



Office of Assessment & APR
Annual Office Report
July 2024

Overview

This report documents assessment activity and results from AY 23-24 for the Office of Assessment and Academic Program Review (OAAPR) at The University of New Mexico.

The OAAPR publishes this annual report as part of its commitment to continual improvement. The report also helps satisfy the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) requirements for academic program review (APR) and academic and co-curricular assessment as well as the New Mexico Higher Education Department's requirement for general education (GE) assessment.

OAAPR highlights from the past year's office assessment include:

- Collaborated with the Office of Community Engagement (CE) by providing ongoing support for UNM's renewal of the Carnegie designation. Past APR self-studies have been able to provide some evidence of community engagement. The OAAPR is currently developing a new community engagement criterion in APRs and will consistently collect data annually from academic programs for the purpose of UNM's CE designation.
- Partnered with UNM Online (UNMO) to integrate online academic degree programming into academic program reviews. APRs will include online learning components starting in AY 24-25.
- Rolled out a new branch academic assessment model to simplify annual branch assessment processes and to recognize and adapt to their unique structures, instructor composition and student populations.
- Designed and implemented new assessment and APR data workshops to support the tracking of student population data, analysis of data and visualization/storytelling of information.
- Expanded co-curricular assessment outreach and support to Student Affairs, the College of University Library & Learning Sciences, and University College. Established ongoing bi-monthly co-curricular assessment meetings to provide resources, strategies, and best practice.

Assessment Modifications

The OAAPR revised its assessment plan for the next three years in the annual retreat. New goals, outcomes and benchmarks were created. This new plan goes into effect in AY 24-25.

Goal 1: The OAAPR will satisfy the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) assessment and APR requirements.

- **Outcome 1:** Maintain an annual process that ensures appropriate progress towards stated HLC requirements.
- **Outcome 2:** Continue to collect and inventory proof of the assessment and APR processes for general education, academic, and co-curricular programs.
- **Outcome 3:** Develop ongoing historical documentation that satisfies HLC requirements.

Benchmark:

Conduct, analyze and reflect on office assessment & APR cycles. The benchmark was met for this year based on the following results.

Results:

Academic Assessment:

The OAAPR collected assessment reports from degree programs. These are stored and archived in the UNM assessment repository. Overall submissions for AY 2023-24 increased by 13% from the previous academic year and reached 65.7%, the highest submission rate in 4 years. Undergraduate program submissions increased by 22% and graduate programs increased by 4%. The OAAPR intentionally worked with units to create assessment plans, increased visibility with assessment overall in mid-cycle APRs (Academic Program Reviews) and Chair's Colloquiums, and onboarded many new Assessment leaders who rallied for learning improvement through assessment. Additionally, the Provost's Office initiated a merger between college, school and branch assessment and curriculum committees to support the connections between curricular improvement and assessment data.

The touchpoints listed above contributed to an increase in academic assessment submission/participation. While this is great progress, 75% of branch campuses struggled with submissions. This has been a trend over the last couple of years where there has been a decline in institutional assessment participation.

As in past years, colleges, schools, and branches submitted maturity rubrics rating themselves across four areas of assessment and describing self-assessment narratives. In total 12 of 15 entities submitted maturity rubrics. This year, maturity rubric ratings decreased. This was less due to overall decreases in programs, and more attributed to new submissions from colleges and schools that had not participated last year. These lower ratings were often attributed to a need to increase faculty buy in within the programs.

The OAAPR also collected assessment data forms from each assessment chair that summarizes the assessment reports for each college, school, and branch. Collection of this form started three years ago to gain insights on programmatic impact, instructor beliefs and engagement in academic assessment. In total 11 of 15 data forms were collected. Please see the UNM State of Affairs annual assessment report for specific results regarding academic assessment outcomes.

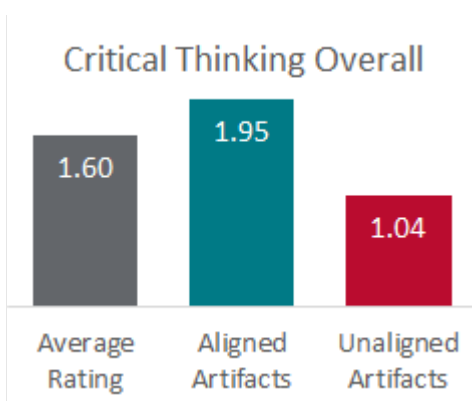
Co-curricular Assessment

Currently, UNM has 12 co-curricular units participating in assessment and submitting assessment documentation annually. These are also stored and archived in the UNM assessment repository. In AY 22-23, six reports and 4 plans were submitted, with an 83 % submission rate. Upon analysis, the most common goals involved increasing and targeting services across units. Programs used a range of methods in assessment with tallies of student participation, data summaries, and longitudinal user trends (year over year). Many programs are already showing evidence of 'closing the loop' and

using the assessment process to inform future services and assessment cycles. The UNM annual co-curricular assessment report provides a complete summary of results regarding co-curricular assessment.

General Education Assessment:

AY 2023-24 marked the completion of the second year of the three-year GE assessment cycle. The OAAPR collected 894 artifacts from 871 students representing the skill of Critical Thinking. This year had the highest submission rates over any other year since the onset of UNM's essential skill assessment cycle in 2019. All UNM content areas are mapped to Critical Thinking skill, which is one reason why the submission rate may be higher. Additionally, the OAAPR sent timely reminders to all GE colleges, schools, and branches regarding artifact submissions, which had a direct impact on participation.



Overall, critical thinking ratings were higher among student artifacts that were aligned to the selected essential skills and rubric dimensions (as seen in the graph above). Alignment plays a significant role in rating student artifacts. Based on this year's results, 62.8% of artifacts were determined aligned with the dimensions of Critical Thinking. Aligned artifacts increased the average rating by .35 points when unaligned artifacts were removed. The OAAPR aims to improve aligned artifact submission rates through workshops and increasing awareness within departments. The GE annual assessment report summarizes specific results regarding general education assessment.

Academic Program Review:

For AY 23-24, the OAAPR completed 7 full reviews and 5 of 6 planned mid-cycle reviews and received 4 of 6 expected action plans. This year marks year 3 of the new mid-cycle review process started in AY 21-22. The following documents are required as part of the APR process: Academic Program Self-Study Report, Review Team Report, Action Plan, and Unit Response Report. Current mid-cycle documentation includes the Key Indicator Packet and Mid-Cycle Check-In Form. These documents are archived and inventoried in the APR public repository and linked through the UNM APR website. At the time of this report, 6 of 7 APR Review team reports have been collected. The final report is planned to be submitted in August 2024.

The OAAPR engages in outreach and notification to department administrators to adhere to the APR's cyclical calendar. Occasionally, delays occur in completion of

process and documentation. One mid-cycle did not occur due to a scheduling conflict. Two action plans received an extension at the request of the program chairs. These documents are scheduled to be submitted during AY 24-25. Documentation is archived post review. OAAPR continues to track the queue of review documents utilizing a project management platform to monitor progress and completion.

The APR Reviewer Survey was administered to 22 reviewers asking them about their UNM reviewer experience and support services when working with the OAAPR. The response rate for the survey was 50% (11/22). Results include:

1. **The Review Yielded Useful Observations:** 36% strongly agree, 45% agree, 9% neutral, 9% strongly disagree (an increase in agree & strongly agree from last year)
2. **The Review Was a Meaningful Experience:** 45% strongly agree, 45% agree, and 9% strongly disagree (a slight decrease in agree & strongly agree from last year)
3. **I Was Prepared for the Review:** 27% strongly agree, 55% agree, 9% disagree, 9% strongly disagree (a decrease in agree & strongly agree from last year)

Please see the UNM State of Affairs APR annual report for additional results regarding APRs and mid-cycles.

Analysis & Continuous Improvement:

Academic Assessment:

Assessment reports and CARC assessment data forms had a robust submission rate this year with high quality information about processes, impact, outcomes, and goals. This documentation by academic programs is evidencing valuable data for continuous improvement at the program level and at the assessment level for academic units.

The OAAPR analyzed all submitted assessment documents to inform institutional assessment practices. After reviewing the maturity rubric self-assessment narratives from each college, school, and branch, there is an opportunity to develop a new workshop on “closing the loop”, some consultations on data analysis and SLO development, and new exploration into curriculum and course mapping related to program assessment.

As part of the annual cycle, OAAPR staff provided feedback to a subset of programs and reviewed them for common characteristics. Within these commonalities, many assessment plans had expired or are expiring and need to be updated for the next assessment cycle(s). There is discernible improvement in the quality of SLO articulation, showing greater clarity and specificity, resulting in more defined and measurable learning goals overall. It was also noted that exit assessment tools were commonly reported to measure student experience and SLOs at the end of their degree program. Programs reported that exit exams, exit interviews, and student exit surveys were frequently used.

Areas for improvement included monitoring and designing of benchmarks, utilizing aligned measurement tools for specific learning behaviors rather than overarching performance scores, and focusing on graduate student behaviors while students are moving through their degree program instead of solely at their exit time or post-graduation.

The OAAPR, with branch campus leadership input, assessed the usefulness of the academic assessment cycle for branch division structures, instructor makeup, degree attainment, and student populations. Three out of four branches decided to move away from the traditional academic assessment model and opted in to a more simplified and efficient assessment cycle that will begin fall 2024. This year, the OAAPR launched a six-month training to equip all branch assessment leadership and committees. In AY 24-25, this training and related resources will be evaluated by the branches and the OAAPR.

Co-Curricular Assessment:

OAAPR analysis of co-curricular assessment plans and reports found that co-curricular units identified priorities for improvement in their goals, outcomes, strategies, benchmarks, and data sources, but these priorities were not always evidenced or aligned across all components.

Overall, programs are building their assessment culture within their units and gaining momentum in the institutional assessment process. The OAAPR will strive for broader participation as more UNM co-curricular units were identified in the last year. Co-curricular assessment training and ongoing support will be facilitated by the assessment office. Any new participants will be transitioned into the institutional process in AY 24-25. The OAAPR will continue designing customized support for co-curricular assessment planning and reporting for all units involved.

The OAAPR will be conducting an environmental scan of co-curricular practices at peer and New Mexican institutions to inform assessment going forward. As the three-year pilot of the co-curricular assessment cycle concludes, AY 24-25 will be devoted to learning from best practitioners and national standards as well as UNM's Division of Student Affairs.

General Education Assessment:

The essential skill of critical thinking had a lower average rating than in the last GE assessment cycle. Communicating the value of assignment and rubric alignment is highly important, as artifacts from assignments not aligned with critical thinking were harder to rate and had lower average scores. This has become a trend over the last couple of years and is a high priority for the OAAPR to troubleshoot. Specific critical thinking workshops will be planned to support alignment, teaching and student success in the next assessment cycle with a goal to increase critical thinking performance ratings. In particular a workshop on creating aligned assignments is scheduled for this year's Get Set, Reset hosted by CTL.

Academic Program Review:

This year, Psychology, Sociology, Chicano/Chicana Studies, Community & Regional Planning, Linguistics, Honors College, and Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies completed an APR. The OAAPR supported these reviews through planning of each APR phase, providing data packets, forming review teams, coordinating all APR activities, and ensuring all stakeholders participated in meetings with the review team visit.

During this year's cycle, some APR reviewers reported that their APR visit was too filled, and not enough time was provided for all meetings. The OAAPR will re-visit the

site-visit itinerary and consider the possibility of extending visits for complex programs. The APR office will also consider hosting an introductory meeting for review teams to meet on zoom before each site-visit to make for a more efficient in-person review. Additional feedback included the desire for a larger presence and guidance from leadership in the APR process. This feedback has been shared with appropriate Academic Affairs leadership.

Additionally, the APR Manager recognized a lack of communication in the APR cycle once the site-visit concluded, which may be contributing to delays in completing Action Plans and Unit Response Reports. The OAAPR plans to create “how to” guidance on these post APR documents and ways to incorporate the APR strategic planning criterion into future program growth, improvement, and actionable directives. As administrator transitions occur, the APR office will continue to prepare and acclimate new leadership to the APR processes. During AY 23-24, the APR office was solicited by UNM’s Office of Community Engagement and UNM’s Online Learning. The office will be taking the next year to collaborate with these campus partners and make decisions on the role of each within the APR annual process.

Communication:

The OAAPR communicates assessment results with campus partners and stakeholders in-person and via email, phone, Zoom, its website, individualized feedback, institutional reports, a quarterly newsletter, workshops, surveys, and established committees. Additional communication with academic programs occurs through the APR self-study and review processes.

Goal 2: The OAAPR will provide relevant support to programs undergoing assessment and academic program review.

- **Outcome 1:** OAAPR staff will provide assessment and APR stakeholders with support services to complete their assessment/APR processes.

Benchmark:

80% of the OAAPR office survey respondents will state that office services aided their APR/assessment/data processes. The benchmark was met this year with 100% of respondents stating that office services were helpful.

Results:

Contacts

The OAAPR tracks all touchpoints with UNM constituents to understand the breadth and depth of contacts. The office had 130 unique contacts with individuals or units from 87 meetings or consultations this year. 48% of contacts were related to assessment, 46% to APR, and 13% to data support. Contacts included 6 facilitated workshops with 70 attendees. The OAAPR also hosted 7 bi-monthly co-curricular meetings and co-facilitated 2 workshops with the Center for Teaching & Learning. For APRs, the office provided 8 orientations, 10 data packet meetings, and 8 mid-cycle meetings.

Services

The OAAPR administered its annual office survey asking all contacts that were tracked to provide feedback and suggestions regarding support services provided. The survey had a response rate of 33% (55 out of 157), up 5% from last year.

Respondents shared the following in terms of support and improvements:

- APR staff are helpful, provide guidance, clarity, data, advice and communicate consistently throughout the process
- The APR process helps departments with direction and to tell their story
- Assessment staff provide clear direction, feedback, and help with data
- Data support is useful, timely, and understandable
- Want a simplified assessment workshop for new faculty
- Want guidance on merging assessment & curriculum committees
- Want an all faculty and staff APR meeting to get the whole program familiar with APRs

Analysis & Continuous Improvement:

Many survey comments mentioned the usefulness of the OAAPR data workshops, and the APR data packets provided by the office. Therefore, continued support for data interpretation, visualization and tracking will be provided by the OAAPR. The office is working with Oracle to have access to data sets relevant to APRs and plans on meeting the needs of traditional and unique degree programming in AY 24-25.

Survey recommendations will be discussed in the OAAPR “Year in Review” event during Fall 2024. Specifically, the OAAPR will put together a plan to expand assessment communications and presentations with venues that have new faculty. Strategies to include entire program personnel in APR orientations and self-study authorship will also be a priority.

Communication:

Same as Goal 1.

Goal 3: The OAAPR will increase its visibility and presence.

- **Outcome 1:** Increase the OAAPR’s presence on local, regional, and national levels.

Benchmark:

- The OAAPR will present on assessment/APR/data processes, improvements, and/or best practices on a local, regional, or national level annually. The benchmark was met for this year based on the results below.

Results:

OAAPR staff attended 5 conferences, 5 webinars, and presented at 3 conferences. Highlights include presenting at UNM Tech Days, presenting GE assessment and APR sessions at the New Mexico Higher Education Assessment & Retention (NMHEAR)

conference and attending a co-curricular national data & assessment conference (a first for the office).

OAAPR staff are members of the UNM's Council for Undergraduate Early Success, Provost's Committee on Assessment, and Student Affairs Assessment meetings. More broadly, staff are members of the Association of Institutional Researchers (AIR) and National Association of Student Affairs Professionals (NASPA).

The OAAPR continues to meet with new leadership regarding assessment and APR issues and publish quarterly newsletters sent to all UNM faculty and staff. This year, a semesterly assessment infographic was made for TAs to begin distribution in AY 24-25. In addition, staff onboarded new assessment contacts and/or leadership from University College, College of Fine Arts, College of University Library and Learning Sciences, Taos branch campus, Los Alamos branch campus, Gallup branch campus, the Office of Community Engagement and UNM Online Learning.

Analysis & Continuous Improvement:

The OAAPR maximized opportunities this year to promote services and create partnerships across campus. As leadership changes at the institutional, college/school, and program level, the OAAPR seeks to appropriately engage and educate leadership regarding their roles in an APR and annual assessment process:

- The OAAPR established partnerships with three branch campuses and two campus entities to strengthen ties in both assessment and APR.
- The office intentionally expanded outreach to TAs inviting them to a newly developed assessment workshop at the College of Arts & Sciences, inviting them to annual GE CTL workshops and crafting a customized assessment infographic to be administered in fall 2024.
- Staff presented at the UNM's Chairs School
- With the attendance at a national co-curricular data and assessment conference, the office will be reflecting on the current processes with student affairs and other student facing organizations to build a more efficient and effective model that aligns with national standards of co-curricular assessment. The OAAPR will be intentionally building rapport with the Division of Student Affairs and the Office of Advising Strategies moving forward.

Communication:

Same as Goal 1.

Conclusion & Summary

In summary, the OAAPR met all benchmarks. There is still movement to improve upon all goals in several ways. Workshops and shifts in initiatives will continue to strengthen and shape both assessment and program reviews across campuses. In addition, reflection on the three-year-old assessment plan led to developing a new assessment plan. Results will be collected in the coming year.

Overall, the office has undertaken new initiatives and projects across the three goals (listed in the highlights section and each analysis & continuous improvement sections above), which will improve quality for assessment and APR constituents.