

May 2026

Office of Assessment & APR

Annual Institutional Academic Assessment Report AY 24-25



OFFICE OF
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

This report communicates key findings, trends, and impacts from the University of New Mexico's academic program assessment initiatives during the 2024-2025 academic year, while also reflecting on patterns emerging from assessment plans spanning 2022-2025. As UNM approaches a critical juncture for academic assessment planning, this report informs next steps in rethinking and revising assessment strategies, set to unfold in Fall 2026.

Assessment Overview

The AY 2024-25 assessment reporting results presents a comprehensive snapshot of institutional assessment activity across 163 degrees and 814 SLOs. A three-year analysis (AY 2022-2025) of assessment plan trends identifies areas of strength and future consideration for future assessment planning. Seven key themes emerge from the analysis:

- **Participation decline requires attention (AY 24-25):** At 52%, overall participation is at its lowest point in seven years. Graduate participation (48%) has fallen below 50% for the first time, and Associate degrees dropped from 73% to 50%. Addressing this decline when moving forward to new assessment planning activities in Fall 2026 should be a priority to ensure that assessment data remains representative of institutional practice.
- **Assessment communication is broadening (AY 24-25):** Leadership communication has grown to 44%, and faculty meetings remain the primary channel at 80%. However, 13% of programs lack a designated communication leader.
- **Assessment and program revisions reflect maturation (AY 24-25):** Both assessment and program revisions have focused on targeted refinements — SLO alignment, more nuanced analysis of student success, and incremental curriculum adjustments — consistent with a maturing institutional assessment culture.
- **SLO verb diversity is growing (2022-2025):** While "Demonstrate" remains the most common student expectation (31%), the other diverse verbs used in student learning outcomes reveal substantial disciplinary specificity. Programs are increasingly using precise, field-specific action language in their SLOs.
- **Cultural/Community content continues to rise (2022-2025):** At 24%, the measurement of this content area has nearly tripled since 2020, reflecting a sustained institutional commitment to culturally responsive and community-engaged learning.
- **Direct assessment measures dominate (2022-2025):** Projects/Assignments (43%), Tests/Exams (36%), and Rubrics (33%) are the three leading measures. Rubric adoption has more than doubled since 2020, representing the strongest positive trend in assessment measurement.
- **Knowledge and Skills are at near-parity (2022-2025):** Both knowledge and skills exceed 80%, while Responsibility at 50% remains the most significant gap in SLO alignment with institutional learning goals.

OAAPR Insights

With another annual assessment cycle complete, this institutional report provides an opportunity for reflection and for programs to learn from one another. In Academic Year

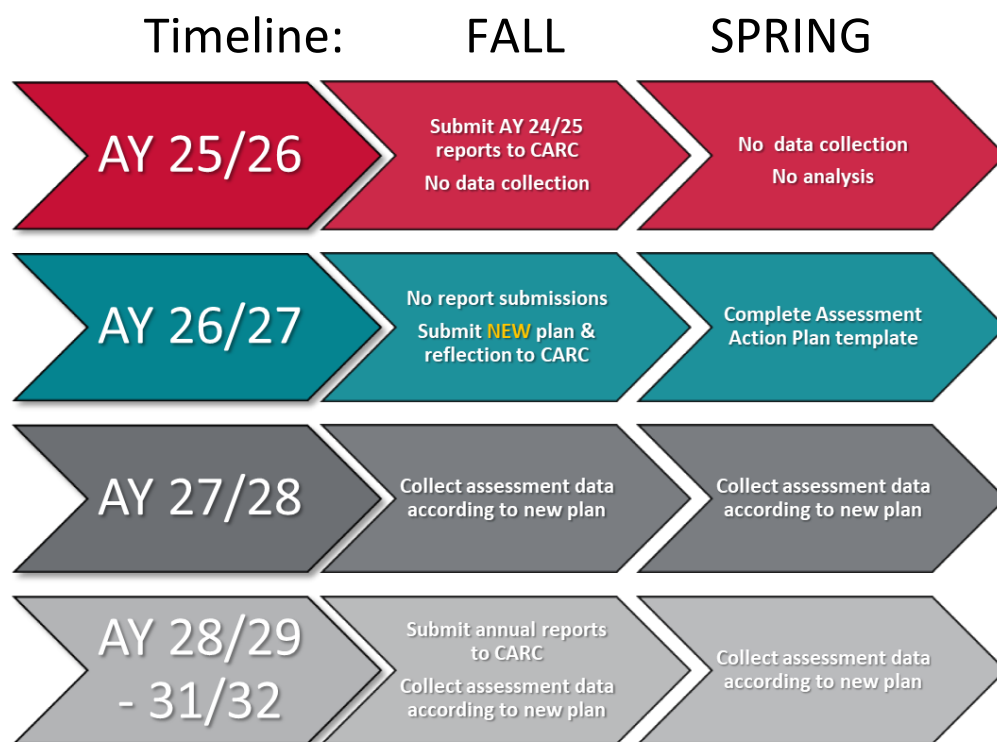
25-26, the University of New Mexico temporarily *paused assessment reporting* to enable all academic programs to *recharge and reset their assessment*. Historically, the analysis from the Office of Assessment and Academic Program Review (OAAPR) Overall, UNM assessment can be improved through the introduction of new measures, practices, and outcomes in the incoming assessment Fall 2026 plans.

Five-year assessment plan

In AY 25-26, a year's pause in reporting will enable academic programs to recharge and refresh, using the new [Assessment Reflection template](#). **No assessment reports will be due during that time.** The reflection forms the basis for transitioning to a [new Assessment Plan Template](#) (Fall 2026). The reflection and plan template will support faculty in developing a refreshed approach to assessment. Assessment plan should be submitted to your College Assessment Review Committee (CARC) Chair in Fall 2026 (by the due date set by your college/school/branch). All assessment plans will be reviewed for success indicators, alignment between outcomes and measures, and specific methods of analysis. This review will contribute to the strengthening of support mechanisms such as workshops, structure of College Assessment Review Committee (CARCs), and institutional priorities with assessment and curriculum.

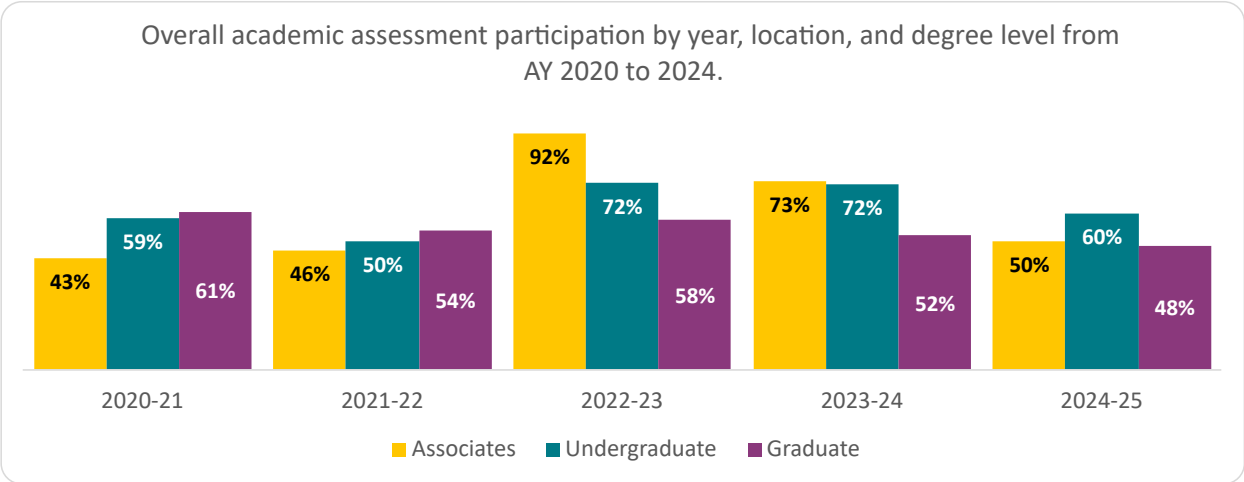
In AY 26-27, the University of New Mexico will restart collection of evidence for academic program assessment based on your new assessment plan. From AY 27-28 to AY 31-32, all academic programs will follow the *same* five-year "plan cycle" or timeline for evidence collection and reporting. This timeline will align with the cycle of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) assurance of UNM accreditation. Please see <https://assessment.unm.edu/academic-assessment/recharge-reset.html> for more information.

Implementation Timeline: Assessment Recharge-Reset 2026



Assessment Participation

Graph 1. Overall academic assessment participation by year and degree level from AY 2020 to 2025.



The 2024-2025 academic year saw a decline in academic assessment participation, with an overall rate of 52%. This represents a drop from previous years, where participation had been relatively stable at approximately 70%. Undergraduate degree programs had a higher participation rate at 60%, although this is down from 72% in the two preceding years. Graduate degree participation declined to its lowest rate since 2020, with 48% engagement. Associate degrees marked a considerable dip (50% submission rate) compared to recent averages of 67% and 80%, respectively.

The observed decrease in assessment participation in AY 24-25 coincides with the university-wide pause in assessment reporting, as announced by OAAPR in Fall 2025. However, the momentum gained from previous years sets the stage for a productive recharge-reset year in 2026. Building on the progress from 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, when OAAPR fostered a culture of continuous improvement through targeted outreach, collaborative initiatives, and strategic discussions, we anticipate that the efforts to rethink assessment plans and reflect on past initiatives will build on these strong foundations. The Provost's Office endorsement of integrating assessment and curriculum committees has already reinforced the link between curriculum design and assessment insights. As we enter this reflective period, the university is well-positioned to strengthen our collective energy and expertise, driving enhanced curriculum alignment, student success, and a revitalized approach to assessment in the years ahead.

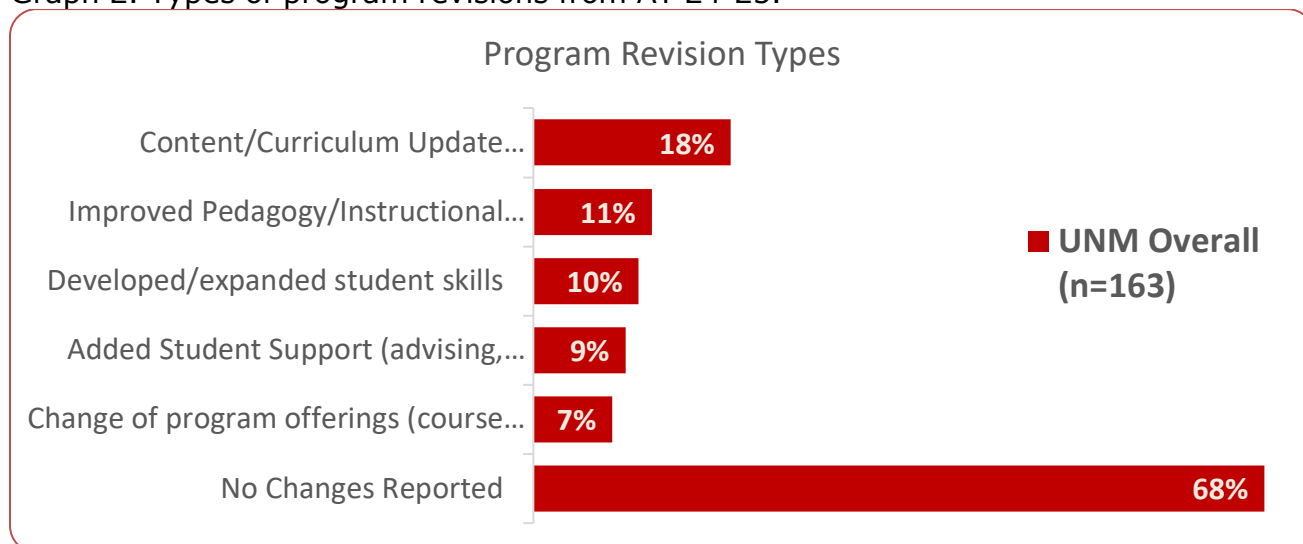
Results AY 2024-2025

The following data comes from nine colleges, schools, and branches: Anderson School of Management, College of Arts & Sciences, College of Education & Human Sciences, College of Fine Arts, College of Population Health, Honors College, School of Engineering, School of Medicine, and Valencia Branch.

Impact of Assessment

Program Revisions

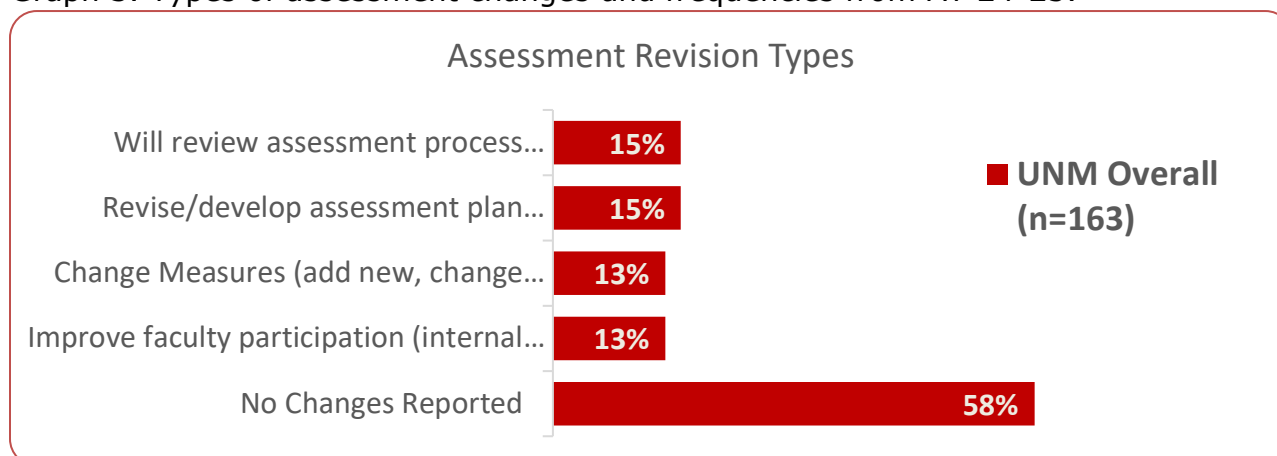
Graph 2. Types of program revisions from AY 24-25.



Overall, for AY 24-25, among the 163 UNM programs that submitted assessment reports, 68% reported no changes at all. Of the programs that did undergo revisions, the most common type was a content/curriculum update (18%), where material was revised, added, or made more explicit, followed by 11% that focused on improving pedagogy and instructional delivery, sharpening timelines and adding new instructional focus. Another 10% worked on developing or expanding student skills, while 9% added student-support services like advising or career activities. The least frequent adjustment was a change in program offerings (7%), involving shifts in course frequency, degree names, or requirement structures. Overall, the data suggests that when programs evolve, they prioritize updating what is taught and how it is taught, leaving the majority of programs unchanged.

Assessment Changes

Graph 3. Types of assessment changes and frequencies from AY 24-25.

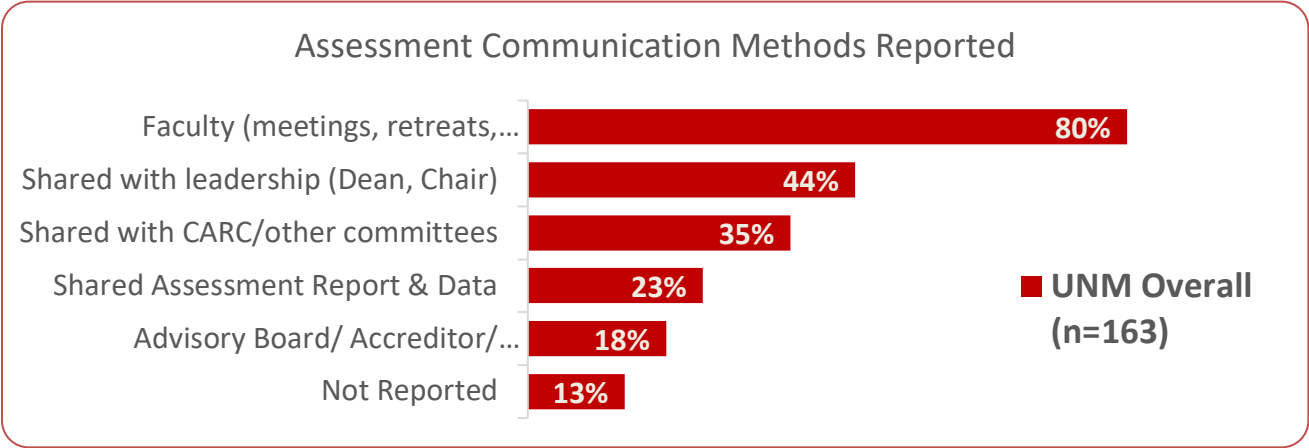


Overall, for AY 24-25, 15% percent of programs plan to review their assessment process, focusing on improving data-collection methods, while another 15% aim to revise or develop their assessment plan, adjusting benchmarks, goals, or the entire plan. Thirteen percent will change measures, either by adding new ones, switching to online formats, or revising existing measures. An additional 11% aim to improve faculty

participation through better internal communication and encouragement. The majority—58 %—reported no changes to their assessment practices.

Communication

Graph 4. Methods of communicating assessment results from AY 24-25



In AY 24-25, the university-wide assessment communication strategy centers around faculty engagement (8%) followed by communication channels on foundational faculty-leadership interactions (44%) and faculty. Committees (35%), making faculty engagement and expanded leadership involvement the university-wide priorities for the 2026 assessment cycle.

College, School, and Branch Maturity Rubric Narrative Assessment Trends

The following summary of trends in strengths and challenges emerges from the annual reports submitted by each College/School/Department (CSB), specifically in response to the open-ended items included in the assessment maturity rubric.

Strengths

One strength across multiple schools is the **maturity and consistency of assessment practices**. SOM/COPH reported fully articulated SLOs, established assessment cycles, and 95-100% SLO attainment with national board exam pass rates meeting or exceeding national averages. SOE confirmed mature processes aligned with ABET requirements, and CULLS OILS demonstrated milestone-based assessment across its B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. programs. Similarly, CAS demonstrated strong assessment design, with most programs successfully evaluating specific, observable student behaviours through direct measures that align closely with UNM's Knowledge and Skills Learning Goals. There is also a **growing culture of data-driven improvement**: UNMV noted a positive shift away from relying on course grades, CFA highlighted creative SLO alignment in the Theatre program, and CULLS OILS described sustained faculty collaboration integrating assessment into curriculum review. **Faculty engagement and buy-in are increasing**, with CFA reporting greater CARC member involvement and SOM/COPH noting strong faculty interest in next-stage development. Finally, the **assessment reset and five-year cycle** were widely praised by HC, SOE, and UNMV as an opportunity to build more meaningful assessment structures.

Challenges

Despite these strengths, several persistent challenges were identified. The most frequently reported challenge is **variability in the depth of data analysis**; while programs collect quality data, interpretation often remains descriptive rather than analytical (SOM/COPH, UNMV, COEHS). **Leadership transitions and faculty fatigue** are significant barriers — SOE reported four of six departments lacking permanent chairs, CAS cited leadership turnover as a factor in non-participation, and COEHS acknowledged that faculty view assessment as "busy work." **Participation rates remain uneven**, with some at 69% and others at 61%. **Alignment and measurement clarity** challenge specific initiatives such as Community-Engaged Learning in HC. Schools also noted that **reporting processes feel redundant**, prompting requests for simplified templates, online tools, and centralized resources. The upcoming reset year presents a critical opportunity to address these challenges through training, identification of exemplary practices, and continued support from the Office of Assessment.

Impact analysis of assessment plan trends (2022-2025)

The following section summarizes the shifts in Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), assessment measures, communication methods, and assessment revisions to help identify strategies for faculty when addressing future assessment planning.

SLO Trends, Impact and Strategies

The action verbs used in SLOS serve as indicators of the cognitive complexity and specificity that programs expect of their students. The content focus of SLOs reveals the thematic priorities embedded in program-level learning outcomes. The Knowledge-Skills-Responsibility (KSR) framework categorizes each SLO according to the type of learning it targets. The number of SLOs reported per program provides insight into the scope and complexity of assessment efforts. Programs with too few SLOs may not adequately capture the breadth of their learning goals, while programs with too many may face assessment fatigue. The following table identifies the most frequently used verbs across all SLOs and reveals how programs balance their assessment design as reported during the three-year period.

	Trend	Impact
SLO Verb Frequency	A shift away from the dominant use of "Demonstrate" (dropping from 34% in AY 23-24 to 25% in AY 24-25) toward a more distributed use of verbs like "Apply", "Analyze," "Identify," and "Develop."	The diversification of action verbs indicates a maturation in how programs articulate learning expectations. Moving away from the generic "Demonstrate" forces faculty to be more precise about the cognitive processes they expect students to achieve.
Outcome Content Type	While "Skill Building" and "Conceptual Learning" remain dominant, there is a notable increase in "Cultural/Community Understanding" (rising to 27% in AY 24-25 vs. 22% in	The growing emphasis on cultural and community understanding reflects a broader institutional shift toward cultural influences, inclusion and community engagement. The rise in

	AY 22-23) and "Student Products/Milestones" (rising to 12% in AY 24-25 vs. 4% in AY 22-23). The Cultural/Community growth reflects the institution's increasing emphasis on diversity and inclusion, and community engagement within academic programs.	student products highlights a shift toward cumulative outcomes that demonstrate student capabilities.
UNM Learning Goals	A balanced and high focus on both "Skills" (81% average in AY 24-25 with a similar trend since 2022) and increased "Knowledge" (85% in AY 24-25 vs. 9% in 2022), with "Responsibility" maintaining a steady presence (52% average from 22-25) in about half of all SLOs.	Programs are successfully integrating theoretical and disciplinary knowledge with practical application. Measuring "responsibility" indicates that ethical, professional, and civic duties are considered integral to the curriculum.
SLO count per assessment report	A slight shift toward reporting a higher number of SLOs from 22-25 (3-6 the majority), with some programs reporting 7 and 8+ SLOs increasing in % from 2022 to 2025.	While most programs maintain a manageable 3-6 SLOs, the increase in programs reporting 7 and 8+ SLOs may lead to assessment fatigue and diluted focus. Assessing too many outcomes simultaneously may complicated data collection and analysis.

Assessment Measures, Impact and Strategies

The way programs communicate assessment results to stakeholders is a critical indicator of assessment culture and data-informed decision-making. Assessment revisions describe the changes programs plan to make to their assessment processes based on their findings. These revisions reflect the self-improvement dimension of the assessment cycle. The following table captures key trends in assessment measures, communication methods, and revision plans from 2022-2025:

	Trend	Impact
Assessment Measure Usage	A significant increase in the use of direct, artifact-based measures like "Projects, Assignments, Capstones" (reaching 47% in AY 24-25) and "Rubrics" (reaching 37%), alongside a decline in "GPAs/Grades" and "Surveys" (15% and 11% respectively in AY 24-25, following a similar pattern since 2022).	This is a highly positive trend indicating a shift toward authentic assessment. Direct measures provide actionable, specific data on student learning, whereas grades and surveys often lack the granularity needed for curriculum improvement.

Rethinking Assessment: New Plans Fall 2026

As UNM embarks on its ambitious journey toward the **UNM 2040: Opportunity Defined strategic vision**, the role of strong, meaningful assessment has never been more critical. Rethinking and elevating our assessment plans is not just an exercise in compliance; it is a fundamental driver of institutional excellence, student success, and strategic alignment. By moving beyond basic measurement toward sophisticated, exemplary assessment practices, faculty and academic units can ensure that their programs are dynamically responding to curricular changes, evolving professional peer trends, and the specific needs of their own disciplines. This continuous cycle of inquiry and improvement directly supports the UNM 2040 strategic goals. Specifically, rigorous assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and authentic measures align with **UNM Goal Two: Student Experience and Educational Innovation**, ensuring that we are transforming the educational experience to guarantee lifelong success for all learners. Additionally, setting evidence-based benchmarks and effectively "closing the loop" to address gaps directly advances **UNM Goal Three: Inclusive Excellence**, fostering an environment where student persistence and success are prioritized. Finally, transparent communication of assessment results across all stakeholders exemplifies the spirit of **UNM Goal Five: One University**, integrating our academic efforts to strengthen UNM's overall impact.

Future Strategies for Faculty to Enhance SLOs and Assessment Effectiveness

SLOs: As UNM's assessment landscape continues to evolve and closer connections are being made between curriculum, assessment based on UNM 2040 Strategic goals, faculty may consider the following strategies to enhance SLOs:

- Use Bloom's Taxonomy more deliberately when crafting SLOs, focusing on precise verb selection to match cognitive rigor.
- Develop authentic assessment methods for cultural competency and community engagement, leveraging e-portfolios or showcasing events with reflection components.
- Design rubrics that evaluate knowledge, skills, and professional responsibility

holistically.

- Design a focused, multi-year rotating assessment cycle, assessing a subset of SLOs annually for deeper analysis.

Assessment Measures, Communication and Revisions: Building on the above-mentioned trends, faculty may consider the following future strategies to enhance assessment effectiveness:

- Prioritize professional development on rubric design and calibration to ensure inter-rater reliability, particularly for project- and capstone-based assessments.
- Develop summary templates: standardized documents that include objectives from a given year, data collection methods, key findings, recommendations and next steps for impact to facilitate clear communication of assessment results to leadership and advisory boards and to inform resource allocation and strategic planning.
- Shift assessment support towards strategic curriculum mapping, ensuring seamless alignment between course-level outcomes and program-level and institutional-level goals.
- As Assessment is becoming more transparent and data-driven at the leadership level, moving beyond simply discussing assessment in faculty meetings to actually sharing the raw data and reports will help to develop a culture of evidence-based decision-making.
- Programs are moving past the mechanical phase of figuring out *how* to measure learning and are now focusing on *what* they are measuring. The focus on aligning and revising shared SLOs will contribute to a maturation toward programmatic coherence and interdisciplinary alignment.

Next Steps: Assessment Reflection Document

The OAAPR has developed an assessment reflection for each degree program to complete in lieu of an assessment report in AY 26-27 located on the [assessment website](#). The assessment reflection will be submitted along with an updated assessment plan in Fall 2026. CARC Chairs will be sending the Assessment Reflection directly to assessment reporters within their college, school and branch. The reflection component encourages programs to provide a contextual understanding of their previous assessment practices and support mechanisms. Program reflections will help inform the future direction of institutional assessment practices in support of the upcoming HLC assurance argument. The reflections will be turned into your College Assessment Review Committee (CARC) Chair in the fall of 2026. Please adhere to your college/school deadlines for the exact due date.

Assessment Planning support

Please utilize your Assessment Reflection document and the following assessment resources to update and/or create your new assessment plan:

- OAAPR will continue to assist units and programs by providing training and support for faculty and staff. The following themes for workshops are identified based on the feedback received from faculty and CARC committees:

How to Restart Your Assessment Planning (August 28th, 2026)

Assessment Meaningful Analysis (September 11th, 2026)

- Assessment plans are for an entire degree program. Map outcomes to your entire set of academic courses to align representation and understanding of which student populations and which content areas are robust:

Curriculum Mapping Institute (September 30th and October 1st, 2026)

For more information, see the Curriculum Mapping workshop on our [OAAPR workshop's page](#).

- Please refer to the best practices guidelines on our website for suggestions toward streamlining assessment, creating overarching goals for all degree programs, and customizing outcomes for each degree level: <https://assessment.unm.edu/academic-assessment/index.html>
- Contact your college/school assessment/curriculum committee chair for feedback, consultation, and/or additional assessment ideas.
- Contact the OAAPR for goals/outcomes, data collection, and data analysis support: assess@unm.edu

Relevant Resources

- [New Assessment Plan Template](#)
- [New Assessment Reflection Template](#)
- OAAPR AY 2026-2027: **Register for all OAAPR SPRING 2026 workshops [here](#)**
- [Association for the Assessment of Higher Learning Education \(AALHE\)](#)
- [National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment \(NILOA\)](#)
- [American Association of Colleges and Universities \(AACU\) VALUE Rubrics](#)
- [Higher Learning Commission \(HLC\)](#)