



## Outcomes Assessment

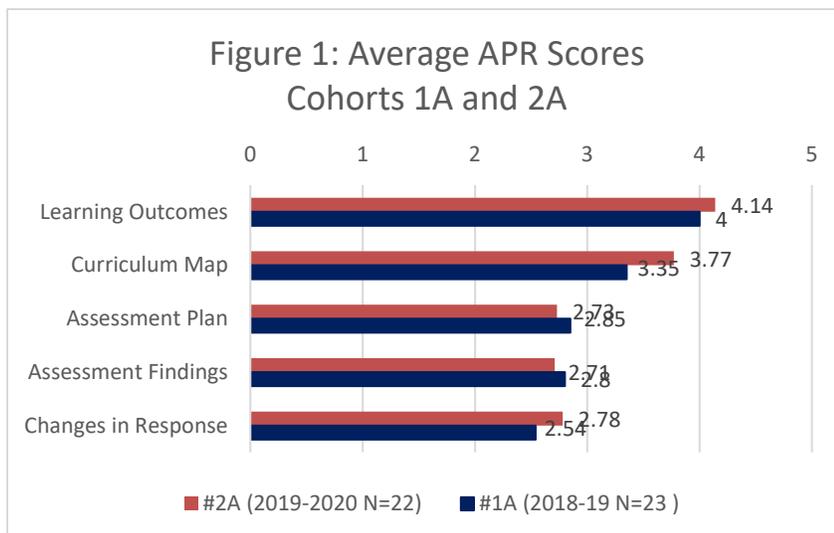
### 2020 Summary <http://assessment.arizona.edu>

2020 was a challenging year for all of us. The COVID-19 pandemic had far-reaching consequences, one of which was the switch to mostly remote/virtual instruction. This was also the year in which the university prepared the self-study report for the upcoming Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation visit in April, 2021. However, one thing that did not change was the fact that the University of Arizona still recognizes the importance of assessment and evaluation in maintaining and 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 evidence-based knowledge for institutional improvement. The assessment team in the Office of Instruction and Assessment continues to provide consultation for academic units to implement and conduct student learning-outcomes assessment at the program level. Since 2011, program-assessment reporting has been 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

In response to the pandemic, we added a COVID-19 statement section in the Taskstream assessment cycle reporting. This allowed programs to explain or justify changes or inconsistencies in their assessment reporting due to the pandemic situation. These statements were read and considered when evaluating the programs, but were not evaluated or scored in any way.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, the second cohort of the second 7-year APR cycle engaged in the APR process requiring reporting of student learning outcomes assessment. Seven departments reported out on a total of 22 programs for this academic year. The evaluation [rubric](#) was once again updated and refined. The scores for the first two cohorts of the second 7-year APR cycle are shown in Figure 1.





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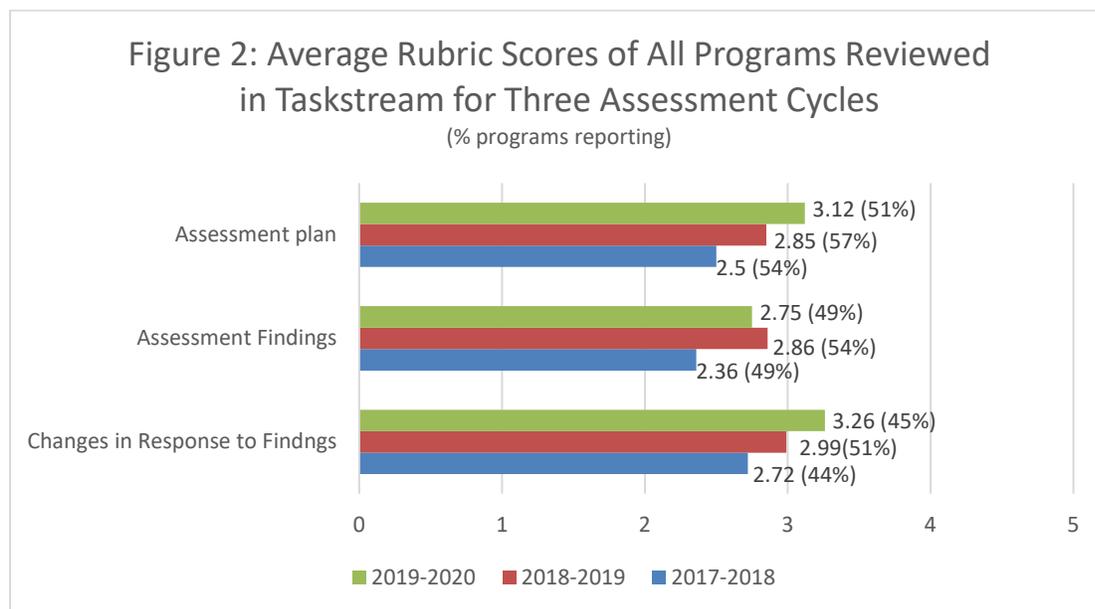
The scores for the Standing Requirements, Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Map, increased slightly with the majority of program achieving outstanding or excellent ratings in these areas. Ratings of the Assessment Plans and Findings are similar for the two cohorts, but the ratings of Changes in Response to Findings have increased. We attribute this increase to programs having a better understanding of the information to report in that area.

Table 1 is a snapshot of the Standing Requirement scores for all reporting programs.

Standing Requirements	*percent programs reporting in Taskstream
Learning Outcomes	4.26 (73%*)
Curriculum Map	4.10 (63%*)
Process of Assessment	204 Met, 23 Not Met (65%*)

5—Outstanding 4—Excellent 3—Achieving 2.5—Approaching 2--Needs development 1—Inadequate

The average scores for both Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Maps are excellent. The majority of the programs have met the requirements for the process of assessment, however there are still a few programs that do not quite understand what we are looking for in this area.



5—Outstanding 4—Excellent 3—Achieving 2.5—Approaching 2--Needs development 1—Inadequate

Because of the efficiency of reviewing programs in Taskstream, we have been able to review all submitted programs (not just the units who are 1, 3 and 5-years post-APR). Therefore, Figure 2 includes the average scores for all undergraduate and graduate programs submitted for review. We see a considerable increase in average scores from 2017 to 2020 except in the area of findings. The decrease in Assessment Findings scores in 2020 is most likely a side-effect of the pandemic and we are confident that those scores will go back up once things find a new normal.



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#### General Comments:

Both assessment staff members in OIA have noticed an uptick in the engagement of programs with assessment. There are several programs across colleges that, in the past, have not actively engaged in assessment reporting that have now dedicated personnel to collecting and uploading the assessment information from the faculty. We have successfully engaged both Colleges of Medicine and the College of Nursing, which include very large, accredited programs. Our goal is to have at least 20% more of the programs reporting in Taskstream by this year's deadline of September 30, 2021. We also have a large number of APRs in the 2021-2022 academic year to make up for those delayed due to the pandemic, so this is our chance to increase our reporting numbers even more.

### ***Additional Highlights***

#### **Assessment Matters Monthly Newsletter**

The Assessment Matters Newsletter continues to be published however, due to the pandemic, it has not been published every month during the academic school year. This 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 the month, August to May.

#### **General Education**

As a continuation of the team's effort with General Education, Elaine Marchello has dedicated 30% of her time (since Summer 2020) to assist with the development of the new program. Her role is to help build the assessment of the General Education learning outcomes within the program, as well as to assist with the newly mandated ABOR assessments. Responsibility for the General Education newsletter for communication with General Education instructors will be taken over by the Director of Communications in the newly formed General Education Office.

The VALUE study measuring Written Communication and Critical Thinking outcomes, which was started in 2019, was concluded in 2020. The [report](#) includes the findings from both written communication and critical thinking artifacts.

#### **Assessment Outreach**

Due to the pandemic, all conference travel was cancelled, however, Ingrid Novodvorsky and Elaine Marchello participated in two virtual conferences in 2020. The ASU+GSV 2020 Virtual Summit and the IUPUI Assessment Institute allowed free remote attendance to their sessions. The Watermark Engage conference was cancelled and was replaced by a two-hour virtual update of their company's focus and future directions.

#### **Teaching Models Website**

In response to the pandemic and the change to online learning, Ingrid Novodvorsky organized teaching resources for the faculty and staff. This all-encompassing website brings together the latest resources and tips for effective remote teaching and includes some information on assessment.



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**Book Chapter**

Ingrid, Elaine and Lisa Elfring have been working on a book chapter entitled: Assessment Work in an Academic Professional Development Center. This chapter is part of a book that will be published online.

For questions related to Outcomes Assessment, contact Elaine Marchello at [evm@email.arizona.edu](mailto:evm@email.arizona.edu), or Ingrid Novodvorsky at [novod@email.arizona.edu](mailto:novod@email.arizona.edu).