

Norco College Assessment Report: 2013-14

Introduction

This report summarizes Norco College activities in assessing learning and service outcomes for the period September 2013 through September 2014. The report, produced annually each fall, presupposes some familiarity on the part of the reader with earlier college assessment reports, which can be found at the Norco Assessment committee (NAC) website: <http://www.norcollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>. Questions about the report and information included in it may be directed to either Greg Aycock, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness; Sarah Burnett, Norco College Assessment Coordinator beginning July 1, 2014; or Arend Flick, Norco Assessment Coordinator from July 2010 to July 2014.

Norco College Outcomes Assessment: Major 2013-14 Accomplishments:

- Continued progress in assessment work by instructional disciplines, as reported in annual program reviews and evaluated by members of the assessment committee. Of the 35¹ disciplines reporting, 21 are at proficiency or above in assessment work, with another 10 at development level. Assessment loops have been completed in courses by most disciplines.
- A significant increase in the number of course assessment reports on file (253 as of September 12, 2014, as compared with 130 on the same date a year earlier) detailing authentic course assessment projects and containing actionable assessment data. (Instructional discipline work in assessment in the past year is summarized in a table in Appendix C of this report.)
- Increasing number of loop-closing assessment projects in which data have been used for improvement.
- Program-level assessment reports in all seven areas of emphasis (AOE) degrees, 18 of the 31 CTE programs of 18 or more units, and several of the new ADT degrees, including English and Early Childhood Studies. A follow-up assessment project for the AOE in Humanities, Philosophy, and the Arts was undertaken in spring 2014 with a report expected in late fall.
- A four-year plan to assess each of the General Education learning outcomes was implemented, beginning with an assessment of the college's Global Awareness and Personal Self-Development learning outcome. All program-level assessment employs forms of direct, authentic assessment.

¹ The total number of reporting disciplines fluctuates from year to year for various reasons. In 2013-14, for example, Health Sciences and Microbiology were incorporated into Biology. Humanities offers so few courses that none were scheduled to be assessed this past year.

- Revision of an MOU between RCCD and the CTA that now enables part-time faculty to receive \$50 for attending an assessment workshop (approximately 30 did this past year) and then another \$50 whenever they complete and submit a course assessment report.
- Student Services streamlined and clarified the peer review process and continued to offer training opportunities for staff members.
- An accreditation visit in March 2014 in which the college was re-accredited without sanction (the college did receive one recommendation regarding its work in outcomes assessment, however).

Course-Level Assessment

Norco College has slightly over 600 active courses in its catalog, of which 253 are being taught in fall semester, 2014. Around 150 – 200 courses could be said to be regularly taught. As September 12, 2014, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness had 253 assessment reports on file for 221 different courses, all submitted between fall 2011 and spring 2014. Thirty-two reports were follow-ups (some of the 2011 and 2012 reports closed the loop on earlier assessment projects for which reports were not filed). The college expects that every active course be assessed at least once every four years.

During the period between fall 2013 and summer 2014, 101 reports were submitted (68 for courses taught in fall 2013; 33 for courses taught in spring 2014. Many of these reports detail efforts on the part of faculty to close the assessment loop and use assessment data for improvement. Examples include:

- **HIS-6 (Political and Social History of the United States to 1877):** An assessment project in fall 2013 showed that although students demonstrated proficiency in identifying a historical source and understanding the nature of historical processes, they had difficulty with describing significant historical information accurately (SLO 1) and describing the origin and influence of a political, economic, and social movement (SLO 4). To address the deficiencies, the instructor said that she *“had face to face discussions and phone conversations with associate faculty members about our assessment process and results, and we discussed ways to improve. Based on these conversations, we plan to add a map to improve SLO1, and emphasize multiple cause and effect in lectures and discussions to improve SLO4.”*
- **KIN-36 (Wellness and Lifestyle Choices):** The instructor of this class focused on an SLO involving students' ability to “compare the connection between food choices and the opportunity for optimal health and wellness.” Employing a primary trait analysis technique, she wanted specifically to see if students demonstrated understanding of the “energy balance equation as it

relates to weight change.” In an assigned project, students were able to demonstrate competency with parts of this learning objective, but the instructor discovered that they had significant difficulty calculating weight change per week. She determined that the problem lay in student arithmetical skills, and indicated that in future semesters she would add a homework assignment related to this question. She adds, *“The homework could then be discussed and reviewed in a subsequent class period. An additional idea would be that of posting sample results and the mathematical process in a ‘help section’ on my faculty webpage.”*

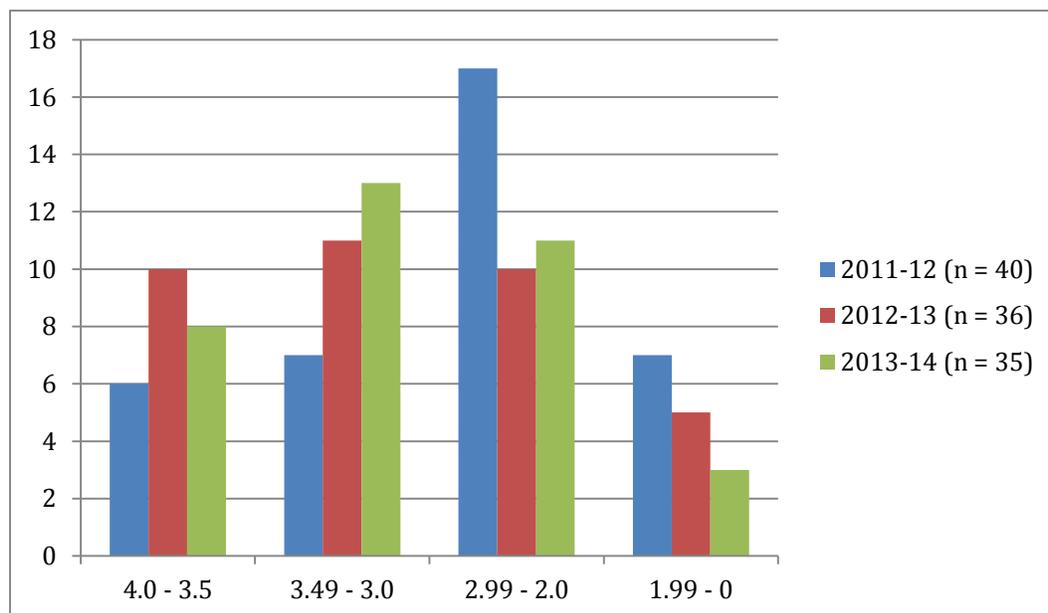
- **COM-1 (Public Speaking):** In a follow-up assessment project, the faculty who taught COM-1 in fall 2013 assessed the second SLO for the course, “Effectively integrate credible evidence and sound reasoning in speech preparation and presentation.” The faculty agreed on a common set of questions mapping to this SLO to embed in a multiple choice exam. Their earlier assessment project had led them to decide to devote more class time to such topics as reasoning, argument, and fallacies. Results for the follow-up assessment were mixed. They note, *“It is evident, that we need to re-examine our approach with how we teach our students about the parts of an argument. There must be more focus on the Toulmin model (e.g., claim, warrant, evidence). Our discipline will research and share different teaching tools/methods of the Toulmin Model.”* However, the scores for sound reasoning significantly improved, due in part to the fact that *“we had better refined our lecture and implemented some successful tactics.”* Improvement, they believe, was also caused by better-worded exam questions.

Full reports on these and many other course assessment projects can be found in the annual program review documents at the program review website: <http://norcollege.edu/about/president/strategic-planning/programreview/Pages/Annual-Instructional-Program-Review.aspx>. For its course assessment guidelines, Norco College emphasizes the need for direct assessment methods that produce actionable data leading to improvement. It also stresses the value of collaboration and dialogue whenever possible. Most of the reports on file exemplify these practices.

A good measure of the college’s commitment to course-level assessment can be found in the scores given to instructional units (academic disciplines) for their work in outcomes assessment as reported in their annual program reviews (APRs). The APRs are due in draft on March 15 each year and in revised form on May 15. Members of the Norco Assessment Committee read each of the assessment sections (which include or reference assessment reports submitted during the previous year), both in draft and in final form, and evaluate

them using an analytic rubric (see Appendix D) for such criteria as assessment method, dialogue, use of data to improve, planning, etc. The following table provides comparative data on discipline assessment scores for the past three years:

Assessment Scores by Discipline, 2012-2014



The college considers any discipline at the 3.0 level or above as doing exemplary work for the year in outcomes assessment, with 2.99 – 2.50 as “approaching exemplary.” By this measure, 21 of Norco College’s 35 disciplines were exemplary, compared to 13 (of 40 disciplines) as recently 2012. The average score for disciplines in 2011-12 was 2.51; the average score for disciplines in 2012-13 was 2.87; the average score disciplines in 2013-14 was 2.95. Only three disciplines scored lower than 2.0 in 2014, compared to seven in 2012.

Nevertheless, the college did not reach its goal of having at least 70% of its disciplines at proficiency level for the 2013-14 academic year (only 60% were, though five were within half a point of that benchmark). The disciplines that fell short did so for various reasons. Several (Business, Library) have been proficient in the past but experienced what can be regarded as an anomalous year from which they can be expected to rebound in 2015. Some others (Music, Commercial Music, Psychology) were lacking full-time instructors to coordinate assessment activities or had newly appointed full-time instructors who did not yet have time to familiarize themselves with assessment protocols; these disciplines, too, should do better next year. At least a few disciplines (Mathematics, Journalism) doubled their scores from the previous year while still falling short of proficiency; they too may be expected to continue to improve. The college is left, then, with really only a handful of disciplines (Anatomy, Geography, Physics/Physical Sciences, Reading, Sociology, and Theater) for which assessment remains a significant problem, for reasons that do not need

to be spelled out in this report. Every college has some such disciplines and departments. A great deal of excellent teaching no doubt goes on in most of them. At Norco, we may hope that with the transition to a new assessment coordinator, disciplines which have not been able or willing to engage meaningfully in assessment activities heretofore will be persuaded to begin to do so.

Program-level Assessment

The total number of degrees and certificates granted by Norco College in 2014 was 1124, 805 degrees and 319 certificates. (Of these 319 certificates, 160 were for programs requiring fewer than 18 units.) The following tables list the programs from which 10 or more students graduated with degrees or certificates in at least one of the past two years:

Norco College Degrees Awarded by Major (at least 10 graduates in one of the last two years)

Major	Number of Graduates (2013)	Number of Graduates (2014)
Social and Behavioral Sciences (AOE)	238	263
Math and Science (AOE)	137	143
Humanities, Philosophy, and the Arts (AOE)	84	114
Communication, Media, Language (AOE)	38	51
Administration and Info Systems (AOE)	68	45
Kinesiology, Health, and Wellness (AOE)	12	25
CSU—Gen Ed	24	25
Fine /Applied Arts (AOE)	10	18
Business Administration- Accounting	10	12

Sociology (ADT)	12	11
IGETC	5	10
Early Childhood Education	12 (plus 1 ADT)	5 (plus 6 ADT)

Norco College Certificates (>18 units, at least 10 graduates in one of the last two years))

Major	Number of graduates (2013)	Number of graduates (2014)
Business Administration-Real Estate Sales	40	19
Drafting	7	14
Construction	13	12 (plus 4 A.S.)
Accounting	9 (plus 10 A.S.)	11 (plus 12 A.S.)
Early Childhood Ed. Cert.	15	9
Real Estate	1 (plus 1 A.S.)	9 (plus 7 A.S.)
Logistics	6 (plus 3 A.S.)	9 (plus 8 A.S.)
General Business	6 (plus 4 A.S.)	8 (plus 7 A.S.)
Architectural Graphics	11	3 (plus 6 A.S.)

Norco College students who want an A.A. or A.S. degree continue to choose one of the AOE majors in greater numbers than they do an ADT major (six of which have now been approved by the college, with an additional four in development), though that should eventually change. Certificate-seeking students graduated from one of 39 programs, though as the chart above suggests, only eight of them graduated more than 10 students.

AOE Assessment

A significant majority of Norco College students who graduate with A.A. or A.S. degrees do so in one of the seven interdisciplinary areas of emphasis that were created by the college five years ago. In 2014, of the 805 students who received

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence:
<http://www.norcollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

such degrees, 659 (nearly 82%) did so in one of the AOE's. Last year's comprehensive assessment report provided a detailed summary of a project undertaken in 2012-13 to assess the seven AOE's. A report on that project was completed in fall 2013 and may be found at

<http://norcollege.edu/about/president/Accreditation/Documents/Evidence2014/Area%20of%20Emphasis%20Assessment%20Report%202013.pdf>.

The project has led to a number of useful discoveries that should help to improve learning in these programs. Among the highlights,

- In five of the seven AOE's, over 80% of the student work assessed demonstrated competency in the program learning outcome being evaluated. In Kinesiology, Health, and Wellness, just under 80% (79.4%) of the students demonstrated PLO competency. (Work by over 2000 students was evaluated from these six AOE's.) While benchmarks were achieved in six of the seven AOE's, student in the Humanities, Philosophy, and Arts AOE demonstrated competency at a rate of only 55.1%. The faculty teaching in this program decided to do a follow-up study in spring 14 (report completed in late fall 2014), employing a more rigorous assessment methodology, to determine the validity of these earlier findings.
- With many of the AOE's, there was a statistically significant correlation between the number of units a student had completed in the AOE and his or her success in achieving the outcome. With most of the AOE's, there was at least some correlation between units completed and assessment score. In a few cases (e.g., the Humanities, Philosophy, and Arts AOE and the Mathematics and Sciences AOE), students who had completed 18 or more units in the program did not do as well as students who had completed 9 – 17 units, but sample size issues, among others, may have led to this anomaly.
- In scrutinizing the programs themselves and the alignment of course SLOs to PLOs, faculty leaders noted a number of problems and made suggestions about the removal or addition of courses to the program, revision of the PLOs themselves, etc.
- Demographic analysis suggested that African-American and Hispanic students slightly underperformed against average scores overall. But African-American students exceeded the average in four of the seven AOE's; Hispanic students exceeded the average in one (Administration and Information Systems).

The college assessment committee (NAC) plans to review the schedule for AOE assessment and continue with additional follow-up projects beginning in spring 2015.

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence:
<http://www.norcollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

ADT Assessment

As of September, 2014, the college has approved Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT) degrees in 12 programs, with several more in development. Curriculum mapping is completed as part of the program approval process. Pilot ADT assessment projects were undertaken by English and Early Childhood Studies in spring 2014.

The English ADT assessment project looked at work by students who self-identified as English majors (or probable English majors) in the two literature courses offered at the college in spring 2014: English 7 (British Literature Survey II) and English 30 (Children's Literature). All of these students demonstrated competency in written expression and critical thinking about literature, though writing skills were markedly superior to critical thinking skills. Recommendations were made on the basis of the study to modify the program itself by adding some classes and deleting others. Prospective English majors also expressed a desire for a faculty member to act as a coordinator for the program.

The Early Childhood Education ADT assessment project demonstrated to faculty satisfaction that the program was preparing students to be successful in their internships and eventually as preschool teachers. The assessment data also suggested that one course needed to be made a prerequisite for another course and that a third course, EAR-28 needed to be reexamined, with SLOs perhaps revised and assignments reworked.

CTE Assessment

All of the Norco College CTE programs of 18 units or more have defined PLOs that appear in the college catalog, and all have completed curriculum maps aligning course SLOs with PLOs. Over half of the CTE programs have been assessed using direct methods, and each of the remaining programs will be assessed during the 2014-15 academic year. CTE faculty are using methods ranging from eportfolios to capstone courses to assess their programs. With CTE faculty input, the Norco Assessment Committee developed CTE program assessment guidelines and reporting template during the 2012-13 academic year. With CTE input, NAC will be developing a revised schedule during the coming year to ensure that each CTE program is assessed at least once every three years.

General Education Assessment

As part of the general education program it shares with its sister colleges in the Riverside Community College district, Norco College revised its GE outcomes in 2012. The district

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence:
<http://www.norcollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

academic senate taskforce that recommended these changes has also recommended changes in the program itself. The changes were initiated as a direct result of assessment projects done at both the district and college level between 2005 and 2012 that suggested that certain classes needed to be deleted and others added to the program to ensure all students would achieve its outcomes.

Norco College has assessed GE outcomes indirectly for the past six years, by means of learning gains surveys administered to college graduates. The results of those surveys through 2013 appear in last year's annual assessment report. The college has also assessed GE outcomes directly through course assessment of GE quasi-capstone classes, particularly English 1A. For a report detailing that effort, see <http://www.norcollege.edu/employees/faculty/Documents/OutcomesAssessment/English%201A%20assessment%20report%202012.pdf>.

The revised GE outcomes expect students who graduate from the program to leave it with competency in the following four areas: Critical Thinking, Information Competency & Technology Literacy, Communication, and Self-Development & Global Awareness. The Norco Assessment Committee decided to implement a four-year cycle of direct assessment of these outcomes beginning in fall 2013, starting with the Self-Development & Global Awareness outcome. (Information Competency & Technology Literacy has been selected for assessment in fall 2014.) A report on that assessment project may be found at NAC website. To summarize, the college asked instructors from six courses map to the Self-Development and/or Global Awareness GE outcome to assess late-term work by their students against a common rubric. Students were also surveyed on their perception of the extent to which they achieved these outcomes in these classes, and faculty were surveyed about their practices as teachers of self-development or global awareness.

Instructor scores correlated, for the most part, with number of units of GE the student had completed, thereby providing some evidence that the program as a whole contributes to student achievement of this outcome. A somewhat puzzling feature of these data (which were also present for many of the Area of Emphasis assessment data) in the diversity category is that students who completed more than 24 units in the GE program did less well (though not to a statistically significant extent) than students who had completed 12-24 units. Similarly, the great majority of students (85%) said in their survey responses that the course had helped them achieve the GE SLO; 78% said that their other coursework at the college had also contributed. Of the more than 1200 students surveyed, 36% were very confident their other coursework helped them achieve the GE SLO and another 42% were somewhat confident. These are good—but not entirely reassuring—numbers, suggesting perhaps the need for some modification of the GE program itself to ensure that all students take a course more explicitly labeled “global awareness” (and perhaps “self-development”).

Assessment in Student Services²

General Overview

Student Services approaches assessment and program review as a continuous, ongoing process. For eight years, or since 2006, Norco College actively engaged in a campus-based program review process in student services. Prior to 2006, the Norco campus participated in a district-wide student services program review process.

All 20 Student Services areas are required to complete annual program reviews. Student Services Program Reviews contain three sections: (1) Area Overview; (2) Assessing Outcomes; and (3) Needs Assessment. The *Area Overview* includes the area's mission, philosophy statement, summary, strengths, and students served. The *Assessing Outcomes* section includes: (1) a snapshot of the prior year's objectives and assessment plan along with a description of how the area used their outcome data for programmatic modifications (i.e. "Closing the Loop"); (2) the current year's objectives and assessment plan; and (3) a detailed description of the assessment plan findings, data analysis, and improvement recommendations. The *Needs Assessment* section includes current staffing levels, a 5-year staffing profile with projected staffing needs, improvement areas, and staffing and resource needs tables. As the documents are finalized, the program reviews are posted on the Student Services Program Review webpage.

This year, each student services area submitted assessment plan proposals that were then reviewed and ranked through a peer review and dialogue session held during a special Student Services Planning Council meeting. Before the end of fall, student services area assessment plans were finalized and many areas were already assessing outcomes. Based upon feedback from program leaders, we discontinued the practice of having various sections of the program review due for submission throughout spring. In mid-June, areas submitted their entire program review document. During the June 2014, Student Services Planning Council meeting, the service area leaders participated in another peer review session that included the use of a rubric and dialogue focusing on outcomes assessment only. After the peer review process, leaders were able to revised their program reviews and submit for administrative review. Each program review document was reviewed, the outcomes assessment ranked, and suggested modifications were provided. The area leaders were then given a final opportunity to finalize their entire program review document by the end of July in preparation for the summer Student Services Planning Council's prioritization process. In 2013-2014, we slightly modified the peer review rubric and expanded the definition of authentic assessment to include student success measures.

2013-2014 Student Services Outcomes Assessment Summary

² This section was written by Dr. Monica Green, Vice President, Student Services.

This outcomes assessment summary includes all of the 20 student services areas successfully completing the annual program review process. For 2013-2014, our service area goals were to have three assessments per area, of which at least two outcomes should demonstrate authentic assessment. Authentic assessment defined as directly examining performance and direct learning with the use of pre- and post-tests. Of the 20 student services areas, there were 77 outcomes measured this last year. All of the 20 Student Services areas (100%) achieved the goal of measuring at least three outcomes. Ninety percent (90%), or 18 of 20 service areas measured at least two authentic assessment outcomes. Nineteen of the 20 (95%) measured at least one authentic assessment outcome. Overall, among our 20 service areas, there were 10 general Service Area Outcomes (SAO's), 4 satisfaction surveys (SAO's), 43 SLO's using direct learning measurement, 6 SLO's using indirect learning measurements, 14 SLO's using student success measures (retention/persistence/ gpa/academic standing/etc.), and a total of 57 authentic outcome assessments. This represents an increase of 19 (38 to 57) or, a 50% increase, of authentic outcome assessments from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014. A table mapping the assessments by service area is available at the end of this report.

With the addition of the assessment outcome rubric, the student services department provides an overall estimation as to where we are with obtaining proficiency to sustainable continuous quality improvement for assessing outcomes. The areas for evaluation on the rubric included SLO/SAO method, use of data for programmatic modifications, and the use of data to close the assessment loop. The ranking of each evaluation area on a scale from Awareness (1) to Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement (4) generated peer review scores from 1.67 to 4.0, for an overall average of 3.49. Based upon the peer review rubric process, the student services department for 2013-2014 is between proficiency and sustainable continuous quality improvement. An administrative review and ranking through the same rubric process produced an average of 3.57, with individual areas scoring between 2.5 to 4.0. This year's average peer review score represents an increase of 0.02 (3.47 to 3.49) from last year. Similarly, the administrative review score represents an increase of 0.07 (3.5 to 3.57) from last year. While there is a nominal increase, it suggests a gradual movement from proficiency to sustainable continuous quality improvement within the Student Services Department.

Outcomes Assessment Discussion & Next Steps

In 2013-2014, two primary assessment objectives were to demonstrate advancement from proficiency to sustainable continuous quality improvement and, where appropriate, continue to incorporate authentic assessment into assessment practice. In this last year, student services moved positively towards sustainable continuous quality improvement and demonstrated authentic assessment in all 20 service areas accounting for a total of 57 authentic assessments within the Student Services Department.

In regard to achieving proficiency and/or sustainable continuous quality improvement in all areas of program review and student learning outcomes, student services continues to make substantial improvements every year. Based upon the newly developed peer review rubric, student services as a whole, appears to be between proficiency (3) and sustainable continuous quality improvement (4), with an average of 3.49 this year. Program review is part of an ongoing dialogue within student services staff meetings, department meetings, and council meetings. Student services approaches program review and outcomes assessment as a developmental process whereby every year improvements are made as we continually refine and improve our practices.

Outcomes assessment goals each year are established in the student services administrative program review and vetted in early fall through dialogue in the Student Services Planning Council. Assessment goals for 2014-2015 will continue to include authentic assessment for at least two outcomes. Our rubric will continue to be refined as it currently asks peer reviewers to subjectively determine whether outcomes are meaningful. This next year the assessment plan template will ask our area leaders to link outcomes to the college mission statement in an effort to objectify ranking the meaningfulness of an outcome.

The following is a breakdown of the 2013-2014 Outcomes Assessment Summary by service area:

Norco Student Services Mapping Outcomes to Goals 2014-2015

NSSV Department	SAO		SLO			Number of Outcomes	Authentic Assessment
	General	Satisfaction Survey	In-Direct	Direct	Student Success Measure		
Admissions & Records				4		4	4
CalWORKs				2	1	3	3
Career/Job Placement Center	1	1		2		4	2
Counseling	3		1	1		5	1
Disability Resource Center (DRC)		1		2	1	4	3
EOPS/CARE	1			2	2	5	4
Health Services				3		3	3
Outreach	3			2		5	2
Puente Program		1		1	3	5	4
Student Activities				3		3	3
Student Employment	1		2			3	0
Student Financial Services				3		3	3
Student Support Services (SSS)			1		3	4	3
Student Support Services/RISE				2	2	4	4
The Talented Tenth (T3p) Program			1	3	1	5	4
Transfer Center		1	1	2		4	2
Upward Bound - Centennial				3	1	4	4
Upward Bound - Corona				3		3	3
Upward Bound - Norte Vista	1			2		3	2
Veterans Services				3		3	3
TOTALS	10	4	6	43	14	77	57

Institutional Assessment³

Institutional assessment at Norco College is the systematic gathering of population or sample data which indicate outcomes for the entire institution. Institutional assessment can take many forms, from standardized assessments such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement to informal assessments like campus climate surveys. Regardless of form, these assessments are a barometer for institutional effectiveness and can be used to improve the institution.

One area of institutional assessment is the annual analysis of progress in achieving the strategic planning goals. In summer 2013, Norco College created a new strategic plan for 2013-2018 and increased the number of goals from five to seven. The seven new goals

³ This section was written by Dr. Greg Aycock, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness.

included 44 objectives, all of which required data collection and oversight. It quickly became apparent that this would not be a job relegated to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. So, measures were taken to distribute responsibility for goal attainment to the strategic planning committees. During 2013-14 most committees devoted time to creating an action plan for their assigned objectives. It was made clear that the committees were not solely responsible for attainment of these goals. Rather, they were responsible for coordinating with the responsible parties who would be engaging in activities that would impact goal attainment. Initial baseline data for 2012-13 were gathered for strategic planning goals and objectives where data was available. These baseline data can be found at: <http://www.norcocollege.edu/about/academic-affairs/Documents/SS-Research/STRATEGIC%20PLANNING%20GOALS-2013.pdf>. These data were presented at the Committee of the Whole and committees were tasked with completing action plans for their assigned objectives at that time. Committees were given time to review the objectives assigned to them and decide to either accept the assignment or make suggestions to change. The final product was that 17 committees took responsibility for the 44 objectives.

Another area of institutional assessment involved the equity plan for Norco College. This plan came to an end in 2013, but one final activity involved analyzing possible barriers to Hispanic and African-American students. Through two institutional assessments, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the campus climate survey, several barriers were assessed for these student populations. This analysis resulted in a report that can be found at: <http://www.norcocollege.edu/about/academic-affairs/Documents/SS-Research/Equity-Barriers%20Report%20Rev.pdf>. This study investigated three potential areas that could pose as barriers to student success: behavioral barriers, outside responsibilities, and institutional climate. In one item representing the behavioral barriers area, African-Americans had the highest percentage indicating “none” for “Number of reports written”. In an item on CCSSE representing the outside responsibilities area, African-American students reported the amount of time spent on care for dependents at almost double the rates of any other ethnic groups. In the institutional climate barrier, African-Americans indicated lower levels of agreement on feeling accepted by faculty on the campus climate survey. On a positive note, Hispanic students indicated positive perceptions on several items from the campus climate survey regarding acceptance, respect, and safety at Norco College.

The scoring of assessment sections on the annual program review (mentioned previously in this report) can also be considered institutional assessment for Norco College. This institutional assessment indicates that instructional programs at Norco College have achieved proficiency level by ACCJC standards. Over the past three years, Norco College instructional programs have demonstrated consistent institutional improvement in each area of assessment, possibly with the exception of Evidence of Dialogue. The table below

represents the mean scores for each of the institutional learning outcomes (rubric categories) from 2011-12 to 2013-14.

<i>Institutional Learning Outcome</i>	<i>2011-12</i>	<i>2012-13</i>	<i>2013-14</i>
<i>Method of Assessment</i>	2.49	3.22	3.34
<i>Use of Data</i>	2.46	2.82	2.97
<i>Evidence of Dialogue</i>	2.58	2.31	2.52
<i>Planning</i>	2.65	3.18	2.93
<i>Reporting</i>	2.36	2.85	2.97
<i>Overall Assessment</i>	2.51	2.89	2.95

A final area of institutional assessment is related to the preparation for the accreditation visit in March 2014. In reality, the entire self-evaluation report that was created for the visit could be considered a compilation of qualitative and quantitative institutional assessment data (please see:

<http://www.norcocollege.edu/about/president/Accreditation/Documents/Reports%20and%20Letters/Self%20Evaluation%202014.pdf>. However, the institution-set standards (ISS) represent a unique benchmark of performance for all colleges in the western region accredited by ACCJC. The ISS are the values or tipping points at which an institution considers itself in the danger zone for an institutional outcome. The ISS (including methodology) for Norco College can be found at:

<http://www.norcocollege.edu/about/academic-affairs/Documents/SS-Research/Institution%20Set%20Standards-2013.pdf>.

Administrative Unit Assessment⁴

Administrative units participate in cycles of ongoing assessment as reflected within the program review process. Historically, this process was centralized at the district; however, in 2010 it became a college-based process. Administrative units participating in the program review process include Academic Affairs, Business Services, and Student Services. Academic Affairs is comprised of the offices of Institutional Effectiveness, Instruction, Career Technical Education, College Grants and Support Programs, STEM, and Library and Learning Resources. Business Services is comprised of Business Services, College Police, Facilities, Maintenance, Custodial, and Grounds. The Student Services administrative

⁴ This section was written by Dr. Diane Dieckmeyer, Vice President, Academic Affairs

program review takes a more focused approach to the process since its 21 service areas participate in a comprehensive and robust Student Services program review in addition to the administrative program review.

With a focus on the authentic assessment of service area outcomes completed in a collaborative and reflective manner, the administrative unit program reviews reflect a process that mirrors that of faculty. Administrative program reviews include Major Functions, Goals and Objectives, a report of the previous year's assessment, a reflection on what has been learned via the assessment process, the current year's assessment plan, and resource requests.

Assessment plans completed in administrative units answer the following questions. What Service Area Outcome (SAO) will be assessed? What assessment methods do you plan to use? When Will the Assessment Be Conducted and Reviewed? What result, target, or value will represent success at achieving this outcome? How do you anticipate using the results from the assessment? Each assessment is also linked to the goals of the Educational Master Plan/ Strategic Plan.

In 2012-13, administrative unit program reviews were reviewed in a two-step process. First the program reviews were reviewed by the respective vice president of the unit who then gave feed back to the manager who was responsible for its submission. The vice presidents had individual dialogue with the managers as well as group meetings to discuss the assessment methods, the outcomes of the assessments, and the plans for closing the loop in the future. The second step in the review process was led by the president who divided all of the administrative program reviews randomly and assigned them to be read by the three vice presidents and himself. In a subsequent meeting the president led a discussion specifically related to the units' assessment plans (previous and current). Lastly, the vice presidents shared the feedback that resulted from the review to their respective managers.

Continuing in the tradition of the faculty annual program review process, in 2014-15 the administrative unit program reviews will be further integrated into the overall College process as the Program Review Committee begins reviewing and scoring them using a rubric developed by a team of administrators. Dialogue regarding assessment projects, goals and objectives, and resource needs related to the administrative program reviews will also continue to occur within each administrative unit, facilitated by the respective vice president of each unit.

The administrative unit program review process has become an increasingly meaningful aspect of the institution's overall planning processes. The quality of assessments completed by administrative units has improved strikingly as the process has become a college-based endeavor. The increased level of collaboration and review occurring within the

administrative unit program review process has provided accountability as well as opportunities for future refinement.

Conclusions

Norco College has been actively engaged in outcomes assessment since 2002: initially as part of the Riverside Community College District, but (for the most part) separately since 2010, the year it was accredited as an individual college. Earlier reports have detailed the sort of vigorous assessment activities that gave the college confidence its 2014 accreditation visit would go smoothly in that area, as indeed it did.

In March 2013, the college provided ACCJC with a self-evaluation of its assessment efforts, six months after it (along with the other 111 California community colleges) was expected to have achieved what ACCJC defined as “proficiency” in its outcomes assessment work. Norco College judged itself at or beyond proficiency in all reporting areas, a judgment that was confirmed by the commission in its report on the college self-evaluation, received in November 2013. While the average report score for California community colleges was 3.44 on a 5-point scale, Norco earned a 4.08, placing it in the top 25% of CCCs for assessment work. The college was judged slightly less proficient than its peers in three areas: alignment of course SLOs with program PLOs; college decision making arising from dialogue about assessment results; and not having defined its planned improvement efforts sufficiently in its self-assessment. The college assessment committee discussed these issues extensively at its spring meetings and determined that these deficiencies arose largely because insufficient evidence was provided to the commission that the college meets these standards, not because the college does not in fact meet them.

The June 2014 ACCJC accreditation report contained one recommendation in the area of outcomes assessment, advising the college to 1) ensure that its course SLOs were accurately embedded in all syllabi, 2) continue its cycle of program-level and GE assessment, and 3) develop a systematic method of assessing the effectiveness of its outcomes assessment methodology. Developing a method for ensuring that all course syllabi contain accurately worded SLOs will perhaps require a generic syllabus template for each course, with SLOs preloaded onto those syllabi; the recommendation, in any event, can be acted on without much difficulty before the follow-up report is due in October 2015. The second part of the recommendation directs the college to do what it had planned to do already, so it should be an even simpler matter to achieve. The third element in the recommendation, assessing college assessment methods more systematically (and acting on the results to improve those methods), will pose the greatest challenge.

In point of fact, the college has been continually evaluating its assessment methods and used data to improve those methods. As has been detailed in previous reports, it has

surveyed faculty on several occasions to gauge its perception of assessment at the college and used that information to make improvements. Changes in the assessment portion of the annual program review template were made in large part because of faculty input in 2011. The assessment committee also routinely assesses itself through annual anonymous surveys of the membership. A number of changes in assessment methodology in recent years have been driven by the college's systematic effort to improve. In 2012-13, for example, the college decided to buy and employ TracDat assessment tracking software after having found CurricuNET software deficient for that purpose. Earlier, it had revised the rubric for assessing the assessment portion of instructional program reviews in order to direct disciplines to engage more robustly in authentic assessment and to ensure that scores more accurately reflected the extent to which they did that. (The college also reintegrated a required assessment report into the annual program reviews after this requirement had been briefly dropped for much the same reason.) It also began in 2011 to identify specific courses to be assessed each semester when leaving these decisions to disciplines proved untenable. In all of these areas—and many more could be identified—the college has implemented changes in its assessment methodologies to address and eliminate perceived deficiencies.

The college also evaluates its assessment methods by tracking what might be described as key performance indicators as to the health of those methods. They include:

- The number of course assessment reports received each semester. The college makes adjustments in how it asks for reports, trains instructors in how to conduct assessment projects, etc. based on this count, on the quality of the reports themselves, and on feedback from instructors. The college has evidence that course assessment work is growing in quantity and quality over recent years.
- The number of program-level assessment reports produced each year. Norco focused on course assessment exclusively for quite some time but has turned its attention to programs in more recent years. The past academic year has seen the completion of more than 20 reports in CTE, AOE, ADT, and GE programs.
- The evaluation of discipline assessment efforts each year as reported in the APRs with a rubric that has been revised several times over the past four years. Longitudinal data are tracked and recalcitrant disciplines targeted to ensure they understand clearly what is expected of them.
- The college's assessment work is assessed annually and reported annually to ACCJC, with special attention paid to areas where deficiencies are exposed.
- A comprehensive report on assessment activities is produced each year that identifies what the college has accomplished and what it has left to do. (The present report is the fourth such document in the past four years.) Comparing annual goals

with actual outcomes becomes a particularly good way of marking the college's progress, which takes place in the last NAC meeting each year.

- Among college strategic planning goals are ones directly related to assessment, so the college can partly chart its effectiveness through this process.

A meta-assessment instrument in the form of a rubric or list of KPIs would seem to be a good way for the college to meet this part of the accreditation recommendation fully. Although the recommendation speaks specifically of “review[ing] all aspects of the *student learning outcomes process* in an ongoing and systematic way” (emphasis added), such a list or rubric might want to take into consideration how well the college assesses outcomes in student services, business services, and other areas of the administration, as well as in instructional areas.

A particular challenge, however, will be to develop mechanisms for tracking accurately two areas of learning outcomes assessment that the college's present methodologies have trouble gauging. The first is the number of courses or programs actually improved as a result of the collection of assessment data. We read in many reports how faculty intend to use assessment data for improvement, but we have mostly only anecdotal evidence of improvement actually implemented. A modification of the annual program review template and rubric might help. The second is evidence of how planning decisions (including resource allocation) are affected by assessment dialogue and informed by assessment data. What more might we do to determine the extent to which planning is driven, at least in part, by a desire to meliorate a learning deficiency that has been identified empirically by an assessment project? A comprehensive meta-assessment instrument would taken into account all of these areas in which the health of the college's assessment activities appears—and perhaps others as well. In the meantime, Norco College has considerably more evidence of the seriousness with which it takes assessment than it does of the degree to which assessment is making a difference.

Appendix A: Norco College Outcomes Assessment Goals: 2014-15

1. To address the ACCJC Recommendations regarding assessment
 - a. To complete a cycle of GE assessment
 - i. This fall we will assess GE outcome #2 Information Competency and Technology Literacy
 - b. To identify an evaluation mechanism that reviews all parts of the SLO process in an ongoing and systematic manner
 - c. To conduct direct assessment of the PLOs in AOE, ADT, and CTE programs as identified on an updated assessment rotation schedule
2. To train the majority of the full time faculty on how to use TracDat for outcomes assessment
 - a. Pilot training in the fall 2014 with a select group of faculty from each department with a focus on how to implement initial assessment plans, improvement plans, and results
 - b. Follow-up training in the spring 2015 on update with results and how to generate reports
 - c. Repeat of the initial training from the fall for the remaining members of full time faculty and any part time faculty able to attend
3. Revise the documents for the Assessment portion of the Annual Program Review
 - a. The main focus will be on the number of assessments that have been initiated, analyzed, changes implemented, and loop-closing activities in the year
4. Revise the documents for the Assessment portion of the Comprehensive Program Review and align with the new Assessment APR
 - a. The main focus will be on self-reflection and analysis of assessments completed in the prior four years, what has been learned, and focus for the next four years
5. To identify the role of NAC and assessment across the college in supporting student success, equity, and teaching and learning
6. To start the process of aligning the current SLOs with the newly revised GE PLOs

Appendix B: Four-Year Plan for Outcomes Assessment at Norco College

	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Course Assessment (4-year cycle)	Complete course assessment projects (SLO) in all large-enrollment (four or more section) classes and write reports	Complete assessment projects for 50-60 courses (SLO) as selected by the Institutional Effectiveness Office	Begin 4-year cycle of course assessment as selected by disciplines (apprx. 50 courses per semester)	Continue cycle of course SLO assessment as selected by disciplines	Continue cycle of course SLO assessment as selected by disciplines	Continue cycle of course SLO assessment as selected by disciplines	Continue cycle of course SLO assessment as selected by disciplines	Continue cycle of course SLO assessment as selected by disciplines
Area of Emphasis (AOE) 3-year cycle	Analyze data from pilot AOR assessment and write report	Collect data on Humanities, Philosophy & Arts program	Analyze data and write report	Collect data on Communications, Media & Languages, Fine & Applied Arts, and Social and Behavioral programs	Analyze data and write report	Collect data on Admin and Info Systems, Math & Sciences, and Kinesiology, Health & Wellness programs	Analyze data and write report	Collect data on Humanities, Philosophy & Arts program
Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) 3-year cycle	All approved ADT programs will have completed curriculum maps	New ADT programs will be completed	Pilot assessment for all approved ADTs – Com Studies, ECE, English, Sociology, Spanish, Studio Arts	Analyze data and write reports	Collect data on Anthropology, Business, Math, Physics, and any newly approved ADT programs	Analyze data and write reports	Collect data on any newly approved ADT Programs	Analyze data and write reports

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence: <http://www.norcocollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Career Technical Education (CTE) Program Assessment (3-year cycle)	All CTE programs of 18 units or more will complete an initial assessment project and the curriculum maps	Analyze data and write reports	Second round of CTE program assessment: Group A	Analyze data and write reports	2 nd round of CTE program assessment: Group B	Analyze data and write reports	3 rd round of CTE program assessment: Group C	Analyze data and write reports
General Education (GE) Assessment 4-year cycle	Collect data on PLO 4 (Self-development & Global Awareness)	Analyze data and write report	Collect data on PLO 2 (Information Competency and Technology Literacy)	Analyze data and write report	Collect data on PLO 3 (Communication)	Analyze data and write report	Collect data on PLO 1 (Critical Thinking)	Analyze data and write report

CTE Groups

Group A

Architecture
 Business Admin: Acct
 Business Admin: Mngment
 Business Admin: Mrkting
 CIS Computer Apps
 CIS Desktop Publishing
 Computer Programming
 CNC Programming
 Early Childhood Education
 Game Art: E & V
 Game Design

Group B

Business Admin: Logistics
 Business Admin: Real Est.
 Commercial Music: Performance
 Computer Aided Production Tech
 Digital Electronics
 Drafting Technology
 Game Art: Character Modeling
 Game Programming
 Logistics Management
 Mobile App Dev

Group C

Audio Production
 Automated Systems Tech
 Business Admin: General
 Construction Technology
 Early Childhood Early Intervention
 Game Art: 3D Animation
 Retail Management/WAFC
 Supply Chain Technology

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence: <http://www.norcocollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

Appendix C: Assessment work by discipline, 2013 – 14

Discipline	Course(s) assessed (2012-13)	Course(s) assessed (2013-14)	Program assessment (2013-14)	Courses in which assessment data have yielded improvement plans (2013-14)	Assessment plans 2014-15	2013 Score	2014 Score
Accounting	1A	1B, 63	Accounting		62,65	3.5	3.5
Anatomy	2A	10			2A, 2B	1.7	2.4
Anthropology	6,7,8	1,2,3,5 (reports embedded in APR)			2,6	3.6	3.4
Art	6,10,26	2,6,7,18,22,27,40	Curriculum mapping, involvement in AOE and GE assessment		2,5,7,18,20,24,27	2.6	3.4
Biology	12	BIO 1,5,8,36 MIC 1		5,8	1,34; MIC-1	2.3	3.0
Business	BUS 29,22,82 MAG 44: MKT 42	BUS 80,83,87,90 MAG 47,51,53,56	Human Resources, Bus Ad: General, Logistics, Management, Marketing		BUS 22,87; MKT 20;MAG 60	3.4	2.8
Chemistry	2A	1A,1B ,10,12A	Gen Ed		2A,12A	3.7	3.1
CIS	17B, 18C, 38B,54A, 56A,72A,72B, 81	1A,1B,5,17A,17B, 17C,21,56A, 78A,79	Desktop Publishing	72B, 1B, 5	12, 14A, 18B, CSC 7, Computer Science ADT, Computer Programm	3.4	3.6

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence: <http://www.norcollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

Discipline	Course(s) assessed (2012-13)	Course(s) assessed (2013-14)	Program assessment (2013-14)	Courses in which assessment data have yielded improvement plans (2013-14)	Assessment plans 2014-15	2013 Score	2014 Score
					ing, C++ Programming, Mobile Apps, Desktop Publishing		
Com Music	none	1A,1B,3,4,7,10 (in progress),11		Audio Engineering program		n/a	----
Com Studies	9.11	1,1H,3, 6 (forthcoming),11		1 (results used for improvement)	12,9	3.15	3.3
Construction	66,73	62,63ABCD,66,67,70	Construction Technology		62,64,67	3.0	3.0
ECE	19,29,28,42	20,24,25,28,30,42	ECE ADT	19,20,24,40,42 (results used for improvement)	30,33,34,44,47	3.4	3.9
Economics	7,8	4,7, 8 (in development)	Participation in AOE assessment	7/8 (results used for improvement)	7,8	3.0	3.0
Engineering-Arch	ENE42,42B	ENE21,22,30	Architecture, Civil Engineering, Engineering Technology	ENE30,21,22	ARE-24,36,37; ENE1A,1B, Drafting Tech	3.3	3.9
English	60A,14,15,44	1B,10,50,80 60B (in progress)	English ADT, Gen Ed	1A	Complete 60B report	4.0	3.85
ESL	53,54	51,52,54,92		51,55	92,93	3.4	3.5

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence: <http://www.norcocollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

Discipline	Course(s) assessed (2012-13)	Course(s) assessed (2013-14)	Program assessment (2013-14)	Courses in which assessment data have yielded improvement plans (2013-14)	Assessment plans 2014-15	2013 Score	2014 Score
Game Art	22,23,31,35,38,42	45,46,49,71	Game Design, Game Art: Environments and Vehicles	71	21,32,44,45,47,49,50,51,71,72,79,	3.8	3.2
Geography	1	1 (referenced in APR, but no report)			1,3	1.7	1.1
Guidance	47	45,46,48	Gen Ed	45	45	3.05	3.3
Health Sciences	none	1	Gen Ed			n/a	(in Bio)
History	2,7,31	1,6,25,34	Gen Ed	6	7	3.85	3.55
Humanities	4,4H,5,10,10H	none				3.6	---
Journalism	7	20			20	.7	2.5
Kinesiology	30,38	36,A40,A75	AOE in KHW		10,A64,A83,A95	2.5	3.4
Library	1	1			Update LIB 1 COR	3.3	2.4
MAN-Electronics	MAN52,55,56,64	MAN 57,60 In progress: ELE 11, 23,26,27,28,MAN 52,55,56		ELE26,MAN52,53	MAN/ELE 61,MAN35	3.55	3.1
Math	35,52	3,12,12H,25,63,6			1A,1B,1C, 2,3,4,5,10,	2.3	2.9

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence: <http://www.norcocollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

Discipline	Course(s) assessed (2012-13)	Course(s) assessed (2013-14)	Program assessment (2013-14)	Courses in which assessment data have yielded improvement plans (2013-14)	Assessment plans 2014-15	2013 Score	2014 Score
		4			11,12,25,35,36,52,53,63,64,65		
Microbiology	1					3.0	(in Bio)
Music	19,38,65,93	32,37; in progress: 19,23,32A,38,89			Audio Engineering	2.7	1.5
Philosophy	10,11,15,32	12,33	Gen Ed	12	Philosophy ADT, 11,15,32	4.0	3.1
Physics/Phys Sci	4A,4C	10,11 (submitted with APR)			4A,4B,4C	2.45	2.6
Political Science	1,4	In progress: 1H,2,7,13		2,7,13	1 (DE),11	1.4	3.2
Psychology	1,9,33,35	9,33	Gen Ed	1	Pending decision of new instructor	2.4	2.4
Reading	81,82,83	83			No plan indicated	2.0	2.25
Real Estate	82	80,85	Real Estate		80	1.6	2.8
Sociology	1,50	1,12 In progress: 2,10	Gen Ed		12,16,20,50	2.6	2.4

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence: <http://www.norcollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

Discipline	Course(s) assessed (2012-13)	Course(s) assessed (2013-14)	Program assessment (2013-14)	Courses in which assessment data have yielded improvement plans (2013-14)	Assessment plans 2014-15	2013 Score	2014 Score
Theater	3,33	32		32	3,32,33	2.0	2.4
World Languages	Spanish 1,2,3,8	Spanish 8			1,2,3,8,4, Japanese 1; Spanish ADT	4.0	4.0

See the Norco College assessment documents website for additional evidence: <http://www.norcocollege.edu/employees/faculty/Pages/Outcomes-Assessment.aspx>.

Appendix D: Assessment Rubric for Scoring Annual Program Reviews

Directions: Please read the discipline's assessment report (found at the end of its annual Program Review document) and rate it according to the five criteria below. (Scores should range from 0 to 4 for each criterion, with zero signifying no assessment.) Then generate a composite score.

Area for Evaluation	Awareness (1)	Development (2)	Near Proficiency (3)	Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement (4)	Score	Comments
Method	The discipline relied exclusively on indirect methods to assess student learning	The discipline used direct (and possibly indirect) methods, but assessment of student learning outcomes is superficial or unclear.	Direct (and possibly indirect) assessment methods were employed to assess at least one SLO and data identify gaps or weaknesses in student learning.	Robust direct (and possibly indirect) assessment methods were employed to assess multiple student learning outcomes or multiple courses.		
Use of data	Assessment data are referenced but not evidenced.	Assessment data are included but not in a form useable for improvement purposes.	Assessment data are included and useable but have yet led to improvement.	Assessment data are included and have been used for improvement.		
Evidence of dialogue	Dialogue about assessment results is referenced but not evidenced.	Dialogue about assessment results is evidenced but superficial.	Dialogue about assessment results is evidenced and detailed.	Dialogue about how to use assessment results is evidenced, detailed, and pervasive within the discipline		
Planning	A plan for assessment in the next year exists, but it is superficial, unclear, or incomplete.	A plan for assessment in the next year exists, but it does not specify methods or SLOs.	A good plan for assessment in the next year exists, specifying course(s)/program(s) to be assessed, method(s), and SLO(s)/PLO(s)..	A concrete and detailed plan for assessment in the next year exists, specifying course(s) /program(s) to be assessed, method(s), SLO(s)/PLO(s), faculty involved, and expected date of completion.		
Reporting	Reports are referenced but not evidenced.	Evidence exists of only superficial or perfunctory assessment reports.	Evidence exists of detailed assessment reports.	Evidence exists of detailed assessment reports that close the loop.		