



Outcomes Assessment

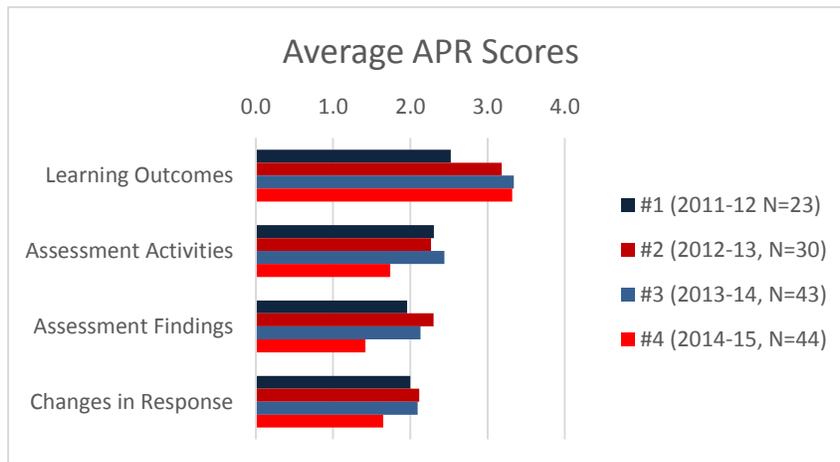
2015 Summary <http://assessment.arizona.edu>

The University of Arizona has long recognized the importance of assessment and evaluation in improving the quality of its academic and support programs for students. Rather than viewing assessment as a reaction to demands for accountability, it is viewed as a continuous source of knowledge for institutional improvement. As a result, a representative faculty group developed the plan for a faculty-driven process for program level assessment of student outcomes. The assessment team in the Office of Instruction and Assessment provides consultation for academic units to implement and conduct student learning outcomes assessment at the program level. In 2011, this Model was incorporated into the Academic Program Review process and the self-study report. For more detail on both the Model and the APR process go to: [Program Assessment](#)

Assessment Impact

As of the 2014-2015 academic year, four cohorts of academic units (about 60% of all units) were engaged in the APR process requiring the student learning outcomes assessment plan. The rubric scores for each of the four criteria evaluated from self-study reports, disaggregated by cohort, are reported in Figure 1. [Click here for the rubric.](#) The number of programs evaluated is greater than the number of units as many units have multiple programs. Rubric score scale is from 1 (inadequate) to 4 (excellent).

Figure 1: Average Rubric Scores for Four Cohorts



Notice the marked increase in scores for the Learning Outcomes criterion, which indicates that collectively, units are improving in the development of student learning outcomes. Scores on the other three criteria suggest opportunities for professional development via workshops and departmental consultation. The slight decline in scores for Cohort #4 is due to a tightening of the scoring rubric in response to feedback.

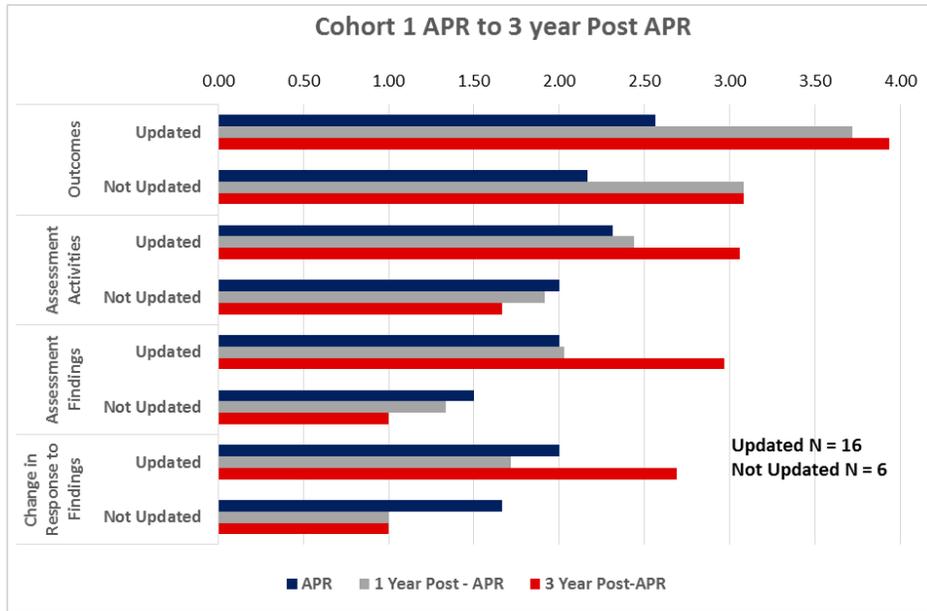
Cohort 1 has been evaluated and rubric scored at both one-year and three-year post-APR points. The scores from the self-study report and the post-APR evaluations are displayed for comparison in Figure 2. For those departments that updated their websites, there was consistent improvement. However, those that were not updated did not show that improvement. Clearly, development of student learning outcomes and assessment activities are notably improved and some data have been collected.





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Figure 2: Average Rubric Criteria Scores for Cohort 1 for APR, 1 year and 3 year post-APR



Cohorts Two and Three have been rubric scored one year post-APR. The results are shown in Figures 3 and 4. Both Cohorts exhibit increased scores in Outcomes, but very small if any improvement in Assessment Activities. As expected, Findings and Changes in Response to Findings were not much changed due to the lack of time to collect evidence. These two categories should earn higher scores on the three year review, which is summer of 2016 for Cohort #2. Several of the departments from these two cohorts have reached out to OIA for help and feedback.

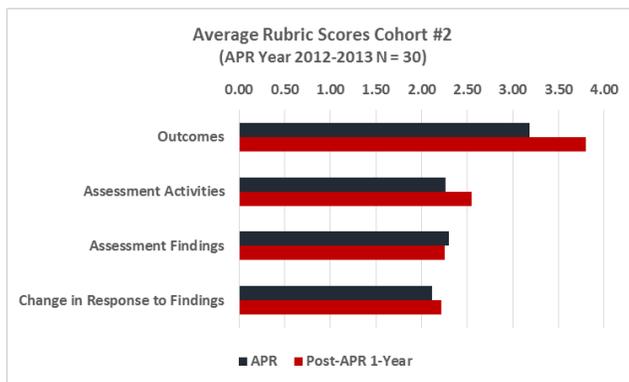


Figure 3: Average Rubric Scores Cohort #2 at APR and 1 year post-APR

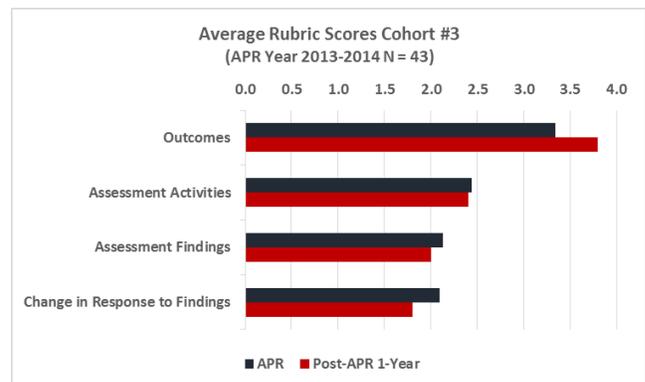


Figure 4: Average Rubric Scores Cohort #3 at APR and 1 year post-APR





Exemplary Programs

Programs from several units were identified as exemplary in 2015, based on their one and three year post-APR scores and further review of their assessment webpages. These programs are currently highlighted as the exemplary programs, showcased on the Assessment website. Comment boxes have been added to these pages for explanation purposes or further references. OIA staff frequently refer other departments to these programs for ideas and best practices. Click the following links to the exemplary assessment webpages:

- [Exemplary Undergraduate Programs](#)
- [Exemplary Graduate Programs](#)

Additional Highlights

Student learning outcomes assessment workshop participation

APR Assessment workshops

In the spring semester before units engage in the APR process, the OIA assessment team facilitates a session specifically designed for units preparing for APR in the upcoming academic year. During the session, participants use the rubric to score a sample assessment plan and OIA assessment team members provide feedback on the scoring process. Of the 12 units scheduled for APR in the 2015 – 2016 academic year, 4 participated in the workshop. See Table 1 for more information.

Gearing up for APR sessions

To better equip units for the development of student learning outcomes assessment plans, the assessment team initiated a two-part series for faculty and staff in units that have not yet engaged in the new APR process. The fall 2014 session focused on developing student learning outcomes and assessment activities. The spring 2015 session focused on collecting student learning outcomes assessment data and using the findings to make relevant changes to the academic program. Both the Fall 14 and Spring 15 sessions were well-attended and received. Because many of the departments in the future cohorts attend these first Gearing Up sessions, the Assessment Staff decided against offering a fall 15 workshop, but will plan for spring 2016 sessions. See Table 1 for more information.

Table 1

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Workshop Participation

| Workshop | Invited participants | Participation | |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------|-----------------|
| | | Units (n) | Individuals (n) |
| APR Assessment (spring) | Units preparing for APR in 2015 – 2016 | 4 | 7 |
| Gearing up for APR (fall) | Units preparing for APR in 2015 – 2018 | 19 | 46 |
| Gearing up for APR (spring) | Units preparing for APR in 2015 – 2018 | 21 | 43 |





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Assessment Matters Monthly Newsletter

In January, 2015, Ryan Foor started publishing Assessment Matters. This monthly newsletter provides snapshots on academic program assessment from the Office of Instruction and Assessment. Its purpose is to 1) support building and maintaining a culture of assessment and 2) serve as an instructive resource for units. It also provides a timely reminder that assessment should be ongoing, not episodic. The distribution is via email to unit heads, program assessment coordinators, and associate deans on or about the second Wednesday of each month, August to May.

Association of American Colleges & Universities General Education Institute, 2015

In June, 2015, Ryan Foor led a team of 5 people through an AAC&U Institute on Assessment of General Education Programs. This team, in addition to Ryan, included Jennifer Ricketts (chair of UWGEC), Tom Fleming (UWGEC representative to Undergraduate Council and past UWGEC chair), Ingrid Novodvorsky (OIA) and Elaine Marchello (OIA). As part of the institute, the team drafted a 3-part proposal to assess the General Education Program at the U of A. A subcommittee, Tools and Assessment, of the UWGEC was formed and a pilot study is currently underway.

Assessment Leadership Team

OIA team members, Ingrid and Ryan, built on an idea from a book to coordinate a regular meeting of institution-level assessment professionals for the purpose of sharing our scope of work and best practices, and generating ideas for collaboration. The aim was to begin a unified effort toward the assessment of the whole student learning experience, looking at the “bigger picture” beyond our already effective divisional assessment practices. The purpose of this group is different from the disbanded Assessment Coordinating Council, although many of the same people were invited to attend this new initiative. This Team has met twice under the leadership of Ingrid, and has discussed the group’s purpose as well as future meeting interests.

Changes to the OIA assessment team

Ryan Foor, who joined Ingrid Novodvorsky and Deb Tomanek on the assessment team in August 2014, left the University during the summer of 2015. Elaine Marchello, who came from the College of Agriculture Career and Academic Services and the School of Animal & Comparative Biomedical Sciences, took on the role as the Assessment Coordinator in October of 2015. Elaine’s main responsibilities are to consult with faculty and staff to develop student learning outcomes assessment plans, evaluate programs’ student learning outcomes assessment plans, and advise the University-wide General Education Committee on program assessment. Elaine is also leading the piloting and implementation of the Assessment of the General Education Program.

For questions related to Outcomes Assessment, contact Elaine at evm@email.arizona.edu, or Ingrid at novod@email.arizona.edu.

