

NORCO COLLEGE  
ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT  
2019-2020

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## INTRODUCTION

Norco College engages in continuous outcome improvement by systematically assessing student learning outcomes (SLOs), program learning outcomes (PLOs), and service area outcomes (SAOs). Assessment is tracked along a six-year cycle, with every learning outcome fully assessed at least once within the cycle. Assessment results are tracked, stored, and shared using the Nuventive Improve platform.

This document summarizes assessment activities at Norco College for the 2019-2020 academic year. The report is produced annually each fall and posted publicly at the Norco Assessment Committee (NAC) website: <https://www.norcocollege.edu/committees/assess/Pages/documents.aspx>. Questions about the report or the information it contains can be sent to Laura Adams, Faculty Assessment Coordinator or Greg Aycock, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness.

## INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

The 2019-2020 academic year was institutionally and historically unusual. On an institutional level, Norco College concluded our first iteration of the 6-year cycle of assessment in Fall 2019. A major emphasis of the Fall 2019 semester was working through the assessment backlog that occurred when we switched assessment criteria mid-cycle, from assessing at least one SLO per course every three years to assessing every SLO in every course every three years. The College also prepared for an ACCJC accreditation site visit and successfully reaffirmed our accreditation status in Spring 2020. Finally, Norco College had to quickly shift gears when the COVID-19 global pandemic reached the United States. All courses were switched to an emergency remote format, with significant implications for instruction and assessment. These events are described in more detail below.

## 2019-20 TRENDS IMPACTING LEARNING OUTCOME ASSESSMENT

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### CLOSING OUT THE 2014-2019 CYCLE OF LEARNING OUTCOME ASSESSMENT

Fall 2019 was the final semester in our six-year cycle of assessment. The six-year cycle has a goal of ensuring that 100% of learning outcomes are fully assessed. The primary goal of Fall 2019 was meeting that 100% goal.

- 8/21/2019 Assessment & Accreditation Flex Session
- 8/21/2019 Assessment Workshop for PLO Assessment
- 9/6/2019 SLO Drop-in Workshop
- 10/4/2019 First Friday Assessment Workshop for New Faculty
- 10/11/2019 PLO Assessment Boot Camp
- 10/25/2019 SLO Drop-in Workshop
- 12/11/2019 Assessment Drop-in Workshop
- 64 hours of availability for one-one appointments with Research Assessment Manager Caitlin Welch or Faculty Assessment Coordinator, Laura Adams.

In addition to the increased accessibility and availability of SLO assessment workshops, office hours, and training sessions, the push toward the 100% goal highlighted the need to accurately track and report learning outcome assessments. Like most institutions of higher education, Norco College has been working to address issues with fully integrating our curriculum, assessment, learning management systems and other key databases. While full integration will take considerable time, energy, and resources to accomplish, we focused heavily on making sure our courses, programs, and learning outcomes in Nuventive Improve matched the information in our approved course and program outlines of record stored in CurricuUNET META.

Other improvements occurred within the Nuventive Improve platform. Due to a change in our contract with Nuventive, we were able to make use of a managed services team, which helped us address a few ongoing issues with the Improve platform. Perhaps most significantly, the managed services team created a set of dashboards that documented the college's progress on learning outcome assessment for both courses and programs over the six-year assessment cycle (SPR 2014 – FAL 2020). The dashboards are generated through PowerBI, update in real time, and are publicly posted on the [website of the Assessment Committee](#). The dashboards made it much easier for us to accurately track our progress toward the 100% goal and allowed administrators, faculty, and classified professionals to do the same. It became a common practice to open the dashboards at committee meetings to check our progress, which helped everyone stay focused on and committed to the goal.

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## ACCREDITATION VISIT

In the Spring 2020 semester, our attention turned to the upcoming ACCJC peer review team site visit, which occurred March 2-4, 2020. By January 2020, we had spent [nearly two years](#) planning for the site visit. The work over that period is reflected in the [Norco College Institutional Self-Evaluation Report \(ISER\) 2020](#).

During the Fall 2019 semester, many of the Norco Assessment Committee meetings dedicated time to reviewing sections of the ISER that contained information about assessment. Committee members were invited to clarify, revise, and provide examples to enrich the text of the ISER, which can be seen in the [committee meeting minutes](#) from that semester. In particular, the committee reviewed the following portions of the ISER:

- Standard IB (Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness),
- Standard 1.C.3 (Institutional Integrity),
- Standard IIA (Instructional Programs- sections that directly address learning assessment),
- Standard IIC (Student Support Services - sections related to assessment of student learning outcomes and service area outcomes in student services), and
- Standard III.A.2 (Human Resources – sections that address assessment as a faculty responsibility).

During the site visit, members of the peer review team attended a meeting of the Norco Assessment Committee and held smaller sessions to discuss the assessment process with committee representatives. The peer review team documented their findings in the [Peer Review Team Report](#) and Norco College received a [reaffirmation of accreditation for seven years from the ACCJC](#). Assessment, broadly defined but including SLO assessment, was mentioned in two of the College Commendations from the commission.

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## ASSESSMENT CYCLE RESET

As we ended our first six-year cycle of assessment in Fall 2019 and prepared to begin a new cycle in Spring 2020, the Norco Assessment Committee reflected on what had worked well versus what could be improved in our process. One issue that was discussed was the lack of alignment with the program review cycle. Program Review at Norco College follows a six-year cycle that tracks along academic years, with Program Reviews due in the spring semester of every third year. The six-year assessment cycle followed calendar years and did not have start and end dates that reflected what needed to be reported in Program Review.

To simplify the process and to strengthen the important connection between assessment and program review, NAC voted to pause the onset of the next assessment cycle. The next program reviews are due Spring 2021. As a result, the next six-year cycle of assessment will begin the following semester, Fall 2021, and will end Spring 2027. We hoped that the subsequent program reviews could be used as an opportunity for programs to check in on the assessment progress at the half-way point and the conclusion of the six-year cycle.

Of course, assessment of SLOs and PLOs will be continuous and ongoing. A pause in the assessment cycle onset does not mean that assessment will be paused. Instead, NAC intends to use this gap year to continue working on the 100% goal. Although we came very close to meeting that goal at the end of the Fall 2019 semester, work still needed to be done. This is particularly true for courses that had not been recently offered, new courses, and courses that have newly revised learning outcomes.

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## COVID-19

On March 13, 2020, The Riverside County Public Health Department issued a [mandate](#) to close all community colleges, universities, preschools, and all K-12 schools in the county as a response to the outbreak of COVID-19 coronavirus. Only essential personnel were allowed on campus during the closure. Although the Health Department had hoped to reopen these institutions on 4/6/2020, these hopes were not realized. The pandemic continued to spread and as a result, all instruction moved to a [remote online format on March 23, 2020](#) and stayed in that format for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester.

The shift to the remote learning format was complicated and difficult for all members of the campus community. The district suspended classes for one week to allow faculty and students to prepare. Most of Norco College's classes were traditional, web-enhanced lecture courses that had to be converted to the remote format in just over a week. Many faculty members had not previously taught online and

required substantial training and support. Many students did not have access to the technology required for remote learning and required training and resources from the district to transition.

In this period of upheaval and uncertainty, our primary focus was on providing high-quality instruction in the remote format and fully supporting faculty and students. Very few results of SLO or PLO assessments were submitted during the Spring 2020 semester. Some NAC meetings and planned discussions of PLOs had to be canceled during the transition.

Although this was a challenging semester, the transition to fully remote instruction highlighted an area for growth. In the past, few faculty members were conducting SLO assessments or collecting assessment data within their Canvas course shells. A clear need for training in assessment within the Canvas LMS emerged. There is considerable potential for Canvas to streamline our assessment processes, particularly if learning outcomes can be imported (either from CurricUNET or Nuventive) into course shells automatically. The technology exists to allow those outcomes to be linked to rubrics and test questions in Canvas, with results automatically displaying in Nuventive for faculty analysis. These opportunities should be aggressively pursued in the future.

## COURSE LEVEL ASSESSMENT

As in the past, the list of courses that had never been previously assessed was continually monitored, updated, and used as a tracking and planning document to gauge our progress toward the 100% goal throughout the Fall 2021 semester.

### Summary of Courses Assessed Fall 2019 - Spring 2020

- # of Courses in the Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 academic year: 481
- # of Courses with Assessment Results between Fall 2019 – Spring 2020: 54
- % of Courses Assessed: 11.23%

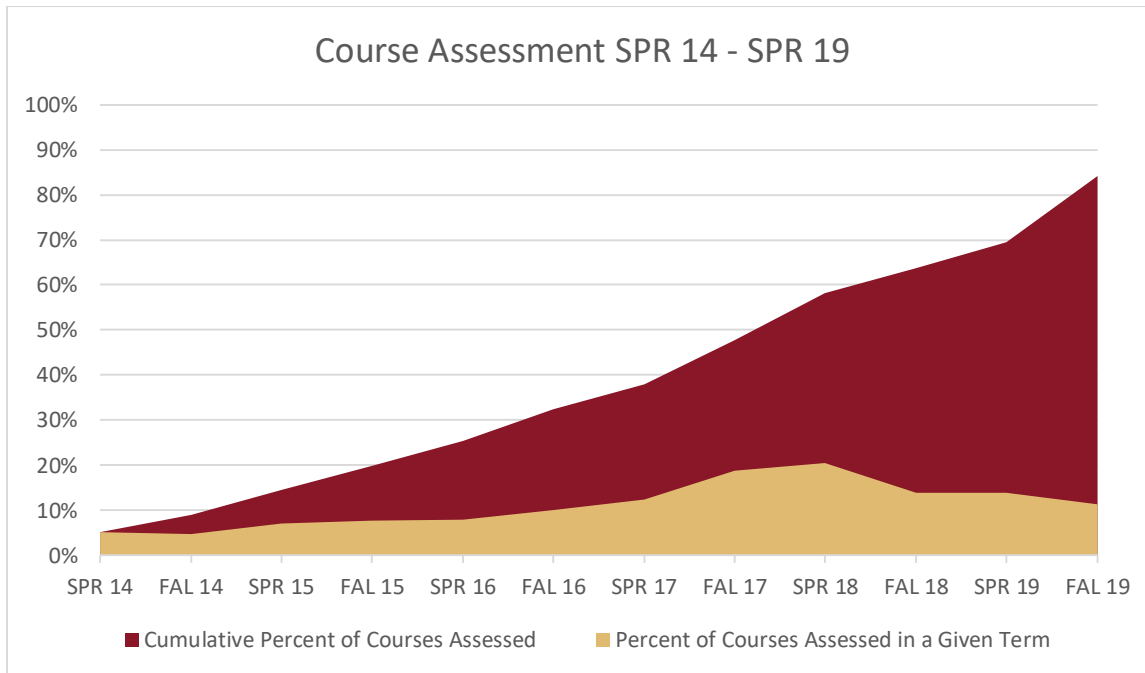
In contrast, 25.7% of courses were assessed in the previous academic year, Fall 2018 – Spring 2019. The reduction in percentage of courses assessed is due to multiple factors. Firstly, the sum and percentage of courses assessed in the 2019-2020 academic year do not accurately reflect the full sum of assessment work conducted by faculty in that timeframe. Our six-year cycle of assessment ended in Fall 2019. In preparation for the Spring 2020 ACCJC accreditation visit, many faculty chose to retroactively examine assessment data generated in previous semesters, particularly from Spring 2019. In fact, recalculating the percentage of courses assessed in 2018-2019 now results in 37.21% of courses assessed, more than 10% above the percentage reported in the 2018-2019 Annual Assessment Report. Reanalyzing the results of previous semesters would likely show similar increases as the backlog of assessment results were entered into Nuventive Improve.

The second factor was the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on instruction and assessment in the Spring 2020 semester. Few assessment results were entered in that term because faculty focused on maintaining instructional integrity in the remote environment. However, retroactive assessment may allow faculty to go back and examine artifacts created during Spring 2020. While keeping in mind that

the trauma of the pandemic and the remote format will confound interpretation of SLO data, it is still a useful tool to help Norco College understand the impact these disruptions had on achievement of SLOs.

When the data for the Fall 2019 semester are added into the total progress during the current 6-year assessment cycle, 85.6% of courses have completed assessment of at least one SLO (420 out of 604).

Progress over the 6-year cycle can be visualized in the following chart.



The rate of progress slowed in the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters, but the overall cumulative percent of courses assessed continued to increase because of retroactive assessments entered during the Fall 2019 semester. The majority of unassessed SLOs and courses fall into a few categories, including courses that were not offered within the six-year cycle, courses that are in the process of being removed, SLOs that were newly revised, or new courses yet to be offered at Norco College. As previously discussed in the Trends section above, these courses and SLOs will be a major focus of our gap year before the next six-year cycle of assessments begins in Fall 2022.

## PROGRAM LEVEL ASSESSMENT

The 100% assessment goal also led us to continue monitoring and improving program level assessment.

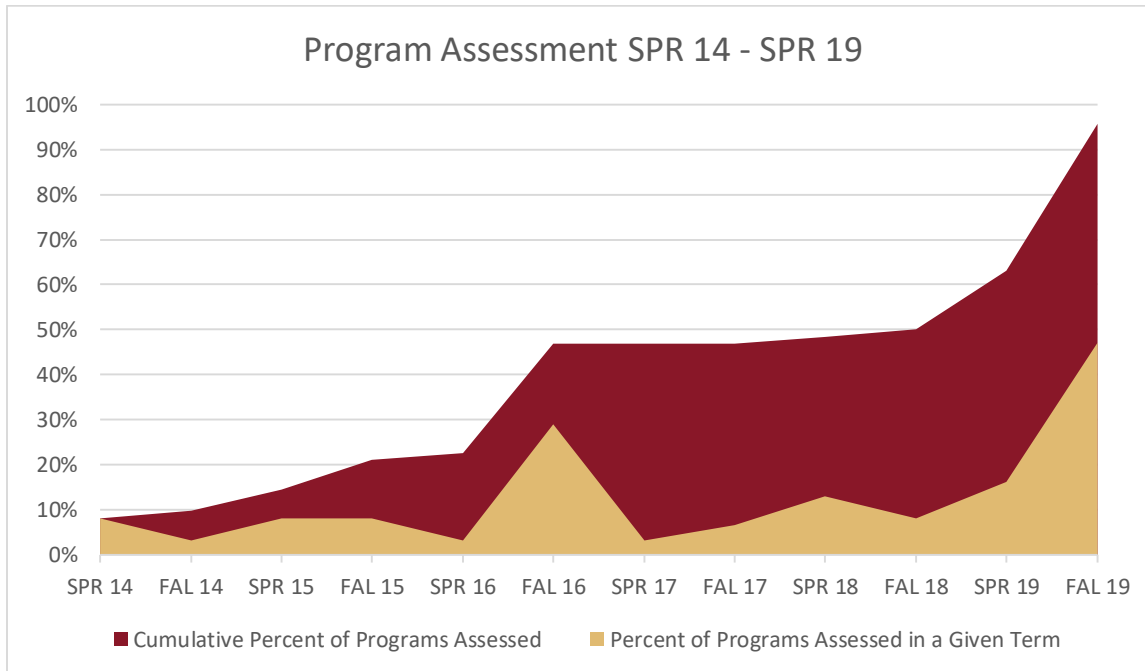
### Summary of Programs Assessed Fall 2019-Spring 2020

- # of Programs in the Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 academic year: 51
- # of Programs with Assessment Results between Fall 2019 – Spring 2020: 24
- % of Programs Assessed: 47.1%

In contrast, 19.35% of courses were assessed in the previous academic year, Fall 2018 – Spring 2019.

When the data for the Fall 2019 semester are added into the total progress during the current 6-year assessment cycle, 90.2% of programs have completed assessment of at least one PLO (46 out of 51 programs). The programs that did not complete assessment of at least one PLO during the six-year cycle are new programs that received curriculum approval in the final semesters of the assessment cycle. When those courses are removed from the calculations, 100% of programs show evidence of continual engagement in the cycle of assessment.

Progress over the 6-year cycle can be visualized in the following chart.



The rate of PLO assessment conducted, and the amount of retroactive PLO assessment added to Nuventive Improve, in the Fall 2019 semester are remarkable. There are several factors that contributed to this success, including targeted outreach efforts, workshops, boot camps, and office hours described previously. In addition, NAC developed a streamlined process for linking SLO results to PLO results and using an aggregate of linked SLO assessments meeting benchmarks as a method of PLO assessment. This method was intuitive, streamlined, simple, and reduced resistance to completing PLO assessment. Going forward, this effective method of PLO assessment could become part of the Norco College culture of assessment and would be a meaningful addition to the program review process.

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## ASSOCIATE DEGREES FOR TRANSFER

### Summary of ADT Programs Assessed Fall 2019 – Spring 2020

- # of ADT Programs in the Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 academic year: 23
- # of ADT Programs with Assessment Results between Fall 2019 – Spring 2020: 12
- % of ADT Programs: 52.2%



When the data for the 2018-2019 academic year are added into the total progress during the current 6-year assessment cycle, 82.6% of ADT programs have completed assessment of at least one PLO (19 out of 23). As mentioned above the four unassessed programs were newly approved in curriculum in the final stages of the six-year cycle of assessment.

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## CTE PROGRAMS & CERTIFICATES

### Summary of CTE Programs & Certificates Assessed Fall 2019 – Spring 2020

- # of CTE Programs & Certificates in the Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 academic year: 28
- # of CTE Programs & Certificates with Assessment Results between Fall 2019 – Spring 2020: 12
- % of CTE Programs & Certificates Programs: 42.9%

When the data for the Fall 2019 semester are added into the total progress during the current 6-year assessment cycle, 100% of CTE programs have completed assessment of at least one PLO (28 out of 28).

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## AREA OF EMPHASIS DEGREES

### Summary of AOE Programs Assessed Fall 2019 – Spring 2020

- # of AOE Programs in the Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 academic year: 6
- # of AOE Programs with Assessment Results between Fall 2019 – Spring 2020: 6
- % of AOE Programs: 100%

In Fall 2019, the most ambitious assessment project to date was undertaken for AOE degrees. Since the cycle of assessment now entails assessing every SLO and PLO it was determined that the remainder of the AOE PLOs would need to be assessed. The process for AOE PLO assessment entails using Nuventive assessment software to assign specific sections in a course to specific AOE PLOs. Some of the AOE are mapped to SLOs in courses, but to ensure that the courses that were selected for the AOE assessment were accurate, department chairs were asked to verify the alignment. A summary of all AOE assessment conducted during Fall 2019 is in the table below.

AOE	Students	Sections	PLOs
SBS	1920	67	4
AIIS	845	30	5
CML	674	31	4
HUM	1491	40	4
KIN	407	20	2
MAT	185	7	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5522</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>21</b>

As indicated in the Total row, 5,522 student assessments in 195 sections were received in assessment of the remaining 21 PLOs for this closeout to the AOE Assessment. Initially, the plan was to conduct six separate discussion sessions for the PLOs by AOE with faculty during the Spring 2020. With the sudden migration to remote learning that occurred during March 2020, in addition to all the concurrent turmoil

surrounding COVID accommodations it was decided that these discussion sessions would be postponed until Fall 2020.

When the data for the Fall 2019 academic year are added into the total progress during the current 6-year assessment cycle, 100% of AOE programs have completed assessment of at least one PLO (7 out of 7). The Office of Institutional Effectiveness was instrumental in coordinating PLO assessments for all AOE programs.

## GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness facilitates data collection and discussion for general education learning outcomes (GELOs). All GELOs have been assessed in our current 6-year cycle of assessment. Because GELO assessment is up to date, no new data were collected for GELO assessment this academic year.

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## SUMMARY

The 2019-2020 academic year was bittersweet. We made our last push to complete our first six-year cycle of assignment, which ended in 2019. Our goal was to complete 100% assessment of all outcomes in all programs and all courses. Although we did not reach that 100% goal, there is much to celebrate. Far more assessment of learning outcomes in both courses and programs occurred during the last two academic years than has perhaps ever occurred at Norco College. In Fall 2019, student learning outcomes were a point of discussion in nearly every meeting occurring on campus. Faculty, classified professionals and administration combined forces and resources to create a new culture of assessment at Norco College. Having a unifying 100% goal made these gains possible and this work contributed to the 2020 Reaffirmation of Accreditation for Norco College.

In Spring 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic made most areas of our professional lives more complicated, and assessment was no exception to that. While some course SLO assessment results have been input into the system, the Norco Assessment Committee should work with faculty to plan retroactive assessment based on data collected during Spring 2020. Despite the disruption, assessment related data exist and can be captured. The move to remote instruction emphasized the potential of the Canvas LMS to further streamline SLO assessment procedures in all course modalities. This potential is not currently realized but should be explored and developed going forward. In particular, course SLO assessment could be improved if current SLOs were pre-loaded into Canvas shells, if faculty were trained in the use of the outcomes feature in Canvas, and if Canvas outcomes data could be imported into Nuventive Improve.