The UNM Office of Assessment & APR (OA) recently completed the 2019 institutional State of Assessment (SOA) and State of APR Reports. Themes were gathered from college/school/branch assessment documents and APRs. The following is a brief overview of the themes; the entire document can be found (here).

State of Assessment Report Themes
Suggestions:
• More clarity around which templates to use when and how to use them
• Create a standardize introductory assessment module for faculty: “It might also be helpful for the Office of Assessment to create a basic assessment learning module that is required for faculty to complete during a calendar year. If such a module is not practical, a basic assessment practice module could be included in New Faculty Orientation.”

Difficulties, Challenges, and Concerns:
• Staff and Faculty assessment participation is sometimes challenging due to changing roles and personnel transitions
• Graduate Assessment: “The frequency of reporting can especially feel like a burden on smaller programs, which may not find it insightful to report on results from just a few students”

Culture of Assessment:
• Units are reporting improvement in their cultures of assessment, including “developing a strong culture of assessment among the faculty”, and “recognizing the value of doing it well”

Participation in the Assessment Process:
• Increasing rates of annual plan/report submissions

Continuous Improvement/Results Use:
• Units are reporting evidence of results use including:
  “Redesign[ing] our approach and philosophy so that we can obtain more meaningful assessment”
• “In most cases, this data was used to make changes to various curricula throughout the college.”
• “Improved assessment planning”

Strengths:
• Units report benefits to engaging in the assessment process, including “The [department] has strengthened its commitment to looking at different SLOs each year and has used the data to make curricular changes.”
• “Strengthening CARC/Faculty relationships through mentoring and one-on-one meetings”

State of APR Themes (resulting from multiple review reports and exit meeting commentary from AY18-19):

Exemplary faculty research and scholarship
• “[faculty are] productive at an R-1 level, regularly publishing their work in top presses and top journals”.

Student and Alumni Outcomes
• Distance education was seen as a beneficial component of degree programs, allowing students to pursue further education
• Programs stated that they would like to establish UNM initiatives to collect data on post-graduate employment and education.

Marketing
• Reviewers stated that there was a lack of institutional marketing to prospective students in some programs.
• Reviewers recommended that departments advertise themselves through professional relationships with professors at other institutions.

Program responses to previous APRs
• Reporting and communication structure improvements, partly the result of a dedicated network of staff

Departmental Needs
• Reviewers suggested increasing the number of mentorship opportunities amongst faculty and between faculty and students
• Reviewers stated the need to improve departmental communication

Facilities and Resources
• Reviewers identified that some programs had outstanding facilities, including student and faculty spaces for collaboration, research, and teaching, while others were in need of attention
• Reviewers suggested greater institutional involvement regarding facility needs

Mark your calendars for January 15, 2020!
On January 15, 2020, from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm, the Office of Assessment/APR and the Office of Institutional Analytics will host a day-long event to empower faculty and staff with training and information on how to leverage institutional data resources to understand their own units and tell their stories more effectively. The tentative schedule includes presentations from various data/reporting units from across campus who will educate the UNM community on reading and interpreting dashboards, using MyReports to gather disaggregated data, using the NCES IPEDS Data Center, managing departmental assessment data, and best practices in survey research.

The event will take place in Dane Smith Hall and registration will include light breakfast and lunch. More information will be published here as it becomes available. The link to register will also be available here on December 2, 2019.

Proposed Schedule at a Glance
9:00 am  Light Breakfast and Opening Keynote: Dr. Pamela Cheek, Using Data to Tell Your Story
10:00 am  Concurrent Sessions - Block 1
11:00 am  Concurrent Sessions - Block 2
12:00 pm  Lunch and Lightning Rounds
1:00 pm  Concurrent Sessions - Block 3
2:00 pm  Concurrent Sessions - Block 4
3:00 pm  Closing and Data Resource Raffle
The OA/APR office has revamped their entire website. In addition to offering additional information and resources, the information on the site has been organized by assessment type. Take a look and let us know what you think!

In addition to the revisions made at our site, OA/APR has also been working on guidance and an optional template for administrative/co-curricular assessment. The template will be finalized shortly, but you can find the admin/co-curricular guidance here.

What’s the difference between course and program learning goals? Linda Suskie in her blog “A Common Sense Approach to Assessment in Higher Education” reviews assessment terminology here.

The National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA)’s Viewpoints offers assessment terminology here.

What People Are Saying...

As a faculty member who has been involved in developing reports in a variety of capacities at UNM over the past decade, I greatly appreciate your team taking the time to develop the new merged plan/report template in a fillable PDF format! It significantly reduces the time necessary to complete the report while still allowing a high-quality, depth and breadth of information to be included. Thank you so much!

– Dr. Glenn Hushman, Associate Professor, Health, Exercise & Sports Science

Since I’m new to the PA Program, I hadn’t used the previous assessment system/form before. Even as a newbie, I found the process and fillable PDF to be straight-forward and efficient.

– Elizabeth Hatch, Education Specialist, UNM Physician Assistant Program

**Note-Worthy Links**

**Academic Program Review (APR) News:**

General education initiatives from the New Mexico Higher Education Department have prompted the design of an institutional review process for general education programming. This structure, related to unit-level academic program reviews, is being designed for a Fall 2021 implementation and will strive to capture the wide breadth of UNM’s general education structure. The Office of Assessment & APR is adopting some processes related to unit-level academic program reviews,

OA will conduct a Spring 2020 workshop, offered twice. Attendance at one of the workshops is required for programs currently creating their APR self-study report.

APR Self Studies and Data

January 24 & March 6

Assessment Dates to Remember:

- UNM Academic /Degree Submission Deadline: January 31
- UNM Gen Ed Assessment Submission Deadline: May 15
- UNM Administrative /Co-curricular Submission Deadline: May 31

Conference Dates to Remember:

- NMHEAR Conference: Feb 27-28, Hotel Albuquerque Old Town
- HLC Conference: April 17-21, Chicago IL

Upcoming OA/APR Spring Workshops (all begin at 10am @DSH 220)

- Assessing Using Focus Groups: January 31
- UNM Data Pathways and Resources: March 27
- Strategic Planning: TBD

Newsletter Submissions:

We are accepting ideas and submissions for our next issues. Please email us at assess@unm.edu before February 15, 2020.

Contact Information:

assess@unm.edu assessment.unm.edu
apr@unm.edu apr.unm.edu

**Assessment Article Review**

*Two Underused Best Practices for Improvement Focused Assessments.*

Phyllis Blumberg, Ph.D. (2018)

https://www.apajournal.com/two-underused-best-practices-for-improvement-focused-assessments/

Although some think that the purpose of assessment is documenting what is occurring in order to meet accreditation standards (accountability), the assessment process can also be used to continuously improve. This article describes two best practices (planning the intended use of data and identification of bottlenecks) as methods to spur continuous improvement during the assessment process.

**Charla’s Data Corner**

Ever wondered about the retention trends for your college/school/branch or program?

Did you know that information about retention is readily available through the Office of Institutional Analytics’ Tableau dashboards?

You can find retention rate trends by gender, ethnicity, major, and more along with other interesting facts about your First-year Cohort students here.

*The Retention Rate definition and formula for how it is calculated can be found in the Data Dictionary.*