



OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Office of Assessment & Academic Program Review

Annual Institutional State of Assessment Report

2017 – 2018

November 2018

Purpose and Introduction

The institutional state of assessment report is a comprehensive description and analysis of the college/school/branch annual narrative reports and program level reports. This report tells UNM's assessment story from the perspective of each academic unit and their assessment experts. Additionally, this document shares the changes and shifts in UNM's Office of Assessment during the last year, with added value placed on the quality of our institution's assessment experiences and practices.

The Office of Assessment underwent a staff restructure, which finalized in fall 2018. The new staff and assessment leadership is focusing on an intentional and purposeful office shift from a quantitative compliance tone to a service and supportive climate adhering to the assessment and data needs of all academic programs. This includes providing semester workshops, weekly assessment & data walk-in hours, establishing and implementing an assessment feedback process helping units with their student learning outcomes, assessment methodologies, tools and results utility, visiting branch campuses, consulting college leadership on their assessment practices, updating websites and templates, collaborating with other institutional offices around data (OIA, EMRT, IDI), and creating a secure centralized data storage space for institutional assessment documents, evidence, and data.

Participants

This narrative incorporates information from almost all academic units on campus, including the following colleges, schools, and branches:

- Anderson School of Management
- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Education
- College of Fine Arts
- College of University Libraries and Learning Sciences
- Gallup Branch Campus
- Honor's College
- Los Alamos Branch Campus
- School of Engineering
- School of Medicine and Health Sciences
- Taos Branch Campus
- Valencia Branch Campus

State of Assessment narratives from the School of Architecture and Planning and University College were not received by the deadline and therefore were not included in this summative report.

During the 2016/2017 academic year, main campus submitted assessment documents for 85.7% of its undergraduate programs on average. Branch campuses submitted assessment documents for 46.8% of their associate degree programs on average. The inventory of what was received by each college/school/branch is available in Appendix I.

Phase I. Atlas.ti and Review of College/School/Branch States of Assessment

The Office of Assessment analyzed the State of Assessment narrative data provided by each UNM college, school, and branch using a qualitative software program called Atlas.ti. This software illustrates a larger picture that the overall data brings, while also shedding light on specific details. This software creates an efficient qualitative data analysis process, organizing several documents with thematic notes. The process requires the importing of a number of documents in any format (word, pdf, excel, etc). Each document is read by the Office of Assessment to identify outlier experiences and trending topics or themes. The software is used to help generate a new document for these themes. The Office of Assessment staff identified quotes, paragraphs and individual words directly related to the themes as well as outlier experiences.

This qualitative analysis software requires codes in order to determine what pieces of information the Office of Assessment would like to retrieve from the State of Assessment narratives. Once the staff did a preliminary review of assessment documents, an initial set of codes emerged. The Office of Assessment Data Analyst re-visited each document using the Atlas.ti software and coded pieces of each narrative that represented the findings. The preliminary codings were reviewed and additional codes were added to tease out greater detail. The Data Analyst performed a secondary round of coding to explore the narratives for the additional codes. Finally, all reports were exported for each individual code and reviewed. There were 12 total codes:

- Assessment is beneficial to the unit benchmarks
- Branch campus concerns
- Future goals
- Graduate level assessment
- Grants for assessment
- Missing pieces/gaps
- Opportunities
- Strengths
- Support from the assessment office
- Threats
- Trends
- Weaknesses

It was possible for the same passage to be associated to more than one code. For example, one stated that they improved their program level assessment participation from 10 programs to 12 programs. This was coded as a strength and also as an opportunity to continue improving. The individual codes were combined into themes. The six themes that emerged throughout the analysis were:

1. Branch campuses and main campus are building a climate of continuous improvement and are maturing in their overall assessment processes.
2. The majority of colleges/schools/branches have an internal assessment structure to actively participate in institutional assessment processes.

3. Colleges/schools/branches are challenged with assessment participation from their faculty. They want more departmental engagement and collaboration.
4. Some colleges/schools/branches indicate an unreliable data storage system within their internal structures.
5. UNM departments are looking to connect more with the leadership/staff in the new Office of Assessment.
6. Reporting fatigue as well as survey fatigue are indicated as valid struggles in the assessment climate.

One limitation noted in this coding process is that while the Office of Assessment staff developed the codes together, the coding was conducted solely by the Data Analyst. Qualitative data analysis is subjective. The Office of Assessment acknowledges this limitation, and attempts to alleviate any bias by coding in two rounds with deep discussion of findings after each round. After deeply analyzing the data individually and together, the Office of Assessment considers the inter-rater reliability to be sufficient to draw the conclusions provided by themes below.

Findings and Office Insights by theme

Branch campuses and main campus are building a climate of continuous improvement and are maturing in their overall assessment processes.

- Using data to improve student experience
- Using results to inform curriculum and programmatic change
- Developing solutions from data to serve students better

Office of Assessment insights: Purposeful and meaningful assessment is the shared philosophy from Office of Assessment and the Provost's Office to the institution at large. This is being interwoven throughout assessment workshops, walk-in hours, faculty meetings, leadership meetings and the APR process. The message shared to all entities is to approach and conduct assessment with student success at the forefront and to internally design measures to help find solutions and strengthen programming within academic and co-curricular units.

The majority of colleges/campuses/schools have an internal assessment structure to actively participate in institutional assessment processes.

- Internal timelines for the assessment design and reporting processes
- Approval system of assessment plans
- Share assessment results and analyses with faculty and staff
- CARCs meet regularly

Office of Assessment insights: Strong assessment planning and reporting structures have been established to create a robust assessment system. Office of Assessment encourages collaborative assessment practices amongst academic units to prevent assessment burnout and to embrace the collective expertise to continually improve student services and academic/professional development. Office of Assessment meets with CARC leaders monthly to support, update and solicit feedback on UNM's assessment processes.

Schools/colleges/branches are challenged with assessment participation from their faculty. They are wanting more departmental engagement and collaboration.

- Branches rely on department chairs since their adjunct are part time and temporary
- Schools/colleges report that non-tenure and/or junior faculty are the prominent members of CARC and assessment outcomes committees.

Office of Assessment insights: The lack of departmental assessment participation seems to be a consistent challenge on both main campus and the branch campuses. Office of Assessment is recommending academic units to increase participation with assessment mentoring, assessment calendaring, appropriate faculty/leadership transitioning regarding assessment documents/timelines/contacts, and/or utilizing faculty orientations/retreats/regular program meetings to discuss and value assessment.

Some colleges/schools/branches indicate an unreliable data storage system within their internal structures.

- Faculty/leadership turnover without transitional assessment processes
- Individuals keep their own reports or data without submitting to a centralized system

Office of Assessment insights: Office of Assessment is providing information and resources to all campus entities regarding opportunities to centralize and store college/school/branch data in UNM's secure data storage systems via IT University Libraries.

UNM departments are looking to connect more with the leadership/staff in the new Office of Assessment.

- Many entities report they want to attend assessment workshops
- Branch campuses would like to define their role with main campus clearly

Office of Assessment insights: The new Office of Assessment has defined and now identifies themselves as a support and service unit to assist all units on all campuses with their assessment methodologies, data pathways, analysis, assessment structures, and data use. This support is implemented via workshops, walk-in hours, college and branch consultations, unit presentations, and regular assessment discussions with campus leadership. The Office of Assessment is actively listening and responding to UNM's assessment experts regarding current and historical assessment systems, documents and protocols to simplify, align, and create valuable institutional assessment that informs institutional continuous improvement.

Reporting fatigue as well as survey fatigue is indicated as a valid struggle in the assessment climate.

- Assessment experts indicate a culture of survey fatigue among students.
- Several entities state that reporting fatigue is becoming a concern at UNM.

Office of Assessment insights: The Office of Assessment will be working on a strategic plan to address assessment fatigue in the institution and minimize reporting requirements. Thus far, Office of Assessment has condensed the assessment maturity rubric and state of assessment narrative reports, created an updated APR manual that eliminated another UNM assessment

narrative report, and has met with academic affairs to pinpoint the overlap in reporting structures across the institution regarding assessment.

Phase 2. Review of a Sampling of Program Level Assessment Plans and Reports

In order to provide quality feedback for assessments from each college/school/branch, the Office of Assessment created a feedback loop for reviewing a sample of each academic unit's documents. A feedback template was used by reviewers to provide examples of strengths and possible areas of improvement in regards to learning outcomes, assessment methods, and results use. A graduate student in the Office of Assessment assisted in the collection of sample documents into packets that were then disseminated to designated reviewers, members of the Assessment Steering Committee for review. The Office of Assessment staff and each member of the Assessment Steering Committee had their own sample set of assessment documents to comment on, divided by college/school/branch. Reviewers did not provide feedback for their own college/school/branch. The Assessment Steering Committee then met with the Office of Assessment to share comments and reflect on the overall assessment feedback process. The Office of Assessment sent an assessment document inventory and summary of all feedback to each college/school/branch who had participated in the 16-17 assessment cycle. Overall, the process was a very positive one and the Office of Assessment looks forward to using a similar feedback cycle in the years to come. The majority of units who received the feedback indicated that they were grateful for the qualitative comments.

Findings and Office Insights by Theme

The main findings from this feedback cycle identified three themes: (1) Strengths, (2) Weaknesses, and (3) Other concerns.

Strengths

Particular strengths included the many measures used by the College of Arts and Sciences, both direct and indirect; and the strong alignment between the School of Engineering Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes. The assessment feedback team was also pleased with the clear and concise plans from Los Alamos and the Dental Assisting report from Gallup.

Weaknesses

Identified weaknesses included many programs struggling to separate their Student Learning Outcomes from student grades earned on a test or in a class. Student Learning Outcomes also appeared to be broad and unmeasurable in many cases. It became clear that many plans need revising. There were concerns that high turnover rates in branch campus staff and faculty could be a contributing factor to incomplete plans and reports. The team also noted that with the current templates for the assessment plans and reports, it is difficult for units to "tell their story" or illustrate their evidence of how they are doing and why.

Other Concerns

Other observations made during the feedback process included that the current assessment protocol makes it difficult to gather longitudinal data. For example, if a benchmark is missed one year, a unit may change their measurement tool in order to improve the outcome. If 50% of students fail the exit exam, and the department changes the exit exam, how can continuous

improvement be demonstrated since the instrument is now different? There were also many issues with the Student Learning Outcomes, specifically with attempting to measure too many levels of learning in one outcome with a single-level measurement methodology. Finally, the team concluded that the culture of compliance is still evident in the written assessment work for the previous year. It is clear that the emphasis had been on participation over quality. The Office of Assessment strives to change this culture towards one where assessment gives units the freedom and power to measure what matters most to them about what their students are learning. This new focused assessment approach emphasizes quality over quantity and encourages units to provide fewer Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes in order to stress what units truly want to know about how they are doing.

Appendix I. Inventory of Assessment Reports Submitted by Each College/School/Branch

College/School/Branch	Number of Undergraduate Programs (as determined by review of website)	Number of 16/17 Undergraduate Assessment Documents Submitted	Participation Rate	Comments
Anderson School of Management	2 (BBA and BA in Acct)	2	100%	
College of Education	10 (Athletic Training, B.S., Community Health Education B.S., Exercise Science, B.S., Physical Education, B.S. Ed., Family and Child Studies, B.S., Nutrition & Dietetics, B.S., Special Education, B.S.Ed., Elementary Ed, B.S.Ed., Secondary Ed, B.S.Ed., Secondary Ed, B.A.Ed.)	10	100%	Secondary Ed B.S. and B.A. are combined in one report
School of Engineering	9 (Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Construction Engineering, Construction Management, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Nuclear Engineering)	7 (Nuclear, Mechanical, Electrical, Construction Management, Computer Science, Civil, Chemical)	78%	Missing Computer Engineering and Construction Engineering
School of Medicine and Health Science Center	8 (BSN, BS in Population Health, BA/MD, Biochemistry , BA/BS, Emergency Medical Services)	8 (BSN (x2), Radiologic Sciences (x2), Population Health, Medical Laboratory Sciences,	100%	Missing the Biochemistry BA and BS They were including in the A&S uploads

	BS, Dental Hygiene BS, Medical Laboratory Science BS, Radiologic Sciences BS)	Emergency Medical Services, Dental Hygiene)		
School of Architecture and Planning	2 (BA in Architecture, BA in Environmental Planning and Design)	1 (Architecture)	50%	Missing the 16/17 EPD (have one from 15/16)
College of Fine Arts	19 (see list on website)	15 (Theatre, Music 1, Music 2, Music 3, Media Arts, IFDM, Dance, Design for Performance, Interdisciplinary Arts, Fine Arts, Art, Art Studio, Art History, BA/MA Art Ed (x2))	79%	Missing Jazz Studies, String Pedagogy, Theory & Composition, Performance
Honors College	1 Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts	1	100%	
University Libraries and Learning Sciences	1	1	100%	
University College	2 (Native American Studies, BA, Liberal Arts and Integrative Studies, LAIS)	1 (Liberal Arts and Integrative Studies)	50%	Missing Native American Studies (also checked in A&S but it's not there either – only have the 15/16)
College of Arts and Sciences	24 (see list on website)	24	100%	
Branch Campuses				
Los Alamos	19 (see list on website)	19	100%	However, reports are frequently (10x) just a separate document that states that a

				program is under revision
Taos	8 (see list on website)	5 (Pre-Science, Business Admin, Liberal Arts, ECME, Nursing)	63%	Missing Fine Art, General Studies, Education
Valencia	21 (see list on website)	12 (Studio Art, Pre-Engineering, Nursing, Mathematics, Information Technology, Health Education, General Science, Game Design and Simulation, Emergency Medical Services, Digital Media Arts, Computer Aided Design, Business Admin)	57%	Missing Secondary Ed, Manufacturing and Industrial Technology, Liberal Arts, Integrative Studies, Health Information Technology, Elementary Education, ECME, Construction Tech, Criminology
Gallup	20 (see list on website)	4 (Applied Technology, Medical Laboratory Technology, Criminal Justice, Construction Technology)	20%	They do have a lot of certificate assessments uploaded but lacking in the associate assessments for 16/17