



OFFICE OF
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Office of Assessment & Academic Program Review

Annual Institutional Co-Curricular Assessment Report AY 22-23

October 2023



Introduction

The purpose of this report is to share information on the state of assessment in the University of New Mexico's administrative and co-curricular programs and how these programs are using assessment to improve their services.

Administrative and co-curricular units document and share key elements of their activities to monitor and understand impact, fulfill accreditation requirements from the Higher Learning Commission and to build better support for students and staff at UNM. Each year, participating units submit assessment plans and/or reports to the Office of Assessment and Academic Program Review (OAAPR), which is itself an administrative unit involved in self-assessment. The OAAPR compiles and analyzes these materials as a whole and provides individual feedback as well.

Key Takeaways

- All units who participated last year have improved their assessment, whether by creating new plans, building on existing ones, aligning elements, or adding detail to reporting. Congratulations!
- Unit participation has declined and should be a focus for subsequent years.
- Aligning components across assessment processes remains an opportunity for growth. In particular, assessment outcomes need to be clearly defined rather than stated as strategies, benchmarks, or results.
- Support is also needed to distinguish between analysis and results and create more robust forms of analysis.
- Units are creating outputs in addition to standard reports that evidence changes made due to assessment, such as trainings and environmental scans.
- Communication can be expanded to include students as stakeholders in assessment.

Participation

Six administrative and co-curricular units (50% of previously participating units) submitted assessment plans and/or reports for the 2022-23 academic year, representing a decline from 11 (92%) last year. Of these, four were at the reporting phase. Programs and their submissions are listed here:

	Plan	Report
African American Student Services	✓	
American Indian Student Services		
Center for Teaching & Learning	✓	✓
College Enrichment Program		
Division for Equity and Inclusion / LGBTQ Resource Center		
El Centro de la Raza	✓	
Office of Advising Strategies		
Office of Assessment & APR	✓	✓
Office of Career Services	✓	✓
University College / Academic Communities		
Veterans & Military Resource Center	✓	✓
Women's Resource Center		

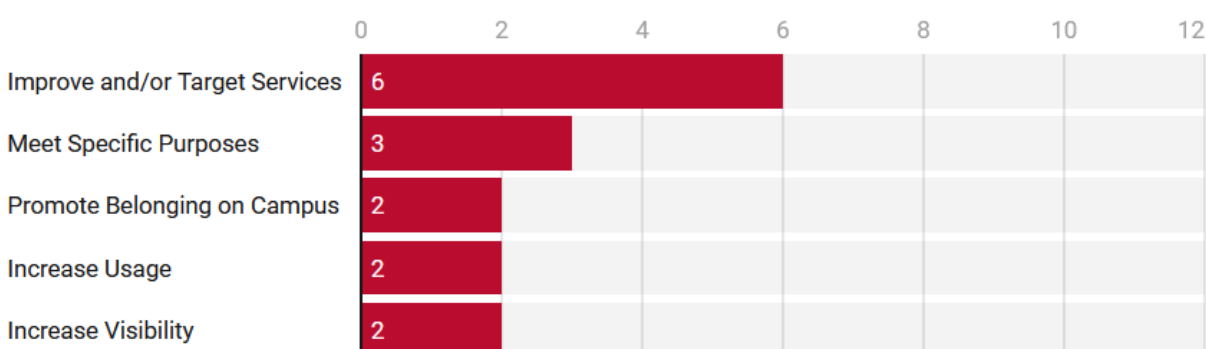
It was reported that turnover and staffing issues contributed to this year's drop in participation. Of the units which did not submit, the OAAPR successfully contacted the Office of Advising Strategies, University College, and the Women's Resource Center, who are committed to submitting plans for the next cycle.

Results

Goals and Outcomes:

Goals are broad aspirations related to each program's mission, and outcomes are specific and measurable behaviors describing how the program will know it has met those goals. Goals and outcomes covered a range of topics that showed the unique needs and missions of each unit. To meet these goals, programs set and measured outcomes in the following areas:

Goals by Program



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Improving or targeting services was an intended outcome for all participating units this year, with some trying to increase general support and others trying to better support specific underrepresented groups. Increasing service usage and/or visibility also remained priorities for some units. New themes this year were promoting belonging and meeting program-specific goals related to each unit's purpose. For example, CTL focused much of its effort on general education, while the OAAPR worked toward meeting requirements from the Higher Learning Commission.

Some units used strategies and benchmarks or reported results in place of setting outcomes, resulting in misalignment and making it less clear what the desired outcomes of assessment would be. Working backwards from these components and/or forward from the program goals may be one strategy to define clearer outcomes and align them across the board.

Strategies, Standards, and Benchmarks:

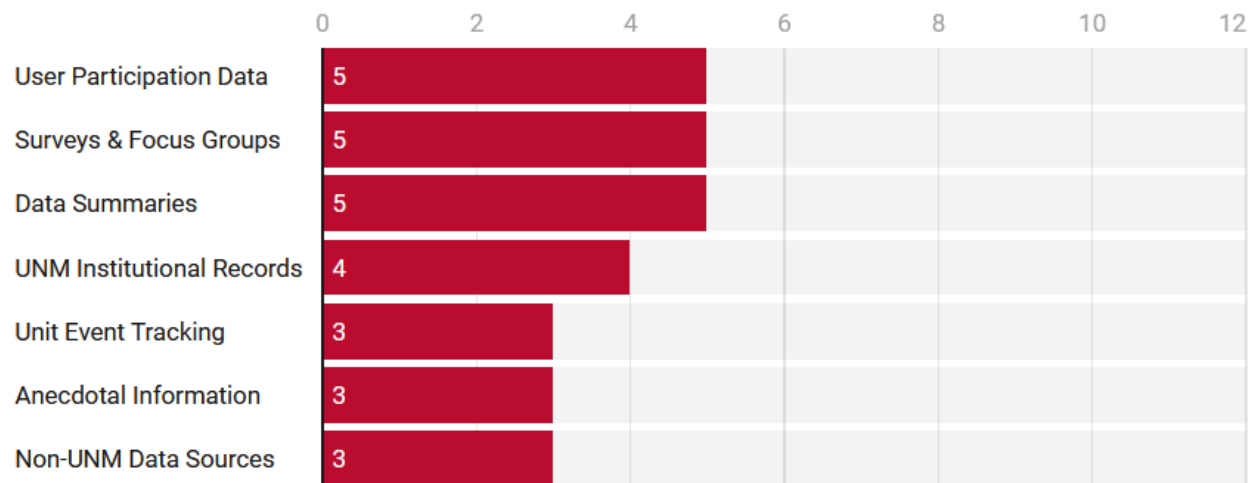
Strategies help programs define and align how they will get from their goals and outcomes to obtaining actionable results, while standards and benchmarks give them reference points to aim for in this process. Many programs adhered to a mixture of internal and external standards and benchmarks, and some programs were still in the middle of establishing benchmarks for ongoing use.

Some programs appeared to be consistently meeting their benchmarks, so the OAAPR encourages moving those benchmarks when it comes time to revise the current assessment plans, such as by raising percentage thresholds or pursuing more specific comparisons.

Data Collection:

Programs demonstrated a wide range of data sources and collection methods largely appropriate to the outcomes being assessed:

Data Sources by Program

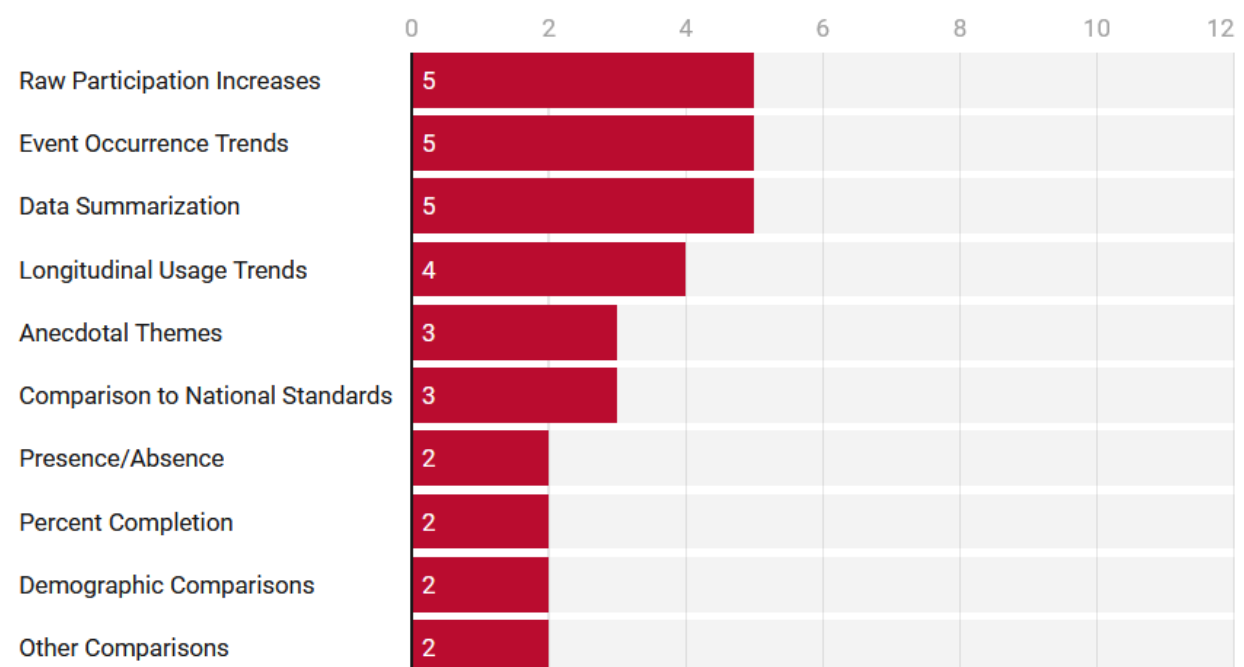


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Units tracking participation in their services via card swipes or paper records, opinion data from surveys and focus groups, and the use of internal reports or other data documents were most common. Less common were UNM-wide data sources, unit event information, staff anecdotes, and external sources such as peer organizations.

Analysis:

Analysis Methods by Program



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The most common means of analyzing collected data were counting service participation, counting number of events, and summarizing other forms of data. Analysis also occurred with respect to trends, themes, and national standards. Units used a wide range of other methods to meet their needs and define success and improvement.

In many cases, the analysis described in plans and reports amounted to reporting collected data and not analyzing them. While raw counts can be useful, they are sensitive to population fluctuation and external factors (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic) and may not be as meaningful.

One suggestion to strengthen analysis is to go beyond raw counts to combining variables in terms of proportions or rates. For example, while the exact number of attendees or programs offered by a unit may vary with staff capacity or from year to year, average attendance per program could be a good metric for a benchmark comparison. Comparing counts to other numbers or benchmarks, as some programs did with respect to UNM-wide demographics or national standards, could be an additional way to enhance analysis.

Going forward, the OAAPR will focus on meaningful analysis and interpretation training with co-curricular units to promote more robust analyses.

Results:

Reporting results enables the OAAPR to provide additional support and feedback on using them for improvement. Many units did not have reports, so results were limited, and some programs did not provide enough detail on how their results were meeting outcomes for the OAAPR to provide feedback.

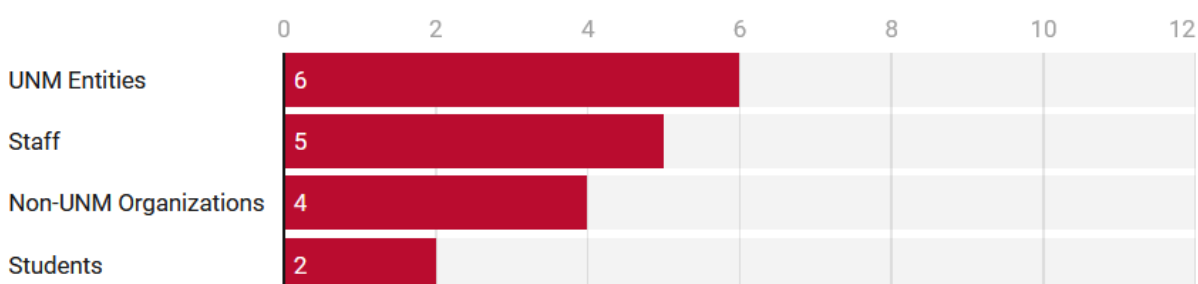
One common result observed this year was that units are creating other kinds of documents besides reports to demonstrate attainment of their outcomes, such as internal tracking documents and environmental scans. This fact is a great reminder that assessment can and should result in useful internal documents and data besides what is contained in reports for assessment purposes.

All units reporting results met their stated benchmarks. One unit will be revising their plan based on having met benchmarks for multiple years, one unit appeared to meet all benchmarks with no plans to adjust or change in the next cycle, and one unit needed additional cycles of data to determine emerging trends.

In many cases, results included standards or benchmarks being met with no changes made, which is acceptable as it shows outcomes being met. At the same time, it may be worth revisiting those benchmarks when the time comes to create new plans and see if they can be refined or altered.

Communication:

Communication Recipients



Programs communicated assessment results to various audiences, including entities such as committees and leadership, program staff, and external communities. Many key stakeholders are already involved, but these audiences could expand with more time and capacity. In particular, the OAAPR recommends including students in messaging on program changes, successes, and improvements.

Closing the Loop:

‘Closing the loop’ refers to using assessment results to inform both the co-curricular program services being assessed and further assessment. There was minimal evidence this year of assessment results impacting services, but at the same time, all programs are still in their first cycle of assessment. Although they may not be at the stage of actually making changes to services, it is clear from plans that units have a sense of how they can use assessment to improve data collection and communication, change marketing initiatives, advocate for more staff, modify internal procedures, and more. Assessment appears to be useful for units, even if it is just to confirm that they are on the right track and meeting their goals.

In addition, programs did use assessment to inform their assessment processes. Although many programs are still in the early stages of assessment maturity, all programs showed improvement in their assessment plans and/or reports from last year. Examples include revising plans to better support office goals, changing outcomes that were not working for the unit, adding new analysis methods, and providing additional detail in reports.

Next Steps

Based on last year’s report and analysis, the OAAPR committed to providing support regarding assessment alignment, reporting and co-curricular assessment connections across campus through events and trainings. The OAAPR has made progress on these goals by engaging in individual consultations with units and scheduling bimonthly meetings for units to learn from and share with each other.

Actionable steps for the OAAPR to support assessment in the next academic year will include:

- Continuing to provide programs with support for analysis, reporting, and alignment
- Continuing to create opportunities for networking and learning among units
- Connecting with specific units and their leadership to increase overall participation

In addition, the OAAPR will continue to provide individual feedback and support to programs and create institutional reports describing overall themes and improvements.

Conclusion

UNM’s administrative and co-curricular units continue to show commitment to assessing and improving their services, and the annual assessment cycle has again helped identify themes and needs for future support. The office looks forward to continued improvement and assessment as more units participate, units with plans present initial reports, and units evidence improvement within their experiences.