



To:	Dr. Shawna Young, AVP Academic Affairs
From:	Stuart Wooley, Faculty Fellow for Assessment
CC:	Ms. Erin Littlepage, Assessment Specialist FLC Leads
Date:	August 22, 2018
RE:	Institutional Assessment Report 2017-18

The following report was developed based on observations of the College Assessment Faculty Learning Communities in the College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Business Administration, the College of Education, Kinesiology, and Social Work, and the College of Science. The College FLC reports informed the following observations, and recommendations for areas of improvement.

Each group was oriented in Fall 2017 and began to review APRs, Annual Reports, and Accreditation reports. The resulting reports from the colleges regarding their observations ranged from very specific to more general observations and areas for improvement. Their reports principally focused on undergraduate programs. Because many programs in COEKSW are graduate programs, a major focus of the report was assessment of and within graduate programs.

College of Business Administration

The process of assessment and development of the assessment plan for CBA was thorough and the CBA faculty developed a thoughtful framework to assess student learning through a 1-unit senior-level course. One major advantage to this approach is that assessment will not rely on a single person in the department nor on a single method

College of Education, Kinesiology, and Social Work

A notable outcomes-oriented observation by the COEKSW FLC was that students met GE, Baccalaureate, and Graduate learning goals based on data collected and reported by both accredited and non-accredited programs within COEKSW. Each COEKSW program continues to refine and improve their framework for assessing student learning outcomes through surveys, regular program and college meetings to discuss assessment and evaluate how to modify, adjust and improve their programs.

College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

The CAHSS FLC found that most programs in that college focus on indirect assessment, but some have recently began direct assessment so long-term trends have not appeared. The CAHSS report was principally focused on assessment development, and assessment-related college and University processes.

College of Science

The COS FLC observed similar trends to CAHSS and noted a wide range of assessment practice among programs.



All reports referenced ongoing assessment practices among program faculty. Among all colleges faculty are working thoughtfully to evaluate student learning and improve program outcomes using both direct and indirect assessment methods, while not relying exclusively on grades as the assessment tool. Notably, all College FLCs reported that assessment is occurring across programs within colleges. Furthermore, a number of programs are actively engaged in discussing how to best utilize assessment findings for program improvement. Most importantly to students and faculty in the COEKSW, was that assessment findings indicated a need. A hiring decision was made to address that need and a person was hired to address advising needs in various programs. That this happened, indicates that carefully assessing programs can lead to a more precise understanding of program needs that can lead to meeting those needs.

Notably, the COEKSW has sophisticated and widespread assessment taking place among programs—likely explained, in part, by the proportionally high number of accredited programs in the college. Unique to the COEKSW, is a very high proportion of faculty trained in teaching, education, and the value of assessment as a tool to improve student learning as a normal part of their teaching and faculty work. The assessment work accomplished by the College of Education, Kinesiology, and Social Work demonstrates the value of assessment (more than just grades) as an effective educational tool and a way to improve program effectiveness and student success.

Process Improvement

Reflective of all the reports is an observation by the CAHSS FLC that “there are many disparate approaches to assessment across programs; some members appreciated the program-specific work this facilitated, others found the variation frustrating as it often obscured trends.” In addition, faculty and departments across campus are conducting assessment. There is, potentially, a lack of understanding of how to assess student learning efficiently. Moreover, a perception exists that there is a difference in how administration views assessment compared with program faculty. Increased opportunity for training faculty in assessment, including using “student success” or “student learning outcomes” instead of “assessment”, and increased conversations among faculty and administration about what constitutes assessment were recommendations to help program faculty focus their assessment in efficient ways. Finally, reports suggested: 1) To refine the reporting structure to more clearly indicate the value of both quantitative and qualitative findings and how to report different types of findings; 2) Clearly define administrative expectations and provide program-level guidance, and 3) Find ways to support consistent and thoughtful program- and college-level assessment. One unique contribution from the COS is a suggestion to, at the college-level, “establish mechanisms to effectively assess the breadth and quality of student research projects across disciplines.”

Among some reports, a possible distinction in the roles of faculty and administration in assessment was implied. For example, CAHSS FLC members suggested that assessment data collection should happen through program-level faculty, but the “number-crunching”



and educational effectiveness should be more administrative thereby facilitating faculty focus on curriculum improvement. The communication process is currently embedded in both the Annual Reporting and Academic Program Review processes along with opportunities for dialogue between programs, Deans, and the Provost. A major goal of those embedded processes is to make the assessment more useful to programs and requires program-, Dean-, Provost-level buy-in and participation to be effective. Recently developed dashboards, including the Academic Unit Profile (AUP), were rolled out to campus during 2017-18. Over the 2018-19 academic year, the Office of Institutional Research and Office of Assessment plan to offer training sessions to assist program faculty with the “number-crunching” portions of the assessment review processes.

Graduate-level Assessment

The only College to report on graduate-level assessment was the COEKSW. The Teacher Preparation programs (MA in Education) and the Master in Social Work (MSW) are accredited programs within the College. Because all of these programs are accredited by various outside agencies, their assessment reporting requirements are rigorous. As a result, program personnel meet regularly (monthly in some instances) to “discuss accreditation and assessment” identify where and how data will be collected. Each program has clear student learning goals and outcomes (as do other accredited UG programs) and data is collected through surveys and other direct assessment of Graduate Learning Goals and Outcomes to achieve specified benchmarks (i.e., 80% competency levels in the MSW).

What seems common among the programs that carefully assess their students is that they have direct evidence of the quality of their teaching and student competency. Therefore, they are using evidence-based approaches to evaluate and update their instructional practices and curriculum to “better meet student needs and improve program effectiveness”. While much of the timeline and rigor seems to be driven by accreditation deadlines and standards, the improvements and instructional changes are driven by faculty, who meet regularly and who use assessment findings from their programs to make changes that can affect student learning outcomes.



To:	Dr. Shawna Young, <i>A.H.</i> <i>J.L.</i>
From:	Drs. Andrew Hinrichs, Jingyun (Jenny) Li, Orestis Panos Panagopoulos, Xun (Peter) Xu and Jarrett Kotrozo (Facilitator) <i>OP</i> <i>[Signature]</i>
CC:	Dean David Lindsay and Ms. Erin Littlepage
Date:	June 7, 2017
RE:	College of Business Administration College Inquiry and Analysis Faculty Learning Community

The College of Business Administration (CBA) earned accreditation by the selective Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) in 2003. A significant part of that accreditation is a robust, systematic and sustainable assurance of learning (assessment) process which the CBA has worked hard to cultivate over the years.

Below highlights some of the tools, techniques and methods the CBA and its faculty have used and developed over time to help build a culture to enhance student learning. Much of what is presented here represents seminars held by AACSB.

- The CBA started small asking three or four faculty who were passionate, interested and even curious about assessment to spearhead the process. It was important to start the process rolling. Trying to do too much too fast can lead to delays or even failure.
- Develop learning goals - skills, attitudes and knowledge that faculty expect students to learn and the foundation on which the assessment program is built but are broad and not sufficiently specific and observable to be measured (Martell, 2005).
 - It is imperative to AACSB that learning goals be mission and vision driven.
 - The CBA's mission and vision are driven by the University's mission and vision.
 - Keep it simple. Too many learning goals become unwieldy. These can and should be revisited regularly and updated (deleted, augmented, etc.) whenever appropriate.
- With agreed-upon learning goals in place, learning objectives follow which identify specific, observable behaviors and actions related to a goal that faculty will use to describe, monitor and assess student achievement (Martell, 2005).
 - These should be: Unitary, clear, use action verbs, are student-related (as opposed to faculty or class related), detail outcomes (and not processes), etc.



- These are the cornerstones of the process. With poor learning goals (LGs) or learning objectives (LOs), the process is much more difficult and may be impossible.
 - For example, having a learning goal that students are able think and act globally may 1) go against the mission of a regional institution, 2) be very difficult or impossible to measure and 3) still sound really good and be difficult to move past or alter to improve it.
 - Though “straightforward” in theory, the CBA found the practice to be challenging, time consuming and difficult – though fruitful once in place.
- With clear LGs and LOs in place, the next step was to identify where the learning takes place (we call it a Curriculum Map) articulating where the LOs have minor, moderate or significant coverage.
 - The CBA does this only with required (core) courses, as it is impractical and not mission-driven if the focus is skewed toward a particular major, concentration or track.
 - This is also reviewed and updated on a regular schedule to see if content or pedagogies have changed as faculty and requirements change.
- Knowing where the learning takes place (or identifying where learning should take place even better) allows the creation of rubrics specifically to help ascertain if, and what, learning is going on.
 - Each LO should have a rubric and should address each and every important aspect of the LO.
 - For example, an oral communication LG/LO may address things like the use of media, the delivery, the diction/tone, the organization...
 - Anyone should be able to look at the rubric and understand what is being evaluated and assessed (especially the students).
 - Rubric development (like most of the process) can be time consuming and likely iterative.
- With these items in place, identification of the prompts (assignments, deliverables) themselves and their timing are necessary.
 - They can be integral to a course (an assignment already given).
 - They can be course-embedded (an additional assignment given).
 - They can be separated (an assignment given outside of a course such as the WPST).
 - They can be formative (along the way) or summative (at the end) and should be done when most appropriate to the mission, vision, LGs and LOs.
 - Student motivation is a consideration.
- A plan should exist to know when, where and how assessment activities will take place (data collection).
 - While the assessment itself is important, it is the implications that come out of the data which drives the process.
 - Although difficult at first, this (and all of the process ultimately) should be driven by more than a few people for a multitude of reasons such as single observer bias and feeling like assessment is “something others do.”



- Data analysis is important, but the focus should be less on our doctoral training (reliability, validity) and more on getting a sense on whether students are learning the things which have been identified as important.
 - Direct measures are imperative to AACSB and are the only acceptable method to be used.
 - Indirect measures are acceptable in a supporting role.
 - Much academic research is conducted around assessment, but this should not be the focus (and is something the CBA still has many discussions about).
 - Ensuring validity (beyond face validity) and reliability adds complexity to the process and may take away from the primary mission of teaching and learning. It is easy to get lost in the data or the process of collecting data.
 - Continuous improvement for students is the takeaway.
 - AACSB refers to this as “closing the loop.”

- AACSB’s Assurance of Learning Process articulates these steps in this order:
 - 1. State Learning Goal
 - 2. State Learning Objective
 - 3. Develop Measure
 - 4. Collect Pilot Data
 - 5. Analyze Data
 - 6. Identify Needs
 - 7. Implement Improvements
 - 8. Collect Data
 - 9. Evaluate Improvements
 - 10. Close the Loop (returning to 7. and repeating)

Since earning accreditation in 2003, the CBA has made great (though not easy nor always rapid) strides in its assessment processes which continue (and should continue based on the previous bullet).

Below are some additional insights which have been acknowledged, observed and often documented.

- Starting with a smaller number made the process a bit more manageable, particularly in the beginning.
 - Faculty should (and must) be involved, but having all faculty drive the process is not likely.
 - Continue to ask for involvement and do so building on the faculty’s interests (things that people like, or are interested in) rather than assignments and directives.
 - “Critical Mass” can be reached. As more people get involved the expectation that others will “get on board” tends to grow.

- The process needs support from all levels
 - If the Dean and the University were not on board, the process would not be where it is today (and may not exist at all).



- Avoid the term “assessment” and “assurance of learning” and use terminology such as “student success,” “student learning outcomes,” etc.
 - Assessment and AOL are accreditation-driven words and directives, which can set a poor mood.
 - Given why most of us are here, there are rather few who are not interested in our students’ success beyond our classrooms.
 - The CBA has been working on this though not with perfect success yet.
- Be very, very clear that faculty are not and will not be evaluated on assessment results.
 - This is one of the biggest and most common hurdles as faculty think if their students do not do well on a particular LO this will reflect poorly on them.
 - Assessment is program-based (or institutionally-based). Other mechanisms are in place for the evaluation of faculty and these MUST remain separate and be well-communicated.

Based on this background and information, below are some of the specifics as they relate to the CBA.

- The undergraduate program has a committee made up of one person from each department as well as a dedicated Accreditation Analyst staff position.
 - It meets once per semester or more frequently as needed.
- The undergraduate program has five LGs with a Teamwork LG added in 2014.
 - Body of knowledge, communication, problem solving, teamwork and ethical decision-making.
 - Each LG has one LO with the exception of a communication LG that has one LO for written communication and a second LO for oral communication skills.
- LOs are assessed regularly on a five-year plan, which is reviewed and approved by the faculty.
 - Body of knowledge is assessed every semester with specific business-related disciplines receiving extra attention every two years.
 - Communication and ethical decision-making are assessed in odd fall semester academic years using one prompt in a summative course (Business Professionalism) created to facilitate the process.
 - Teamwork and problem solving are assessed in even fall semester academic years. Teamwork is assessed in the CBA’s capstone course and problem solving is assessed in Business Professionalism.
 - Indirect assessment takes place through surveys of graduating seniors on a three-year rotating cycle and alumni on a five-year rotating cycle.
 - The plan is reviewed a minimum of once every five years.
- The CBA’s Curriculum Map is reviewed during every five-year cycle for accuracy.
- Faculty are queried regarding their interest in participating in assessment activities each semester (grading, aggregating, summarizing) and are provided a modest stipend for their efforts.



- Assessment results are brought to the faculty for discussion on opportunities for improvement either at an annual assessment retreat, or during other regularly-scheduled faculty meetings as appropriate.
- All assessment-related material is posted on a Blackboard site created which include all tenure/tenure track, part-time and adjunct faculty.
 - Committee and faculty meeting agendas and minutes are posted.
 - Summary results of assessment results are posted.
 - All assessment-related documentation including LGs, LOs, Maps, Plans and similar information is available for review by any faculty member at their convenience.

Considering the process over the years below is a specific example of the process in action – creation of Business Professionalism (BUS 4901) because of difficulties in the process prior to, and including, 2011.

- Each semester the Undergraduate Assessment Committee Chair would announce what needed to be assessed and would solicit volunteers on conducting the assessment in their classes.
 - Much of the assessment ended up taking place in the College's capstone course as the logical choice, but faculty teaching this class either declined to do the assessment or starting pushing back citing too much focus on collecting data and too little time focusing on their subject matter.
 - Other assessment happened earlier in students' study path, which was contrary to the nature of the LGs and LOs which lend themselves to more summative assessment.
- Discussion and debate took place over the academic year with two leading options coming to the fore.
 - Creation of a required (Saturday) session where graduating seniors would be required to come sit for assessment activities.
 - Similar to the University's WPST requirement.
 - Challenges of motivating students to do their best was cited as a hindrance.
 - Creation of a new one-unit course to handle assessment activities.
 - Did not want to create the "assessment class."
 - Motivation was still a concern.



- Through a vote, the faculty (not unanimously) decided on the one-unit course.
 - A member of the Undergraduate Assessment Committee, in conjunction with other members, went through the process of course creation.
 - Debate within the committee and college led to a course which was:
 - Credit/no credit so students were not punished if the program had areas for improvement.
 - Entitled Business Professionalism to incorporate more than just assessment activities. It is designed to also help prepare students for their transition into (or back into) industry and to be taught by someone with practical and current industry experience.
 - Was given a BUS prefix (BUS 4901) so as not to be affiliated with a specific major/concentration/tract.
 - After approval through the College in 2012, went through the University's process and gained approval in 2013.
 - It was offered for the first time in spring 2016 (by the member from the Undergraduate Assessment Committee who took the lead in creation to work out initial kinds) when demand reached a level which justified opening a section.
 - It is taught over a five-week period (160 minutes) to allow assessment activities such as testing to take place where more than 50 minutes may be necessary.
 - Continuous improvement continues (closing the loop) with recommendations that include:
 - Creating a High Achievers List/Certificates of Excellence (similar to a Dean's List) to recognize excellent performers related to the LOs which can be disseminated to employers and added to resumes.
 - Developing a packet to provide all Instructors of Record to help standardize the process and ensure that the CBA's assessment plans are being followed regardless of who teaches the classes or sits on particular committees.
 - Identifying ways to handle and store large amounts of data as sample size increases and approaches a population.

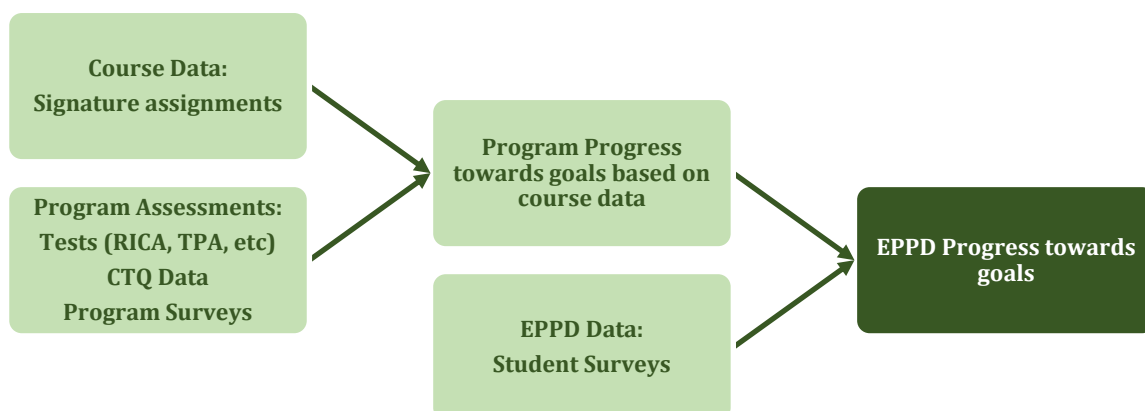
This is a process the CBA has been working on for well over a decade and continues to refine as is integral to the process. Likely, the most difficult part was generating the momentum to move beyond the first stage. However, once that was accomplished the process has become more polished and is part of the faculty culture.

With the recent GREAT initiative discussions at the state, university and college levels we anticipate being able to use these processes to help move forward with this valuable directive.

To:	Dr. Shawna Young, AVP Academic Affairs
From:	Dr. Oddmund Myhre, Dean, College of Education, Kinesiology & Social Work
CC:	Ms. Erin Littlepage, Assessment Specialist
Date:	May 30, 2018
RE:	COEKSW Unit Assessment 2017-18

The College of Education, Kinesiology & Social Work has three distinct program areas, each with unique assessment and accreditation requirements. Educator preparation programs located in the departments of Advanced Studies and Teacher Education are accredited by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). This includes the Master of Arts concentrations in education tied to programs leading to a credential. The only exception is the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership which accredited and reviewed by WASC. The Master of Social Work program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Accreditation. Finally, the two undergraduate programs, Liberal Studies and Kinesiology follow the regular university program review format. All programs have established student learning outcomes that are aligned to college, university, and accreditation agencies' expectations.

Coordinators and department chairs in the educator preparation programs meet monthly to discuss accreditation and assessment. Data are collected at several points. Each program has identified signature assessments aimed at measuring progress towards student learning goals. Further, programs administer exit and year-out surveys of graduates. Employers of teacher credential graduates are surveyed on critical issues related to preparedness for the profession. Finally, all students in the college complete a survey administered in spring that provides information about department and unit support structures and operations. Assessment findings on educator preparation programs are reported annually in august. These reports serve as foundation for accreditation site visits and program reviews that take place in the seventh year of the cycle.



Chairs in the two undergraduate departments and other programs that are not externally accredited (currently the Doctorate in Educational Leadership) meet every spring to discuss assessment. Each program collects data throughout the year assessing student progress towards learning outcomes and program maintenance issues (e.g., staffing, student advising, etc.). The data are discussed within the department and summarized in the annual reports. These reports serve as the basis for the cross departmental meeting and core findings are addressed in the Dean's responses to the annual reports.

There are two annual college wide retreats/meetings, one in spring and another in fall. Assessment and accreditation issues are usually discussed at the fall meeting following initiatives proposed by the College Executive Committee in response to department and program assessment reports.

This year, a preliminary review of assessments across the College of Education, Kinesiology & Social Work revealed that the vast majority of students meet program learning goals. Faculty members are regularly adjusting and updating instructional practices and curricula based on assessment findings to better meet student needs and improve program effectiveness.

Despite many successes, several programs are reporting that students are not adequately prepared in writing and some departments and programs continue to struggle when it comes to providing timely advising for struggling students. A couple of initiatives have been put in place to address writing. The Department of Liberal Studies added a literacy course requirement to the major and the doctoral program is requiring students to complete a writing workshop. In response to advising needs, the Department of Liberal Studies is planning to add faculty advising hours during peak times (beginning of semesters) and Kinesiology is looking into how students are distributed among faculty for advising and if changes can improve access. Further, the College has changed one staff position into a Student Support Professional (SSP). This person will advise students on the main campus and at the Stockton center and play a critical role when it comes to supporting students in the new Integrated Teacher Education Program, a collaborative effort between teacher education and Liberal Studies, where students can earn a degree and a teaching credential in four years. In addition, an adjunct faculty member in Liberal Studies who has a background in advising, is receiving assigned time to work with students. Another initiative is aimed at targeting students who are in need of early intervention (before they fail a course). Students will be encouraged by course instructors to contact the SSP staff early when they sense they have difficulty in a course they are taking. Many of our students have expressed that they find it challenging to meet directly with a professor about difficulties and it is our hope that the SSP can serve as "safe" person to contact.

All departments and programs are either preparing for or have just completed Academic Program Reviews or professional accreditation visits. The Master of Social Work program was reviewed by the Council of Social Work Education in fall 2017 and the accreditation visit for the ten educator preparation programs by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing will take place in October 2018. Preparations for the reviews have facilitated curriculum revisions to meet new university and/or professional standards

followed by updates to assessment systems. This include identifying new direct assessments of student learning that can be consistently administered across course sections. The new assessments will be implemented immediately following the academic or accreditation review.

Departments and programs must have sufficient faculty resources in order to offer coursework and support students. The college has been in a rebuilding phase since the recession ten years ago when a large number of positions vacated by retiring faculties were left unfilled. In response to this situation, the college prioritized hiring and moved salary lines from departments and programs that could easily find part time instructors to areas with the greatest needs. These moves have allowed growing programs in Kinesiology and Liberal Studies to meet student demands, but at a cost to educator preparation programs. A next step on the resource side will therefore be to find ways to address the faculty situation in the departments of Teacher Education and Advanced Studies in order to meet student demands and accreditation requirements.

Finally, resent research is increasingly emphasizing the importance of a faculty that is representative of the students served by the institution. The college has taken deliberate steps to secure as diverse a pool as possible of applicants for faculty positions. As a result, four of the eight confirmed new faculty members joining the college in fall 2018 are of minority background.

California State University, Stanislaus
College of the Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences
Assessment Faculty Learning Community

Summary Report, Spring 2017-Spring 2018

The CAHSS College-Level Inquiry & Academic Data Analysis Faculty Learning Community (informally known as the CAHSS Assessment FLC) was assembled in Spring 2017 with the goal of reviewing program assessment summary data (via annual reports and Academic Program Reviews/specialized accreditation reports) to identify trends for college and institutional review and continuous improvement. Possible outcomes also include reviewing and providing feedback on college-level processes.

Member of the CAHSS Assessment FLC include:

Ellen Bell, Anthropology, Geography, Ethnic Studies (lead facilitator)
Steve Routh, Political Science
Staci Scheiwiller, Art
Blake Randol, Criminal Justice
Keith Nainby, Communication Studies

The FLC meets on an ad-hoc basis to discuss reviews of assessment documents completed by individual members between meetings, to identify and share observations and trends in college-level assessment data, and to discuss and formulate recommendations to improve college-level processes. In some cases, college-level recommendations require University-level changes, and the FLC has discussed those as well.

In Spring 2017-Spring 2018, the FLC met on the following dates:

April 4, 2017
May 5, 2017
Sept. 29, 2018
March 16, 2018
April 27, 2018

The Lead Facilitator (Bell) also attends FLC Leads meetings convened by the Office of the Assessment of Student Learning and communicates findings, requests, and recommendations to and from the FLC.

At the inaugural meeting, FLC members decided that each member would review a sub-set of assessment documents submitted by CAHSS programs and agreed to pay particular attention to the ways in which each program engages (or doesn't engage) the following:

1. Direct assessment
2. Closing the loop/"authentic assessment"
3. Sustainable Assessment
4. The Stan State Principles of Assessment

FLC members also agreed to work diligently to identify and track general trends and best practices beyond each of these elements and report back on them.

All subsequent meetings have focused on sharing and analyzing the observations identified during review and discussing issues, policies, attitudes, philosophical frameworks, and administrative processes that help or hinder the production and use of authentic assessment in our college.

Trends in CAHSS program assessment include:

- A stronger emphasis on indirect than direct assessment in many programs
- Where direct assessment is occurring, it has often been in place for a relatively short period of time, making it difficult to spot long-term trends
- Confusion about the appropriate amount and kind of data to be reported in accordance with the Stan State Principles of Assessment
- Even with the highly structured Annual Report template, there are many disparate approaches to assessment across programs; some members appreciated the program-specific work this facilitated, others found the variation frustrating as it often obscured trends
- Direct assessment techniques used include rubric-assessed assignments, qualifying exams, and skills tests.
- Indirect assessments used include surveys, composite IDEA scores, and self-assessments.

Recommendations for professional development activities linked to assessment:

- FLC members thought that faculty members would be most interested in workshops/trainings that will help them complete the required assessment work (especially reporting) more quickly and effectively. For example, sessions might focus on what administrators are looking for when they read Annual Reports and APRs or how to use Campus Labs.

Comments on issues, policies, processes, approaches, and values include:

- While the Annual Report is about far more than assessment, the template doesn't encourage discussion beyond assessment reporting. Changing the template might help broaden the topics addressed and increase faculty engagement with the documents. APR and Annual Report preparation provides a useful time for reflection and analysis, but the current template doesn't seem to encourage this.
- The minimal compliance currently observed in some programs may be due to the lack of meaningful incentives to do the assessment and the annual reports. Consequences and benefits seem very distant. The FLC input recommended below might itself become an incentive.
- Assessment is a locus in which faculty and administrative roles can become conflated in unproductive ways. Within assessment, there are some roles that can only be performed effectively by faculty members, but others need people with administrative skills—good administrators. FLC members observed that first-level assessment that requires disciplinary expertise should be done by faculty members, while the number-crunching and institutional level analysis should be done by people who are well-versed in reporting. Faculty should focus on curriculum and curriculum improvement; the educational effectiveness reporting should be done by administrators.
- The nature of role of the faculty member leading assessment seems to have changed, which raises the question of what the structure actually supports/encourages now? For example, the Faculty Fellow for Assessment position seems to have a much stronger administrative focus than did the chair of the Program Assessment Council (PAC).

- One of the bigger philosophical issues seems to be how we decide what we value—and therefore want to measure. Is program assessment driven by outcomes that are most important, or by those that are easiest to measure?

Recommendations for the FLC

- Recognize that the group works best as a true FLC
- Explore establishing a link between the CAHSS Assessment FLC and Budget and Planning to encourage communication between the two bodies as they deal most extensively with assessment at the college level. For example, an elected member of Budget & Planning might serve in an ex-officio capacity on the FLC.
- Establish a practice in which submission of the annual report initiates a dialog between the FLC member liaising with each the program and program faculty. Ideally, this peer-to-peer discussion will help ensure that the program receives feedback on the annual report and on-going assessment activities that is timely, personalized, and helpful. The conversation will also make it easier to share insights, suggestions, and best practices and to bring questions, concerns, challenges, and suggestions to the FLC so that they can be shared in aggregate with the CAHSS, the Dean, the Office of Assessment, and others as appropriate. It is vital that information flow in both directions, as this might help break down barriers to meaningful assessment. A small budget to allow these conversations to take place in a relaxed, collegial setting over coffee would not be unwelcome.
- Revisit the Stan State Principles of Assessment since many programs aren't following #8¹
- It would be beneficial to use University-wide assessment practices to provide uniformity of process in addition to the current program-specific emphasis
- Ensure that program assessment conversations with the WASC team flow both ways. For example, it would be good to ask for suggestions about assessing a program, like the GE program, that includes areas that have only one class that can be assessed so that program assessment does not run afoul of the CBA.


The FLC looks forward to continuing our work and sharing our findings within the CAHSS and beyond.

(Please note that, because the CAHSS Constitution stipulates that the CAHSS Budget and Planning Committee is charged with reviewing APR Self-Study documents and had not referred them to us for review, the FLC decided to focus our 2017-2018 work on the Annual Reports.)

¹ **P.8 Assessment data will not be used to make comparison across programs, departments, or colleges.**

Assessment data will be used only for the facilitation of student, program, college, and university development, and are not intended for comparative judgments. Assessment data will be made available to those most closely involved in and responsible for the learning that is related to the data.



To:	Dr. Shawna Young, AVP Academic Affairs
From:	David Evans, Dean, College of Science 
CC:	Ms. Erin Littlepage, Assessment Analyst
Date:	June 27, 2018
RE:	College-Level Assessment in the College of Science

College-level assessment in the College of Science is based on the most recent Academic Program Reviews (Biological Sciences, Physics, Geology), the annual reports available in CampusLabs, and discussions with the department chairs and program coordinators.

The College of Science includes 10 academic programs in seven departments. Each program has distinct disciplinary requirements. Nonetheless, there are consistent program-level learning objectives that focus on developing

- Research skills
- Communication competence
- Mastery of disciplinary knowledge
- Teamwork in problem solving
- High-level thinking about the collection, interpretation, analysis, and synthesis of scientific information

These objectives are consistent with the university's baccalaureate learning goals.

All programs have increased their attention to assessment over the last several years. Nonetheless, there are disparities in the level of sophistication in the assessment activities across the college. The three most recent APRs show that some programs have well established rubrics to evaluate critical student work, others are actively preparing thoughtful assessment activities, and some continue to rely on student grades as a proxy for assessment. It is apparent that departments need more guidance to ensure consistent and thoughtful assessment activities – as well as to get broader buy-in on program assessment efforts.

Given the importance of research in program-level objectives, the college should establish mechanisms to effectively assess the breadth and quality of student research projects across all disciplines.

The college Budget and Planning Committee has the responsibility of reviewing drafts of academic program reviews and making advisory recommendations for changes in reviews and/or programs. Reviewing and revising the charge of college committees, including the Budget and Planning Committee, might be one mechanism to encourage more consistent assessment activities.

Most of the curricula in the college have tightly sequenced courses with prerequisites. This makes major advising particularly important in order to ensure efficient progress to degrees. While all programs work to provide effective major advising, the advising burden on faculty varies considerably based on the ratio of majors to tenure-track faculty. This ratio varies from well over 50:1 in some program to less than 8:1 in others. The college should explore mechanisms for leveling this workload.