



NNMC Curricular Student Learning Assessment Plan & Handbook

NNMC is committed to assessment as a tool to improve student learning and provide demonstrable evidence that the College is achieving its mission.

Assessment is an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning. It involves making our expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards; and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance. When it is embedded effectively within larger institutional systems, assessment can help us focus our collective attention, examine our assumptions, and create a shared academic culture dedicated to assuring and improving the quality of higher education. (Thomas Angelo, AAHE Bulletin, November 1995, p. 7)

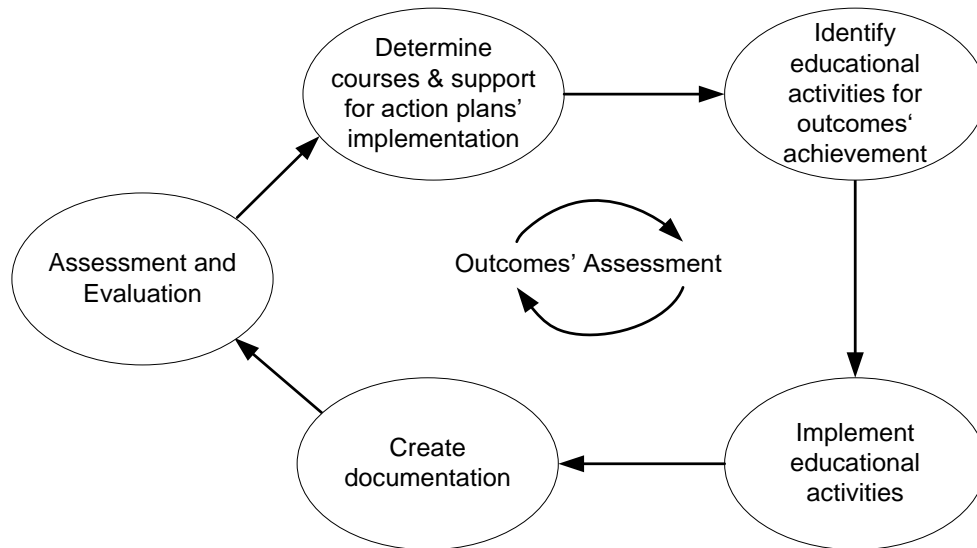
Our assessment efforts are grounded in the following:

- Assessment of student learning is an intentional, scholarly effort to document academic quality, improve learning programs, and make informed decisions as well as fulfill responsibilities to our students and the greater public by continually looking to improve student learning and/or the processes that support that learning.
- Assessment of student learning is faculty-owned and driven. Faculty will actively participate in and be consulted on aspects of the assessment cycle. Faculty use assessment data to strengthen and improve curriculum and pedagogy as it is embedded in the regular course and program activities where possible.
- Assessment of student learning is simple, systematic, and sustainable. The results yielded should be useful and will be conducted efficiently and effectively with available time, resources, and expertise.
- Assessment efforts work in parallel with other student learning efforts, including, but not limited to, instructional design, Quality Matters, pedagogical innovations, and research methodologies.
- Building and maintaining a culture of assessment will be done strategically and intentionally. Therefore, assessment results for all classes will not be reported formally every semester.

Levels of Planning and Assessment

Assessment involves developing a program's or unit's desired outcomes, monitoring progress toward those outcomes, communicating results, and using those results to make improvements. The purpose or goal of assessment is continual improvement and quality assurance, and it can be focused on the individual learner, an organized group of learners, the institution, or the educational system as a whole.

Assessment of student learning in concentrated areas (such as general education, institutional, or degree-specific) of study is viewed as a continuous cycle of improvement.



General Education/Essential Skill Assessment

In 2019, the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NM HED) implemented a new model for General Education (GE) courses, including a change in course numbering as well as the introduction of “Essential Skills” (ES), or five skills that every student should be able to demonstrate upon successful completion of NNMC GE curriculum. The GE program, including the ES embedded in this program, provides foundational outcomes for student achievement regardless of one’s major and helps students connect and/or apply the knowledge and experiences acquired there within to future courses or their personal and professional lives. The GE outcomes are not tied to specific departments or majors but are infused throughout disciplines and recognized across the GE curriculum. In reaction to the NM HED model, NNMC faculty worked throughout 2020 to replace college-wide student learning outcomes with the GE program outcomes. While NM HED provided broad skill categories, NNMC faculty chose to define those categories as student learning outcomes, including:

1. *Communication*: Deliver versatile information in a clear manner, demonstrating an understanding of audience and content in response to a diverse range of situations.
2. *Critical Thinking*: Interpret, analyze, and evaluate claims to identify well-reasoned and substantiated arguments.
3. *Personal & Social Responsibility*: Cultivate an awareness of peoples' cultures, examine social norms and power relations, apply ethical and moral reasoning, and recognize that complex identities are a source of individual and social strength with the ultimate goal of positively contributing to society through diversity, inclusion, and equity.
4. *Information & Digital Literacy*: Reflectively locate, organize, analyze, and evaluate information across multiple platforms or media in order to apply that information to a defined question or problem.
5. *Quantitative Reasoning*: Calculate, represent, apply, analyze, and communicate both quantitative and qualitative information.

Assessment Measures Faculty who teach GE courses employ standardized tests and design the assessment tools used to directly rate the ES for the respective knowledge area of that course. Faculty in knowledge/skill areas reviewed and adopted or adapted initial NM HED scoring rubrics by which student performance is assessed. For each knowledge/skill area, faculty have defined subcomponent skills and levels of student performance that are agreed to be satisfactory to “meet” reasonable collegiate standards. Beyond this, faculty have established criteria considered as “proficient,” “developing,” or “emerging” to judge student work. Scoring rubrics are revisited during norming processes to ensure they maximize the reliability of the assessment activities.

In compliance with NM HED expectations, faculty assess GE learning outcomes using a representative sample of students taking a GE-identified course in the knowledge or skill area. GE student learning outcomes and corresponding ES are included on the course syllabi of courses that satisfy GE requirements.

Responsibility & Cycle The Provost has ultimate oversight and responsibility for academic assessment. The CLAS Committee, a standing committee that reports to the Provost and chaired by the Director for Assessment, is responsible for monitoring the assessment of GE student learning outcomes. The CLAS Committee maintains the schedule for GE assessment in a three-year cycle and notifies program directors and chairs of the GE outcomes to be assessed each academic year. Faculty who teach GE courses administer the assessments and report results to either their department chair or the Director of Assessment.

Outcome	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
Critical Thinking	DC, E,IP	PI	DC, E,IP	PI
Communication	DC	E, IP	PI	DC
Quantitative Reasoning	DC	E, IP	PI	DC
Information & Digital Literacy		DC	E, IP	PI
Personal/Social Responsibility		DC	E, IP	PI

DC= Data Collection; E=Evaluate; IP=Improvement Plan; PI=Plan Implementation

Data Collection, Analysis, & Action Plan If standardized tests are deployed, the Director of Assessment works as an intermediary between the testing entity and faculty to ensure data is collected and distributed appropriately. Faculty using locally developed assessments collect data. The Director of Assessment works with the CLAS Committee to aggregate and share the data. During the Spring semester, faculty review, discuss and prioritize the results. Then, the faculty at large generate suggestions for improvement strategies. The CLAS Committee evaluates and prioritizes the suggested improvement strategies. In many cases, the improvement strategies involve specific departments or positions; thus, the CLAS Committee communicates with the department or individual to develop and/or identify specific actions, targets, measurable outcomes, timelines, and anticipated sample sizes.

Reporting GE assessment results are communicated to the campus community during the Spring semester. Data and discussions about the data, including improvement strategies, are communicated via a biannual report generated by the CLAS Committee. In addition, at the time of the analysis of assessment results, a review of the assessment plan and process will occur, ensuring a review occurs at least once on a three-year cycle.

Academic Program Assessment

Academic program-level assessment happens in three venues: yearly program-level assessment plans and reports, the program review process, and external accrediting bodies (when applicable).

Program-Level Assessment

Academic programs will undertake program-level student learning outcomes (PSLO) assessment. This is an ongoing process to establish measurable expected outcomes of student learning, collect and analyze evidence to determine how well student learning matches those expectations, and use the resulting information to improve curricula.

Assessment Cycle, Responsibility, & Reporting A yearly academic program assessment cycle begins with the individual department's discipline-appropriate PLSOs. An assessment plan is designed from these PLSOs and should be reviewed/revised each year as needed. Department chairs and faculty should review program assessment plans and offer suggestions, find gaps in the yearly assessment of outcomes, and assure that the program has reviewed the data and made decisions about revisions in the program based upon the assessment data. The Assessment Director will post program assessment plans on the assessment website, and they can be updated at any point during the year. The assessment cycle requires each program to submit an annual assessment report as an appendix to the Provost's Annual Report on the progress of the current program assessment plan. The process allows programs to use assessment data and metrics to inform curricular changes.

Assessment Measures Disciplinary faculty within departments select and/or design assessment tools used to directly rate student learning within a program. For each PSLO, faculty define a level of student performance that is agreed to be satisfactory to "meet" reasonable collegiate standards. Faculty also determine a satisfactory level of performance for fixed-choice tests or other quantitative student learning assessment tools.

Analysis & Action Plan Faculty complete analyses and action plans in their respective departments and submit them as part of the Provost's Annual Report. As needed, action plans are carried out by the faculty in the subject area under the supervision of the department chair and Provost.

Academic Program Review

Program review is a comprehensive evaluation of an academic program for the purposes of improvement and accountability. One purpose for conducting program review is to help programs/departments identify the strengths and weaknesses of

the curriculum. Assessment of student learning can help programs determine necessary improvements to courses or needed changes.

Assessment Measures & Responsibility Department chairs lead program review efforts with analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data including, but not limited to, enrollment and fiscal data; curriculum and student learning; faculty and academic support; facilities and equipment; recruitment, admissions, and advisement; labor outlook and job placement; and strategic program planning.

Student Learning Assessment Since student learning is a fundamental goal of any academic program, the student learning outcomes assessment plan executed by each program is a significant component of the program review process. Programs will use a compilation of annual assessment data submitted to the Provost's Annual Report to better organize and reflect departmental assessment efforts.

Assessment Cycle & Reporting All programs undergo a formalized program review self-study and action plan every seven (7) years. Programs are required to present review results directly to an Academic Council of peers in the year following their program review. The Academic Council reviews the results and evaluates the quality of, need for, and centrality of the program to the College's mission and goals.

Discipline-Specific Accreditation

Discipline specific accreditations are a voluntary, non-governmental process of self-analysis and peer review that assures educational quality and encourages purposeful improvement.

Discontinuation of Assessment Activities

Programmatic assessment activities can end when a program is terminated.

Assessment Roles & Responsibilities

Director of Assessment and Accreditation

- Oversees, documents, and manages assessment processes.
- Serves as the data collection manager for General Education assessment and ensures access for those involved with these assessment-related tasks.
- Provides training and support to Department Chairs and faculty members on matters related to assessment and assessment tools.
- Compiles and disseminates reports related to assessment.
- Chairs the CLAS Committee.

Institutional Research

- Helps prepare student learning outcome reports.
- Participates in the analysis and interpretation of data collected.

- Responds to requests to gather and analyze data related to student success that might be helpful when looking at the broader picture of SLO assessment.

CLAS Committee

- Develops and maintains portions of the student learning assessment plan and timelines that align with campus priorities and initiatives. This includes reviewing the quality of student learning assessment processes and practices on a regular basis.
- Identifies, coordinates, and deploys curricular assessment activities and resources across campus to assure they result in integrated, meaningful, and sustained improvement of student learning.
- Reviews and encourages alignment of curricular student learning outcomes spanning across degree programs and/or departments.
- Reviews, analyzes, and shares data generated from institutional level assessment.
- Makes recommendations to the Provost, departments, and/or academic programs based on assessment results, reporting strategies, and/or feedback processes.
- Encourages and organizes professional development (such as Assessment Day) related to student learning assessment, dissemination of assessment information.
- Serves as a resource to assist with student learning assessment efforts across campus.

Department Chairs

- Develop and update assessment program and/or departmental plans.
- Collaborate with faculty to perform an analysis of student learning outcome data and recommend program improvements based on the analysis.
- Document discussions and decisions in the form of meeting minutes.
- Ensure all action plans are completed and appropriately integrated into program revisions.
- Collect PSLO data and follow protocol for data collection for institutional-related assessment results.
- Include student learning assessment plans and results in the Annual Reports to the Provost.
- Include student learning assessment information in Annual Program Review.

Departmental Faculty

- Collaborate with the Department Chair in collecting and reviewing assessment data, analyzing results, and creating recommendations for improvement.
- Participate in the review of assessment results.
- Complete additional responsibilities if assigned by their Department Chair.

Communication

The campus community remains aware of assessment efforts via several channels. Regular training or professional development opportunities are provided and publicized by the Office of the Provost and/or CLAS to campus constituents through website postings, email, and routine departmental communication. The Provost and/or Director of Assessment remind individuals responsible for assessment processes about reporting requirements and due dates.

Academic Year Timeline

GE Assessment Tasks

PSLO Assessment Tasks

Program Review Tasks

Month	Task	Responsible Parties
July/August	PSLO Assessment Reports due in Provost's Annual Report	Department Chairs
August	Bi-Annual Provost's update on GE Assessment due	CLAS/Faculty
August	Select classes involved in GE Assessment	CLAS/Department Chairs
September	PSLO Reports from the previous academic year finalized in repository	Assessment Director
October	Campus-wide Faculty Professional Development	Assessment Director/CLAS Committee
December	Bi-Annual Provost's update on GE Assessment due	CLAS/Faculty
October -January	Program Reviews take place	Select Department Chairs

January	Select classes involved in GE Assessment	CLAS/Department Chairs
February	Provost and Council of Chairs complete Program Review reports with findings and recommendations	Select Department Chairs Provost/Council of Chairs
February/March	Campus-wide Faculty Review of Assessment Results from the previous academic year	Assessment Director/CLAS Committee
January-May	Progress update for previous year's program reviews	Provost and Academic Council
April	Reminder to departments re: programs up for review in the next year	Provost
June	Program Review is completed and submitted to the President/BOR	Provost