



2021 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE CNM STUDENT ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

SAAC Overview

The Student Academic Assessment Committee (SAAC) is the committee charged with facilitating student learning outcomes assessment. SAAC currently coordinates the assessment done by academic departments for both degree and certificate programs as well as general education courses. The committee provides support to individual departments and instructors developing assessment practices, communicates assessment updates to the college community using a newsletter and personal updates, and determines assessment reporting details such as reporting tool design and deadlines.

SAAC membership consists of two faculty members from each school, faculty representatives from the CCC and CTL, administrative representatives from Deans Council and Accreditation, and an administrative coordinator from the Office of Data Strategies. The current membership is:

- John Morningstar (AT)
- <vacant> (AT)
- Nathan Saline (BIT, SAAC co-chair)
- Carol Rogers (BIT)
- Jessica Mills (CHSS)
- David Chavez (CHSS, SAAC co-chair)
- Kris Holder (HWPS)
- Bill Havins (HWPS)
- Karen Riley (MSE)
- Anna Gilletly (MSE administrator, non-voting)
- Andrew Tibble (SAGE)
- Judith Tomasson (SAGE administrator, non-voting)
- Kenny Anglin (Assessment Fellow, non-voting)
- Michael Faulhaber (CCC, non-voting)
- Erica Reed (CTL, non-voting)
- Fang Chen (Deans Council, non-voting)
- Kristen Ferris (ODS – Accreditation, non-voting)
- Linda Martin (ODS – Assessment, non-voting)

Summary of Committee Activities

The primary responsibility of SAAC is to facilitate the assessment processes in the schools by assisting faculty with assessment activities and ensuring that assessment reports are completed. There were several assessment initiatives planned last year that impacted the regular SAAC activities in Academic Year 2020-2021. The initiatives described in last year's report, along with their impact on 2020-2021 reporting, are described here:

- *From last year's report: CNM has embarked on an HLC Assessment Academy project. The Assessment Academy core team will spend Spring 2021 gathering input from faculty to design a reinvigorated approach to assessment, to be piloted in Fall 2021...*

The Assessment Academy pilot launched in Fall 2021 with participation from 38 different departments (40% of the total of 94), covering 89 different degree, certificate, and general education programs (35% of the 256 total). Because of the additional assessment work required of programs participating in the pilot, the requirement to submit SAAC reports for the 2020-2021 academic year was waived for the 89 participating programs (though 6 pilot programs submitted SAAC reports due to program accreditation requirements).

Instead of requiring the traditional reporting, the assessment academy pilot supported the participating programs in examining student learning outcomes, mapping student learning outcomes to the three college-wide universal themes ("Thinking in Action", "Professional Skills", and "Practicing Community"), identifying areas of concern to be addressed in the assessment process, and designing assessment tools to gather data related to the areas of concern. As the pilot progresses, these programs will analyze the data gathered and develop interventions based on the data to try to improve outcomes, and then collect more assessment data to analyze the interventions. Programs record their progress as they complete these activities, and a final report will be created based on these artifacts.

The faculty participating in the pilot are given support in transitioning to this new approach to assessment through several different methods: there are five faculty members (an assessment fellow and four assessment coaches) who have been given course release time to assist participants one-on-one, there are written materials and videos provided in an Assessment Academy Brightspace shell, and there are monthly assessment workshops, all coordinated by the CTL and assessment fellow and coaches.

- *From last year's report: Programs identified through the new automated form that have not been submitting assessment reports are now in a position to do so.*

Most of the programs that were identified as non-reporters last year were encouraged to join the Assessment Academy pilot, where they would be given structured support in developing assessment activities. This approach has had a noticeable impact on participation rates. The number of programs with no documentation of assessment activity has dropped from 56 last year to 36 this year. Those 36 programs include 13 that were expected to submit a 2020-2021 report (their challenges are described later in this report) and 23 that are participating in the Assessment Academy pilot but have not yet submitted any artifacts of that work. SAAC and Assessment Academy personnel are actively working to ensure that all 36 programs complete assessment activities this year and expect close to 100% participation next year.

- *From last year's report: The Office of Data Strategy will continue to refine the automated assessment reporting tool. Bugs that were identified will be fixed, and the course outcomes data supplied will be supplemented with additional measures faculty have requested.*

The automated excel form used last year was replaced this year by a web app created by ITS. The new platform solved the problems people encountered last year with platform incompatibility and received positive comments from users. For example, one Associate Dean said, "I wanted to express my gratitude for all the work you have done to get the assessment reporting form/tool where it is today. It's a vast improvement, and it answers many requests we heard from faculty throughout the years." A program director from another school said, "That was literally the easiest report EVER! Wow and thank you!"

- *From last year's report: CNM has adopted a new Learning Management System, Brightspace, which has the potential to automate assessment data collection from courses. This automation is being explored in Spring 2021, with hopes for implementation in some classes in Fall 2021.*

This automation has been designed through a collaboration between the Distance Learning office, ODS, and the Assessment Academy pilot. It was piloted by a few of the departments in the Assessment Academy during Fall 2021 and will be used by more pilot programs in Spring 2021.

Highlights from 2020-2021 Assessment Reporting

Overall participation in assessment activities at CNM is excellent: 147, or 91%, of the 161 programs expected to submit SAAC reports did so, contained in 144 reports. In addition, 66, or 77%, of the 88 programs participating in the Assessment Academy pilot have actively reported progress. The non-reporting programs fall into four categories:

- There were 8 programs (7 in the School of Applied Technologies (AT) and 1 in the School of Communications, Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS)) that did not submit reports and have no full-time faculty in the departments who could lead the assessment process. *SAAC recommends offering extra compensation to part-time faculty in these departments to begin leading assessment activities now so that next year's report can be completed.*
- There were 5 programs (2 in AT and 3 in CHSS) that did not submit reports for unknown reasons.
- There were 12 programs in AT that are offered by departments participating in the Assessment Academy pilot but have not yet been included in reporting of pilot activities. *These programs are expected to be brought into the process next year, once those departments have developed initial assessment structures.*

- There were 11 programs in CHSS that joined the Assessment Academy pilot late, and are now working to catch up with that assessment process. *These programs are expected to be conducting assessment soon, with assessment activities on track by next year.*

The 146 SAAC assessment reports that were submitted documented the thoughtful work an engaged faculty:

- The pandemic is still affecting many programs' planning. Most (86 of the 146, or 59%) of the submitted reports reference the pandemic or online learning in their program summaries or analyses.
- Almost all programs are analyzing data directly related to their learning outcomes: 80%, or 116, of the programs reported such detailed data.
- A large majority, 72%, of the programs are planning programmatic improvements in the upcoming year. Those changes include: 20 programs planning additional faculty development, 26 planning curricular revision, 34 planning course content revision, 41 planning change in teaching approach, 30 planning assignment revisions, and 41 planning changes in assessment.
- These programmatic changes were motivated by many factors, including developments in the industry, changes in accreditation requirements, anecdotal observations from instructors, and informal feedback from students, as well as the data used in the assessment process. Only 33 of the programs described the relationship between the data reviewed as part of the assessment process and the changes they planned for the upcoming year. The structure of the Assessment Academy pilot is designed to increase this number.

Applied Technologies summary:

- With 16 programs submitting 15 assessment reports, and 20 more programs actively participating in the Assessment Academy, 76% of AT programs were active in assessment this year, though we only have documentation from 52% of them, which is similar to the reporting rate seen last year. Almost all of the programs not reporting either have no full-time faculty to manage the assessment process or are expected to begin assessing next year as part of the assessment academy.
- The 15 submitted reports included 11 (73%) with planned changes, all of which were substantive (not just planning changes to the assessment process). Over 1/3 of those changes (4 of 11) were tied to specific data as opposed to outside influences or anecdotal information.
- Over half (11) of the AT reports mention the impact of the pandemic on their programs, especially on enrollment and graduation numbers.

Business and Information Technology summary:

- BIT had 100% participation in assessment, and the highest number of assessment reports completed, with 57 reports submitted and 2 additional programs in the Assessment Academy.
- The 57 submitted reports included 48 (84%) with planned changes, almost all of which (45) were about substantive changes, rather than only changes to the assessment process. About 1/3 (33%) of the changes planned were tied to specific data; the others were explained by accreditation changes, influences of changing industry standards or course textbooks, or anecdotal information from faculty or students.
- Only 36% of reports, the smallest percentage of any school, mention the impact of the pandemic or online shift on their programs. Many of these programs describe the challenge students face in online instruction of difficult material. Others cite the success their programs have seen despite the challenges related to the pandemic.

Communication, Humanities and Social Sciences summary:

- With 21 reports submitted and 42 programs in the Assessment Academy, CHSS improved reporting from 40% last year to 76% this year. Most (12) of the 16 programs not reporting were late additions to the Assessment Academy and are expected to begin assessing next year.
- The 21 submitted reports included 19 (90%) with planned changes, but all but one of these were focused entirely on the assessment process rather than programmatic improvement. The one program planning a change in teaching method was also the only program (5%) that tied the planned changes to specific motivating data.
- Program summaries most commonly mentioned the move to online learning (successes and challenges) and curricular changes.

Health, Wellness and Public Safety summary:

- HWPS had 100% participation in assessment, with 30 reports submitted and 10 programs in the Assessment Academy.
- The 30 submitted reports included 21 (70%) with planned changes, almost all of which (19) were about substantive changes, rather than only changes to the assessment process. HWPS is the most data-centered school, with 67% of changes tied to specific motivating data.
- About 2/3 (67%) of the reports mention the impact of the pandemic or online shift on their programs. In addition to the concerns cited by other schools, the HWPS programs described challenges with clinical placements impacting graduation rates.

Math, Science and Engineering summary:

- MSE had 100% participation in assessment, with 21 reports submitted and 2 programs in the Assessment Academy.

- MSE had the lowest rate (57%) of reports describing planned changes. The 21 submitted reports included 12 (57%) with planned changes, and only 58% of those were about substantive changes, rather than only changes to the assessment process. About 1/3 (33%) of the changes were linked to specific data.
- About ¾ (76%) of the MSE reports mention the impact of the pandemic or online shift on their programs, primarily discussing the successes and challenges of moving content to the online environment.

- School of Adult and General Education

All 7 assessing programs in SAGE are participating in the Assessment Academy pilot and so have did not submit reports for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The Year Ahead

In the coming year, we expect to continue to improve the assessment process at CNM. In particular:

- We will continue to improve the automated assessment reporting form. SAAC representatives will gather feedback from assessment reporters for the ITS programmers who created the application. This feedback will help the continued development of the current form and will also inform the design of a similar form that will be created for the new assessment process developed in the Assessment Academy.
- We hope to expand the availability of automated data collection through Brightspace to all departments beginning in Fall 2022.
- We will continue to work with departments who have struggled to complete the assessment process in hopes of increasing participation to 100%.
- We will complete the first two-year cycle of the Assessment Academy structure and prepare for its adoption college-wide. This work will include more professional development opportunities for faculty related to assessment and course improvement approaches, the creation of a new web application to facilitate the Assessment Academy activities and supportive materials, and the evaluation of the different aspects of the pilot.

