab and return to the SLO and scroll to the bottom of the widow to verify the result of relating this SLO to support these two items (Figure 19).

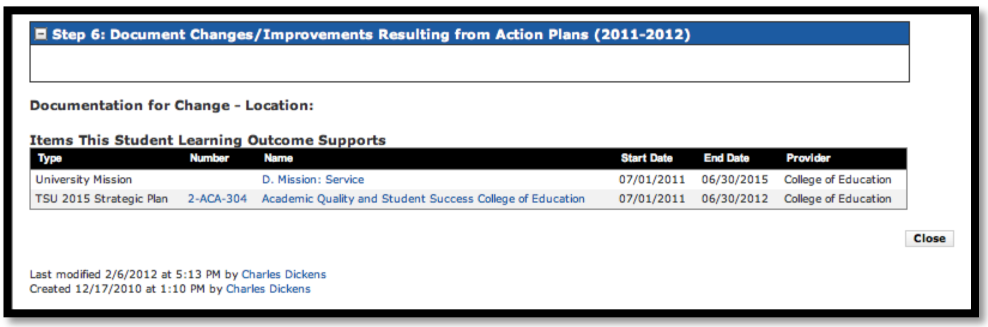


Figure 19.

Please remember that all of your current outcomes need to have the related items set. While you are in the system and reviewing the POs and SLOs, this is also a good time to update the Number field to reflect the current codes, if your unit has moved in the recent reorganization or if you didn't follow the suggested format when they were originally created.

If you need assistance, your first line of support are your representatives on the University Strategic Planning Council (USPC) and the University Assessment and Improvement Council (UAIC). The current rosters are in the Appendices to this document.

References

[1] Osters, S. & Tiu F. S.. "Writing Measureable Learning Outcomes." [Online] 30 January 2012.
<http://www.gavilan.edu/research/spd/Writing-Measurable-Learning-Outcomes.pdf>.

Appendices

Appendix A. University Strategic Planning Council (USPC) Roster

1. Binkley, Yildiz	Library & Media Centers
2. Brinkley, Mark	Research & Sponsored Programs
3. Brooks, Ronnie	Facilities
4. Burch-Sims, Pamela	Institutional Research & Title III
5. Busey, Elaine	Faculty Senate
6. Chaudhary, Khalid	CIT
7. Davis, Angela	Career Center
8. Ejiofor, Anthony	College of Agriculture
9. Ghosh, Soumendra	College of Business
10. Grimes, Johnanna	Enrollment Services & Student Success
11. Housel, Natalie	College of Health Science
12. Jackson, Coreen	College of Liberal Arts
13. Kendall, Nicole	College of Education
14. Looney, Kenny	Academic Affairs
15. Miller, Oscar	College of Public Service Affairs
16. Nwosu, Peter	Institutional Planning & Assessment
17. Olorunniwo, Festus	College of Business
18. Onyebueke, Landon	College of Engineering
19. Sanders, Yvonne	Business & Finance
20. Sekwat, Alex	School of Graduate Studies & Research
21. Stanley, Rodney	College of Public Service & Urban Affairs
22. Vaughan, Verla	College of Health Sciences
23. Griggs, Cassandra	URD
24. White, Bradley	Business & Finance
25. Wyms, Herbert	Student Affairs

Appendix B. University Assessment and Improvement Council (UAIC) Roster

1.	Brinkley, Mark	Research & Sponsored Programs
2.	Brown, Elizabeth	College of Health Sciences
3.	Consigny, Rusty	College of Engineering
4.	Davis, Angela	Student Affairs
5.	Dickens, Charles	College of Education
6.	Dixon, Rebecca	College of Liberal Arts
7.	Ge, Xuemei	Library & Media Centers
8.	Grimes, Johnanna	Enrollment Services & Student Success
9.	Hayslett, William	College of Agriculture
10.	Jornadal-Recinto, Fay	College of Health Sciences
11.	Krigel, Belinda	CIT
12.	Lee, Belinda	Student Affairs
13.	Modeste, Nelson	College of Business
14.	Nettles, Evelyn	Extended Education
15.	Rutledge-Jones, Dawn	University Relations and Development
16.	Smith, Johnnie	Athletic Department
17.	Stanley, Rodney	College of Public Service & Urban Affairs
18.	West, Susan	Center for Service Learning & Civic Engagement
19.	Wood, Amy	Business & Finance
20.	Burch-Sims, Pamela	Institutional Research & Title III
21.	Nwosu, Peter	Institutional Planning & Assessment
22.	Quain, Timothy	College of Liberal Arts

Appendix C. Quick Guide

Relating Outcomes Quick Guide

- Log in to Compliance Assist! http://compliance.tnstate.edu/Planning
- Click on | Institution | from the Home screen.
- Navigate to your unit in the Organizational Chart panel. Expand [+] parent nodes as needed.
- Use the | Strategic Plan 2010-2015 | tab to review your parent unit's planning narrative if needed.
- Under the | Assessment & Improvement Plan | tab and navigate to the level where your Performance Outcomes (POs) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) have been entered.
- Select an outcome by clicking its name in the right pane. This will bring up a new window with the six steps for assessing this outcome. This is the | View | tab for this outcome.
- Click on the | Related | tab in this window.
- Click + Add for **Items This … Outcome Supports**.
- In the new **Add Related Item** window, use the navigation pane to select your parent unit (the next level above your unit). You should now see in the right pane the four mission items and the strategic planning items for your parent unit.
- Select your related items by clicking in the box to the left of the icon. You will select one (1) Mission: item and no more than two (2) Strategic Planning KPI items.
- Once you've selected the related items, click the [**Add**] button above the list.
- Your selections will now appear in the **Items This … Outcome Supports** field.
- Close the outcome window and repeat for the rest of your POs and/or SLOs.
- When you are through working, don't forget to Log Out of Compliance Assist!

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