2021 continued to be a challenging year for all of us. The COVID-19 pandemic lasted longer than many thought it would, and although most courses went back to teaching in person, the threat of the virus was still on campus. In April, we had the site visit from the Higher Learning Commission as part of the 10-year accreditation process. The University of Arizona continues to recognize 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**

The Covid-19 statement area for the 2020-2021 assessment cycle was still available for programs to explain any pandemic-related changes in assessment. Very few departments utilized this feature.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the third cohort of the second 7-year APR cycle engaged in the APR process requiring reporting of student learning outcomes assessment. Five departments/schools reported out on a total of 19 programs for this academic year. The evaluation rubric was once again updated and refined. The scores for the first three cohorts of the second 7-year APR cycle are shown in Figure 1.
One APR department did not submit assessment cycles for review and one program was new within a department. Therefore, only 13 programs are represented in Figure 1. The Cohort 3A scores for the Standing Requirements: Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Map, increased slightly, with the majority of programs achieving outstanding or excellent ratings in these areas. Ratings of the Assessment Plans, Findings and Changes in Response to Findings appear significantly higher when compared to the prior two cohorts. We attribute this increase to increased departmental effort in the creation and maintenance of sustainable assessment plans and reporting.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standing Requirements</th>
<th>*percent programs reporting in Taskstream</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>4.26 (73%*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Map</td>
<td>4.10 (63%*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process of Assessment</td>
<td>267 Met, 35 Not Met (65%*)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

The Assessment team in OIA reviewed and scored 254 programs in Taskstream. Figure 2 includes the average scores for all undergraduate and graduate programs submitted for review for the last three annual cycles. Scores have increased slightly or stayed stable. However, the percentage of programs submitting their workspaces for reviewing has increased greatly with the plan increasing from 51% to 69% reporting, findings increasing from 49% to 66% and changes increasing from 45% to 62%.
General Comments:
There continues to be 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. Unlike our previous accreditation visit, this HLC review resulted in our “passing” in the assessment criteria, however their comments mentioned that they would like to see 100% of the programs reporting on program assessment. Consequently, we will continue our efforts to reach out to those programs that are not reporting their assessment information, but we may need support from the upper administration in our efforts.

Additional Highlights
Assessment Matters Monthly Newsletter
The Assessment Matters newsletter saw a new look this year and continues to be published. However, due to the pandemic, it has not been published as often. 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. The new GE program was softly rolled out during spring semester, 2022. The mandated ABOR assessments are moving along, and the Written Communication assessment will be complete by the end of summer, 2022. The next campus-wide assessment to be conducted will be Quantitative Reasoning during the 2022-2023 academic year.
Also as part of the GE efforts, Elaine is the lead for the team of faculty participating in the HLC Assessment Academy. The team is working on the third year of involvement with the academy and is developing ideas and plans for the new GE assessment plan.

Assessment Outreach
Due to the pandemic, conferences continued to be held virtually. Ingrid Novodvorsky and Elaine Marchello participated in several virtual conferences in 2021.

Teaching Models Website
Ingrid Novodvorsky has continued to organize 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.

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