



# Exemplary Student Pathways

An initiative of The University of Texas System

## The ESP Impact Assessment Framework

### Overview

The ESP Impact Assessment Framework is a tool for institutions, systems, or external agencies to assess the impact of the ESP Change Model on data agency and curricular redesign. The framework assesses **two levels of impact**. 1) *how engagement with the ESP change model affects institutional orientation to data agency and curricular redesign*; and 2) *the effectiveness of projects focused on advancing data agency and curricular redesign in relation to intended student success outcomes*. Users are encouraged to identify and name factors that might hinder or support the progress of their work, and to account for those factors in their evaluation approach.

The framework was developed by members of the Impact Assessment Framework Working Group, who convened between March 2024 and May 2025 to design an assessment and accountability framework for ESP projects.

### Level 1–The ESP Change Model: Assessing Impact on Data Agency and Curricular Redesign

The ESP Change model prioritizes students by fostering an educational environment that respects and reflects their myriad backgrounds and experiences. It centers data agency and curricular redesign as the levers of change to remove barriers to student success and gaps in student outcomes. Therefore, the framework seeks to answer two qualitative evaluation questions related to data agency and curricular redesign. These are:

*Evaluation Question 1: Did the ESP Change Model enable comprehensive student-centered, data-informed curricular redesign?*

*Evaluation Question 2: Did the ESP Change model improve data agency?*

These questions will be answered using two qualitative self-assessment rubrics developed to help institutions identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth along a continuum at both the outset of the project and at the end to determine growth over time.

The figure below illustrates the various levels, evaluation questions, and components of the Impact Assessment Framework.



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### ESP CHANGE MODEL ASSESSMENT

Evaluation Question 1: Did the model enable student-centered, data-informed curricular redesign?

Evaluation Question 2: Did the model improve data agency?

### FACTORS HINDERING OR SUPPORTING PROGRESS

Project leads and evaluators are encouraged to consider factors that may impact progress toward data agency, holistic curricular redesign, and/or on shared metrics-in either a positive or negative way. (Examples: changes in leadership, shifts in priorities, shifts in team composition, resources, etc.)

#### DATA AGENCY

Measured for all projects using a self-assessment rubric to determine level of maturity and growth over the course of the project in four **domain** areas: **infrastructure, exploration and analysis, culture and communication, and data-informed decision-making**. The assessment is applied at the beginning and end of the project.

The ESP Change Model definition of Data Agency: the focus on the ability to create utility from data. It enables institutions and higher education practitioners to develop a clear strategy and capacity for data infrastructure, exploration and analysis, culture and communication, and data-informed decision-making with a student-centered lens.

#### CURRICULAR REDESIGN

Measured for all projects using a self-assessment rubric to determine level of maturity and growth over the course of the project in four **domain** areas: **structure, operations, content, and pedagogy**. The assessment is applied at the beginning and end of the project.

The ESP Change Model definition of Curricular Redesign: a comprehensive process of evaluating and transforming the structure, operations, content, and pedagogy of academic programs and courses. The primary goal is to provide students with learning experiences that equip them with the skills, knowledge, abilities, and habits of mind necessary for success in college, careers, and civic life. This is achieved through the development of clear degree pathways with well-defined learning outcomes resulting in curricula that are coherent and transparent.



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### Level Two—Assessing the Effectiveness of ESP Projects

In order to evaluate multiple projects, a set of relevant **shared student success** and **project-based** metrics have been established.

**Shared student success metrics** are primarily quantitative based on uniform definitions and sources such as state agency reports, IPEDS, and/or student information systems. (e.g., graduation rates, time-to-degree, etc.). Although the populations of focus vary between projects, shared metrics offer a mechanism for describing the collective gains across projects and help to establish accountability.

The following question is used to evaluate the collective gains across multiple projects, whether institution-wide for those with multiple ESP projects or systemwide:

*What results were achieved by ESP projects in aggregate?*

**Project-based metrics** are a set of metrics determined by project type. Although these project-specific metrics will not be comparable across projects to determine “success” or “impact” in aggregate, they do offer a means of assessing the efficacy of individual projects. (e.g., reduction in DFW rates in gateway courses, improvement in subsequent course performance, changes in policy to remove barriers to student progression in degree programs, changes in pedagogy and course content).

The framework offers guidance on approaches to measure the effectiveness of individual projects against stated goals-focused on answering the question:

*What results were achieved by each individual ESP project?*

Guidance will provide recommendations for **project-based metrics** and qualitative measurements based on project type and generally understood outcomes of curricular reform. Evaluators are encouraged to consider whether metrics are appropriate for the project’s level and/or population as well as institutional priorities. The unit of measurement could expand and/or change over time as institutions implement changes within other majors/courses/etc. Evaluators are encouraged to consider including metrics that provide both leading and lagging indicators of progress, such as term-to-term retention and graduation rates.



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### PROJECT-BASED METRICS

#### What results were achieved by each individual ESP project?

**Project-based Metrics** are a set of metrics determined by project type. (e.g., reduction in DFW rates in gateway courses, improvement in subsequent course performance, changes in policy to remove barriers to student progression in degree programs, changes in pedagogy and course content). Although these project-specific metrics will not be comparable across projects to determine “success” or “impact” in aggregate, they do offer a means of assessing the efficacy of individual projects. Project-based metrics are level/population appropriate (i.e., focused on the population(s) the project(s) are working to support) as well as aligned with institutional priorities. Therefore, the unit of measurement could expand and/or change over time as institutions implement changes within other majors/courses/etc. Project-based metrics will not be comparable across projects to determine “success” or “impact” of the project, but rather serve to establish accountability for each project.

#### QUANTITATIVE METRICS

These are metrics reflective of expected outcomes of any project related to curricular reform and student success. Metrics may need to be adjusted to account for the level and populations of focus (e.g. cohort-level, course-level, faculty, student etc.). Institutional teams should consider metrics that are most relevant for their projects. A set of guiding principles will help support teams in determining their outcomes and selecting appropriate metrics along with suggestions for assessment models. Click here for guidance on the selection of appropriate quantitative metrics and common locations for supporting data.

#### QUALITATIVE METRICS

These are metrics reflective of expected outcomes of any project related to curricular reform and student success. Metrics may need to be adjusted to account for the level and populations of focus (e.g. cohort-level, course-level, faculty, student etc.). Institutional teams should consider metrics that are most relevant for their projects. A set of guiding principles will help support teams in determining their outcomes and selecting appropriate metrics along with suggestions for assessment models. Click here for guidance on the selection of appropriate qualitative metrics and suggested methods of data collection.

#### Leading Indicators

Indicators that reflect short-term outcomes associated with the project and help provide feedback for real-time course corrections (i.e. Improvements in procedures/practice such as decreases in substitutions, course overrides, and ease of registration).

#### Lagging Indicators

Indicators that reflect long-term outcomes associated with the project and help provide feedback for whether the project achieved its overall goal(s) (i.e. completions within the major).

#### Leading Indicators

Indicators that reflect short-term outcomes associated with the project and help provide feedback for real-time course corrections. Will require multiple measurement points of the same population to determine change over time.

#### Lagging Indicators

Indicators that reflect long-term outcomes associated with the project and help provide feedback for whether the project achieved its overall goal(s). Will require multiple measurement points of the same population to determine change over time.



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Sova

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