

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 7, 2016

To: Daniel J. Howard, Executive Vice President & Provost

From: David Smith, Director of Assessment

RE: Fall 2015 Institutional Report on Academic Program Assessment (APA)

All academic departments at NMSU are required to participate in and report annually on the assessment of student learning in their undergraduate and graduate programs. In September of each year, a call for reports is issued to Academic Deans, Associate Deans, and Department Heads from the Executive Vice President & Provost. Each department is required to submit at least one report each for its undergraduate and graduate degree programs, as appropriate to its degree offerings. Reports for the 2014-2015 academic year were submitted through the WEAVE online reporting system and were due on Oct. 15, 2015.

NMSU's six academic colleges house 53 departments of which 51 offer undergraduate degrees and 42 offer graduate degrees. Two additional colleges, the Honors College and the Library, offer courses but not separate degree programs. There are therefore a total of 93 units from which reports are required. NMSU recently set a goal for a 100% participation in mandated assessment reporting. In Fall 2015, 82 out of the 93 required reports (88%) were submitted including 48 out of 51 (94%) undergraduate and 34 out of 42 (80%) graduate reports. As shown in Table 1, this compares with a 92% reporting rate in Fall 2014 and a 74% reporting rate in Fall 2013. The Colleges of Engineering and ACES were the only colleges where multiple units failed to report. A total of nine additional reports were submitted, one from the Library and the rest being separate submissions for multiple programs within a department. Tables showing submissions for all departments organized by college are appended to this memo.

Table 1: Reporting by college, 2013 – 2015. Highlighted cells indicate current areas with the greatest need for improvement.

College	Fall 2015			Fall 2014			Fall 2013		
	Reports Required	Reports Received	% Reporting	Reports Required	Reports Received	% Reporting	Reports Required	Reports Received	% Reporting
ACES	15	11	73%	15	11	73%	15	6	40%
A&S	44	43	98%	41	41	100%	40	32	80%
BUS*	9	9	100%	9	9	100%	9	9	100%
EDUC	8	7	88%	8	7	88%	8	7	88%
ENG*	11	6	55%	11	9	82%	12	6	50%
HSS	6	6	100%	6	6	100%	6	6	100%
TOTAL	93	82	88%	90	83	92%	91	67	74%

* Additional reports were received from the College of Business (3), the College of Engineering (5), and the Library (1)

Rubric Evaluation and Feedback

All reports submitted by academic units were reviewed by the Director of Assessment (DoA). A feedback document consisting of a rubric evaluation and additional comments was prepared for each report. The DoA met with each Dean or Dean's designee (Associate Dean) to review college reports and feedback. Following the meetings, the DoA wrote a summary report to the Provost regarding the college submission, and included departmental feedback in the form of a rubric. Deans and their designees were copied on the report, and were asked to distribute departmental feedback to departments.

A copy of the rubric used to evaluate departmental reports is attached. Detailed descriptions of various levels of achievement on the report components are included on the rubric. Aggregate results from evaluation of reports on identified rubric criteria are displayed in *Table 2*. Areas with the greatest need for improvement are:

- **Action Plan.** The action plan is directly related to the assessment and clearly indicates what actions will be taken and how those actions are intended to improve or support the program’s practices.
- **Impact.** Findings were analyzed carefully, related to the intended outcome, and evaluated for relevance in decision-making.
- **Engagement.** Assessment findings and analysis were presented and discussed with faculty, students, and other appropriate stakeholders; feedback from discussions was documented and used when appropriate to guide decision-making.
- **Summary Analysis.** A clear summary is provided of how assessment findings show strengths or opportunities for improvement in the program’s practices and outcomes. If all assessment targets were met, a plan to promote continuous improvement is described.

Overall ratings by department are appended, organized by college.

Table 2: Aggregate results by rubric components. Highlighted cells indicate areas with the greatest need for improvement.

	Not Evident	Developing	Well-Developed	TOTAL # of Reports	% Well-Developed
Mission/Purpose	3	0	88	91	97%
Goals/Objectives	1	20	70	91	77%
Outcome	3	3	85	91	93%
Associations	13	14	64	91	70%
Measures	2	9	80	91	88%
Targets	8	7	76	91	83%
Findings	6	21	64	91	70%
Action Plan	18	42	31	91	34%
Impact	17	41	33	91	36%
Engagement	18	30	43	91	47%
Summary Analysis	20	20	51	91	56%
Overall	2	27	62	91	68%

Closing the Loop Analysis and Feedback

The areas in greatest need for improvement identified in *Table 2* are all related to “closing the loop” aspects of assessment. To address this need, a closing the loop analysis was displayed prominently on every feedback document. A sample is given in *Figure 1*. Each report also received a closing the loop rating from the following possibilities:

- **Demonstrating excellence**, indicating all four aspects of closing the loop described above are present and adequate.
- **Complete with deficiencies**, indicating all four aspects of closing the loop are present to some degree but one or more need improvement.
- **Incomplete**, indicating that some of the four aspects of closing the loop are present but not all.
- **Poor**, indicating that none of the four aspects of closing the loop is present.

Figure 1: Closing the loop rating and feedback form.

Closing the Loop: An accreditation and assessment priority. In support of our HLC reaffirmation of accreditation visit in the fall of 2017, it is imperative that every department has an assessment process that “closes the loop” such that *assessment findings are used for change and improvement. Closing the loop is more than quality assurance; it is a demonstrated commitment to improvement that includes:*

- Analysis of assessment data including evaluation of its relevance for decision making
- Substantial engagement of faculty and others for discussion of assessment findings
- Planning and implementing change in response to findings
- Reassessment following implementation of changes

The feedback and rubric scores below give special attention to these components of closing the loop.

Closing the loop feedback: In terms of closing the loop, assessment as represented in this report is rated as (demonstrating excellence, complete with deficiencies, incomplete, poor) *[followed by justification of rating and suggestions for improvement]*

A summary of closing the loop ratings by college is shown in *Table 3*. Ratings by department are appended, organized by college.

Table 3: Closing the loop ratings by college.

College	# Reports	Rating				% Complete with Deficiencies or Demonstrating Excellence
		Poor	Incomplete	Complete with Deficiencies	Demonstrating Excellence	
ACES	11	3	3	1	4	45%
A&S	43	2	14	17	10	63%
BUS	12	1	4	4	3	58%
EDUC	7	0	2	3	2	71%
ENG	11	2	6	0	3	27%
HSS	6	3	0	1	2	50%
Library	1	0	0	0	1	100%
Overall (%)	91	11 (12%)	29 (32%)	26 (29%)	25 (27%)	56%

Quality Initiative Analysis

All departments with undergraduate programs were required to participate in NMSU's Quality Initiative (QI) as part of their undergraduate assessment for the 2014-2015 academic year. From the total of 51 undergraduate reporting units, 45 reports were received that described writing-related assessments contributing to the QI. This corresponds to **88% departmental participation in the QI**. Of the remaining 6 reporting units, 3 did not submit reports and 3 submitted reports that were not writing related. A total of 6 additional (unrequired) reports on undergraduate programs were submitted, 5 of which contributed to the QI. A summary by college is given in *Table 4*.

Table 4. Quality Initiative (QI) participation by college.

College	# QI Reports Required	# QI Reports Received	% Participation	Additional QI Reports Received	Total QI Reports Received	# QI Reports Closing the Loop* (%)
ACES	8	7	88%	-	7	3 (43%)
A&S	25	23	92%	-	23	18 (78%)
BUS	5	4	80%	-	4	1 (25%)
EDUC	4	3	75%	-	3	2 (67%)
ENG	6	5	100%	4	9	2 (22%)
HSS	3	3	100%	-	3	1 (33%)
Library	-	-	-	1	1	1 (100%)
Overall	51	45	88%	5	50	28 (56%)

*Achieving either "complete with deficiencies" or "demonstrating excellence" on closing the loop.

Analysis:

Based on analysis of APA reports, conversations with college deans and associate deans, and accreditation expectations of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the following challenges related to program-level assessment have been identified.

1. NMSU is committed to achieving 100% participation of departments in the APA process. After substantial improvement the previous year (from 74% to 92%, see *Table 1*), the % participation declined this year to 88%.
2. Integrating course, program, and institution-level learning objectives is a clear expectation of the HLC. Currently, NMSU's institution-level Baccalaureate Experience objectives are poorly integrated. In addition, many departments have poorly defined program-level objectives.
3. Demonstrating continuous improvement. Weaknesses evident from *Table 2* involve processes where assessment findings are used to make substantive change, i.e., to closing the loop.
4. Improving graduate program assessment. There was a smaller level of participation of graduate programs (80%) than undergraduate programs (94%) and several indications that training and resources are needed to support this process.
5. Increase transparency related to assessment. Facilitate effective communication of assessment processes, findings, and impact including the broader program context in which assessment takes place.

Action Plan

1. Coordinate with colleges to establish intermediate deadlines and college-directed feedback mechanisms within the annual assessment cycle. Provide colleges with assessment support and resources including consulting, written materials, and workshops to be offered to department heads and departmental assessment coordinators. Objectives: Increase participation and improve on closing the loop.
2. Redirect the Advocates for Scholarly Teaching Committee to work with the Director of Assessment to provide feedback on APA reports. Objectives: improve the quality and timing of feedback on APA reports; develop faculty expertise on program-level assessment among committee members.
3. Work with the Dean of the Graduate School to provide resources and training tailored specifically to the needs of graduate program assessment. Objectives: Increase participation and improve quality of graduate program assessment.
4. Continue and create activities supporting departments in the development and evaluation of program-level learning objectives and their integration with both course- and institution-level objectives. Objectives: Provide evidence of integration of learning objectives to the HLC; support development of shared goals and teamwork among program faculty.

Appendices: Departmental Report Ratings Organized by College

Table A.1: College of ACES Report Ratings.

- *NR = no report submitted.*
- *Closing the Loop Ratings:*
 - *0 = poor*
 - *1 = incomplete*
 - *2 = complete with deficiencies*
 - *3 = demonstrating excellence.*
- *Overall Ratings:*
 - *0 = No evidence of assessment*
 - *1 = Developing assessment, improvement needed*
 - *2 = Convincing evidence of effective assessment*
- **Highlighted Box:** *Trouble Spots*

College:			Closing the Loop				Overall		
ACES		NR	0	1	2	3	0	1	2
	Percentages		27%	27%	9%	36%	9%	36%	55%
	Department								
Undergraduate	AEAB		X					X	
	ANRS		X				X		
	AXED	X							
	EPPWS				X				X
	FCS			X					X
	FWCE					X			X
	HRTM			X				X	
	PES					X			X
Graduate	AEAB			X				X	
	ANRS		X					X	
	AXED	X							
	EPPWS					X			X
	FCS	X							
	FWCE	X							
	PES					X			X

Table A.2: College of Arts & Sciences Report Ratings. See Table A.1 for explanation of scores.

College:			Closing the Loop				Overall		
A&S		NR	0	1	2	3	0	1	2
	Percentages		5%	30%	42%	23%	7%	16%	77%
	Department								
Undergraduate	AERO			X					X
	ANTH				X				X
	ART				X				X
	BIOL					X			X
	CHEM/BCHE			X					X
	COMM			X					X
	CS					X			X
	CMI					X			X
	CJ		X					X	
	ENGL				X				X
	GEOG				X				X
	GEOL					X			X
	GOVT				X				X
	HIST				X				X
	INTD STUD				X				X
	JOUR/MC				X				X
	L & L				X			X	X
	MATH					X			X
	MIL SCI				X				X
	MUS			X				X	
	PHIL				X				X
	PHYS			X				X	
	PSYC			X				X	
	SOC					X			X
THTR					X			X	
Graduate	ANTH				X				
	ART					X			
	ASTR				X				X
	BIOL			X					X
	CHEM/BCHE	X							
	COMM			X				X	
	CS				X				X
	CJ		X					X	
	ENGL					X			X
	GEOG			X					X
	GEOL					X			X
	GOVT				X				X
	HIST				X				X
	L & L			X				X	
	MATH			X					X
	MUS			X				X	
PHYS			X				X		
PSYC					X			X	
SOC						X		X	

Table A.3: College of Business Report Ratings. See Table A.1 for explanation of scores.

College:			Closing the Loop				Overall		
Business		NR	0	1	2	3	0	1	2
	Percentages		8%	46%	23%	23%	0%	31%	69%
	Department: Program								
Undergraduate	ACCT/INFO SYS					X			X
	EASIB			X					X
	FIN			X				X	
	MGMT			X				X	
	MKTG				X				X
Graduate	ACCT/INFO SYS					X			X
	EASIB: Economics (MA)			X				X	
	Econ. Dev. (Ph.D)				X				X
	Applied Stat. (MS)			X					X
	MGMT		X					X	
	MKTG					X			X
	MBS (Adm. By College)				X				X

Table A.4: College of Education Report Ratings. See Table A.1 for explanation of scores.

College:			Closing the Loop				Overall		
Education		NR	0	1	2	3	0	1	2
	Percentages		0%	29%	43%	29%	0%	14%	86%
	Department								
Undergraduate	CEP	X							
	C&I					X			X
	KIND			X				X	
	SPED CD				X				X
Graduate	CEP			X					X
	C&I				X				X
	ELA					X			X
	SPED CD				X				X

Table A.5: College of Engineering Report Ratings. See Table A.1 for explanation of scores.

College:			Closing the Loop				Overall		
Engineering		NR	0	1	2	3	0	1	2
	Percentages		18%	55%	0%	27%	0%	73%	27%
	Department: Program								
Undergraduate	CHME		X					X	
	C E					X			X
	ECE		X					X	
	ETSE: Civil			X				X	
	E&C			X				X	
	Information					X			X
	Mechanical			X				X	
	ICT			X				X	
	Surv. Eng.			X				X	
	I E					X			X
	ME & AE	X							
Graduate	CHME	X							
	C E	X							
	ECE	X							
	I E			X				X	
	ME & AE	X							

Table A.6: College of Health and Social Services Report Ratings. See Table A.1 for explanation of scores.

College:			Closing the Loop				Overall		
HSS		NR	0	1	2	3	0	1	2
	Percentages		50%	0%	17%	33%	0%	50%	50%
	Department								
Undergraduate	PHS		X					X	
	School of Nursing		X					X	
	School of Social Work					X			X
Graduate	PHS		X					X	
	School of Nursing				X				X
	School of Social Work					X			X

Table A.7: NMSU Library Report Ratings. See Table A.1 for explanation of scores.

College:			Closing the Loop				Overall		
Library		NR	0	1	2	3	0	1	2
	Percentages					100%			100%
Undergraduate	College Academic Report					X			X